



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Home page: www.or.blm.gov/coosbay E-mail: coos_bay@or.blm.gov

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



Revised FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Project Area A Cedar Creek Subwatershed Environmental Assessment OR125-99-19

I. Introduction

An interdisciplinary team (IDT) for the Umpqua Field Office, Coos Bay District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) project has analyzed a proposal to implement regeneration harvest and commercial thinning activities in the Cedar Creek subwatershed. The analysis area is approximately 26 miles southeast of Coos Bay, Oregon. It includes the Arrow Creek, Lower Cedar Creek Upper Cedar Creek, Middle Williams River, and Goose Gulch drainages that are tributary to South Fork Coos River. The total area is 34,773 acres in size. The BLM manages 3,437 acres (10%) of the analysis area. Remaining lands are privately owned. The proposed harvest activities are located in Douglas County, T25S-R08W, T26S-R08W, T26S-09W T27S-R09W, Willamette Meridian.

Project Areas A through F were proposed in EA OR125-99-19. The EA and FONSI were sent out for public review on November 7, 2000. The six project areas consisted of 189 acres of regeneration harvest and 906 acres of commercial thinning. A decision was made on Area F, Mother Goose CT, which was sold in September of 2001. Project Areas A through E have not been implemented.

This Revised FONSI is in reference to Project Area A only. The proposal and associated design features are described in EA OR125-99-19 and the attached EA Revision which adds an analysis of Port Orford-cedar effects from Project Area A.

The Umpqua Field Office (UFO) proposes a regeneration harvest in Project Area A, a 95 year old stand located in an isolated 40 acre block surrounded by private forest land in T.26 S.-R.08 W. Section 10. The project would harvest 16 acres in the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) from the 40 acres using an uphill cable system from an existing rock surface road on private land. No new road construction would be needed. The Riparian Reserve is reserved with a site potential tree height buffer. Six to eight green retention trees per acre would be reserved. Large woody debris would be reserved at a minimum 120 lineal feet per acre. The harvest site would be treated to remove slash that could be a fire hazard and to prepare planting spots for conifer regeneration.

II. Background

The Coos Bay District of the BLM is under the direction of the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and its Record of Decision (ROD) (BLM, 1995) as supplemented and amended. The RMP and its ROD are in conformance with the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its ROD (Northwest Forest Plan [NFP]) (Interagency, 1994) as supplemented and amended.

As stated in the ROD for the NFP, the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) was developed to maintain the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems on public lands within the range of Pacific Ocean anadromous fisheries. The Environmental Consequences section of the EA describes the consistency of the Proposed Action Alternative with the ACS.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

A careful review of the original EA and new information contained in the Revised EA, that I herein adopt, indicates that there would not be a significant impact on the quality of the human environment from the implementation of any of the alternatives as they relate to Project Area A. I agree with this conclusion and determine that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared. This determination is based on consideration of the following factors:

1. The proposed activities are not national or regional in scope. Project Area A includes approximately 16 acres, located within 54.3 sq. mi. of the Cedar Creek 6th field subwatershed (No. 171003040102). The Coos Bay District BLM manages approximately 10% of the subwatershed.
2. The proposed activities would not have an impact on unique characteristics of the geographic area such as historical or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecological critical areas. Project Area A is located at a site that was previously disturbed from a 1978 commercial thinning timber sale. I have reviewed the application of the 2004 POC FEIS risk key contained in the Revised EA, and thereby consider the project's possible effects to POC, as required by the Coos Bay District RMP and FLPMA. On the basis of applying the FSEIS risk key, I have determined that the risk of the action to POC is low, thus no site-specific management practices are required.
3. The effects on the quality of the human environment of the proposed activities are not highly controversial.
4. The possible effects of the proposed activities on the quality of the human environment are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risks; or risks to public health or safety from hazardous materials or noxious weeds. There are no known risks to public health or safety.
5. The proposed project does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant effects.

6. There are no significant cumulative effects identified by this assessment. Although there would be removal of vegetation within the GFMA harvest unit, potential adverse impacts to the aquatic environment are eliminated or minimized by the implementation of a no-harvest Riparian Reserve buffer area along the adjacent stream.

7. The proposed activities would not affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places, nor would the activities cause a loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, Native American Religious Concerns, or historical resources.

8. The proposed projects would fully comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended.

Proposed activities that may affect listed wildlife species within the project area were submitted for consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with Section 7(A)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1536(A)(2) and (A)(4) as amended]. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded in their biological opinion (1-7-96-F-411) that the proposed project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl or the marbled murrelet, and is not likely to adversely modify spotted owl or murrelet habitat. The project is not located within Critical Habitat.

The proposed action would not contribute to the need to list any special status species, either under the Endangered Species Act or the OR/WA Special Status Species Policy.

Proposed activities that may affect listed fish species within the project area were submitted for consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service. The NMFS concurred with the Level 1 team that implementation of the proposed action meets the NLAA determination for Oregon Coast coho and for Oregon Coast steelhead. The NMFS also determined that the actions are not likely to adversely affect OC coho or OC steelhead critical habitat.

9. There are no irreversible or irretrievable resource commitments identified by this assessment, except for a minor consumption of fossil fuels for routine operations.

10. The proposed activities would not violate Federal, State, or local laws imposed for the protection of the environment including Executive Orders for Environmental Justice, Floodplain Management, Protection of Wetlands, and Energy Development.

Bill Hudson (Acting)

Date: *3/29/2005*

M. Elaine Raper
 Umpqua Field Manager
 Coos Bay District
 Bureau of Land Management