

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
for the
South Gerber Environmental Assessment
EA No. OR 014-04-06

The Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview District, Klamath Falls Resource Area, has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and analyzed alternatives to the proposal to conduct a variety of treatments within the South Gerber area on BLM lands. These treatments include:

Eastside Matrix Forest Lands

- Density Management (thinning) could occur on approximately 4,000 acres of eastside matrix lands. This type of harvest would be designed to maintain large ponderosa pine (16” DBH or larger) while maintaining uneven-aged, multi-strata stand structure and reducing competition and stress to reserve trees (RMP/ROD, Page 56). Retain 40-120 square feet of basal area in the Density Management Units. Retain 1.4 snags per acre with a minimum DBH of 16”, or largest available if less than 16” (RMP/ROD, Page 26-27). Retain fifty (50) linear feet of logs per acre greater than or equal to twelve (12) inches in diameter and eight (8) feet long (RMP/ROD, Page 26).
- Approximately 200 acres of patch cuts within the Density Management units to address root rot areas, mistletoe pockets, insect caused mortality, and blowdown areas. Patch cuts would be limited to no more than five (5) acres in size and no more than fifteen (15%) of the density management unit. Retain 5 to 10 large green trees (>16” DBH) per acre in the patch cuts.
- Approximately 7.0 million board feet (MMBF) of timber would be harvested over the life of this EA.
- Cutting and removal of encroaching juniper adjacent to and within matrix forested lands.
- Appendix B of this EA includes the silvicultural prescription, including project design features and best management practices, for treatment of forested areas.
- Upon completion of harvesting, some treatment areas would be underburned in prescription to reduce fuel loading.
- Patch cuts would be replanted with pine and other native vegetation.

Juniper Woodlands

- Selective cutting of western juniper on approximately 3,000 acres of juniper woodlands immediately adjacent to eastside matrix forest lands. Cut juniper trees would be piled and burned, sold for firewood, or yarded and sold as sawlogs, chips, or other products depending up public and market demand.
- Any residual slash would be piled and burned.
- Approximately 1,000 acres of juniper woodlands would be replanted with bitterbrush and other native shrubs upon completion of burning.

Riparian Areas and Aspen Stands

- Approximately 100 acres of aspen stand treatments would be implemented. This would primarily involve cutting and removing or piling and burning competing vegetation including conifers and shrubs within aspen stands. It could also include prescribed burning of certain aspen stands to promote aspen regeneration.
- Approximately 700 acres of thinning of juniper and/or non-merchantable pine in riparian reserves could occur. Cutting would be done by hand and/or mechanically. The residual debris would be piled and burned. Where feasible, material would be sold for firewood.

- Approximately 200 acres of commercial Density Management (thinning) would occur in riparian reserves. Cutting would be done by hand and/or mechanically. Where feasible, material would be sold for firewood or sawlogs. The residual debris would be piled and burned or the stand would be underburned.

Other Restoration Work

- Precommercial thinning of sub-merchantable material on approximately 300 acres.
- Road restoration projects including: improvement, decommissioning, obliteration, realignment, construction, seasonal closure, and maintenance. (Refer to Table 3.)

The project will contribute to meeting the Management Action/Direction and Objectives of the Klamath Falls Resource Area RMP. Based on the information in the EA, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitutes a significant impact affecting the quality of the human environment greater than those addressed in the:

- Final - Klamath Falls Resource Area Management Plan and EIS (FEIS) (Sept. 1994), and its Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 2, 1995) (KFRA ROD/RMP).
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Fire Management EA#OR-014-94-09 (June 10, 1994)
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (July 21, 1993).
- Range Reform FEIS (August 1995).
- Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines For Livestock Management For Public Lands Administered By The Bureau Of Land Management In the State Of Oregon and Washington (August 12, 1997).
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Vegetation Treatment On BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991).

In addition, it is consistent with applicable scientific findings from the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project.

Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement, or a supplement to the existing RMP or Environmental Impact Statement, is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Signed


Jon Raby, Field Manager
Klamath Falls Resource Area

Date

7/22/05