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

Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
Lost Analysis Forest Health Treatments Environmental Assessment
(DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2011-001-EA)

Background:

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) of the Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the impacts of different management alternatives to meet the following objectives: 1) implement actions to meet the objectives of the 1995 Klamath Falls ROD/RMP, 2) improve vigor and resiliency of forest stands to drought, insects and disease, 3) produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities to support local and regional timber related businesses, 4) decrease the likelihood of stand replacing fires by reducing hazardous fuel loads and tree overstocking, 5) restore fire dependent processes and historic stand composition and structure, 6) improve riparian conditions and associated aquatic species habitat, 7) reduce road density in the proposed project area while improving the condition of the transportation system, 8) enhance recreation activities for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, and 9) comply with the 2011 Revised Spotted Owl Recovery plan as well as providing habitat for a variety of organisms associated with late-successional forests.

The proposed project area is located in the Klamath Falls Resource Area approximately 20 miles west of Klamath Falls, Oregon. All BLM-administered lands within the project area are Oregon and California Railroad Revested (O&C) Lands. All treatments proposed in this EA would occur exclusively on BLM-administered lands within the KFRA. The analysis area (Spencer Creek Watershed) includes approximately 54,194 acres of Private, federal and state lands. Approximately 1,151 acres of BLM lands was analyzed for various treatments.

The proposed actions include: density management and group selection timber harvest, including thinning of Riparian Reserves (RRs) and District Designated Reserves (DDRs), aspen restoration, tree planting, firewood and biomass utilization, prescribed fire underburning and pile burning, temporary road construction and obliteration, and development of an OHV recreation site. The issues addressed in the EA concern potential impacts to forest vegetation, soils, water quality, air quality, socioeconomics, and other resources as they affect the ecosystem in the proposed project area. The design features of the alternatives are analyzed in this EA.

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. 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 mitigation measures and project design features (Appendix B 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. Within the project area there are no known energy resources with commercial potential and energy producing or processing facilities thus no known adverse effects on National Energy Policy exist.

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 following documents:

- Final - Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, September 1994 (FEIS).
- Oregon Wilderness FEIS and ROD (1989 and 1991)
- Wilderness Interim Management Policy (1995)
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991)
- Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program FEIS and ROD (1985) and Supplement (1987)
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (July 21, 1993)
- Lakeview District Fire Management Plan – Phase 1 (1998)
- National Fire Plan (A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy) (2001)
- Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy (1998)
- Emergency Fire Rehabilitation Plan (see Interagency Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Handbook - 2001)
- Northwest Forest Plan (1994)
- Migratory Bird Policy
- Aquatic Conservation Strategy Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision 2004 (ACS SEIS EIS/ROD – 2004)

- Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (2001)
- Survey and Manage Project Exemptions - Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, et al. v. Mark E. Rey, et al., No. C04-844P (W.D.Wash)

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.

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Donald J. Holmstrom Date
Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area