

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: Eugene District

Lease/Serial/Case File No: NA

Categorical Exclusion Number: 1791A-ORE000-2009-0012

Proposed Action: Seed Orchard Recycling/Orchard Establishment

Location of Proposed Action: Project is located at Tyrrell Seed Orchard in Township 20 South, Range 5 West, Sections 9 and 15.

Land Use Allocation(s): Administratively withdrawn

Description of Proposed Action: Tyrrell Seed Orchard, located in Lorane, Oregon, is one of four centralized seed orchards that are managed by the BLM in western Oregon. The orchard, established about 20 years ago, provides genetically improved seed for Eugene, Roseburg and Coos Bay BLM Districts and for eleven orchard cooperators. There are approximately 250 acres devoted to conifer seed production.

New orchards are planned for development over the next ten years in sections 9 and 15 as part of the 2009 Orchard Consolidation Plan. This will involve orchard establishment on between 42 and 105 acres at Tyrrell. Some of the new orchards will be designed to replace portions of existing orchards that are excess to seed needs (see attachment 1), requiring harvest/removal of standing trees followed by site preparation (between 7 and 23 acres), while others will utilize fallow land that was previously cleared but not currently used (between 35 and 82 acres). In certain instances, orchard trees will be harvested and/or removed, but no site preparation, except for stump grinding, is planned. All proposed treatment areas were previously cleared for orchard production in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

Orchard trees in areas to be recycled would be cut and removed from the orchard, either in the form of logs or chips. Brush and vegetation would be cleared and removed by chipping or burning. The ground would then be deep ripped to 18" using winged rippers, followed by disking, land leveling, and establishment of a cover crop. Planting of new orchards would probably take place over the next 5-6 years.

Rototilling would be used on fallow acres that have been previously cleared but never planted to trees. Each orchard row in these grass covered areas would be tilled to a width of 6ft-8ft., leaving approximately 12 ft. of untouched cover crop between rows.

In certain instances, trees would be cut and removed from portions of orchards as a means of controlling pollen contamination and providing future use options (approximately 14 acres in 2009). Trees would also be cut and removed as part of orchard thinning, to provide optimum growing conditions, and for roguing operations, used as an operational tool to manage genetic quality (approximately 56 acres in fall 2009). Stumps would be ground to remove the operational hazard. No major site preparation activities would take place for such areas at the present time.

Stump grinding would be utilized to remove operational/safety hazards created by stumps in areas where the ground will not be required for orchard development in the near future. Stump grinding would also be used orchard-wide for the same purpose following orchard thinning/roguing operations.

Except for stump grinding and thinning/roguing operations (which can take place any time of the year depending on site conditions), all work would be performed during dry summer months to minimize soil compaction and runoff.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the 1995 Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, which addresses the need for tree improvement and states that “Genetically improved indigenous trees would be used in reforestation to the extent available” (pg 1-41).

Tyrrell Seed Orchard is administratively withdrawn. Specifically, Public Land Order 6662 withdrew a total of 823.5 acres at the seed orchard from surface entry and mining under the general land laws and mining laws.

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 11.9C (1), which allows for “land cultivation and silvicultural activities (excluding herbicide application) in forest tree nurseries, seed orchards, and progeny test sites”.

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 DM2 apply.

Table 1: Categorical Exclusions: Extraordinary Circumstances Review

The Proposed Categorical Exclusion Action Will:	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety		X
Rationale: All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed orchard recycling/orchard establishment would have no effect on public health or safety.		
2.2 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 revivers; 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.		X
Rationale: The area proposed for orchard recycling/orchard establishment is outside of any unique areas such as those discussed above		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2)(E)].		X
Rationale: The effects of orchard recycling/orchard establishment are not controversial. This will be the second land clearing treatment for between 7 and 20 of the proposed acres, with the first being approximately 20 years ago. Work will be done during the dry periods of the year to minimize the chance for compaction and runoff. There are no unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: The proposed orchard recycling/orchard establishment are not unique or unusual. The BLM has considerable experience implementing similar actions at the seed orchard without highly		

controversial, highly uncertain, or unique or unknown risks		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The BLM has conducted similar actions at the seed orchard since its inception. There is no evidence that recycling and establishing orchards has potentially significant environmental effects and it would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: The proposed action would not have a direct relationship to other actions with any kind of environmental effect.		
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for list, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office		X
Rationale: No properties listed or eligible for listing are affected.		
2.8 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. Fisheries: the action will have no effect on any ESA-listed species. Wildlife: the action "May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect" the marbled murrelet and spotted owl due to disturbance in the latter part of their breeding periods (August 8 through September 30). There would be "No Effect" due to disturbance from October 1 through February 28. There would be "No Effect" to Critical Habitat for those species. Use of chainsaws would not take place within 100 yards of the old-growth habitat in section 15 between March 1 and August 5. Use of those saws within 100 yards of that habitat between August 6 and September 15 would not begin until two hours after sunrise and must cease two hour prior to sunset.		X
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: Proposed orchard recycling/orchard establishment follow all known Federal, State, local, and Tribal laws imposed for the protection of the environment		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		X
Rationale: There would be no adverse effect on low income or minority populations associated with orchard recycling/orchard establishment.		
2.11 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).		X
Rationale: There are no known Indian sacred sites located within the seed orchard. The proposed action would not limit the use of or the physical integrity of Indian sacred site on Federal land.		
2.12 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).		X
Rationale: The Contractor would be required to clean all equipment using a pressure washer prior to entry on BLM lands to prevent the spread of noxious weeds and root disease.		

The proposed action described above will take place only at Tyrrell Seed Orchard. Actual acres will be determined following a discussion by the westside District Managers concerning orchard consolidation. Orchard thinning/roguing and stump grinding will take place periodically throughout the Tyrrell Seed Orchard between 2009 and 2015. The orchard recycling portion of the proposed action will be completed under this categorical exclusion beginning in fall 2009 and will be completed by late summer 2010. Orchard establishment will begin in 2010 and could extend 2020, although it is likely that the project would be completed by 2015.

D. Signatures

Prepared By:	/s/ Michael Crawford	Date:	8/19/2009
Michael Crawford: Forester/Seed Orchard Program Manager			
Reviewed By:	/s/ Richard Hardt	Date:	8/20/2009
Richard Hardt: Environmental Coordinator			
Approved By:	/s/ Emily Rice (Acting)	Date:	8/20/2009
Virginia Grilley: District Manager, Eugene District BLM			

Contract Person

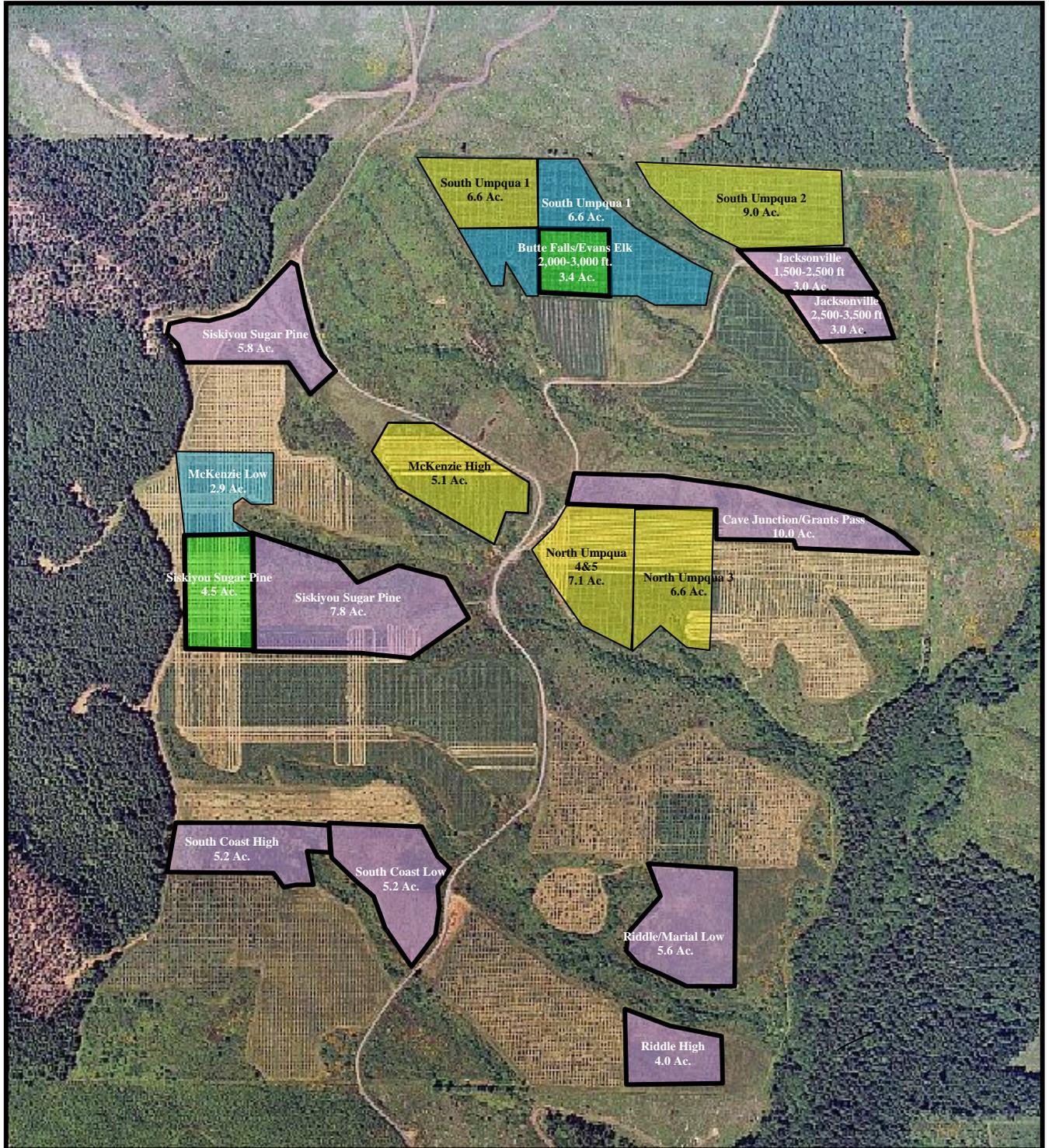
For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion review, contact Mike Crawford, Seed Orchard Program Manager, (541) 683-6445.

2009-2015 Tyrrell Orchard Recycling/Land Clearing Information

Orchard	Section	Block	Acres	Present Condition of Site	% Slope (Avg)	Proposed 2009-2015 Treatment	
Tyrrell	9	Butte Falls (Low)	3.4	Douglas-fir orchard unit	10%	Clear trees, Stump/vegetation removal, contouring/ ripping/ surface debris removal, site	
		Siskiyou Sugar Pine	4.5		20%		
		McKenzie High	5.1		10%	Rogue/thin, stump removal	
		North Umpqua 3	6.6		10%		
		North Umpqua 4&5	7.1		10%		
		South Umpqua 2	9.0		10%		
		South Umpqua 1	6.6		10%		
			7.0		15%	Clear trees/stump removal	
		McKenzie Low	2.9		15%		
		Cave Junction/Grants Pass	10.0		10%	Fallow Ground	Rototill
		Jacksonville Low	3.0	10%			
		Jacksonville Mid	3.0	10%			
		Riddle/Marial Low	5.6	15%			
		Riddle High	4.0	15%			
		Siskiyou Sugar Pine	13.6	15%			
		South Coast Low	5.2	20%			
	South Coast High	5.2	20%				
	15	North Coast Range (Inland)	5.2	Douglas-fir orchard unit	5%	Clear trees, Stump/vegetation removal, contouring/ ripping/ surface debris removal, site preparation	
		North Coast Range (Coast)	3.5		5%		
		Central Coast Range (Inland)	4.5		10%		
			12.2	15%	Fallow Ground	Rototill	
		Central Coast Range (Coast)	8.2	10%			
		Coos Bay Coast Range (Inland)	4.8	10%			
		Tyee/Elkton	8.6	10%			
		Riddle 1&2	13.4	Douglas-fir orchard unit	15%	Rogue/thin, stump removal	
		Riddle 3&4	8.6		15%		
		Noti	3.5		10%	Clear trees/stump removal	
	21	BPO Thin	20.0		10%	Thin, stump removal	
	Total Acres (Tyrrell)			194.3			

8/17/2009

Tyrrell Seed Orchard Proposed Orchard Recycling/Orchard Establishment T. 20 S., R. 5 W., Sec. 9



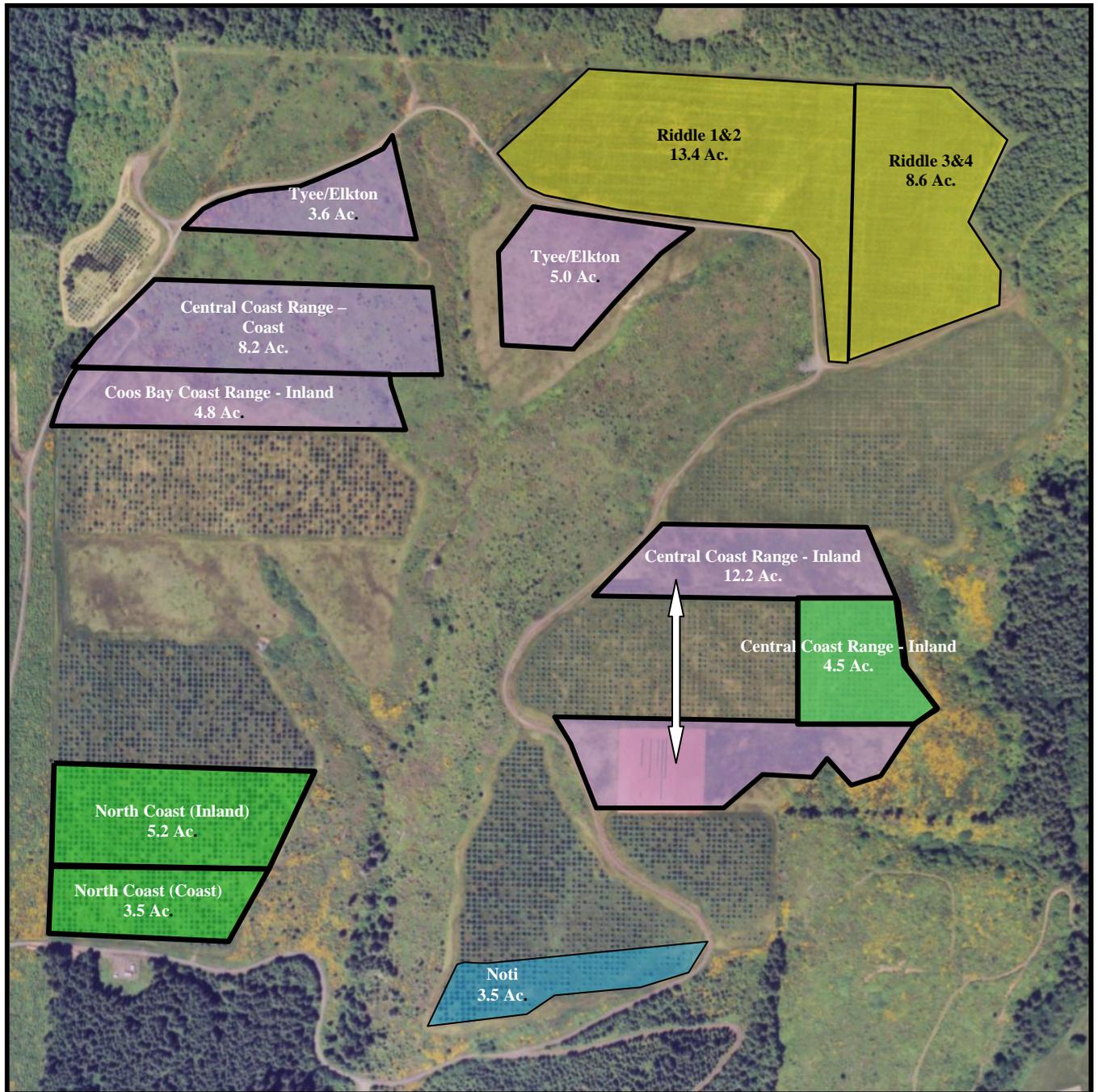
- = Orchard Recycling/Land Clearing
- = Fallow Ground Requiring Rototilling
- = Remove Trees/Grind Stumps
- = 2009/2010 Rogue/Thin/Grind Stumps

8/17/2009

Tyrrell Seed Orchard

Proposed Orchard Recycling/Orchard Establishment

T. 20 S., R. 5W., Sec. 15



■ = Orchard Recycling/Land Clearing
■ = 2009/2010 Rogue/Thin/Grind Stumps

■ = Fallow Ground Requiring Rototilling

■ = Remove Trees/Grind Stumps

8/17/2009

**Tyrrell Seed Orchard
Proposed Orchard Recycling/Orchard Establishment
T. 20 S., R. 5W., Sec. 21**



 =2009/2010 Rogue/Thin/Grind Stumps