

Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)

Little Wolf Thrice Density Management Study

Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District
EA# 104 – 08 – 07

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Swiftwater Field Office proposes a density management of approximately 20 acres of late-seral forest stands, 70-80 years old.

The proposed Little Wolf Density Management Study (DMS) is located in the Upper Umpqua fifth-field watershed within Late-successional Reserve (20 acres) yielding approximately 112,000 board feet (112 MBF) of timber in support of local and regional manufacturers and economies. The proposed unit is located in the Upper Umpqua fifth-field watershed in Sections 3 and 10; T. 25 S., R. 08 W.; Willamette Meridian.

Test for Significant Impacts.

1. Has significant impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (1))?

Yes No

Remarks: Any impacts would be consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District's 1995 Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP, 1995).

2. Has significant adverse impacts on public health or safety (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (2))?

Yes No

Remarks: The additional amount of down woody debris (i.e. four tons per acre) would not dramatically increase the fire risk to the area. The primary carrier of fires is the fine fuels of less than three inches in diameter. These fine fuels generated in the harvest process would mostly degrade within two years after harvest. (*Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA*, pg. 27).

Treatment of logging slash by machine piling and burning at the landings has the potential to affect air quality locally. Burning will be accomplished under guidelines established by the Oregon Smoke Management Plan. Adhering to the guidance of the Oregon Smoke Management Plan minimizes smoke impacts from prescribed fires on local communities and directs smoke away from Smoke Sensitive Receptor Areas (2008 FEIS, pg. 813). Any impacts to local air quality will be localized and of short duration, consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the 2008 FEIS (pgs. 813-816).

3. Adversely effects such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (3))?

Yes No

Remarks: Unique geographic characteristics (such as those listed above) are absent from the project area and would not be affected.

4. Has highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (4))?

Yes No

Remarks: The BLM conducts density management of forested stands regularly across western Oregon. There is also a wide body of literature describing the environmental effects of such forest management activity. No effects are expected to be highly controversial. This project is expected to increase this body of knowledge. This is the second phase and the third entry into the Little Wolf study area and the public was afforded several opportunities to comment on the current proposal. None of the comments received indicated controversy over the nature of the effects on the human environment.

5. Has highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks to the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (5))?

Yes No

Remarks: The risks to the human environment from the project were analyzed in the Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA and found not to be highly uncertain or unique.

6. Establishes a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (6))?

Yes No

Remarks: The advertisement, auction, and award of a timber sale contract allowing the harvest of trees is a well-established practice and would not establish a precedent for future actions.

7. Is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (7))?

Yes No

Remarks: The impacts to forest vegetation (pgs. 17-22, 41-42), wildlife (pgs. 23-31), fire and fuels management (pg. 31-32), soils (pgs. 33-36), hydrology (pgs. 36--39), fish populations and habitat (pgs. 39-41) were analyzed in the *Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA* and found not to be significant.

8. Has adverse effects on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (8))?

Yes No

Remarks: The BLM has completed Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols (*Little Wolf Thrice DMSEA*, pg. 43). No cultural resources were discovered (*Little Wolf Thrice Density Management EA*, pg. 12). It has been determined that there will be no effect to cultural or historical resources (*Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA*, pg. 43).

9. May adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (9))?

Botanical Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Fish Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Wildlife Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Remarks: Surveys did not identify the presence of any federally threatened or endangered botanical species; therefore the proposed action would have no effect on listed botanical species (*Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA*, pg. 54-58).

Little Wolf Thrice DMS would have no effect on the Oregon Coast coho or its critical habitat. The closest Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho or Chinook salmon is approximately 0.1 miles downstream from the project and would not be adversely affected by the project (*Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA*, pg. 41).

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the proposed density management described in the *Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA* regarding the northern spotted owl and its critical habitat.

A Biological Opinion was received from the USFWS (*Roseburg District BLM Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Program of Activities* [Tails#: 13420-2009-F-0109]) dated June 9, 2009. The biological opinion stated that density management may occur within spotted owl . . . Critical Habitat; Late-Successional and Riparian Management Areas. (pgs. 8) and that density management of critical habitat (such as that proposed in the Little Wolf DMS) *may affect*, but is *not likely to adversely affect* designated spotted owl critical habitat. However, the USFWS concluded in their biological opinion (pg. 34, Ref. No. 13420-2009-F-0109) that the Roseburg District’s program of density management (which included the individual sales in the *Little Wolf Thrice DMS EA*) will be insignificant and not likely to adversely affect spotted owls because density management would not prevent spotted owls from utilizing the affected home range territories and no nest trees would be removed.

10. Threatens to violate Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (10))?

Yes No

Remarks: The measures described above ensure that Little Wolf Thrice Density Management would be consistent with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws. The impacts of the silvicultural treatment on the human environment would not exceed those anticipated by the 2008 FEIS.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the President’s National Energy Policy. A high-voltage transmission line and a natural gas pipeline are adjacent to or within the Little Wolf Thrice Density Management project area but there are no known energy resources with commercial potential within the project area. Trees would be felled away from the transmission lines, and ground-based equipment would not be allowed to operate within the transmission line and pipeline corridor, except on designated skid trails and roads (*Little Wolf Thrice Density Management EA*, pg. 13). There would be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that Little Wolf Thrice Density Management would not have a significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969,

and that an environmental impact statement is not required. I have determined that the effects of the silvicultural treatment would be within those anticipated and already analyzed in the *2008 Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Revision of the Resource Management Plan of the Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management* (2008 Final EIS) and will be in conformance with the 1995 *Roseburg District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (1995 ROD/RMP (1995 ROD/RMP) for the Roseburg District, approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior on June 1995.

Max Yager
Field Manager
Swiftwater Field Office

Date