

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
EUGENE DISTRICT

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW  
AND EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES CHECKLIST

**West Eugene Wetlands Ethnobotany Project**  
**CE No: CE-OR-090-08-07**

**Background**

The BLM has funded an exploratory research to gauge the interest and possibility for establishing an ethnobotany resource area (ERA) at the West Eugene Wetlands (WEW). Regional Native American tribes have shown strong interest in restoring ethnobotanical activities at the wetlands and WEW Partners have expressed support. The project is now ready to move to a pilot project phase and has identified a number of activities for 2008, several on BLM land as described below. (T17S, R4W, Sections 27 and 34; see attached maps)

**Proposed Action**

- 1) Survey of culturally important plants. This activity will consist of walks at the wetlands to visually inventory plants that were traditionally used in basketry, as shelter, for food, and other cultural uses. The walks will be lead by a tribal member and may have 10 to 20 people attending. The purpose is educational. A wetland scientist (e.g., Gil Voss) will accompany the group to help them avoid walking in sensitive areas. No specific dates have been set but they are likely to be a few times during the summer.
- 2) *Quercus garryana* (Oregon White Oak) acorn collections at Stewart Pond. This activity will specifically consist of walking to and sitting near the oak trees found on BLM managed land in the Stewart Pond area and will include storytelling and discussion among participants. To demonstrate the tradition participants will gather a five gallon bucket of acorns but no more than 25% of the total available so as to leave the majority for wildlife. The activity will take place in early October if acorns are available. Harvesting activities will be lead by a tribal member and may have 10 to 20 people participating. A wetland scientist (e.g., Gil Voss) will accompany the group to help them avoid walking in sensitive areas.
- 3) *Salix Spp.* (Piper's, Geyer's, Arroyo and other willow species) collections at Bertelsen Nature Park ponds on BLM managed land. This activity will consist of harvesting willow branches to be used in demonstrations of traditional use, such as basketmaking. Approximately 20 to 40 branches ranging in size from 2 to 4 feet will be harvested. Harvesting activities will be lead by a tribal member and may have 10 to 20 people participating. A wetland scientist (e.g., Gil Voss) will accompany the group to help them avoid walking in sensitive areas. Harvesting will take place in April.
- 4) *Juncus effusus L.* (Common Rush) 100 to 200 leaves will be harvested from plants found on BLM managed land at Bertelsen Nature Park. Harvesting activities will be lead by a tribal member and may have 10 to 20 people participating. A wetland scientist (e.g., Gil

Voss) will accompany the group to help them avoid walking in sensitive areas.  
Harvesting will take place in late summer.

**Decision**

The proposed action, as described above, is approved to be implemented.

**Rationale**

The proposed action meets the criteria for the categorical exclusion in 516 DM 11.5C(5) which allows for disposal of small amounts of miscellaneous vegetation products outside established harvest areas. None of the “extraordinary circumstances” in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply. Further, the action is in conformance with the Northwest Forest Plan ROD and the Eugene District Resource Management Plan (2005), as amended.

Prepared By:	/s/ Pat Johnston West Eugene Wetlands Project Manager	Date:	April 4, 2008
Reviewed By:	/s/ Sharmila Premdas Planning & Environmental Specialist	Date:	April 10, 2008
Approved By:	/s/ William E. Hatton Field Manager	Date:	April 10, 2008

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**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW**

Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist

**Proposed Action: West Eugene Wetlands Ethnobotany Project**

**CE No: CE-OR-090-08-07**

Review the proposed action against each of the 12 “extraordinary circumstances” listed below. Any action that is normally categorically excluded must be subjected to sufficient environmental review to determine whether it meets any of the extraordinary circumstances, in which case, further analysis and environmental documents must be prepared for the action. If the criterion does not apply, indicate "Not Applicable." Any mitigation measures (such as contract stipulations or terms and conditions on permits) necessary to ensure that the proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion should be identified at the bottom of the page.

Extraordinary Circumstances		Comments
1.	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.	
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 principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	
3.	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA, Sec. 102(2)(E)]	
4.	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	
5.	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	
6.	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	
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.	
8.	Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	
9.	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	
10.	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898).	
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 (EO 13007).	
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 EO 13112).	

Mitigation Measures:

Harvesting of Salix spp. should not be conducted between May 15 - July 15 to minimize disturbance to breeding & nesting migratory birds to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Act. If harvesting of Salix spp. is conducted during May 15 - July 15 inspection of area for migratory bird nesting is required to be performed by a biologist. Recommendations for harvest will be made based on findings. Harvesting of plants and Salix spp. in and around Grimes pond should be conducted after Aug. 1 to minimize foot traffic and visual disturbance to nesting Western pond turtles. The western pond turtle is a Bureau Sensitive species.