

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

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2013-0003-EA
Boulder Creek Timber Sale Project

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2013-0004-EA) which analyzed the effects of the proposed action and alternatives. On the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that the implementation of the proposed action would not have significant environmental effects. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared. This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

CONTEXT

The action alternatives would occur in the Matrix and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations (LUA) as designated by the 1995 Eugene District Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP anticipated that forest management activities would occur in the Matrix and Riparian Reserve LUAs. The action alternatives are in compliance with the 1995 Eugene District RMP, as amended.

Under the action alternative, treatments would be designed to meet the purposes and needs. Purposes of the actions include: (1) Produce a sustainable supply of timber (1995 ROD/RMP p. 34); (2) Provide habitat for a variety of organisms associated with both late-successional and younger forests and maintain valuable structural components, such as down logs and snags (1995 ROD/RMP, p. 34). Additional direction for road management directs us to provide and manage the road system to serve resource management needs (1995 ROD/RMP, p. 98).

The purposes of the actions in Riparian Reserves are to provide habitat for Special Status Species and other terrestrial species, and to maintain and restore water quality (1995 ROD/RMP, p. 23).

No actions would take place within stands older than 80 years of age. Furthermore, thinning in the near term does not establish a firm commitment to harvest these stands.

INTENSITY

I have considered the potential intensity of the impacts that would result from the proposed action relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), as detailed below:

- 1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.** The EA considered both potential beneficial and adverse effects especially for relevant resources such as wildlife. None of the effects are beyond the range of effects analyzed in the Eugene District "Final Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement" (November 1994), to which this EA is tiered.
- 2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety. No aspect of the Proposed Action would have an effect on public health and safety.** No aspect of the proposed action would have an effect on public health and safety.
- 3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.** There are no known parks, prime farmlands, wilderness or wild and scenic rivers in the project area. The proposed project is not expected to affect cultural resources, but if cultural resources are found in pre-project surveys, they would be assessed for significance. If necessary, the project would be redesigned to protect the values present.
- 4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.** The effects of actions planned under the proposed action are similar to

many other forest management projects implemented within the scope of the 1995 Eugene RMP. No unique or appreciable scientific controversy has been identified regarding the effects of the proposed action.

5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.** The analysis has not shown that there would be any unique or unknown risks to the human environment not previously considered and analyzed in 1994 EIS, to which this decision is tiered. Thinning and density management treatments have been conducted for many years in the vegetation types typical of the project area.
6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.** This project neither establishes a precedent nor represents a decision in principle about future actions. The proposed action is consistent with actions appropriate for the Matrix and Riparian Reserve land use allocations, as designated by the 1995 Eugene District ROD/RMP.
7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.** The environmental analysis did not reveal any cumulative effects beyond those already in the EIS.
8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.** There are no features within the planning area that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or are significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.
9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.**

Generally, the proposed units show relatively small tree size, simple structure, high tree density, mostly uniform age distribution, restricted sub-canopy flying room, and no snags. As a result, proposed harvest areas are characterized as dispersal habitat. Roughly half of these areas (especially in Riparian Reserves) are also functioning as moderate to low quality forage habitat due to slightly lower tree densities, slightly larger tree sizes, and some adequate sub-canopy flying space and down wood.

Overall, proposed harvest areas lack nesting structure due to their size, density, and lack of mature-late-seral characteristics. Occasional single large trees, or patches less than one acre, with potential nesting size structure are present in harvest areas, but they are not expected to provide nesting habitat because their crowns are above, and discontinuous with, the main stand canopy and any potential nesting structure is unfavorably exposed. These trees would be reserved from harvest.

ESA consultation considers effects to general habitat due to habitat modification, and effects to site occupation and reproduction due to habitat modification and nesting behavior due to noise disturbance/disruption. Collectively these considerations result in an overall effects determination of project actions. Consultation was conducted under the following batched Province BAs: Biological Assessment of NLAA Projects with the Potential to Modify the Habitat of Northern Spotted Owls Willamette Planning Province - FY2013.

1. Biological Assessment of NLAA Projects with the Potential to Modify the Habitat and/or Disrupt Northern Spotted Owls Willamette Planning Province - FY 2011-2012, and;
2. Biological Assessment of LAA Projects with the Potential to Modify the Habitat and/or Disrupt Northern Spotted Owls Willamette Planning Province - FY 2011-2012.

It was determined that the proposed action would result in a may affect, but not likely to adversely affect determination for Boulder Creek 5, but would result in a may affect, likely to adversely affect determination for Boulder Creek 35 due to affects to the Osborn Knob site.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. The proposed action does not threaten to violate any law. The proposed action is in compliance with the 1995 Eugene RMP, which provide direction for the protection of the environment on public lands.

Signature of the Responsible Official:

/s/ William O'Sullivan
William O'Sullivan
Upper Willamette Field Manager
Eugene District Office

7/9/13
Date: