

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE  
DECISION RECORD**

**SEELEY CREEK NORTH TIMBER SALE  
DOI-BLM-OR-E060-2008-0004-EA**

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) for the proposed Seeley Creek Project (EA-OR090-08-04) were prepared by the Upper Willamette Resource Area, Eugene District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This timber sale was analyzed as part of that project, and would occur on approximately 350 acres located in T. 15 S., R 1 W., section 7 and T. 15S., 2W., section 13. Land Use Allocations were Matrix and Riparian Reserves. Actions may include thinning in upland and Riparian Reserves, road and off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail improvements, culvert replacements, temporary road construction, and road decommissioning.

Purpose and Objectives:

The need for action in Matrix and Riparian Reserves has been established through the results of field reviews and stand examinations, which indicate that stands would benefit from thinning or density management. Currently the stands are dense, overstocked and are uniform in structure. This results in reduced tree growth and stand vigor. Also in Riparian Reserves, stand examination show that stands are deficient in late-successional structural components. Treatment would increase stand vigor, growth rates, crown differentiation and complexity. Additional benefits for treating Riparian Reserves would be to acquire desired vegetation characteristics, which would help to attain watershed aquatic conservation objectives.

The purposes of the actions in Matrix are to meet the objectives given in the 1995 Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (1995 ROD/RMP). Some listed objectives are to: (1) Produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities to provide jobs and to contribute to community stability; (2) Provide habitat for a variety of organisms associated with both late-successional and younger forests and maintain valuable structural components, such as down logs and snags (pg. 34). Direction for road management is stated on page 98 of the 1995 RMP, which directs us to, "manage roads to meet the needs identified under other resource programs." Additional guidance for recreation management directs us to, "manage Off Highway Vehicle use on BLM administered land to protect natural resources, provide visitor safety, and minimize conflicts among various users (1995 RMP, pg. 80).

The purpose of the actions in Riparian Reserves are to enhance or maintain late-successional forest conditions, acquire or maintain characteristics needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives, and to provide habitat for Special Status Species, and other terrestrial species (1995 RMP, pp. 18, 23).

Decision:

Based on the analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment (EA-OR090-08-04) and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), it is my decision to implement

Alternative 2 and all associated Project Design Features (PDFs) because it best meets the purpose and need.

This alternative proposes to thin approximately 350 acres. Thinning would be designed to increase tree size through time, develop windfirm trees, extend the culmination of mean annual increment and capture anticipated mortality. The stands would be thinned from below. Trees selected for harvest would be the suppressed, intermediate, and co-dominant conifer trees, leaving the larger trees. Cut trees would be Douglas-fir and western hemlock. This prescription would result in a stand with variable spacing, between 15 and 25 feet between the Douglas-fir and western hemlock. Thinning would be accomplished with a combination of cable and ground-based yarding systems.

Silvicultural treatments would occur in the outer edges of the Riparian Reserve and would be treated the same as the upland. Depending on channel stability, effective shade zone needed, and current stand conditions, the no-harvest buffers adjacent to the streams would vary between 75 and 200 feet. Seeps and springs would have no-harvest buffers ranging between 25 to 50 feet.

Treatments would provide and help to create a sustainable supply of timber in the uplands while managing stocking and species composition in the Riparian Reserves.

Under this alternative and within this sale, approximately 1900 feet of road would be permanently constructed, 1100 feet would be temporarily constructed and 3700 feet of road would be decommissioned.

Portions of BLM managed OHV trails may be temporarily disturbed during project activities. However project design features outlined in the environmental analysis, would help to mitigate the extent and duration of these disturbances.

I did not select Alternative 1 because it did not meet the purpose and need for the project.

#### Compliance:

On the basis of the information contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that this decision is in conformance with the Eugene District's 2008 Western Oregon Plan Revision Record of Decision (2008 ROD) and Resource Management Plan (2008 RMP).

Revision of a resource management plan necessarily involves a transition from the application of the old resource management to the application of the new resource management plan. A transition from the old resource management plan avoids disruption of the management of BLM-administered lands and allows the BLM to utilize work already begun or completed on the planning and analysis of projects.

The 2008 ROD allowed for such projects to be implemented consistent with the management direction of either the 1995 Resource Management Plan or the approved Resource Management Plan attached to the Record of Decision, at the discretion of the decision maker. This project is consistent with the 1995 RMP and meets the requirements designated in the 2008 ROD for such transition projects:

1. A decision was not signed prior to the effective date of the 2008 ROD, but will be signed within two years of the effective date of the 2008 ROD. (For the purpose

- of establishing the date of the decision for such transition projects, the decision is considered signed for a timber sale upon the publication of a notice of sale in a newspaper, consistent with 43 CFR 5003.2).
2. Preparation of the NEPA document was advertised in the Eugene District's scoping newsletter, *Eye to the Future*, in October 2007, which was prior to the effective date of the 2008 ROD.
  3. The action would not employ regeneration harvest in a late-successional management area allocated by the 2008 ROD.
  4. The action would not employ timber harvest in a deferred timber management area allocated by the 2008 ROD.
  5. There would be no destruction or adverse modifications of critical habitat designated for species listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The 2008 ROD anticipated that the primary inconsistency with the 2008 RMP would be the retention of merchantable material in regeneration harvest units for green tree retention, snags, and coarse woody debris where the management direction in the 2008 RMP would direct the removal of all merchantable material. This inconsistency would result in less change to the current condition of the affected environment described in the 2008 EIS than if the project was consistent with the management direction in the 2008 RMP.

The implementation of this project will not have significant environmental effects beyond those already indentified in the 2008 Final EIS/Proposed RMP. The proposed action does not constitute a major federal action having significant effects on the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Administrative Review Opportunities:

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.

Approved by:

*William O'Sullivan*

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William O'Sullivan,  
Upper Willamette Resource Area Manager

5/22/09

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 2009