

Categorical Exclusion Determination and Decision Record for Gopher Trapping in the Butte Falls Resource Area

DOI-BLM-OR-M050-2014-0008-CX

Description of Proposed Action

The Butte Falls Resource Area of the Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to perform Gopher Trapping treatments within reforestation units in the Resource Area. Trapping areas would occur where gophers are making it difficult to establish new vegetation. This action is necessary to get both conifer and other wildlife habitat vegetation established to BLM minimum standards.

Gopher trapping involves searching for evidence of underground gopher "runways" where they live, by looking for mounds of soil pushed above ground that are located at the end of their runways. A probe (stick, metal pole, etc) is then used to find a soft area in the ground that is a hollow runway. Once the runway is found, it would be dug out with a shovel for enough space for a metal trap to be placed on either side of the runway. Traps would be checked after 48 hours. They are kill traps similar to a small rodent trap that kills the animal almost instantly. Disturbance is limited to the areas where gopher runways exist. The traps are attached to wooden stakes that are visible above ground. Everything is removed once trapping is completed.

The dead gopher carcasses would be left on each unit as food for eagles, ravens, and hawks. Gopher trapping would occur over the next 5 years. Each year from 2014-2019, all gopher trapping treatments would start around June when the soil conditions are right and would continue until all the silvicultural units are completed, or the fall weather prohibits the completion of trapping.

Neither spotted owls nor spotted owl habitat would be affected by the proposed action. The proposed activity would not adversely affect wildlife species that are listed or proposed for listing under the auspices of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

Proposed work specific to each individual site would be reviewed by Butte Falls Resource Area specialists for necessary clearances prior to implementation including any needed cultural, wildlife, and/or plant surveys.

Project Design Features

Cultural, Wildlife, and Botany

- If cultural resources are found during implementation, activities will protect the cultural resource values present, or evaluation or mitigation procedures would be implemented based on recommendations from the Resource Area Archaeologist, with input from local federally recognized Tribes, and concurrence from the Field Manager and State Historic Preservation Office.

Streams and Riparian Zones

- No digging will occur in the banks of any channel feature, nor in any designated wetlands, springs, or seeps.
- All road use will occur on existing roads only. No vehicles are permitted off-road.
- Any ground disturbance in Riparian Reserves will be mulched and seeded with weed free straw and native seed or other acceptable native materials.

Plan Conformance Review

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 including 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. 49) that directs the BLM to “Design and implement fish habitat restoration and enhancement activities in a manner that contributes to attainment of Aquatic Conservation Strategy and riparian reserve objectives.”

Categorical Exclusion Determination

This Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion as provided in United States Department of the Interior Departmental Manual 516 DM 11.9 C (3). This section allows for “Seeding or reforestation of timber sales or burn areas where no chaining is done, no pesticides are used, and there is no conversion of timber type or conversion of non-forest to forest land. Specific reforestation activities covered include....rodent trapping...”

Before any action described in the list of categorical exclusions may be used, the “extraordinary circumstances,” included in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 43 CFR 46.205(c) must be reviewed for applicability. After review, the BLM determined no extraordinary circumstances exist that would cause the proposed action to have a significant environmental effect. The action will not require additional analysis.

NEPA 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 MJC 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 MJC 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 MJC Remarks:
4. *Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*
 Yes No
Initial MJC 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 MJC 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 JR 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 DR Remarks:
Fish Yes No Initial BHJ Remarks:

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

Yes No

Initial ms Remarks:

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

Yes No

Initial ms 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 AK 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:

Categorical Exclusion Reviewers:

Name	Title	Date	Initials
Michelle Calvert	NEPA Coordinator	6/3/14	MJC
Marcia Wineteer	Botanist	5/21/14	M.W.
Dave Roelofs	Wildlife Biologist	5/20/14	D.R.
Baker Holden	Fisheries Biologist	5/20/14	BH
Shawn Simpson	Hydrologist	5/15/14	SS
Amy Meredith	Soil Scientist	5/22/14	ACM
Al Mason	Fire/Fuels Specialist	6/4/14	APM
Lisa Rice <i>Cheryl Ripley</i>	Archaeologist	05/12/2014	CR
Jeff Brown	Engineer	05/19/14	JB
Trish Lindaman	Outdoor Recreation Planner	5/23/14	TL
Bill Ripley	Silviculturalist	5/22/2014	WR

May 2014

Decision

It is my decision to authorize the Gopher Trapping in the Butte Falls Resource Area as described in the Proposed Action and including the Project Design Features.

Decision and Rationale

The Proposed Action has been reviewed by Butte Falls Resource Area staff and appropriate Project Design Features, as specified above, will be incorporated into the proposal. Based on the attached NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined the Proposed Action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further environmental analysis is required.



Jennifer Sanbourn
Acting Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

6/3/14
Date

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

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.

Butte Falls Resource Area
Gopher Trapping for 2014

Notification

The following Butte Falls Resource Area resource specialists have reviewed this proposed action and have identified any resource concerns and/or constraints. Resource concerns and/or constraints have been made known to the **Lead Silviculturalist**.

Name	Resource	Date	Initials
Michelle Calvert	NEPA Compliance	6/3/14	MSC
Marcia Wineteer	Botany	5/21/14	mw
Dave Roelofs	Wildlife	5/20/14	D.R.
Baker Holden	Fisheries	5/27/14	BH
Shawn Simpson	Hydrology	5/22/14	SS
Amy Meredith	Soil	5/13/14	AM
Al Mason	Fuels	5/12/14	AM
Lisa Rice	Cultural	5/13/14	LR
Jeff Brown	Engineering	5/27/14	JB
Trish Lindaman	Recreation	5/23/14	TL
Bill Ripley	Silviculture	5/22/2014	BR

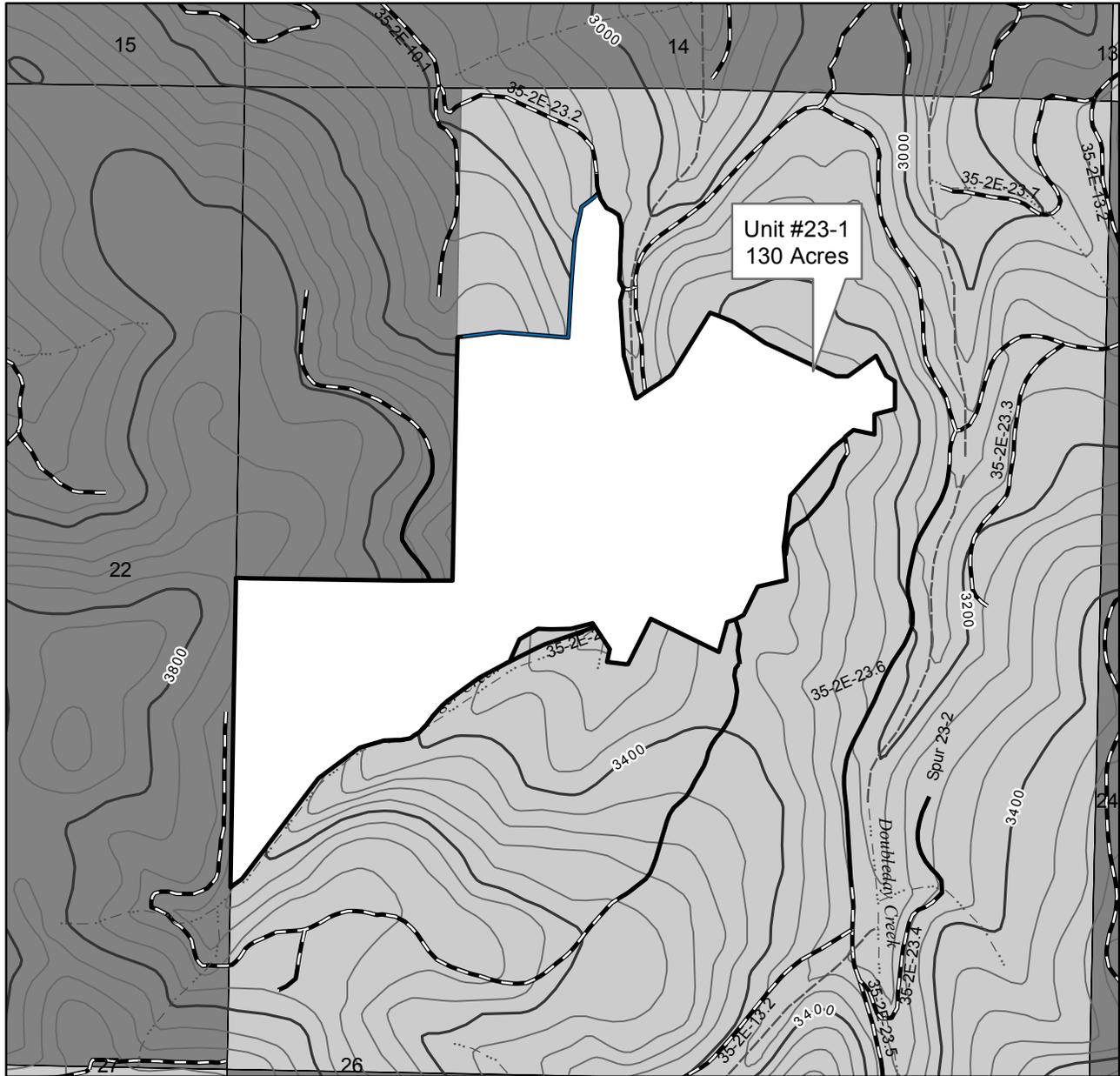
NEPA Document	Location	Unit Number	Acres
DOI-BLM-OR-M050-2009-0015-EA, Doubleday Fire Salvage	T35S-R2E-S23	23-1	130
		23-6	105
	T35S-R2E-S27	27-6	4
		27-16	10

Notes:

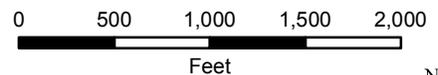
Of the total unit acres in the above table for units 23-1 and 23-6, less than 80 percent of unit 23-1 and less than 20 percent of unit 23-6 will actually have gopher traps set in them. The exact areas within these units have not been determined yet. The attached map shows the location of units.

Doubleday Fire

T35S R2E Sec 23



-  Treatment Area
-  Perennial Stream
-  Intermediate 40-ft contour
-  BLM Administered
-  Road
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Index 200-ft contour
-  Non-BLM Land
-  35-2E-23#23-1FY14PlantBdry.



1:12,000



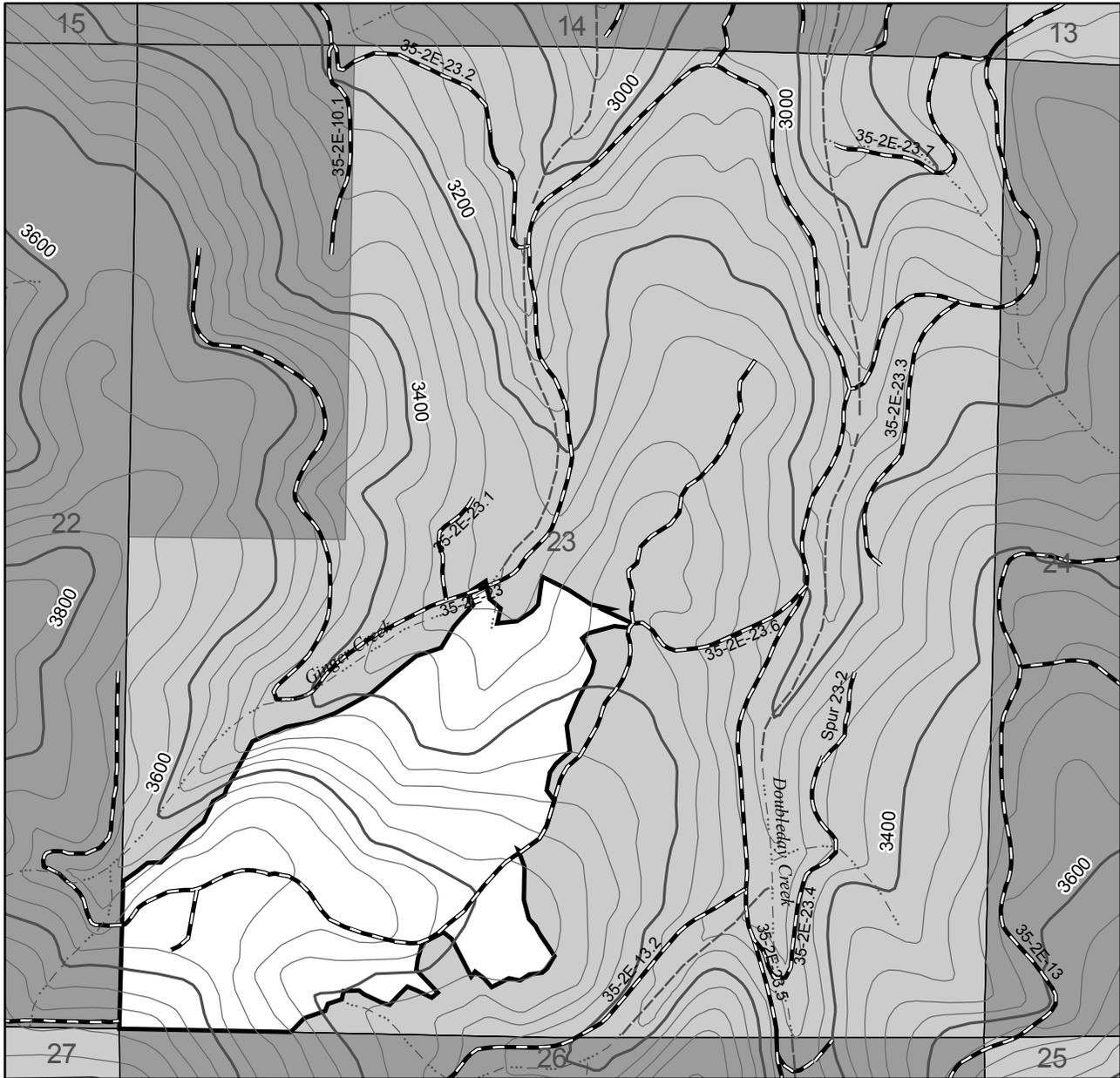
FOI Key	Bid Item	Unit #	Acres	Treatment
162560	5A	23-1	130	Gopher Trapping
163749				
161531				
162060		Total	130	
163750				
165668				
162573				



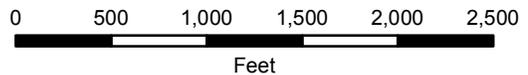
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Butte Falls RA
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Doubleday Fire

T35S R2E Sec 23



-  Treatment Area
-  40 ft Contour
-  Perennial Stream
-  BLM Administered
-  Road
-  100ft Contour
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Non-BLM Land



FOI Key	Unit #	OI#	Acres	Treatment
163751	23-6	005	105	Gopher Trapping
163749		002		
		Total	105	

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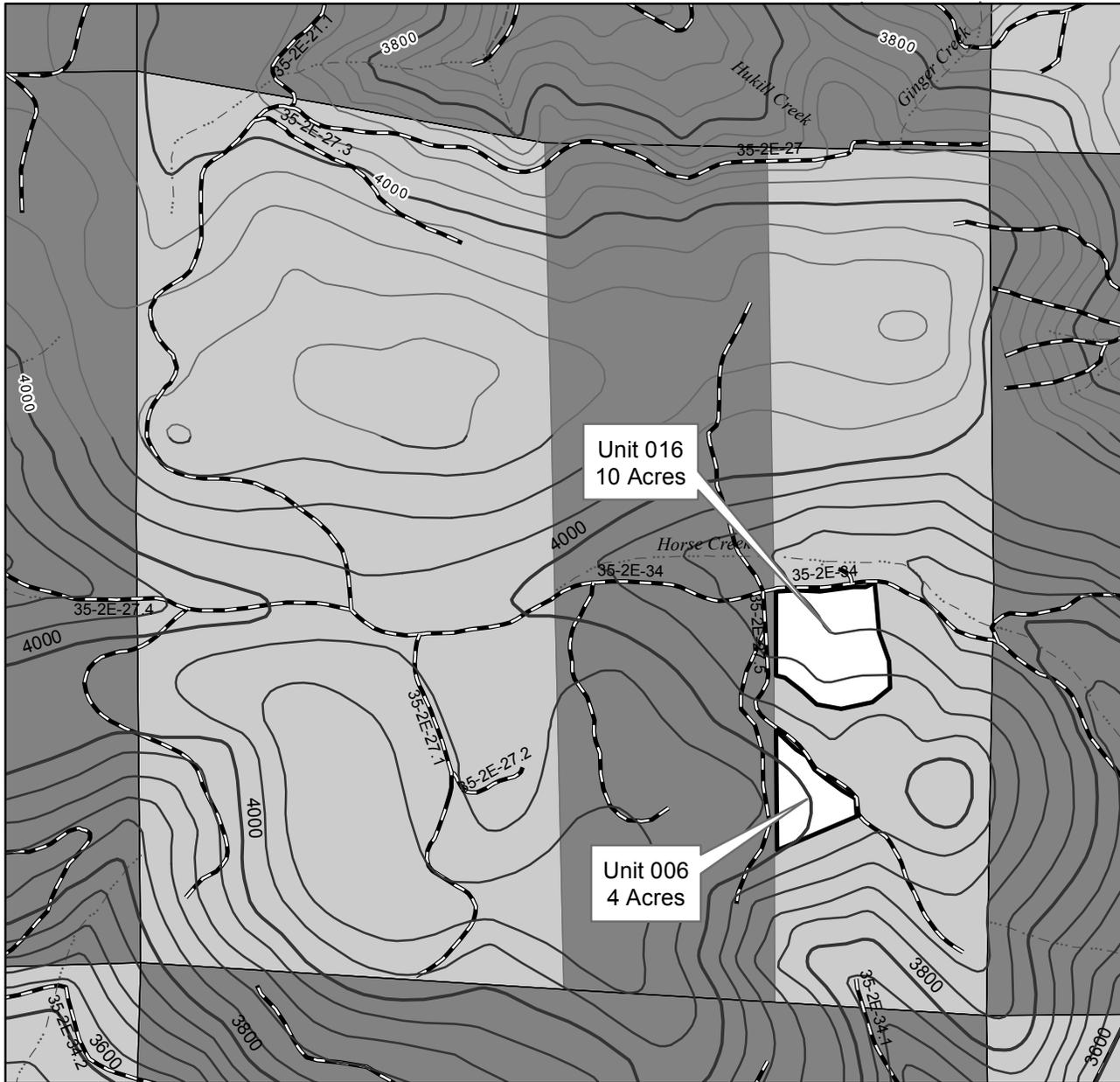


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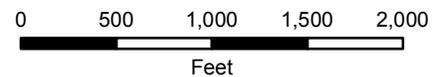


Doubleday Fire

T35S R2E Sec 27



- Road
- Perennial Stream
- 40 ft Contour
- BLM Administered
- Intermittent Stream
- 200 ft Contour
- Non-BLM Land
- New_Shapefile



FOI Key	Bid Item	Unit #	Acres	Treatment
162734	2B	006	4	Gopher Trapping
164202	2B	016	10	Gopher Trapping
		Total	14	

1:12,000



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