

**United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Eugene District Office**

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

District Hazard Tree
DOI-BLM-1791A-OR-090-CE-2009-03

A. Background

Heavy winter rains, combined with severe wind conditions, are typical events which cause a significant number of blowdown and hazard trees along road and electrical transmission right-of-ways. This causes complications to the maintenance of these roads and powerlines. The road crew and local utility companies have asked for assistance in keeping these right-of-ways clear of these hazard trees and blowdown trees, which would help the maintenance program. Trees remaining along these right-of-ways are vulnerable to theft, and become a safety issue to vehicular traffic and the maintenance of the powerlines. In addition, hazard trees and blowdown trees pose a safety threat to structures and/or human safety.

A hazard tree is any standing live or dead tree, including snags, with evidence of deterioration or physical damage to the root system, trunk, or stem, when in proximity to people or structures. This is as defined in the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Code, Forest Activities, Oregon Administrative Rules, Chapter 437.

Proposed Action

Hazard trees and blowdown trees, which compromise the security of structures and human safety or jeopardize BLM's ability to maintain right-of-ways, may be removed when easily accessible or felled and left on site. Where possible, these trees would be sold or used for other projects, to recover value from BLM lands throughout the Eugene District.

The objectives of the proposed action are to remove, or fell and leave on site, trees which jeopardize human safety, pose hazards to road and electrical transmission right-of-ways, and where possible to recover resource value in a timely manner, and prevent theft of products.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the December 2008 Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (2008 ROD/RMP). Specific management direction is provided in the 2008 ROD/RMP for the LSMA, RMA, and Deferred TMA land use allocations. "Fall and remove trees as needed for safety or operational reasons, including but not limited to, hazard tree removal, creation of yarding corridors adjacent to nearby harvest units, and road construction, improvement or maintenance" (pg 28, 34, 37). In addition, the ROD/RMP directs that administrative actions including "Incidental removal of trees, snags, or logs for safety or operational reasons" would be applied in any land use allocation (pg 59-60).

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action meets the criteria for categorical exclusion in the Department of Interior, Departmental Manual 516 Chapter 11.5C (2); in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

"Sale and removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute a safety hazard, and where access for the removal requires no more than maintenance to existing roads."

It does not meet any of the exception criteria in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2.

During the design of this Proposed Action I gave special consideration to the potential for significant impacts to: threatened and endangered or bureau sensitive species of fish, wildlife, and plants; cultural resources; noxious weeds; and soil/hydrologic resources. Implementing the actions proposed in this categorical exclusion in a timely manner will enable the BLM to increase human safety and prevent damage to structures. where hazard trees may present a risk, reduce the potential of timber theft and recover some economic value of the damaged timber.

The proposed action described above is targeted for all BLM lands throughout the Eugene District. It will be carried out as necessary to prevent theft and alleviate safety concerns. The proposed action will be completed under this categorical exclusion in the calendar year 2009.

D. Signatures

Prepared By: /s/ Alan D. Corbin Date: 1/23/2009
Forester

Reviewed By: /s/ Sharmila Premdas Date: 1/23/2009
Environmental Coordinator

Reviewed By: /s/ William O'Sullivan Date: 1/28/2009
Field Manager, Upper Willamette Resource Area

Reviewed By: /s/ William E. Hatton Date: 2/2/2009
Field Manager, Siuslaw Resource Area

Approved By: /s/ Virginia Grilley Date: 2/4/2009
District Manager, Eugene District BLM

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion review, contact Larry Larson, Eugene District Cruiser, (541) 683-6291.

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist

Proposed Action: Categorical Exclusion No. DOI-BLM-1791A-OR-090-CE-2009-03 Hazard Trees

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.	No
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.	No
3.	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA, Sec. 102(2)(E)]	No
4.	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	No
5.	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	No
6.	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	No
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.	No
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.	No
9.	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	No
10.	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898).	No
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).	No
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).	No

Mitigation Measures:

Except for situations when public safety is an immediate concern, contact the unit wildlife biologist to ensure compliance with all current mitigation standards.

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DECISION RECORD

Decision:

It is my decision to implement this action on BLM lands as described in the categorical exclusion documentation DOI-BLM-1791A-OR-090-CE-2009-03

Decision Rationale:

The proposed action has been reviewed by Resource Area Staff and appropriate project Design Features as specified, will be incorporated into the proposal. Based on the NEPA Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

Authorizing Official:

/s/ Virginia Grilley
Virginia Grilley
District Manager
Eugene District Office

2/4/2009
Date

Administrative Remedies

Notice of the decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR section 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.