

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Klamath Falls Resource Area**

**Finding of No Significant Impact  
2009 Juniper Disposal Environmental Assessment  
(#DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2009-0008-EA)**

## **Background**

The Interdisciplinary Team for the Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA), Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the impacts of different alternatives to dispose of approximately 3,210 acres of cut and piled juniper. The actions considered include ground based yarding the material using either one-end or full suspension and then removing and utilizing the material, burning, or leaving it lay. The proposed action will contribute to the reduction of fuel hazards generated from the recent juniper cutting and piling as well as provide material for commercial uses. The western juniper piles are located on rangelands and juniper woodlands located in the KFRA and were cut to improve overall rangeland conditions and to reduce the effects from encroaching western juniper on native rangeland vegetation.

The project area is located east of Klamath Falls and west of Lakeview within the Klamath Falls Resource Area. The proposed action is to mechanically yard western juniper using one-end suspension and then utilize it for biomass or other value added wood products. In riparian reserves and meadows, juniper would only be removed using full suspension logging. Inaccessible piles and residual material from landing piles will be burned after removal of material. Approximately five miles of temporary roads would be built and obliterated after use to facilitate removal. Approximately 20 miles of existing haul roads will be improved. The overall objective is to provide a raw material to be utilized for biomass and other value added wood products while at the same time address ecological conditions and restore native rangeland vegetation and contribute to local employment.

The issues addressed in the EA concern potential impacts to rangeland, soils, water quality, air quality, and other resources as they affect the ecosystem in the proposed project area. The design features of the Proposed Action and alternatives are analyzed in this EA.

## **Analysis of Potential Effects**

The proposed action and alternatives including “no action” were analyzed for significant effects as per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations - 40 CFR § 1508.27. The following criteria listed under 40 CFR § 1508.27(b) were considered and found to be not applicable to this action: significant beneficial or adverse effects; significant effects on public health or safety; effects on the quality of the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial; anticipated cumulatively significant impacts; highly uncertain or unknown risks; and precedents for future actions with significant effects.

The following unique characteristics (Critical Elements of the Human Environment), listed in 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(3), are not present and will not be affected: prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; wilderness; solid or hazardous waste; and Wild and Scenic Rivers. There is an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) within the project area; however the juniper material within this area will not be utilized to minimize impacts. The area was analyzed under the no action alternative and the burn only alternative. In either case project design features and mitigation described in Appendix A of the EA will be implemented to protect the area.

In regard to 40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(8), no adverse impacts are expected to cultural, scientific, or historical resources. The proposed area has been surveyed for cultural resources using BLM Class III survey methods. Surveys for cultural resources were conducted and known sites will be avoided. There are no sites, structures or objects listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

There will be no significant impacts to any special status species or habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act [40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(9)]. Surveys of the proposed treatment area were conducted for Threatened and Endangered species and special status species. Refer to the analysis for a discussion of special status species and habitat. Implementation of mitigations and project design features (Appendix A of the EA) as part of the proposed action would be sufficient to avoid significant impacts to potential habitat for special status species.

As per 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(10), this action conforms to all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. The action is consistent with Executive Order 12898 which addresses Environmental Justice. No potential impacts to low-income or minority populations have been identified internally by the BLM or externally through public notification and involvement. Consultation with local tribal governments has not identified any unique or special resources providing religious, employment, subsistence or recreation opportunities. Implementation of the actions would provide some employment opportunities that would involve local contractors who engage in similar types of work throughout Klamath County and the state of Oregon.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider effects of this decision on National Energy Policy. There will be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy. Within the project area there are no known energy resources with commercial potential and energy producing or processing facilities.

## **Determination**

The anticipated environmental effects contained in this EA are based on the most current science, professional judgment, and experience of the Interdisciplinary (ID) team and Klamath Falls Resource Area staff. Based on the information within the Environmental Assessment, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitute a significant impact affecting the quality of the human environment greater than those addressed in the:

- Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/FEIS, September 1994) and its Record of Decision (ROD, June 1995)
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (1993).
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Vegetation Treatments on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991).
- Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project and the Eastside Draft Environmental Impact Statement (ICBEMP, May 1997).

Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement, or a supplement to the existing RMP or Environmental Impact Statement, is not necessary and will not be prepared.

/s/ Donald J. Holmstrom  
Donald J. Holmstrom  
Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area

02/05/2010  
Date