

Categorical Exclusion Determination and Decision Record for the Big Butte Boulder Placement Project

DOI-BLM-OR-M050-2015-011-CX

A. Background

BLM Office: Butte Falls Resource Area

Document Number: DOI-BLM-OR-M050-2015-011-CX

Proposed Action: Boulder Placement to restrict unauthorized driving in meadows

Location of Proposed Action: The project is located in the Big Butte Creek fifth field watershed in Township 34 South, Range 3 East, Sections 27, 31, 33, and 35; Township 35 South, Range 3 East, Sections 1, 5, and 11; and Township 35 South, Range 2 East, Section 1; Willamette Meridian, Jackson County, Oregon.

Proposed Action:

In an effort to reduce resource damage and restore meadow habitat, the Butte Falls Resource Area of the Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to restrict vehicle access to identified meadows adjacent to roads, and from streams at identified campsites in the Big Butte Creek watershed (see Map). Vehicle access would be restricted by blocking or reblocking access points with boulders, logs, and other suitable material. Boulders may be countersunk up to 25%, where conditions allow, to prevent the boulders from being moved with a winch or other methods by the public. Informational signs would then be installed.

Approximately 20 cubic yards of crushed rock would be added to improve drainage at one campsite along BLM road 35-3E-3. Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, including mud-bogging when soils are saturated, is occurring within these meadow areas. The result is disturbance to wildlife; soil and water quality impacts in the form of erosion, gullies, and possible turbidity and sedimentation into streams; and pervasive noxious weed invasion of areas disturbed by OHVs. Work is scheduled to be completed during the summer of 2015.

Project Design Features

The following project design features are included in the site-specific design of the proposal to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts on the human environment. These project design features are a compilation of resource protection measures identified by the BLM's Interdisciplinary Team, Best Management Practices identified in the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP), and Best Management Practices incorporated into the 1995 RMP through an RMP plan maintenance action in 2012.

- Pressure wash all heavy equipment to remove all dirt and debris prior to entering BLM lands in the project area.
- Suspend ground-disturbing activities during precipitation events or when precipitation is imminent.
- Apply native materials or weed-free straw mulch to disturbed surfaces and seed with native grass species.
- Minimize ground disturbance associated with all activities.

- Stage equipment and supplies on previously disturbed and compacted surfaces and outside of riparian reserves.
- The project botanist and project leader will work with the contractor to achieve the desired results while minimizing disturbance that could spread weeds in the short term.
- If, during project implementation, the contractor/workers encounters or becomes aware of any objects or sites of cultural value on federal lands, such as historical or pre-historical ruins, graves, grave markers, or artifacts, the contractor shall immediately suspend all operations in the vicinity of the cultural value and notify the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). The project may be redesigned to protect the cultural resource values present, or evaluation and mitigation procedures would be implemented based on recommendations from the resource area archaeologist and concurrence by the Butte Falls Field Manager and State Historic Preservation Office.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The Bureau of Land Management did not scope this proposal and the public was not involved in its development. This proposal is in conformance with objectives, land use allocations, and management direction of the 1995 *Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP) and any plan amendments in effect at the time this document is published.

This project also conforms with the 1994 *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan).

The Proposed Action is consistent with the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District by the Oregon and California Lands Act of 1937, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Endangered Species Act of 1973, Clean Water Act of 1987, Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (as amended 1986 and 1996), Clean Air Act of 1990 (as amended), and Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

This proposal is consistent with management direction in the Medford District 1995 ROD/RMP (p. 45) that directs the BLM to protect or enhance special habitats for wildlife habitat with a 100 to 200 foot buffer. Roads would avoid special habitats and minimize effects to wetlands and riparian areas. Meadows and wetlands would be closed to off-highway vehicle use.

C. Compliance with NEPA

This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 G(2) as follows:

Installation of routine signs, markers, culverts, ditches, waterbars, gates or cattelguards on/or adjacent to roads and trails identified in any land use or transportation plan, or eligible for incorporation is such plan.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment, as documented in the following review.

D. Categorical Exclusion Review

The Code of Federal Regulations at 43 CFR 46.205(c) requires that “any action that is normally categorically excluded must be evaluated to determine whether it meets any of the extraordinary circumstances in section 46.215” (listed below). Additional analysis and environmental documents must be completed for any normally categorically excluded action which may:

Butte Falls Resource Area CX Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation

1. *Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

2. *Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

3. *Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

4. *Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

5. *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

6. *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

Initial SLS Remarks:

7. *Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau.*

Yes No

Initial AR Remarks:

8. *Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.*

Plants Yes No Initial mw Remarks:

Animals Yes No Initial AR Remarks:

Fish Yes No Initial ASD Remarks:

*seasonal restriction 35-2E-01 NWNW
March 1-July 30*

9. *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

Yes No

Initial RW Remarks:

10. *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

Yes No

Initial SW Remarks:

11. *Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).*

Yes No

Initial SR Remarks:

12. *Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).*

Yes No

Initial mw Remarks: *PDFs will be followed*

E. Categorical Exclusion Reviewers:

Robyn Wicks for

Name	Title	Date	Initials
Jean Williams	Environmental Specialist	5/12/15	RW
Marcia Wineteer	Botanist	4/28/15	mw
Dave Roelofs	Wildlife Biologist	4/27/15	DR
Aaron Donnell	Fisheries Biologist	4/20/15	ADD
Shawn Simpson	Hydrologist	4/17/15	SLS
Amy Meredith	Soil Scientist	4/23/15	AMM
Al Mason	Fire/Fuels Specialist	4/20/15	APM
Lisa Rice	Archaeologist	05/11/15	LR
Trish Lindaman	Recreation Planner	4/22/15	TZ
Jeff Brown	Engineer	5/6/15	AB

F. Decision and Rationale

BLM staff (listed in section E) have reviewed this project for potential impacts and provided project design features that will be incorporated into this proposal. I have considered the Big Butte Boulder Placement project and the required project design features listed in this categorical exclusion documentation in section A. Based on the categorical exclusion review documented in section D, I have determined the proposed action represents no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

Therefore, it is my decision to authorize the Big Butte Boulder Placement project as described in the Proposed Action.

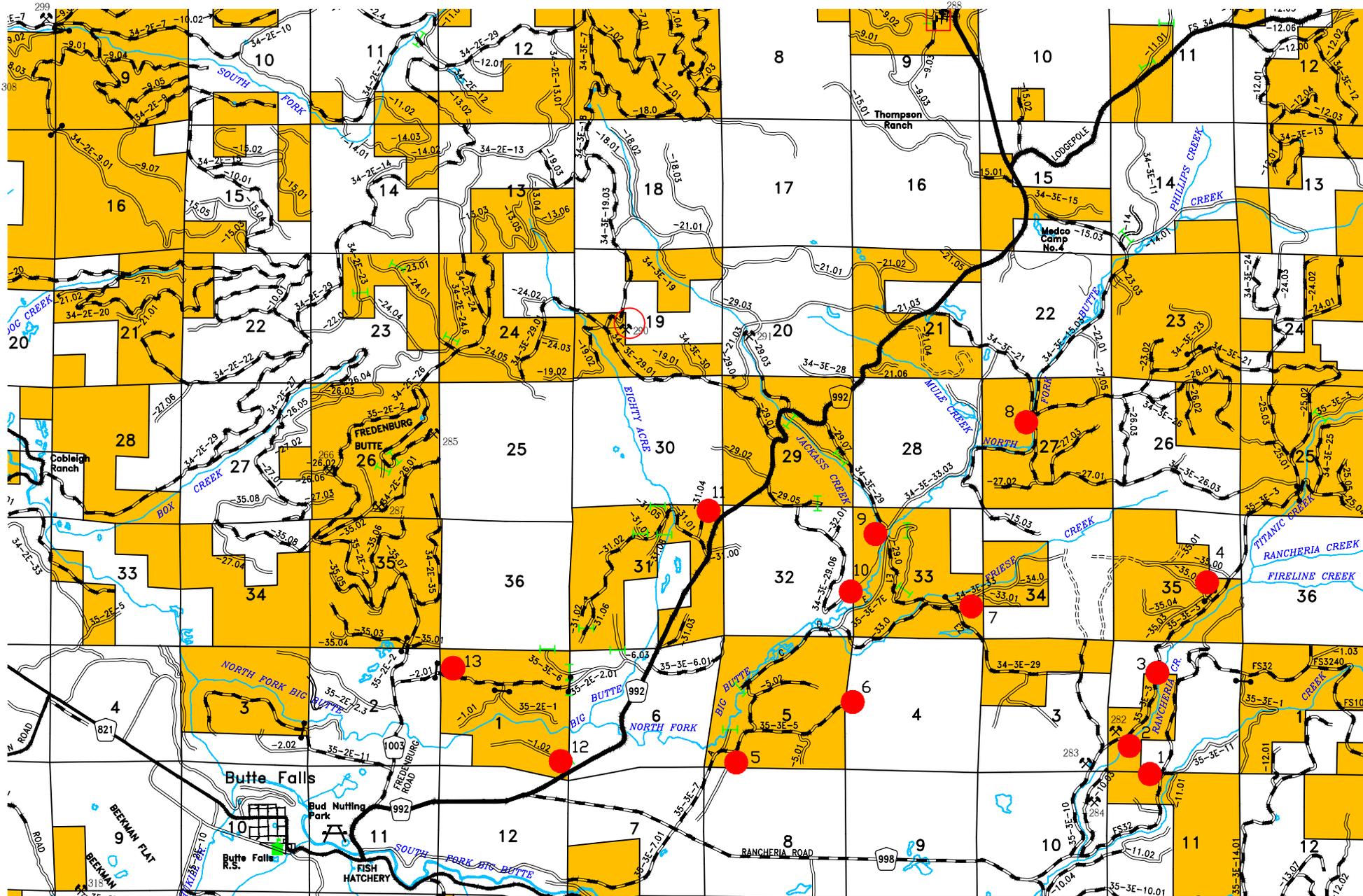
Teresa J. Trulock *5/14/2015*
Teresa J. Trulock Date
Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

G. Administrative Remedy

Notice of the general public land decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the Medford District Web site. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR 4.450-2. A written protest electronically transmitted (e.g., email, facsimile, or social media) will not be accepted as a protest. A written protest must be on paper hand delivered or mailed to Medford District BLM, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon 97504. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.

H. Contact

For additional information concerning this categorical exclusion review, contact Shawn Simpson, Project Lead, at 541-618-2460.



- Boulder Source / Eighty Acre Quarry
- Boulder Source / Vine Maple Quarry
- Boulder placement / work sites 1-13

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 MEDFORD DISTRICT - MEDFORD, OREGON

BUTTE FALLS RESOURCE AREA

Boulder Placement 1

DRAWN	LMK	SCALE: NONE
DATE	April, 2014	SHEET 1 OF 1