



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Klamath Falls Resource Area
2795 Anderson Avenue, Building 25
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603-7891
Phone: (541) 883-6916 | Fax: (541) 884-2097
E-Mail Address: Klamath_Falls_Mail@or.blm.gov
Website: <http://www.or.blm.gov/Lakeview/kfra/index.htm>

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1790/5400 (ORL040)

DECISION RECORD #3 FOR COLD ONION FOREST HEALTH TREATMENTS EA #OR-014-08-01 PROJECT: ONION SPRINGS TIMBER SALE

INTRODUCTION

The effects of the Onion Springs Timber Sale, included in this Decision Record (DR) are analyzed in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments Environmental Assessment (EA) #OR-014-08-01. This EA analyzed multiple proposed actions across watersheds with implementation proposed over a five to ten year period. It was anticipated that separate Decision Records would be prepared at the time specific projects were proposed. I will be making additional decisions in the future to implement other proposed actions analyzed in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA.

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) interdisciplinary team analyzed the Onion Springs Timber Sale based on: (a) current resource conditions in the project area, (b) the results of monitoring the previous decade of timber harvest activities, (c) meeting the purpose and need as identified in the Cold Onion EA, (d) implementation of the management action and direction stipulated in the 1995 Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP), and (e) comments from the public. The proposals presented and evaluated in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA reflect what the interdisciplinary team determined to be the best balance and integration of resource conditions, resource potentials, competing management objectives, expressed interests of the various publics, and the concerns of surrounding communities.

PLAN CONFORMANCE

On July 16, 2009 the U.S. Department of the Interior, withdrew the Records of Decision (2008 ROD) for the Western Oregon Plan Revision and directed the BLM to implement actions in conformance with the resource management plans for western Oregon that were in place prior to December 30, 2008. Since project planning and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act documentation for these projects began prior to the effective date of the 2008 ROD, these projects have been designed to comply with the land use allocations, management direction, and objectives of the Resource Management Plan.

On February 23, 2010, the KFRA received direction (Instruction Memorandum No. OR-2010-017) in consideration of a December 17, 2009 order by the District Court for the Western District of Washington regarding Survey and Manage species. This guidance specifies that at this point projects within the range of the northern spotted owl can only move forward if they are in compliance with the *2001 Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures, Standards and Guidelines* (hereinafter referred to the 2001 S&M ROD) or fit at least one of the four exemptions listed in the October 11, 2006, modified injunction in Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Rey, Case No. 04-844-MJP (W.D. Wash.) The Onion Springs Timber Sale,

as analyzed in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA, is compliant with the 2001 ROD without Annual Species Reviews.

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the portions of the Proposed Action Alternative in the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA that applies to the Onion Springs Timber Sale. As part of this action, applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Appendix D of the KFRA ROD/RMP and the Project Design Features in Appendix B of the EA will be applied. The approved action will result in the implementation of the Onion Springs Timber Sale (see Map 1, Onion Springs Timber Sale).

Specifically, this decision will result in:

Timber Harvesting

1. Harvest of approximately 2.7 million board feet (MMBF) from 11 timber sale units
2. Variable Density Management Treatments on matrix lands of approximately 428 acres in mixed conifer forests and approximately five acres of variable density management treatments in Riparian Reserves (RR) including:
 - Ground based yarding (skidding) of approximately 409 acres
 - Unit 11-1, 83 acres
 - Unit 11-2, 53 acres
 - Unit 11-3, 63 acres
 - Unit 12-1, 80 acres
 - Unit 13-1, 44 acres
 - Unit 13-2, 72 acres (includes approximately two acres of RR)
 - Unit 13-3, 6 acres (includes approximately 1/2 acre of RR)
 - Unit 13-4, 8 acres
 - Cable yarding of three units totaling approximately 24 acres
 - Unit 13-2C - approximately 5 acres (includes approximately 1/2 acre of RR)
 - Unit 13-4C - approximately 12 acres
 - Unit 13-5C - approximately 7 acres (includes approximately two acres of RR)

Riparian Reserves

Variable density management cable yarding and ground based yarding of approximately five acres of Riparian Reserves (treatment primarily in outer half of RR).

Roads

1. Approximately eight miles of road renovation/improvement.
2. All other access to the sale areas will be on existing system roads requiring normal periodic maintenance.
3. Roads opened for timber sale activities will be blocked upon completion of timber sale activities
4. Replacement of two culverts to facilitate fish passage and reduce sedimentation

Surveys

1. All required surveys for Wildlife, Botanical, and Survey and Manage resources have been completed:
2. Survey and Manage terrestrial mollusks have been identified and only one site (Evening fieldslug) exists within a harvest unit. All other S&M locations are outside of the timber sale units and within riparian reserves that will not be directly impacted by the proposed logging. The one site in Unit 13-2 has been buffered to protect the microsite habitat.
3. Required cultural surveys are completed, no cultural resources were located

Wildlife Management

Northern Spotted Owl

1. In the Matrix, the density management silvicultural prescription will retain stocking levels of 80-180 square feet of basal area (BA) per acre with an average of 120 BA. Variable Density Management will result in stocking levels varying above and below the average. The planned harvest will affect two spotted owl territories by downgrading suitable habitat to dispersal habitat.
2. A seasonal restriction for nesting spotted owls will be implemented during the nesting season (March 1- September 30) to reduce disturbance related impacts to nesting owls.

The PDFs described in Appendix B of the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA and the BMPs applying to timber harvesting in the KFRA ROD/RMP, will be implemented for all actions conducted in the 433 acres of timber harvesting described above.

Fuel Treatments

1. Where operationally feasible, whole tree yarding of all material designated for harvest will be done to reduce activity generated hazardous fuel loading.
2. In the yarding areas (including cable yarding units) where trees larger than 20 inches DBH are harvested, tops will be yarded attached to the last log.
3. In all harvest areas, residual materials will be treated with a variety of methods including: yarding to landings, hand and/or machine piling, lopping and scattering.
4. Landing piles will be utilized for firewood, chips, hog fuel and/or other products, or burned.
5. Hand and/or machine piles left in the units will be burned or left for wildlife purposes.

Mitigation

No additional mitigation was deemed necessary and thus none was described in the EA or in this Decision Record.

DECISION RATIONALE

The decision to implement approximately 433 acres of timber harvest activities related to the Proposed Action alternative, meets the purpose and needs identified in the EA and furthers the intent established in the Klamath Falls Resource Area RMP to harvest timber and protect other resource values as described in the EA and other sections of this Decision Record.

The Regeneration Harvest Alternative is rejected because the 150 acres proposed for regeneration harvest would remove a proportionately high amount of spotted owl dispersal habitat from the timber sale area. Also the removal of a large block of upland vegetation within this watershed could increase runoff rates into the adjacent drainages causing unacceptable water impacts.

The No Action Alternative, is rejected because it does not meet the resource management objectives for the Matrix identified in the Klamath Falls RMP and the Northwest Forest Plan. It would not address or alter many of the existing conditions and trends relative to desired healthy vegetative conditions, resource protection, and watershed restoration that were identified in the EA. With No Action, these conditions would not be improved or mitigated; certain undesirable ecological trends would continue unchanged, and, in some cases, would be exacerbated with the passage of time. In addition, economic opportunities from timber harvesting would be foregone and no thinning or fuels reduction benefits would be realized.

Other alternatives were also considered but were dropped from detailed analysis (see EA page 11) including Fuels Treatment Only and Restoration Treatments Only. These alternatives were rejected because they would not meet one or more parts of the Purpose and Need section of the EA.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (as amended) was completed for the Cold Onion Forest Health Treatments EA including the 433 acres of Timber Harvest described above. The BLM made a “Likely to Adversely Affect” determination for the northern spotted owl due to the downgrading of suitable habitat to dispersal habitat. The FWS concurred with this determination and issued a Biological Opinion (8-10-09-08F0009) on August 12th, 2009. The Service has determined that the proposed action will adversely affect two spotted owl territories; however the action will not jeopardize the continued existence of the northern spotted owl.

A “No Effect” determination was made for all other listed species and designated critical habitat.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was notified of this project in accordance with 36 CFR §805.5(b). They have raised no objections to the BLM’s finding that it would not adversely impact sites of cultural or historic significance.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public scoping input and EA comments were considered in development and refinement of the proposed action and alternatives, and in this decision. The KFRA requested public scoping input on the Cold Onion EA on October 15, 2007. The scoping letter outlined the proposed treatments for the analysis area. Four scoping response letters were received. The following scoping issues received early in the planning process were addressed in the EA in one or more alternatives:

Scoping Issues

Roads – upgrade existing roads; improve fish passage and stream crossings; avoid new road construction; and reduce road density

Vegetation – use variable density thinning in young stands; leave trees with old growth characteristics and trees over 20 inches DBH; retain and protect under represented trees and shrubs; maintain connectivity, maintain habitat diversity and important ecological functions; manage to retain special status plants; and avoid spread of noxious weeds

Hydrology and Fisheries – follow Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) guidelines for fisheries; retain adequate stream buffers; and follow the Aquatic Conservation Strategy to maintain water quality

Wildlife – avoid a “take” of Northern spotted owls, protect goshawks, protect other rare birds and old growth dependent species, avoid impacts to raptor nests, and retain snags and coarse woody debris (CWD)

Soils – minimize disturbance from tractor yarding and maintain soil integrity

Fuels – reduce fuels to lower the potential hazard and risk of wildfire

Range – reduce and/or remove livestock grazing

Other – the current watershed analysis may be inadequate; analyze cumulative impacts; and monitor on the ground actions

EA Comments and 2009 Field Tour

Upon completion of the EA, the public was notified on March 2, 2009 and given an opportunity to comment during a formal thirty (30) day public comment period. Two comment letters were received. In August of 2009, the KFRA also received a series of comments related to the proposed action specifically

involving the proposed Cold Creek Timber Sale. In addition, a field tour was held on September 29, 2009, to address some of the comments raised.

The following comments were received during and after the 30-day EA comment period. Although some of the following comments are related to the Cold Creek Timber Sale, most are also applicable to the proposed Onion Springs Timber Sale. None of the comments were of the nature to cause the interdisciplinary team to revise the Environmental Assessment. However, they were considered in development of this Decision and I provide responses to those paraphrased comments below:

Vegetation

Comment: Coarse Woody Material – densities should support the natural range of biota for the site.

Response: As described in the EA (Appendix B, page 57), a minimum of 120 linear feet per acre will be retained. Logs will be greater than or equal to sixteen (16) inches in diameter and sixteen (16) feet in length. Most of the units in the Onion Springs Timber Sale currently exceed these amounts.

Comment: 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling is not allowed under NEPA.

Response: 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling will not be used on this project.

Comment: Many of the unhealthy cedar are providing great wildlife habitat for woodpeckers and cavity nesting bird species. The large cedars are also underrepresented on the landscape.

Response: Most of the larger cedars on Onion Springs Timber Sale are not designated for removal. In addition, conifer trees including large cedars were considered for retention if they are considered under-represented in the proposed project area and/or exhibited one or more of the following characteristics that could be valuable for wildlife: larger diameters, cull trees, trees with evidence of wildlife use (cavities, bird holes, etc.), frost cracks, cat faces. No snags are designated for harvest in the Onion Springs Timber Sale. The only snags likely to be removed are those that present a direct safety hazard to operators or those that were marked to remove while they were green trees and have subsequently died.

Comment: Regeneration and density management logging are inappropriate in this watershed.

Response: Both regeneration and density management logging were analyzed under the 1995 RMP. Pages 4 and 77 of the KFRA 2008 Annual Program Summary indicate that the KFRA has only implemented 259 acres of Regeneration Harvest of the planned 2,296 projected in the RMP. Regeneration harvesting was analyzed in the EA but no regeneration harvests are included in this sale. The primary harvest prescription in the KFRA since the signing of the 1995 RMP has been density management.

Insects and Disease

Comment: The EA did not address the significant scientific controversy reflected in the peer-reviewed documents and studies concerning loggings influence on insects and disease that were submitted in our scoping comments.

Response: The BLM recognizes the different positions within the scientific community for the historic and present roles insects and diseases have had in shaping our present day forests. As cited on page 3 of the EA and referenced on pages 3-63 to 3-66 of the 1994 Final Klamath Falls Resource Area Management Plan And EIS (EIS), the BLM acknowledges that past management practices like fire suppression and logging have influenced present day insect and disease responses. As stated on page 3 of the EA under the Purpose and Need for Action section, one of the purposes for the proposed action is to “improve the resiliency of residual trees” to drought, insect, and disease. The most commonly accepted and promoted forest management treatment to improve stand resiliency on fire prone, dry forest sites is to thin overstocked stands. Thinning (Density Management) of overstocked stands as prescribed in the Onion Springs Timber Sale is expected to result in:

- retention of the most resilient tree species to both fire and insects,
- increased vigor of the residual trees,
- reduction in stand replacement fire risks as a result of canopy gaps, and
- overall improvement of forest health.

Further analysis of impacts regarding insect and disease responses can be found in the environmental consequences section of the No Action Alternative summarized on page 14 of the EA. In summary, the No Action alternative would leave many of the stands more vulnerable and at higher risk to stand replacement fires and higher insect and disease mortality.

NEPA

Comment: Inadequate site-specific analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts.

Response: The Cold Onion EA tiers to the KFRA RMP/EIS. The assessment addressed direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of each action associated with the proposed timber sale and fuel treatments. The cumulative effects discussion in the EA addresses past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions on BLM land and on adjacent Forest Service and private lands. Therefore, the effects are fully and adequately analyzed.

Comment: Inadequate Range of Alternatives.

Response: An adequate range of alternatives was considered. Three alternatives were considered in depth; the Proposed Action, a Regeneration Harvest Alternative, and the No Action Alternative.

The Proposed Action meets the purpose and need identified in the EA (page 4) and furthers the intent established in the RMP to harvest timber while meeting other resource objectives; wildlife, soils, snags, coarse woody debris, improving vigor of forested stands, and reducing wildfire hazard conditions. Other alternatives were also considered but were dropped from detailed analysis (see EA page 11) including Fuels Treatment Only and Restoration Treatments Only. These alternatives were rejected because they would not meet one or more parts of the Purpose and Need section of the EA.

Fire and Fuels

Comment: Slash Burning – consider using Kraft paper rather than polyethylene for slash piles.

Response: The Resource Area has experimented with the use of Kraft paper for covering slash piles. Under the desired burning conditions, when the surrounding fuels are moist, the paper covered slash pile was typically moist as well. This typically results in poor consumption and excessive production of particulate matter (PM2.5) and particles of incomplete combustion (PIC). The emissions to the atmosphere contributed by the sheet of polyethylene covering are chemically similar to the emissions from the underlying pile of slash. There is no evidence that unique classes of chemicals are found in emissions from burning polyethylene, in comparison to burning wood debris. The literature, and anecdotal evidence, clearly indicates that slash piles burn more efficiently and produce fewer PICs & PM2.5 when they are allowed to cure to a dryness that readily supports combustion. The benefit obtained from the increased combustion efficiency commensurate with dry biomass fuel favors the use of some sort of moisture barrier to aid in the drying of logging slash piles. The articles reviewed provide no evidence that burning the PE plastic sheeting along with the slash pile would cause a significant impact to air quality, however, the limited amount of information regarding the pyrolysis/combustion of PE in conjunction with woody biomass precludes an ironclad statement (from REVIEW OF POTENTIAL AIR EMISSIONS FROM BURNING POLYETHYLENE PLASTIC SHEETING WITH PILED FOREST DEBRIS FINAL REPORT, October 28, 2003; Christopher Wrobel, Tim Reinhardt, URS Corporation; Prepared for USDA Forest Service). The burning of plastic is also in conformance with the MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING Between the OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY and the OREGON DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (March 28, 2005).

Wildlife

Comment: No Analysis [of] Acorn Woodpecker and Plain Titmouse

Response: The EA did not cover the above species because neither they nor their habitat are present within the analysis area. Both species are associated with oak woodland and that habitat is not present and would not be affected by the proposed actions.

Comment: Impacts to Fisher ignored in EA.

Response: Impacts to Pacific Fisher were not ignored; rather it was identified in the EA on page 23 that the Fisher has not been documented within the analysis area after surveys have been completed and that the likelihood of fishers being present is extremely low. Currently there are only two populations documented in Oregon as stated on page 23 which does not include the analysis area. Therefore no impacts to fisher from the Onion Springs Timber Sale are anticipated.

Comment: Project degrades NSO dispersal and foraging habitat below 40% canopy.

Response: The proposed timber sale would not downgrade habitat below dispersal habitat. On page 26 of the EA it states that no dispersal habitat will be downgraded. Similar density management prescriptions implemented in the past on similar type stands have supported this. The project will downgrade some nesting, roosting and foraging habitat to dispersal habitat but maintain a greater than 40% canopy closure within the timber stands, therefore maintaining dispersal habitat as stated on page 26.

Comment: EA fails to recognize NSO critical habitat removed by the flawed 2008 process.

Response: The EA addressed Northern Spotted Owl designated critical habitat on page 22 of the EA. At the time of the EA and the development of this decision record critical habitat is still not present within the analysis area. However since the Department of Interior has announced a voluntary remand of the revision to Critical Habitat the BLM has consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the impacts to Critical Habitat from the Cold Onion EA Proposed Actions if the 1992 designation is reinstated. The BLM amended the Cold Onion Biological Assessment to include the 1992 Critical Habitat designation to assess impacts to Designated Critical Habitat.

If the 1992 Critical Habitat designation is reinstated by the court then the BLM will reinitiate consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that the analysis and determinations within the Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion are still appropriate.

Comment: The statement in the Cold Onion EA that NSO populations in Southern Oregon are "stationary or stable" is in error.

Response: As stated in the EA on page 23 "The latest population trend information for the spotted owl indicates that the Southern Cascades demographic area population is considered stationary or stable (Lint 2005). The Klamath Falls Resource Area is within the Southern Cascades province and the population trends would be representative." A new meta-analysis for the spotted owl (2003-2008) was conducted in 2009 and the results from the analysis have not been published at the time of the EA and this Decision Record. The latest published information still shows that the population is considered stationary or stable. Once the new meta-analysis is published the information would reflect the population trends within the Southern Cascades Province.

Comment: The analysis of Barred Owls is not sufficient.

Response: The spotted owl analysis considered barred owls with respect to detectability and occupancy of spotted owls in the presence of barred owls (pg 22 of the EA). As stated in the EA "Kelly et al (2003) reported that occupancy of spotted owls was significantly lower in the presence of barred owls". Additionally, Appendix D of the EA "Review and Key findings for the Northern Spotted Owl" also addresses some of the assumptions to the affects that barred owls may be having on spotted owls.

Currently no barred owls have been detected within the EA analysis area (pg 22 of the EA), therefore, there would be no cumulative effects to the spotted owls from the loss of habitat (pg 23-27 of the EA) and the presence of barred owls. As described in the EA pg 26, the removal of habitat will have a direct negative effect on the spotted owls due to downgrading some habitat. Therefore, the BLM consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to meet the requirements of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

Special Status Plants

Comment: The BLM is not following the requirements of NEPA, FLPMA or its RMP/ROD for management of Bureau sensitive species (BSS) in this extremely important botanical hotspot.

Response: The requirements of NEPA, FLPMA and its RMP/ROD for the management of Bureau sensitive species were considered and followed in the preparation of this document. Appropriate surveys for vascular plants occurred, and mitigation measures have been applied for non-vascular species not recently surveyed for.

Comment: The EA (page 13) indicates that many of the BSS vascular plant surveys were conducted in 2002. By the time a decision is signed for this project those surveys will be over 7 years old and no longer reliable.

Response: KFRA has determined that vascular plant surveys that were conducted within the past ten years are sufficient. These surveys were considered sufficient because no changes in Bureau sensitive species populations were expected to have occurred in the time since the last survey.

Comment: The EA (page 13) further indicates that no surveys were conducted for non-vascular BSS species despite the suspected presence of up to 13 species of BSS non-vascular plants in the project area. Hence the potential impacts to these species are unknown and undocumented.

Response: Page 8 of the 2007 Record of Decision to Remove the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines from BLM Resource Management Plans within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl states:

“For ...species whose characteristics make them impractical to locate during field surveys, pre-project clearances may be accomplished by surveys; habitat examinations; habitat evaluation; evaluation of species-habitat associations and presence of suitable or potential habitat; review of existing survey records, inventories, and spatial data; or utilization of professional research, literature, and other technology transfer sources.”

The determination was made that the proposed activities would not significantly impact any possible populations of non-vascular plants, so field surveys were not conducted. In addition, the likelihood of locating the non-vascular plants on the Bureau Sensitive Species list in the project areas during field studies is low.

Comment: The claim (EA page 17) that the project will not result in any impacts of BSS due to lack of known sites is not credible given: (1) the complete lack of surveys for non-vascular sensitive species; and (2) the fact that many of the surveys for vascular plants are over 7 years old. Indeed, the EA in no way recognizes or analyses the many unique botanical properties of this watershed and the potential impacts of the project on those botanical values.

Response: (1) The determination was made that the proposed activities would not significantly impact any possible populations of non-vascular plants, so field surveys were not recently conducted. In addition, the likelihood of locating the non-vascular plants on the Bureau Sensitive Species list in the project areas during field studies is low. (2) KFRA has determined that vascular plant surveys that were conducted within the past ten years are sufficient. These surveys were considered sufficient because no changes in Bureau sensitive species populations were expected to have occurred in the time since the last survey.

Aquatic Conservation Strategy

Comment: The variable width, no cut riparian buffer is not adequate for shading and down woody debris recruitment.

Response: Impacts to hydrology and the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives were addressed in the EA and it was determined that the project would not inhibit meeting ACS objectives or result in negative impacts to aquatic resources, including shade, coarse wood recruitment, and water quality. None of the riparian reserves in the Onion Springs Timber Sale involve fish bearing waters. The Cold Onion EA allows for density management treatments in riparian reserves (EA page 2) as long as the treatments

meet ACS objectives. Approximately five acres of Riparian Reserves (primarily cable yarding units) will receive treatment for density management under this timber sale. This harvest will not prevent attainment of ACS objectives because the vegetation treatment is designed to reduce crowding of overstocked tree stands, and favors removal of small and mid diameter trees. Thinning will also take place primarily in the outer half of the Riparian Reserves.

2010 Public Tour

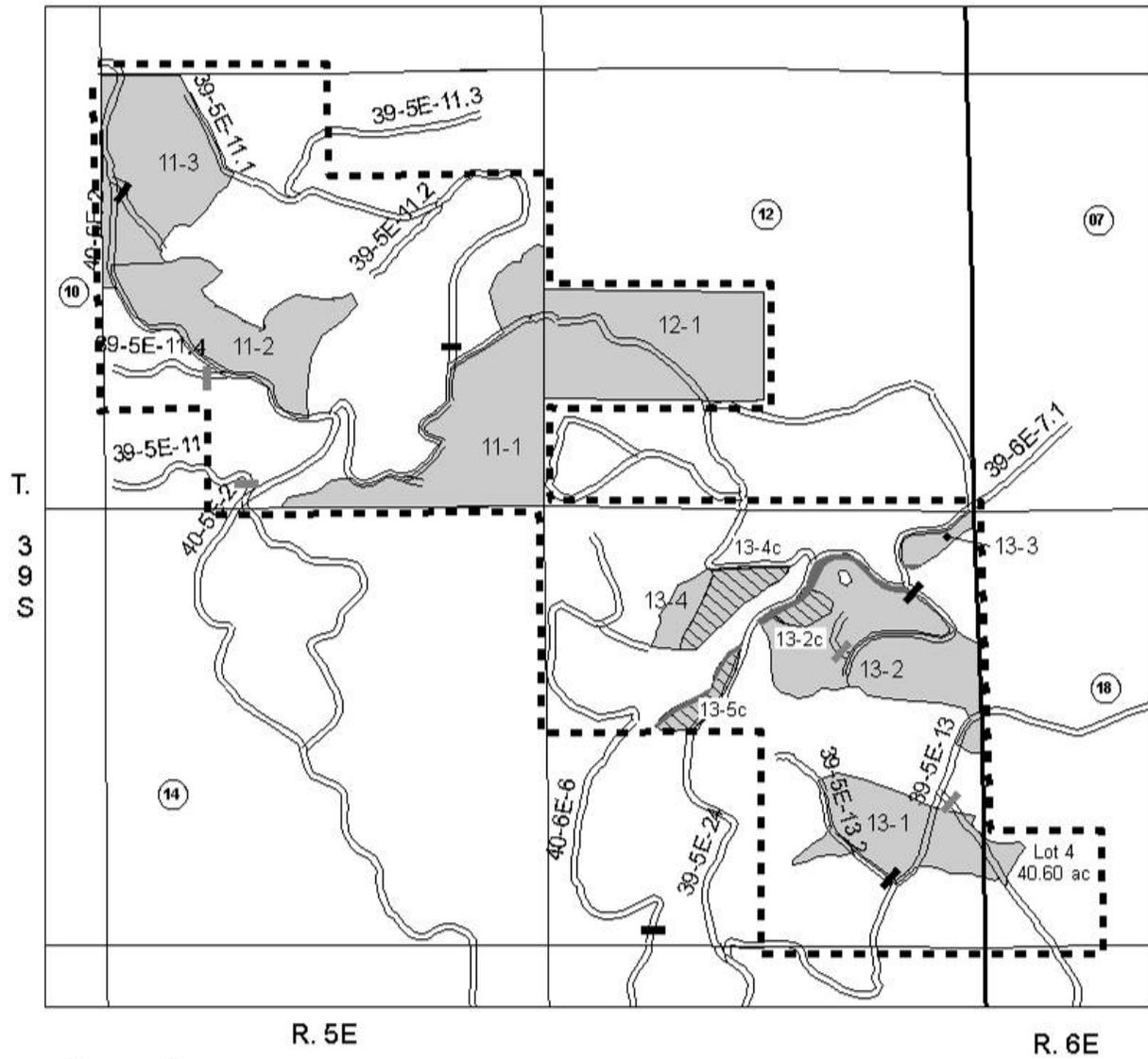
On June 10, 2010, the Klamath Falls Field Office conducted a public tour of the Onion Springs Timber Sale Area and plantation treatment areas and nearby future timber sale areas (Replacement Gal and Spike Timber Sales). Three members of the public attended the tour and provided both verbal and written comments. Many of the comments were similar in nature to those described above. Several issues were of sufficient concern to the public that the BLM reviewed those issues and made modifications to the Onion Springs Timber Sale. These concerns included:

- Too many large trees were designated for harvest in some units
- Trees are being harvested from Riparian Reserves that would contribute to ACS objectives

Modifications to the sale to address the above concerns include:

- More than 200 trees (mostly white fir but including Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine trees) originally designated for harvest were removed from the sale. Most of these trees were larger than 30 inches DBH. These trees were reserved in part to assure that a potentially underrepresented component of the planning area landscape is retained and to insure that adequate overstory structure is maintained.
- Riparian Reserve widths and tree marking in the RRs was reviewed. Approximately 90 trees (part of the 200 + described above) in and adjacent to the riparian reserves, particularly adjacent to 39-5E-24.0 road, that could potentially contribute large down wood and/or shade to the streams were removed from the sale (they will not be harvested). The BLM has determined that all of the approximately five acres of riparian reserves that are being treated will meet ACS objectives. Trees designated for removal in the RRs will promote stand health and growth of the residual trees by allowing additional growing space and removing some diseased trees.
- The five acre patch cut (Unit 13-2C) that was designed to remove some over-story trees that are infected by mistletoe and release a well stocked understory of Douglas fir has been modified by removing some trees that could potentially reach the stream and some of the larger trees to insure attainment of ACS objectives. As a result, this five acre area is now marked to meet variable density management specifications. It is still marked to a lower basal area and to remove some mistletoe infected Douglas-fir trees.

Onion Springs Timber Sale Map (Map 1)



Legend

- Roads
- Gate
- Road Blocked
- ⋯ Contract Area
- Density Management
- Riparian Reserve Density Management
- ▨ Cable Units



1:20,000



CONCLUSION

A. Consideration of Public Comments

I have reviewed the public comments summarized above and have discussed them with the interdisciplinary team of specialists on my staff. The EA and this DR contain the requisite site specific information to implement the proposed action. The comments received do not provide any substantially new information or new analysis. Nor do they identify substantial new data gaps that would indicate additional analysis is needed. Finally, the comments do not identify any significant new data which would alter the effects described in the EA. I am confident that the Cold Onion EA plus the supplemental information, including responses to public comments contained in this DR, in addition to the more comprehensive analysis done in the Klamath Falls Resource Area RMP/EIS to which the EA is tiered, represents a thorough analysis of potential effects associated with the Onion Springs Timber Sale.

B. Plan Consistency

Based on the information in the Cold Onion EA and in the record, I conclude that this action is consistent with the Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan. The action will help to move this portion of the landscape towards the desired future condition considered in development of the RMP. The actions will comply with the Endangered Species Act, the Native American Religious Freedom Act, cultural resource management laws and regulations, and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). This decision will not have any adverse effects to energy development, production, supply and/or distribution (per Executive Order 13212).

C. Finding of No Significant Impact

No significant impacts were identified. No impacts beyond those anticipated in the KFRA RMP/EIS would occur. Refer to the accompanying Finding of No Significant Impact.

D. Summary

In consideration of public comments, the consistency with the RMP and the finding that there would not be any significant impacts, this decision allows for activities related to the Onion Springs Timber Sale.

As outlined in 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies at § 5003.3 (a) and (b), protests may be made within 15 days of the publication date of a notice of sale. Publication of such notice in The Klamath Falls Herald and News, Klamath Falls, Oregon constitutes the decision date from which such protests may be filed. Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision.

43 CFR 5003.3 subsection (b) states: "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail or facsimile protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Klamath Falls Resource Area office will be accepted.

/s/ Donald J Holmstrom
Donald J. Holmstrom, Manager
Klamath Falls Resource Area
Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management

8/17/2010
Date