United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Grants Pass Field Office
2164 NE Spalding Avenue
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526
www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford

1792 (ORM070)
DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2012-0003-EA

NOV 10 2014

Dear Interested Party:

As the Grants Pass Resource Area Field Manager, I have signed the Decision Record (DR) for the Jumping Bean Vegetation Management Project. Forest management activities include Density Management and Hazardous Fuels Reduction on 636 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Matrix lands. Connected actions may include road maintenance work associated with the Density Management treatments.

The activities of the Jumping Bean Vegetation Management Project are analyzed under the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2012-0003-EA). The Environmental Assessment was made available for public comment on May 7, 2013 to June 7, 2013 for a 30 day comment period. The BLM's responses to substantive public comments are included with the DR. These comments were considered in reaching a final decision for the Jumping Bean Vegetation Management Project.

This is a forest management decision. Administrative remedies are available to persons who believe they will be adversely affected by this decision. In accordance with BLM Forest Management Regulations (43 CFR § 5003.2(a)), the decision for this project will not become effective, or be open to formal protest, until the Legal Notice appears in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* on November 11, 2014.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (b) states, "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail (email) or facsimile (fax) protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Grants Pass Interagency Office will be accepted. The protest must clearly and concisely state which portion or element of the decision is being protested and the reasons why the decision is believed to be in error.

You can review the DR at: http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/index.php, the Medford District's Internet site. Hard copies of the DR are also available at the Grants Pass Interagency Office at 2164 NE Spalding Ave, Grants Pass, OR 97526. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., closed holidays. For additional information, contact Mark Brown, Planning and Environmental Specialist, at (541)471-6505.

Sincerely,

acting for

Allen Bollschweiler
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resource Area

Decision Record for the
Jumping Bean Vegetation Management Project
DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2012-0003-EA

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Medford District, Grants Pass Resource Area

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the third Decision Record (DR) for activities analyzed in the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2012-0003-EA). This DR applies to 636 acres of Density Management and Hazardous Fuels Reduction activities as analyzed under the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (EA). There may be road maintenance work (EA p. 22-25 and p. 36) associated with the Density Management treatments (stewardship activities). This decision does not authorize road renovation/improvements or temporary route construction/reconstruction. The land use allocations in this project area are Matrix and Riparian Reserve as listed under the Medford District's 1995 Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The Planning Area (PA) is north of the city of Grants Pass, Oregon. The legal description of the PA is T34S-R6W-Sections 12, 13, 23-27, 33-36; T34S-R5W-Sections 7, 11-15, 18-36; T34S-R4W-Sections 18, 19, 30, 31; T35S-R6W-Sections 1-5, 8-17, 21-28, 34-36; T35S-R5W-Sections 1-12, 14-36; T36S-R6W-Sections 1-3; and T36S-R5W-Sections 1-4, 9-12, 14-16, and 21-22 in Josephine and Jackson Counties, Oregon, Willamette Meridian.

Table 1. Jumping Bean Density Management/Hazardous Fuels Units

Township-Range-Section	Unit Number	Acres	Treatment Type
T34S-R5W-13	13-12	36	DM/HFR
T34S-R5W-14	14-1	55	DM/HFR
	14-2	33	DM/HFR
	14-4	9	DM/HFR
T34S-R5W-15	15-11	49	DM/HFR
T34S-R5W-21	21-3	38	DM/HFR
	21N-1	28	DM/HFR
T34S-R5W-23	23-1	55	DM/HFR
	23-9	11	DM/HFR
T34S-R5W-28	28-17	23	DM/HFR
T35S-R5W-15	15-6	41	DM/HFR
	15-13A	3	DM/HFR
	15-24	55	DM/HFR
T35S-R5W-21	21-12	48	DM/HFR
T35S-R5W-22	22-1	10	DM/HFR
	22-3	80	DM/HFR
T35S-R5W-28	28-11	62	DM/HFR

Density Management/Hazardous Fuels Reduction (DM/HFR)

II. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement included two scoping letters for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project (February and August 2012) and a public field trip (October 2012). The February 2012 scoping letter was released prior to the project being assigned as an Ecological Forestry Project. Following the Secretary of Interior's direction, the project evolved to incorporate Ecological Forestry principles, which prompted the August 2012 scoping period.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) also had two field trips with Drs. Johnson and Franklin in April and September 2012 to review sample marking and to ensure the project would meet the principles of their ecological forestry work.

The scoping letters were mailed to a list of individuals, agencies, and organizations expressing interest in Grants Pass Resource Area projects and landowners within ¼ mile of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project proposed units. Public comments were requested within 30 days for each of these scoping periods so comments received could be considered for further development of the project prior to environmental analysis. All substantive comments are responded to in Appendix 2 of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA.

The Grants Pass Resource Area also accepts public comment of proposed forest management activities through the quarterly BLM *Medford Messenger* publication. A brief description of proposed projects, such as Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project, a legal location and general vicinity map are provided along with a comment sheet for public responses. The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project has been included in these quarterly publications beginning in the winter of 2011/2012.

Conflicts identified during scoping with the Proposed Action were considered to determine if an alternative action would be developed. Chapter 1 summarizes this alternative consideration and explains why some alternatives were considered but not analyzed in detail and eliminated from further study.

The public comment period for review of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA was initiated on May 7, 2013 for 30 days. A Reader's Guide for the EA was released at that time to assist readers in understanding the project and the EA. Approximately 75 letters were sent to individuals, groups, and agencies that requested to be kept informed of the project. The letter announced the 30-day public comment period, provided a synopsis of the proposed activities, and noted that the EA is available online and at the Grants Pass Interagency Office.

A legal notice of sale was published in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* on May 7, 2013. Five comment letters were received in response to these public outreach efforts. Substantive comments identified in the comment letters for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project are addressed and responded to in Attachment 1 of this Decision Record.

III. PLAN CONFORMANCE, CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Land Use Plan Conformance

- *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 FEIS, 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* (FEIS, 2004 and ROD, 2004)
- *Final SEIS for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2000), and the *ROD and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2001)
- *Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan Environmental Assessment* (1998) and tiered to *the Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program* (EIS, 1985)

Endangered Species Act, Section 7 Consultation

Northern Spotted Owl

The BLM completed a Biological Assessment in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to access the impacts from the proposed Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project to Northern Spotted Owls (NSO) in compliance of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). A Biological Opinion (BO) was received April 12, 2013 (#01EOFW00-2013-F-0091).

The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project PA overlaps a portion of the Revised 2012 Critical Habitat for the NSO, specifically a portion of the KLE 3 subunit of the Klamath East Habitat Unit (Figure 10, EA p. 121). Approximately 12,407 acres of the KLE 3 subunit are within the PA for this project, which is approximately 60% of the federal lands in the PA. The proposed suite of management activities included under Alternative 2 are designed to be consistent with both the *Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl* (USFWS 2011) and the 2012 Final Revised Critical Habitat for the NSO (USFWS 2012) management recommendations of active management using ecological forestry techniques, both inside and outside the reserves.

The proposed Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project PA does not occur in marbled murrelet critical habitat.

Survey and Manage and Bureau Sensitive Species Compliance

Red Tree Vole

Red Tree Vole (RTV) protocol surveys (Survey and Manage Protocol – Oregon Red Tree Vole (*Arborimus longicaudus*) Version 2.0) were conducted. Based on active and associated inactive RTV nests located during surveys, approximately 270 acres were buffered from treatment across the PA.

Great Grey Owl

Great Gray Owl (GGO), surveys were completed for proposed units with suitable nesting habitat in 2011 and 2012. These surveys resulted in detection of a single male GGO on three occasions in 2011, but no pair or nest was detected. Surveys of this area in 2012 did not detect any GGOs. There is a low likelihood that GGOs would be directly affected at the population level because protocol surveys did not detect any GGO pairs or nest sites in the PA.

Plants

Vascular and nonvascular plant surveys were conducted for the Jumping Bean Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project consistent with the final SEIS for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (2000), and the ROD and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (2001).

Cultural and Tribal Coordination

Cultural

Required cultural surveys were completed for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project. Eligible sites will be protected using Project Design Features (PDFs) with a no cut buffer. The State Historic Preservation Office concurred that the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project will have “no effect” to cultural resources as cultural sites will be avoided during project implementation. The concurrence form is contained within the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA case file.

Tribal

Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project scoping reports (February and August 2012) were sent to local federally recognized Native American Tribes interested in Medford District BLM proposed projects. Tribes take an active role in the management of their native lands and the BLM works with individual tribal governments to further identify and address Native American concerns and traditional uses of lands administered by the BLM. Further consultation with tribes in the form of meetings, phone calls, and emails did not identify any cultural resource tribal concerns associated with the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project.

IV. DECISION

I have decided to implement a portion of Alternative 2 of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA referred to hereafter as the Selected Alternative. The Selected Alternative includes treating approximately 636 aces of Density Management and Hazardous Fuels reduction. Density Management is intended to reduce stocking levels throughout the stand and promote growth and structural development of residual trees; extraction would be a by-product of the treatment and is not a driver for this treatment type. Hazardous fuels treatments will be accomplished by a combination of slashing, hand-piling, pile-burning, chipping, lop and scatter, biomass removal, and/or underburning. The Selected Alternative includes all Project Design Features (PDFs) and Best Management Practices (BMPs) described in the EA in Section 2.3.2.

This decision is based on site-specific analysis, the Administrative Project Record, management recommendations contained in the *Jumpoff Joe Creek Watershed Analysis* (1998), the *Grave Creek Watershed Analysis* (1999), and *Grants Pass-Rogue River Watershed Analysis* (1998) as well as the management direction contained in the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan* (1994), *Medford District Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (1995), and public comments.

In June 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) finalized the Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl, which contains 33 Recovery Actions (RA). RAs are recommendations to guide activities needed to accomplish the recovery objectives and ultimately lead to delisting of the species. Specifically, RA 32 in the Recovery Plan recommends maintaining and restoring the older and more structurally complex multilayered conifer forests (USFWS 2011, III-67). The Jumping Bean Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project defers treatment in RA 32 stands identified by interagency survey guidance (U.S. Forest Service and BLM Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan – Recovery Action 32 Draft Guidance).

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

All substantive public comments were already covered by Alternative 2 and analyzed for in their respective resources. No action requests were made that warranted a new alternative to be developed that would meet the purpose and need of the project.

DECISION RATIONALE

Based upon my review of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA, best available science, comments received from the public and management direction contained in the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan* (1994), *Medford District Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (1995), I have decided to authorize a portion of Alternative 2, known as the Selected Alternative. The Selected Alternative authorizes Density Management (DM) / Hazardous Fuels Reduction treatments (HFR).

My rationale for the decision is as follows:

The Selected Alternative meets the BLM's obligation to implement the RMP and to address the primary needs identified for lands in the PA, as well as meeting the purpose and need of the project to implement forest management activities that would contribute to continuous timber production while restoring dry and moist forest characteristics and reducing wildlife danger.

The rationale for choosing the Selected Alternative over Alternative 1 is that the Selected Alternative best meets the purpose and need. The Selected Alternative would best meet the ecological forestry objective of Drs. Franklin and Johnson, while meeting other resource objectives. Alterative 1 was not selected because it would not treat stands and would not best meet the silvicultural goals of ecological forestry.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA was made available along with the first DR on August 14, 2013 and the FONSI is attached with this DR. This project does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment; therefore an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

This is a forest management decision. Administrative remedies are available to persons who believe they will be adversely affected by this decision. In accordance with the BLM Forest Management Regulations (43 CFR § 5003.2(a)), the decision for this project will not become effective, or be open to formal protest, until the Legal Notice is published in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* on July 31, 2014.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (b) states, "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail (email) or facsimile (fax) protests. **Only written and signed hard copies of protests delivered to the Grants Pass Interagency Office will be accepted.** The Grants Pass Interagency Office is located at 2164 NE Spalding Ave, Grants Pass, OR 97526.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (c) states, "Protests received more than 15 days after the publication of the notice of decision or the notice of sale are not timely filed and shall not be considered." Upon timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider the project decision to be implemented in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available to him. The authorized officer shall, at the conclusion of the review, serve the protest decision in writing to the protesting party. Upon denial of a protest, the authorized officer may proceed with the implementation of the decision as permitted by regulations at 43 CFR 5003.3(f).

VI. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

If no protest is received by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) within 15 days after publication of the Legal Notice, the decision will become final. If a timely protest is received, the decision will

be reconsidered in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available and a final decision will be issued in accordance with 43 CFR § 5003.3.

VII. CONTACT PERSON

For additional information contact either Allen Bollschweiler, Grants Pass Resource Area Field Manager, 2164 NE Spalding Ave., Grants Pass, OR 97526, telephone (541) 471-6653; or Mark Brown, Environmental Planner, (541) 471-6505.

Allen Bollschweiler, Field Manager
Grants Pass Resource Area

11/10/2014
Date

Attachment 1

PUBLIC COMMENT
JUMPING BEAN ECOLOGICAL FORESTRY PROJECT
BLM RESPONSE

The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (EA) was released for public comment from May 7, 2013 to June 7, 2013. Notification of the comment period was included in publication of a legal notice in the Daily Courier, newspaper of Grants Pass, Oregon on June 7, 2013; the Medford District Bureau of Land Management website at http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/index.php; and a letter was mailed to those individuals, organizations, and agencies that requested to be involved in the environmental planning and decision making processes for forest management activities. Five comment letters were received by the Grants Pass Resource Area from two parties.

Substantive comments do one or more of the following (H -1790-1, National Environmental Policy Handbook):
question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information

- question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of, methodology for, or assumptions used for the environmental analysis
- present new information relevant to the analysis
- present reasonable alternatives
- cause changes or revisions in one or more alternative

Comments that are not considered substantive include the following:

- comments in favor of or against the proposed action or alternatives without reasoning that meet the criteria listed above (such as "we disagree with Alternative Two and believe the BLM should select Alternative Three)
- comments that only agree or disagree with BLM policy or resource decisions without justification or supporting data that meet the criteria listed above (such as "more grazing should be permitted").
- comments that don't pertain to the Project Area or the project (such as "the government should eliminate all dams," when the project is about a grazing permit)
- comments that take the form of vague, open-ended questions

For comments that were identical or very similar, they were combined and a single response was made. The Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR §1503.4) identifies five possible types of responses for use with environmental impact statements.

- modifying one or more of the alternatives as suggested
- developing and evaluating suggested alternatives
- supplementing, improving, or modifying the analysis
- making factual corrections
- explaining why the comments do not warrant further agency response, citing cases, authorities or reasons to support the BLM's position.

Comment (1): Commenter requests commercial removal of Riparian Reserves (RR) trees be eliminated from the project or an EIS be prepared to disclose significant adverse effects. The commenter provides scientific analysis critical of RR thinning (*Effects of Riparian Thinning on Wood Recruitment: A Scientific Synthesis* (Spies, T. Polluck, M. and G. Reeves. 2013)) and requests any proposals for such treatment require site specific information about actual riparian conditions.

BLM Response: The EA (p.32) states "The Riparian Reserves proposed for treatment were selected based on field stream survey information and silvicultural review. Stands that exhibited conditions such as overstocking, minimal canopy layers, low species diversity, or low conifer and hardwood vigor were selected for treatment."

The specific EPZ distance per stream was developed using stated protection criteria from the Northwest Forest Plan[1] for individual elements of the Riparian Reserve including: bankfull and flood stage streambank stability; shade and temperature; surface erosion of streamside slopes; fluvial erosion of the stream channel; soil productivity; habitat for riparian-dependent species; the ability of streams to transmit damage downstream; the role of streams in the distribution of large wood to downstream fish bearing waters; and riparian microclimate. The Ecological Protection Width Needs chart is based on slope and rock type, and takes into account protection of streams from "surface erosion of streamside slopes, fluvial erosion of the stream channel, soil productivity, habitat for riparian-dependent species, the ability of streams to transmit damage downstream, and the role of streams in the distribution of large wood to downstream fish bearing waters."

The Jumping Bean Timber Sale would commercially thin 11.75 acres within the RR. An Ecological Protection Zone (EPZ) ranging from 75-180 ft from the stream bankfull width (by slope distance) would be applied along streams to protect stream channel structure and water quality (Best Management Practice, RMP p.154. "Canopy cover would remain above 50%, and species diversity would be maintained. Activities in this area would be designed to ensure that habitat conditions for the wildlife and plant species that use this zone are not degraded," (EA, p.34).

The commenter notes from Spies et al. 2013, that "[a]ccurate assessments of thinning effects requires site-specific information. The effects of thinning regimes on dead wood creation and recruitment will depend on many factors including initial stand conditions, particularly stand density, and thinning prescription". As with the prescriptions of upland treatments, substantial and detailed field data was collected to recommend thinning in the RR for this project. This field information is available in the NEPA project case file.

There is no requirement under NEPA to provide all the details of field data collected in the NEPA document in order to recommend proposed treatments for each unit. BLM regulations, regarding NEPA state that "it is not better documents but better decisions that count". NEPA's purpose is not to generate paperwork – even excellent paperwork – but to foster better action

[1] Ecological Protection Width Needs chart (Northwest Forest Plan Record of Decision, p. B-15); **Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team** (FEMAT) 1993; and the Northwest Forest Plan Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Strategies, U.S. Forest Service and BLM, 2005).

((40 CFR §1500.1(c)). NEPA requires that alternatives are described in sufficient detail so that effects of the alternatives can be compared (40 CFR 1502.14(b)). The NEPA calls for "concise" and focused descriptions of the proposals and "brief discussions… of the environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives" (40 CFR 1508.9(b)); and "(1) Briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact (40 CFR 1508.9(a)(1)); not all background information is required to be part of the NEPA document (40 CFR 1502.1).

Comment (2): The commenter states, "commercial thinning would be expected to degrade wildlife habitat and stream health because thinned stands would produce fewer large dead trees and less recruitment of dead wood to streams as described and quantified by Spies et al. 2013. Spies et al 2013:2 key finding #9 states: 95% of near-stream wood inputs come from within 82 to 148 feet of a stream."

BLM Response: Of the total 11.75 acres proposed for the Riparian Reserve Thinning across 8 units for the Jumping Bean Timber Sale, the proposed thinning would be no closer than 100 to 180 ft from either side of the bankful width of intermittent and perennial streams, with the exception of one entry of less than 0.25 acres which would be no closer than 75 ft from either side of the bankfull width of the stream in Unit 29-11. Riparian Thinning for this project would largely retain larger diameter trees as well as a minimum of 50% canopy closure in the Riparian Reserve outside of the Ecological Protection Zone (EPZ). No commercial entry would occur within the EPZ for this project. In the EPZ development process, the initial distance is refined based on individual site specific survey form information. This information, collected by trained BLM field survey crews, assesses numerous riparian characteristics including current stream bed and bank character and condition, current riparian zone and Riparian Reserve stand conditions, the amount of large woody debris (LWD) present, the presence of any slumps or other mass movement indicators, and any chronic sources of erosion. This information is field checked by a BLM hydrologist, then used to develop the final EPZ buffers for proposed Riparian Thinning units.

Comment (3): The commenter states thinning will generally produce fewer large dead trees and large woody debris across a range of sizes over the several decades following thinning and the stand's lifetime.

BLM Response: Treatments in Riparian Reserves would be specifically designed to promote the development of future large woody debris, a healthy mix of riparian species, and multi-story canopies, see Section 3.5.2.2 (*Riparian Reserve Thinning Treatments*) for further details.

The EA states (p. 68) the No Action Alternative would result with stands having a more immediate large tree mortality followed by an understory reinitiation stage since resources previously used by the dead trees are reallocated to new or surviving vegetation. Maguire, et al., (1991) found that large branches develop only on widely spaced trees or on trees adjacent to gaps or openings. No action would inhibit this development as vegetation continues to populate and occupy available growing space.

The long term result of the No Action Alternative would likely exhibit a stand with widespread poor vigor, low insect and disease resistance, and poor resilience to changing climates. On the driest sites and lowest elevations full site occupancy would occur before crown closure due to moisture and nutrient limitations. Moisture and nutrient limitations on such sites would occur before sunlight limitations become evident (i.e., crown closure).

While this analysis is described for the upland vegetation such a result would also be seen in dense riparian stands. As a result, the stands would exhibit fewer sources of large woody debris in the long-term.

Comment (4): The commenter states the effects from off highway vehicles appear to be cumulative and connected to the BLM road system as all of the user-created routes and damage originated from BLM system roads.

BLM Response: The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project is not anticipated to contribute to further OHV use. There are specific Project Design Features (PFDs) (Section 2.3.2.9) to minimize increased use of OHVs, such as pulling vegetation over skid trails and blocking skid trails so they are un-usable.

If the project is not anticipated to change the existing condition of OHV use, even if it is currently present or starts from BLM system roads, a cumulative effects analysis of OHV is not required as OHV use would be present regardless of the proposed project.

The purpose of cumulative effects analysis is to ensure that federal decision-makers consider the full range of consequences of actions. CEQ (Council of Environmental) regulations define cumulative effect as "…the impact of the environmental which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such actions" (40 CFR 1508.7).

Actions are "connected" if they automatically trigger other actions that may require an EIS; cannot or will not proceed unless other actions are taken previously or simultaneously; or if the actions are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend upon the larger action for their justification (40 CFR 1508.25 (a)(i, ii, iii)). The OHV use is not a "connected action" to the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project, since the project is not anticipated to increase OHV use in the area and the current OHV use is likely to continue regardless of whether the project is implemented or not.

Comment (5): The commenter states existing road conditions are affecting coho salmon. The commenter provided four pictures depicting erosion runoff coming off roads stated to be in the Analysis Area for the project.

BLM Response: Similar to comment (4), the activities proposed for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project were evaluated to determine if they would contribute environmental effects to the existing environmental condition. The EA (p.141) concluded "Harvesting, yarding, landing construction and rehabilitation, temporary route construction and reconstruction (including route decommissioning), road maintenance hauling, and fuel treatments would have

no effect on Klamath Mountains Province steelhead and Southern Oregon Coast/Northern California Coast Chinook." This conclusion was made based upon application of Project Design Features and Best Management Practices developed for the project. The PDFs and BMPs would limit road use to dry conditions and would implement rehabilitation and winterization of roads, yarding corridors, and skid trails. The design and location of temporary route construction and re-construction were developed to divert runoff away from water sources and erodible areas.

The EA (p.86 & 87) acknowledges that there are ditchlines that are not properly functioning and "the pulling of the ditch would be adequate to correct these problems. Downspouts of some cross drains and stream culverts could be upgraded by installing splash pads or downspouts to reduce existing stream draw erosion. Poorly located roads can cause accelerated erosion as a result of the channelization of flow on hillslopes, and in some cases mass wasting (Wemple and Jones, 2003). Some historical roads on both public and private lands within this Planning Area are poorly located and have contributed to excessive erosion and instances of mass wasting."

Before any harvesting work can begin on this project, roads in the condition depicted in the commenter's photos would be required to be upgraded to an appropriately usable condition such that it would not contribute to off-site erosion. For example, ditchlines would be cleaned and crossdrains would be installed where needed or replaced if plugged. The roads would be required to be maintained in the appropriate condition during operations and after haul is completed. Exposed soil would be seeded and mulched to hold back erosion. For further Project Design Features and Best Management Practices required to be in place for hauling on existing BLM managed roads see Section 2.3.2.2 of the EA.

While the EA (p.86) acknowledges "Due to limited funding for maintenance, and multiple ownerships, some roads in this Planning Area show evidence of surface erosion, inadequate drainage, inadequate stream crossings or unstable cut-banks and fill slopes." Timber sales provide a key source for BLM roads to be maintained.

Comment (6): The commenter wants documentation for BLM to divert from the Medford District Resource Management Plan in order to implement the forestry practices of Drs. Norman Johnson and Jerry Franklin.

BLM Response: The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project is consistent with the Medford District RMP's suite of available forest management treatment types including such treatments as Group Select, Partial Cut, Commercial Thinning, and Density Management to name a few. The Medford Mail Tribune, the Grants Pass Daily Courier, and the Medford District's Press Release all document Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar's announcement that the "Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will apply ecological forestry principles on a broader landscape to restore forest health and to provide sustainable timber harvests for local mills and the communities who rely on the timber industry for jobs and economic strength" by applying 'the latest science and the lessons from these pilot projects, we can apply the principles of ecological forestry to the broader landscape and address the growing risks of catastrophic fire, insect infestation, and climate change' (Ken Salazar)'…In December 2010, Secretary Salazar set in motion a plan to apply the principles of active forest management, as suggested by Professors

Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin, on BLM lands within the Coos Bay, Roseburg, and Medford Districts in Oregon." (BLM Press Release, February 21, 2012).

"Three of the five new projects are on the Medford District, including Pilot Thompson in the Thompson Creek drainage of the Applegate, and the Jumping Bean project in the Grants Pass Resource Area" (Medford Mail Tribune, April 23, 2012).

The Oregon/Washington BLM State Office also has "three Ecological Forestry projects" noted on the Annual Work Plan for fiscal year 2013, "implementing the concepts of Drs. Jerry Franklin and Norm Johnson…as part of district timber sale goals."

Comment (7): The commenter requests consideration of Northwest Forest Plan restrictions in place of designing Late Successional Emphasis Areas (LSEAs).

BLM Response: The interdisciplinary team for this project incorporated the use of several Northwest Forest Plan resource protection buffers in designing Late Successional Emphasis Areas. These resource buffers included Riparian Reserves, Red Tree Vole buffers, Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Action 32 buffers, and Critical Habitat Units for the northern spotted owl.

The BLM did not re-designate the Medford District's Resource Management Plan Land Use Allocations. LSEAs where a tool used to identify high value habitat areas in the BLM portion of the Planning Area as part of a landscape level plan.

Comment (8): The commenter requested gap treatments in Riparian Reserves.

BLM Response: Proposing gaps in Riparian Reserves may alter aquatic microclimate conditions. The EA describes the importance for protecting stream shade to maintain water temperature and to meet water quality standards, see p.34 of the EA. The primary shade zone of streams would be protected by no entry in the Ecological Protection Zone for commercial extraction. Maintaining sufficient canopy closure within the secondary shade zone, is needed to maintain or improve microclimate conditions within the riparian zone in the long term, without any measurable increase in stream temperature in the short or long term. The secondary shade zone would retain a minimum crown closure of 50%. In the uplands, gaps for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project range from ¼ acre to 1 acre. Per the Northwest Forest Plan, Riparian Reserves also serve as connectivity corridors for mobile wildlife species between more open portions of landscape.

Comment (9): The commenter requests regeneration harvesting to be proposed.

BLM Response: American Forestry Resource Council (AFRC) notes their support of gap treatments, which is proposed as a part of Variable Density Thinning (VDT) treatments in the Jumping Bean Timber Sale. All the units in this timber sale consist of VDT. There are three units outside of the northern spotted owl Critical Habitat Units. Within the BLM portion of the Planning Area, areas outside proposed units and CHU were not proposed for Variable Retention Harvest or Regeneration Harvest due stand age, stand conditions, accessibility, and/or economic feasibility.

Comment (10): The commenter requests the BLM to be consistent in how they define northern spotted owl habitat types. Page 126 of the EA describes 48 acres of nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF) downgrade in CHU as "relatively homongeneous in terms of species composition and stand structure". It goes on to further describe the stands as in the "stem exclusion phase." Page 111 of the EA describes features that support NRF habitat, which includes "multistoried & multispecies canopy." The commenter states 48 acres described as NRF habitat above does not seem to be consistent
with how the BLM describes NRF habitat.

BLM Response: Nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF) habitat contains a wide range of habitat conditions. The description on p.111 of the EA, is specifically noting "features that support *nesting and roosting habitat*". Nesting and roosting habitat are the higher quality habitat features on the spectrum of northern spotted owl habitat.

The full context of the sentence states "features that support *nesting and roosting* [emphasis added] habitat typically include a moderate to high canopy (70 to 90 percent); a multistoried, multi-species canopy with large overstory trees (greater than 30 inches dbh); a realtively high incidence of larger trees with various deformities, including mistletoe, large snags, large accumulations of fall trees and wood on the ground; and flying space (Thomas et al., 1990)."

Page 146 describes the conditions specific to the 48 acres of NRF habitat that would be downgraded by the project. These acres are still categorized as NRF habitat, but contain less optimum habitat by the larger presence of foraging habitat than nesting and roosting habitat.

Comment (11): The commenter stated the language in the EA could be interpreted as an absolute prohibition of haul during wet conditions regardless of mitigation measures taken. If road conditions are suitable for haul after 24 hours why would the BLM not allow it to occur?

BLM Response: Some logging operations and haul may occur during the winter months during dry conditions. The Best Management Practice with a 48 hour restriction is limited to natural and rocked roads where a storm event results in a ½ inch or more of precipitation within a 24 hour period, and until the road surface is sufficiently dry to prevent the following from reoccurring:

- surface displacement such as rutting or ribbons;
- continuous mud splash or tire slide; fines being pumped through road surfacing from the subgrade and resulting in a layer of surface sludge;
- road drainage causing a visible increase in stream turbidities, or any condition that would result in water being chronically routed into tire tracks or away from designed road drainage during precipitation events

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are required by the Federal Clean Water Act to reduce nonpoint source pollution to the maximum extent practicable. The BMPs are methods, measures, or practices established from Appendix D of the 1995 ROD/ RMP, and the ODEQ Erosion and Sediment Control Manual (April, 2005), and per IM OR-2011-18. BMPs are essential for ensuring that water quality will be maintained at its highest practicable level.

Comment (12): The commenter recommends removing culverts, waterbarring, and closing a rocked road to vehicular traffic as a relatively inexpensive practice that would leave the roadbed intact for future use instead of obliterating it, and then rebuilding the same road in 20 years, as it would be a waste of time and money.

BLM Response: Decommissioning of routes is necessary to meet federal water quality standards and to not have an effect on aquatic species. Temporary route construction and re-construction would be decommissioned after use by blocking the route, sub-soiling the road surface to 18 inches or bedrock to allow for water filtration, installing waterbars (if needed), and applying seed and mulch.

As stated in the EA, p.85 "Decommissioning that includes sub-soiling can greatly reduce the recovery period for compacted soils….In cases where compacted soils have not been rehabilitated, erosion and other soil impacts can persist for 40- 80 years, or more (Wert and Thomas, 1981)….When soil displacement occurs, soil horizons may become mixed, essential soil nutrients, water, and soil organisms may be rearranged or removed, and topsoil may become rutted. These alterations to the soil profile or soil characteristics may result in accelerated erosion."

EA p. 95 "Decommissioning of all temporary routes that utilize fill material to construct the running surface of the road would include placement and stabilization of fill material back over the route bed following sub-soiling, but prior to surface erosion stabilization treatments. This would greatly reduce the hydrologic impact of constructing these roads because it would stabilize fill material and allow for ground water flow patterns to be reestablished."

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
for the
JUMPING BEAN ECOLOGICAL FORESTRY PROJECT

I. INTRODUCTION

The Grants Pass Resource Area, Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (EA) was made available for public comment from May 7, 2013 to June 7, 2013. The EA stated that the need of the project was to implement forest management activities that would restore ecological systems of forests in southwest Oregon, reduce wildfire danger, and contribute to continuous timber production.

The Grants Pass Field Manager has decided to implement a portion of Alternative 2 (with modifications) referred to hereafter as the Selected Action as well as the associated Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Project Design Features (PDFs). This FONSI was evaluated for the entire Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project analyzed under the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2012-003-EA).

II. DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The discussion of the significance criteria that follows applies to the analyzed actions and is within the context of local importance. Chapter 3 of the EA details the effects of Alternative 2. None of the effects identified, including direct, indirect and cumulative effects, are considered to be significant and do not exceed those effects described in the Medford District Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (June 1995). The environmental effects of Alternative 2 do not meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR § 1508.27. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Context. The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA covers site-specific actions directly involving 2,326 acres of BLM (Bureau of Land Management) administered land that by itself does not have international, national, region-wide, or state-wide importance. The Proposed Action is located within Matrix and Riparian Reserve land use allocations under the Medford District's 1995 Resource Management Plan (RMP). The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Planning Area is within the boundaries of the 5th field Hydrologic Unit Condition (HUC 5) of Jump Off Joe Creek, Grave Creek, and Grants Pass- Rogue River. The corresponding HUC 6 sub-watersheds are Upper Jump Off Joe Creek, Middle Jump Off Joe Creek, Savage Creek, Louse Creek, Shanks Creek, and Savage Creek.

The Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Planning Area overlaps a portion of the Revised 2012 Critical Habitat (USFWS 2012) for the northern spotted owl, specifically a portion of the KLE 3 Subunit of the Klamath East Habitat Unit.

The discussion of the significance criteria that follows applies to the intended actions and is within the context of local importance. Chapter 3 of the EA details the effects of the Proposed Action. None of the effects identified, including direct, indirect and cumulative effects, are considered to be significant and do not exceed those effects described in the *Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (1994 PRMP/EIS).*

Intensity. The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27.

1. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. The most noteworthy predicted environmental effects of the Proposed Action (Alternative 2) include:

a) Social and economic benefits by providing a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities to provide jobs and contribute to community stability;

b) Following forest management activities and prior to slash disposal, fire behavior potential would increase from the current potential fire behavior due to increased surface fuels. After slash disposal treatments, fuel levels would be reduced. There would likely be a short term (1-2 years) increase in fire hazard because the landing piles have the potential to produce flame lengths that exceed the fire behavior threshold to the extent of increased spotting distance. The proposed fuels treatments would ultimately reduce fire behavior such as flame length, rate of spread, and fire duration.

c) Under the Proposed Action, 102.6 acres of soil would be compacted or displaced over new and existing footprints. Under Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the 1995 RMP (p. 166) up to 12% skid trail compaction is allowed to remain within a unit until final entry. Alternative 2 would result in a 3.22% soil productivity loss in the Activity Area. Total compaction/displacement associated with new and existing temporary routes, tractor skid trails, landings and cable yarding corridors would account for an average of approximately 9.13% per unit (based on horizontal distance). Therefore, each proposed Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project unit would be below 12% compaction and 5% productivity loss as analyzed in the 1994 Medford District FEIS RMP.

d) Sediment from the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project would not result in more than a 10% increase in stream turbidity, and would not measurably increase these conditions for more than 25 feet from haul roads. It is concluded that negligible increases in sediment from these activities would contribute to the overall amount of sediment entering streams from past, present, and future impacts within these sub-watersheds, but sediment from this action would not be distinguishable above baseline levels or have any effect on aquatic organisms.

Actions within these watersheds would be consistent with the Clean Water Act, State of Oregon water quality standards, and Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives (see EA Appendix 5).

e) The effects of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project on atmospheric greenhouse gas levels, when placed in the appropriate context, are negligible. As described in the EA, atmospheric greenhouse gas levels are related to global climate change. Because existing science is unable to identify a specific source of greenhouse gas emissions or sequestration, and designate it as the cause of specific climate impacts at a specific location, the appropriate context for greenhouse gas impacts is the global, regional, and continental scale. Current global carbon dioxide emissions (total 25 billion metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (IPCC 2007, p. 513), and current U.S. emissions of carbon dioxide total 6 billion tonnes (EPA 2007, p 2-3).

EA Appendix 1 states the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project would reduce carbon stores temporarily but would result in net increases over time, by comparing similar treatments in other recent BLM project analysis. For units similar to the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project thinning units (VDT) growth within 5 years following treatment would result in carbon storage that exceed direct and indirect carbon emissions, resulting in a net storage of carbon compared to pretreatment conditions. Density Management/Hazardous Fuel Reduction units would result in a net storage of carbon compared to pretreatment conditions within 10 years. The effects would be so small that it would not merit reporting under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule on mandatory reporting of greenhouse gases, which presents a reporting threshold of 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for several industrial and agricultural sectors (40 CFR 98.2). While science related to carbon storage, greenhouse gases, and climate change continues to evolve and address the existing uncertainties, the impacts of this project are so small that even despite these uncertainties, there is not enough impact to suggest the project's impacts are significant enough to warrant an environmental impact statement.

f) See effects to ESA threatened and endangered species in criteria # 9 below.

2. The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety. Public health and safety would not be affected. The Proposed Action is comparable to other projects which have occurred within the Grants Pass Resource Area with no unusual health or safety concerns. The Planning Area is not located within a Class I designated airshed or non-attainment area. Activity fuel burning operations would follow all requirements of the Oregon Smoke Management Plan and the Department of Environmental Quality Air Quality and Visibility Protection Program, ensuring that smoke related impacts to public health and safety are mitigated.

The impact of smoke on air quality is expected to be localized and of short duration. Particulate matter would not be of a magnitude to harm human health, affect the environment, or result in property damage.

Dust created from vehicle traffic on gravel or natural-surfaced roads and logging operations would be localized and of short duration. As such, the Proposed Action is consistent with the provisions of the Federal Clean Air Act.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas. There are no prime farm lands, wetlands, or wildernesses located within the Planning Area.

There are no eligible rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, as amended segments in the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Planning Area. There are no Research Natural Areas (RNAs) or Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) as designated by the Medford District RMP in the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Planning Area.

Recreation users in the Planning Area may experience increased logging truck traffic during the operational months; however, this type of activity is typical for the area because of harvesting on private and other government owned lands. The trail head for the Grayback Mountain Trail and Layton Ditch Trail would notify potential users of trail closure on the BLM portion during timber operations. The proposed project activities are limited to BLM managed land and Project Design Features would keep these BLM recreation trails intact.

See Criteria #8 on cultural resources.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial. The effects of the Proposed Action on the quality of the human environment are adequately understood by the interdisciplinary team to provide analysis for the decision.

Substantive public comments were analyzed by the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project interdisciplinary team and the BLM responded to those comments in Appendix 2 of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA. While comments, such as other scientific research, were mentioned by the public, the actions of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project are within those identified in the 1995 Medford District RMP and the predicted effects are discussed in Chapter 3 of the EA. None of the comments were considered controversial in respect to their context and intensity in determining significance.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The Proposed Action is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas and have found effects to be reasonably predictable. The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in Chapter 3 of the EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment which are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. Public scoping included release of two scoping letters for the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project (February and August 2012) and a public field trip (October 2012). The February 2012 scoping letter was released prior to the project being assigned as an Ecological Forestry Project. Following the Secretary of Interior's direction, the project evolved to incorporate Ecological Forestry principles, which prompted the August 2012 scoping period.

The BLM also held two internal field trips with Drs. Johnson and Franklin in April and September 2012 to review sample marking and to ensure the project would meet the principles of their ecological forestry work.

The scoping letters were mailed to a list of individuals, agencies, and organizations expressing interest in Grants Pass Resource Area projects and landowners within ¼ mile of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project proposed units. Public comments were requested within 30 days for each of these letters so comments received could be considered for further development of the project prior to environmental analysis. The BLM received public responses in the form of letters, emails, and phone calls during scoping. Scoping comments were considered in the development of the project. All substantive scoping comments were responded to in Appendix 2 of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA. No unique or unknown risks were identified in public comments.

6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.** The Proposed Action does not set a precedent for future actions that might have significant effects nor does it represent a decision in principle about future consideration. The Proposed Action is located in Matrix and Riparian Reserve land use allocations under the Medford District's 1995 Resource Management Plan (RMP).

Chapter 1 of the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA identifies how the Proposed Action would be consistent with the Purpose and Need and for compliance with higher level EIS documents. Chapter 3 evaluates the effects of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives and the findings are that all proposed activities would be compliant with the effects anticipated under the 1995 Medford RMP. Any future projects, not identified in the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project EA would be evaluated through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and would stand on their own as to environmental effects.

7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.** The interdisciplinary team evaluated the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects outside those already disclosed in the 1995 ROD/RMP are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the Proposed Action is in Appendix 2 and Chapter 3 of the EA.

The BLM anticipates that most projects' impacts on greenhouse gas levels and carbon storage would be negligible when placed in the context for analysis of global, regional, and continental scale.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. The Proposed Action would not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor would the Proposed Action cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. Cultural resource surveys of the Activity Area have been completed. Site specific protection measures, referred to as Project Design Features would be applied to protect cultural sites located within Areas of Potential Effects (APE) or evaluated and mitigation procedures would be implemented based on recommendations from the Resource Area Archaeologist with input from Tribes and concurrence from the Field Manager and State Historic Preservation Office. If cultural resources are discovered during project implementation, the same procedures would be implemented.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Southern Oregon/Northern California Coasts coho salmon (ESA-Threatened) and coho critical habitat: Harvesting, yarding, landing construction and rehabilitation, temporary route construction and re-construction (including route decommissioning), existing route re-construction, road maintenance hauling, and fuel treatments would have no effect on Southern Oregon/Northern California Coasts (SONCC) coho salmon (ESA-Threatened) and coho critical habitat (CCH).

Sediment barriers would be applied to BLM road #35-5-21 to prevent sediment from being delivered into Southern Oregon/Northern California Coasts coho critical habitat. Sediment would not be expected to enter CCH as a result of haul or maintenance of roads, with dry condition haul, well-vegetated ditch lines, properly functioning cross drains, and existing filter strips, or sediment barriers installed, where needed, to prevent sediment delivery into CCH.

Northern Spotted Owl Habitat (ESA Threatened): Alternative 2 would downgrade 147 acres of nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF habitat), 624 acres of NRF would be treated and maintained, and 1,200 acres of dispersal habitat would be treated and maintained.

The BLM completed a Biological Assessment in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (BLM 2013) to assess the impacts from the proposed Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project to spotted owls in compliance of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. A Biological Opinion (BO) was received April 12th, 2013 (#01EOFW00-2013-F-0091).

The BO states: "after reviewing the current status of the spotted owl, the environmental baseline for the action area, the effects of the proposed action, and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's Biological Opinion that the District's proposed action, *is* ***not likely to jeopardize*** the continued existence of the spotted owl."

Within the Jumping Bean Ecological Forestry Project Planning Area, there are 8 cores (0.5 mile radius) that are associated with known northern spotted owl sites that overlap the Planning Area. Of these 8 cores, 4 have treatments proposed within a portion of the core. All proposed treatments in these core areas are designed to treat and maintain the existing habitat type where implementation is to occur.

Seasonal restrictions listed as Project Design Features (see EA Section 2.3.2.6) would prevent disturbance to nesting spotted owls within the Activity Area.

Decadent woody material would be retained as either snags or down wood.

Under Alternative 2, no management activities of any kind are proposed in the Nest Patch of any known or historical NSO sites located within the Planning Area.

The effects of this road work to the northern spotted owls present in the Planning Area from this route construction and re-construction are anticipated to be minimal. Edge effects from this construction would not be expected because all construction would occur within units proposed for timber extraction or in location already impacted by previous road construction. The unit level treatments would affect canopy cover and interior forest at the stand level greater than the effects to the route reconstruction. Therefore, the effects of the route construction are predicted to be less than those described for the thinning activities. The habitat where these routes are utilized would continue to function as dispersal habitat after implementation.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. The Proposed Action does not violate any known federal, state, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. Furthermore, the Proposed Action is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs (see Section 1.5 of the EA).

III. FINDING

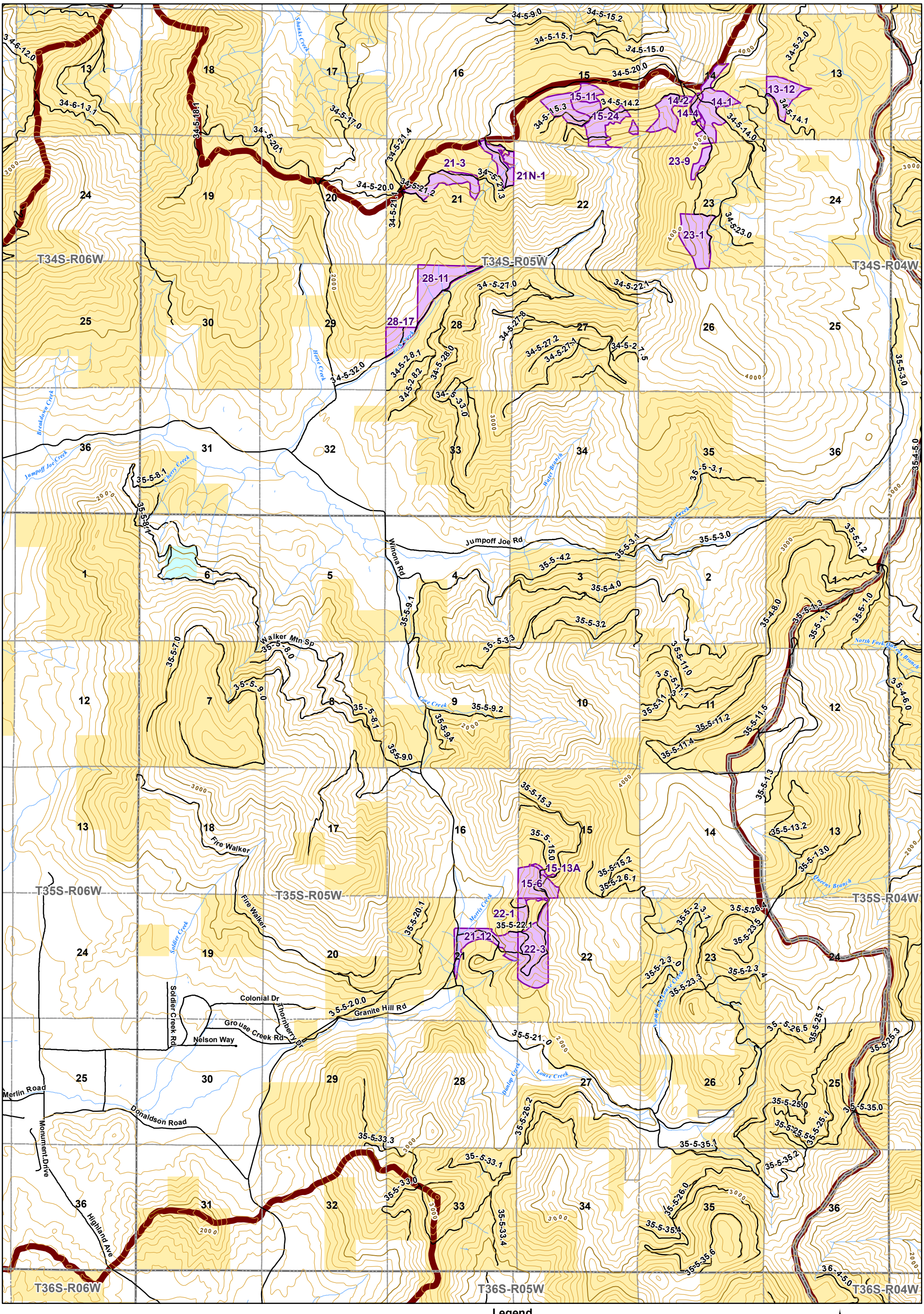
I have determined that the Selected Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment; an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared. This conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's criteria for significance (40 CFR §1508.27), with regard to the context and the intensity of the impacts described in the EA, and on my understanding of the project, review of the project analysis, and consideration of public comments. As previously noted, the analysis of effects has been completed within the context of the Medford District's Resource Management Plan and the Northwest Forest Plan. This conclusion is consistent with those plans and the anticipated effects are within the scope, type, and magnitude of effects anticipated and analyzed in those plans. The analysis of project effects has also occurred in the context of multiple spatial and temporal scales as appropriate for different types of impacts and the effects were determined to be insignificant.

8/12/13

Allen Bollschweiller
Field Manager, Grants Pass Resource Area
Medford District, Bureau of Land Management

Date

Jumping Bean Project
Decision Record - Density Management / Hazardous Fuels Reduction



Legend

- Road
- Perennial Stream
- BLM Resource Area Boundary
- Density Management / Hazardous Fuels Reduction Units
- Jumping Bean Project Area

Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Private

Miles: 0, 0.5, 1

Current Date: 06/24/2014