

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

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW**

OFFICE: Eugene District, Siuslaw Resource Area

TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-OR-050-2015-0012-CX

PROJECT NAME: Yellow Point Salvage

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T. 20 S., R. 7 W., Section 7, W.M.

**A. Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

Background

On Friday, September 5, 2014, at approximately 5:30 p.m., the Yellow Point Fire was reported burning approximately 25 miles west of Cottage Grove on private and Bureau of Land Management forestlands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry. The yellow point fire burned approximately 790 acres, of which approximately 350 acres are BLM lands. These lands are comprised of Late Successional Reserve, Riparian Reserve, and Matrix Land Use Allocation. Approximately 20 acres of Matrix General Forest Management Area (GFMA) lands are suitable for timber salvage.

Proposed Action

Salvage would occur on approximately 18 acres of matrix land. Salvage operations would remove fire-killed or fire-injured conifer trees. For this project, fire-injured trees are defined as having 70% of their green crown scorched and thus a 70% probability of mortality (Powell 2012, Reinhardt and Ryan 1989; Wagener 1961). Green trees would be harvested where necessary to facilitate logging operations, road construction and road renovation. Whole tree yarding would be restricted to minimize landslide potential and promote nutrient cycling. Two native surfaced roads would be renovated, one of which will require approximately 555 feet (0.105 miles) of temporary new road construction to re-align the existing grade and facilitate timber haul. In addition to timber harvest and road construction and renovation, approximately 400-600 trees per acre would be planted throughout the harvest areas. Predominately Douglas-fir trees would be used for planting.

A minimum of 240 linear feet of course woody debris (CWD) per acre, greater than 20 inches diameter and in segments 20 feet or longer would be left on site and scattered throughout the stand where they naturally occur. Approximately 4 snags per acre would be retained and would be retained in aggregates. One clump of about 20 snags for every 5 acres would be retained, which is about 3 clumps of roughly 1/10<sup>th</sup> of an acre each.

Natural surfaced roads, newly constructed temporary road and landings renovated for use would receive decommissioning measures including blocking, de-compacting, drainage and having slash placed on them. No additional gravel would be placed on existing roads and newly constructed road would remain native surface. In addition, native seed would be spread on newly constructed and existing road beds to re-establish vegetative cover as soon as possible after operations are complete.

**Project Design Features**

Operations would occur during the dry season, approximately 13 acres are proposed for cable yarding and 5 acres are proposed for ground based yarding.

- Organics should be left in the unit, on the ground, for nutrients and to reduce erosion. Trees will have their tops and limbs left within the unit where the source tree is felled.

- CWD would be felled across the slope as much as possible, to capture sediment and control erosion.

### **Logging design features to minimize effects to soil productivity**

#### Cable Yarding Design Features – approximately 13 acres Planned

- There shall be no whole tree yarding. All tops and limbs should remain within the unit.
- Cable yard to designated or approved landings.
- Space cable corridors 150 feet apart and limit to 12 feet in width (a cable system capable of 75 foot lateral yarding)
- Require a minimum one-end suspension. Intermediate supports may be necessary to achieve the required suspension.
- Require full suspension on all yarding across streams.
- Cable Corridors used for yarding in concave slopes above stream channel initiation points (headwall areas) should be 45 degrees of perpendicular to the centerline. This is to provide a sharp channel junction to dissipate the energy of any potential debris flows or torrents.
- Layout cable yarding systems to eliminate gouging (log dragging) to reduce concentration of drainage delivering to streams.
- Make cable yarding corridors erosion resistant if needed where severe gouging has occurred.
- Require directional felling and yarding away from streams where feasible to provide for stream bank stability and water quality protection.

#### Ground Based Yarding Design Features – approximately 5 acres

- Limit operations to when soil moisture content provides the most resistance to compaction (generally less than 25% - during dry season, typically, July 1 to October 15<sup>th</sup>, as approved by the Authorized Officer)
- There shall be no whole tree yarding. Leave all tops and limbs within the unit to retain organic matter including tops and limbs on the forest floor to provide soil stability and nutrient cycling
- Limit skid trails to slopes less than 35% with approval from the Authorized Officer.
- Pre-designate and approve all skid trails.
- Use existing skid trails wherever possible.
- Excavation (gouging) on skid trails would not exceed one foot in depth. Trees would be felled to lead to the skid trail.
- Preplan (map) and designate (flag) skid trails to occupy less than 10% of the Unit. This can be accomplished by minimum 150 foot spacing between skid trails, and maintaining width of the skid trail to 12 feet (felling of trees to-lead to the skid trails optimizes winching distances that can be as much as 100 feet so that distances between trails could reach 200 feet).
- Limit use of low ground pressure (recommended <6 psi) ground-based yarding equipment to one round trip when operating outside designated primary skid trails, walking the equipment over downed slash to minimize soil disturbance.
- Skid logs to designated or approved landings.
- Decompact all skid trails and landings and place slash and brush on trails. Use of an excavator with a bucket with teeth that can be used to shatter but not mix the soil is optimum. Care should be taken not to mix or displace the soil profile. Decompaction should immediately follow logging operations and take place no later than October 15. If decompaction cannot be accomplished the same operating season, all trails should be left in an erosion resistant condition and blocked.
- Drainage and erosion control measures, including water barring of skid trails, shall occur prior to winter rains.

### **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 applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:**

- "Provide for salvage harvest of timber killed or damaged by events such as wildfire, windstorms, insects, or disease, consistent with management objectives for other resources." (RMP, pg. 84).
- "Normally, all sites that receive regeneration harvest and do not require burning will be reforested within one year of cutting...Most areas will be planted with seedlings grown from genetically-selected seed." (RMP, pg. 200).

**C. Compliance with NEPA**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with BLM categorical exclusions 516 DM 11.9 (C)(8). *Salvage dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 mile of temporary road construction.*

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9(C)(3): *Seeding or reforestation of timber sales or burn areas.*

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/ Dan Stephens  
Dan Stephens, Logging Systems Specialist

Date: 4/15/15

Signature of NEPA Coordinator:

/S/ Sharmila Premdas  
Sharmila Premdas, NEPA Planner

Date: 4/15/15

Signature of the Responsible Official:

/S/ Michael J. Korn  
Michael J. Korn, Siuslaw Resource Area,  
Field Manager

Date: 4/15/15

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion review, contact: Chris Finn at 541-683-6421.

**References**

Ryan, K.C. (1982). Marking guidelines for fire-injured trees in California.

Reinhardt, E. D., & Ryan, K.C. (1989). Estimating tree mortality resulting from prescribed fire. Prescribed fire in the inter-mountain region: *Forest site preparation and range improvement*. [Pullman, WA], [Washington State University, Cooperative Extension], p. 41-44.

Wagner, W. (1961). Guidelines for estimating the survival of fire-damaged trees in California.

Southwest Oregon Forest Insect and Disease Service Center (SWOFIDSC), (2001). USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Southwest Oregon Forest Insect and Disease Service Center, Central Point, OR 97502 USA. Guidelines for selecting fire injured trees that are likely to be infested by insects in southwest Oregon forests.

## EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES CHECKLIST

DOI-BLM-OR-050-2015-0012-CX

Yellow Point Salvage

*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><b>1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Safety precautions will be incorporated into operations as required by OSHA regulation.</p>		X
<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> No unique cultural or natural resources are present in project area. Riparian areas have been reserved from salvage. No significant impacts to migratory birds because although early seral habitat with abundant recently dead snags is rare in the Oregon Coast Range and on the Siuslaw RA (&lt;1% of the RA), the project would only remove a conservative amount of acres with recently dead snags. Salvage would remove about 18 acres of the fire area on BLM matrix lands, similar habitat will remain within adjacent riparian reserve and late successional reserve land use allocations. Salvage would retain snags and down wood in adequate numbers to support individual or small groups of wildlife species that are dependent on dead wood in early seral habitats.</p>		X
<p><b>3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> While the Northwest Forest Plan and ROD/RMP recognized circumstances where salvage may occur within riparian reserves and late successional reserves, this salvage project will not occur within riparian reserve and late successional reserve land use allocations. The project will occur in accordance with direction in the Eugene District ROD/RMP within matrix land use allocations.</p> <p>The BLM also acknowledges there may be a difference of opinion over the definition of a dying tree. The categorical exclusion for this salvage project defines a dying tree as "a standing tree that has been severely damaged by forces such as fire, wind, ice, insects, or disease, and that in the judgment of an experienced forest professional or someone technically trained for the work, is likely to die within a few years." Only trees considered dead or dying would be salvaged, a dying tree is defined as a Douglas-fir tree with more than 70 percent crown scorch.</p> <p>Four snags per acre would be left across the portions of the 18 acres proposed for salvage. In addition, a minimum of 240 linear feet of logs per acre greater than or equal to 20 inches in diameter and 20 feet long would be left per the 1995 ROD/RMP management direction (p. 84-86).</p> <p>While there has been some controversy among scientists regarding the amount of dead trees that should remain after salvage to serve as coarse woody debris and snags, whether this is "highly" controversial is questionable. In any case, this was resolved in the Eugene District ROD/RMP that was accompanied by an EIS that addressed this. This project will leave 4 snags and 240 linear feet of coarse woody debris on average per acre within the salvage units, in accordance with the Eugene District ROD/RMP.</p>		X

Extraordinary Circumstances	YES	NO
<p><b>4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMP's) are being implemented to mitigate potentially significant environmental effects such as restricting whole tree yarding and placement of Course Woody Debris (CWD) to prevent soil erosion and promote nutrient cycling.</p>		X
<p><b>5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This action is directed by the 1995 RMP to provide for salvage of fire killed trees (page 84). Future actions would be similarly directed by the RMP and would be independent of this action. No precedent would be set by this action.</p>		X
<p><b>6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u>  Only salvage of dead or dying trees, road renovation and 0.105 miles of new road construction is being proposed on BLM lands, no additional forest management activities are planned on BLM lands in the area. Appropriate BMP's for soil conservation are being implemented to prevent significant environmental effects. Of 350 acres of BLM timber burned, approximately 18 acres are being harvested. No harvest is to occur on late successional reserve or riparian reserve land use allocations.</p> <p>The salvage operation would not contribute to significant direct or indirect adverse impacts to wildlife species from the salvage operation. The 1995 RMP standards of leaving 240 linear feet of coarse woody debris logs per acre greater than or equal to 20 inches in diameter and 20 feet long would be implemented along with leaving 4 snags per acre. The proposed action would not contribute to cumulatively significant effects to wildlife species.</p> <p>The salvage operation would not contribute to significant direct or indirect adverse impacts on sediment delivery into streams from the salvage operation. The proposed action would occur during the dry season, full suspension will be used when yarding across streams, full 1995 RMP no harvest riparian reserve stream buffers will be maintained (120 feet for non-fish-bearing streams and 240 feet for fish bearing streams) on all streams within the project area, CWD retained within the salvage area will be felled across the slope as much as possible to capture sediment and control erosion. The proposed action would not contribute to cumulatively significant effects on sediment delivery into streams.</p>		X
<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> No properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are located within the project area.</p>		X
<p><b>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.</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> The salvage operation would not contribute to adverse direct or indirect effects on northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets because there is no habitat that would be impacted for the northern spotted owl or marbled murrelet. The salvage area is not located in designated critical habitat for spotted owls or marbled murrelets. Furthermore, there would no effect to these species from disturbance or disruption because the nearest known spotted owl or marbled murrelet sites or suitable nesting habitats are more than ¼ mile from project activities that could potentially disrupt or disturb nesting individuals. Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive Botanical Species are unlikely to</p>		X

<b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<p>occur in the project area.</p> <p>The salvage operation would not contribute to adverse direct or indirect effects on coho salmon and their designated critical habitat because coho salmon are not present in streams that are adjacent to the harvest area. Designated coho salmon critical habitat is located approximately 2500 feet downstream from the harvest area. The salvage operation will not contribute to sediment delivery because the proposed action would occur during the dry season, full suspension will be used when yarding across streams, full 1995 RMP no harvest riparian reserve stream buffers will be maintained (120 feet for non-fish-bearing streams and 240 feet for fish bearing streams) on all streams within the project area. Project design features such as CWD retained within the salvage area will be felled across the slope as much as possible to capture sediment and control erosion.</p> <p>The salvage area is not considered habitat for any ESA listed botanical species therefore the salvage operation would not contribute to adverse direct or indirect effects on any listed botanical species.</p>		
<p><b>9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</b></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 (1995), which complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act and others.</p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 2898).</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This action would not have a disproportionately adverse effect on low income or minority populations. This action would provide jobs and resources for the local wood products economy.</p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>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).</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This project falls within the Oregon coast range and there are no recorded sites within project area. A professional archaeologist has assessed the project.</p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>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).</b></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Noxious weeds are present in the vicinity of the project area, there is no potential for significant impacts since the salvage area is small. Mitigation measures being implemented are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean all yarding and road construction equipment prior to arrival on BLM-managed lands to lessen the spread of noxious weed seed.</li> <li>• Sow native grass seed on decommissioned, tilled roads, and other areas as appropriate, after operations have been completed.</li> <li>• Monitor for at least 3 consecutive years after timber sale implementation, and control weed infestations discovered through monitoring as appropriate.</li> </ul>		<b>X</b>

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**DECISION RECORD**  
DOI-BLM-OR-050-2015-0012-CX  
Yellow Point Salvage

**Decision**

It is my decision to implement this action as described in the categorical exclusion documentation DOI-BLM-OR-050-2015-0012-CX.

**Survey and Manage**

The project is consistent with the 2001 Record of Decision (ROD) and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, as incorporated into the district Resource Management Plan.

The salvage area burned with a high intensity fire and currently does not provide habitat for any survey and manage botanical species. Therefore salvage would not be considered habitat disturbing for survey and manage botanical species.

No significant impacts to survey and manage wildlife species would occur because the salvage operations would not impact late successional forest habitats that these species require for persistence.

**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.

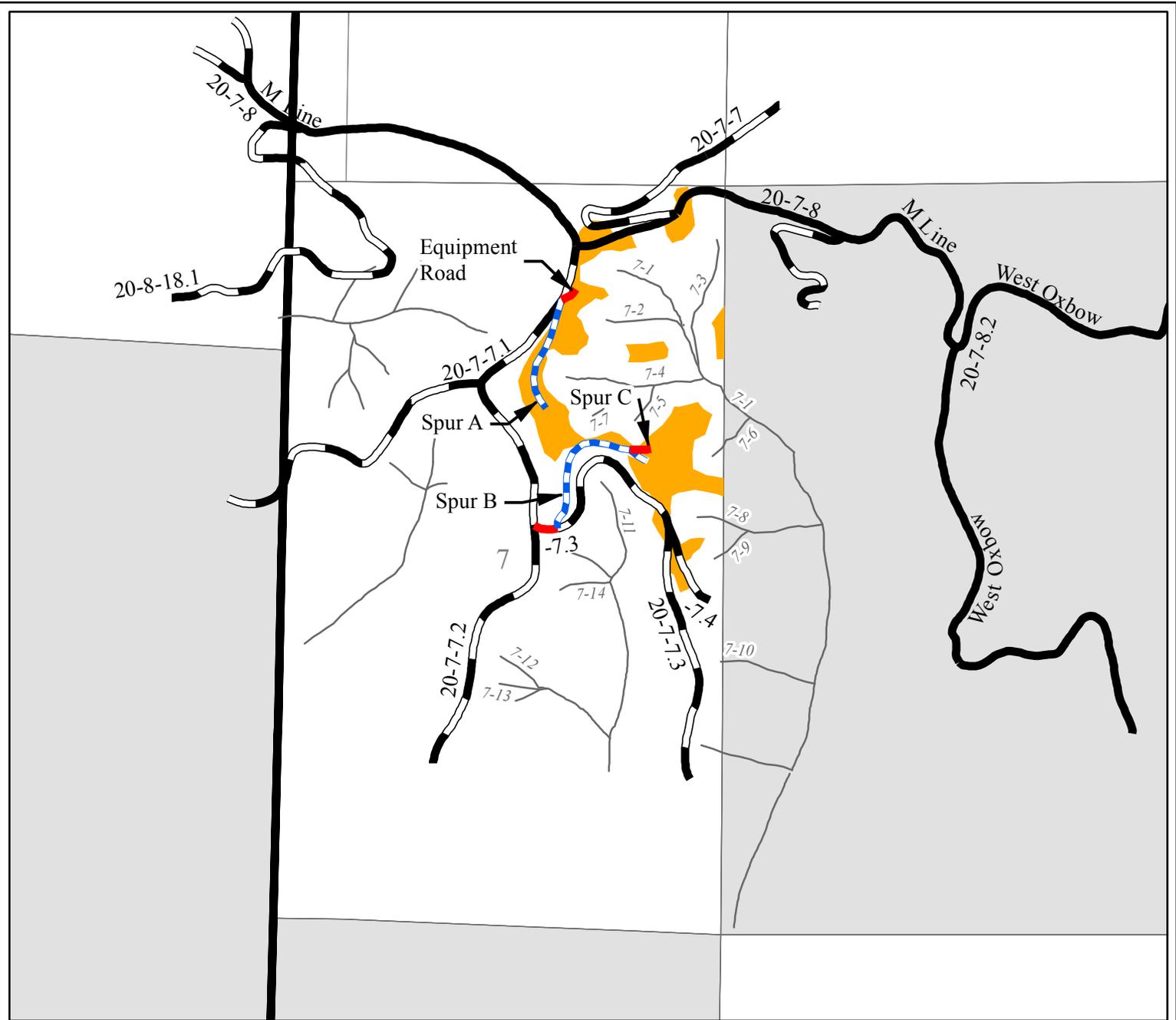
**Administrative Remedies**

The decision to implement this project may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this project will not be subject to protest until the notice of sale is first published in the Eugene Register-Guard. This published notice of sale will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests of this project (43 CFR 5003.2b). Protests of this decision must be filed with this office within fifteen (15) days after first publication of the notice of sale. 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/ Michael J. Korn  
Michael J. Korn  
Field Manager, Siuslaw Resource  
Area, Eugene District Office

Date: 4/15/15



**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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Universal Transverse Mercator  
Zone 10, North American Datum 1983

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Original data were compiled from various sources and may  
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**Eugene District**



# Yellow Point Salvage CX Map

T.20 S., R.7 W. Sec. 7

