

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

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW**

OFFICE: Upper Willamette Resource Area

TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2014-0031-CX

PROJECT NAME: 2014 Pruning Project

LOCATION/LLEGAL DESCRIPTION: Eugene District: T16S R1W SEC. 7, 9, 23, 27, 33;  
T16S R2W SEC. 27, 23, 25; T17S R1W SEC. 3, 9

**A. Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

The proposed action is to implement a program of pruning on approximately 303 acres within the Upper Willamette Resource Area within the wildland-urban interface area. This project would be accomplished by contracting for the manual cutting of limbs on conifer trees in young (15-30 year old) Douglas fir stands using manual pole saws. Slash created would be pulled back from designated roads. Project activities would occur over approximately a month sometime between October 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014 (dependent on contractor availability and weather).

**B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance**

LUP Name: Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP), as amended.  
Date Approved: June 1995.

**The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:**

Fuels Management (p.109): 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.

**The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions:**

Timber Resources, Objective 2, (p. 84): Manage developing stands on available lands to promote tree survival and growth and to achieve a balance between wood volume production, quality of wood, and timber value at harvest.

**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 1,1.12 Hazardous fuels reduction activities using prescribed fire not to exceed 4,500 acres, and mechanical methods for crushing, piling, thinning, pruning, cutting, chipping, mulching, and mowing, not to exceed 1,000 acres. Such activities: Shall be limited to areas (1) in wildland–urban interface and (2) Condition Classes 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III, outside the wildland–urban interface; Shall be identified through a collaborative framework as described in “A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan;” Shall be conducted

consistent with agency and Departmental procedures and applicable land and resource management plans; Shall not be conducted in wilderness areas or impair the suitability of wilderness study areas for preservation as wilderness; Shall not include the use of herbicides or pesticides or the construction of new permanent roads or other new permanent infrastructure; and may include the sale of vegetative material if the primary purpose of the activity is hazardous fuels reduction.

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 apply.

**D. Signature**

Signature of Project Lead:

/s/ Ronald Gregory  
Forestry Technician

Date: 09/05/2014

Signature of NEPA Coordinator:

/s/ Kristine Struck  
Planning and Environmental Coordinator

Date: 09/05/2014

Signature of the Responsible Official:

/s/ William O'Sullivan  
Field Manager

Date: 09/05/2014

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion review, contact: Ron Gregory;  
Upper Willamette Resource Area Forestry Technician, at (541) 683-6634

**EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES CHECKLIST**  
 DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2014-0031-CX  
 PRUNING

*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.*

<b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<p><b>1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed pruning project areas are in remote, forested locations outside of population centers.</p>		X
<p><b>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 (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The project areas are not within and do not contain any of the natural or geographic areas described above. There would be no effect to migratory birds.</p>		X
<p><b>3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed action manually prunes the lower 9 feet of limbs on approximately 303 acres of young Douglas Fir stands. There are no predicted environmental effects from the proposed action which are considered to be highly controversial nor are there unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses.</p>		X
<p><b>4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed action would cut the lower 9 feet of limbs on 120 to 150 trees per acre on 303 acres of young Douglas Fir stands. There are no predicted effects from the proposed action that are highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique, or involve unknown risks.</p>		X
<p><b>5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> Manual pruning of young Douglas Fir stands has taken place throughout the State of Oregon and the Eugene District for years. There is no evidence that this action has potentially significant environmental effects; it does not commit the BLM to pursuing further actions; and it would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		X
<p><b>6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> Based upon review of the project, and given current conditions on the grounds, the Eugene District did not find any resource issues of concern that would be affected by this action.</p>		X
<p><b>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.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> There are no known eligible or listed properties within the proposed treatment areas.</p>		X
<p><b>8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, as an Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The areas to be treated will have no significant impacts to species listed or proposed to be listed as an Endangered or Threatened Species, nor have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</p>		X

Extraordinary Circumstances	YES	NO
<p><b>9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Eugene District ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act and others.</p>		X
<p><b>10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 2898).</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> There would be no adverse effect on low income minority populations.</p>		X
<p><b>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).</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The project is located within the Oregon Coast Range Physiographic Province, and the terms of Protocol D as defined in the National Programmatic Agreement in Oregon (USDI,1998) apply.</p>		X
<p><b>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).</b>  <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed action would not result in measurable changes to the current baseline of the risk, or actual introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species in or from the project area. Existing and likely continuing activities including, but not limited to, motor vehicle traffic, recreation use, rural and urban development, road construction, timber harvest, and natural processes can contribute to the introduction, existence, and spread of noxious weeds/invasive species. Vehicles accessing the project area for the proposed action would stay on existing roads (no additional roads are proposed), reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds or seed. The proposed action would not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found.</p>		X

