

Proposed Action Title/Type: Edson Creek Channel Restoration and Habitat Improvement Project

Location of Proposed Action: Edson Creek Recreation Site, T.32 S., R. 14 W., Section 6

Conformance With Applicable Land Use Plan: This proposed action is subject to the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement* and its Record of Decision (BLM, 1995); which is in conformance with the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its Record of Decision (Interagency, 1994). This plan has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms with the land use plan's terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1601.5.

Remarks: The Proposed Action is in compliance with the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement* and its Record of Decision (BLM, 1995) (RMP); hereby incorporated by reference. The RMP has been determined to be consistent with the standards and guidelines for healthy lands at the land use plan scale and associated timelines.

Need for Proposed Action:

The intent of the proposed action is to meet ACS objectives by restoring the spatial and temporal connectivity between Edson Creek and its adjoining floodplain, and restore habitat to support populations of anadromous fish. The rip rap dike was placed before the acquisition of the property by BLM to protect the area now serving as the main campground from flooding and erosion. The November 18, 1996 flood, high waters again on January 1-2, 1997, and during the winter of 1998-1999 resulted in lateral stream migration, bank cutting and loss of flood plain and riparian vegetation on Edson Creek above the dike. A subsequent project was initiated to restore bank stability by adding in-stream structures to dissipate flows and relieve the stress upon the banks with the use of bioengineering techniques and natural vegetation. The stabilizing structures were implemented upstream of the dike with good success. Due to the up-stream protection of these structures, the dike is no longer necessary, and presently excludes a remnant channel area that could serve as additional floodplain or habitat for fish. Edson Creek is considered critical habitat for Oregon Coast Coho salmon populations. The additional side channel habitat for fish would provide cover in slow deep pools where rest could be available. Edson Creek Recreational Area is a popular campground for the local public and provides some of the strongest returns of salmon in the Sixes Watershed.

Description of Proposed Action:

In 1999, rock and log vanes were placed along an outside bend of Edson Creek upstream of the proposed project area for erosion control. The proposed project is to return downstream of a previous bank stabilization project to address restoring floodplain function and off channel habitat downstream of the stabilized reach by removing a rip rap dike. The action requires removing a portion of the dike to allow flows greater than bankfull, to reach a remnant channel downstream of the structure. The material removed would be placed upstream of the dike along the channel for additional bank protection and as randomly placed boulders for in-stream habitat. The additional flows to this seasonally saturated area will add to channel complexity, provide in-stream and overhead cover, shade, detritus, and terrestrial insect habitat. In addition, side channel connectivity will be made accessible by removing a portion of a dike on the upstream inlet and cleaning the downstream outlet where it would re-join with the Edson Creek to protect fish from being stranded, but allow for the maintenance of sediment.

Environmental Impacts to Critical Elements of the Human Environment:

Critical Elements	Affected		Critical Elements	Affected	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Air Quality	—	<u>X</u>	T & E Species	<u>X</u>	—
ACECs	—	<u>X</u>	Wastes, Hazardous/Solid	—	<u>X</u>
Cultural Resources	—	<u>X</u>	Water Quality	<u>X</u>	—
Farmlands, Prime/Unique	—	<u>X</u>	Wetlands/Riparian Zones/ACS	<u>X</u>	—
Floodplains	<u>X</u>	—	Wild & Scenic Rivers	—	<u>X</u>
Unresolved conflicts	—	<u>X</u>	Wilderness	—	<u>X</u>
Noxious Weed Management	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	Port Orford Cedar Management	—	<u>X</u>
Environmental Justice Concerns	—	<u>X</u>	Energy production, transmission	—	<u>X</u>
Native American religious concerns and/or Indian trust resources	—	<u>X</u>			

Description of Impacts to Specific Elements of the Human Environment:

The project is not applicable to the following resources as it is located in-stream and requires no access roads or vegetation disturbances for implementation: Port Orford Cedar Management, Botany - including T&E and S &M, or S&M Mollusks.

Hydrology:

The proposed action is designed to provide additional floodplain connectivity to Edson Creek by allowing stream flows above bankfull elevation to reach an abandoned channel blocked by the construction of the rip rap dike. The additional floodplain would restore an element important to the drainage network for providing structural diversity, patterns of sediment and riparian plant communities, as well as, restoring habitat for a variety of aquatic species.

There may be some short term negative impacts to water quality as a result of construction and disturbance to streambanks that should diminish soon after the first few precipitation events. The access point would use the existing campground roads on stable, low gradient ground resistant to disturbance. The design of the project is to reduce long term impacts to these elements and be beneficial to floodplain conditions, water quality, and the riparian ecosystem of Edson Creek. All work would take place during the low flow periods of Edson Creek and any short term turbidity as a result of construction is not expected to exceed the range of natural variability.

Wildlife, Including T & E and S&M:

There is a small risk that this proposal will cause the premature death of Red Alder close to the campground. If this occurs, snags will result and a variety of wildlife will be likely to use these structures (currently there is a deficiency of snag habitat in part because of the hazard tree management of the past decade or more). Since, this stand is in close proximity to the campground, any snags that are created, will be eliminated because they are considered to be hazard structures.

Placing structures into the stream will affect wildlife, which occurs in the stream. Species of wildlife which may be affected include beaver, muskrat, dippers, a variety of waterfowl and members of the weasel family. In some cases, there is likely to be positive affects, and in other situations, there will be minor adverse affects.

No threatened or endangered, or special status wildlife species are likely to be adversely affected by this proposal.

Aquatic Habitat/Fisheries Including T & E:

The proposed action is not expected to impact aquatic habitat or fish species. The proposed action would include removing rock from an existing dike with heavy machinery. Equipment would be located outside the stream channel on the existing dike. Rock removed from the dike would be placed upstream, adjacent to the stream channel within the bankfull width, but outside the wetted width. Because the proposed action will not occur within the stream channel, turbidity created from the action would be minimal or non-existent. Restoring access to the existing side channel is expected to increase habitat availability for juvenile salmonids, which use these areas for rearing habitat and refugia during high winter flows.

Threatened or endangered fish species are not likely to be adversely affected by the proposed action.

Noxious Weed Management:

The proposed action is not expected to have any impact on the spread noxious weeds or increase the risk to invasive plant species becoming epidemic in nature if design recommendations are followed.

Cultural Resources:

It is not expected that cultural resources will be affected by the Proposed Action. However, if cultural resources are observed during project activities, work must stop and the District Archeologist must be notified.

Recreation:

This action will result in flushing out a stagnant pool that is now located behind the old dike. It should help to reduce the level of mosquitos in the campground. As long as breaching does not result in further erosion of the campground, it should have a positive effect on recreation. Removal of this stagnant pool will also improve the appearance of the riparian zone within the campground.

Hazardous Materials / Solid Wastes:

Any in-stream or streamside work involving heavy equipment is subject to State and Federal Law governing petroleum spill prevention and cleanup including; Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 340, Division 108, Oil and Hazardous Materials Spills and Releases (DEQ), and OAR 629-57-3600, Petroleum Product Precautions, and Oregon Forest Practices. Contractors should be made aware of the BLM Coos Bay District Spill Plan in effect for riparian operations, and it should be followed in the event of any release of petroleum or hazardous materials.

Description of Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts:

1. The work would be accomplished during the ODFW In-stream work period, July 1 – September 15.
2. Equipment would access the work area through the campground. Heavy equipment would be located outside the stream channel.
3. Standard stipulations for weed seed control would be written into the contract, requesting incoming equipment to be washed prior to arriving on site.
4. All exposed or disturbed areas within 150 of the stream channel will be stabilized with native seeding within seven days of exposure.
5. Work occurring between April 1 and September 15 would start no earlier than 2 hours after sunrise, and no later than 2 hours before sunset.
6. Follow all applicable permit guidelines (DEQ, DSL, COE).
7. All work would cease and the District Archaeologist would be contacted if any cultural resources are observed during the activity.
8. Any in-stream or streamside work involving heavy equipment is subject to State and Federal Law governing petroleum spill prevention and cleanup including; Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 340, Division 108, Oil and Hazardous Materials Spills and Releases (DEQ), and OAR 629-57-3600, Petroleum Product Precautions, and Oregon Forest Practices.
9. Contractors should be made aware of the BLM Coos Bay District Spill Plan in effect for riparian operations, and it should be followed in the event of any release of petroleum or hazardous materials.

Persons/Agencies Consulted:

National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Division of State Lands
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Preparer(s) / Reviewers:

Matthew Azhocar
Steve Langenstein
Nikki Moore
Tim Rodenkirk
Reg Pullen
Todd Hicks
Jim Kowalick
Bob Raper
Steve Samuels
Dale Stewart
Dan Carpenter
Tim Votaw
Craig Beyer

Myrtlewood Resource Area Hydrologist
Myrtlewood Resource Area Wildlife Biologist
Myrtlewood Resource Area Fisheries Biologist
Myrtlewood Resource Area Botanist
Myrtlewood Resource Area Recreation Specialist
Engineer
Port Orford Cedar
Noxious Weeds
Coos Bay District Archaeologist
Coos Bay District Soil Scientist
Coos Bay District Hydrologist
Coos Bay District HazMat Specialist
Coos Bay District Safety Specialist

Date: April 8, 2003

