Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance
and
NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
for
Ashland Resource Area
Soda Creek Large Wood Restoration Project
DOI-BLM-OR-M060-2009-0028-DNA

A. Describe the Proposed Action:
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plans to implement the Soda Creek Large Wood Restoration Project. The project involves dragging 17 trees, with intact root wads, into the riparian area of Soda Creek. The downed trees are currently lying above the flood plain of Soda Creek. All 17 trees were blown down in a large wind event in winter of 2007/2008. The trees are within 150 feet, or less, of the stream channel. Working from established roads located from 60 to500 feet from the channel, we will utilize a cable yarder with block and tackle to drag the trees into the wetted channel of Soda Creek. No heavy equipment will leave the road prism. Trees range in size from 18 to greater than 40 inches at DBH, and intact bole lengths, as measured from the root mass, range from 40 to 140 feet in length. Pieces would be placed parallel to stream flow, or incorporated into existing debris jams. As all pieces include intact root wads, we do not propose to anchor them with cables. Pieces not incorporated into existing jams would be anchored into bank side trees, which are large mature conifers. The proposed restoration project is entirely on BLM lands.

The location of the project is within the Lower Soda Creek drainage (HUC#17100307080615), Lower South Fork Little Butte Creek catchment basin, Little Butte Creek fifth field Watershed, Upper Rogue River basin of southwest Oregon, Jackson County. Legal Description: T 37S R 3E, NW of the SE quarter/quarter of Section 18 (see attached map). The BLM intends to start the project immediately.

The lower mile of Soda Creek supports populations of coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. This reach is designated Coho Critical and Essential Fish habitat for coho, which are listed as "threatened". This project is covered under the Aquatic Restoration Biological Opinion released by the National Marine Fisheries Service 2008, and hence meets section 7 consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

The South Fork of Little Butte Creek catchment was designated a tier 1 Key Watershed under the 1995 Northwest Forest Plan as part of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS). The ACS objectives address restoration activities to enhance watershed function, particularly in key watersheds. This project is the type of restoration envisioned to help meet ACS objectives, and would benefit aquatic habitat conditions within the South Fork Little Butte catchment.

The proposed action will incorporate all appropriate project design features included in the Environmental Assessment for the *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Enhancement* (April 2009).

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance
This proposal is in conformance with the Medford District's 2008 Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (USDI 2008. In addition, this project fully complies with the management objectives, action, and direction of the resource management plan in place prior to the 2008 RMP, the 1995 RMP. The design of this project would not have differed under either plan. This proposal is also in compliance with the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District by the Oregon and

California Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act), Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, the Clean Water Act of 1987, Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (as amended 1986 and 1996), Clean Air Act, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

LUP Name: Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan.
Approved: December 2008

The proposed action is in conformance with this LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions. Riparian Management Area Direction (p. 37) states: "Implement instream and riparian restoration activities, such as placement of boulders and large wood in streams including tree lining from adjacent riparian areas for all streams. Place an emphasis on streams that have high intrinsic potential for fish, high priority fish populations (such as those defined in recovery plans) or high levels of chronic sediment inputs." The proposed action is also in conformance with the Riparian Management Area objective (p. 36) which states: "Provide for riparian and aquatic conditions that supply stream channels with shade, sediment filtering, leaf litter and large wood, and streambank stability."

The proposed action is in compliance with the Water Management Direction (p. 63) which states: "Apply Best Management Practices as needed to maintain or restore water quality." The proposed action project design features incorporate, as appropriate, Best Management Practices (Appendix C) identified in this LUP.

LUP Name: Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan.
Approved: June 1995 (in place prior to December 30, 2008).

The proposed action also complies with BLMs 1995 RMP, in place prior to December 30, 2008 as it is clearly consistent with the following LUP objectives. The Watershed and Habitat Restoration objective for riparian reserves (p. 31) states: "Design and implement watershed restoration projects in a manner that promotes long-term ecological integrity of ecosystems, conserves the generic integrity of native species, and attains Aquatic Conservation Strategy and riparian reserve objectives." Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives (p. 22) state: "Maintain and restore habitat to support well-distributed populations of native plants, invertebrate and vertebrate riparian-dependent species." Course Woody Material is an important component for maintaining habitat complexity within stream channels and riparian areas (NWFP p. B-32 and *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Enhancement EA* p. 2 and 6).

Project design features included in the proposed action incorporate Best Management Practices for In-Stream Habitat Structures (1995 RMP, Appendix D, p. 174).

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

The following documents cover the proposed action:

The Environmental Assessment for the *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Enhancement,* (April 2009).

The Decision Record, signed June 9, 2009 for the *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Enhancement* (April 2009) Environmental Assessment.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife' *Guide to Placing Large Wood in Streams* (1995) and *Habitat Restoration Guide* (1999).

The Decision Record, signed 6/5/98, for the *Integrated Weed Management Plan* with the associated FONSI and Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion (#13420-2007-F-0055) and Letter of Concurrence (#13420-2008-1-0136) for *Programmatic Aquatic Restoration Activities in Oregon and Washington that Affect ESA-listed Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Species and their Critical Habitats.*

The National Marine Fisheries Service' *Aquatic Restoration Biological Opinion* (2008).

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the current proposed action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current proposed action within the same analysis area of the previously analyzed project? The *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat Enhancement EA,* listed above, analyzed programmatically a suite of activities for maintaining and restoring watershed conditions, including large wood placement for stream enhancement, across the Medford District BLM. This site-specific project is implementing wood placement for stream enhancement, and project design features required under the above referenced EA are included in this project.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA documents appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values? The range of alternatives analyzed in the above Environmental Assessment document is appropriate with respect to the current proposed action.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances? This project is consistent with the suite of activities analyzed in the above referenced EA (p. 6-7). The ID Team planning and overseeing the implementation of this site-specific project reviewed the anticipated effects of this project against those documented in the above referenced EA and found the existing analysis to be valid for this proposed action. No new information exists.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA documents continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action? The interdisciplinary team approach was used in evaluating the proposed action. The present methodology continues to be appropriate, because the action is the same.

5. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the current proposed action similar to those identified in the existing NEPA documents? The ID Team planning and overseeing the implementation of this site-specific project reviewed the anticipated effects of this project against those documented in the above referenced EA and the effects disclosed are the same as those identified and analyzed. No new information or circumstances would affect the predicted environmental impacts as stated in the above referenced EA.

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequately for the current proposed action? The above referenced EA was made available for public review on BLM's Medford District Website in March of 2009. This level of public and interagency review is adequate for the current proposed action.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: This worksheet was distributed to the appropriate members of the Ashland Resource Area Interdisciplinary Team for review and input.

F. Mitigation Measures: Project Design Features (PDFs), discussed in Section A above, are included as part of the proposed action for the purpose of reducing or eliminating anticipated adverse environmental impacts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the existing NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Signature of the Responsible Official

6/16/09

Date