Plan Maintenance for fiscal year 2012

Rural Interface Areas

It is necessary to clarify a discrepancy in the definition of rural urban interface lands. The **Glossary** (pg. 111) of the ROD/RMP defined rural interface areas as privately owned lands zoned for 1 to 20-acre lots or that already have residential development. This is inconsistent with the definition provided in management direction from the ROD/RMP (pg. 54) which is predominant and specifies special management of BLM-administered lands within ¼-mile of private lands zoned for 1-5 acre lots.

Regeneration Harvest

It is necessary to clarify the difference between regeneration, as it pertains to the establishment of trees naturally or artificially, and regeneration harvest, a silvicultural prescription in which a single residual density is created post-harvest.

Regeneration harvest, as described in the Roseburg District *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP) is a silvicultural prescription that applies a single residual tree density across all harvest unit acres. Its application is limited to the matrix allocations and the Little River Adaptive Management Area. In the General Forest Management Area the residual tree density at the time of regeneration harvest is defined as six to eight large conifers per acre (ROD/RMP pg. 64). In Connectivity/Diversity Blocks the residual tree density at the time of regeneration harvest is defined as 12 to 18 large conifers per acre (ROD/RMP pg. 65). In the Little River Adaptive Management Area management direction for regeneration will apply the standards and guidelines for matrix management (ROD/RMP pg. 154).

Revised Policy for the Management of Marbled Murrelet Nesting Structure within Younger Stands

The existing policy regarding "*Management of Potential Marbled Murrelet Nesting Structure in Thinning Stands*" (dated August 4, 2004) which was included in plan maintenance fiscal year 2004 was revised and updated by the Roseburg District and Coos Bay District Level 2 Teams in July 2012.

The prospect of updating and revising the existing 2004 policy was initially raised to the Roseburg Level 1 Team on December 12, 2011. The Roseburg Level 1 Team discussed the proposed update at its scheduled meetings during Winter/Spring 2012 (i.e. January 13, 2012; February 27, 2012; March 26, 2012; and April 30, 2012). In April 2012, the Roseburg Level 1 Team and the Coos Bay Level 1 Team discussed jointly updating the existing policy. The collaboration between the Roseburg and Coos Bay Level 1 Teams resulted in the updated "*Revised Policy for the Management of Marbled Murrelet Nesting Structure within Younger Stands - Roseburg and Coos Bay BLM Districts*".

Updates to the policy for the *Management of Marbled Murrelet Nesting Structure within Younger Stands on the Roseburg and Coos Bay BLM Districts* focus on the characteristics that define potential nesting structure for marbled murrelets; specifically: elevation, species of nest tree, platform size, and platform height. These updates are summarized below.

I. Characteristics of Potential Structure

Any tree that does not meet all of the following characteristics is unlikely to support nesting marbled murrelets. However, not all of these characteristics are visible from the ground in all situations. Therefore, the unit wildlife biologist shall make site-specific determinations on the presence of potential structure based upon professional judgment.

A tree with potential structure has the following characteristics:

- It occurs within 50 miles (81 km) of the coast (USFWS, 1997; pg. 32);
- It is a conifer tree (USFWS, 1997; pg. 18);
- It is ≥ 19.1 inches (49 centimeters) (dbh) in diameter, > 107 feet (33 meters) in height, has at least one **platform** ≥ 4 inches (10 centimeters) in diameter, nesting substrate (e.g. moss, epiphytes, duff) on that platform, and an access route through the canopy that a marbled murrelet could use to approach and land on the platform (Burger 2002, Nelson & Wilson 2002:24, 27, 42, 97, 100);
- It has potential structure ≥ 32.5 feet (9.9 meters) above the ground;
- And it has a tree branch or foliage, either on the tree with potential structure or on a surrounding tree, that provides protective cover over the platform (Nelson & Wilson 2002:98 & 99).

Because marbled murrelets respond to the landscape-level availability of nesting habitat (Burger 1997, Burger 2002, Cooper *et al.* 2001 and Raphael *et al*. 2002), a tree with potential structure might providemarbled murrelet nesting habitat depending on where it occurs on the landscape.

Increasing distance from the ocean becomes a negative factor in marbled murrelet inland site selection after 12-20 miles (19.5 – 32.5 km) (Anderson 2003, Burger 2002, Humes 2003, U.S. BLM 2003, Willamette Industries 2003 and Wilson 2002).

Habitat with < 6 trees with potential structure within a 5-acre area, and located > 20 miles (32.5 km) inland, has a decreased likelihood of use by nestingmarbled murrelets (Anderson 2003, Humes 2003, U.S. BLM 2003, Willamette Industries 2003 and Wilson 2002).

This policy/plan maintenance allows thinning operations without protocol surveys when effects from proposed actions are discountable, insignificant or entirely beneficial so they would not adversely affect marbled murrelets.

This plan maintenance clarifies and refines ROD/RMP requirements that were intended to protect marbled murrelet nesting habitat from habitat modifications but were not intended to prohibit or discourage habitat modifications that would benefit marbled murrelet conservation. Logic presented by the Level 1 Teams clearly indicates that this plan maintenance would have a discountable, insignificant, or entirely beneficial effect on marbled murrelets. This action encourages the enhancement of habitat immediately surrounding potential nesting structure.

Management direction for marbled murrelet is found on page 48 of the Roseburg District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. Plan maintenance is appropriate for this action as it clarifies the intention of current ROD/RMP requirements for the marbled murrelet and the biological information provided by the Level 1 Team indicates that this refinement of requirements will not result in an expansion of the scope of resource uses or restrictions.