# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Glendale Resource Area
2164 N.E. Spalding
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1790 (ORM080)

SEP 09 2010

Dear Interested Party:

Attached for your review and comment is a Project Scoping Report for the proposed Fire Resiliency Project located on the Glendale Resource Area, Medford District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This report includes the proposal to create fire resilient forests on a landscape scale, up to 10,000 acres throughout the Glendale Resource Area. Implementation of this Project would be a maximum of ten years. The initial phase of the project identifies specific areas to be treated. Future project activities would be assessed as to whether the effects were anticipated or determined to be adequately analyzed under the environmental analysis document.

Prior to implementation of each phase, public collaboration would take place with members of the local communities and any other interested stakeholders in order to identify and address any site-specific concerns. Also, resource values would be identified and assessed before implementation of each phase. Multiple Decision Documents are expected to occur.

The initial phase of the project would tentatively begin in 2011. Implementation would occur in phases on roughly an annual basis, with up to 1,500 acres being treated in each phase. During implementation, multiparty or third-party monitoring would be encouraged to allow for an adaptive management approach. The initial phase includes a total of approximately 500 acres in the Lawson Creek area. This report includes a description of the project location, purpose of and need for action, decision to be made, a list of project design features, and the proposed action.

The Medford District BLM has already completed an Environmental Impact Statement for the Resource Management Plan, known as the 1995 Medford District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP-EIS). The RMP is itself an implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP) which was also prepared by federal agencies, including the BLM. These EISs, and the corresponding RODs, specifically contemplated the ecological significance of the areas in which forest management activities would be planned. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document that BLM would prepare for these proposed projects would tier to analysis of these projects impacts already contained in these programmatic EISs

The ultimate purpose of completing a NEPA document for these projects is to allow the Field Manager to make choices between management options (alternatives) for the locations identified by the interdisciplinary team (IDT) as needing treatment. We are inviting you to participate in the planning of these projects by identifying resource concerns and objectives that the IDT has not already identified, and that have not already been analyzed in the RMP and NFP. These projects do not provide an opportunity to re-visit landscape-wide decisions that were made in the NFP and RMP. Rather, helpful comments will assist me by identifying those concerns not previously considered that you feel

are important, and explanation of why you believe those concerns are relevant to my ultimate decision on how to carry out the selected management options for the locations identified.

I encourage you to provide comments in writing regarding the proposed project on or before October 10, 2010 to the Glendale Field Manager, 2164 NE Spalding Ave, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526. Comments will be considered in the development of the project.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. Private Citizens may request to withhold their name and/or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. If you would like your information withheld, please make your request prominently at the beginning of your letter. Such requests will be honored by the extent allowed by law. 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. For additional information concerning this proposed project contact Martin Lew at the above address, or phone (541) 471-6504.

Sincerely,

Katrina Symons
Field Manager
Glendale Resource Area

Enclosure
-Fire Resiliency Project Scoping Report (18 pp)

# Fire Resiliency Project
# Scoping Report

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Medford District
Glendale Resource Area

| | |
|---|---|
| Location: | The Project Area is delineated by the management boundaries of the Glendale Resource Area, Medford District Bureau of Land Management |

| | |
|---|---|
| Responsible Official: | Katrina Symons<br>Glendale Field Manager<br>2164 N.E. Spalding Avenue<br>Grants Pass, Oregon 97526 |

# Table of Contents

**1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED ..... 3**

1.1 INTRODUCTION ..... 3
1.2 PROJECT LOCATION ..... 3
1.3 PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROPOSAL ..... 3
1.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES ..... 3
1.5 PROPOSED ACTION ..... 4
1.6 DECISION FACTORS ..... 5
1.7 CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLANS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS ..... 5
1.8 PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED ..... 6
1.9 SCOPING AND ALTERNATIVE USE OF RESOURCES ..... 7

**2.0 ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF ACCOMPLISHING THE OBJECTIVES ..... 7**

2.1 INTRODUCTION ..... 7
2.2 ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION) ..... 7
2.3 ALTERNATIVE 2 (PROPOSED ACTION) ..... 7
*2.3.1. Understory Thinning and Density Management Thinning ..... 8*
*2.3.2. Associated Activities ..... 8*
2.4 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES ..... 9
*2.4.1 Soil Productivity, Residual Trees, and Coarse Woody Debris ..... 9*
*2.4.2 Air Quality / Smoke Management ..... 11*
*2.4.3 Noxious Weeds ..... 12*
*2.4.4 Streams and Riparian Zones ..... 12*
*2.4.5 Sedimentation and Soil Compaction from Roads, Temporary Routes and Landings 14*
*2.4.6 Special Status Species and their Habitats: Northern Spotted Owl ..... 15*
*2.4.7 Marbled Murrelet Seasonal Operating Restrictions ..... 16*
*2.4.8 Special Status Plants (T&E, Sensitive, State Listed, and Survey &Manage) ..... 16*
*2.4.9 Recreation ..... 16*
*2.4.10 Cultural Resources ..... 17*
*2.4.11 Rural Interface and Visual Resources Management ..... 17*

**APPENDIX A: ISSUES AND CONCERNS ..... 18**

# 1.0 Purpose and Need

## 1.1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the effects of implementing the Fire Resiliency Project. The public was asked to comment on an initial proposal. The four page initial proposal was made available to residents within the Wolf Creek, Sunny Valley, Glendale and Azalea communities as an insert into the Big News newsletter and by letters to residents. The Glendale Resource Area held three public meetings at local community buildings in Wolf Creek and Glendale. Two field trips were done in conjunction with these meetings to demonstrate site specific management practices similar to what is being proposed for the Fire Resiliency Project.

## 1.2 Project Location

The Project Area is delineated by the management boundaries of the Glendale Resource Area of the Medford District Bureau of Land Management.

## 1.3 Purpose and Need of the Proposal

As a result of the absence of fire, forested lands within the Glendale Resource Area currently have higher fuel loadings and more fire-prone vegetative conditions. This has increased the potential for high intensity, high severity wildfire events. The purpose of the Fire Resiliency project is to effectively create fire resilient forests on a landscape scale. Ecologic benefits include creating fire resilient forests that have a higher probability of withstanding wildfire events so that fish and wildlife habitat as well as protecting riparian areas and water quality are maintained on the landscape. Economic benefits would include the creation of employment opportunities associated with service contract work, supplying commercial by-product material to local markets through timber sale contracts, and maximizing federal funding by leveraging the goods-for-services potential of stewardship contracts.

The Fire Resiliency Project implements the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP, USDI 1995). The Medford District BLM has already completed an Environmental Impact Statement for the RMP, known as the 1995 Medford District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP-EIS). The RMP is itself an implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan for which federal agencies, including BLM, prepared the NW Forest Plan FSEIS. Management direction set forth in the RMP provides direction for resource management on BLM-administered lands according to various land-use allocations.

## 1.4 Project Objectives

The Fire Resiliency Project is designed to:

- Restore, maintain, and enhance fire-adapted ecosystems by promoting fire resiliency through forest management activities.
- Reduce the fire hazard throughout the Glendale Resource Area to protect life, property, and other values at risk of loss from wildfire.

- Create strategic areas for fire suppression activities to enhance public and firefighter safety.
- "Reduce both natural and activity based fuel hazards through methods such as prescribed burning, mechanical or manual manipulation of forest vegetation and debris, removal of forest vegetation and debris, and combinations of these methods" (RMP, p. 91).
- Social benefits include providing networking opportunities with local residents and other interested parties to design well-rounded projects in a collaborative manner.`

## 1.5 Proposed Action

To effectively create fire resilient forests on a landscape scale, up to 10,000 acres throughout the Glendale Resource Area would be treated under the Proposed Fire Resiliency Project. This project would implement fire resiliency treatments on BLM lands, and potentially on private lands if requested by local landowners as authorized under the Wyden Amendment (Public Law 109-54, Section 434).

**Implementation Phases**
Implementation of this Project would be a maximum of ten years. The initial phase of the project identifies specific areas to be treated. Future phases of this project would be designed using the criteria set forth in this EA. Future project activities would be assessed as to whether the effects were anticipated or determined to be adequately analyzed under this EA.

Prior to implementation of each phase, public collaboration would take place with members of the local communities and any other interested stakeholders in order to identify and address any site-specific concerns. Also, resource values would be identified and assessed before implementation of each phase. Multiple Decision Documents are expected to occur.

The initial phase of the project would tentatively begin in 2011. Implementation would occur in phases on roughly an annual basis, with up to 1,500 acres being treated in each phase. During implementation, multiparty or third-party monitoring would be encouraged to allow for an adaptive management approach. The initial phase includes a total of approximately 500 acres in the Lawson Creek area

Project areas would be prioritized by strategic location to create landscape-scale fire resilient forests, to enhance the safety of firefighting personnel and the public, and to best protect life, property, natural resources, and other values at risk of loss due to wildfire. High priority areas generally include the following:

- High fire hazard areas, unless other circumstances are present, such as a low fire hazard area that may need treatment to maintain it as such. Fire hazard is rated as high, medium, or low and is based on the expected fire behavior of an area.
- Areas within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) to protect life, property, homes, livestock, and other infrastructure. Areas outside the wildland-urban interface may be considered higher priority than in the WUI if, for example, a combination of criteria are met, such as a roadway that is located along a ridgetop where implementation of treatment would protect adjacent spotted owl habitat, cultural resources, infrastructure, or other valued resources.

- Ridgelines, because they lend themselves to strategic locations during fire suppression efforts.
- Roadways and major travel routes, because they provide access for fire suppression equipment as well as evacuation routes for the general public.
- Treatments that tie in to previously treated areas in order to create more continuous fire resilient forests (rather than isolated treatment areas) in order to achieve a landscape-scale approach.

## 1.6 Decision Factors

The Glendale Field Manager is the official responsible for deciding whether or not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and whether to approve the treatments as proposed, not at all, or to some extent.

## 1.7 Conformance with Land Use Plans and Other Documents

The actions proposed and analyzed in this EA were developed to be consistent with the management objectives for public lands identified in the following documents:

The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans and decisions:

- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and 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 FSEIS 1994 and ROD 1994);
- *Final-Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* and *Record of Decision* (EIS 1994 and RMP/ROD 1995);
- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (FSEIS 2004 and ROD 2004);
- *Final SEIS for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2000), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2001); and
- *Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan Environmental Assessment (1998*) and tiered to the *Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program* (EIS 1985).

On December 17, 2009, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington issued an order in *Conservation Northwest, et al. v. Rey, et al.*, No. 08-1067 (W.D. Wash.) ( Coughenour, J.), granting Plaintiffs' motion for partial summary judgment and finding a variety of NEPA violations in the BLM and USFS 2007 Record of Decision eliminating the Survey and Manage mitigation measure.
The project may proceed even if the District Court sets aside or otherwise enjoins use of the 2007 Survey and Manage Record of Decision. This is because the Fire Resiliency Project meets the provisions of the last valid Record of Decision, specifically 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 (not including subsequent Annual Species Reviews).

Previously, in 2006, the District Court (Judge Pechman) had invalidated the agencies' 2004 RODs eliminating Survey and Manage due to NEPA violations. Following the District Court's 2006 ruling, parties to the litigation had entered into a stipulation exempting certain categories of activities from the Survey and Manage standard (hereinafter "Pechman exemptions").

Judge Pechman's Order from October 11, 2006 directs: "Defendants shall not authorize, allow, or permit to continue any logging or other ground-disturbing activities on projects to which the 2004 ROD applied unless such activities are in compliance with the 2001 ROD (as the 2001 ROD was amended or modified as of March 21, 2004), except that this order will not apply to:

A. Thinning projects in stands younger than 80 years old;

B. Replacing culverts on roads that are in use and part of the road system, and removing culverts if the road is temporary or to be decommissioned;

C. Riparian and stream improvement projects where the riparian work is riparian planting, obtaining material for placing in-stream, and road or trail decommissioning; and where the stream improvement work is the placement large wood, channel and floodplain reconstruction, or removal of channel diversions; and

D. The portions of project involving hazardous fuel treatments where prescribed fire is applied. Any portion of a hazardous fuel treatment project involving commercial logging will remain subject to the survey and management requirements except for thinning of stands younger than 80 years old under subparagraph a. of this paragraph."

Following the Court's December 17, 2009 ruling, the Pechman exemptions are still in place. Judge Coughenour deferred issuing a remedy in his December 17, 2009 order until further proceedings, and did not enjoin the BLM from proceeding with projects.

The Fire Resiliency project is designed to comply with the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA, Bill H.R. 1904); the National Fire Plan of 2000 (NFP, Public Law 106-291); the Ten-year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan of 2002; the Healthy Forest Initiative (HFI, 2002); the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and the Department of the Interior's manual guidance on the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (H-1790-1); and the Wyden Amendment (Public Law 109-54, Section 434).

## 1.8 Permits and Approvals Required

- License agreements and/or other authorization with adjacent landowners to have a third party haul timber and use of landings

- In compliance with the Oregon Smoke Management Plan, prescribed burning activities on the Medford District require pre-burn registration of all prescribed burn locations with the Oregon State Forester.

## 1.9 Scoping and Alternative Use of Resources

A scoping letter was sent to approximately 2,100 landowners, federal, state, and county agencies, and to tribal and private organizations, and individuals that requested information concerning projects of this type. A variety of issues and concerns were raised during project scoping by BLM's interdisciplinary team, and interested individuals and groups outside the BLM. These are summarized in Appendix A.

# 2.0 Alternative Ways of Accomplishing the Objectives

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the alternative ways of meeting the project objectives identified in Chapter 1, by describing and comparing Alternative 1 (No Action Alternative) and Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) as specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) § 1502.14. Descriptions summarize potential environmental consequences and focus on potential actions and outputs. Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Project Design Features were identified and are included here to ensure project compliance with the federal Clean Water Act and higher-level National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, laws and BLM guidelines.

## 2.2 Alternative 1 (No Action)

The No Action Alternative provides a baseline for the comparison of the Proposed Action and describes the existing condition and the continuing trends within the Planning Area. Selection of this alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project (described in Chapter 1). The purpose and need is: 1) to effectively create fire resilient forests on a landscape scale; 2) create fire resilient forests that have a higher probability of withstanding wildfire events so that fish and wildlife habitat as well as protecting riparian areas and water quality are maintained on the landscape; 3). create employment opportunities associated with service contract work, 4) supplying commercial by-product material to local markets through timber sale contracts, 5) and maximizing federal funding by leveraging the goods-for-services potential of stewardship contracts.

Consideration of this alternative provides the answer to the question of what it would mean for the objectives not to be achieved. Stewardship project development would not occur at this time, nor would the associated employment opportunities for local communities or the opportunity to fund and implement restoration and maintenance projects.

## 2.3 Alternative 2 (Proposed Action)

The initial phase of the project would tentatively begin in 2011. Implementation would occur in phases on roughly an annual basis, with up to 1,500 acres being treated in each phase. The initial phase includes a total of approximately 500 acres in the Lawson Creek area. The Proposed Action would treat BLM lands, with the potential of treatments on private lands if requested by local landowners as authorized under the Wyden Amendment (Public Law 109-54, Section 434). The timeframe of this project would be a maximum of ten years.

The two types of forestry treatments associated with the Proposed Action are understory thinning and density management thinning

### 2.3.1. Understory Thinning and Density Management Thinning

Approximately 10,000 acres throughout the Glendale Resource Area would be treated under this project.

Understory Thinning would reduce the amount of ladder fuels that could carry fire from the forest floor into the crowns of the trees. Understory thinning would occur across all stand age classes in late successional reserves (LSR) and matrix lands. T hinning of understory vegetation (brush and small trees) would be limited to material less than eight inches diameter at breast height (dbh). To reduce stump sprouting, dominant hardwood stems greater than six inches dbh would be retained. No conifer and hardwood trees greater than eight inches dbh would be cut. The spacing between conifer trees would range between 14 and 20 feet. This range in spacing allows incorporation of existing stand characteristics so that treatment results such as a mosaic pattern of stand can be achieved rather than a uniform landscape.

Density Management Thinning would reduce the probability of fire spreading from the crown of one tree to the next. Density management thinning would be limited to stands 160 years of age and less on matrix land, and 80 years and less in the LSR. To achieve the objective of preventing fire from spreading from tree to tree through the crowns, density management thinning would focus on trees greater than eight inches dbh. The objective would be to retain the larger trees that are generally more fire resilient. The thinning would promote health and vigor of the remaining trees. Trees to be removed in the LSR would be limited to 20 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) and smaller.

Density Management Thinning in riparian reserves would improve stand health, promote the growth of future large woody debris, enhance species diversity, reduce the existing fire hazard, and promote fire resiliency. Such treatments would benefit perennial and intermittent fish and other aquatic species habitat.

### 2.3.2. Associated Activities

The slash created by the thinning activities would be disposed of using the appropriate method depending on the amount of material: lop-and-scatter, chipping on site, chip and haul/remove, handpiling and handpile burning, whole-tree yarding and burning the landing piles, prescribed underburning, or removal for biomass utilization.

Lop-and-scatter treatments break up jackpots of material so that the slash does not increase the fire hazard. The lop portion of “lop-and-scatter” would cut slash so it would not exceed 18 inches in height from the ground and material less than six inches in diameter would be cut into pieces so it would not exceed eight feet in length. Scattering would arrange slash in a discontinuous pattern across the forest floor. If the amount of slash remaining within units is too high, chipping or handpile/burn may be recommended for treatment.

Hand piling and burning are typically done when underburning is not possible due to heavy fuel loads. Woody material that has been cut one to eight inches in diameter and greater than two feet in length would be piled by hand. The piles would be covered with 4 mm black plastic to

create a dry ignition point and would be burned during the wet season when the risk of fire spread (scorch or mortality) to nearby residual trees and shrubs is minimized.

Underburning may be used to set back resprouting vegetation every five to seven years and to re-establish fire in the ecosystem and to prolong desired conditions.

Biomass utilization could include firewood for local communities. Biomass may be removed during initial treatments to reduce smoke emissions and to benefit the local economies. In areas where biomass extraction is not feasible, hand piling and burning may occur.

Temporary spur route construction would occur to facilitate extraction of biomass and commercial by-product material. Temporary spur routes are not intended to be part of the permanent or designated transportation network system and would be decommissioned after use. Temporary spur routes would be sub-soiled, mulched, seeded, and barricaded as needed. No new permanent road construction is proposed under this project.

Road maintenance would occur as needed for hauling of by-product material. Road maintenance activities would be proposed on existing roads to keep a road at its original design standard. Work would include blading and shaping, spot rocking and surface replacement, ditch cleaning, culvert inlet and outlet cleaning, culvert replacement, and removing vegetation along roadsides to improve site distance.

Maintenance of existing water sources for fire suppression resources and equipment such as fire engines, water tenders, and helicopters would occur as needed. Work could include dredging or excavating ponds, replacing or repairing infrastructure like holding tanks or pond liners, as well as improving access by removing brush and trees that impede ingress and egress for fire suppression equipment.

## 2.4 Project Design Features

Project Design Features (PDFs) are specific measures included in the site specific design of the Proposal to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts on the human environment. These PDFs were developed by the Fire Resiliency interdisciplinary team from guidance of Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in the Medford District ROD/RMP, Appendix D, and other regulatory laws, for resource protection measures specific to the Planning Area.

### 2.4.1 Soil Productivity, Residual Trees, and Coarse Woody Debris

- Existing skid trails would be used whenever practical. New skid trails would be pre-designated and approved by the Authorized Officer.

- Tractor yarding would generally be limited to slopes less than 35%. Tractor logging would not occur when soil moisture at a depth of 4-6 inches is wet enough to maintain form when compressed, or when soil moisture at the surface would readily displace, causing ribbons and ruts along equipment tracks. These conditions are generally found when soil moisture, at a depth of 4-10 inches, and is between 15-25% depending on soil type.

- Productivity loss resulting from topsoil disturbance and soil compaction would not exceed a combined calculated total of 5% of the unit.

- Whole tree yarding would be permitted as long as contractor can operate without causing unacceptable damage from bark slippage, girdling, broken tops, or damage to live crowns. If it is determined by the Authorized Officer that unacceptable amounts of damage is occurring, trees would be required to be bucked and limbed as directed by the Authorized Officer.

- Total compaction, including compaction associated with pre-existing skidtrails within the unit, would be reduced to less than 12% within thinning units, upon completion of harvest (RMP, p. 166). To reduce soil compaction, minimize sedimentation, and improve site productivity temporary routes and temporary landings would be rehabilitated by discontinuously sub-soiling, seeding, water-barring, mulching, and blocking prior to October 15 of the year of harvest. For all sub-soiling, a winged ripping device would be used to sub-soil the full width of the skid trail, rips would be no more than 36 inches apart, and would be to a depth of 18 inches or to bedrock, whichever is shallower. All rehabilitation activities that utilize heavy equipment would be required to take place at same time as sub-soiling to prevent machinery from driving back over sub-soiled ground.

- Tractors would be equipped with an integral arch to minimize soils disturbance and compaction.

- To minimize soil disturbance the use of blades while tractor yarding would not be permitted. Equipment would walk over as much ground litter as possible to reduce compaction.

- Cut-to-length equipment with a ground pressure less than, or equal to 6.0 psi may be used instead of designated skidtrails. At time of operation, soil moistures must remain below 25 percent. In addition, when used off designated skidtrails, the forwarder would be required to operate perpendicular to the slope when slopes exceed 20 percent (no sidesloping).

- Merchantable sawlogs would be removed from yarded material, and any remaining debris at the landing sites would be handpiled and burned on the immediate downhill side of existing roads, chipped, or removed for biomass utilization.

- Activity slash remaining in units would be lopped-and-scattered, chipped, or handpiled and burned to prevent an increase in fire hazard.

- Firelines would be constructed by hand on slopes greater than 35%. On slopes less than 35%, one-pass with a brush blade could be used to construct fireline using machinery. Machine firelines would not be constructed in riparian reserves.

- Lateral yarding would be required on all units to protect residual leave trees and existing conifer regeneration. Yarding carriages would be required to maintain a fixed position during lateral yarding to reduce damage to the residual stand.

- The number of cable yarding corridors would be minimized to reduce soil compaction and displacement from cable yarding. Cable yarding corridors would be located approximately 150 feet apart at the tail end.

- All non-hazardous snags would be retained in all harvest units. If it is necessary to fall snags for safety reasons, they would remain on site as down wood. All existing naturally occurring dead and down woody debris would remain on site.

- A minimum 20 foot area on the ground would be cleared of slash and other vegetation, litter, and debris, around each landing pile to prevent escaped fire. Each landing pile would be covered with a large enough piece of 4 mil black plastic to ensure a dry ignition spot (generally 10 ft x 10 ft or large enough to cover 80% of the pile). To minimize scorch and mortality, landing piles would not be placed adjacent to or within 15 feet of leave trees. To facilitate desired consumption, landing piles would be as free of dirt as reasonably possible.

- Each hand pile would be covered with a large enough piece of 4 mil black plastic to ensure a dry ignition spot (generally 5 ft x 5 ft or large enough to cover 80% of the pile). To minimize scorch and mortality, hand piles would not be placed adjacent to or within 10 feet of leave trees or large woody debris.

- Piles would be burned in the fall to spring season after one or more inches of precipitation have occurred. Patrol and mop-up of burning piles would occur when needed to prevent treated areas from reburning or becoming an escaped fire.

- Slash piles would not be allowed on roadways, turnouts, shoulders, or on the cut bank

### 2.4.2 Air Quality / Smoke Management

- All prescribed burning would be managed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Oregon Smoke Management Plan administered by the Oregon Department of Forestry and the regulations established by the Air Quality Division of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

- Burning of slash piles would occur after a sufficient period of curing to ensure desired consumption of material and after a period of enough seasonal moisture to minimize risk of fire escape. Prescribed fire burn plans would be completed before ignition, as would smoke clearance to minimize impacts on air quality.

- Local residents would be advised of prescribed burning on the Glendale Resource Area prior to seasonal burning through news releases.

### 2.4.3 Noxious Weeds

- Seed and straw used for restoration, replanting of bare soil, and post treatment throughout the project area would be native species and weed free to prevent the further spread of noxious weeds. All seeding would be contingent on seed availability.

- In order to prevent the potential spread of noxious weeds into the Medford District BLM, the operator would be required to clean all logging, construction, chipping, grinding, shredding, rock crushing, and transportation equipment prior to entry on BLM lands.

- Cleaning shall be defined as removal of dirt, grease, plant parts, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds into BLM lands. Cleaning prior to entry onto BLM lands may be accomplished by using a pressure hose.

- Only equipment inspected by the BLM would be allowed to operate within BLM lands. All subsequent move-ins of equipment as described above shall be treated the same as the initial move-in.

- Prior to initial move-in of any equipment, and all subsequent move-ins, the operator shall make the equipment available for BLM inspection at an agreed upon location off federal lands.

- Noxious weeds within BLM lands would be surveyed and treated for noxious weeds as funding is available. Treatments would primarily consist of herbicide application, hand pulling, and mechanical cutting methods as analyzed in the Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (USDI 1998).

### 2.4.4 Streams and Riparian Zones

- On all units, a minimum 25 foot no treatment buffer, from bankfull width, would be used to protect streambank stability.

- Within the variable width ecological protection zone (EPZ), canopy closure would remain at existing levels and vegetative species diversity would be maintained. Young stand management activities that do not use ground disturbing yarding systems would be allowed.

- Treatments within the riparian reserve that are outside the variable width ecological protection zone would be maintain canopy closures above 50%.

- Unless unsafe, trees within riparian reserve boundaries (180’) would be directionally felled away from the stream, and adjacent trees would not be felled into riparian reserves.

- Springs and perennial wet areas would receive a radial buffer that would prohibit any overstory canopy removal or ground disturbance. This buffer would extend outward from the edge of the riparian vegetation for a distance equal to the EPZ width designated for that unit, or 100 feet (whichever is smaller), in order to protect the ecology of these sites.

- Slumps, intermittent seeps, and other unstable areas would be buffered (no treatment) by leaving one row of overstory trees or a 25 foot diameter (whichever is greatest), from the outer edge of instability, around these areas for soil stabilization (RMP, p. 154).

- Trees in no-harvest portions of riparian reserves that are accidentally knocked over during falling and yarding would be retained on site for fish /wildlife habitat or would be treated with activity fuels.

- Upon completion of harvest, all utilized skid trails within riparian reserves would be discontinuously sub-soiled, seeded, water-barred, mulched and blocked

- Hydraulic fluid and fuel lines on heavy mechanized equipment would be in proper working condition in order to minimize potential for leakage into streams. No re-fueling of heavy equipment would occur within 150 feet of streams or stream crossings. Absorbent materials would be required to be onsite to allow for immediate containment of any accidental spills.

- Cleaning culvert inlet catch basins, culvert installations, and culvert removals in stream channels would be restricted to between July 1 and September 15 in accordance with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in-stream work period recommendations, except where the potential for greater damage to water quality and fish habitats exists.

- Material removed during excavation of water source maintenance work would only be placed outside the EPZ in locations where it cannot enter streams, hydrologically connected ditchlines, or other water bodies.

- Flowing water would be diverted around each culvert or cross drain installation or removal site whenever there is sufficient water volume. Diverted water would be returned to the channel immediately downstream of the work site. Effective erosion control measures would be in place at all times during installation or removal, and would be removed from the channel prior to October 15$^{th}$ of the same calendar year. Stored sediment behind erosion control devices would be removed from channel and disposed of in a stable location outside the EPZ.

- Fires would be allowed to back into riparian reserve no-treatment areas, but no ignition would take place within the no treatment areas.

- Fire suppression foam would not be used within 150 feet of streams and wetland.

- Refueling of chainsaws and pumps would be done no closer than 150 feet of any stream or wet area. Spilled fuel and oil would be cleaned-up and would be disposed of at an approved disposal site.

- Contractors must prepare a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan for all hazardous substances to be used in the contract area, as directed by the Authorized Officer. Such plan shall include identification of Purchaser's representatives responsible for supervising initial containment action for releases and subsequent cleanup. Such plans must comply with the State of Oregon DEQ OAR 340-142, Oil and Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Requirements.

#### 2.4.5 Sedimentation and Soil Compaction from Roads, Temporary Routes and Landings

- Temporary routes, slid trails, and road renovation/improvement construction would not occur when soil moisture, at a depth of 4-6 inches, is wet enough to maintain form when compressed; or when soil moisture at the surface would readily displace, causing ribbons and ruts along equipment tracks. These conditions are generally found when soil moisture at a depth of 4-10 inches and is between 15-25% depending on soil type.

- Where hydrologically connected, log hauling on natural surface and rocked roads would not occur under wet conditions to protect water quality. Wet road conditions are considered to result in: continuous mud splash or tire slide, fines being pumped through road surfacing from the subgrade, road drainage causing a visible increase in stream turbidities, surface rutting, or any condition that would result in being chronically routed into tire tracks or away from designed road drainage during precipitation events.

- Landings used during dry conditions within the wet season (October through May) that have the potential to release sedimentation into a stream or wet area, would have silt fencing or other sediment control measures in place during periods of non-use if they are hydrologically connected to streams.

- All natural surface or rocked roads that are re-opened for harvest operations or log haul would receive adequate surfacing, be gated, or be blocked prior to the wet season and stabilized in such a way that no future maintenance would be necessary to prevent road damage or stream sedimentation.

- All landings, skid trails, and cable yarding corridors would be winterized and rehabilitated by properly installing and/or using water bars, berms, sediment basins, gravel pads, hay bales, small dense woody debris, seeding and/or mulching, to reduce sediment runoff

- Prior to October 15 of the same operating season, winterization and rehabilitation would occur on temporary routes, landings, corridors, skid trails, and other areas of exposed soils by properly installing and/or using water bars, berms, sediment basins, gravel pads, hay bales, small dense woody debris, seeding and/or mulching, to reduce sediment runoff as directed by the Authorized Officer.

- Non-emergency road maintenance work shall occur during the dry season (generally between May 15 and October 15). Certain activities (blading of aggregate roads, rocking, brushing, cross drain installation) occurring a minimum of 200 feet away from any

stream may be permitted during the wet season (generally Oct 15 -May 15) when conditions are dry. When dry conditions are experienced outside seasonal restrictions, coordination with area specialists for agreement on the activity needs to occur. No ditch maintenance shall occur during the wet season unless for safety or resource protection. Work shall be suspended during precipitation events or when observations indicate that saturated soils exist to the extent that there is visible runoff or a potential for causing elevated stream turbidity and sedimentation. Emergency road work may be permitted during the wet season.

- Avoid blading and vegetation removal unless necessary to remove drainage impediments when maintaining inboard ditches. Sediment control measures will be evaluated and implemented ifnecessary, where ditchline blading is required within 100 feet of streams.

- Waste material from road maintenance activities would be placed in stable disposal areas a minimum of 200 feet from any stream and in a location where sediment laden runoff can be confined. Where necessary, provide erosion control to minimize sediment delivery to streams.

### 2.4.6 Special Status Species and their Habitats: Northern Spotted Owl

- Any of the following measures may be waived in a particular year if nesting or reproductive success surveys conducted according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) - endorsed survey guidelines reveal that spotted owls are non-nesting or that no young are present that year. Waivers are valid only until March 1 of the following year. Previously known well established sites/activity centers are assumed occupied unless protocol surveys indicate otherwise.

- Work activities (such as tree felling, yarding, temporary route construction, road renovation/improvement, hauling on roads not generally used by the public, and prescribed fire) would not be permitted within specified distances (see table 2-1 below ), of any nest site or activity center of known pairs and resident singles between March 1 and June 30 (or until two weeks after the fledging period) – unless protocol surveys have determined the activity center to be not occupied, non-nesting, or failed in their nesting attempt. March 1 – June 30 is considered the critical early nesting period; the restricted season may be extended during the year of harvest, based on site-specific knowledge (such as a late or recycle nesting attempt). The boundary of the prescribed area may be modified by the action agency biologist using topographic features or other site-specific information. The restricted area is calculated as a radius from the assumed nest site (point).

**Table 2-1. Harassment distances from various activities for spotted owls (BLM 2009)**

| Activity | Buffer Distance around Owl Sites |
|---|---|
| Heavy Equipment (including non-blasting quarry operations) | 105 feet |

| | |
|---|---|
| Chain saws | 195 feet |
| Prescribed fire | 0.25 miles |

- Maintain 60% canopy closure and greater in nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat (NRF) of northern spotted owl habitat.

- 40% canopy closure and greater in dispersal Spotted Owl habitat.

### 2.4.7 Marbled Murrelet Seasonal Operating Restrictions

- Daily/seasonal restrictions for the marbled murrelet would be implemented, if required, in concurrence with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### 2.4.8 Special Status Plants (T&E, Sensitive, State Listed, and Survey &Manage)

- Underburning in areas containing special status plant species would follow prescriptions that would result in cool burns which would minimize potential damage to plant populations. Prescribed fire operations would be done in a manner which strives to reduce or eliminate burning through identified special status plant populations, dependent on the adaptability of each species to fire.

- Buffer sizes would be a minimum of 0 to 200 feet from the occurrence boundary (maximum size will be determined on a case by case basis because of differing habitat requirements and existing habitat conditions); however for some species thinning treatments would be allowed through the sites during dormancy periods for those species that will benefit from the disturbance.

- Cut material must be removed and piled outside the buffered occurrence.

- Hand pile and burning: no hand piles in the buffer and piles must be at least 25feet from the plant site.

- Burning of landing piles would not occur within 100 feet of an occurrence.

- No mechanical equipment would be allowed in buffers.

- Manual slashing (chainsaws) and brushing through buffered occurrences are allowed if during the dormancy period. For Gentner's fritillary *(Fritillaria gentneri)*, 40 percent combined canopy coverage of trees and shrubs must be retained. If the canopy cover is less than 40 percent, then treatment of the buffer is not needed. There is no canopy minimum for Cook's lomatium (*Lomatium cookii*).

### 2.4.9 Recreation

- The Glendale Resource Area has open, limited and closed categories for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use (RMP p.109). If, as a result of increased OHV use due to more open terrain following removal of vegetation, it is determined that resource damage from OHV

use is documented, steps will be taken to control the use through additional steps such as signing, barrier installation, monitoring and, increased law enforcement activity.

- To reduce the possibility of damage to resources from unauthorized OHV in high use areas, fireline construction would not be done within 100 feet of roadways until project is implemented. Vegetation removal would be minimal for the first 100 feet, routing the fireline around existing vegetation where possible. Upon completion, vegetation would be pulled back over the first 100 feet of fireline.

### 2.4.10 Cultural Resources

- Prior to any project implementation under this Fire Resiliency programmatic EA, a cultural resource survey would be completed and site-specific protection measures would be implemented to preserve the integrity of all recorded cultural sites, referred to as Historic Properties in cultural resource protection laws and regulations.

- If cultural resources are found during project implementation, the project would 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 with concurrence from the Field Manager and State Historic Preservation Office.

- An additional cultural resource survey may be required in the event that additional surface disturbing opertations are added to the project after the initial survey.

### 2.4.11 Rural Interface and Visual Resources Management

- Dust abatement measures would be used, where needed, on BLM roads within ¼ mile of residents. Dust abatement substances (such as water, lignon sulfonate, or magnesium-chloride) would not be applied at stream crossings or other locations that could result in direct delivery to a water body (not within 25 feet of a water body or stream channel) nor would it be applied during 24 hours prior to predicted rain. All applications of magnesium-chloride would meet US EPA National Recommended Water Quality Criteria for Chloride.

- Prior to individual plan implementation a Visual Resource Contrast Rating Analysis would be completed to analyze potential visual impacts of the proposed project and activities.

## Appendix A: Issues and Concerns

BLM identified a number of issues through internal scoping, interdisciplinary team process, and public input. The following issues were considered during the development of the Fire Resiliency Scoping Report.

-project size

-programmatic format

-canopy closure (brush/resprout related, soil issues with increased runoff)

-erosion related to road construction (and aesthetics of decommissioning)

-10 year timeframe

-view sheds affected by clear cutting