



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: BLM_OR_CB_Mail@blm.gov

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



IN REPLY REFER TO

5820/1791 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2013-0002-CX

Communication Site Hazard Fuel Reduction Maintenance: Grizzly Mountain & Signal Tree

June 10, 2013

Dear Concerned Citizen:

We have signed the decision record for a categorical exclusion (CX) for Communication Site Hazard Fuel Reduction Maintenance: Grizzly Mountain & Signal Tree (DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2013-0002-CX). The proposed action of this CX consists of cutting, piling, and burning encroaching trees and brush surrounding communication towers and associated infrastructure at Grizzly Mountain (near Gold Beach) and Signal Tree (near Camas Valley). This document and decision record has been posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/plans/index.php>.

The decision to implement this forest management project may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 – Administrative Remedies. As outlined in 43 CFR 5003(a) and (b), protests of a forest management decision may be made within 15 days of the publication date of the decision notice and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision. In accordance with the regulations, this notice constitutes the decision document for the purpose of protests which must be filed by close of business (4:30 p.m.) on June 28, 2013 with the Myrtlewood Field Manager, *Kathy Hoffine*, at the Coos Bay District Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, Oregon, 97459. As interpreted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the regulations do not authorize acceptance by the BLM of protests in any form other than a signed, paper document that is delivered to the physical address of the BLM office within the 15-day period. Therefore, email, verbal, or facsimile protests will not be accepted.

For further information, contact Joanie Lawrence, Fuels Management Specialist at 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, Oregon, 97459 or (541) 756-0100, or email at BLM_OR_CB_Mail@blm.gov, Attn: Joanie Lawrence.

Respectfully,

/s/ Kathy Hoffine

Kathy Hoffine

Myrtlewood Field Manager



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IN REPLY REFER TO

5820/1791 (ORC040)

Decision Record for Categorical Exclusion DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2013-0002-CX

Decision:

It is my decision to implement Communication Site Hazard Fuel Reduction Maintenance: Grizzly Mountain & Signal Tree as described in DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2013-0002-CX.

Decision Rationale:

The proposed action has been reviewed by Resource Area staff and appropriate project design features as specified will be incorporated into the proposal. Based on the NEPA Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

Signature of Authorizing Official:

/s/ Kathy Hoffine

June 10, 2013

Kathy Hoffine
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Date

Administrative Remedies:

The forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion is subject to protest under 43 CFR subpart 5003. Under 43 CFR 5003.2 subsection (c), a notice of decision will be published in local newspaper(s). Under 43 CFR 5003.3 subsection (a), a protest may be filed with the authorized officer within 15 days of the publication date of the notice. Under 43 CFR 5003.3(b), a protest filed with the authorized officer shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision. A decision on this protest would be subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, although, under 43 CFR 5003.1 subsection (a), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of a decision governing or relating to forest management under 43 CFR 5003.2 or 5003.3.

For further information, contact Joanie Lawrence, Fuels Management Specialist, at 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, Oregon, 97459 or (541) 756-0100.

United States Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Coos Bay District

Categorical Exclusion Review (CX)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2013-0002-CX
Date: May 5, 2013

A. Background

Project: Communication Site Hazard Fuel Reduction Maintenance: Grizzly Mtn. & Signal Tree

Location: Grizzly Mtn.: T. 37 S., R. 14 W., Sec. 4 (SE¼)
Signal Tree: T. 29 S., R 9 W., Sec. 33 (SW¼)

Project Description:

This project would improve and maintain the defensible space around the communication infrastructure located at the Grizzly Communication site near the town of Gold Beach and Signal Tree Communication site near Camas Valley.

Grizzly Mtn Communication site: Fuel reduction activities were last completed here in 2008. Since then, much of the brush has recovered/re-sprouted and is currently 4-6 feet tall. This treatment would involve cutting and piling of these encroaching fuels in order to maintain defensible space around the facilities. Pile burning would be done at a later date as conditions allow. The project area covers approximately 9 acres of BLM land. It is estimated that it would take 1 week for this project and occur during the summer of 2013.

Signal Tree Communication site: Fuel reduction activities have not occurred over the last 10 years and the current condition does not serve as an effective stand-alone fuel break. Small trees have grown taller and are beginning to encroach on the cleared area and much of the brush is 3-5 feet tall. In addition, debris from past clearing activity has been piled within islands of vegetation between facilities. These accumulations of fuels reduce the effectiveness of earlier clearing efforts, leaving the facilities vulnerable to damage, and may compromise the safety of personnel working in the area during a wildfire event. The project area covers approximately 1.7 acres of BLM land. It is estimated that it would take 2 – 3 days for this project and occur during the summer of 2013.

The projects include:

- Seasonal and daily timing restrictions would be applied to minimize potential disturbance impacts as the sites are adjacent to suitable northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet habitat. No activities would occur between March 1 and August 5; daily timing restrictions (no work until 2 hours after sunrise and work ends two hours before sunset) would be applied between August 6 and September 15.
- Cut all brush, hardwoods and snags within the treatment area.
- Fall all conifers less than eight (8) inches DBH and any other trees as identified by BLM project manager.
- Directionally fall trees away from structures, guywires, overhead lines, ground cables, fences, power poles, or any other equipment that is within the treatment area.
- Cut and pile noxious weeds following the same guidelines as described.
- Construct all piles a minimum of thirty (30) feet away from facilities/infrastructure and a minimum of fifteen (15) feet away from leave trees, snags and other features of concern.
- Work would be accomplished utilizing hand tools and chainsaws.

- Piles would contain only natural vegetation material.
- All material less than six (6) inches in diameter would be included in the piles.

A small clump of Howell's manzanita (Federal Species of Concern, State Threatened Species) is located within the Grizzly Mtn project area. It would be clearly identified as a protected plant and no cutting of these plants would be allowed. No piles would be constructed within fifteen (15) feet of these plants.

No ground disturbance is anticipated. If any objects or sites of possible cultural value such as historic or prehistoric ruins, fossils or artifacts, are found during work described herein, all activities near these objects or sites would immediately be suspended and the authorized officer and District Archaeologist would be notified of the findings. Operations may resume at the discovery site upon receipt of written instructions and authorization by the authorized officer.

Future hazard fuel reduction activities at these locations would occur on an "as needed" basis. It is estimated that re-treatment would be required every 5-8 years.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance Review: The BLM developed this project to conform and be consistent with the *1995 Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (1995 ROD/RMP). The analysis supporting this decision tiers to the *Final Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (USDI 1994). This 1995 *Record of Decision* is also supported by, and consistent with, the *1994 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its associated *Record of Decision* (USDA/USDI 1994).

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

Reduce hazards through methods such as prescribed burning; mechanical or manual manipulation of forest vegetation and debris; removal of forest vegetation and debris; and combinations of these methods. (p. 75)

The project areas do not contain habitat for Survey & Manage species, therefore it is consistent with the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan as amended by the 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2001 ROD).

C: Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2 Appendix 1 (1.7)

Routine and continuing government business, including such things as supervision, administration, operations, maintenance, renovations, and replacement activities having limited context and intensity (e.g., limited size and magnitude or short-term effects).

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 Appendix 2 apply.

<u>Extraordinary Circumstances</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Initials</u>	<u>Date</u>
(1) Health & Safety Hazardous Materials	Reviewed by Hazardous Materials Coordinator;	<u>jj</u>	<u>5-16-2013</u>
(2) Unique Resources	Reviewed by Port-Orford Cedar Coordinator	<u>jk</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(3) Controversial Effects	Reviewed by NEPA Coordinator	<u>sdf</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(4) Risks	Reviewed by NEPA Coordinator	<u>sdf</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(5) Precedent	Reviewed by NEPA Coordinator	<u>sdf</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(6) Cumulative	Reviewed by NEPA Coordinator	<u>sdf</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(7) Cultural & Historic	Reviewed by Archaeologist	<u>srs</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(8) T & E Species	Reviewed by: Wildlife Biologist, Fisheries Biologist, Botanist	<u>jh</u> <u>sm</u> <u>tr</u>	<u>5-16-2013</u> <u>5-9-2013</u> <u>5-16-2013</u>
(9) Violate Laws	Reviewed by NEPA Coordinator	<u>sdf</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(10) Environmental Justice	Reviewed by Environmental Justice Coordinator	<u>srs</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(11) Native American	Reviewed by District Native American Coordinator	<u>srs</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>
(12) Noxious Weeds	Reviewed by Noxious Weed Coordinator	<u>jk</u>	<u>5-8-2013</u>

A summary of the extraordinary circumstances is listed below. The action must have a significant or a disproportional adverse effect on the listed categories to warrant further analysis and environmental review.

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
<p>Rationale: There are no significant impacts to health and safety. OSHA has specific requirements for the operation of chainsaws. All fuel for equipment is kept in proper storage containers. Prescribed burning would be conducted under the authorization of the Oregon Smoke Management and Visibility Protection Plan. This plan minimizes particulate emissions by regulating the amount of generated particulates.</p>		
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principle drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
<p>Rationale: There are no unique geographic characteristics, park or refuge lands, wilderness or wild and scenic rivers, national landmarks, principle drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands or wetlands, or national monuments. The project would have no significant effect to the migratory bird population migrating through southwest Oregon.</p>		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102 (2)(E)]		X
<p>Rationale: Based on past experience, this type of activity is not highly controversial. The ROD/RMP establishes the land use allocation and goals for the affected lands; as such, there are no unresolved conflicts regarding other uses of these resources.</p>		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks		X
<p>Rationale: The District has conducted this type of activity for the past several decades. Past experience from this type of activity has shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.</p>		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
<p>Rationale: There is no evidence that this type of activity has potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects		X
<p>Rationale: The District has conducted this type of activity before. There is no evidence that this type of activity has potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
<p>Rationale: The proposed activities would not affect districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed in or potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Nor would the activities cause a loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.</p>		
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Threatened or Endangered Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
<p>Rationale: This type of activity does not remove suitable habitat for northern spotted owls or marbled murrelets; seasonal/daily timing restrictions would be implemented to minimize disturbance effects.</p>		

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
The project is covered under the Biological Opinion issued on October 8, 2008 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Formal Consultation and Informal Consultation on Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-2013 Programmatic Activities that may affect Northern Spotted Owls, Marbled Murrelets and their designated Habitats on Public Lands Administered by the Coos Bay District of the Bureau of Land Management and the Coquille Tribe (Tails #13420-2008-F-0118)		
2.9 Violate a Federal, State, Local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal, State, local and tribal laws.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: This type of project is not known to have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
Rationale: The project area is within an area that has been previously disturbed. Cultural clearances were performed at that time; none were located within the project area.		
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)		X
Rationale: The proposed action does not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found. Vegetation would be cut, piled, and burned via manual methods. Vehicles accessing the project area would stay on existing roads, reducing the potential of dispersing noxious weed or seed.		

D. Signature

Authorizing Official:

Field Manager: /s/ Kathy Hoffine

Date: 06/05/2013

E. Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact: Joanie Lawrence, Fuels Management Specialist, Coos Bay BLM District, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459, (541)756-0100.