

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

OFFICE: EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2015-0025-CX

PROJECT NAME: PRECOMMERCIAL THINNING

LOCATION/LLEGAL DESCRIPTION: EUGENE DISTRICT: T15S R1W SEC. 31; 15S-2W-36;
T16S R2W SEC. 7; T18S R01E SEC. 21; T20S R1W SEC. 2,11; T21S R2W SEC. 35;
T23S R2W SEC. 33

A. Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

The proposed action is to implement a program of precommercial thinning on 587 acres within the Upper Willamette Resource Area. This project will be accomplished by contracting for the manual cutting of competing trees and hardwoods in young Douglas Fir stands using small mechanical devices (chainsaws). Slash will be pulled back from designated roads. Work is anticipated to occur in October and November 2015.

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 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 11.9 (DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2014-0013-CX Manual Maintenance). 11.9.C. Forestry (4) Pre-commercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices.

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: September 17, 2015

Signature of NEPA Coordinator:

/s/ Kristine M. Struck
Planning and Environmental Coordinator

Date: September 17, 2015

Signature of the Responsible Official:

/s/ William O'Sullivan
Field Manager

Date: September 17, 2015

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-E060-2015-0025-CX
 PRECOMMERCIAL THINNING

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	YES	NO
<p>1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety. <u>Rationale:</u> All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed precommercial thinning is in remote, forested locations outside of population centers.</p>		X
<p>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. <u>Rationale:</u> The project areas are not within and do not contain any of the natural or geographic areas described above. Due to the habitat type and timing of the project, there would be no significant effects to migratory birds. The project would have no significant impacts on cultural resources.</p>		X
<p>3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]. <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed action manually cuts competing trees and hardwoods on approximately 587 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>4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. <u>Rationale:</u> Manual cutting 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. There are no predicted effects from the proposed action that are highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique, or involve unknown risks.</p>		X
<p>5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. <u>Rationale:</u> Manual cutting 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>6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. <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>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. <u>Rationale:</u> The project would not have significant impacts to properties listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.</p>		X

Extraordinary Circumstances	YES	NO
<p>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.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Due to the habitat type treated and the project timing, there will be no significant impacts to species listed or proposed to be listed as an Endangered or Threatened Species, nor will there be significant impacts to designated Critical Habitat for these species.</p>		X
<p>9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</p> <p><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>10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 2898).</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> There would be no adverse effect on low income minority populations.</p>		X
<p>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).</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This project would not have any impacts on access to or integrity of potential sacred sites.</p>		X
<p>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).</p> <p><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.</p> <p>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

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DECISION RECORD
DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2015-0025-CX
PRECOMMERCIALTHINNING

Decision

It is my decision to implement this action as described in the categorical exclusion documentation DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2015-0025-CX.

Decision Rationale

The proposed action has been reviewed by BLM staff. The Proposed Action is in conformance with the 1995 Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (as amended). Based on the Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

Administrative Remedies

This forest management decision may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies. This decision record constitutes the decision document for the purpose of protests. Protests of this decision must be filed with this office within fifteen (15) days after the date of this decision record. As interpreted by BLM, the regulations do not authorize the acceptance of protests in any form other than a signed, written hard copy that is delivered to the physical address of the BLM Eugene District Office.

Signature of the Responsible Official:

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

September 17, 2015
Date: