

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
SALEM DISTRICT OFFICE  
TILLAMOOK RESOURCE AREA  
YAMHILL COUNTY, OREGON

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

### A. Background

**Project:** Willamina Roadside Salvage      **Date:** 8/12/2009

**Categorical Exclusion Number:** DOI-BLM-OR-S060-2009-0010-CX

**Location:** BLM Roads 4-7-24 and 4-7-36 in T. 4 S., R. 7W, sections 24, 25, 26 and 35

**Land Use Allocation(s):** Adaptive Management Area and Riparian Reserve

### B. Description of Proposed Action

The proposed action is to salvage harvest approximately 50 conifer trees that were blown down during winter storms in 2008 and 2009. The project area is along approximately 3.5 miles of BLM roads 4-7-24 (Homestead Rd.) and 4-7-36 (Willamina Cr. Rd.) in T.4S, R.7W, sections 24, 25, 26 and 35, about seven miles north of Willamina, Oregon. The trees to be salvaged are currently blocking these roads, and they will be bucked into commercial log lengths and decked alongside the roads as the roads are opened for travel. At that time the logs will be sold, loaded onto trucks and hauled to a local mill. Equipment will be restricted to existing roads. There will be no road construction or reconstruction associated with this proposed action, and no new ground disturbance will occur from selling, loading and hauling these logs. Harvest activities are expected to take one to two days to complete, and are expected to occur in August and September 2009.

This action is in conformance with the categorical exclusion defined under Department of Interior Manual 516 DM 11, 11.9 C (2), which allows for "Sale and removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute an safety hazard, and where access for the removal requires no more than maintenance to existing roads". This action is in conformance with the requirements of this categorical exclusion for the following reasons: (1) the trees are dead, and (2) no new roads will be constructed.

#### **Design Features:**

Timber Harvest

Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in the *Salem District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP) dated May 1995 would be implemented for the timber harvest operation.

#### Soil and Water Quality Protection

Harvest would take place during dry soil conditions.

Equipment would be restricted to existing roads.

#### Invasive and Nonnative Plants

Prior to entering the sale area, any heavy machinery (with the exception of log trucks and pick-up trucks used for daily personnel travel) would have all dirt and adhering vegetation removed by power-washing.

#### Wildlife

All work which would generate noise above the ambient noise level and conducted between April 1 and September 15 would be restricted to the daily time period of two hours after sunrise until two hours before sunset.

### **C. Land Use Plan Conformance**

The proposed action is in conformance with the *Salem District Record of Decision and Resource & Management Plan* (ROD/RMP), dated May 1995, because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

- *Provide a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products* (ROD/RMP page 46).
- *Provide for salvage harvest of timber killed or damaged by events such as wildfire, windstorms, insects, or disease, consistent with management objectives for other resources* (ROD/RMP page 46).

### **D. Compliance with NEPA**

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11, 11.9, **C (2)**, which allows for “**Sale and removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute an safety hazard, and where access for the removal requires no more than maintenance to existing roads**”.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment as documented

in the following table. The proposed action is reviewed below, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

<b>THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Rationale:</b> All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed salvage harvest is in a remote, forested location outside of population centers.		
<b>2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Rationale:</b> Trees to be harvested are currently laying on and across rocked road. They will be decked alongside existing rocked roads as the roads are opened, and prior to being sold and hauled to a mill. The trees are outside of unique areas such as those discussed above. No tree felling will occur in parks, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands. Salvage logging approximately 50 down trees would not change the overall habitat function of the adjacent stands or remove habitat at the species level; as such, the proposed action would not have significant impacts on migratory birds.		
<b>2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Rationale:</b> Based on past experience, environmental effects of salvage logging a small number of trees are not highly controversial. The ROD/RMP establishes the land use allocation and goals for the affected lands; as such, there are no unresolved conflicts regarding other uses of these resources.		
<b>2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Rationale:</b> Past experience from this type of activity has shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks.		
<b>2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Rationale:</b> The BLM has conducted salvage logging throughout the Salem District for years. There is no evidence that logging a small number of down trees has potentially significant environmental effects. Salvage logging is addressed and authorized under the Salem ROD/RMP, and as such this project represents the implementation of that land use plan decision, not a decision in principle about future actions.		
<b>2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</b>		<b>X</b>

<b>THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> The proposed project has no direct relationship to other current or planned projects in the watershed. Salvage logging will not affect the existing forest canopy in the project area, it will not alter the forest age class distribution of BLM lands in the watershed, nor will it affect stream flows in the watershed by creating extensive openings in the forest canopy. Loading and hauling logs during the dry season and using rocked and paved roads for log haul will essentially eliminate the potential for sediment transport from roads.</p>		
<p><b>2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.</b></p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Surveys conducted by the BLM have not identified any cultural or historical resources that would be affected by the proposed salvage project.</p>		
<p><b>2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</b></p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> The proposed loading and hauling of logs will all occur on paved or gravel-surfaced roads. There will be no effects to water quality or fish habitat from the harvest or log haul activities. The proposed action will have no effect on Upper Willamette Steelhead the ESA listed species in the proximity of this action. Upper Willamette Chinook are listed within this watershed; however their maximum distribution is over 12 miles downstream. There is no designated critical habitat in the Willamina Creek Watershed.</p> <p>Although the project is not expected to be implemented during the spotted owl breeding period, there is potential for disturbance impacts to spotted owls as a result of activities that generate noise above the ambient level if the project should be implemented during the breeding season (March 1 - September 30) as unsurveyed suitable habitat is within 0.25 miles of trees to be harvested. Given the pre-salvage functionality of the habitat within the treatment area (<i>i.e.</i>, most of the trees are lying on the ground), and the requirements for the maintenance of coarse woody debris in sufficient quantities to comply with the Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP), it is unlikely that down salvage would result in adverse affects to northern spotted owls during the near term or in the future. Consequently, the proposed action <i>may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect</i>, northern spotted owls. Based on the nature of the proposed action and the habitats to be affected, no impacts to the marbled murrelet would be anticipated. Consultation with US Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed. Compliance with the Endangered Species Act includes the incorporation of applicable Design Standards and/or Terms and Conditions, as necessary.</p>		
<p><b>2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</b></p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal, State, local and tribal laws.</p>		
<p><b>2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).</b></p>		<b>X</b>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> No potential impacts have been identified by the BLM internally or through public involvement indicating that salvage logging would have an impact on low income or minority populations in Yamhill County.</p>		

<b>THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rationale:</b> There are no identified sacred sites in the project area.		
<b>2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed action requires that logging equipment be washed to remove dirt and vegetative material before entering the project area. This will reduce the risk of introducing or spreading and noxious weeds or non-native species in the project area. The proposed action does not introduce any vector for spread or introduction beyond such vectors already found.		

**E. Interdisciplinary Team Review:**

<b>Affected Resource</b>	<b>Specialist</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Date</b>
Botany	Kurt Heckeroth	<i>KH</i>	8/12/2009
Recreation	Debra Drake	<i>DD</i>	8/12/2009
Fisheries	Matt Walker	<i>MJW</i>	8/12/2009
Hydrology, Water Quality	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	8/12/2009
Soils	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	8/12/2009
Other Resources/ NEPA	Bob McDonald	<i>RM</i>	8/12/2009
Wildlife	Steve Bahe	<i>SB</i>	8/12/2009

**F. Signature**

Authorized Official: /s/ Brad Keller

Date: 8/14/09

Brad Keller, Field Manager  
 Tillamook Resource Area  
 Salem District

**G. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX Review, contact Bob McDonald, NEPA Coordinator, Tillamook Resource Area, 4610 Third Street, Tillamook, OR 97141, (503) 815-1110.

## **H. Administrative Remedy**

Notice of the forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the Salem District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR section 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.

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**DECISION RECORD**

It is my decision to implement this action as described in the Categorical Exclusion documentation DOI-BLM-OR-S060-2009-0010-CX.

Based upon the Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the proposed action, salvage harvest of approximately 50 trees, involves no significant impacts to the human environment and requires no further environmental analysis.

On July 16, 2009 the U.S. Department of the Interior, withdrew the Records of Decision (2008 ROD) for the Western Oregon Plan Revision and directed the BLM to implement actions in conformance with the Resource Management Plans for western Oregon that were in place prior to December 30, 2008.

Although project planning and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act documentation for this project began after the effective date of the 2008 ROD, this project was designed to comply with the land use allocations, management direction, and objectives of the 1995 Salem District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (1995 ROD/RMP).

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the standards and guidelines of the 1995 ROD/RMP (as amended).

Notice of this forest management decision will be posted on the Salem District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR section 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.

/s/ Brad Keller

Brad Keller  
Field Manager  
Tillamook Resource Area

8/14/09

Date