



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Klamath Falls Resource Area

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January 27, 2012

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1790/5100 (ORL040)

To: All Interested Parties

Public Scoping Input

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) of the Lakeview District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing the Keno Landscape Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate and analyze an assortment of resource management opportunities and their effects on the environment. I am asking for your help in identifying issues and concerns that you may have regarding the proposed treatments listed below. I am seeking your input to assist in developing alternatives to the proposed actions.

Location (see attached map)

The proposed Keno Landscape EA analysis area consists of approximately 54,350 acres including approximately 14,150 acres of BLM lands. Treatments are proposed on approximately 4,100 acres of BLM lands.

Purpose and Need for Action

The KFRA has a need to implement management direction outlined in various plan and guiding documents including:

- The Klamath Falls Resource Area Record of Decision (ROD)/Resource Management Plan (RMP) December 2008
- The 2011 Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl
- Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for the Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (2001)
- Survey and Manage Settlement Agreement, July 6, 2011, Conservation Northwest et al. v. Sherman et al., Case No. 08-1067-JCC (W.D.Wash).

Purposes for the actions proposed in the Keno Landscape analysis include:

- Implement actions to meet the objectives of the 2008 Klamath Falls ROD/RMP.
- Improve the resiliency of residual timber stands to drought, insects, and disease.
- Produce a sustainable supply of commercial timber products and other forest commodities to support local and regional timber-related businesses and help achieve the KFRA's annual sale quantity.
- Provide for public firewood demand near rural communities.

- Reduce potential fire intensity and severity in an effort to create a fire resilient landscape in and adjacent to the Keno Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
- Restore fire dependent processes and historic stand composition and structure.
- Improve riparian conditions and associated aquatic species' habitat.
- Reduce road densities while improving the condition of the remaining transportation system where needed.
- Reduce impacts to air quality by providing for utilization instead of prescribed burning of forest products in some areas.
- Provide an improved, permanent source of potable drinking water to the Topsy Recreation Site that does not require handling and transport by truck and trailer.

Proposed Treatments (see map for proposed locations for vegetation treatments)

The following actions have been identified as part of the proposed action for this EA:

- Over-story variable density management and group selection - These treatments refer to thinning commercial sized trees (defined as 7 inches in diameter at 4.5 feet from the ground and at least 8 feet tall to a 5 inch diameter top) using uneven-aged silvicultural prescriptions and administered under timber sale contracts. Both treatments are typically implemented together depending on the stand conditions. Manual and mechanical harvesting methods will be used to cut and remove designated timber. Group selection refers to reduction of tree densities within areas of less than four (4) acres (pg. 39, 2008 RMP) to levels required for preferred species regeneration to occur. This tool helps create variability within the stand while treating areas infected by Dwarf Mistletoe and root rot diseases.
- Understory density management - This treatment refers to thinning of non-commercial sized trees (typically 3 to 7 inches diameter at 4.5 feet above ground, but may include some trees that are larger) using both manual and mechanical harvesting methods. This treatment can be implemented using timber sale contracts or via biomass utilization (stewardship) contracts in which the federal government will pay to have the material removed, either manually or mechanically.
- Plantation density management - This treatment refers to thinning of predominantly non-commercial sized trees in previously planted stands. These stands are typically younger in age than natural stands and are less variable in diameter distribution and are more evenly spaced. Plantations predominately comprised of merchantable sized trees would be treated under a timber sale contract and therefore are included above in variable density management and group selection. Mechanical harvesting equipment will be used in these stands to cut and remove designated trees.
- Juniper woodland treatment - This treatment refers to the removal of juniper from treatment areas. All variable density management and plantation density management areas will have juniper cut, piled and removed. Burning, chipping or public firewood permits will be used to remove all cut and piled juniper.
- Conifer planting – Preferred conifer species will be planted to a stocking level appropriate for the specific site. Trees will be planted by hand using service contracts and will be inspected throughout the planting process.
- Hazardous fuels treatments - A variety of hazardous fuels treatments are proposed including prescribed fire, manual cutting, piling and burning, and slashbusting. Slashbusting is a form of fuels reduction using mechanical equipment to chop, mow, or otherwise break up standing vegetation in an effort to spatially rearrange hazardous fuels onto the forest floor.

Some hazardous fuels treatment areas will treat existing fuels while treating project generated fuels in other areas.

- Transportation management - Approximately seven (7) miles of roads are proposed to be closed. Approximately 0.50 miles of new road construction is proposed.
- Riparian reserve understory density management - These units are proposed in an effort to maintain and restore water quality. Density management will be used to speed development of large trees for stream channel course woody debris while maintaining stream shade requirements, sediment filtering, and streambank stability. Stream buffer requirements will be adhered to as described in the RMP. This treatment would be implemented using either a timber sale contract or stewardship contract.
- Drinking water source and pipeline - This project would analyze the feasibility and environmental impacts of constructing a pipeline and associated infrastructure, to source and transport potable drinking water from nearby private property to the BLM Topsy Recreation Site. BLM would then work with the property owners to acquire an easement and any other necessary documentation to acquire rights to the drinking water and for the waterline to traverse their property.

Initial Issues and Concerns

Besides internal concerns raised by the interdisciplinary team regarding management of resources, recent public input, lawsuits or administrative actions have highlighted the need to focus our analysis and alternative development on the following potential issues and concerns:

- A new recovery plan exists for the Northern Spotted Owl.
- There have been recent changes in internal direction for Survey and Manage species.

Additional Information and Submitting Your Comments

In order to improve the BLM's Klamath Falls staff is revising their planning process to collaborate more, and help facilitate public involvement. We have developed a web site to house information about this project. At that site you will be able to find a photos, maps and management direction for the area: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/lakeview/plans/collaborative/keno/>

Changing the planning process to be more collaborative, including developing the content of the web site will proceed gradually over time. I appreciate your patience. If you have suggestions of information you would like to see for this project, or other upcoming projects, I welcome your feedback.

Please submit your comments by March 2, 2012 to be most effective in BLM's planning schedule. To submit issues or questions about the proposed treatments I encourage you to submit them via email at the following address: BLM_OR_KF_Mail@blm.gov and identify your comments for the "Keno Landscape EA". You may also submit your comments directly on line at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/lakeview/plans/collaborative/keno/kenocomments.php>

If you desire to send a letter via regular mail please send to:

Donald J. Holmstrom, Manager
Klamath Falls Resource Area
2795 Anderson Avenue, Building 25
Klamath Falls, OR 97603

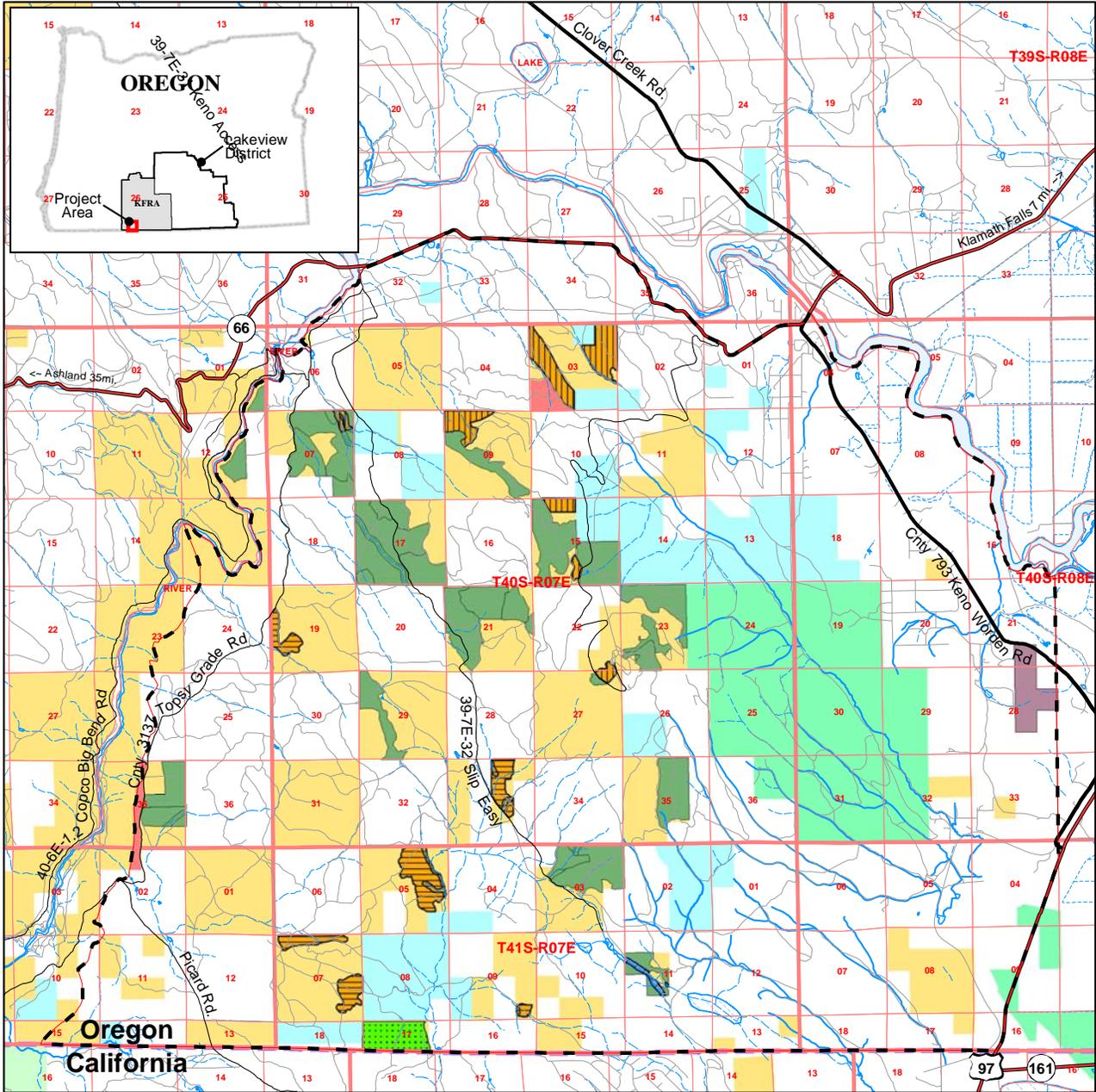
Note: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, can be made available for public review at the Klamath Falls Resource Area Field Office during regular business hours (8:00am to 5:00pm), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

KFRA's interdisciplinary team will consider your comments in developing potential alternatives to the proposed actions and for determining the scope of the analysis. This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. When the Keno Landscape EA has been prepared, you will have an opportunity to make further comments. If interest is sufficient, BLM may also hold open house meetings and/or a field trip to the project area. Please express your interest in these options as part of your comments.

If you have questions about this project specifically or on the planning process in general, contact Dan Stephens or Don Hoffheins at 541-883-6916.

Donald J. Holmstrom

Donald J. Holmstrom
Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area



Keno Landscape EA



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Analysis Area	BLM
Overstory Variable Density Mgt / Group Selection	USFS
Understory Thin	FWS
Plantation Density Management	Private
Riparian Reserve Understory Density Management	State
Juniper Woodland Treatment	
Conifer Planting	
Hazardous Fuels Treatment Only	

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