



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

1790 (ORM070)

FEB 18 2015

DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2015-0003-CX

Dear Interested Party,

On July 28, 2014 a lightning event started the Reeves Creek fire in the Deer Creek Watershed south of the community of Selma, Oregon. The fire burned 187 acres, 79 of those burned acres are on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. The remaining burned acres are on private land.

The Grants Pass Field Office is proposing to salvage 18 acres of fire-injured and fire-killed trees within the fire perimeter. Removal of fire injured and killed commercial trees would be accomplished by ground-based yarding and cable yarding. Salvage is not proposed in Riparian Reserves. The planning area is outside of any known Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) home ranges, and is not in designated NSO critical habitat. The Categorical Exclusion for the proposed Reeves Creek Salvage Project (DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2015-0003-CX) is available for public review and comment.

This project would utilize 0.47 miles of a previously established dozer line which was constructed during fire suppression activities for the Reeves Creek Fire. The temporary route located on BLM administered land (0.30 miles) would be decommissioned after use. The remaining segment of the temporary route (0.17 miles) located on private land would be managed under the discretion of the private landowner.

The Reeves Creek Salvage Project Categorical Exclusion is available for a 15 day review and public comment period. Starting February 18, 2015, comments should be provided in writing to the Allen Bollschweiler, Field Manager, Grants Pass Field Office, at the address below. Comments will be considered in making the final decision.

Comments need to be submitted on or before March 06, 2015. Comments may be delivered or mailed to the Grants Pass Interagency Office, 2164 NE Spalding Avenue, Grants Pass OR, 97526. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., closed holidays. The document may also be accessed on the Medford District's internet site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/index.php>. If you have questions or comments and do not have internet access or would prefer a paper copy of this document, please contact Mark Brown, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, at (541) 471-6505.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to 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.

Thank you for your interest in public lands managed by the Grants Pass Field Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Allen Bollschweiler', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Allen Bollschweiler
Field Manager
Grants Pass Field Office

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GRANTS PASS FIELD OFFICE
2164 NE Spalding Ave
Grants Pass, OR 97526**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION

**REEVES CREEK SALVAGE PROJECT
DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2015-0003-CX**

A. Background

BLM Office: Grants Pass Resource Area

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2015-0003-CX

Proposed Action Title: Reeves Creek Salvage Project

Location of Proposed Action: Reeves Creek Fire: Township 38 South, Range 8 West, Section 23, Willamette Meridian, Josephine County, Oregon.

Reeves Creek Fire: On July 28, 2014 a lightning event started the Reeves Creek fire in the Deer Creek Watershed. The fire burned south of the town of Selma. A total of 187 acres burned; 79 of these acres occurred on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Matrix lands and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations (LUA). The remaining 108 acres burned on nonfederal land. The proposed planning area is within the Douglas-fir Plant Series in the plant association group PSME/PIPO consisting of Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, and California black oak.

Description of Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing a post fire salvage project on 18 acres of land managed by the Grants Pass Field Office that were affected by the Reeves Creek Fire. The salvage would occur on the Matrix Land Use Allocation (LUA) within the fire perimeter. The salvage prescription would remove fire-injured and fire-killed trees. For the purpose of this Categorical Exclusion (CX), a fire-injured tree is defined as a Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, or incense cedar tree with at least a 50% probability of mortality. The prescription uses the Smith and Cluck 2011: *Marking Guidelines for Fire-injured Trees in California* due to site conditions. The removal of undamaged green trees would only occur to facilitate equipment access and ensure safe working conditions. Green tree removal may include but is not limited to yarding corridors, skid trails, temporary routes, haul routes, and areas adjacent to landings.

Salvage harvest would not occur within Riparian Reserves. Any tree felled within a Riparian Reserve would be for safety concerns and the tree would be left on-site. Full Riparian Reserve buffers would be 190 feet on either side of perennial and intermittent streams, and 380 feet on perennial springs. All streams, seeps, and wetlands have been field verified and are excluded from the proposed treatment unit.

The snag retention would generally be clumped along the sides and near the bottom of the proposed treatment unit to facilitate safe harvest operations. The proposed treatment unit is outside of any known Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) home ranges, and is not in designated NSO critical habitat. The proposed treatment unit would retain a minimum of 120 linear feet of logs per acre greater than or equal to 16 inches in diameter and 16 feet long for coarse woody debris (RMP p. 39).

To facilitate salvage operations, 0.47 miles of route reconstruction would occur along a dozer line previously used during fire suppression. The reconstructed route would be blocked after use. The proposal also includes 2.23 miles of road maintenance activities.

Landings would be located along roadsides and would be limited to ¼ acre in size. Trees would be yarded using cable and ground-based tractor yarding methods.

Trees to be removed would not be whole-tree yarded and may or may not be yarded with tops attached. Harvested trees would be processed and cut to log length within the treatment units. Slash remaining in the unit after yarding would be treated by utilizing lop-and-scatter or handpiling and burning. Any slash at landings would be used for biomass or piled and burned.

The lop-and-scatter treatment would arrange slash in a discontinuous horizontal pattern at a depth not to exceed 18 inches in height. The material would decompose faster in this arrangement and minimize the amount of time the slash would be available to influence fire behavior. Retained slash would mitigate negative impacts to sensitive burned soils, decrease the chance of off-site erosion and increase retained nutrients on site.

A handpile and burn treatment would be recommended when the amount of retained slash prevents a discontinuous pattern from being attained as described above. The amount of time for the slash to influence fire behavior would therefore be minimized through pile burning rather than decomposition.

Best Management Practices and Project Design Features

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 incorporated into the 1995 Resource Management Plan (RMP) through an RMP plan maintenance action in July of 2012. The purpose is to minimize or prevent sediment delivery to the waters of the United States. BMPs are noted by an asterisk (*). Project Design Features (PDFs) are measures included in the site specific design on the proposal to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts on the human environment. PDFs are noted by a bullet. Measures that apply to all proposed activities are identified first, followed by measures that apply to individual activities.

The use of BLM roads during the wet season have some restrictions. Existing roads that are designed to function effectively and have a minimum of 6-12 inches of clean, crushed, and compacted rock may be utilized during dry conditions of the wet season with prior BLM approval. Natural surface roads would not be utilized during wet conditions of the wet season or the dry season.

Maintenance and construction of roads and road drainage features is generally limited to dry conditions of the dry season (generally between May 15 and October 15), with the exception being emergency road maintenance.

- Wet season – generally between October 15 and May 15
- Dry season – generally between May 15 and October 15
- Wet condition – (with regards to road work and/or road use may include one or more of the following):
 - Continuous mud splash or tire slide
 - Fines being pumped through road surfacing from the subgrade
 - Road drainage causing a visible increase in water turbidity within the road prism where hydrologically connected to streams
 - Surface rutting or visible ribboning from tires or boots
 - Soil moisture of 25% or greater
 - Any condition that would result in water being chronically routed into tire tracks or away from designed road drainage during precipitation events
- Dry condition – a condition that would permit the use and/or maintenance of roads, would not be unsafe, and would not cause unnecessary or undue degradation to resources.

Measures Common to All Project Activities

- * Any project related activities would be suspended if conditions develop that cause a potential for sediment laden runoff to enter a wetland, floodplain or waters of the state.
- * Sediment trapping devices would be properly installed to hydrologically disconnect sites. Operations would resume when sediment control devices are in place and conditions would allow turbidity standards to be met.
- Seed and straw used for rehabilitation, decommissioning, winterization, planting of bare soil, and post treatment throughout the proposed action area would be an approved species mixtures, and certified weed free, to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Harvest Operations

- No harvest extraction would occur within the Riparian Reserves. For this project area, this would include the 190 feet on both sides and above all perennial and intermittent streams. Use of existing roads within and crossing the Riparian Reserve would be permitted as long as PDFs are followed.
- Tractor and cable yarding operations would be restricted to dry conditions.
- Existing skid trails would be utilized whenever practical. New skid trails would be placed approximately 150 feet apart and approved by the Authorized Officer prior to implementation.
- Upon completion of harvest, utilized skid trails would be rehabilitated¹.
- Ground based skid trails would be limited to slopes less than 35%.
- Tractors would be equipped with an integral arch to minimize soils disturbance. Equipment would walk over as much ground litter as possible to reduce compaction.
- At a minimum, partial suspension would be required on all ground based and cable units to minimize soil disturbance. Full suspension would be required if yarding is needed to cross unstable areas or buffered draws.
- To minimize soil disturbance, the use of blades while tractor yarding would not occur.

¹ Rehabilitation/Decommissioning - Rehabilitated/Decommissioned areas would be discontinuously sub-soiled, seeded and mulched where applicable. If not applicable, areas would have fine slash placed over, water-barred, and blocked. Sub-soiling would be implemented using a winged ripping device placed on bucket or pulled behind ground-based equipment capable of sub-soiling 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 use heavy equipment would be required to take place at the same time as sub-soiling to prevent machinery from driving back over sub-soiled ground. Waterbar spacing and drainage angles would be based on the NWFP Standards and Guidelines erosion control measures for timber harvest which considers slope and soil series (RMP, p. 167). All rehabilitation would occur within 24 months of harvest, and during the dry season when soils at 4-6" no longer maintain form when compressed, and soils on the surface do not readily displace under pressure to form ribbons, tracks, or ruts.

- Tractors would not exceed 9 feet in width to minimize soils disturbance and compaction. Skid trails including turning points would be 12 feet width on average.
- To retain slash for nutrient retention and ground cover needs, whole tree yarding would not occur.
- Where naturally occurring merchantable coarse woody debris exceeds 120 linear feet per acre, additional merchantable coarse woody debris may be removed as a commercial product.
- Hardwoods greater than 16 inches DBH would be retained where operationally feasible, if cut the tree would stay within the unit
- 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.
- * Prior to seasonal winter rains (generally October 15), all hydrologically connected yarding corridors would be water-barred as per the Medford RMP (p.167) water bar spacing guidelines to minimize erosion and transport of sediment to streams.
- * Prior to seasonal winter rains, cable yarding corridors, and other areas of disturbed soil resulting from this action, would have slash, wood chips, and/or straw mulch placed over them to reduce the risk of surface erosion and to protect water quality. Slash would not exceed a depth of 18 inches, and some ground cover would be left on site during fuels reduction treatments.

Landings

- Construction and rehabilitation of landings would be restricted to the dry conditions.
- Landings would be located on stable locations that minimize sediment delivery potential to streams (e.g., ridge tops, stable benches or flats, existing roads/landings, and gentle-to-moderate convex or planar side-slopes), in areas with low risk for landslides, and outside jurisdictional wetlands. Placement of landings on unstable headwalls would be avoided.
- Landings used during dry conditions within the wet season (generally October 15 through May 15, see above) that have the potential to release sedimentation into a stream or wet area via ditchlines or other means, would have silt fencing or other sediment control measures in place if they are hydrologically connected² to streams. Disposal of captured sediment would occur outside of Riparian Reserves.

² Hydrologically Connected – The term Hydrologically Connected is where drainage features are connected to stream channels via surface water flow routes, including headwater springs. This determination is made with project specific field verified stream surveys to identify where sediment has the potential to be carried to streams; where precipitation and subsurface flows on impermeable road surfaces may be intercepted, concentrated, and carried to stream channels; and where ditchlines are increasing the stream network (for more information see Hydrologically-Connected Roads: An Indicator of the Influence of Roads on Chronic Sedimentation, Surface Water Hydrology, and Exposure to Toxic Chemicals by M. Furniss et al. (USDI, Forest Service Stream Systems Technology Center website at http://stream.fs.fed.us/news/streamnt/jul00/jul00_2.htm).

- With the exception of the pre-identified designated roadside landing mentioned above, landings and landing piles would be placed outside of Riparian Reserves.
- During rehabilitation of landings, runoff water would be diverted away from headwalls, slide areas, high landslide hazard locations or steep erodible fill slopes.
- At landing sites merchantable sawlogs would be removed, and any remaining material would be piled and burned, chipped, or left for firewood.
- To minimize scorch and mortality, landing piles would not be placed adjacent to or within 15 feet of leave trees. Landing piles would be as free of dirt as reasonably possible to facilitate desired consumption.
- After final disturbance, landings outside of the road prism, would be seeded, mulched, and ripped with native seed and weed-free straw, per specifications provided by the project botanist.

Hauling and Road Maintenance

- Haul would not occur on hydrologically connected natural surface or rocked roads when water is flowing in the ditchlines, or during any conditions that would result in any of the following: 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. Hauling on natural surface or rocked roads would not resume for a minimum of 48 hours following any storm event that results in ½ inch or more precipitation within a 24 hour period, and until road surface is sufficiently dry to prevent any of the above conditions from reoccurring, and as approved by the Authorized Officer.
- Spot rocking of the road surface would occur prior to, and during, all hauling operations, as necessary to protect the road surface from developing pot holes or similar types of surface irregularities.
- Non-emergency road maintenance work would occur during the dry season. Certain activities (blading of aggregate roads, rocking, brushing, cross drain installation) would not be permitted during the wet season. The season may be extended into fall if wetting winter rains have not occurred, the weather forecast is monitored daily, and all winterization actions can reasonably occur prior to the season ending storm event. If these activities occur within 200 feet of streams, sediment control devices would be placed and maintained as necessary to prevent action-related stream sedimentation.
- No ditch maintenance would occur during the wet season unless for safety or resource protection. Work would 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.
- * Blading and vegetation removal would be avoided unless necessary to remove drainage impediments when maintaining inboard ditches. Sediment control measures would be evaluated and implemented if necessary, where ditchline blading is required within 200 feet of streams.
- Waste material from road maintenance activities would be placed in designated stable disposal areas a minimum of 200 feet from any stream and in a location where sediment laden runoff can be confined. Where necessary, erosion control would be provided to minimize sediment delivery to streams.

- All natural surface or rocked roads used for harvest operations or log hauling would receive adequate surfacing, if needed, for winter use (generally 6-12 inches of clean, compacted rock), 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.
- Prior to wet season hauling activities, structural road treatments would be implemented as needed to prevent discernible stream sedimentation from occurring during off season use, such as: increasing the frequency of cross drains, installing sediment barriers or catch basins, applying gravel lifts at stream crossing approaches, and cleaning and armoring ditchlines.
- Roads would be bladed and shaped to conserve existing aggregate surface material, and retain or restore the original cross section. Berms and other irregularities would be removed that impede effective runoff or cause erosion. During road improvement activities surface runoff would be directed into vegetated, stable areas to the extent practicable.
- When cleaning ditchlines, undercutting of cut-slopes would be avoided. Bare soils would be seeded and mulched including cleaned ditchlines that are hydrologically connected to stream channels. Routine machine cleaning of ditches and blading during the wet season would be avoided.
- * Low-growing vegetation on cut-and-fill slopes would be retained (i.e. grasses, ferns).
- Culvert inlets and outlets, drainage structures and ditches would be inspected and maintained before and during the wet season to diminish the likelihood of plugged culverts and the possibility of washouts.
- Where appropriate, downspouts and/or energy dissipaters would be utilized for drainage outlets.
- Flowing water would be diverted around each culvert or cross drain installation 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, and would be removed from the channel prior to September 15th. This period may be extended by the fish biologist, hydrologist, or as directed by the Authorized Officer.

Temporary Routes

- Temporary route re-construction, use, and decommissioning, would occur during dry conditions and on the pre-existing dozer line.
- The temporary route would not be located on or above headwalls, or on slopes in excess of 60%.
- The temporary route would be located on the upper slope or ridge, and would not occur in Riparian Reserves.

Activity Fuels Treatments

- Mechanically piling slash would not occur off of utilized landings and roads.
- To improve soil productivity and reduce erosion, woody material from logging would be scattered on yarding corridors, and where possible throughout the unit, on landings, and on temporary roads, to a maximum depth of 18 inches. Where slash quantity is such that lop-and-scatter treatment alone would result in an increase in the fire hazard classification, high concentrations of slash would be hand-piled and burned outside yarding corridors.

- Activity slash on yarding corridors would not be treated with activity fuels.
- Merchantable sawlogs would be removed from yarded material, and any remaining material at the landing sites would be machine and/or hand piled and burned at approved locations, chipped, or removed for biomass utilization. In the event that slash would be better utilized, it would be distributed back in the unit and yarding corridor for soil stabilization. Wind rows and concentrations of slash would not occur.
- Activity slash remaining in units would be lopped-and-scattered. Activity slash along roadways may be handpiled/burned, chipped, or lopped-and-scattered based on a post-logging assessment of fuel loading.
- A lop-and-scatter treatment would 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 6 inches in diameter would be cut into pieces so it would not exceed 4 feet in length. Scattering would arrange slash in a discontinuous pattern across the forest floor. If the amount of slash remaining in units is too high of a fuel load because there are no open spaces to scatter the slash, chipping or handpiling followed by handpile burning would be done.
- A 5 foot by 5 foot cover of 4 millimeter black plastic sheet shall cap each handpile to maintain a dry ignition point. The cover shall be firmly fixed to the pile to hold it in place. Approximately one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the pile shall lie above this plastic cover. The ignition point will consist of fine fuel material such as needles, small limbs, and branches less than one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) inch in diameter and free of dirt. Piles shall be constructed by aligning individual pieces in the same direction and placing the heavier slash on top. Piles shall have a stable base to prevent toppling. The long axis of individual pieces shall be oriented up and down the slope. Protruding pieces shall be trimmed to allow covering in a manner that permits the pile to shed water. Height shall be no less than 5 feet and no greater than 8 feet; width shall be no less than 6 feet and shall not exceed 8 feet; piles shall be circular and not windrowed. No pile shall be located in any stream channel; on down logs or stumps; or the trunk of the nearest living reserve tree.
- Around each landing pile, a minimum 10 foot area on the ground would be cleared of slash and other vegetation, litter, and debris to prevent escaped fire. Each landing pile would be covered with at least a 4 millimeter black plastic sheet to ensure a dry ignition point (generally 10 feet x 10 feet). All 4 corners and the middle of plastic sheets shall be anchored with slash or other debris. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Prescribed fire burn plans would be completed before ignition, as would smoke clearance to minimize impacts on air quality.

- Slash piles would not be allowed on roadways, turnouts, shoulders, or on the cut bank, unless authorized by the Authorized Officer.

Hazmat

- Contractors would 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 would include identification of Purchaser's representatives responsible for supervising initial containment action for releases and subsequent cleanup.
- Such plans would comply with the State of Oregon DEQ OAR 340-142, Oil and Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Requirements.
- Hydraulic fluid and fuel lines on heavy mechanized equipment would be in proper working condition to minimize potential for leakage into streams. No re-fueling of heavy equipment or chainsaws would occur within 150 feet of streams or stream crossings. Absorbent materials would be required on-site to allow for immediate containment of any accidental spills. Spilled fuel and oil would be cleaned-up and would be disposed of at an approved disposal site.
- Fire suppression foam would not be used within 150 feet of streams.

Noxious Weeds/Special Status Species

- Wash equipment including undercarriages prior to entry onto BLM-administered lands to remove mud, dirt, and plant parts.
- If additional Special Status plant sites are found during implementation of the proposed project, the project botanist would prescribe appropriate measures based on species, proposed treatment, site-specific environmental conditions, and available management recommendations.

Cultural

- Cultural resource surveys have been conducted within the proposed action area in accordance with the National Cultural Programmatic Agreement and Protocol for Managing Cultural Resources on Lands Administered by the BLM in Oregon. Site specific protection measures or specific PDFs would be implemented to preserve the integrity of significant cultural resources, referred to as Historic Properties in cultural resource protection laws and regulations.
- If cultural resources are discovered during project implementation the project would be redesigned to 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 interested federally recognized Tribes, approved by the Field Manager, and with concurrence from SHPO.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

- the *Final-Medford District Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision* (EIS, 1994 and RMP/ROD, 1995);
- the *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); *including the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives.*

- *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);
- the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (FSEIS, 2004 and ROD, 2004); and
- *Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan Environmental Assessment* (1998) and tiered to the *Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program* (EIS, 1985).

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 C(8) as follows:

- (8) *Salvaging dead or dying trees not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 miles of temporary road construction. Such activities:*
- May include incidental removal of live or dead trees for landings, skid trails, and road clearing.*
 - May include temporary roads which are defined as roads authorized by contract, permit, lease, other written authorization, or emergency operation not intended to be part of the BLM transportation system and not necessary for long-term resource management. Temporary roads shall be designed to standards appropriate for the intended uses, considering safety, cost of transportation, and impacts on land and resources; and*
 - Shall require the treatment of temporary roads constructed or used so as to permit the reestablishment, by artificial or natural means, of vegetative cover on the roadway and areas where the vegetative cover was disturbed by the construction or use of the road, as necessary to minimize erosion from the disturbed area. Such treatment shall be designed to reestablish vegetative cover as soon as practicable, but at least within 10 years after the termination of the contract.*
 - For this CX, a dying tree is defined as a standing tree that has been severely damaged by forces such as fire, wind, ice, insects, or disease, and that in the judgment of an experienced forest professional or someone technically trained for the work, is likely to die within a few years. Examples include, but are not limited to:*
 - Harvesting a portion of a stand damaged by a wind or ice event.*
 - Harvesting fire damaged trees.*

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances having effects that may significantly affect the environment as documented in the following review. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR § 46.215 rise to the level of significance. A summary of the extraordinary circumstances is listed below. The action must have a significant or a disproportional effect on the listed categories to warrant further analysis and environmental review.

D. Categorical Exclusion Review

Department of the Interior Regulations 43 CFR § 46.205 (c) require that any action that is normally categorically excluded must be evaluated to determine whether it meets any of the extraordinary circumstances found at 43 CFR § 46.215. An action would meet one of the extraordinary circumstances if the action may:

CE Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation		
The proposed Categorical Exclusion action will:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: Operations will follow Federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards designed to prevent job-related illness or injuries. Operations will remove or fall standing trees that currently represent a hazard to workers and the public.		
2.2 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.		X
Rationale: Treatment would occur on up to 18 acres within the Matrix land use allocation of the Reeves Creek Fire perimeter. This treatment area is located outside the unique geographic areas listed above. There are no parks, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild and scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; or other ecologically significant or critical areas within the project area.		
Cultural resource surveys have been conducted within the proposed action areas in accordance with the National Cultural Programmatic Agreement and Protocol for Managing Cultural Resources on Lands Administered by the BLM in Oregon. No cultural or historic sites were found in the project area.		
The fire altered the habitat for migratory birds by increasing habitat for early successional species, snag dependent species, and open canopy species. The proposed treatment would not decrease overall landscape population levels for these species, and therefore would not have significant impacts on migratory birds.		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: The BLM acknowledges public opposition and recognizes scientific controversy regarding post fire salvage. The BLM does not counter the scientific rationale for ecosystem restoration. This project's Categorical Exclusion Authority allows for the economic recovery of dead and dying trees not to exceed 250 acres. The project's Purpose and Need is to recover the economic value of fire-injured and fire-killed trees on Matrix lands while balancing the need to minimize environmental effects to resources from project implementation.		
Only fire-injured or fire-killed trees would be salvaged. A fire-injured tree with a 50% probability of mortality is defined generally as trees with more than the following percentages of crown scorch: Douglas-fir: 65%, ponderosa pine: 50%, sugar pine: 50% or incense cedar tree 85%. Two snags per acre 20 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) or greater would be left within the treatment unit. The proposed salvage operations would treat but maintain current habitat classifications. The proposed salvage area is outside of any known NSO home ranges, and is not in designated NSO critical habitat. The salvage area would retain 120 linear feet of merchantable coarse wood per acre on average; additional merchantable coarse wood may be removed as a commercial product.		
This project conforms to the Medford District ROD/RMP. The Reeves Creek Salvage Project would retain coarse woody debris and snags in quantities that meet or exceed the minimal levels identified in the Medford District ROD/RMP.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X

CE Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation		
The proposed Categorical Exclusion action will:	YES	NO
Rationale: The BLM interdisciplinary team of resource specialists for the Reeves Creek Salvage Project reviewed the project and determined there is no threat of significant environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks.		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Salvage operations have occurred on the Medford District in the past and are likely to occur in the future. However, each project contains its own set of conditions that must be evaluated on its own merit, as the BLM has done with this project. Land use allocations and environmental conditions, such as remaining vegetation, slopes, soils, and streams, are unique to each project and must be considered anew as each opportunity for treatment occurs. This action does not represent a decision in principle about the future actions with potentially significant effects.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
<p>Rationale: Due to the checkerboard pattern of ownership that typifies Western Oregon BLM lands many private and county lands adjacent to BLM lands in the proposed Reeves Creek Salvage Project area have been logged or are currently being logged. The proposed Reeves Creek Salvage project is 18 acres and excludes salvage in Riparian Reserves. A total of 187 acres burned during the Reeves Creek Fire. The proposed Reeves Creek treatment area is 18 acres which totals 10% of the acres burned in the Reeves Creek Fire perimeter. While the actions on private, county, and BLM lands occur within the same geographic area, the conservative approach to the Reeves Creek Salvage Project does not contribute to cumulatively significant environmental effects. The proposed treatment unit is not directly adjacent to private or county lands. The proposed salvage area is outside of any known NSO home ranges, and is not in designated NSO critical habitat. Additionally, snag retention would be focused along the borders of proposed treatment unit.</p> <p>The BLM interdisciplinary team of resource specialists reviewed the project based on current on-the-ground conditions. The interdisciplinary team incorporated PDFs into the project to minimize impacts to resources and prevent off-site effects that would contribute to the cumulative effects of other projects in the area (i.e. No treatments within Riparian Reserves, and the proposed salvage area is outside of any known NSO home ranges, and is not in designated NSO critical habitat, and increased snag and coarse woody debris retention). The interdisciplinary team determined that the actions proposed in the Reeves Creek salvage would not result in a cumulative significant effect when added to relevant past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions in the area.</p>		
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
Rationale: There are no significant impacts to properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places. No National Register Listed sites, or sites eligible for listing, were identified in areas of potential effect (APE) during archaeological survey or extensive background research.		
2.8 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.		X
Rationale: Treatments would not change the function of spotted owl habitat. If, during implementation of the proposed action a species is discovered, the BLM would apply the appropriate protective measures as described by a Grants Pass Field Office wildlife biologist.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X

CE Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation		
The proposed Categorical Exclusion action will:	YES	NO
Rationale: The BLM interdisciplinary team for the Reeves Creek Salvage Project reviewed the project for compliance with applicable laws such as the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Air Act, National Historic Preservation Act and Archaeological Resources Protection Act, among others. The resource specialists found the project conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal and State laws.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
Rationale: Based on past projects in the Grants Pass Field Office, the project would provide job opportunities in communities such as Selma, Cave Junction, and Grants Pass. The project does not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect to low income or minority populations.		
2.11 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).		X
Rationale: The project archaeologist conducted a cultural survey for the project area. No Native American sacred sites were identified during the survey. The project does not significantly or adversely affect the physical integrity of any such sacred sites. There has been coordination with local tribes and the State Historic Preservation Office.		
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native 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).		X
Rationale: The proposed action does not result in measurable changes to the current baseline of the risk, or actual introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative invasive species in or from the project area. The implementation of PDFs such as washing equipment prior to entry to the project area and using native seed and weed-free mulch after final disturbance and the ongoing treatment of noxious weeds in the project area will reduce the risk of introduction or spread of noxious weeds. Existing and likely continuing activities including, but not limited to, motor vehicle traffic, recreation use, rural and urban development, road construction, timber harvest, and natural processes can contribute to the introduction, existence, and spread of noxious weeds and invasive species. Vehicles accessing the project area would stay on existing roads (no additional permanent roads are proposed), reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds or seed. The proposed action does not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found.		

E. Public Comment Period

The Reeves Creek Salvage Project Categorical Exclusion (DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2015-0003-CX) is available for a 15-day review and public comment period. Notification of the comment period will include: the publication of the legal notice in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* newspaper of Grants Pass, Oregon; and a letter will be mailed to those individuals, organizations, and agencies that have requested to be involved in the environmental planning and decision making process for activities by the Grants Pass Field Office.

I encourage you to provide comments in writing regarding the proposed project starting February 19, 2015 to Allen Bollschweiler, Field Manager, Grants Pass Field Office, at the address below. Comments will be considered in making the final decision.

Comments need to be submitted on or before March 05, 2015. Comments may be delivered or mailed to the Grants Pass Interagency Office, 2164 NE Spalding Avenue, Grants Pass, OR 97526. Office hours are Monday

through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., closed holidays. The document may also be accessed on the Medford District's internet site at <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/plans/index.php>. If you have questions or comments and do not have internet access or would prefer a paper copy of this document, please contact Leah Schofield, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, at (541) 471-6504.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. 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.

Reviewers:

Ladell 2-18-15
Botany Date

Paul Stewart 2-23-15
Soils/Hydrology Date

Jon Raker 2-18-15
Fisheries Date

Jan Perry 2/18/15
Wildlife Date

Julie A. Wood 2/18/15
Cultural Date

Sarah Queen Foster 2/18/15
Timber Date

Ann Gallimore 2/17/15
Fire/Fuels Date

Colin Smith 2/18/15
Engineering Date

Lee Anderson 2/18/15
Silviculture Date

Mark Brown 2/23/15
Planning/NEPA Date