



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Web Address: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay> E-mail: [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov)

Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303



## **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/5400 (ORC030)

DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2011-0003-EA

***March 18, 2011***

Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Coos Bay BLM has prepared a Scoping Document for the Big-Vincent Environmental Assessment. The Scoping document and associated maps are now posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/index.php>.

The BLM proposes to conduct forest treatments on approximately 7,000 acres of 35-75 year old timber stands. Forest treatments would occur within the General Forest Management Area and Connectivity portions of the Matrix Land Use Allocation (LUA), and within the Late-Successional Reserve and Riparian Reserve LUAs.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by April 16, 2011. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Please direct requests for hard copies, questions, or comments to Coos Bay District BLM, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459-2000, ATTN: Jeff Lau; call 541-756-0100; FAX 541-751-4303, or email to [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov), ATTN: Jeff Lau.

Sincerely,

*/s/ A. Dennis Turowski*

A. Dennis Turowski  
Umpqua Field Manager



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## **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/5400 (ORC030)

DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2011-0003-EA

Big-Vincent Environmental Assessment

## **Scoping Document**

*March 18, 2011*

Dear Citizen:

The following information and the enclosed maps briefly describe a Proposed Action for the development of the Big-Vincent Environmental Assessment (EA No: DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2011-0003-EA).

The USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Coos Bay District Office is preparing an Environmental Assessment for multiple timber sales that would occur primarily within the Upper Smith River and Lower Smith River 5<sup>th</sup>-field watersheds. The Proposed Action would treat approximately 7,000 acres of 35-75 year old forest stands through commercial thinning, density management thinning, and hardwood conversion.

Forest treatments would occur within the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and Connectivity (Conn) portions of the Matrix Land Use Allocation (LUA), within the Late-Successional Reserve LUA and within the Riparian Reserve LUA as defined in the 1995 Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (1995 RMP).

### **Project Summary**

Commercial thinning would occur within GFMA and Connectivity stands and use a “thin from below” prescription. Individual stand prescriptions would capture imminent mortality and yield commercial forest products while leaving a residual stand that fully utilizes the growing potential of the site and maximizes the volume and quality of future forest products.

Density Management would occur within the Late-Successional Reserves (LSR) and Riparian Reserves (RR) and would receive slightly different treatments to achieve results for the differing management objectives for these LUAs. Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) treatments would increase tree growth rates and encourage development of large diameter snags and down wood and other habitat characteristics associated with late-successional forests. Riparian Reserves would be treated to restore and maintain components of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.

Hardwood conversions would be designed to achieve results meeting the management objectives for these LUAs which include enhancing stand conditions to provide habitat for late-successional and old-growth dependent species. Hardwood conversions would be implemented in hardwood dominated stands that previously supported conifer stands. This will be determined on an individual stand basis using historical photos and field evaluations.

Harvest would occur on roughly 2,600 acres of GFMA, 100 acres of Connectivity, 1,100 acres of Late-Successional Reserve and 3,200 acres of Riparian Reserve.

The timber sales are expected to be sold in FY2015 - FY2017 and would yield approximately 56 million board feet of timber, 19 million of which would contribute to the decadal Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) for the Umpqua Field Office.

The Big-Vincent project would also include constructing roughly 20 miles of new roads, and renovating or improving approximately 80 miles of existing roads.

Some of the proposed units are adjacent to un-surveyed suitable marbled murrelet habitat and known/predicted northern spotted owl sites.

The Big-Vincent project will employ sample tree falling as a technique in the field cruise to provide increased accuracy in formulating volume tables.

### **Location**

The project area is mainly within the Upper Smith River and Lower Smith River 5<sup>th</sup>-field Watershed, with some units in the Umpqua River-Sawyer Rapids 5<sup>th</sup>-field Watershed. The project area is located roughly 25 miles northeast of Reedsport. The total analysis area is approximately 124,414 acres in size with BLM lands totaling 63,958 acres. The project is located in T. 21 S., R. 7 W., Sections 7, 12, 18; T. 21 S., R. 8 W., Sections 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 29; T. 21 S., R. 9 W., Sections 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 21, 23, 27, 29, Willamette Meridian, Douglas County, Oregon.

### **Need for the Project**

Within the analysis area, the GFMA and Connectivity stands are characterized by uniform structure, heavy stocking, slowing growth rate and low stand vigor. Research indicates that stands that develop at very high densities are susceptible to diameter growth stagnation and instability. Without treatment, these dense stands rapidly decline in growth and vigor. This results in a stagnant stand that becomes more susceptible to wind, insects, disease and fire disturbances.

Late-Successional Reserves and Riparian Reserves in the project are in the same over-stocked condition. Left untreated, these stands would not achieve the desired vegetation characteristics envisioned in the Northwest Forest Plan. Reducing stand density is needed in order to maintain growth trajectory, improve stand stability and meet the objectives for each LUA.

### **Project Objectives (Purpose)**

Management actions/alternatives within the Big-Vincent project area must meet the objectives provided in the Coos Bay District ROD/RMP. The ROD/RMP and applicable statutes specify the following objectives to be accomplished in managing the lands in the project area:

- 1) Manage developing stands on available lands to promote tree survival and growth and to achieve a balance between wood volume production, quality of wood and timber value at harvest (p. 52) by:
  - Selecting logging systems based on the suitability and economic efficiency of each system for the successful implementation of the silvicultural prescription, for protection of soil and water quality, and for meeting other land use objectives (p. 52).
  - Applying silvicultural systems that are planned to produce, over time, forests with desired species composition, structural characteristics and distribution of seral or age classes (p. 53).
  - Basing silvicultural treatments and harvest designs on the functional characteristics of each forest stand site. Treatments would be designed, as much as possible, to prevent the development of undesirable stand characteristics (p. 53).
- 2) Manage Matrix stands (GFMA/Conn) to produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities to provide jobs and contribute to community stability (p. 22) by:
  - Conducting timber harvest and other silvicultural activities in that portion of the Matrix with suitable forest lands (p. 22).
- 3) Managing Late-Successional Reserves to protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystems that serve as habitat for late-successional and old growth forest-related species including northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet (p. 18) by:
  - Conducting thinning operations in forest stands up to 80 years of age. This will be accomplished by precommercial and/or commercial thinning of stands regardless of origin (e.g. planted after logging or naturally regenerated after fire or blowdown) (p. 19).
  - Planning and implementing silvicultural treatments inside Late-Successional Reserves to be beneficial to the creation of late-successional habitat (p. 19).
- 4) Managing Riparian Reserves to meet the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives designed to maintain and restore the ecological health of aquatic ecosystems on public lands (p. 6) by:
  - Applying silvicultural practices for Riparian Reserves to control stocking, reestablish and manage stands, and acquire desired vegetation characteristics (p. 13).

**Scoping Period**

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this project by April 16, 2011. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EA document or other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Please direct your responses or questions to Jeff Lau, Umpqua Field Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459, call (541) 756-0100, FAX: (541) 756-4303.  
[OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov) , ATTN: Jeff Lau.

Respectfully,

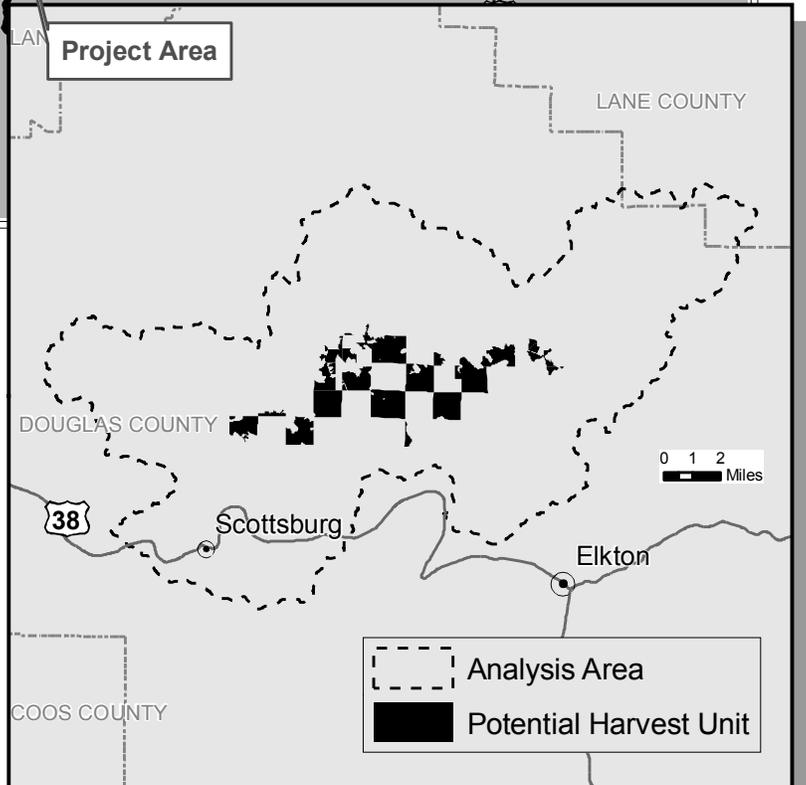
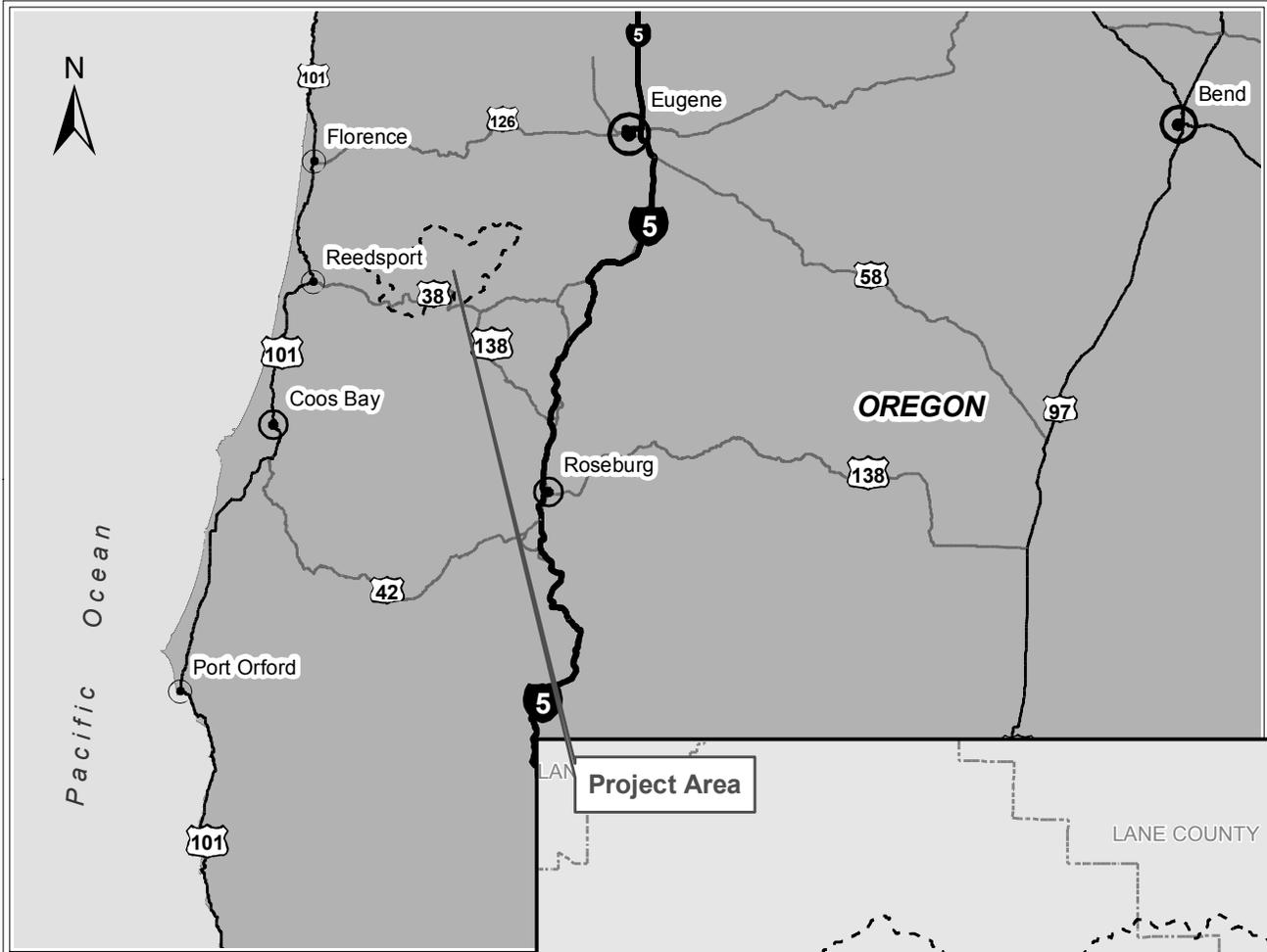
*/s/ A. Dennis Turowski*

A. Dennis Turowski  
Umpqua Field Manager

Enclosures: Vicinity Map  
Scoping Maps (2)

VICINITY MAP  
**Big-Vincent EA**  
**EA No. DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2011-003-EA**

Umpqua Field Office  
 COOS BAY DISTRICT BLM



**United States Department of the Interior  
 Bureau of Land Management**

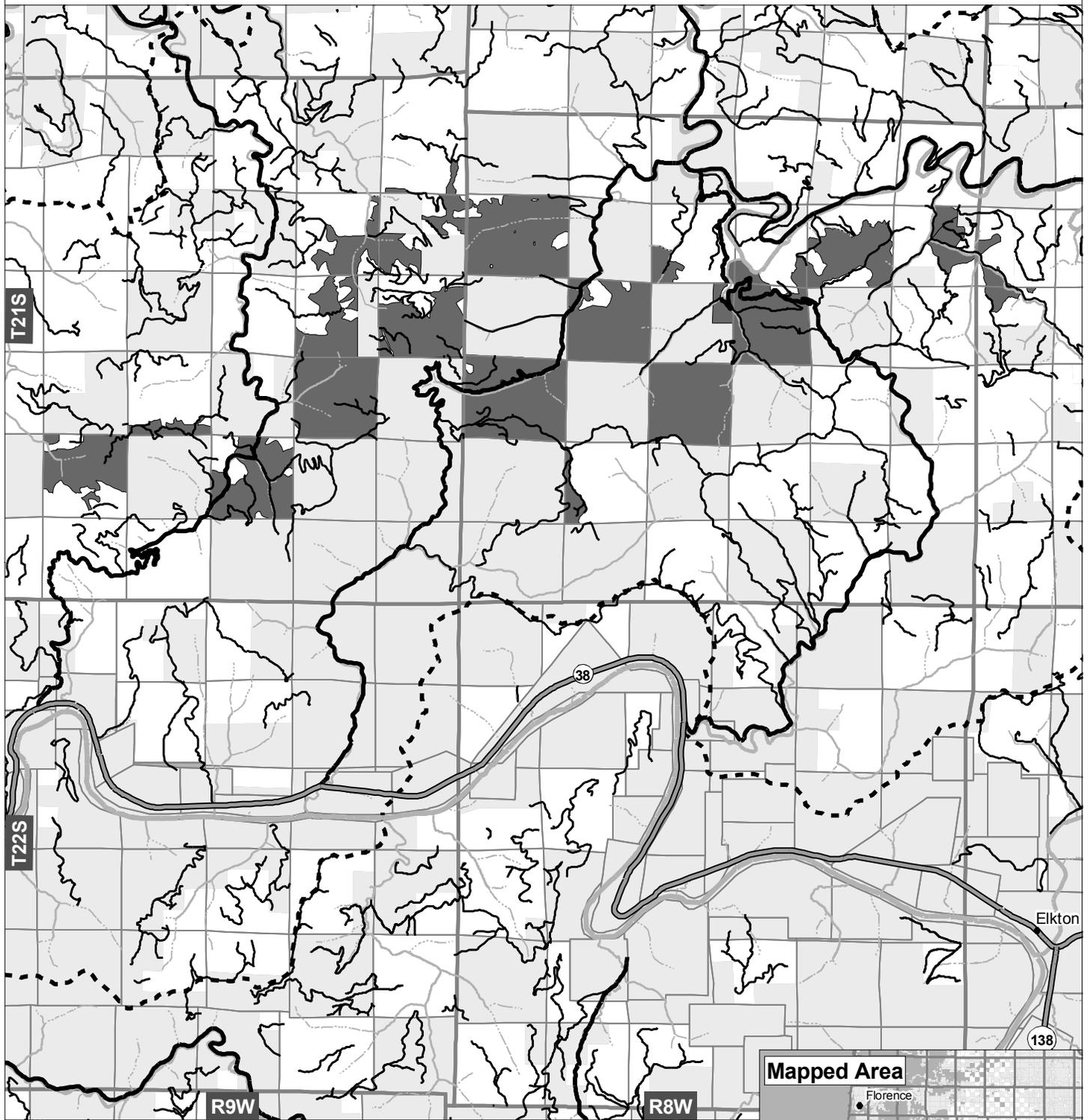
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# Big-Vincent EA

# EA No. DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2011-0003-EA



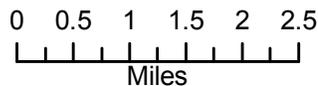
- Analysis Area
- Potential Harvest Unit
- BLM Administered Land
- Private or Other Lands
- Township Boundary
- Highway
- Road



## US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Bureau of Land Management



Coos Bay District  
Umpqua Field Office



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