

**RECORD OF PLAN CONFORMANCE AND
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) DETERMINATION
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

BLM Office: Lakeview District, Klamath Falls Resource Area

Proposed Action Title/Type: Bly Precommercial Thinning

NEPA Log #: DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2015-18-CX

Project Location: W.M., Township 37 South, Range 13 East, Section 1

A. Background

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed action includes cutting and removal of ponderosa pine saplings in a plantation. The project area is approximately nine acres of BLM plantation adjacent to several hundred acres of private pine plantation (Map 1). The nine acre BLM plantation is densely stocked at a spacing of approximately 8' X 8' (681 trees/acre). The BLM ground is part of a much larger private plantation that is adjacent to the BLM land on two sides. The private plantation is being thinned and the adjacent landowner has proposed that he thin the BLM land at the same time. The precommercial sized trees would be cut and removed from the site. Treatment would leave an approximate spacing of 15' X 15' of the largest and best trees. The proposed action would consist of cutting the pine trees, bunching them and then removing them with a skidder. The proposed project is expected to improve forest health as well as growth and vigor of residual trees.

Purpose and Need for the Project:

The purpose of the proposed action is to

- Reduce hazardous fuel loading through tree density reduction and removal of the material.
- Increase fire suppression effectiveness by increasing crown spacing.
- Thin young overstocked plantations and natural stands to increase growth and resiliency of remaining trees.
- Utilize small diameter material from existing plantations and young stands to facilitate the local economy by providing products.

Proposed Implementation:

This project is expected to be implemented in FY 2015. Depending on funding and environmental parameters this project could last over a period of five years.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan (LUP) Name: Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan

Date Approved/Amended: June 1995

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): "Precommercial thinning and release treatments would be designed to control stand density, influence species dominance, maintain stand vigor and place stands on developmental paths so that desired stand characteristics result in the future" (KFRA RMP page E-6).

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, 11.9. C.4. as follows: *Pre-commercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices.*

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, Appendix 2 apply. The following documentation describes whether or not the extraordinary circumstances apply to the project:

CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation		
Will the proposed categorical exclusion action:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: Operations will follow Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards designed to prevent job-related illness or injuries.		
2.2 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.		X
Rationale: The project area was reviewed and resource specialists were consulted and no unique features are present. This treatment area is located outside the unique geographic areas listed above. There are no parks, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild and scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; or other ecologically significant or critical areas within the project area.		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		X
Rationale: The proposed thinning area is small. The 9 acres chosen for harvest in this CX are PD lands with no unresolved conflicts. There are no streams or LSRs in this area.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: The KFRA BLM interdisciplinary team of resource specialists reviewed the project and determined there is no threat of significant environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks.		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: This action does not establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. Each project contains its own set of conditions that must be evaluated on its own merit, as the BLM has done with this project. Land use allocations and environmental conditions, such as remaining vegetation, slopes, soils, and streams, are unique to each project and must be considered with each treatment proposed.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: No direct relationships to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects were identified by resource specialists.		
2.7 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.		X
Rationale: The Area of Potential Effects (APE) is determined to be the area to be thinned within BLM ownership. A record search was performed and previous survey coverage was determined to be adequate. Cultural resource surveys of the entire APE were previously conducted within the proposed action areas in accordance with the National Cultural Programmatic Agreement and Protocol for Managing Cultural Resources on Lands Administered by the BLM in Oregon. No National Register Listed sites, or sites eligible for listing, were identified in the APE. The undertaking is determined to result in No Historic Properties Affected. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts to properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.		

2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: There are no proposed, threatened, or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act within the project area. There is no designated critical habitat within the project area. Therefore there will be "No Effect" to listed species or designated critical habitat.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The BLM interdisciplinary team reviewed the project for compliance with applicable laws such as the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Air Act, National Historic Preservation Act and Archaeological Resources Protection Act, among others. The resource specialists found the project conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Klamath Falls RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal and State laws.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: Based on past projects in the Klamath Falls Resource Area, the project would provide job opportunities in local communities. The project does not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect to low income or minority populations.		
2.11 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).		X
Rationale: BLM determines that the project will not 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.		
2.12 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).		X
Rationale: The proposed action does not result in measurable changes to the current baseline of the risk, or actual introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative invasive species in or from the project area. The implementation of project design features (PDFs) such as washing equipment prior to entry to the project area will reduce the risk of introduction or spread of noxious weeds.		
Existing and likely continuing activities including, but not limited to, motor vehicle traffic, recreation use, rural and urban development, road construction, timber harvest, and natural processes, can contribute to the introduction, existence, and spread of noxious weeds and invasive species. Vehicles accessing the project area would stay on existing roads (no additional roads are proposed), reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds or seed. The proposed action does not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found.		

The proposed action would not meet any of the above extraordinary circumstances, or fail to comply with Executive Order 13212 (Actions to Expedite Energy-Related Projects) – to avoid direct or indirect adverse impact on energy development, production, supply, and/or distribution.

D. Surveys and Consultation

Surveys and/or consultation are not needed for special status plants and animals, for cultural resources, and other resources as necessary (appropriate fields are Initialed and Dated by responsible resource specialist):

Surveys	Are Completed	Will Be Completed	Are Not Needed
SS Animals			SGH 06/08/15
SS Plants			SGH 06/08/15
Cultural Resources			LPN 6/8/15
Consultation			
SS Animal Consultation*			SGH 06/08/15
Botanical Consultation			SGH 06/08/15
Cultural Consultation			LPN 6/8/15
*(SS = Special Status)			

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact: Madeline Campbell, Klamath Falls Resource Area, 2795 Anderson Avenue, Building 25, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603-7891 or telephone: 541-883-6916

**Determination for Bly Precommercial Thinning
DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2015-18-CX**

I have determined that it is appropriate to proceed with the Proposed Action as described and shown on the attached map(s) in the Bly Precommercial Thinning categorical exclusion.

Rationale

The proposed action has been reviewed by the Klamath Falls Resource Area staff and appropriate Project Design Features, as specified, will be incorporated into the proposal. The proposed action would not create adverse environmental effects, meet any of the above extraordinary circumstances, or fail to comply with Executive Order 13212 (Actions to Expedite Energy-Related Projects) – to avoid direct or indirect adverse impact on energy development, production, supply, and/or distribution.

Based on the attached NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further environmental analysis is required.

Authorizing Official: /s/ Donald J. Holmstrom
(Signature)

Date: 6/24/2015

Name: Donald J. Holmstrom
Title: Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area

