



United States Department of the Interior



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January 25, 2013

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1790 (ORL040)

To: All Interested Parties:

Public Scoping Input

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing the Hayden Fox Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the effects of various vegetation treatments on wildlife habitat, soils, hydrology, and other resources. The proposed project area consists of approximately 5,534 acres of BLM land within the 8,063-acre project boundary (see map). Treatments are proposed on approximately 2,300 acres of BLM lands and would include (1) density management; (2) plantation density management; (3) mowing; and (4) hazardous fuels treatments. The project area is located south of Highway 66, west of the Klamath River, east of the Jackson/Klamath County line, and north of the California state border.

The BLM is asking for your help in identifying issues and concerns that you may have regarding the proposed Hayden Fox project described below. We are seeking your comments to assist in developing alternatives to the proposed actions.

Purpose & Need for Action

The purpose of this project is to implement the 1995 KFRA Record of Decision (ROD)/Resource Management Plan (RMP). Purposes for implementing the Hayden Fox project include:

- Produce a sustainable supply of commercial timber products and other forest commodities to support local and regional timber-related businesses.
- Improve the resiliency of residual stands to drought, insects, and disease.
- Restore meadows and oak savannah
- Improve big game winter range
- Reduce hazardous fuels to lower the risk of high intensity, stand-replacing wildfires
- Improve riparian conditions and habitat for associated aquatic species.

Need

The BLM has a statutory obligation under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), which directs that “[t]he Secretary shall manage the public lands in accordance with the land use plans developed by him under section 202 of this Act when they are available . . .” The RMP of June 1995 guides and directs management on BLM lands. The BLM also has a statutory obligation under the Oregon and California railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act) to produce a

sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities. The RMP has allocated the majority of lands being analyzed to Matrix, with some being District Designated Reserve (DDR) and Riparian Reserves (RR). Matrix lands have RMP objectives to produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities as stated in the KFRA RMP and Oregon and California (O&C) Lands Act of 1937, which can be met by offering commercial timber products and other forest commodities to local and regional timber-related businesses. The latter two allocations have goals to protect and enhance conditions of late-successional ecosystems and meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives, respectively.

Proposed Treatments

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

Table 1. Treatments Proposed by Land Use Allocation

		Treatment Type Proposed			
Land Use Allocation	Definition/Objectives from 1995 RMP	Density Management	Plantation Density Management	Mowing	Hazardous Fuels Treatments
Matrix	Matrix (General Forest Management Area) lands have objectives to produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities to provide jobs and contribute to community stability.	yes	yes	yes	yes
DDR/LSR	In District Designated Reserves (DDRs)/Late Successional Reserves (LSRs), treatments are designed to protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old growth forest ecosystems, which serve as habitat for species including the northern spotted owl.	yes	no	no	yes
ACEC	Objectives for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) are to maintain, protect, or restore the values for which the ACEC was designated.	yes	no	no	yes
Riparian Reserves (RR)	Riparian Reserves are lands along streams and unstable and potentially unstable areas where special standards and guidelines direct land use. Goals are to meet Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.	yes	no	no	yes

(1) Density management- This treatment refers to thinning trees of all size classes using uneven-aged silvicultural prescriptions. Approximately 1,900 acres of this treatment is proposed. Manual and mechanical harvesting methods would be used to cut and remove designated timber. Group selection would be used to reduce tree densities within areas of less than five (5) acres to levels required for preferred species regeneration. This tool helps create variability within the stand while treating areas infected by dwarf mistletoe and root rot diseases. These areas may also be treated with understory density management, oak thinning, hazardous fuels reduction, conifer planting, and juniper removal where applicable.

One unit (26 acres) is within the Upper Klamath River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Treatments proposed in the ACEC may include density management, oak thinning, and prescribed fire. Treatments to promote late successional forest structure are proposed within two District Designated Reserves (DDRs)/Late Successional Reserves (LSRs), Dixie and Hayden Creek, totaling 213 acres.

Riparian Reserve (RR) treatments may be proposed to promote and improve hydrologic function once stream surveys are completed for the analysis.

The condition of the road system would be improved as needed for forest product removal. A total of approximately 0.5 mile of temporary road spurs may be constructed where necessary to reduce log skidding distances and associated impacts to soils and other resources.

(2) Plantation density management- This treatment refers to thinning of commercial and non-commercial sized trees in previously planted stands. Approximately 182 acres of this treatment are proposed. These stands are typically younger in age than most natural stands, are less variable in diameter distribution and species composition, and are more evenly spaced. Mechanical harvesting would be used in these stands to cut and remove designated trees.

(3) Mowing- Mechanical mowing of brush is proposed on approximately 190 acres to improve forage conditions for deer and other wildlife species. This treatment would include the mowing of western junipers less than approximately 150 years old and mowing/thinning of clumps of small diameter oaks.

(4) Hazardous fuels treatments- A variety of hazardous fuels treatments are proposed throughout the project area including prescribed fire, manual cutting, piling and burning, and brush mowing.

Initial Issues and Concerns

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

- A new recovery plan and designated Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl is currently being incorporated into the management of BLM lands.
- There have been recent changes in internal direction for Survey and Manage species.
- One vegetation treatment unit is in an ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern)

Comments Requested

Please submit your comments by March 1, 2013 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 as being for the "Hayden Fox EA." If you desire to send a letter via regular mail, please use the address in our letterhead, ATTN: Field Manager.

Once an Environmental Assessment has been prepared, the public will be notified again and will have an opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed action and analysis. For further information, contact Shawna Dao or Stephen Hayner at 541-883-6916.

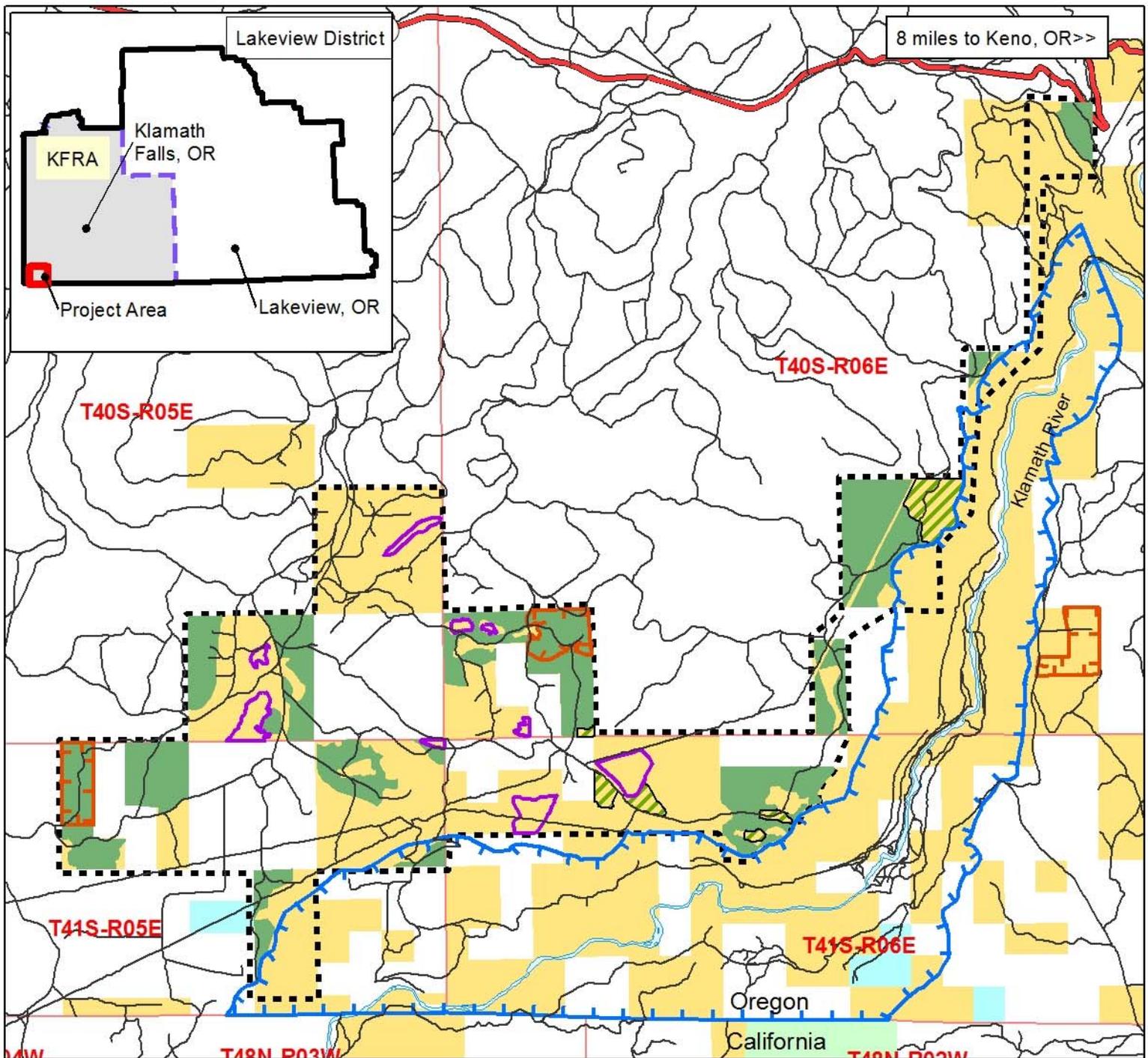
NOTE: Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Klamath Falls Resource Area Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please 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 or

from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 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.

Sincerely,

/s/ Heather A. Bernier

Heather A. Bernier
Field Manager



Hayden Fox EA



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