

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

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
for the
BUCK MOUNTAIN ROAD ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
(#DOI-BLM-OR-L014-2012-002-EA)**

Background:

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA), Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has completed the environmental assessment (EA) for the Buck Mountain Road, which is located in T. 39 S., R. 6 E., Section 19. The EA considered three alternatives. One alternative was not analyzed in detail (EA, p. 3) because constructing a temporary road multiple times to provide access to the same area was not practical. The two alternatives analyzed in detail consist of the No Action Alternative and the proposed action (EA, pp. 2-3).

The Buck Mountain Road Environmental Assessment (EA) tiers to the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA # OR-014-08-01 and analyzes the same project area. The only proposed action in the Buck Mountain Road EA is within the Cold Onion EA project area. The Cold Onion EA analyzed the effects of proposed vegetation treatments and other management actions on BLM lands.

Proposed Action:

Construction of approximately one quarter (0.25) mile of road to extend road 39-6E-19 to allow for removal of harvested material from the adjacent plantation.

Analysis of Potential Effects:

The following Critical Elements of the Human Environment are not present and will not be affected, so no unique characteristics would be impacted (Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations - 40 CFR § 508.27(b) (3)): Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; wilderness; waste, solid or hazardous; and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

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. Correspondence with local tribal governments has not identified any unique or special resources providing religious, employment, subsistence or recreation opportunities. Employment would involve local contractors who engage in similar types of work throughout Klamath County.

Surveys have not been performed in this area for cultural resources due to the heavy brush throughout the area. Surveys will be performed prior to road construction and following pretreatment of vegetation within the road prism when better ground access is available. As a consequence, there will be no adverse impacts to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(8)).

Field surveys for special status species and Survey and Manage botanical species were conducted in the timber sale area as documented in the Cold Onion EA (p. 23). No special status species or Survey and Manage species were found in the Buck Mountain Road EA project area.

Terrestrial wildlife special status species described in the Cold Onion Forest Health EA are associated with mature forest stands and are not associated with pine plantation habitat. Therefore, they would not be found in this habitat type. There would be no additional impacts from this proposed action to wildlife special status species other than those impacts already assessed in the Cold Onion EA.

The BLM consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on the effects of timber harvest on northern spotted owls (NSOs) for the Cold Onion EA. The Buck Mountain plantation thinning treatments described in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA, and the proposed road construction analyzed in the Buck Mountain Road EA, are not within any known spotted owl territories. The proposed road construction would occur primarily within a 30-year-old pine plantation classified as non-habitat for the spotted owl with only the initial 200 feet of the road construction in dispersal habitat. The proposed road construction would not change that classification or the determinations made by the BLM for the actions consulted on under the Cold Onion EA. On January 3, 2013 the final rule for NSO designated critical habitat became effective. The proposed road construction is outside of the NSO critical habitat designation.

The BLM notified the FWS about the proposed road construction necessary to complete the plantation thinning. On May 21, 2012, the FWS determined that the proposed road would not trigger re-initiation and the Cold Onion Forest Health Biological Opinion (8-10-09-08F0009) would meet our section 7 consultation requirements. Surveys were conducted for threatened and endangered species in the proposed treatment area. Refer to the analysis on pages 16 through 26 of the Cold Onion EA for a discussion of survey protocols and results. There will be no significant impacts to any threatened or endangered species or their habitat that has been determined as critical under the Endangered Species Act [40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(9)].

Of the ten points listed under 40 CFR § 1508.27(b), the following were considered and found not to apply 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 no precedents for future actions with significant effects.

This action conforms with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations (40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(10)). Impacts on the human environment will not exceed those anticipated in the RMP/EIS.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider effects of this decision on National Energy Policy. Within the project area, there are no known energy resources with commercial potential, and no pipelines, electrical transmission lines, energy producing or processing facilities (Cold Onion EA, p. 10) and there will be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that this action will not have any significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act

of 1969, and an environmental impact statement is not required. I have further determined that the proposed action conforms to management direction from the 1995 KFRA *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP).

/s/ Michael J. Korn
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Klamath Falls Resource Area
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2/28/2013
Date