



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE  
3040 BIDDLE ROAD  
MEDFORD, OREGON 97504

## DECISION RECORD/RATIONALE/FONSI *White Fir Fuel Hazard Reduction* (EA # OR117-04-12)

### I. DECISION

The decision is to implement the proposed action for the White Fir Fuel Hazard Reduction as described in its environmental assessment (EA). Implementation of this decision will include all project design features as described in the EA.

### II. RATIONALE

This project will reduce fire hazard within close proximity to several residences in a rural interface area. Fuels will be reduced and altered so that if wildfire does occur, its rate of spread and extent will be reduced. Furthermore, fire suppression will be safer and access, easier. Finally, habitat diversity and condition will be improved for many species.

This action incorporates project design features that minimize potential short and long term adverse effects of the actions to be implemented. No adverse cumulative effects have been identified.

The No Action alternative was rejected because it does not meet the RMP's objective for reducing wildfire hazard in rural interface areas (RMP pp. 88-89).

Discussions with adjacent landowners and three letters received during scoping or the public comment period all expressed support for the project.

This decision is consistent with the *Medford District Resource Management Plan* (1995), the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (1994), the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2001), the *Record of Decision 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: Decision to Clarify Provisions Relating to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy* (2004); the *Record of Decision to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Document within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*. (2004), and the *Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan Amendment for White Fir Fuel Hazard Reduction Project – DR & FONSI*

*Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts* (May 2004). This decision is also consistent with the Endangered Species Act; the Native American Religious Freedom Act; other cultural resource management laws and regulations; Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice; and Executive Order 13212 regarding potential adverse impacts to energy development, production, supply and/or distribution.

This project is also consistent with and promotes the goals of the National Fire Plan by reducing fire hazard on public lands and within the rural interface area. The project also advances the Bureau of Land Management's Strategic Plan for FY2000-2005, specifically mission goals 1.4 (reduce threats to public health, safety and property) and 2.2 (restore at-risk resources and maintain functioning systems). This project implements BLM's Operating Plan 2004-2008, mission areas 1.1.10-12 and 4.1.10/11 by reducing fuels and improving condition class in high priority areas in the wildland-urban interface.

### III. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on information contained in the EA, the project's record, and on comments received from the public regarding the project, it is my determination that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment. During scoping and the public comment period, those who commented shared their preferences on how to implement the project or proposed additional objectives, but no new impacts were brought to light that would indicate a need for further analysis. This project does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This conclusion is also based on a consideration of both the context and intensity of the impacts of the selected action(s) (40 CFR § 1508.27). **Context** refers to analysis of environmental consequences at various social or geographic scales. For this project, impacts were assessed at both the site-specific and 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed scales. **Intensity** refers to the severity of impacts. Conclusions regarding intensity are supported by the following findings:

1) *Impacts can be both beneficial and adverse and a significant effect may exist regardless of the perceived balance of effects.* Both adverse and beneficial impacts will result from the project. Both have been considered in concluding that there will be no adverse impacts at the 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed scale and inconsequential impacts at the site-specific scale for the following issues (resources not mentioned are expected to have no impacts at any scale): erosion, sedimentation, noxious weed dispersal, air quality and wildlife disturbance.

2) *The degree of the impact on public health or safety.* No adverse effects to public health or safety have been identified. Reduced fuel hazard, especially near residences, greatly benefits public safety.

3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area.* The project is in matrix land and will not impact wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, ecologically critical areas or cultural or historical

features. The 120 acre project area is surrounded by private land and residences, making this site especially suitable for fuel hazard reduction.

4) *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.* There is no indication of any highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment.

5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are likely to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.* The type of fuel hazard reduction proposed is a common type of land treatment and the effects of this type of activity are well known.

6) *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.* The action is not precedent setting. Fuel hazard reduction is a typical activity.

7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.* There is no indication that the actions will appreciably contribute to any cumulative impacts at the site-specific or watershed scale.

8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect National Historic Register listed or eligible to be listed sites or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.* One historic site is in the area. However, the site will be buffered from any disturbance due to project implementation and thus will not be adversely impacted.

9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect ESA listed species or critical habitat.* No ESA listed species or ESA identified critical habitat have been found in the project area.

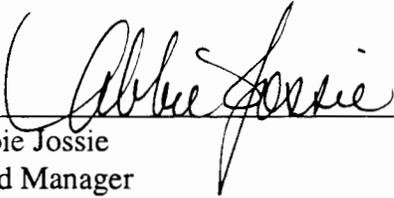
10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of environmental protection law or requirements.* There are no indications that the action will violate any environmental protection law or requirement.

#### **IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES**

Administrative remedies may be available to persons who believe that they will be adversely affected by this decision. Persons wishing to seek administrative recourse must do so in accordance with BLM regulations and the procedures and requirements of 43 CFR § 5003 - Administrative Remedies and 43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 4, Subpart E, both as modified by the Federal Register Notice on June 5, 2003 (Vol. 68, No. 108).

This wildfire management decision is issued under 43 CFR Part 5003.1 and will be effective immediately following the completion of a 15 day public review period. The BLM has made the determination that vegetation, soil, or other resources on the public lands are at substantial risk of wildfire due to drought, fuels accumulation, or other reasons, or are at immediate risk of erosion

or other damage due to wildfire. The BLM has determined that the hazardous fuel buildup in the project area and the consequent substantial risk of wildfire to nearby residents call for expeditious implementation of this decision to facilitate the preparation of hazardous fuel reduction work (43 CFR § 5003.1(b)). Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. The Interior Board of Land Appeals will, however, decide an appeal within 60 days after all pleadings have been filed, and within 180 days after the appeal is filed (43 CFR § 4.416). Any contest of this decision should state specifically which portion or element of the decision is being protested and cite the applicable CFR regulations.



Abbie Jossie  
Field Manager  
Grants Pass Resource Area  
Medford District, Bureau of Land Management

4-1-05

Date