



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE  
1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459  
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### **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/5400 (ORC040)  
DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2011-0008-EA  
Wagon Road Pilot Environmental Assessment

***May 18, 2011***

Interested Public:

The Coos Bay BLM and the Coquille Indian Tribe have prepared a Scoping Document for the Wagon Road Pilot Environmental Assessment. The Scoping Document and associated maps are now posted on the Coos Bay District Internet site:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/plans/index.php>.

The proposed action would treat 70-year old stands using the ecological principles outlined by Drs. Jerry F. Franklin and K. Norman Johnson. This is a pilot project designated by the Secretary of the Interior.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by June 17, 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: Aimee Hoefs; call 541-756-0100; FAX 541-751-4303, or email to [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov), ATTN: Aimee Hoefs.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Kathy Hoffine*

Kathy Hoffine  
Myrtlewood Field Manager



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DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2011-0008-EA  
Wagon Road Pilot Environmental Assessment

## **Scoping Document**

*May 18, 2011*

Interested Public,

The following information and the enclosed map briefly describe a Proposed Action for the development of the Wagon Road Pilot Environmental Assessment (EA No: DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2011-0008-EA).

The USDI, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Coos Bay District Office and the Coquille Indian Tribe (CIT) are preparing an Environmental Assessment for a timber sale that would occur in the East Fork Coquille watershed. The Proposed Action would treat approximately 70 year-old forest stands using the ecological restoration principles described below.

### **Background**

The Secretary of the Interior designated Pilot Demonstration projects in BLM Districts in southwest Oregon to demonstrate the principles of ecosystem restoration developed by Drs. Jerry F. Franklin and K. Norman Johnson (*Applying Restoration Principles on the O&C Forests in Southwest Oregon, 2010*). Part of the Secretary's intent in designating these projects was to help inform long-term planning of BLM O&C lands.

Franklin and Johnson define "restoration" broadly to encompass activities that are designed to restore forests and landscapes to conditions that provide the diversity needed to restore and sustain native biodiversity and essential ecosystem functions. Restoration of ecosystems at the stand and landscape scale are the primary focus, rather than singular goals, such as fuels and wildfire abatement, timber production, or wildlife habitat (*Restoration of Federal Forests in the Pacific Northwest 2011, Review Draft*).

The Coquille Indian Tribe has strong ties to the federal lands within the region. In addition, their tribal forest lands are closely linked to the management of nearby or adjacent federal lands. The Secretary has endorsed the CIT working in partnership with the BLM in the development of this pilot project. The Wagon Road Pilot project will be developed in compliance with all BLM requirements and under BLM's legal authorities.

### **Location**

The Wagon Road Pilot project is located in the central portion of the East Fork Coquille 5<sup>th</sup>-field Watershed. This area is located about 20 miles southeast of Coos Bay, Oregon and is north of

State highway 42. The proposed harvest activities are located in T. 28 S., R. 10 W., Section 17 Willamette Meridian.

This area contains units previously proposed for harvest under earlier EAs. Those units were never finalized but contain areas with flagging, posted sale boundaries and painted trees from those efforts. No part of the Wagon Road Pilot has been identified on-the-ground.

The lands are part of the Coos Bay Wagon Road (CBWR) lands in Coos County, which were selected as the landscape to consider for a pilot demonstration project. The CBWR lands contain approximately 26% of the timber management land base within the Coos Bay District.

### **Need for the Wagon Road Pilot**

In general, the basis for this pilot project is the need to focus on activities that achieve environmental, economic and social benefits by improving ecosystem diversity and functionality and increasing societal options for timber harvest on federal forest lands, particularly the O&C and CBWR land base. The stands chosen in this project represent the Moist Forest conditions and contain stand characteristics described by Drs. Johnson and Franklin as needing treatment. There is a lack of diversity concerning early-successional stages in Moist Forest ecosystems which can be provided through regeneration harvest and modified site preparation and planting. The structure and composition of early successional stages are important to perpetuating species populations at the local scale, thereby enabling reestablishment of species into the regenerated forest and promoting the sustainability of current ecosystem dynamics while providing timber harvest opportunities. There is a need to demonstrate these ecosystem principles through timber harvest and subsequent field monitoring.

Additionally, harvest activities on BLM administered lands have shifted from a mix of commercial thinning and regeneration harvests to almost exclusively commercial thinnings. Even at the current annual sale quantity levels, a thinning-only harvest regime cannot be sustained on the Coos Bay District.

Forest management on federal lands in the Northwest continues to be stymied by conflicting interests that pit timber production against habitat protection and result in the legal and administrative gridlock noted by both the Secretary and the Oregon Congressional Delegation. By demonstrating the restoration principles outlined by Drs. Johnson and Franklin, the social acceptability of this project can be directly compared to the controversies around current forest management practices. That is, this pilot project would serve to demonstrate the various ecosystem restoration principles and tools, and help gauge whether or not a broader social support for active management could be developed.

### **General Project Objectives**

As designated by the Secretary, the Wagon Road Pilot is intended to accomplish the following:

- Demonstrate the application of ecosystem principles developed by Drs. Franklin and Johnson. The intent of these principles is to move the current federal landscape towards desired forest conditions that include the maintenance of older trees, restoration of characteristic structure and composition including early-successional habitat, and increased heterogeneity.

- Provide an example of active forest management which includes regeneration timber harvest, with a focus on ecosystem restoration that has a broader base of social acceptance.
  - Provide commercially viable timber sales that provide revenues from management of those timber resources.
- 

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this project by June 17, 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.

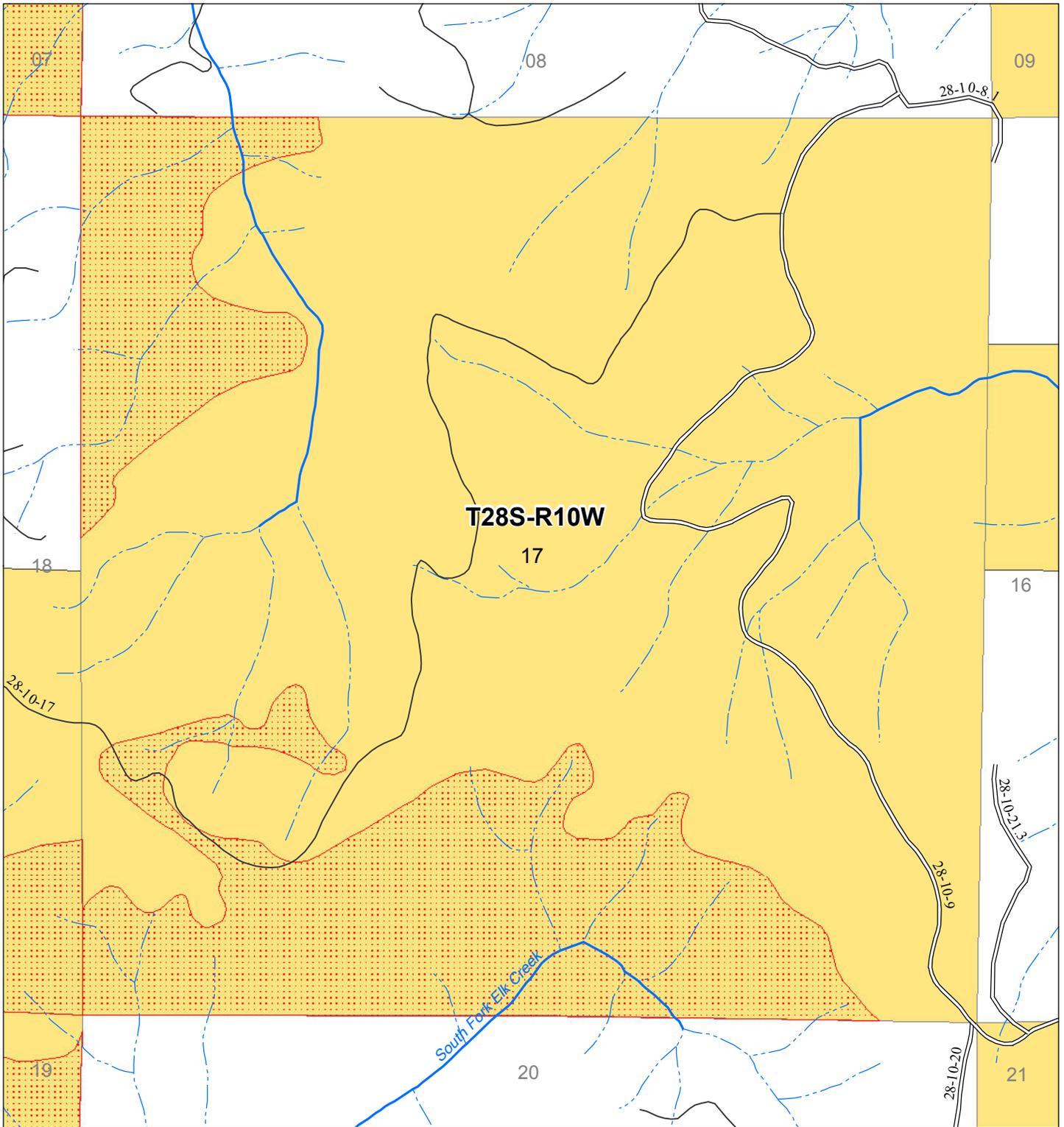
Please direct your responses or questions to Aimee Hoefs, Myrtlewood Field Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459, call (541) 756-0100, FAX: (541) 756-4303, or e-mail [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov) Attn: Aimee Hoefs.

Respectfully,

*/s/ Kathy Hoffine*

Kathy Hoffine  
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Enclosures: Scoping Map  
Vicinity Map



**Map Features**

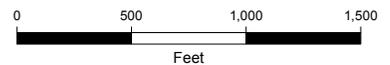
- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  BLM Administered Land           |  Paved Road               |
|  Private or Other Lands          |  Gravel Road              |
|  Marbled Murrelet Occupied Sites |  Natural/Unk Surface Road |
|   |  Perennial Stream         |
|   |  Intermittent Stream      |



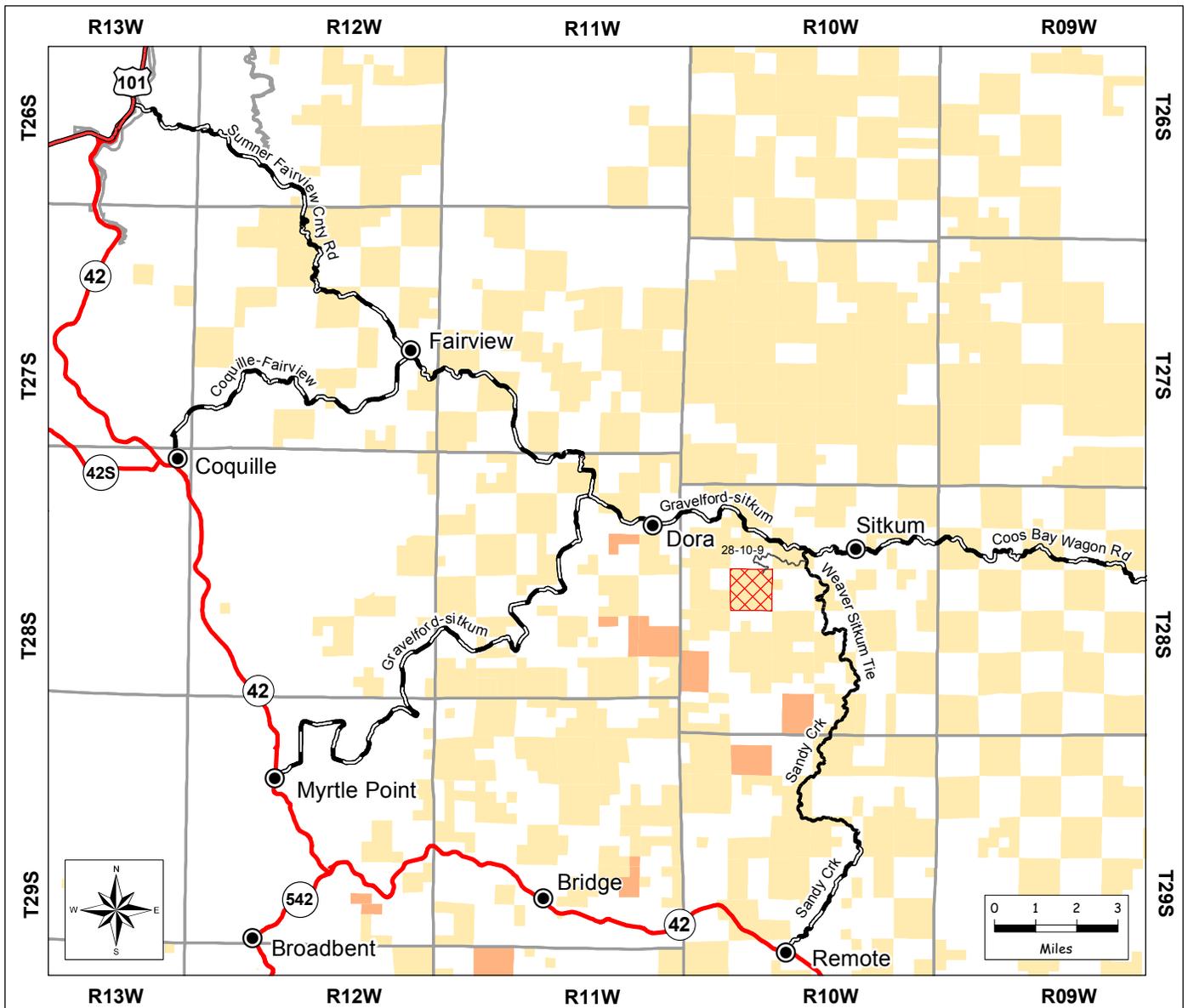
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Myrtlewood Resource Area  
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No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data.



**Map Features**

- County Road
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road
- Pilot Project Section (28-10-17)
- BLM Administered Land
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Private / Other Ownership

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