

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

A. Background

Project Name: West Eugene Wetlands Soil/Water Chemistry Study - to be conducted between Sept 2012 and Sept 2017;

Categorical Exclusion Number: DOI-BLM-ORE050-2012-0033-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 T16S&T17SR4W&R5W, W.M.

Parcel Names: South Taylor, North Taylor, Long Tom ACEC, Fir Butte, Oxbow West, Beaver Run, Balboa, Danebo, Burley, Stewart Pond, Eastern Gateway, Oxbow East, Greenhill, Oak Hill, Vinci, Speedway, Isabelle, Willow Corner Annex, Willow Creek Confluence, Rosy, Nolan, Hansen.

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed project consists of soil and water chemistry sampling using piezometers. Piezometers will not exceed 3 inches in diameter and will be installed in geomorphically dissimilar locations on BLM parcels. The project area will be assessed to determine which parcels represent geomorphically dissimilar topographies and ground water tables. The Contractor shall auger no deeper than required to install the piezometers (three to twelve feet in depth). Excavated soil from the probe holes will be stored and used for analysis. Sampling will occur seasonally, but primarily during large rain events. All units will be secured during use and any and all excavations will be backfilled upon completion. Any proposed work on parcels containing designated Critical Habitat will result in no adverse modification of the critical habitat since sampling will not occur within areas determined to be occupied by federally listed plants and animals. Areas where other special status plants or animals occur will also be avoided. Piezometers will be mapped and clearly marked. Mowing or burning may occur where piezometers are located. These areas will be identified with BLM staff assistance.

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/ Karin Baitis </u> Siuslaw Resource Area Soil Scientist	Date: <u> 8/21/2012 </u>
Reviewed	<u> /s/ Sharmila Premdas </u> Environmental Coordinator	Date: <u> 8/29/2012 </u>
Approved	<u> /s/ Alan D. Corbin </u> Siuslaw Resource Area Field Manager Eugene District BLM	Date: <u> 8/28/2012 </u>

Contact Person:

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion, contact:
Karin Baitis, Soil Scientist (541) 683-6470.

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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist

Proposed Action: DOI-BLM-ORE050-2012-0033-CX; West Eugene Wetlands Soil/Water Chemistry Study

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. No historic or cultural resource properties will be affected by the placement of the piezometers.</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 environmental effects from the proposed action which is not considered to be highly controversial nor are there unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses. Discrete water and soil sampling is being conducted to supplement and monitor water quality response to soil chemistry.</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 effects from the proposed action that are highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique, or have unknown risks. Soil cores will be limited in size and limited to locations that do not impinge on any plant or animal species.</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> Soil/Water sampling is a discrete action and does 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. <u>Rationale:</u> Soil/Water sampling, piezometer installation and soil coring will not have significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effects. Soil removed from the site will be used for chemical analysis. This study is 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. <u>Rationale:</u> This action will be designed to not impact any cultural resources.</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. <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. Any proposed work on parcels containing designated Critical Habitat will result in no adverse modification of the critical habitat since sampling will not occur within areas determined to be occupied by federally listed plants and animals. Areas where other special status plants or animals occur will also be avoided. The contractor will work closely with BLM staff and other specialists prior to piezometer installation. There would be insignificant effects to the species or their critical habitat from this action .</p>		X
<p>9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. <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). <u>Rationale:</u> The proposed actions would not affect low income or minority populations. The action is a physical science based study within west Eugene wetland boundaries.</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). <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). <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. No vehicle will access the project areas. All equipment will be cleaned prior to entering a site and when moving between sites.</p>		X

Soils

- Ant mound topography will not be disturbed.

Cultural Resources

- Piezometers will not be placed within known historic properties or archaeological sites. If cultural material is discovered during project activities, all ground disturbing work must be suspended in the area of the discovery until an archaeologist can assess the significance of the find.

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Soil/Water Chemistry
Study

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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-ORE050-2012-0033-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

8/28/2012

Date: