



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
email address: Medford_Mail@blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

NOV 09 2011

1792 (ORM050)

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Butte Falls Resource Area, is inviting you to participate in the development of the proposed Friese Camp Forest Management Project. This project will consider timber harvest and thinning projects north of the town of Butte Falls in Township 33 South, Ranges 2 East and 3 East; Township 34 South, Range 3 East; and Township 35 South, Range 3 East (see enclosed map). The projects will be analyzed in the Friese Camp Forest Management Project Environmental Assessment (EA).

The Friese Camp Forest Management Project EA will also include the Camp Cur timber sale units that were analyzed in the 2005 Camp Cur Timber Sale and Landscape Restoration Project EA. I have decided to include those timber sale units for reanalysis in this EA because Survey and Manage guidelines have changed and the final recovery plan for the northern spotted owl was released before the Camp Cur timber sale was implemented.

The Friese Camp Forest Management Project EA will analyze a combination of silviculture prescriptions in selected forest stands to meet the following objectives: provide forest products, improve conifer forest vigor and growth, maintain or improve wildlife habitat conditions, and reduce individual tree mortality. These prescriptions tailor management practices to the topography of the project area and the long-term goals for each forest stand. Management of these forest stands could be accomplished through multiple commercial timber sales and stewardship contracts.

The BLM is proposing to conduct management activities on approximately 2,260 acres. Depending on the alternative chosen, silviculture treatments could include a combination of commercial thinning (\approx 110 acres), selection harvest (\approx 40 acres), density management/restoration thinning (\approx 1,710 to 1,920 acres), regeneration harvest (\approx 60 acres), and small diameter thinning (\approx 340 acres). Harvested trees would be removed using tractor/ground-based, cable/skyline, or helicopter yarding methods. We are proposing to reduce the debris resulting from the tree harvest and small diameter thinning by underburning, piling and burning, or removing biomass. Road-related projects (e.g., road renovation and temporary route construction) to support the tree harvest and small diameter tree thinning are also proposed. In addition, road-related work (e.g., road closures and road decommissioning) to maintain or improve aquatic and watershed conditions are being considered.

I anticipate the number of acres and miles of roads being considered for this project will be refined as this project develops.

We are asking for any comments, issues, and concerns you have that will help shape or further develop this project. We recognize that people place a wide range of values on forest resources and resource use on public lands. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action. Comments clearly expressing site-specific issues or concerns are the most helpful. **Your comments will be most useful if they are received by December 2, 2011.** However, we appreciate your comments and they will be accepted and reviewed up until I issue a decision on the project.

Please submit your comments to **Medford District BLM, Butte Falls Resource Area Planning, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon 97504**, or email to **BLM_OR_MD_Mail@blm.gov (Attention: Jean Williams)**.

Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. If you wish us to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses submitted on official letterheads and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

This is not the only opportunity you will have to comment on this project. The BLM is preparing extensive written documentation of the project proposals and the possible environmental effects. This will be distributed to the public in the Friese Camp Forest Management Project EA. When the EA has been prepared and distributed, you will have an opportunity to make further comments. If you wish to continue to receive information about this project, please complete and return the enclosed "Response Form" or direct an email to **BLM_OR_MD_Mail@blm.gov (Attention: Jean Williams)** and you will remain on the list.

For additional information concerning this proposed project, contact Jean Williams at 541-618-2385. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,



Jon K. Raby
Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

Enclosures

Friese Camp Forest Management Project Silviculture Prescriptions and Yarding Methods

Proposed Silviculture Prescriptions

A combination of the following silviculture prescriptions may be used, depending on management objectives and the proposed action alternative.

Commercial thinning would maximize growth and yield by controlling stocking and redistributing the growth potential to fewer but larger trees. This treatment would occur in stands that have reached an economical combination of tree diameters and surplus volume. Smaller trees and trees in direct competition with healthy dominant and codominant trees would be removed. A minimum of 40% canopy cover would remain after harvest.

Selection harvest in uneven-age stands is used to reduce stand densities, remove low vigor trees, and leave a fully stocked healthy stand. Trees are harvested across all diameter classes with the harvest criteria based on density levels, target stocking levels, and risk factors of individual trees. Canopy closure would range from 40% to 60% following harvest.

Density management would thin trees from below to maintain or enhance forest health, stand structure, and function for northern spotted owl habitat. The residual canopy cover would be a minimum of 40% or 60%, depending on the current owl habitat designation (dispersal or nesting, roosting, and foraging).

Restoration thinning would reduce stand densities to increase landscape resiliency to environmental disturbances (e.g., fire, insects, disease, and climate change). Smaller trees and vegetation that are competing with the dominant and codominant trees for nutrients and water would be removed. All trees 150 years or older and all of the largest hardwoods would be retained. Structural diversity within stands would be achieved by leaving small, unthinned patches and creating small openings. A minimum of 40% canopy cover would remain after harvest.

Regeneration harvest is used to maximize volume growth and yield and to reestablish favored tree species on matrix lands. Regeneration harvest would occur in stands 100 years or older and only in areas outside designated provincial home ranges of the northern spotted owl.

Three regeneration harvest methods may be proposed for implementation: shelterwood and northern general forest management area (NGFMA) and southern general forest management area (SGFMA). The target stand conditions for these harvest methods are similar, except for the remaining canopy closure and number of green trees greater than 20 inches DBH. Shelterwood harvest would be used in stands that occur on flat terrain with slopes less than 15 percent. Shelterwood systems are used to provide overstory frost protection for planted seedlings by reducing the loss of radiant heat. NGFMA regeneration harvest would be applied in stands that occur on slopes greater than 15 percent. SGFMA regeneration harvest would be applied in stands that occur in the transient snow zone. The treatment would maintain high canopy cover and reduce the risk of flooding from a rain on snow event.

<i>Regeneration Method</i>	<i>Remaining Trees per Acre greater than 20" DBH</i>	<i>Percent Canopy Closure</i>
Shelterwood	12-25	20-40
NGFMA	6-8	10-15
SGFMA	16-25	25-40

Retained trees would be the most vigorous and would be selected based on tree crown ratio and form. The spatial distribution of these trees would vary from individual trees to groups. Healthy understory ponderosa pine, sugar pine, incense cedar, and Douglas-fir trees less than 8 inches DBH and free of insects, disease, or damage would be left; all other trees would be removed. Existing wildlife snags and coarse woody debris would not be removed.

Small diameter thinning would be applied in young stands to promote stand health, create structural diversity, and increase landscape resiliency to environmental disturbances. Riparian areas located adjacent to upland thinning units would be thinned using a similar prescription with an emphasis on retaining riparian species (e.g., maple, willow). High stand densities in young ponderosa pine and mixed conifer stands have resulted in slow or stagnant growth rates. These stands are overstocked with more trees than the site has water, nutrients, and growing space to sustain. Precommercial and commercial thinning would reduce the number of trees per acre to levels that the site has resources to sustain. A minimum of 40% canopy cover would remain after harvest.

Proposed Timber Harvest Yarding Methods

Trees harvested as a result of the silviculture prescriptions described above would be moved, or yarded, from the forest stands to a landing (a central area where logs are gathered for further transport). A combination of skyline cable and tractor yarding methods would be used in this project.

Skyline cable yarding drags trees by cable with one end suspended and one end on the ground, up the slope to a landing area on or near a road. This results in narrow, parallel yarding corridors about every 150 feet throughout the harvest unit. Corridors are about 9 to 15 feet wide, depending on the size of trees removed and the terrain. The locations of the corridors are approved by the BLM sale administrator and are designated before harvest begins. Cut trees are dragged from the place they are cut to the yarding corridor.

Tractor yarding uses tractors to drag trees to landing locations. Tractor yarding only occurs on lands with less than 35 percent slopes. This method requires narrow skid trails (about 9 to 12 feet wide). Skid trail locations are approximately 150 feet apart, but may vary depending on site-specific terrain. The skid trails are located before harvest begins and the locations are preapproved by the BLM sale administrator.

Helicopter yarding lifts trees bunched together by a cable, moving the trees with a helicopter from the harvest unit to a landing area near a road. Helicopter yarding allows for full suspension of the trees from the harvest unit to the landing area and does not create skid trails or corridors. Helicopter yarding eliminates the need to build roads within the harvest area. The objective is to

minimize surface disturbance in high risk watersheds. Existing helicopter landings would be used whenever possible. Landings would not exceed one acre in size.

Response Form

We are trying to save paper and conserve resources. Please respond if you wish to be included in future mailings for this project.

Complete this form and return to:

Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Butte Falls Resource Area Planning
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504

Include me on the mailing list for the Friese Camp Forest Management Project (as described in the attached letter).

Please Print Your Mailing Address Clearly

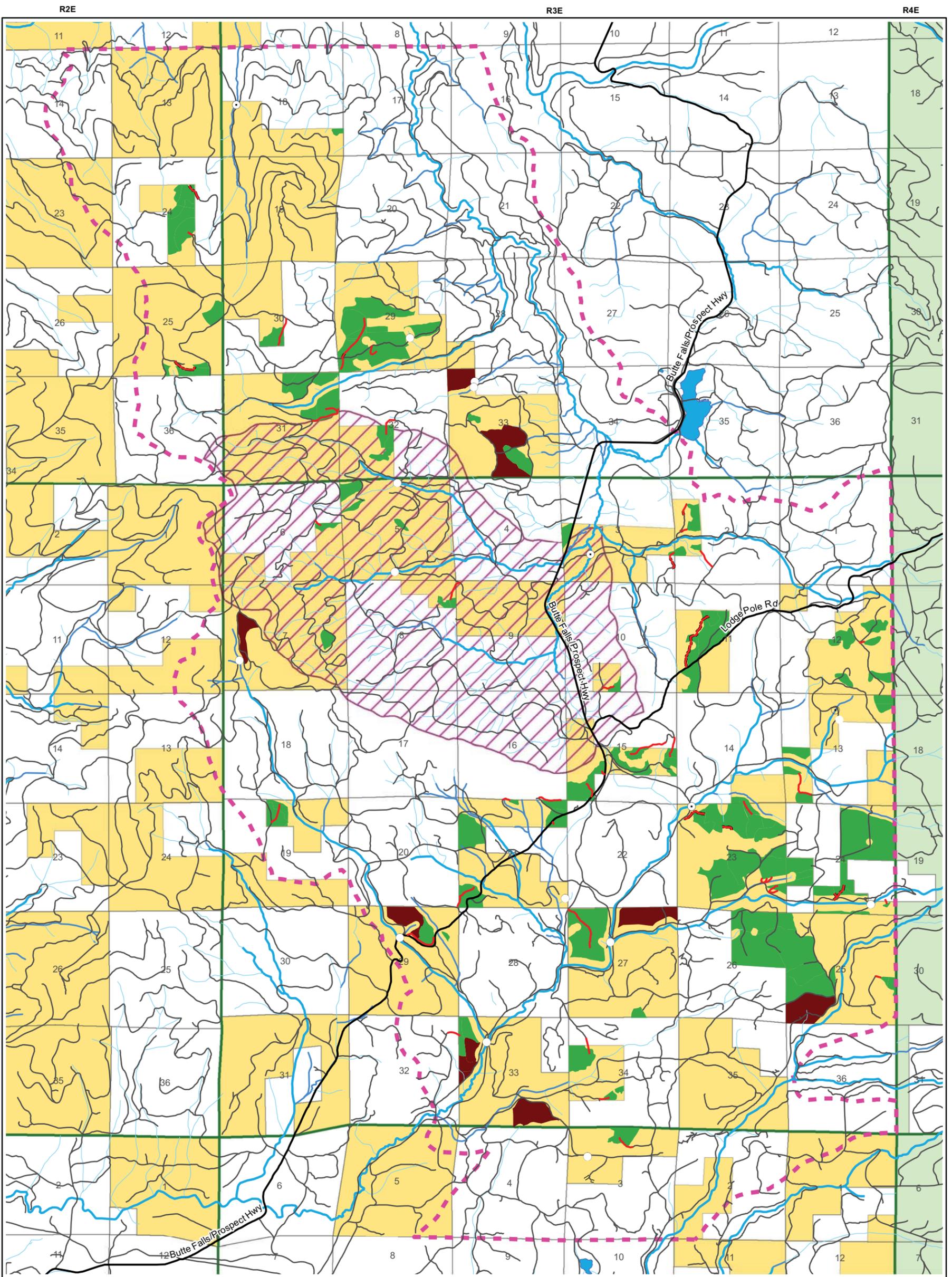
Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

I prefer to be kept informed via **Email** **Postal Service**



- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Proposed Timber Harvest Units | Paved Road | Private |
| Proposed Small Diameter Thinning Units | Existing Road | Forest Service |
| Proposed Temporary Route | Existing Primitive Route | BLM-Administered |
| Water Source Restoration | Perennial Stream | Friese Camp Project Boundary |
| | Intermittent Stream | RMP Deferred Watershed |
| | Lake | |

**Butte Falls Resource Area
Friese Camp Forest Management Project
Environmental Assessment**



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

