

**U.S. Department of Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Roseburg District, Oregon**

**Bell Mountain  
Commercial Thinning & Density Management  
Decision Document**

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Bureau of Land Management  
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**SECTION 1 – THE DECISION**

**Decision**

It is my decision to authorize the implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative as described in the Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management Environmental Assessment (EA) in Chapter 2, pages 7-10 (EA #OR-104-06-09). The Project Design Features that will be implemented as part of the Action Alternative are described on pages 11-15 of the Bell Mountain EA. These project design features have been developed into contract stipulations and will be implemented as part of the timber sale contract.

The Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management will occur on four scattered units (approximately 151 acres) of 47 to 54 year-old second-growth forest located in the Elk Creek/Upper Umpqua Fifth-Field Watershed in Sections 14, 23, and 27; T22S, R07W; W.M. Within these 151 acres, approximately two acres will be removed for the development of temporary spur roads. Bell Mountain will provide approximately 2.5 MMBF of merchantable timber available for auction. Approximately 288 MBF is within the GFMA portion of the sale and 2,190 MBF is within Riparian Reserves.

This decision is subject to administrative remedy under 43 CFR § 5003.2 and 5003.3.

**Updated Information**

Numerical values reported for the timber yarding summary (EA, pg. 9, Table 3) and the amount of road renovation and improvement (EA, pg. 10) have been updated since the EA was released for public review. This updated information, described below, has been considered but does not alter the conclusions of the analysis.

1) Timber Yarding

The action will require a mix of skyline cable yarding (65 acres [formerly reported as 72 acres]) and ground-based tractor yarding (82 acres [formerly reported as 79 acres]; Table 3). The table included below, updates Table 3 from page 9 of the EA.

**Table 1. Timber Yarding Summary.**

| Project Unit | Yarding Method<br>(acres) |       |        |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------|--------|
|              | Aerial                    | Cable | Ground |
| 14A          | 0                         | 19    | 8      |
| 23A          | 0                         | 46    | 44     |
| 27A          | 0                         | 0     | 14     |
| 27B          | 0                         | 0     | 16     |

|              |   |    |        |
|--------------|---|----|--------|
| <b>Total</b> | 0 | 65 | 82+10* |
|--------------|---|----|--------|

\* Up to 10 acres of additional, incidental ground-based yarding may occur.

2) Road Renovation/Improvement

Approximately 6.2 miles (formerly reported as 5.59 miles) of existing roads will be renovated (road no. 22-7-20.0, 22-7-22.0, 22-7-22.2, 22-7-22.4, 22-7-23.0, 22-7-23.2, 22-7-23.4, 22-7-23.6, 22-7-23.8, and 22-7-27.2). These roads will be brought back to their original design specifications.

The 22-7-27.2 road and the 22-7-23.0 road were formerly categorized as road improvement and not as road renovation (EA, pg. 10). The 22-7-27.2 road will be renovated by installing or maintaining drainage structures (culverts and drainage ditches), reshaping the road surface, and brushing road shoulders. The 22-7-27.2 road will be decommissioned by blocking with a trench barrier and water-barring.

The 22-7-23.0 road was formerly described in the EA as needing improvement by adding eight inches of rock for the base course and four inches of rock for surfacing. This road will be renovated by installing or maintaining drainage structures (culverts and drainage ditches), reshaping the road surface, rocking turnouts, and brushing road shoulders.

**Compliance and Monitoring**

Compliance with this decision will be ensured by frequent on the ground inspections by the Contracting Officer’s Representative. Monitoring will be conducted as per the direction given in Appendix I of the RMP (pgs. 189-209).

**SECTION 2 – THE DECISION RATIONALE**

The Project Design Features described in the EA (pgs. 11-15) will minimize soil compaction, limit erosion, protect slope stability, protect wildlife, protect air and water quality, and protect fish habitat, as well as protect other identified resource values. I have reviewed the resource information contained in the EA, which is briefly summarized in Table 2 (below), and the updated information presented in this Decision. This decision recognizes that impacts could occur to some of these resources; however, the impacts to resource values will not exceed those identified in the *Final - Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS). This decision provides timber commodities resulting from silvicultural treatments whose effects to the environment are within those anticipated and already analyzed in the PRMP/EIS.

Chapter 2 of the EA describes two alternatives: a "No Action" alternative and a "Proposed Action" alternative. The No Action alternative was not selected because it did not meet the objectives from page 4-5 of the EA to: provide a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities, contribute to the Roseburg District’s Allowable Sale Quantity of 45 MMBF, manage forest land to assure a high level of sustained timber productivity, maintain stand densities within the desired range through commercial thinning/density management prescriptions, or comply with Section I of the O&C Act. In addition, the EA did not identify any

impacts under the proposed action alternative that would be beyond those identified in the PRMP/EIS.

### **Survey and Manage**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is aware of the August 1, 2005, U.S. District Court order in Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Rey et al. which found portions of the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2004) (EIS) inadequate. Subsequently in that case, on January 9, 2006, the Court ordered:

- set aside the 2004 Record of Decision *To Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern spotted Owl* (March, 2004) (2004 ROD) and
- reinstate the 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2001) (2001 ROD), including any amendments or modifications in effect as of March 21, 2004.

The BLM is also aware of the November 6, 2006, Ninth Circuit Court opinion in Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center et al. v. Boody et al., No. 06-35214 (CV 03-3124, District of Oregon). The court held that the 2001 and 2003 Annual Species Reviews (ASRs) regarding the red tree vole are invalid under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and concluded that the BLM's Cow Catcher and Cotton Snake timber sales violate federal law.

This court opinion is specifically directed toward the two sales challenged in this lawsuit. The case was mandated back to the District Court on December 29, 2006, and the Court issued an *Order Regarding Permanent Injunctive Relief* on February 12, 2007. The Court ORDERED that the Decision Records for the Cow Catcher and Cottonsnake Timber Sales are SET ASIDE in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 706 and further ORDERED that defendants are ENJOINED from implementing the Cow Catcher and Cottonsnake Timber Sales until such time that either sale conforms to the 2001 Survey & Manage Record of Decision ("ROD") or, in the alternative, a resource management plan that satisfies the FLPMA and NEPA deficiencies found by the Ninth Circuit in this case. At this time, the ASR process itself has not been invalidated, nor have all the changes made by the 2001-2003 ASR processes been vacated or withdrawn, nor have species been reinstated to the Survey and Manage program, except for the red tree vole.

The Swiftwater Field Office will re-examine individual project level NEPA documents (environmental assessments) in light of any pertinent court ordered remedy and will make revisions to such documents as necessary following issuance of the court's judgment. We have provided advance notice to potential purchasers informing them that the court's ruling may result in delays in award of the sale to the high bidder or suspensions of operations in the special provisions of the timbersale contract. Appropriate processes are in place to provide BLM the ability to delay award of timber sales or issue suspensions should they become necessary.

We do not expect that the litigation over the Annual Species Review process in Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center et al. v. Boody et al will affect this project, because the development and design of this project exempt it from the Survey and Manage program. In Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Rey et al the U.S. District Court modified its order on October 11,

2006, amending paragraph three of the January 9, 2006 injunction. This most recent order directs:

"Defendants shall not authorize, allow, or permit to continue any logging or other ground-disturbing activities on projects to which the 2004 ROD applied unless such activities are in compliance with the 2001 ROD (as the 2001 ROD was amended or modified as of March 21, 2004), except that this order will not apply to:

- a. Thinning projects in stands younger than 80 years old;
- b. Replacing culverts on roads that are in use and part of the road system, and removing culverts if the road is temporary or to be decommissioned;
- c. Riparian and stream improvement projects where the riparian work is riparian planting, obtaining material for placing in-stream, and road or trail decommissioning; and where the stream improvement work is the placement large wood, channel and floodplain reconstruction, or removal of channel diversions; and
- d. The portions of project involving hazardous fuel treatments where prescribed fire is applied. Any portion of a hazardous fuel treatment project involving commercial logging will remain subject to the survey and management requirements except for thinning of stands younger than 80 years old under subparagraph a. of this paragraph."

The Swiftwater Field Office has reviewed the design of Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management as described in the EA (pg. 7-10). Bell Mountain is a commercial thinning and density management project on 151 acres of mid-seral forest stands that are approximately 47-54 years old. For the foregoing reason, it is my determination that Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management meets exemption "a" above. Therefore, the decision to eliminate Survey and Manage is effective on this project.

### **SECTION 3 – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

For the Bell Mountain EA, comments were solicited from affected tribal governments, adjacent landowners and affected State and local government agencies. No comments were received from these sources. A letter was sent (October 20, 2006) to adjacent landowners. Two comments were received. One commenter requested to be added to the mailing list for future documents regarding this project and another expressed general support of the proposed project.

During the thirty day public review period for the Bell Mountain EA (which ended on February 8, 2007), comments were received from one business and four organizations (two of which submitted comments jointly).

Upon reviewing the comments that were received, the following topics warrant additional clarification specific to the Bell Mountain project: (1) impacts to old growth trees, (2) concerns regarding oak trees, (3) marbled murrelet survey expiration, (4) road clarification, (5) spur road widths, (6) questions regarding spur #1, (7) stream buffer measurements, and (8) waiver of operating restrictions for slope stability concerns.

1) Impacts to Old-Growth Trees

A comment was received that asked how many old-growth trees would be cut, killed, and/or harmed by the proposed action as a result of road rights-of-way, clearing landing areas, and operational safety concerns.

Based on the cruise data there are no old-growth conifers within the road right-of-ways (which also includes clearings for landings) within the project area. Within the road right-of-ways there are conifers up to 30 inches diameter breast height that will be harvested, but these trees have characteristics typical of second-growth trees and not old-growth trees. In addition, the project design features state that “[p]rior to attaching any logging equipment to a reserve tree, precautions to protect the tree from damage shall be taken” (EA, pg. 11).

2) Concerns Regarding Oak Trees

A comment expressed concern regarding large Oregon white oak trees within the project area and whether or not they would be removed or damaged by the proposed action.

The marking prescription for Bell Mountain included retention of hardwoods greater than eight inches diameter breast height in the uplands and reserves (EA, pg. 8). The Oregon white oak trees in question will be reserved unless they must be cut in order to build a road or a landing.

3) Marbled Murrelet Survey Expiration

A comment was received indicating that the marbled murrelet clearance surveys for the Bell Mountain project expired in 2006.

There is no expiration date for surveys specified in the protocol. The protocol provides rationale that is useful when deciding where and when additional surveys may be appropriate. According to *Methods For Surveying Marbled Murrelets in Forests: A Revised Protocol for Land Management and Research* (Pacific Seabird Group, January 2003), “*For probable absence sites, if a significant time lag ( $\geq 5$  years) occurs between the completion of protocol surveys and the implementation of activities that would modify suitable habitat, additional surveys may be appropriate to support the results of previous surveys.*”

The results of surveys completed in 1996, 1997, 2000, and 2001 indicate Bell Mountain is a “probable absence” site. In addition, based on the number of survey visits completed in 2000 and 2001, these surveys meet the 2003 protocol standards. Because the Bell Mountain timber sale area was adequately surveyed and supporting surveys determined “probable absence” of marbled murrelets within the project area, additional surveys are not appropriate in this case.

4) Road Clarification

A comment expressed the need for clarification of what roads would be constructed, decommissioned, improved, and renovated, and asked a question about the decommissioning proposed under an earlier EA for the 22-7-27.2 road. A concern that

Spur #4 would be built to facilitate the future harvest of old growth forest and that the compaction on this spur would retard tree growth was also expressed.

The construction of Spurs #2, 3, and 4 (0.47 miles total) is accurately described in the EA on page 10. These spurs are shown on the project map in Appendix B of the EA. The EA also describes the activities to decommission these roads on page 10.

The EA stated (pg. 10) that approximately 0.56 miles of existing road (road no. 22-7-27.2 and 22-7-23.0) would be improved. As previously corrected in the “Updated Information” in this Decision Document (pg. 2), these roads are being renovated, not improved.

As stated in the EA (pg. 10), Spur #4 will be used and then closed to traffic with a trench barrier, water-barred, and mulched with logging slash or with straw if logging slash is not available. While future management of the stands that Spur #4 provides access to was a consideration in how to decommission Spur #4, there are no plans for regeneration harvests now or in the foreseeable future. The statement in the EA (pg. 37) that “[d]etrimental compaction could retard the growth of adjacent trees by approximately ten percent” pertains to tractor skid trails in the ground based harvest areas, not to Spur #4.

#### 5) Spur Road Widths

A concern was expressed that the width of roads is excessive because 58 feet was measured between orange tags that designate a road location.

The orange tags are posted on the nearest trees adjacent to the road location or road alignment. The only time this would indicate that trees would be cut is if there are trees between the orange tags. It isn't clear from the comment if this was the case, but it is unlikely. Roads used to haul logs require a running surface approximately 12 feet in width. In addition, extra width is required for curve widening (so that trucks with trailers will keep the wheels on the road when they go around corners) and turn outs are required so that vehicles can safely pass one another.

The width required to provide the running surface also depends on topography, with steeper slopes requiring more width for cut and fill slopes. Clearing of shrubs and limbs from trees is necessary within approximately five feet on either side of the running surface for visibility and safety. *For example:* a road with flat topography would have a 12 foot running surface with 5 feet of clearing on either side for a total clearing width of approximately 22 feet.

#### 6) Questions Regarding Spur #1

A concern that a new road was built in the vicinity of Spur #1 that accesses unit 23A was not addressed in the EA.

Spur #1 is no longer a part of the Bell Mountain project. The road pictured in the comments was built in the spring of 2006 under a reciprocal right-of-way agreement with Lone Rock Timber and is shown (un-numbered) on the Appendix B map. It takes off at the same point where Spur #1 was originally proposed, but it goes west and accesses the

adjacent private property. The portion of this road that is on BLM administered lands is rocky but will not be used to access the harvest units. The landing at the end of this road is located on adjacent private land.

7) Stream Buffer Measurements

A comment was received that measuring buffer distances from the center of the stream channel, as opposed to the edge of the stream bank, could result in the removal of stream-side trees.

The statement "...measured from the center of the stream channel" from page 8 of the EA was in error. Stream buffer distances were measured from the edge of the stream channel and field review indicated that the minimum buffer width was 20 feet. Therefore, streamside trees will be retained.

8) Waiver of Operating Restrictions for Slope Stability Concerns

A comment was received that asked under what conditions the operating restriction that protects slope stability could be waived by the Authorized Officer.

The project design features on page 13 of the EA state:

"On the potentially unstable area (six acres with 65 to 90 percent slopes) in the southeast portion of Unit 23A, no cable yarding shall be permitted from November 15<sup>th</sup> - April 15<sup>th</sup>, both days inclusive, or during other periods when soil moisture is high (greater than 30 percent), unless waived by the Authorized Officer."

To clarify, cable yarding on the potentially unstable area in the southeast portion of Unit 23A will not occur from November 15<sup>th</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup>, both days inclusive, and will not occur when soil moisture is greater than 30 percent. The Authorized Officer can waive this restriction during unseasonably dry periods when soil moisture is less than 30 percent, as determined by the soil scientist.

The remaining comments received were general or philosophical in nature and did not raise issues specific to the Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management project nor how the analysis was flawed or in error. No further comments have been received pertaining to Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management.

## **SECTION 4 – PROTEST PROCEDURES**

The decision described in this document is a forest management decision and is subject to protest by the public. In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests of this decision may be filed with the authorized officer [Marci L. Todd] within 15 days of the publication date of the notice of decision/timber sale advertisement in *The News-Review*, Roseburg, Oregon.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (b) states that: "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer

and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision.” This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail or facsimile protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Roseburg District Office will be accepted. The protest must clearly and concisely state the reasons why the decision is believed to be in error.

Protests received more than 15 days after the publication of the notice of decision/timber sale advertisement are not timely filed and shall not be considered. Upon timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider the decision to be implemented in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available to her. The authorized officer shall, at the conclusion of her review, serve her decision in writing to the protesting party. Upon denial of a protest the authorized officer may proceed with the implementation of the decision.

For further information, contact Marci L. Todd, Field Manager, Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management, 777 NW Garden Valley Blvd; Roseburg, OR. 97470, 541 440-4931.

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Marci L. Todd, Field Manager  
Swiftwater Field Office

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Date

**Table 2.** Summary of Effects of the Action: Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning & Density Management.

| Context (What?)   | Intensity (How Much?)  | Reason for not being Significant.  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Cultural Resources</b>   |  |  |
| <b>Cultural Resources.</b>  | Project area was inventoried for cultural resources (October, 2006) and Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act were completed, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols. No cultural or historic resources were identified (EA, pg. 16). | There will be no effect to cultural or historical resources (EA, pg. 16).  |
| <b>Botany &amp; Noxious Weeds</b>   |  |  |
| Federally threatened (FT) <b>Kincaid's lupine</b> and the federally endangered (FE) <b>rough popcorn flower</b> . | There is no suitable habitat for the rough popcorn flower and surveys were completed for Kincaid's lupine (1997, 1998, May-June 2006). No Kincaid's lupine sites were discovered (EA, pg. 43).   | No impacts to these two federally listed plant species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.  |
| <b>Survey &amp; Manage (S&amp;M) Species.</b>   | Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management meets one of the exemption criteria for Survey and Manage from the October 11, 2006 U.S. District Court Order (EA, pg. 43-44).  | The decision to eliminate Survey and Manage is effective on this project (EA, pg. 44).   |
| <b>Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and Tracking (BT) Species.</b>   | Surveys were completed (1997, 1998, May-June 2006) and no sites were discovered (EA, pg. 43).  | No impacts to BS, BA, or BT botanical species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.   |
| <b>Noxious weeds.</b>   | There are infestations of noxious weeds scattered throughout the project area; mostly located within road prisms or previously used logging landings (EA, pg. 44).   | The project area has been treated in the past (2002) and will receive future treatment (2007) under the Roseburg District Integrated Weed Control Plan. The project area will be monitored and new infestations will be treated in accordance with the weed control plan. The project design features will |

| Context (What?)   | Intensity (How Much?)  | Reason for not being Significant.  |
|---|--|--|
|   |  | minimize the spread of noxious weeds (EA, pgs. 44-45).   |
| <b>Fisheries</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)</b> for Coho Salmon and Chinook salmon.   | The nearest essential fish habitat is located approximately 0.10 miles downslope from Unit 27A (EA, pg. 42).   | Project will not adversely affect essential fish habitat for Chinook or Coho salmon (EA, pg. 43). Therefore, consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service is not required.  |
| <b>Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and Tracking (BT) Species.</b> | <p>Oregon Coast coho salmon (BS), Oregon coast steelhead, Coastal Cutthroat (BT) Oregon Coast Chinook Salmon, Pacific lamprey (BT), and Umpqua Chub (BS) are present within the Elk Creek fifth-field watershed (EA, pg. 39).</p> <p>Unit 27A is approximately 0.1 miles from a fish-bearing stream (EA, pg. 39). There are no stream crossings over fish-bearing streams in the haul route and the haul route is at least 200 feet from fish-bearing streams (i.e. Hancock Creek [EA, pg. 41]).</p> | <p>Since stream temperature and water chemistry will not be influenced by the action; and changes in sediment will be immeasurable and will not extend to the fish-bearing streams downstream, fish habitat and aquatic species will not be affected (EA, pg. 41).</p> |
| <b>Hydrology</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Stream Flow</b> (water yield and peak flow).                           | The project will involve the partial removal of vegetation on areas constituting less than three percent of each affected drainage (EA, pg. 34).   | No measurable effect to peak flow is anticipated as a result of the action because water yield increases are usually only detectable when at least 20-25 percent of the forest cover has been removed within a drainage (EA, pg. 34).                                  |
| <b>Stream Temperature.</b>  | Variable width “no-harvest” buffers, at least 20 feet wide, will be established along streams to retain direct shading as necessary for maintenance of water temperatures (EA, pg. 31).  | Stream shading will not be affected by thinning or density management and therefore stream temperatures will not be affected (EA, pg. 31).   |

| Context (What?)  | Intensity (How Much?)  | Reason for not being Significant.   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Sedimentation.</b>  | Effects of sediment generated by road related activities, particularly timber hauling in wet weather, will be short term and limited to the immediate vicinity of stream crossings. Prior to hauling, sediment-control devices such as silt fences and hay bales may be placed in ditch lines and at cross drain outlets to trap sediment locally and prevent migration into streams (EA, pg. 31). | “No-harvest” buffers will intercept surface run-off and prevent sedimentation of streams, such that there will be no cumulative degradation of water quality in the Elk Creek Watershed (EA, pg. 35).   |
| <b>Soils</b>   |  |   |
| <b>Landslides.</b>   | In-unit landslides will have a low probability of occurring (less than ten percent chance) and if they did occur they will likely be small in size (less than 0.1 acre) (EA, pg. 37).  | Cumulative soil productivity loss due to landslides, at both project level and watershed scales, will be inconsequential because of their low probabilities of occurrence and likely small sizes (less than 0.1 acre) when project design features are applied (EA, pg. 39).  |
| <b>Soil Productivity.</b>  | Soil productivity will be maintained or improved slightly by this action because approximately 5 acres of old, compacted surfaces (trails and roads) will be subsoiled (EA, pg. 37).   | Soil productivity will be maintained or slightly improved because of the combination of slow, natural healing and active amelioration of old ground-based and road impacts by the BLM on future projects (EA, pg. 39).  |
| <b>Wildlife</b>  |  |   |
| In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, <b>consultation</b> with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the federally threatened (FT) bald eagle, northern spotted owl, and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat and murrelet critical habitat. | A letter of concurrence from the USFWS for the re-initiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities (Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511) was received June 24, 2005 and a letter of concurrence regarding disturbance to marbled murrelets in Zone   | The USFWS concurred that this action is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, spotted owl, spotted owl critical habitat, murrelet, murrelet critical habitat (pg. 30, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511) or the murrelet as a result of disturbance (pg. 6, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0596). Project design features will be implemented in |

| Context (What?)   | Intensity (How Much?)   | Reason for not being Significant.  |
|---|---|--|
|   | 2 was received July 20, 2005 (Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0596).   | compliance with the letters of concurrence.  |
| <b>Bald Eagle.</b>  | No noise/visual disruption effects to bald eagles will occur due to this action since there are no known nests within 0.5 mile of the harvest units. There are no known bald eagle nest sites within the project area. Based on current surveys (2006) the nearest known bald eagle nest site (Brads Creek) is approximately 3.4 miles to the south (EA, pgs. 20-21).   | No disruption effects to bald eagles will occur and suitable nesting habitat will not be modified.<br><br>Thinning will facilitate the development of late-successional characteristics, thereby increasing the amount of suitable habitat available earlier than through natural stand development (EA, pg. 21).  |
| <b>Noise/Visual Disruption of Northern Spotted Owl</b> nesting behaviors.   | No noise/visual disruption effects to spotted owls will occur due to this action since there are no known spotted owl nests, activity centers, or unsurveyed suitable habitat are within 65 yards of the harvest units (EA, pg. 24).  | No disruption effects to spotted owls will occur.  |
| <b>Northern Spotted Owl Habitat.</b> There are five northern spotted owl sites that are located within 1.5 miles (Coast Range provincial home range) of the harvest units. The Bell Mountain and Hancock Creek sites have established 100 acre Known Owl Activity Centers (KOACs) (EA, pg. 22). | Commercial thinning and density management will include the modification of 151 acres of dispersal habitat (EA, pg. 23).<br><br>The action will accelerate the development of late-successional characteristics used by spotted owls (e.g. large diameter trees, multiple canopy layers, and hunting perches) over the long term, thereby increasing the amount of suitable habitat available to spotted owl sites earlier than through natural stand development (EA, pg. 23). | Based on the high residual density of trees remaining following treatment, dispersal habitat will not be reduced below 60 percent canopy cover. Therefore, the capability of the habitat to function for dispersing spotted owls will be maintained (EA, pg. 23).<br><br>The USFWS concurs that this action is not likely to adversely affect spotted owls (pgs. 19-20) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]. |
| <b>Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl.</b>   | This project is not within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl (EA, pg. 22).   | There is no effect to critical habitat for the northern spotted owl from this action.  |

| Context (What?)   | Intensity (How Much?)   | Reason for not being Significant.  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Noise/Visual Disruption of Marbled Murrelet</b> nesting behaviors. The project area is located approximately 35-36 miles from the coast, within Zone 2 and within the 1.3 mile Restriction Corridor (EA, pg. 21).</p> | <p>All suitable marbled murrelet habitat within 0.25 miles of the project area was surveyed in 2000-2001 following the 2000 survey protocol. No murrelets were detected during the intensive survey effort (EA, pg. 21).</p> <p>The results of surveys completed in 1996, 1997, 2000, and 2001 indicate Bell Mountain is a “probable absence” site (Decision, pg. 6).</p>   | <p>This action will not disrupt nesting behaviors since marbled murrelets are absent from the project area.</p> <p>The USFWS concurs that the commercial thinning and density management activities are not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet as a result of disturbance within Zone 2 and within the 1.3 mile Restriction Corridor (pg. 7, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0596).</p>  |
| <p><b>Marbled Murrelet Habitat.</b></p>   | <p>Older remnant trees that could serve as suitable nest trees may be present, but are not the numerically predominant stand components. Such trees will be retained to the greatest degree practicable (EA, pg. 8).</p> <p>All suitable marbled murrelet habitat within 0.25 miles of the project area was surveyed in 2000-2001 following the 2000 survey protocol (but also meet 2003 protocol standards [Decision, pg. 6]). No murrelets were detected during the intensive survey effort (EA, pg. 21).</p> | <p>Commercial thinning and density management will reduce tree densities, facilitating the development of future nesting habitat by increasing tree and tree-limb growth rates; thus providing an opportunity for murrelets to occupy these stands earlier (EA, pg. 22).</p> <p>The USFWS concurs that the commercial thinning and density management activities are not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet within Zone 2 and within the 1.3 mile Restriction Corridor (pgs.8-11, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511).</p> |
| <p><b>Critical Habitat for the Marbled Murrelet.</b></p>  | <p>This project is not within designated critical habitat for the marbled murrelet (EA, pg. 21).</p>  | <p>There is no effect to critical habitat for the marbled murrelet from this action.</p>   |
| <p><b>Survey &amp; Manage (S&amp;M) Species.</b></p>  | <p>Bell Mountain Commercial Thinning and Density Management meets one of the exemption criteria for Survey and Manage from the October 11, 2006 U.S. District Court Order (EA, pgs. 26-27).</p>   | <p>The decision to eliminate Survey and Manage is effective on this project (EA, pg. 27).</p>  |

| Context (What?)   | Intensity (How Much?)   | Reason for not being Significant.   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Purple Martin</b> (Bureau Sensitive).  | There are currently no known purple martin sites within the project area and the nearest known purple martin colony is approximately ten miles east of the project area. Purple martins are expected to forage above the forest canopies within the project area (EA, pg. 25).  | Purple martins will continue to forage above the canopies within the units post-harvest and potential nesting habitat (i.e. sangs) will be retained and created following the project design features (EA, pg. 25). |
| <b>Townsend's Big-eared Bat</b> (Bureau Sensitive) & <b>Fringed Myotis</b> (Bureau Assessment). | <p>Suitable roost trees include trees with deeply furrowed bark, loose bark, cavities, or with similar structures, typically in late-successional conifers (EA, pg. 25).</p> <p>It is unknown if the Townsend's big-eared bat or the fringed myotis is present within the proposed project area since surveys are not practical (EA, pg. 25).</p> | Existing snag habitat is expected to be retained and more snags may be created following harvest operations, thus providing additional snag recruitment as future habitat for bats (EA, pg. 26).                    |
| Remaining <b>Bureau Sensitive (BS)</b> and <b>Bureau Assessment (BA)</b> Species.               | Evaluation of the remaining BS and BA wildlife species was completed in September, 2006 (EA, pgs. 69-70) and no known sites or concerns were identified (except for the purple martin, Townsend's big-eared bat, and fringed myotis as discussed above).  | No impacts to the remaining BS or BA wildlife species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.  |
| <b>Bureau Tracking (BT)</b> Species.  | Detections of four BT species (i.e. Northern red-legged frog, olive-sided flycatcher, pileated woodpecker, and Western bluebird) have been documented within the project area (EA, pgs. 71-72).   | Districts are encouraged to collect occurrence data on BT species but they will not be considered as Special Status Species for management purposes (IM-OR-2003-054).   |