



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

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### **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/2800 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA

Lone Rock O&C ROW Permit

*August 6, 2009*

Dear Citizen:

We have completed the Lone Rock O&C ROW Permit Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA) and have prepared a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) analyzing the potential impacts of granting an O&C right-of-way across BLM-managed lands. This project is designed to implement management objectives and direction described in the 1995 Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan.

The environmental assessment analyzed the effects of a no-action alternative and a proposed-action alternative. The proposed action would construct a short segment (1623 feet) of temporary road across BLM lands. The project is located in T. 31 S., R. 12 W., Section 3.

You are encouraged to read the EA and comment on the appropriateness of the FONSI prior to the end of the 15-day comment period, August 21, 2009. This EA is located on our BLM web site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/plans/index.php>. A Decision Document will be published prior to implementing the activities.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address above 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. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Questions should be directed to Aimee Hoefs at (541) 751-0100.

Written comments on the EA and appropriateness of the draft FONSI may be sent to:

BLM Coos Bay District

Attn: Aimee Hoefs

1300 Airport Lane

North Bend, OR 97459-2000

You may e-mail your comments to: [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov), RE: Lone Rock ROW, Aimee Hoefs.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Paul T. Flanagan*

Paul T. Flanagan  
Myrtlewood Field Manager



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### **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/2800 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

### **For the**

### **Lone Rock O&C ROW Permit**

**DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA**

### **I. Introduction**

An Interdisciplinary Team has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) in response to a request from Lone Rock Timberlands for a right-of-way crossing across BLM managed lands. This EA is hereby incorporated by reference. This document analyzed two alternatives: a no-action alternative and a proposed action alternative. As the applicants have other alternatives to access their lands, the no-action includes the analysis of their proposed harvest activities. The proposed action consists of the temporary construction of 1623 feet of a dirt road across BLM lands located in T. 31 S., R. 12 W., section 3. The term of the request is perpetual; however, after harvest is completed on Lone Rock owned lands, the road would be decommissioned.

### **II. Background**

This EA is in conformance 1995 Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (1995 ROD/RMP). The analysis supporting this decision tiers to the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (Northwest Forest Plan)* (USDA and USDI 1994) and its *Record of Decision* (USDA and USDI 1994a).

### **III. Finding of No Significant Impact**

I am adopting the EA, in which the effects analysis indicates that there would not be a significant impact on the quality of the human environment from the implementation of either alternative. This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council of Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

#### Context

The proposed action would occur within the Matrix land use allocation as designated by the 1995 Coos Bay District ROD/RMP. The RMP anticipated that right-of-way requests would occur to cross BLM-managed lands (p. 65). As stated in the ROD for the Northwest Forest Plan, the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) was developed to restore and maintain the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems on public lands within the range of Pacific Ocean

anadromy. Consistency of the proposed alternative with the ACS Objectives is included in Chapters 3 & 4 of the Lone Rock O&R ROW Permit EA (pp. 12-15).

The proposal consists of only 1623 feet of new construction, which would comprise 1.5 acres. The project would not be regional or national in scope.

Intensity

*Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse* (40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(1))

All impacts have been considered in the EA. The 1995 ROD/RMP anticipated these kinds of effects from right-of-way requests.

*Public Health and Safety* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2))

No aspect of the proposed action would have an effect on public health and safety.

*Unique characteristics of the geographic area* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3))

There are no known historic or cultural resources within the project area and the terrain (>20% slopes) is not likely to contain cultural deposits (EA p. 11). There are no parklands, prime or unique farmlands, wetlands (p. 7), floodplains, Wild and Scenic Rivers, wilderness or Areas of Environmental Critical Concern.

*Degree to which effects are likely to be highly controversial* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4))

The effects on the quality of the human environment of the proposed activity are not highly controversial. The processing of right-of-way requests has occurred since the first perpetual Right-of-way grants were established in as early as the 1950's. The checkerboard pattern of ownership between the BLM and private landowners makes this an integral part of business in Western Oregon.

*Degree to which effects are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5))

The possible effects of the proposed action on the quality of the human environment are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risk.

*Consideration of whether the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6))

The proposed project does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant effects. As stated above, rights-of-way requests are very common in western Oregon with the checkerboard ownership pattern.

*Consideration of whether the action is related to other actions with cumulatively significant impacts* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7))

There are no cumulatively significant cumulative impacts identified by the environmental assessment.

*Scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places* (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8))

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.

*Threatened or endangered species and their critical habitat (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9))*

- The removal of trees classified as suitable nesting, roosting and foraging habitat for the northern spotted owl is covered under the Programmatic Biological Opinion issues from the Fish and Wildlife Service (1340-2008-F-01-0118) dated 8 October 2008.
- There would be “no effect” to the marbled murrelet.
- There would be “no effect” to Oregon Coast coho salmon.
- There is not any designated Critical Habitat for the marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl or coho salmon that would be impacted by the proposed action.

*Any effects that threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10))*

The proposed action would not violate Federal, State or local laws imposed for the protection of the environment. These include the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act.

Analysis has also concluded that implementation of the proposed actions will not change the likelihood of and need for listing of any Special Status Species under the ESA as identified in BLM Manual 6840 and BLM OR/WA 6840 policy.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the National Energy Policy. As there would be no impact to the exploration, development or transportation of undeveloped energy sources from the proposed action, a Statement of Adverse Energy Impacts is not required.

**Conclusion**

Based on the information contained in the EA (DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA), and all other information available to me I have determined that the proposed action would not have a significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. I have determined that the effects of the proposed activities would be in conformance with the 1995 *Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* for the Coos Bay District.

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Paul T. Flanagan  
Myrtlewood Field Manager

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Lone Rock O&C ROW Permit

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Environmental Assessment  
EA No. DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2009-005-EA

Myrtlewood Field Office  
Coos Bay District  
Bureau of Land Management  
1300 Airport Lane  
North Bend, Or. 97459

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## Chapter 1 Purpose and Need for Action

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### Need for the Project

The Coos Bay District, Bureau of Land Management, received an application for an O&C Road Use Permit request from Lone Rock Timber Management Company on March 17, 2009. Issuance of a temporary road use permit is authorized under 43 CFR § 2812.0-6 (h).

The need for the action is established by the BLM's responsibility under FLPMA to respond to a request for a Right-of-Way Permit for legal access to private land by constructing a short segment of temporary road across public land. The permittee would use the existing 31-12-3.0 road (Baker Creek Road) to facilitate extraction of their timber products. This road is open for public travel.

Federal regulations for issuance of an O&C Right-of-Way Permit not currently covered by a previously issued ROW agreement require NEPA analysis to be performed according to 43 CFR Subpart 2812.

### Purpose (Objectives) of the Project

The purpose of the action is to provide Lone Rock Timber Management Company, owners of the land located in T. 31 S., R. 12 W., Section 3, with legal access across adjacent public land managed by the BLM located within the same Section.

The following objectives are included in the 1995 Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (USDI 1995):

Continue to make BLM-administered lands available for needed rights-of-way where consistent with local comprehensive plans, Oregon statewide planning goals and rules, and the exclusion and avoidance areas identified in this PRMP (p.65).

### Decision Factors

In choosing the alternative that best meets the purpose and need, consideration would be given to the extent to which each alternative would:

1. Provide access that best meets the need of the Applicant and the future transportation needs of the BLM.
2. Comply with applicable laws and Bureau policies including, but not limited to, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the O&C Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Special Status Species Program.

### Conformance with existing Land Use Plans

On July 16, 2009 the U.S. Department of Interior withdrew the Records of Decision (2008 ROD) for the Western Oregon Plan Revision and directed the BLM to implement actions in conformance with the Resource Management Plans for western Oregon that were in place prior to December 30, 2008.

Although project planning and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act documentation for this project began after the effective date of the 2008 ROD, this project is designed to comply with the land use allocations, management direction, and objectives of the 1995 Resource Management Plan (1995 RMP).

This EA is in conformance with the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement* (USDI 1994) and its *Record of Decision* (USDI 1995) because it also meets the objectives listed above. The analysis supporting this EA is also tiered to the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth*

*Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (Northwest Forest Plan)* (USDA and USDI 1994a) and its *Record of Decision* (USDA and USDI 1994b) as supplemented and amended by:

- *Management of Port-orford-cedar in Southwestern Oregon Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement* (USDA and USDI 2004) and its *Record of Decision* (USDI 2004)
- *The Final Supplement to The 2004 Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify The Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (USDA and USDI 2007) and its *Record of Decision* (USDI 2007b)

### **Endangered Species Act**

Consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service will not be requested as the proposed project has been determined to have “no effect” to threatened Oregon Coast coho salmon. Additionally, project activities would not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1855(b)).

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as provided in Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536 (a)(2) and (a)(4) as amended has been completed for Programmatic Activities on the Coos Bay District. “Individual Tree Removal” which covers tree removal from right-of-way requests are addressed in the Fish and Wildlife Services’ Biological Opinion and Concurrence on the FY 2008-2013 Programmatic Suite of Activities Planned by the District and the Tribe (FWS Reference Number 1340-2008-F-01-0118), dated 8 October 2008. Actions covered under this category such as the tree removal for this right-of-way are considered “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” for the northern spotted owl.

There would be “no effect” to marbled murrelets.

### **Decisions to be Made**

The Field Manager of the Myrtlewood Field Office, Coos Bay BLM, must decide whether to issue a ROW Permit to Lone Rock Timber Management Company across BLM lands located in T. 31 S., R. 12 W., Section 3 and if there are any terms or conditions.

The Field Manager must also determine if the selected alternative would or would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the human environment. If the Manager decides it **would not** significantly affect the human environment, then the Manager can prepare and sign a FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact).

If the Manager determines that the selected alternative would significantly affect the human environment, then the project must either be dropped, modified, or have an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) prepared and signed before this project can proceed.

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## Chapter 2 Alternatives

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This chapter provides a description of each alternative and summarizes the environmental consequences of the alternatives.

### **No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative provides a baseline for the comparison of the alternatives. This alternative describes the existing condition and continuing trends. This alternative also includes the implementation of harvest activities on the private lands for which the right-of-way is being requested. Approximately 930 Mbf of timber would be removed under the direction of the State of Oregon Forest Practices Act (OAR 527).

### **Proposed Action Alternative**

In order to access their lands located in T. 31 S., R 12 W., Section 3 N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , the Lone Rock Timber Company proposes to construct approximately 1623 feet of road on BLM-administered lands located in the same section but in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$ . The proposed road grade would not exceed 18% and the road width would be 16 ft. with standard turnouts and curve widening. The road would be natural surface and decommissioned at the end of harvest. The applicant requests a perpetual right-of-way. Merchantable trees removed for the road construction would be sold pursuant to 43 CFR 2812.5-1. These lands are classified as Matrix.

### **Design Features for the Proposed Action**

#### ***Road Construction/Use/Decommissioning***

Construction activities and road use would be limited to the dry season. All applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) for road construction would be used.

Full bench construction techniques would be used during excavation.

Waste would be hauled to appropriate designations to prevent sediment delivery.

Any waste sites needed for excavated material from road construction activities would be reviewed by staff prior to such use.

In the seasonally wet area near station 12+50, appropriate drainage features would be used to remove water during the wet parts of the year.

Prior to the winter season, seeding and mulching of exposed soils would occur.

At the completion of project activities to decommission the road, waterbars would be installed using the guide in Table 1 below for a low erosion class. A suitable barrier would also be installed to block access.

**Table 1: Guide for Waterbar Spacing by Soil Erosion Classes and Road Grade.**

Gradients (%)	Erosion Class		
	High	Moderate	Low
3-5	200	300	400
6-10	150	200	300
11-15	100	150	200
16-20	75	100	150
21-35	50	75	100
36+	50	50	50

Spacing is determined by slope distance and is the maximum allowed for the grade. Spacing in feet.

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## Chapter 3&4      Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

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### Analysis Background

This Chapter combines the affected-environment (typically EA Chapter 3) and effects-analysis discussion (usually Chapter 4) and has been arranged by specific resource values that may be affected. It identifies the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental affects that may result from implementation of either alternative described in Chapter 2. It also addresses the interaction between the effects of the proposed road construction with the current environmental baseline, describing effects that might be expected, how they would occur, and the incremental effects that could result. The description of the current conditions inherently includes and represents the cumulative effects of past and current land management activities undertaken by the BLM and private entities.

### Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

Annual recurring activities are likely to occur within the project area. These include, but are not limited to, fire suppression activities, construction of roads across BLM under existing right-of-way agreements, routine road maintenance, control of noxious weeds, and silvicultural activities in young stands.

Private lands comprise the largest portion of the Rowland Creek – South Fork Coquille 6<sup>th</sup> field watershed. It is assumed that private forests would be intensively managed on a 40 to 60-year harvest rotation.

The Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline Project released the Final Environmental Impact Statement in May 2009. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has not issued its decision. However, this pipeline would not occur within the project area or within the 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed of the proposed action.

### Cumulative Effects Considerations

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) provided guidance on June 24, 2005, as to the extent to which agencies of the Federal Government are required to analyze the environmental effects of past actions when describing the cumulative environmental effect of a proposed action in accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). CEQ noted the “[e]nvironmental analysis required under NEPA is forward-looking” and “[r]eview of past actions is only required to the extent that this review informs agency decision making regarding the proposed action.” This is because a description of the current state of the environment inherently includes effects of past actions. Guidance further states that “[g]enerally, agencies can conduct an adequate cumulative effects analysis by focusing on the current aggregate effects of past actions without delving into the historic details of individual past actions.”

The information on individual past actions is merely subjective, and would not be an acceptable scientific method to illuminate or predict the direct or indirect effects of the action alternative. The basis for

predicting the direct and indirect effects of the action alternative should be based on generally accepted scientific methods such as empirical research. The cumulative effects of this project upon the environment did not identify any need to exhaustively list individual past actions or analyze, compare, describe the environmental effects of individual past actions in order to complete an analysis which would be useful for illuminating or predicting the effects of the proposed action.

## **Resources**

### **Hydrology**

The proposed road location is within the Baker Creek drainage tributary to the South Fork of the Coquille River. No wetted stream channels were observed during the field reconnaissance conducted on April 6, 2009. One seasonally wet area approximately 10 feet in diameter (at station 12+50) was noted and likely due to the free draining rock uphill and the change in slope at the location. There is no wetland vegetation at the site, no defined stream channel, and seasonal wetting does not produce wetland soil characteristics (mottled or gleying). Therefore this site does not meet the RMP definition of a wetland (RMP p. 12).

### **No Action**

The road across BLM lands would not be constructed. Private timber lands would be accessed from another location. Timber harvest on private lands would occur under the regulations of the Oregon Forests Practices Act to protect water quality. These include restricting harvest operations within a certain distance from stream banks in riparian management areas.

### **Proposed Action**

Due to the design features (p.4) and the temporary nature of the road, no direct indirect or cumulative effects are expected to water resources from the proposed road. The road would not cross or be connected to the stream network and would be decommissioned after proposed project activities are completed (approximately 4 years).

## **Fisheries**

### Threatened Species

The analysis area is located within the Oregon Coast coho, *Oncorhynchus kisutch*, Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published the listing determination and critical habitat designation for Oregon Coast coho as threatened February 11, 2008 effective May 12, 2008 (73 FR 7816). Streams used by coho and/or designated as coho critical habitat within the analysis area include Baker Creek and the South Fork Coquille River (73 FR 7816).

### Essential Fish Habitat

Streams used by coho and chinook salmon within the analysis area are designated as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Magnuson-Stevens Act defines EFH as "...those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity (67 FR 2343)." Streams with EFH within the analysis area include Baker Creek and the South Fork Coquille River.

### Special Status Species

Aquatic Sensitive species from the Bureau Special Status Species list which occur in the analysis area include Oregon Coast coho and Oregon Coast steelhead. Streams used by steelhead and coho within the analysis area include: Baker Creek and the South Fork Coquille River.

### **No Action**

The new road across BLM would not be constructed under this alternative. Fish habitat in Baker Creek and the South Fork Coquille River would remain unchanged.

Private harvest, including the harvest Lone Rock would conduct if the road across BLM were built, would continue to occur under the no action alternative. The 1994 FEIS for the Northwest Forest Plan incorporated the cumulative effects of private timber harvest (USDA and USDI 1994a): “For analysis of cumulative effects, most private forest lands would be intensively managed with final harvest on commercial economic rotations ranging from 45 to 80 years” (p. 4-6).

### **Proposed Action**

#### Endangered Species Act, Magnuson-Stevens Act, and Special Status Species

The proposed new road construction would not affect coho, coho critical habitat, EFH, or special status species. There are no stream crossings along the 1623 feet of proposed new road on BLM. The closest point the portion of the new road on BLM would be to fish would be approximately 900 feet to the South Fork Coquille River. The proposed new road would not affect temperature or large wood delivery to fish habitat in the South Fork Coquille River because of the distance from the new road to the river. The proposed new road would have no mechanisms to transport sediment to streams or fish habitat because there would be no stream crossings and there are no stream channels within close proximity to the proposed new road. The proposed new road construction would not be located within Riparian Reserves. The road would be natural surface, winterized, water barred, exposed soil would be seeded and mulched, and the road would be decommissioned after use.

The proposed action would not affect fish or fish habitat and therefore no cumulative effects would occur.

### **Wildlife**

#### Threatened Species

The analysis area contains no marble murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) Critical Habitat (61 FR 26255), nor is there any suitable habitat. There are no occupied sites in the analysis area.

The analysis area contains northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) roosting, foraging, and dispersal habitat. There are several trees higher up in the stand and greater than 0.25 miles from the proposed road that could be potential nest trees; however, because of the lack of habitat adjacent to the stand and the stands isolated nature, it is highly unlikely that spotted owls are using the stand. The analysis area contains no Critical Habitat (73 FR 50929). There are no known or ITS predicted spotted owl sites in the analysis area.

#### Special Status Species

There is one known bald eagle site containing one active nest as well as an alternate nest site within the BLM parcel. The eagles associated with this are have been nesting in the stand since 2000. That year they produced two young. Bald eagles have nested in this stand every year since that time. As of July 2, 2009, there was one unfledged eaglet in the nest.

The proposed action would occur outside of the 330- and 660-foot buffers recommended in the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (USDI 2007a) and is outside the 0.25 mile buffer recommended in the 1995 Coos Bay District ROD/RMP.

There is no peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) habitat or known sites within the analysis area. The analysis area contains nesting habitat (snags) for the purple martin; however, there no known sites associated with the proposed action. Also, the project does not contain any stream habitats, therefore

yellow-legged frogs and western pond turtles are not present within the project area. Fisher has been documented elsewhere on district; however, there is no documentation of fisher presence in the analysis area.

Red tree voles are likely present within the analysis area.

There are no known caves, mines, or abandoned bridges or buildings within the analysis area. They are known bat roosts. No other known sites of any Special Status wildlife species occur within the proposed units.

### ***No Action***

There should be no effect to Bald Eagles from implementation of harvest activities on private lands. Harvest practices on private lands “must be avoided or modified in areas near sensitive bird nesting, roosting or watering sites, particularly sites used by osprey, great blue herons, bald eagles, and northern spotted owls.”<sup>1</sup> While the nest is some distance away from the private lands, there may be some modification of the harvest activities to accommodate these birds.

### ***Proposed Action***

#### Northern Spotted Owl

The proposed new road construction (1623 feet long by 40 feet wide) would remove approximately 1.5 acres of spotted owl roosting and foraging habitat. These acres represent 1.5% of the approximately 100 acres of roosting, foraging, and dispersal habitat in the analysis area and is 0.005% of the total roosting, foraging, and dispersal habitat within the Rowland Creek South Fork Coquille River 6<sup>th</sup> Field watershed. There are no mapped owl conservation areas, conservation support areas, or designated critical habitat in the analysis area. There is little to no possibility northern spotted owls would be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed action.

#### Bald Eagles

Project work is outside all recommended disturbance and visual buffer distances (330 feet, 660 feet, and 1,320 feet) and no nest or perch trees would be removed from the BLM stand. Future traffic noise on the road would not impact the Bald Eagles because it is out of the disturbance range distances stated above.

#### Red Tree Voles

Red tree voles are likely present in the analysis area and would be directly impacted from implementation of the proposed action. However, the project area is located within the Mesic Biological Zone (FSEIS: USDA and USDI 2007), which contains a stable, well-distributed population of red tree voles. This FSEIS found that because of their large size and connectivity across the landscape, federal reserved lands “have a high likelihood of providing sufficient habitat (including known sites) to provide for stable populations of tree voles” on these lands within this zone. Potential effects at the site-scale would not cause an impact to species viability at the larger watershed or regional scale. There would only be a removal of 1.5 acres of trees, the remaining stand would ensure viability within the BLM parcel.

### **Botany**

The proposed Right-of-Way (ROW) goes through a mature stand (approximately 75 years old) of Douglas-fir with scattered grand fir also present in the overstory. The understory is dominated by hardwoods, particularly myrtlewood and tan oak with some scattered big leaf maple and madrone. The understory shrub layer is primarily sword fern with quite a bit of poison oak in areas where light reaches the forest floor.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://factbook.oregonforests.org/ForestProtection/ForestPracticesAct.html> accessed 7/14/2009.

Lichen diversity and abundance is very low due to the dense canopy cover along much of the ROW except along the very northern portion of the ROW where it traverses a ridgetop. Lichen abundance and diversity along this ridgetop is much greater than elsewhere along the ROW with small quantities of cyanolichens present. Bryophyte diversity and abundance is low, mainly due to the closed canopy cover and lack of large down conifer logs along the ROW.

**No Action**

Harvest on private lands would convert a mature stand of trees to an early-successional stand after harvest and subsequent re-planting. The mature stand on BLM lands would remain unchanged, with overall plant diversity greatest in areas with gaps in the canopy

**Proposed Action**

On 7 July 2009 the project area was surveyed for threatened or endangered and special status plant species, but none were located. Therefore, road construction would not impact any threatened and endangered or special status plant species.

**Soils**

The soil types found in the general area and the specific location crossing of BLM managed lands is confined to the Etelka, Whobrey, Remote (22E) and Digger, Preacher, Umpcoos (14F) soil map units.<sup>2</sup>

Potential for sediment delivery for the 14F map unit soils is low due to high infiltration rates for water and the lack of fine sediments in the horizons. The gravelly nature of the soils can provide an excellent road bed medium if properly excavated and managed. The clay portion of the Preacher soil type is very compactable and stable when placed and compacted with a little moisture. The sediment delivery potential for the 22E map unit soils is normally high due to poor infiltration of water in the upper soil layers and the high content of silt and clays. However, for this proposed location the slope is not steep (25-30%) and there is no nearby stream crossing so the actual potential for delivery is very low.

The soil surfaces on the proposed route are stable. Due to high rock contents of the soil on the 14F map unit and the lower percent slope in the bowl area beyond the second ridge, the potential to have slope failures in this area is low.

**No Action**

The harvest activities that would occur on private property is regulated by the Oregon Forest Practices Act to ensure protection of viable growing soil for tree replanting and to prevent erosion that could impact water quality.

**Proposed Action**

The direct changes from accepting the proposed action will be the removal of approximately 1.5 acres of forest land and replace it with a dirt road system. Due to the poor quality of soil on approximately 1,000 feet of the 14F map unit minimal commercial timber land will be impacted. No indirect sediment will be delivered to any stream as none are in the vicinity. Stable road surfaces are expected to be constructed through full bench construction techniques and compacted fills where necessary. Long term stability should be achieved through installation of appropriately spaced water bars and a road closure berm at the junction of the Plum Creek spur.

Providing for proper drainage of water at the seasonally wet area at approximately station 12+50 through the use of onsite large rocks (or other materials) for drainage would prevent failure of the road at this location.

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<sup>2</sup> Soil Survey of Coos County, Oregon <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/Survey.aspx?County=OR011>

The cumulative effects to this proposed action have been considered through the 1994 EIS (Northwest Forest Plan) for the removal of private timber and road building associated with crossing BLM managed lands.

**Cultural**

Inventories show no known cultural resources in the immediate vicinity of the project area.

**No Action**

Known cultural sites would likely be avoided in gaining other access to the Lone Rock parcel for harvest. The harvest activities themselves would have no known impact to potential cultural values.

**Proposed Action**

The use of existing roads for timber haul does not involve new ground disturbance, and is therefore not likely to affect intact cultural resources. The area of potential effect for the new road construction is across terrain which has a current slope of 20% or greater. This route is not likely to contain cultural deposits because of its steepness. Therefore, ground disturbance associated with this road construction project is not likely to disturb intact cultural resources. If potential cultural resources are discovered during the course of the project, work would stop and the District Archaeologist would be notified immediately.

**Summary of Effects**

Context	Intensity	Why not significant
Bald Eagle Displacement	None	Project outside of 0.25 mile buffer circle
NSO Habitat Removal	1.5 acres total.	Only 1.5 percent of the BLM stand, 0.005% of sub-watershed, no owls are known to currently use the site, no measurable impact to prey base
Water Quality, T&E Fish	None	No mechanisms for sediment delivery, no Riparian Reserves

**Aquatic Conservation Strategy**

Components of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy

There are four main components to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS): Riparian Reserves, Key Watersheds, Watershed Analysis and Watershed Restoration. A “fifth” component is a subset of these four, and is the standards and guidelines for management activities. These standards and guidelines were incorporated into the Draft Coos Bay District Management Plan preferred alternative which was under development (p. A-2). With the signing of the Record of Decision for the Resource Management Plan in May of 1995, these standards and guidelines were superseded by the RMP management actions/direction.

**1) Riparian Reserves:**

The interim Riparian Reserve width in the South Fork Coquille Watershed is based on a 180-foot tall site potential tree (USDI 1995). There are no Riparian Reserves associated with the proposed action.

**2) Key Watersheds:**

The proposed road is not located within a Key Watershed.

**3) Watershed Analysis:**

The Lower South Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis was completed in April 1996 (USDI 1996). The action alternative is consistent with the Watershed Analysis.

**4) Watershed Restoration:**

The purpose of proposed action is not a watershed restoration activity.

### ***Management Actions/Direction***

See the 1995 Coos Bay RMP (pgs. 65-66) for a list of management actions/directions for ROWs (USDI 1995).

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### ***Existing Watershed Condition***

The following are the existing conditions as analyzed in the Lower South Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis (USDI 1996):

- This lower portion of the watershed drains approximately 65,669 acres or 245 square miles (USDI 1996).
  - BLM manages 7,368 acres within this portion of the watershed, USFS manages 4,235 acres, and private owns 54,066 acres (USDI 1996).
  - Riparian reserves occupy approximately 3,825 acres (52%) of BLM land within the lower portion of the South Fork Coquille Watershed.
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### ***Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives***

*1. Maintain and restore the distribution, diversity, and complexity of watershed and landscape-scale features to ensure protection of the aquatic systems to which species, populations, and communities are uniquely adapted.*

### **Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

#### *Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the distribution, diversity and complexity of watershed and landscape-scale features at the site scale and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms. Aquatic systems along with the aquatic associated species, populations and communities would not be affected by the proposed new road. The new road would be located outside of Riparian Reserves and would not include any stream crossings.

*2. Maintain and restore spatial and temporal connectivity within and between watersheds. Lateral, longitudinal, and drainage network connections include floodplains, wetlands, upslope areas, headwater tributaries, and intact refugia. These network connections must provide chemically and physically unobstructed routes to areas critical for fulfilling life history requirements of aquatic and riparian-dependent species.*

### **Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

#### *Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain connectivity at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms. Physically and chemically unobstructed routes would be maintained at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms for aquatic and riparian-dependent species. The proposed new road would not be located in Riparian Reserves and the road would not cross any stream channels.

*3. Maintain and restore the physical integrity of the aquatic system, including shorelines, banks, and bottom configurations.*

### **Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the physical integrity of the aquatic system, including shorelines, banks, and bottom configurations at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long term. The proposed new road would not be located in Riparian Reserves and would not cross any streams, therefore the road would not affect shorelines, banks, or bottom configurations.

*4. Maintain and restore water quality necessary to support healthy riparian, aquatic, and wetland ecosystems. Water quality must remain within the range that maintains the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the system and benefits survival, growth, reproduction, and migration of individuals composing aquatic and riparian communities.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain water quality at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long term.

The proposed new road would not be located within Riparian Reserves and would not remove trees providing shade to stream channels.

*5. Maintain and restore the sediment regime under which aquatic ecosystems evolved. Elements of the sediment regime include the timing, volume, rate, and character of sediment input, storage, and transport.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the timing, volume, rate and character of the sediment regime at the site scale and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms.

The proposed new road would not be located within Riparian Reserves and would not have any stream crossings. There are no mechanisms for the proposed new road to deliver sediment to stream channels.

*6. Maintain and restore in-stream flows sufficient to create and sustain riparian, aquatic, and wetland habitats and to retain patterns of sediment, nutrient, and wood routing. The timing, magnitude, duration, and spatial distribution of peak, high, and low flows must be protected.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the timing, magnitude, duration, and spatial distribution of in-stream flows in the short and long term at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale.

The proposed new road would not include any stream crossings. There are no mechanisms for the proposed new road to alter in-stream flows.

*7. Maintain and restore the timing, variability, and duration of floodplain inundation and water table elevation in meadows and wetlands.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the timing, variability and duration of floodplain inundation and water table elevation in meadows and wetlands in the short and long term at the site and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale.

The proposed new road would not be located in meadows or wetlands. The proposed new road would not change the amount or timing of water elevation in surrounding areas.

*8. Maintain and restore the species composition and structural diversity of plant communities in riparian areas and wetlands to provide adequate summer and winter thermal regulation, nutrient filtering, appropriate rates of surface erosion, bank erosion, and channel migration and to supply amounts and distributions of down wood sufficient to sustain physical complexity and stability.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain the species composition and structural diversity of plant communities in riparian areas and wetlands in the analysis area at the site scale and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms.

The proposed new road would not be located within Riparian Reserves and therefore would not affect the species composition or structural diversity of plant communities in riparian or wetland areas.

*9. Maintain and restore habitat to support well-distributed populations of native plant, invertebrate and vertebrate riparian-dependent species.*

**Site Scale/5<sup>th</sup> Field Analysis**

*Short Term/Long Term*

The action alternative would maintain habitat needed to support population of native plant, invertebrate, and vertebrate riparian-dependent species at the site scale and 5<sup>th</sup> field scale in the short and long terms. Riparian-dependent species would not be affected by the proposed new road because the road would be located outside of Riparian Reserves and would not include any stream crossings.

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## Chapter 5 Agencies and People Contacted

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Because of the limited scope and scale of this project, this ID Team did not request external issues concerning on project development. These types of projects are routine and the issues are usually the same.

The following were directly contacted:

Oregon Department of Forestry  
Lone Rock Timberland Co.

The following groups/individuals will receive notification of the draft FONSI at which time they will be able to comment on its appropriateness for the environmental assessment:

Coquille Indian Tribe	Coos County Board of Commissioners
Governors Natural Resources Office	Association of O&C Counties
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Klamath Siskiyou Wildland Center
Oregon Department of Forestry	Plum Creek Timberlands LP
Division of State Lands	Oregon Wild
Douglas Timber Operators	NW Environmental Defense Council
Friends of the Coquille	Coast Range Association
Hugh Kern	Umpqua Watersheds
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	

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## Chapter 6 List of Preparers

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Aimee Hoefs	Team Lead, EA Writer
Brett Jones	Project Lead, Road & Right-Of-Way Specialist
Jim Heaney	Wildlife Biologist
Stephanie Messerle	Fish Biologist
Larry Standley	Hydrologist
Tim Rodenkirk	Botanist
Dale Stewart	District Soils Scientist
Stephan Samuels	District Archaeologist
Jay Flora	GIS

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## Chapter 7 References

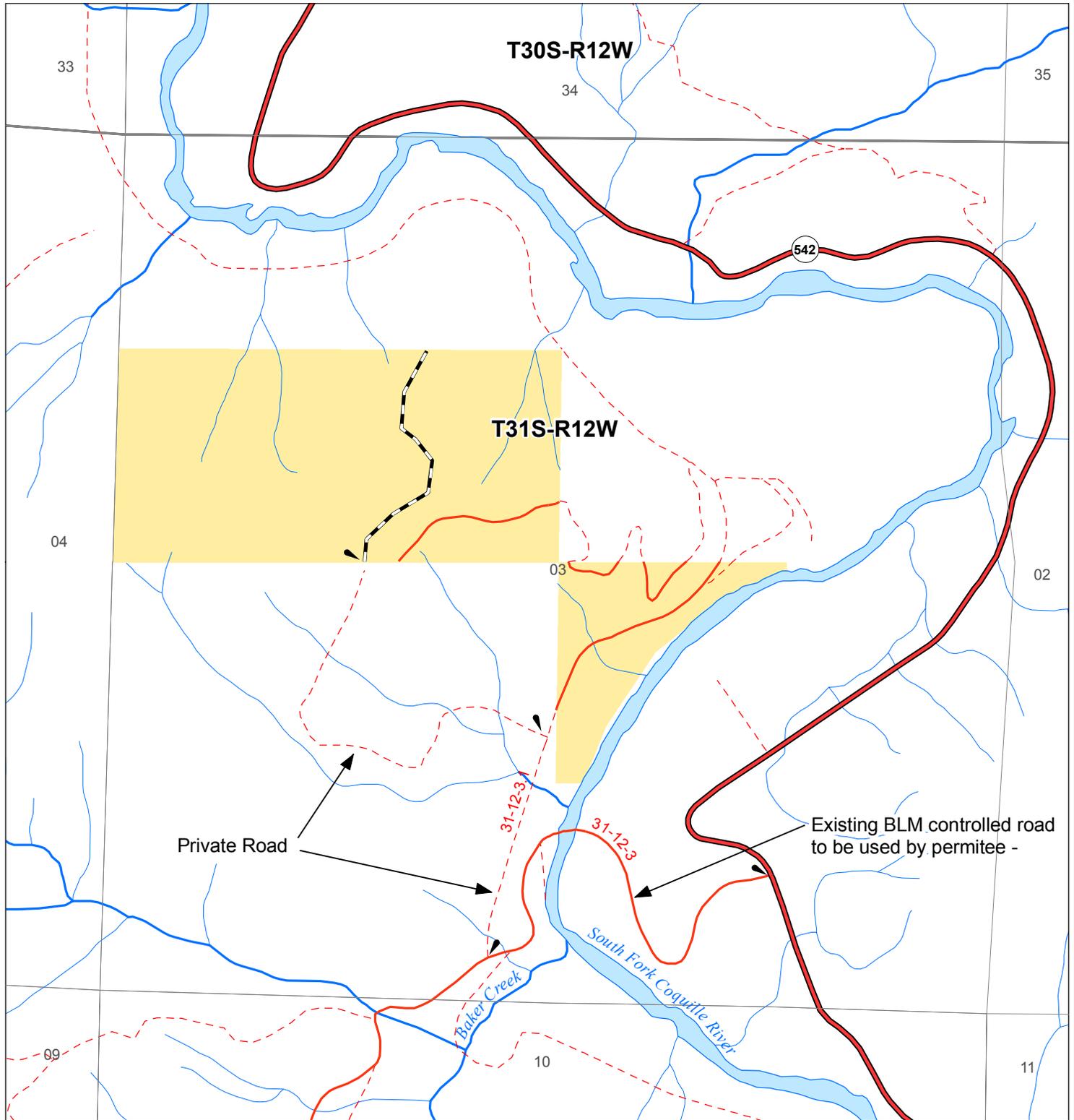
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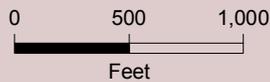
## Maps

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- New Construction ROW Request
- Highway
- BLM-Controlled Road
- - - Non BLM-Controlled Road
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream

- Rivers, Lakes, Estuaries
- BLM Administered Land
- Private or Other Lands



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