

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
for
Sagaberd Complex Environmental Assessment
OR125-97-18

An Interdisciplinary Team for the Sagaberd Complex EA within the Umpqua Resource Area, Coos Bay District, Bureau of Land Management has analyzed two action alternatives and a no action alternative. Alternative II would harvest approximately 260 acres of General Forest Management Area (GFMA) in T. 22 S., R. 09 W., Section 21, 22, 27, 27, & 35, Willamette Meridian. Alternative III would harvest 260 acres in the GFMA lands and conduct density management on 66 acres of Riparian Reserve and commercially thin 13 acres of within the GFMA. The Sagaberd Complex is located in the Lower Umpqua Frontal Watershed Analysis Unit (WAU) with a small portion, (10 acres) within the Mill Creek WAU. A watershed analysis has been prepared for both watersheds. The Sagaberd Complex, and the resulting timber sales, are in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines of the Record of Decision (ROD) for 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* (Northwest Forest Plan). Green trees, snags, and down logs would be retained for biodiversity to meet or exceed the requirements in the Northwest Forest Plan. The proposal would provide employment in the forest industry sector of the economy and supply society with wood products.

This EA is tiered to the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan* and its *Record of Decision* (RMP) (BLM, May, 1995) which conforms with the Northwest Forest Plan and its *Record of Decision* (Interagency, 1994).

The Alternatives, with their design features, are described in the attached EA.

Surveys for marbled murrelets were completed in 1995 and 1996. The proposed project has been reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the consultation process provided under section 7(A)(4) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1563 (a)(2) and (a)(4) as amended]. Consultation (document # 1-7-96-f-411) resulted in a finding of “may affect , likely to adversely affect,” the marbled murrelets. This is based on removal of habitat, not on occupancy. An incidental take was granted in a letter dated August 28, 1996. The Service has determines that this level of anticipated take is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of marbled murrelets.

Project level conferencing on BLM management actions affecting coho salmon and Oregon coast steelhead trout was included in the August 1997 District Biological Assessment submission to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Consultation with NMFS concluded that the action proposed in the Sagaberd EA is a “may affect, likely to adversely affect” for the Umpqua cutthroat; that conclusion is based on disturbance history within the watershed. The aquatic resources would be protected with riparian reserves at the interim widths recommended in the ROD, and the protection of the riparian reserves would allow natural in-stream functions to occur. An incidental take was granted in a letter dated October 1, 1997.

The analysis of the effects was based on research, professional judgement, and experience of the Interdisciplinary Team. There are no adverse effects on (1) Threatened or Endangered Species, (2) Flood plains or Wetlands/Riparian zones, (3) Wilderness Values, (4) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, (5) Cultural Resources, (6) Prime or Unique Farmland, (7) Wild and Scenic Rivers, (8) Air Quality, (9) Native American Religious Concerns, (10) Hazardous or Solid Waste, (11) Water Quality, (12) Sensitive Plants, (13) Survey and Manage Species, and (14) Noxious Weed Spread.

DETERMINATION

On the basis of information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitutes a major Federal action affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

/s/ Mark A. Buckbee
Mark A. Buckbee
Umpqua Resource Area Manager

January 26, 1998
Date

**Proposed
DECISION DOCUMENTATION
for**

**Sagaberd Complex Environmental Assessment
OR125-97-15**

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Sagaberd Complex were prepared by the Umpqua Resource Area, Coos Bay District Office, using input from District and Resource staff and public comment. Alternative I is the No Action alternative. Alternative II proposes a regeneration harvest on approximately 260 acres of timber. Alternative III proposes a regeneration harvest on approximately 260 acres of General Forest Management Area, a density management on 66 acres within the Riparian Reserves, and to commercially thin about 13 acres within the GFMA thus providing forest products while maintaining biodiversity on the site for future forest health. The Sagaberd Complex is located in T. 22 S., R. 08 W., Sections, 21, 22, 27, 28, & 35, Willamette Meridian. Details of the EA are available for public review at the Coos Bay District Office.

Management objectives are to:

- Offer economic opportunities for year-round, high-wage, high-skill jobs by producing a predictable and sustainable level of timber harvest;
- Partially fulfill the Umpqua Resource Area's harvest commitment for the Coos Bay District from GFMA lands for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998;
- Maintain or improve habitat within the forest ecosystem to support populations of native species;
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity and long-term health of the forest ecosystem through compliance with the Record of Decision for the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (RMP) which is tiered to the Northwest Forest Plan.

Decision:

My decision is to implement Alternative III as described in EA OR125-97-18.

In accordance with the *Forest Management Regulations* at CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective or be opened to formal protest until a *Notice of Sale* is published "in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located." For this project, the *Notice of Sale* will be published in *The World* newspaper and constitutes the decision document for purposes of protests, 43 CFR Subpart 5003 - Administrative Remedies. Protests of the decision to offer timber for sale described here must be filed within 15 days after the first publication of the newspaper notice.

Approximately 14 MMBF of timber harvested from the Sagaberd Complex would be offered as an advertised sale as part of the Coos Bay District's harvest commitment from the General Forest Management Area in FY 1998 and 1999. The sale units would be regenerated by planting conifer seedlings following site preparation. The Design Features such as road improvement, logging method, snag and down log retention, described in the EA are hereby adopted.

The design features and management requirements will be implemented as described in the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan/EIS* and its *Record of Decision (RMP)* (BLM, May 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)*.

Rationale:

The proposed action meets the intent of the *Record of Decision* for the RMP by providing a balance of forest products and maintains and enhances biodiversity for the future health of the forest. A watershed analysis has been completed for both affected subwatersheds and regeneration harvest is limited to the GFMA land allocation. The project meets the objectives of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy as listed on page 6-7 of the RMP.

The Coos Bay District consulted with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the Northern Spotted Owl and the Marbled Murrelet as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. It is the biological opinion of the Service that the proposed forest management activities are not expected to jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl or murrelet.

Project level consultation/conferencing on BLM management actions affecting the Endangered Umpqua Basin cutthroat trout, the coho salmon and Oregon coast steelhead trout was included in the August 1997 District Biological Assessment submission to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). A Biological Opinion from NMFS was received on October 1, 1997, and concluded that the proposed action will not jeopardize the continued existence T&E fish species. An incidental take was granted in a letter dated October 1, 1997.

This sale has also been surveyed for special status and protection buffer species botanical species. No populations of special status species, threatened or endangered species of wildlife or fish , as defined by the Endangered species Act of 1973, as amended, were found in the project area.

Mark Buckbee
Umpqua Area Manager

Date