

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

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
Keno Landscape Analysis Environmental Assessment
#DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2011-008-EA**

Background:

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) of the Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the impacts of different management alternatives to meet the following objectives of the KFRA Resource Management Plan:

- Improve the resiliency of stands to drought, insects, and disease.
- Restore fire-dependent processes and historic stand composition and structure.
- Design one or more economically viable timber sales that help produce a sustainable supply of commercial timber products and other forest commodities to support local and regional timber-related businesses.
- Use materials from silviculture and fuels treatments to produce forest products (e.g., biomass and firewood).
- Reduce hazardous fuel loading and overstocked stands in an effort to decrease fire intensity and severity in and adjacent to the Keno Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
- Improve riparian conditions and associated aquatic species' habitat.
- Reduce road density in the area while improving the condition of the remaining transportation system.
- Remove juniper to increase available water for preferred vegetation and wildlife species.

Other management objectives include the following:

- Apply Ecological Forestry principles (Franklin and Johnson 2010) in managing the landscape
- Meet the objectives of the 2011 Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Recovery Plan and the Designated Critical Habitat rule (2012)
- 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.

The proposed project area is located in the KFRA, southwest of the town of Keno, between Highway 97, Highway 66, the Upper Klamath River, and the Oregon-California border. The Keno Landscape is located in the Butte Valley, John C. Boyle Reservoir/Klamath River, Lake Ewauna/Klamath River, and Lower Klamath Lake watersheds. Much of the landscape is located within the boundaries of the Keno Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

The Keno Landscape analysis area consists of over 54,000 acres, of which over 14,000 are managed by the BLM. Silvicultural and fuels reduction treatments are proposed on approximately 4,100 of these acres. These treatments consist of timber sales, small diameter (understory and plantation) thinning, riparian thinning, juniper removal, conifer planting, brush mastication, and prescribed burning. Also proposed are some transportation management actions, noxious weed treatment, and construction of a waterline at Topsy Recreation Site.

Analysis of Potential Effects:

The 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; Wild and Scenic Rivers; and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). 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.

The BLM consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on the effects of timber harvest on northern spotted owls (NSOs) and NSO designated critical habitat. A determination of “May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect” was made by the BLM for the spotted owl and NSO designated critical habitat. Surveys were conducted in suitable habitat within the project area for the NSO, and there were no detections. There is only one historic NSO site within the project area, and it was deemed “abandoned” by Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) due to the site history and the limited amount of habitat available within the core and home range. NSO designated critical habitat would be affected from proposed activities, but only nine acres of NRF habitat would be downgraded to dispersal, and the treatments would not change the connectivity or demographic function for which it was designated.

The actions that are proposed outside the range of the spotted owl (juniper cutting, piling and burning, imazapic treatments), as well as the Topsy water pipeline, tree planting, road improvements and closures that do not reduce spotted owl habitat quantity or quality, would not affect spotted owls. Therefore, the BLM has made a “No Effect” determination for these actions on spotted owls.

The NSO was the only listed species affected from proposed activities, and NSO critical habitat was the only designated critical habitat that would be affected from proposed activities. Therefore a “No Effect” determination was made by the BLM for all other listed species and designated critical habitat.

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 EA for a discussion of special status species and habitat. Implementation of best management practices (BMPs) and project design features (PDFs) (described in Appendix A of the EA), as part of the proposed activities, 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, there are no known adverse effects on National Energy Policy.

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 KFRA staff. Based on the information within the EA, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitute a significant impact affecting the quality of the human environment, or are greater than those addressed in the following documents:

- Final - Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, September 1994 (FEIS).
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991)
- Aquatic Conservation Strategy Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision 2004 (ACS SEIS EIS/ROD – 2004)
- Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement For Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines. November 2000.

Based on the conformance with the resource management plan and the lack of significant environmental effects, an Environmental Impact Statement, or a supplement to the existing RMP and Environmental Impact Statement, is not necessary and will not be prepared.

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

8/13/2013
Date