

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

**SEELEY CREEK SOUTH 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 400 acres located in T. 15 S., R 1 W., section 19 and T. 15S., 2W., section 24. Land Use Allocations are Matrix and Riparian Reserves. Actions include thinning in Matrix and Riparian Reserves, an off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail addition, road 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.

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 the BLM to, "manage roads to meet the needs identified under other resource programs." Additional guidance for recreation management directs the BLM 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 of the project.

This alternative proposes to thin approximately 400 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 Matrix. 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 Matrix while managing stocking and species composition in the Riparian Reserves.

Under the selected alternative and within this sale, approximately 1/2 mile of road would be permanently constructed, and approximately 1½ miles of road would be temporarily constructed. Also, approximately ½ mile of road may be designated as part of the Shotgun OHV Trail system.

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 either does not meet or would delay the achievement of the Purpose and Need and subsequent objectives of the project as outlined in the EA (page 1).

Compliance:

This project is in conformance the 1995 *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan {NSO-ROD} USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management, April 1994), and the 1995 *Eugene District Resource Management Plan* (1995 RMP) including the 2007 *Record of Decision To Remove the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines from Bureau of Land Management Resource Management Plans within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*.

On July 16, 2009 the U.S. Department of the Interior, withdrew the Records of Decision (2008 ROD) for the Western Oregon Plan Revision and directed the BLM to implement actions in conformance with the resource management plans for western Oregon that were in place prior to December 30, 2008.

Since project planning and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act documentation for this project began prior to the effective date of the 2008 ROD, this project had been designed to comply with the land use allocations, management direction, and objectives of the 1995 resource management plan (1995 RMP).

The implementation of this project will not have significant environmental effects beyond those already indentified in the 1995 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

William O'Sullivan,
Upper Willamette Resource Area Manager

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Date: _____, 2009