

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**for the**  
**WEST FORK ILLINOIS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT**

EA# OR-117-06-09

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT  
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA

August 2006

Dear Reader:

We appreciate your interest in the BLM's public land management activities. We also appreciate your taking the time to review this environmental assessment (EA). If you would like to provide us with written comments regarding this project or EA, please send them to me at 2164 NE Spalding Ave. Grants Pass, OR 97526 or email them to [medford\\_mail@or.blm.gov](mailto:medford_mail@or.blm.gov).

If you would like to comment confidentially, please be aware that comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review or may be held in a file available for public inspection and review unless you 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 clearly at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

I look forward to your continued interest in the management of our public lands.

Abbie Jossie  
Field Manager  
Grants Pass Resource Area

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT

EA COVER SHEET

RESOURCE AREA: Grants Pass

EA# OR-117-06-09

ACTION/TITLE: West Fork Illinois River Bridge Replacement

LOCATION: Grants Pass Resource Area, Josephine Co., Oregon. T41S, R9W, Sec.16 NW1/4

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## **1.0 Purpose of and Need for Action**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This environmental assessment (EA) will assist in the decision-making process by assessing the environmental and human effects resulting from implementing the proposed project or alternatives. The EA will also assist in determining if an environmental impact statement (EIS) needs to be prepared or if a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

This EA tiers to the following documents:

1. *Final EIS and ROD for the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) (1995);*
2. *Final SEIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (1994);*
3. *ROD for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its attachment A Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (1994);*
4. *Final SEIS and ROD for Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (2000 and 2001);*
5. *ROD Amending Resource Management Plans for Seven Bureau of Land Management Districts and Land and Resource Management Plans for Nineteen National Forests within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its Final SEIS for the Clarification of Language in the 1994 ROD for the Northwest Forest Plan amending wording about the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (2004);*
6. *Final SEIS and ROD for Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon (2004)*
7. *Medford District Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment (1998).*
8. *West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Project EA and EA Addendum (2004, 2005).*

### **1.2 Purpose of and Need for the Proposal**

A bridge over the West Fork Illinois River is beyond its useable life span. Wooden pilings, abutments, and running surface have lost structural integrity due to age and decomposition. Additionally, the bridge does not accommodate a 100-year flood event. The purpose of the proposed action is to build a bridge that would be in compliance with the 100 year flood design criteria and provide safe transportation. This EA will assist in the decision making process to decide whether or not to replace the bridge.

The bridge is on private land and access is controlled by the landowner. Josephine County requested Title 2 funds to replace the bridge for safe transportation, hydrologic function and access for fire suppression. As a federal undertaking utilizing federal funds BLM must analyze the impacts of project implementation.

### **1.3 Project Location**

The project area is in the West Fork Illinois watershed, T41S, R9W, Section 14 (Appendix A, Map 1). The project area is located on private land.

## **1.4 Issues and Concerns**

Issues and concerns were raised during project scoping by the public and by BLM's interdisciplinary planning team. In this EA, an issue is something unique to the project area that may need particular consideration and which may contribute to defining a particular action alternative. The pertinent issues are:

- Port-Orford-Cedar (POC) is in the area and downstream. Heavy equipment operation poses a potential risk of POC root disease introduction.
- The deteriorated bridge poses a safety hazard.
- Heavy equipment use in the stream and riparian area could cause sedimentation.
- Bridge replacement could facilitate future activities which might degrade environmental conditions.
- The use of heavy equipment and machinery has the potential to introduce noxious weeds.
- Bridge replacement may increase off-highway vehicle (OHV) use.

## **2.0 Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **2.1 Alternative 1: No Action**

The no action alternative is defined as not implementing the proposed action. The no action alternative also serves as a baseline for evaluating the environmental effects of the action alternative. Inclusion of this alternative is done without regard to whether or not it is consistent with the Medford District RMP.

### **2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action**

The bridge is located on private property and construction would occur between June 15 and November 15. BLM would manage the project and contract the work, utilizing Title II funds, to a private engineering firm. As a result of BLM's investment, BLM would acquire an exclusive easement across the bridge and on road 41-9-9 that crosses the aforementioned private property. With the exclusive easement BLM would control road use.

The proposed action is to replace a 55' railroad flat car bridge with a 14' x 70' pre-engineered bridge. Bridge abutments would be constructed outside the stream channel, so dewatering would not be necessary. A crane/excavator or pair of excavators would be used to remove the old bridge and install the new bridge as described below.

The old rail road car bridge would be lifted out and removed from the site using equipment operating on the north bank of the river. The north end abutments, which are large logs that have decayed beyond safe use, would be dug out with an excavator. Silt barriers would be placed below the work area to prevent material from entering the stream. Debris, soil and old logs would be placed in a stable location where they would not enter the stream. Vegetation (saplings and brush) growing in fill material surrounding the existing bridge and at the toe of the fill where new footings would be located would be removed.

Concrete abutments would be built on stable underlying rock and parent material after removal of erodable fill. Slopes would be re-graded to a shallower slope and armored with rip rap to prevent scour during peak flows.

Some soil and boulders may be moved to provide a low water crossing for the excavator to access the south side of the stream. The streambed is composed of boulders and cobble rock and would only require minimal movement of boulders to allow passage of the excavator. Once the excavator is on the south side of the stream, the abutments would be removed and material placed in a stable location. Silt barriers would also be installed on the south side of the stream. Sediment either removed through construction or the silt fences would be small and would be used as fill or distributed around the project site. The crossing would be used only once, at the start of the work. To return to the north side, the excavator would use the new bridge once it is in place. A crane/excavator would place the bridge on the new abutments, located outside the stream channel.

## **2.3 Project Design Features**

The following Project Design Features (PDFs) would reduce anticipated adverse environmental impacts due to implementation of the proposal:

### **2.3.1 Soil and Water**

To provide future shade, erosion control, and bank stability, disturbed areas would be mulched and planted with suitable native trees, shrubs and grasses.

### **2.3.2 Noxious Weeds**

For noxious weed prevention, all construction equipment would be cleaned prior to moving onto the project area. To prevent noxious weed establishment, disturbed sites would be planted with native vegetation. Straw and mulch would be native and weed free.

### **2.3.3 Fisheries**

These PDFs are based on the terms and conditions and reasonable and prudent measures identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) August 8, 2001 programmatic biological opinion:

- Instream work would occur between June 15 and September 15 unless a waiver is granted by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- Heavy equipment would be clean and free of leaks before use adjacent to or within stream channels.
- Spill containment materials would be kept on site at all times.
- Equipment refueling would not occur within 150' of streams.
- Heavy equipment would stay outside the channel to the greatest extent possible. In-

channel work would be in accordance with the approval of the written plan filed with the Oregon Department of Forestry.

#### **2.3.4 Public Notification and Fire Suppression**

Oregon Department of Forestry, Josephine County, and local landowners would be notified prior to road closures. All roads would be signed and notices placed in newspapers at least two weeks prior to closure.

#### **2.3.5 POC Root Disease**

Port-Orford cedar (POC) in the project area would be managed according the 2004 BLM POC FSEIS/ROD. Per this ROD, a risk key has been prepared outlining the environmental conditions under which one or more disease-controlling management practices would be implemented. The following PDF's were identified by the risk key evaluation:

- Whenever possible, the operations would be limited to the dry season. If operations extend into the wet season or during summer rain events which create standing puddles, vehicles and heavy equipment would be washed according to Management Guidelines provided by the Port-Orford Rangeland Assessment (USDA, USDI 2003) prior to entering a POC area or leaving a *Phytophthora lateralis* (PL) area.
- To limit the potential for disease spread, access and egress routes and parking areas would be designated by BLM.

### **3.0 Environmental Consequences**

Only substantive site specific environmental changes that would result from implementing the proposed action are discussed in this chapter. If an ecological component is not discussed, it should be assumed that the resource specialists have considered effects to that component and found the proposed action would have minimal or no effects. Similarly, unless addressed specifically, the following were found not to be affected by the proposed action: air quality; areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC); cultural or historical resources; Native American religious sites; prime or unique farmlands; wild and scenic rivers; and wilderness.

Project implementation would improve BLM access to the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Project (LMP) area. The effects of the West Fork Illinois LMP on the environment were addressed in detail in the West Fork Illinois LMP EA, EA Addendum, and EA Erratum (EA #OR117-04-07). While the bridge replacement would improve access to these lands, no additional degradation beyond what was disclosed and analyzed under the West Fork Illinois project would occur as a result of this project. Similarly, private mining operations that currently use the bridge for access would continue to do so following project completion. As a result, no additions to current effects from private mining operations would be expected as a result of this project. Josephine County has no current plans to harvest timber following bridge replacement.

### **3.1 Soil and Water**

#### **3.1.1 Affected Environment**

The project site is located in the western portion of the West Fork Illinois River 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed, which is dominated by serpentine soils, where, due to the high ratio of magnesium to calcium, soil productivity is low and vegetation, sparse. Serpentine soils are typically shallow and water holding capacity, low. Due to the dominance of serpentine soils, stream flows are particularly “flashy” (i.e., rapidly rising and falling with the onset and cessation of rainfall).

Moderate peak flows (2 to 5 year flood return interval) result from intense winter rainstorms. Peak flows of record such as the 1964 and 1974 flood events resulted from rain on snow events. Flood events create widespread bank erosion and channel adjustment in the lower gradient floodplain reaches. While bank erosion is a natural occurrence, riparian vegetation removal and channel straightening in the floodplain of the West Fork Illinois has greatly reduced the ability of the floodplain to dissipate flood energy which has accelerated bank erosion. In particular, the fill slopes supporting the existing bridge abutments are vulnerable to accelerated bank erosion. They are too steep and are eroding into the channel. The existing abutments are rotting logs which further contribute to fill slope destabilization.

The existing bridge over West Fork Illinois spans 55’ with abutments below the high water mark. Engineering analysis found that the bridge with abutments in the active channel would not accommodate a 100-year flood event. Winter peak flows are eroding the banks that secure the bridge abutments, compromising bridge stability. Sediment is also entering the stream channel.

The West Fork Illinois River from the mouth upstream to the California border is 303(d) listed for water temperature.

#### **3.1.2 Environmental Consequences**

##### ***Alternative 1 - No Action***

Without bridge replacement and new concrete abutments, the existing log abutments and steepened fill slope would continue to degrade. The fill slopes would be vulnerable to peak flows and would continue to be a chronic source of sediment. The bridge and fill slopes would eventually fail completely, allowing all erodable fill to fall into the channel or be washed in during storms. Timing of failure would likely coincide with peak flow events which are the flows that carry a majority of the basin’s suspended and bedload sediment. During such events, sediment from bank failure would represent a fraction of sediment transporting

The cobble and boulder substrate reflects the high sediment transport capacity of the stream. Hence, sediment would be expected to move downstream. During peak flow events, sediment would likely deposit throughout the lower gradient valley of the mainstem Illinois River and would not be measurable or detectable. However, if banks were to fail during low to moderate flows, sediment would likely deposit in mass downstream of the bridge. Embeddedness and small deposits are likely to result. This condition would persist until peak flows distribute the sediment to downstream locations. Once transported and distributed through the Illinois River, the sediment would not be observable. The site is sparsely vegetated. Loss of vegetation from bank failure would not decrease stream shade.

## ***Alternative 2- Proposed Action***

*Hydrology:* There would be no alteration of channel function or processes. No constriction of the channel would result from the placement of rip rap or construction of abutments. No changes in peak or base flows would result.

*Sediment:* Replacement of the bridge and abutments and removal or reshaping of fill slopes would remove a chronic source of sediment input and prevent eventual failure of the bridge and fill slopes. Shallower grades on fill slopes and armoring with rip rap would prevent scour during peak flows, thus further reducing sediment input.

During abutment construction and the single pass across the channel by the excavator, sediment input would be minimal and localized. The stream crossing would impact only a small area (10' by 20') and would be of short duration (minutes). Silt fences would prevent debris from bank disturbance from entering the channel. Material captured by the silt fences would be pulled and distributed on the site outside of the channel banks. Should a summer thunderstorm occur during construction fine sediment may pass through the silt fence. Increases in turbidity for a short distance downstream may occur but is unlikely given the small volume of input. Mulching and seeding would help stabilize disturbed areas in the short and long term. Therefore, sediment due to runoff would be less compared to the no action alternative. As a result of heavy equipment use, a short term (hours) increase in turbidity may be observable. Given the short duration and limited volume of sediment, there would be no measurable change to total sediment load in the West Fork Illinois River. In the long term, sediment would be reduced compared to no action with the replacement of the failing abutments and eroding fill slopes.

*Stream Shade:* Some vegetation would be removed during construction. However, because stream shade at the project site is primarily topographic and the vegetation that would be removed is not large enough to shade the stream, stream temperature would not be affected. Over the long term, as trees establish and mature stream shade would increase.

*Cumulative Effects:* Due to the limited duration, very small scale, and PDFs there are no effects to stream shade, or channel function anticipated. Sediment suspension would occur as the equipment crosses the channel and if a thunderstorm were to occur during construction. However, the turbidity would be short duration and limited to downstream of the bridge and would not alter channel conditions. Therefore, there are no cumulative effects with past, present or foreseeable future projects such as the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Plan.

## **3.2 Botany / Port-Orford Cedar**

### **3.2.1 Affected Environment**

The project area was surveyed for Survey and Manage (S&M), Threatened and Endangered (T&E), State Threatened (STO), Bureau Sensitive, Bureau Assessment, or Bureau Tracking plant species in the project area. S&M, T&E, STO, and Bureau Sensitive plants are required to be protected and managed by the Bureau. Bureau Assessment species are ones currently not eligible for federal listing, but are of a conservation concern and may need protection. It is Oregon State Office's policy that BLM will protect, manage, and conserve sensitive species and their habitats such that any Bureau action would not contribute to the need to list any of these species. Bureau Tracking species are not considered Special Status species for management

purposes, but are documented to help determine future status and management. Protection for these species is discretionary, and is based on species and proposed treatment.

This project is within the range of the federally endangered Cook's Desert Parsley (*Lomatium cookii*) and McDonald's Rockcress (*Arabis macdonaldiana*). Surveys for vascular and non-vascular species were conducted; none were found in the treatment area. Because the project site is in an existing disturbed area, there is no suitable habitat for vascular or non-vascular Survey and Manage (S&M), Threatened and Endangered (T&E), State Threatened (STO), and Bureau Special status plants.

Existing vegetation around the bridge is currently sparse, which is characteristic of the serpentine community. There are less than ten sapling sized trees within the affected area. A few of these are POC, which is susceptible to an exotic root pathogen (*Phytophthora lateralis*). Downstream of the project area, POC is frequent and is an important riparian species. No noxious weeds were found in the project area.

### **3.2.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***Alternative 1: No Action***

Riparian vegetation would remain unchanged. Continuation of current management would have no impact on rare plants or their potential habitat.

Existing non-native species in the road prism would continue but would be unlikely to expand without soil disturbance or increased vehicular traffic.

Because additional disturbance and increased access are not anticipated, the risk of increased POC infection would not change.

#### ***Alternative 2: Proposed Action***

No S&M, T&E, STO, and Bureau Sensitive, Bureau Assessment, or Bureau Tracking plant species were located during surveys. Most of the work would occur within and adjacent to the road prism. Therefore, due to the small area of new disturbance, lack of rare plants in the project area, and poor quality of the potential habitat, there would be no effects to populations or potential habitat.

Noxious weeds could be introduced during project implementation. However, mulching/seeding /planting disturbed areas would help native species become established before noxious weeds and the PDF which requires vehicle/equipment washing before entry into the project area would prevent weed seeds from being carried to the project area. These PDFs for reducing or eliminating noxious weed impacts are "widely accepted and utilized as best management practices in noxious weed control across the nation" (USDI Bureau of Land Management. 2006. Cottonsnake Timber Sale EA Supplement) and would reduce the risk of weed spread to an inconsequential level that is indistinguishable from existing levels of spread through such sources as wind, water, animals, vehicles and land development. If noxious weeds are found on federal land, they would be contained or eradicated using appropriate methods based on species and conditions under the guidance of the Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan (PA-OR110-98-14). All noxious weed populations that are treated would be monitored for treatment effectiveness.

The project area is in a *Phytophthora lateralis* infected 7<sup>th</sup> field watershed as identified by the ROD for the Management of Port-Orford Cedar in Southwestern Oregon (May 2004). There are POC within, near and downstream of the project area. Washing equipment, scheduling work during the dry season and controlling contractor access, egress and parking areas would minimize the risk of spreading the infection during bridge construction to an inconsequential level which is within parameters anticipated in the 2004 POC EIS to which this project is tiered. Additionally, since access would continue to be controlled by a private gate, the replacement of the bridge does not increase the infection risk to Port-Orford cedars located beyond the bridge.

*Cumulative Effects:* Due to the absence of habitat, small scale of the project area and poor habitat conditions, there are no effects to special status plant species anticipated. Mulching, seeding and vehicle washing are expected to prevent noxious weed spread beyond levels anticipated in the EISs to which this EA is tiered and to be indistinguishable from existing levels of weed spread. Due to PDFs to prevent the spread of POC root disease and continued limited access beyond the new bridge, POC infection risk is not expected to increase. Because no direct adverse impacts are anticipated for special status plants, noxious weed spread, or POC infection rates, there are no cumulative effects with past or foreseeable projects such as the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Project expected.

### **3.3 Fisheries**

#### **3.3.1 Affected Environment**

The project site is located on the West Fork Illinois River upstream of the Whiskey Creek confluence. The West Fork Illinois River is an important fish-bearing tributary to the Illinois River although fish production is lower than it was historically. Fish in this section of the West Fork include coho salmon, winter steelhead, cutthroat trout, Pacific lamprey, and sculpins. Coho presence ends just upstream of the project site, which is the BLM Road 41-9-9 bridge crossing. Steelhead use continues upstream into Del Norte County, California for 0.25 miles. The low gradient and a lack of any physical migration barriers allow anadromous fish to extend high into the watershed. Southern Oregon/Northern California (SONC) coho salmon are federally listed as threatened.

In the upper reaches of the West Fork Illinois in Section 9, a channel gradient of 6% is typical. There are very low amounts of instream wood, with almost no key pieces (>24" diameter and >50' or twice bank full width long). Sedimentation is at undesirable levels typically, but at the project site, the substrate is dominated by boulders and cobble; fine sediment is not limiting productivity.

#### **3.3.2 Environmental Consequences**

##### ***Alternative 1: No Action***

Depending on the magnitude of the slope failure, movement of material into the channel, and flow magnitude at time of failure, spawning and rearing habitat immediately downstream of the bridge could be degraded. If sediment is deposited in mass below the bridge and is not transported downstream it would potentially harm coho and steelhead egg survival if redds were present at the time of the slope failure. Duration of sediment deposition could last hours to a year, depending on the magnitude of peak flows.

### ***Alternative 2: Proposed Action***

*Sediment:* Replacement of the bridge and abutments and associated fill slopes would remove a chronic source of sediment input and would prevent predictable, eventual failure of the bridge and collapse of fill slopes into the channel. During construction and the channel crossing by the excavator, the potential for input of sediment to the channel exists, but the amount is expected to be minimal and localized through the implementation of Project Design Features (see Soil and Water section, above). This small amount of fine sediment would not be expected to affect fish or alter habitat due to the small amounts involved and the short duration of the project construction period. Any sediment that is transported into the channel during the first runoff season should be indistinguishable from background levels present during winter flows and should not adversely affect fish.

*Direct Mortality:* The single stream crossing by the excavator, juvenile fish would likely temporarily relocate. This effect would be momentary and would not be expected to result in any harm to individuals or to degrade habitat. No adult fish would be present during operations.

No effects to fish would be expected because temperatures and channel environment would not be altered. Large instream wood would be maintained at current levels and no changes to pools would occur. As a result, there would be no effect on spawning, incubation, rearing or migration of any fish. Salmonid production and survival would be maintained.

*Cumulative Effects:* Due to the limited duration, very small scale, and PDFs there are no cumulative effects anticipated with past or foreseeable future projects such as the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Plan. Additionally, given that Josephine County and the mining company currently have access across the bridge, there are no interrelated/interconnected activities leading to effects to fish or fish habitat.

## **3.4 Wildlife**

### **3.4.1 Affected Environment**

The project area contains habitat for two state listed sensitive amphibian species, the foothill yellow-legged frog and the tailed frog. Surveys have not been done. These species are adversely affected by high water temperatures and excessive sedimentation. They require a clean, silt free, gravelly substrate. There are no known species listed under the Endangered Species Act or special status invertebrate species in the project area.

### **3.4.2 Environmental Effects**

#### ***Alternative 1: No Action***

Without bridge replacement and construction of concrete piers, bridge and fill slopes would eventually fail completely, allowing all erodable fill to fall into the channel or be washed in during storms. Depending on the magnitude of the slope failure and movement of material into the channel, amphibian spawning and rearing habitat immediately downstream of the bridge would be degraded.

The effect would be temporary, depending on the magnitude of flows during failure. The effect could last hours or up to a year. The sediment would potentially degrade habitat and harm

foothill yellow-legged frogs or tailed frogs, as well as their eggs if they were present at the time of the slope failure.

### ***Alternative 2: Proposed Action***

During construction, there may be short term increases in suspended sediments in the streams, possibly causing short term effects to special status or other amphibian species. Although fine sediment could enter the channel as a result of the work during construction, it would not be expected to affect viability of amphibian populations or alter habitat due to the small amounts of sediment involved and the short duration of the bridge construction.

Frogs could be hurt or killed during the equipment stream crossing. This could harm individuals but would not affect populations or species viability. A long term benefit would be improved stabilization of the banks and bridge structure, reduced long term sedimentation from the currently degraded structure, and reduced risk of bank fill failure and subsequent sedimentation, all of which would result in reduced sediment to frog habitat.

The proposed action would provide improved access to BLM lands in the West Fork Illinois project area. This bridge construction will not result in any impacts in the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Project (LMP) area that have not already been analyzed in the West Fork Illinois LMP EA, its Addendum, and Erratum.

## **3.5 Recreation, Cultural Resources and Visual Resources**

### **3.5.1 Affected Environment**

The project would prevent access during construction. The project area road is used for local access by landowners and those with permission to cross private land. Therefore, there would be no effect to recreation. The project site is in Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class 3. VRM Class 3 objectives are to manage for moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. There are no known cultural sites in the project area based on previous disturbance and no recorded cultural sites within one mile of the bridge site.

### **3.5.2 Environmental Consequences**

#### ***Alternative 1 -No Action***

Access would remain the same. There is no public access south of a gate located on BLM land north of the project area. The visual landscape would remain unchanged.

#### ***Alternative 2 - Proposed Action***

During construction a short term inconvenience to a local resident may occur due to temporary road closures during project implementation. Due to a gate which blocks public access, recreational use of the area, including OHV use, is not expected to change.

The proposed action would be consistent with the objectives for VRM Class 3 lands due to the small scale of the project and its location along an existing road.

Since there are no direct or indirect effects expected, cumulative effects to visual resources or recreation are not expected when this project is considered in conjunction with past or

foreseeable future actions such as the West Fork Illinois LMP.

## **4.0 Agencies and Persons Consulted**

### **4.1 Public Involvement**

Public involvement began in February 2006 with a scoping letter sent to approximately 40 neighboring landowners, federal, state, and county agencies, tribal governments, and private organizations and individuals that have requested information concerning projects of this type. Discussions regarding this project were conducted with the Josephine County Public Works, Josephine County Department of Forestry and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Two letters were received in response to scoping. They both requested that BLM be sure to consider the cumulative effects of this bridge and its role in improving access to the West Fork Illinois Landscape Management Project. One letter requested that we consider decommissioning the road beyond the bridge and to also consider POC issues and potential increased OHV use. Decommissioning the road beyond the bridge was not a viable alternative since this would prevent access to both public and private lands

### **4.2 Availability of Document and Comment Procedures**

Copies of the EA will be available for public review at the Grants Pass Interagency Office (2164 NE Spaulding Ave., Grants Pass OR) or may be requested through Jim Roper (471-6631) or Mike Mathews (471-6565). A notice of the EA's availability will be sent to neighbors and known interested parties. A formal 15-day public comment period will be held following an announcement in the Grants Pass Daily Courier.

Written comments should be addressed to Abbie Jossie, Field Manager, Grants Pass Resource Area, at 2164 NE Spaulding Ave., Grants Pass OR 97526. Emailed comments may be sent to [medford\\_mail@or.blm.gov](mailto:medford_mail@or.blm.gov).

# West Fork Illinois Bridge Replacement Site Location Map

DIRECTIONS: From O'Brien, Oregon, SouthWest  
6.11 miles on FS 4402, South 0.87 miles on BLM  
Road #41-9-9.

