
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Cottonsnake Timber Sale Supplement to EA #OR-118-03-006

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

Lead agency: Bureau of Land Management

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Type of statement: Supplemental Environmental Assessment

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Abstract: This document supplements the Cottonsnake environmental assessment that was previously made available for public review and comment between June 19, 2003 and July 21, 2003. The objective of this analysis is to provide additional information regarding the “effects or cumulative effects of the Cottonsnake Timber Sale on the spread of noxious weeds” as directed by the District Court of Oregon in litigation of this project. Given the scope of the related court ruling, BLM will only accept comments regarding the effects of forest management activities on the spread of noxious weeds.

Chapter 1 – Project Scope

1.1 Background/Introduction

On June 19, 2003, the Glendale Field Office, Medford District BLM issued the Cottonsnake Timber Sale environmental analysis for public comment after publishing a legal notice of availability in the Grants Pass Daily Courier and the Douglas County Mail newspapers. The comment period began on June 19, 2003 and ended on July 21, 2003. After considering over a dozen letters from the public, the Glendale Field Manager issued a Decision Record on August 28, 2003 and selected Alternative 2 for implementation. The decision authorized 322 acres of commercial harvesting within the matrix land allocation and consistent with management direction in the Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP, 1995). The Cottonsnake Timber Sale was sold on September 25, 2003.

The timber sale was protested on September 18, 2003. The Glendale Field Manager considered all issues raised in the protest and thoroughly responded to the protesters on December 2003, thus communicating her denial of the protest. A request for stay and appeal was submitted by the protestors to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S Department of the Interior, Board of Land Appeals. The Board of Land Appeals affirmed the BLM decision denying the protest and denied the request for stay in February 2004.

The timber sale decision was subsequently litigated in the United States District Court for the District of Oregon (Case No. 03-3124-CO). The plaintiffs filed an amended complaint which went before District Court of Oregon, Magistrate Judge Cooney. The Findings and Recommendations issued by Magistrate Judge Cooney on June 6, 2005 identified that the Cottonsnake “analysis is insufficient to show that the BLM took a ‘hard look’ at the effects or cumulative effects of the CS [Cottonsnake] timber sale on the spread of noxious weeds...An agency must set forth a reasoned explanation for its decision.” On February 16, 2006 Oregon District Court Judge Hogan adopted Magistrate Judge Cooney’s Findings and Recommendations, and issued a judgment that enjoined ground disturbing activities on the Cottonsnake Timber Sale until the BLM completes “(1) a supplemental environmental assessment with evidence and analysis of effects of the Cottonsnake timber sale on the spread of noxious weeds sufficient to determine whether to prepare an environmental statement or finding of no significant impact (2) an environmental impact statement, if necessary, and (3) a Decision Record with, if necessary, a Finding of No Significant Impact.”

1.2 Conformance with Existing Documents

As mentioned in the Cottonsnake Timber Sale EA, this supplement also tiers to and conforms with 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* (FSEIS, 1994 and ROD, 1994); the *Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact*

Statement and the Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (FEIS, 1994 and ROD/RMP, 1995); and the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (FSEIS, 2000 and S&M ROD, 2001), including any amendments or modifications in effect as of March 21, 2004.

The Medford RMP direction is to contain and/or reduce noxious weeds on federal land. Activities in treating noxious weeds are also consistent with the management objectives for public lands under the Medford the District's *Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment OR-110-98-14*.

This analysis also tiers to the following supplemental environmental impact statements to the Northwest Forest Plan implemented after the Cottonsnake Timber Sale EA was signed: the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (FSEIS, 2004 and ROD, 2004); and the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Clarification of Language in the 1994 Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan National Forests and Bureau of Land Management Districts Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, Proposal to Amend Wording About the Aquatic Conservation Strategy* (FSEIS, 2003 and ROD, 2004).

The Medford District is aware of ongoing litigation Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations et al. v. National Marine Fisheries Service et al. (W.D. Wash.) related to the 2004 supplemental environmental impact statement for the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS). The Magistrate Judge issued findings and recommendations to the court on March 29, 2006. The court has not found this amendment to be "illegal," nor did the Magistrate recommend such a finding. Given the court has not yet adopted the findings and recommendations, the BLM will appropriately continue to follow the current direction in the 2004 ROD, until ordered otherwise. The Cottonsnake Timber Sale environmental analysis tiers to this document as the clarification of how to address the ACS. Since it was only a clarification, and did not alter any of the on-the-ground components of the standards and guidelines designed for achieving the ACS objectives, whether the court upholds the amendment or not should have little practical effect at the project level.

Chapter 2 – Supplement to Project Design Features

An addition to the existing Project Design Features in the Cottonsnake EA (EA#OR118-03-006) to minimize the spread of noxious weeds is to:

Seed and/or plant newly created openings (e.g., landings, new road cut and fill slopes, etc.) with native vegetation the first season after completion of the project.

Chapter 3 – Supplement to Affected Environment

3.1 Noxious Weeds

3.1.1. Affected Environment

Units within the Cottonsnake Planning Area were surveyed for noxious weeds in the spring of 1998. The Planning Area is known to have noxious weeds along many roadsides, and 5 populations of *Cirsium vulgare* (Bull thistle), 1 population of *Cytisus scoparius* (Scotchbroom), and 1 population of *Rubus discolor* (Himalayan blackberry), were documented within or directly adjacent to proposed units (Table 3-1). Based on current population sizes, past noxious weed reports provided by professional botany contractors and professional judgment, the Glendale botanist estimated that less than 1% of the harvest unit acreage harbor noxious weeds. Bull thistle populations typically include one to twenty five or thirty individuals, within a 150 square foot area, with an average of 20% cover. Scotchbroom populations can range from one to one hundred + individuals, which typically cluster together to cover up to 200-500 square feet, at 60-90 percent cover. Himalayan blackberry populations usually range from one to several individuals, and form patches covering anywhere from 25–300 feet at 40-100 percent coverage. Given the 7 known weed populations as well as the typical sizes of these populations as discussed above, the maximum square footage occupied by all noxious weed species is approximately 1,550 square feet (0.036 acres), or 0.01% of the treatment units (332 acres). This calculation of 0.01 % is at the high end as it assumes 100% coverage within a given population, which is rarely attained, with the exception of Himalayan blackberry.

Table 3-1. 1998 Plant Surveys Revealing Noxious Weed Species in the Cottonsnake Planning Area

1998 Plant Surveys Revealing Noxious Weed Species in the Cottonsnake Planning Area Units				
Location in Township (T), Range (R), Section (S)	Species	Coverage in Sq. Feet	Oregon Department of Agriculture Designation	Plant Description / Habitat Requirements
T33S-R7W-S1	Bull thistle	150	B ("B" designation; a weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant but which may have limited distribution in some counties. Where implementation of a fully integrated statewide management plan is not feasible, biological control shall be the main control approach (ODA, 2005)).	Bull thistle is an early successional biennial species that establishes well in open, disturbed sites, and is an important weed in clearcuts and conifer plantations in the western U.S. (Rejmanek et al, 1996). Populations of bull thistle tend to be short lived, establishing after disturbance, dominating for a few years, and then declining as other vegetation recovers (Cox, 1970; McDonald, 1999). Doucet and Cavers (1996) note that bull thistle is absent from densely shaded areas. A review by Klinkhamer and de Jong (1993) indicates that bull thistle is almost absent if light is reduced to less than 40% of full sunlight.
T33S-R6W-S6	Bull thistle	150	B	See above description
T32S-R6W-S19	Scotchbroom	500	B	Scotch Broom is a long-lived, brushy, early seral colonizer which does not grow well in forested areas but invades rapidly following logging, land clearing, and burning (Mobley, 1954). Scotch broom is generally intolerant of shade and will not grow in heavily shaded places (DiTomaso, 1998; Peterson and Prasad, 1998), and is typically shaded out once native species are established (Bossard, 2000; Williams, 1983) or forest canopy closes (Sawyer et. al, 2000).
T33S-R7W-S13	(2) Bull thistle	300	B	See above description.
T32S-R7W-S13	Bull thistle	150	B	See above description.

Location in Township (T), Range (R), Section (S)	Species	Coverage in Sq. Feet	Oregon Department of Agriculture Designation	Plant Description / Habitat Requirements
T32S-R7W-S13	Himalayan blackberry	300	B	Himalayan blackberry is a robust, clambering or sprawling, evergreen shrub which grows up to 9.8 feet (3 m) in height (Munz, 1974). Himalayan blackberry typically grows in open weedy sites, such as along field margins, railroad right-of-ways, roadsides, and riparian areas (Crane, 1940; Hitchcock et. al, 1973; Laymon, 1984; Roberts, 1980).
Total Sq. feet		1,550 (0.036 ac)		

Over the last 150 years activities such as motor vehicle traffic, recreational use, rural and urban development, timber harvest, road construction, and natural process have introduced and transported noxious weeds into the Rogue Valley. Noxious weeds are spread by the wind and by seed via attachment to vehicles and vectors such as humans, animals, and birds, and are able to grow on suitable habitat (generally considered as any newly disturbed ground and/or an influx of light due to canopy removal). Since the 1970's a recognition that weeds were causing environmental damage resulted in the passage of State noxious weed laws, the Carson-Foley Act of 1968 – Plant Protection Act of 2000, and Presidential executive orders like Invasive Species E.O. 13112, which directs federal agencies to combat the noxious weeds on federal lands. Additional direction is provided by the Medford District RMP, which states the district is to “contain and/or reduce noxious weed infestations on BLM-administered land ...(p. 92),” and “...survey BLM-administered land for noxious weed infestations...(p. 93).” These RMP directions for weed management are intended to be met at a landscape level; whether the direction is achieved is not intended to be measured at the site specific level nor with the implementation of each project.

Thousands of acres of weed treatments have occurred on federal (and non-federal) lands over the last decade across the Medford District with the RMP-driven objective of containing or reducing – not eradicating - noxious weed populations (Budesá, 2006). In an effort to continue to contain and/or reduce noxious weeds on federal land, the BLM proposed to treat known weed populations within the Glendale Resource Area, including the Cottonsnake Planning Area, under a contract funded by Title II, in 2005. This contract is separate of the Cottonsnake Timber Sale as analyzed under the Medford the District's *Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment OR-110-98-14*.

Chapter 4 – Supplement to Environmental Consequences

4.1 Noxious Weeds

4.1.1. Environmental Effects

Alternative 1 (No Action) – Direct and Indirect Effects

Under the No Action Alternative, noxious weeds within the Planning Area would continue to spread into suitable habitat at an unknown rate. The rate at which noxious weeds spread is impossible to quantify, as it depends on a myriad of factors including, but not limited to, logging on private lands, motor vehicle traffic, recreational use, rural and urban development, and natural processes (Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program EIS, p. 59). The following table (4-1) illustrates how each of these activities affects noxious weed dispersal.

Table 4-1: Factors Affecting the Determination of the Rate of Noxious Weed Spread

Activity	Role in Potential Noxious Weed Seed Dispersal
Private Land	Private lands host a perpetual source for noxious weed seed, which can be dispersed when seeds attach to tires, feet, fur, feathers or feces, or when natural processes such as wind and/or flooding events transport the seed from its source to another geographical vicinity.
Logging on Private Lands	Logging activity presents a key dispersal opportunity for noxious weed seeds per 1) attachment to tires/tracks of mechanized logging equipment, tires of log trucks, and various other logging-related substrates which subsequently transport the seed from its source to another geographic vicinity, 2) creation of openings for potential noxious weeds colonization and 3) a lack of PDFs – such as equipment/vehicle washing, etc. - which attempt to reduce the activity’s spread of noxious weed seeds.
Motor Vehicle Traffic (including Log Trucks)	Roads on public land are for public use, which results in a plethora of seed-dispersing activities occurring on a daily basis. Private landowners use public roads to haul logs, undertake recreational pursuits, and/or access their properties. This transportation often occurs along BLM-administered roads, which are situated within a checkerboarded ownership arrangement. How or when seed detachment occurs is a random event could take place within feet or miles from the work site/seed source, presenting a high likelihood of detachment on public lands.
Recreational Use	The Public often recreates on BLM-managed public lands, and can spread seed from their residences to public land in a variety of ways such as attachment to vehicle tires, hikers’ sox, shoes, or other clothing, the fur of domesticated animals, etc.
Rural and Urban Development	Rural development occurring within the checkerboarded land arrangement often requires public landowners to acquire a Right of Way (ROW) from the BLM to legally access their parcel(s). These ROWs, or use of BLM-administered roads is often granted (Groves, 2006). Please refer to ‘Motor Vehicle Traffic’ and ‘Private Land,’ for clarification of how this affects the spread of noxious weeds from private to public lands.
Natural Processes	Wind, seasonal flooding, and migration patterns of birds/animals are a few natural processes that potentially spread noxious weeds, especially from private land to public land. Wind carries seeds, and deposits them at random intervals. High water caused by flooding reaches vegetation (often consisting of a noxious weed component) growing on the banks of rivers/creeks/streams, and deposits seeds downstream.

The abovementioned activities would contribute to noxious weed spread, which could degrade some elements of the environment. To predict the rate of this degradation would be highly speculative, as the extent of weed expansion is dependent on so many factors that it is considered impossible to quantify. The degree of degradation would depend on the noxious weed species, as some, such as Scotchbroom, are more intrusive than others. The more aggressive species mentioned in the table 4-1 - specifically Scotchbroom- is slated for treatment under Medford District's *Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment OR-110-98-14* under a separate project. However, the success of implementing the weed management plan would be temporary, as logging on non-federal lands, recreational use, rural and urban development, natural processes and vehicle traffic will continue to spread noxious weed populations into the Planning Area.

Indirect effects of noxious weed spread include the potential degradation of wildlife habitat (Rice et. al. 1997, Harris and Cranston 1979), a decline in natural diversity (Forcella and Harvey 1983; Tyser and Key 1988; Williams 1997), and decline in water quality (Lacey et al. 1989); however, a very small amount of Cottonsnake unit acreage (less than 0.5 ac) is covered by noxious weeds, making it difficult to quantify any potential decline in ecosystem health related to existing noxious weed populations, or to quantify the potential decline in ecosystem health related to any additional noxious weed populations potentially established by the activities described in Table 4-1.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) – Direct and Indirect Effects

In the short term (approximately 1-5 years), proposed activities within the Planning Area would result in the reasonable probability of spreading noxious weeds. However, the rate at which this potential spread would occur is unknown due to the indistinguishable causal effect of other activities and factors listed in table 4-1 on the spread of noxious weeds. Openings, caused by logging (332 acres) and road construction/decommissioning (2.3 miles total), would provide suitable habitat for noxious weeds to colonize. In addition, during project implementation, increased vehicle traffic could increase, or at least perpetuate, weed infestations along road systems because of seed dispersal. Openings and disturbance provide the greatest opportunity for the establishment of noxious weeds.

In an effort to address the potential for project activities to increase the rate of spread of noxious weeds, Project Design Features (PDFs) have been included in the project to decrease the potential spread of weeds associated with the Proposed Action. Project Design Features include washing equipment prior to moving it on-site, operating vehicles/equipment in the dry season, and seeding and/or planting newly created openings with native vegetation to reduce the potential establishment of noxious weeds. These PDFs are widely accepted and utilized as Best Management Practices (BMPs) in noxious weed control strategies across the nation (Thompson, 2006). Table 4-2 delineates the project design features and their expected implementation results.

Table 4-2: Project Design Features and Expected Implementation Results

Project Design Feature (PDF)	Result of Implementing PDF
Washing vehicles / equipment	Removes dirt that may contain viable noxious weed seeds, thereby reducing the potential for noxious weed spread
Operating vehicles/equipment during the dry season	Reduces the potential for viable noxious weed seed to be transported and dispersed via mud caked on the undercarriages/tires/tracks of logging equipment.
Seeding and/or planting newly created openings with native seed vegetation.	Introduces native vegetation to the site prior to noxious weed seed recruitment, allowing native plants an advantageous jump-start in reestablishment, which reduces the potential for noxious weed infestation.

Implementing the PDFs that reduce the potential spread of noxious weeds associated with the Proposed Action, and using native species for seeding/planting newly disturbed openings is expected to result in a similar potential of noxious weed expansion as associated with the No Action Alternative.

In the long term (5-100 years), tree canopies would eventually expand and reduce light levels, which in turn would prevent weeds from growing and expanding within treated areas, because populations decline as the amount of light reaching the plants diminishes. Consequently, in the long term, remaining weed populations would be confined to the road prism and adjoining (private) disturbed land as canopy is re-established in treated areas over time.

The effect of implementing Alternative 2 could possibly result in the establishment of new noxious weed populations. Although the *immediate* potential for weed spread would be less with the No-Action Alternative than for the Proposed Action, the potential for the spread of existing noxious weeds and the introduction of new species is considered similar for both alternatives, because of the inclusion of PDFs in Alternative 2, and the fact that under the No Action alternative, populations would continue to establish and spread due to seed transport by vehicular traffic, wildlife, and other natural dispersal methods listed in Table 4-1 regardless of the alternative selected.

Indirect effects associated with noxious weed population enlargement are similar to those mentioned in the No Action Alternative, and are known to include, generally, declines in the palatability or abundance of wildlife and livestock forage (Rice et al., 1997), declines in native plant diversity (Forcella and Harvey, 1983; Tyser and Key, 1988; Williams, 1997), reductions in the aesthetic value of the landscape, encroachment upon rare plant populations and their habitats, potential reductions in soil stability and subsequent increases in erosion (Lacey et. al, 1989), and an overall decline of ecosystem health.

However, considering implementation of Alternative 2, there are three main reasons why potential weed establishment that might be caused by the Proposed Action is not expected to result in a detectable effect to overall ecosystem health. First, surveys indicate that a very small percentage - less than 0.1% of acreage within the Planning Area units - are affected by noxious weeds. Second, these sites located in units proposed for

treatment have been reported during pre-disturbance surveys, and are proposed for weed treatment under Medford District's *Integrated Weed Management Plan and Environmental Assessment OR-110-98-14*, which means that known populations would be treated, bringing the acreage in the Planning Area affected by noxious weeds closer to 0% until ongoing activities listed in Table 4-1 re-introduce weeds into the Planning Area. Third, as aforementioned, Project Design Features (PDFs) have been established to minimize the rate at which project activities might potentially spread noxious weed seed from outside/adjacent sources.

Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) - Cumulative Effects

In order to address the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action on the spread of noxious weed encroachment, the condition of non-federal lands must be considered. However, there is no available or existing data regarding noxious weed occurrence on local non-federal lands. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, BLM assumes that 1) there is a perpetual source of noxious/invasive weeds on non-federal lands that can spread to federal lands, especially when the land ownership is checkerboard, as within the Planning Area, and 2) conversely that noxious weeds are not established on these lands, and therefore there is a need to reduce the risk of spread of noxious weeds from the federal lands to the adjoining non-federal lands. Seeds are spread by the wind, by animal/avian vectors, natural events, and by human activities - in particular through soil attachment to vehicles. BLM's influence over these causes of the spread of noxious weeds is limited to those caused by human activities. Additional human disturbance and traffic would increase the potential for spreading noxious weed establishment, but regardless of human activity, spread of these weeds will continue through natural forces. Thus, the BLM cannot stop the spread of noxious weeds, it might only reduce the risk or rate of spread.

Given the unpredictable vectors for weed spread, such as the vehicle usage by private parties, wildlife behavior, and wind currents, it is not possible to quantify with any degree of confidence the rate of weed spread in the future, or even the degree by which that potential would be increased by the Proposed Action.

Foreseeable activities within the Planning Area are expected to be similar to past and current activities: motor vehicle traffic, recreational use, rural and urban development, timber harvest, road construction, firewood collection. These types of activities could result in new disturbed sites available for colonization by existing noxious weed populations, and they do offer the possibility of introduction of new noxious weed species to the Planning Area under any alternative, including the No Action Alternative. As stated above, there is no available or existing data concerning the rate of weed spread occurring on either federal or non-federal lands as a consequence of these types of activities. Also, as discussed above, there is no information on what, if any, increase in the rate of weed spread the Proposed Action would cause, and hence, it is not possible to quantify with any degree of confidence what the incremental effect of the Proposed Action on the spread of noxious weeds would be when added to the existing rate of weed spread caused by past, present, and future actions.

Project Design Features exist to reduce the potential that the Proposed Action would contribute to the spread of weed seed and establishment of new populations. PDFs are not intended or expected to completely eliminate any possibility that the Proposed Action would contribute to the spread of weed seed and establishment of new populations; however, PDFs ensure that any incremental contribution of the Proposed Action to the spread of weeds, when added to the rate of weed spread caused by past, present, and future actions, would be so small as to be incapable of quantification or distinction from background levels.

As described above, PDFs for this project include washing vehicles/equipment, operating in the dry season, and seeding/planting newly created openings with native vegetation. BLM, and other federal and nonfederal organizations involved in combating noxious weed spread, routinely utilize these PDFs in noxious weed control strategies. These PDFs are widely accepted as Best Management Practices (BMPs), as they are inexpensive to implement, easily attainable, and accomplish the objective of reducing the potential of spreading noxious weeds as a result of project-oriented activities.

There is no available data on the background rate of weed spread, and additional data collection on the rate of weed spread would not reduce the inherent speculation in predicting the future activities of private parties and wildlife and the resultant rate of weed spread. Further, additional data collection would not reduce the inherent speculation in predicting the incremental effects of the Proposed Action on the spread of weeds because of (1) the unpredictable natural factors that largely determine whether weeds would spread after project activities, (2) the unlikelihood that future data collection would be able to detect or measure any difference between background rates of weed spread and the rate of weed spread as affected by the Proposed Action and correspondingly reduced by PDFs, and (3) the included PDFs that would reduce, if not eliminate, any project effects on the rate of weed spread that would make the already undetectable effects of the Proposed Action even more undetectable. Finally, data collection on the rate of spread would not alter the PDF techniques already being applied to reduce that rate of spread. It cannot be over emphasized that under the No Action Alternative, noxious weeds are likely to spread over time regardless of whether or not the Cottonsnake Timber Sale occurs, and that rate would not be altered to any detectable degree by the Proposed Action.

Chapter 5 - List of Preparers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Primary Responsibility</u>
Martin Lew	NEPA Coordinator	NEPA writer/editor
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Chapter 6 - Public Involvement and Consultation

6.1 Public Scoping and Notification

The Supplemental Environmental Assessment will be made available for a 30-day public review period. Notification of the comment period will include: the publication of a legal notice in the Daily Courier, newspaper of Grants Pass, Oregon; and a letter to be mailed to those individuals, organizations, and agencies that have requested to be involved in the environmental planning and decision making processes for proposed timber sales, as well as those organizations involved in the litigation of this project. BLM will only accept comments regarding the effects of forest management activities on the spread of noxious weeds, as is the focus of this supplement. Comments received in the Glendale Resource Area Office, 2164 Spalding Ave. Grants Pass, Oregon 97526 on or before the end of the 30-day comment period will be considered in making the final decision for this project.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review. 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 on their entirety.

6.2 Consultation

6.2.1 United States Fish and Wildlife Service

In accordance with regulations pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act 1973, as amended, consultation with the USFWS concerning the potential impacts of implementing the Cottonsnake Timber Sale Project upon the northern spotted owl has been completed. The Cottonsnake Timber Sale Project was included within the Biological Opinion for Re-initiation of Consultation on Effects to Northern Spotted Owl and Northern Spotted Owl Critical Habitat by timber harvest activities associated with the FY 01-03 Program of Timber Harvest Activities by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, and U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Medford District Office (FWS Reference Number 1-15-05-F-0581) 2005.

6.2.2 NOAA Fisheries (National Marine Fisheries Service)

NOAA Fisheries concurred that consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act was not required as the Proposed Action would have no adverse impact to Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for Oregon Coast (OC) coho salmon as included in a Letter of Concurrence by that agency on July 11, 2003.

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