

1791
CX-12-30

Cultural Resource Pedestrian Survey,
Soil Probes, and Exploratory Excavation

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

A. Background

Project Name: West Eugene Wetlands Cultural Resource Inventory - to be conducted between July 2012 and September 2013;

Categorical Exclusion Number: DOI-BLM-ORE050-2012-0030-CX

Location: The project area is comprised of 22 discontinuous parcels within West Eugene Wetlands (WEW) which are owned and managed by the BLM. All land within the planning area lies in the Long Tom River Basin. The parcels lie primarily to the east-southeast of Fern Ridge Reservoir, with a few to the north of the reservoir, all within T.16S. & T.17S., R. 4 W. & R 5 W., W.M.

Parcel Name	Survey Acres
South Taylor	161
North Taylor	143
Long Tom ACEC	13
Fir Butte	18
Oxbow West	59
Beaver Run	20
Balboa	56
Danebo	12
Burley	4
Stewart Pond	86
Eastern Gateway	14
Oxbow East	46
Greenhill	79
Oak Hill	53
Vinci	53
Speedway	83
Isabelle	5
Willow Corner Annex	5
Willow Creek Confluence	3
Rosy	3
Nolan	1
Hansen	<1

917

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed project consists of three (3) tasks to be completed under contract for cultural resource inventory on an estimated 917 acres in specific parcels of the WEW, including a pedestrian survey of the entire area to be complemented by approximately 100 small "discovery" shovel probes in specified areas determined by the contractor in consultation with the BLM COR. The survey of the project area will be conducted by archaeologists at transect intervals of 20 meters or less to identify any evidence of cultural sites that may be visible on the surface. Because surface visibility may be limited by vegetation in many areas, the surveyors may clear up to 1 meter squares by scraping the surface with appropriate hand tools providing exposure of mineral soil at 20 meter intervals in areas of poor visibility. The surveyors may also take advantage of areas of natural exposure such as rodent burrows, and schedule the survey to further take advantage of enhanced surface exposure following prescribed fire, mastication, mowing and other vegetation treatments when feasible (see attachments). In addition, the pedestrian survey will be complemented by subsurface probes in selected areas determined in consultation with the COR to have a high probability of cultural resources to determine whether buried archaeological deposits are present within the project area. The Contractor shall perform systematic subsurface discovery probing consisting of up to 105 shovel probes (30-cm-diameter) or hand augers (25-cm in diameter), depending upon depth of exploration needed. The probes will be excavated by natural strata, subdivided by 10-cm levels. All soil will be sifted through 1/8-inch mesh screens. All units will be backfilled upon completion.

In addition, limited exploratory excavations will be executed in the area of several (3-6) previously identified rock features within the southwest portion of the Hansen parcel to determine the potential archaeological significance of these rock features. This work item consists of excavating a trench 50 cm wide and 1 to 2 meters long through each feature; depth will depend on the nature of archaeological materials but generally will be a minimum of 50 cm. Up to 2.8 cubic meters of soils will be excavated in this manner. Excavation will be conducted in arbitrary 10 cm levels within natural stratigraphy using standard archaeological controls and documentation methods. All excavated fill shall pass through 1/8 inch screen and again all units will be backfilled upon completion. This parcel contains designated Critical Habitat. The work as proposed will result in no adverse modification of the critical habitat.

B. Plan Conformance Review:

The proposed action is in conformance with the Eugene District Resource Management Plan (RMP, 1995), as amended.

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. (1.6) *Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.* The categorical exclusion is appropriate because there are no extraordinary circumstances

potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment, as documented in the following table. The proposed action is reviewed below, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

D. Signatures:

Prepared	<u> /s/Cathy Lindberg </u> Acting District Archaeologist	Date: <u> 7/30/2012 </u>
Reviewed	<u> /s/Richard Hardt </u> Environmental Coordinator	Date: <u> 7/30/2012 </u>
Approved	<u> /s/Alan D. Corbin </u> Siuslaw Resource Area Field Manager Eugene District BLM	Date: <u> 8/2/2012 </u>

Contact Person:

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion, contact: Catherine Lindberg, Acting District Archaeologist (541) 683-6425.

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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist

Proposed Action: DOI-BLM-ORE050-2012-0030-CX; West Eugene Wetlands Cultural Resource Inventory

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. (See attached Project Design Features.)

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</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> This action would comply with relevant protection measures under the Bald Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and associated federal regulations and BLM policies, and would not measurably affect any of the species regulated by those acts. This action is designed to execute cultural resource inventories and identify previously undocumented cultural resources within the area.</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> 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> There are no predicted effects from the proposed action that are highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique, or 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> Cultural Resource inventory and exploratory excavation are discrete actions and do not commit the BLM to pursuing further actions, and as such would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		X

Extraordinary Circumstances	YES	NO
<p>6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Cultural Resource inventory and exploratory excavation will not have significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effects. No trees will be removed from the site and are not connected to other proposed actions.</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.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This action is designed to execute cultural resource inventories and identify previously undocumented cultural resources within the area which may potentially be eligible to the National Register.</p>		X
<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> There are approximately 450 acres that are designated as critical habitat for Fender's blue butterfly, Kincaid's lupine, and the Willamette daisy. These three federally-listed species and several other BLM-designated sensitive plants are present in some portions of the project area. Pedestrian surveys and exploratory probes within sensitive plant populations may be scheduled after plant populations have senesced for the season. The Contractor will identify specific locations within listed plants and Fender's blue butterfly areas proposed to be disturbed by inventory methods by flagging exact locations and will work closely with the BLM COR and other specialists prior to any scrapings, probing and excavation. (See specific project design features below.) The proposed action would result in no effect to federally listed species or their critical habitat.</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 Federal, State, local and tribal laws.</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> The proposed actions would not affect low income or 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> Project activities will not affect access to ceremonial sites. Previous scoping for these types of projects has not identified tribal concerns regarding ceremonial use of Indian 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 does 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. Vehicles accessing the project area for the proposed action would stay on existing roads (no additional roads proposed), reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds or seed. All equipment will be cleaned prior to entering a site and when moving between sites. District personnel or the contractor will augment native seed (provided by the BLM) into the scraping/excavation locations to prevent weed invasions into higher quality native prairie locations as determined by the WEW project lead.</p>		X

** See project design features below and attached table.

Project Design Features – See Attached Table and Maps

T&E and Special Status Animal Species

Fender's Blue Butterfly – Surveys will be conducted in the following manner to protect Fender's Blue Butterfly sites from being impacted:

- The initial Pedestrian Surveys will be done within Fender's Exclusion Areas after butterflies have diapaused and lupine plants have senesced (after August 18) in 2012. No scraping or probing will occur within these areas until a qualified BLM staff person approves the area for scraping and probing to be conducted. Limited scrapings and probing may occur in 2013 with the assistance/approval of a BLM staff person but shall be at least 6 six feet away from existing Kincaid's lupine plants and when adult butterflies have recently emerged (late May into June).
- Exclusion Areas will be identified in the field for the contractor in following way. The map for each site will be explicit:
 - Sites will be located with the help of a BLM wildlife biologist. The contractor will coordinate with BLM to have a staff member help identify Exclusion Area boundaries.
- Areas for future inventory scraping or probing within Exclusion Areas will be proposed by the contractor in consultation with BLM COR.
 - Proposed for scraping and probing within the Exclusion Areas will be marked in the field by the contractor by placing pin flags for future assessment by BLM staff. These areas shall be marked on the BLM aerial photo map as well and provided to the BLM COR after the initial Pedestrian survey for review and approval by BLM wildlife biologist.
- Sites that are designated as higher quality prairie or Critical Habitat will be re-seeded with native species after scraping and probing are conducted by the contractor and inspections are completed by COR.

Great Copper Butterfly — Surveys will be conducted in the following manner to protect Great Copper Butterfly sites from being impacted:

- The initial Pedestrian Surveys will be done within Copper's Exclusion Areas after butterflies have diapaused and the willow dock plants have senesced (September 1). No scraping or probing will occur within these areas until approved by a qualified BLM staff person. Exclusion Areas will be identified in the field for the contractor in following way. The map for each site will be explicit:
 - Sites will be located with the help of a BLM wildlife biologist. The contractor will coordinate with BLM to have a staff member help identify Exclusion Area boundaries.
- Areas for future inventory scraping or probing within Exclusion Areas will be proposed by the contractor in consultation with BLM COR.
 - Proposed areas will be marked by the contractor by placing pin flags for future assessment and marked on the BLM's aerial photo map and provided to the BLM COR after the initial Pedestrian survey for review and approval by BLM wildlife biologist.
- Sites that are designated as higher quality prairie or Critical Habitat will be re-seeded with native species after scrapings, probing, or excavation.

Ground Nesting Birds and Migratory Bird policy – (Grasshopper & vesper sparrows, meadowlarks, horned lark);

Pedestrian surveys will be conducted after July 15. Any nests found during survey shall be avoided.

T&E and Special Status Plant Species - (Willamette daisy, Bradshaw's lomatium, Kincaid's lupine)

Surveys will be conducted in the following manner to protect any T&E or Sensitive plants from being impacted. Areas that do not have T&E or Sensitive species will not have restrictions on when or where Pedestrian Surveys, scrapings and probing can occur:

- The initial Pedestrian Surveys will be done within T&E/Sensitive Plant Exclusion Areas after plants have senesced. No scraping or probing will occur within these areas until approved by a qualified BLM staff person. Exclusion Areas will be identified in the field for the contractor in one of the following ways. The map for each site will be explicit as to which of the following methods is required:
 - Sites are identified as Exclusion Areas on maps and will have GPS coordinates – contractor will be responsible for knowing where the boundaries of Exclusion Areas are based on maps and GPS coordinates; OR,
 - Sites will be located with the help of a BLM botanist – contractor will coordinate with BLM and have a botanist to help identify Exclusion Area boundaries.
- Any scraping, probing, or excavation within T&E Sensitive Plant Exclusion Areas that are necessary will occur when a staff botanist can accompany the contract archaeologist to the Exclusion Area and help select sites that will avoid any adverse impacts to a plant species of concern. Scraping, probing, and excavation shall be at least 6 feet away from Bureau-listed and Federally- listed species.
- Areas for future inventory scraping or probing within Exclusion Areas will be proposed by the contractor in consultation with BLM COR.
- Proposed areas will be marked by the contractor by placing pin flags for future assessment and marked on the BLM photo and provided to the BLM COR after the initial Pedestrian survey for review and approval by BLM botanist.
- Sites that are designated as higher quality prairie or Critical Habitat will be re-seeded with native species after scrapings, probing, or excavation.

Soils

- Ant mound topography will not be disturbed during scraping/probing/excavation.

Aquatic Resources

N/A

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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-ORE050-2012-0030-CX.

Land Use Plan Conformance:

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the 1995 Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (as amended).

Survey and Manage:

Survey and Manage does not apply to these lands since the West Eugene Wetlands are not located within the range of the northern spotted owl and the actions proposed are not related to management of habitat for late-successional and old growth forest related species.

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.

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 appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR Part 4.

Authorizing Official:

/s/ Alan D. Corbin

Alan D. Corbin, Field Manager
Siuslaw Resource Area, Eugene District Office

8/2/2012

Date: