



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

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1792
EA OR125-99-05

Decision Documentation For Shotgun Density Management EA OR125-99-05

Background:

The Umpqua Resource Area, Coos Bay District Bureau of Land Management, using input from District resource staff and the public, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Tioga Creek Subwatershed Density Management project. Alternative 1 is the No Action Alternative and Alternative 2 proposes to manage tree densities on about 2,536 acres, convert about 321 acres of alder, construct 3.5 miles of new road, renovate or improve 35 miles of road, decommission 16 miles of road, and do 2.25 miles of in-stream restoration. The project areas are located in Sections 17, 18, 19, 21, 31, 32, and 33 of T. 26 S., R. 9 W., Sections 13, 14, 23, 24 of T. 26 S., R. 10 W., Sections 4, 5, 6, 9, 17, 18, 20, and 21 of T. 27 S., R. 9 W and Sections 1, 13, and 14 of T. 27 S., R 10 W., Willamette Meridian.

Management objectives are to:

1. Implement recommendations and management priorities contained in the *South Coast - Northern Klamath Late-Successional Reserve Assessment* to: enlarge existing interior late-successional habitat blocks, improve habitat connections between Late-Successional Reserves, and maintain and improve connectivity habitat within Late-Successional Reserves.
2. Work toward the goals established by the Draft Western Oregon Districts Transportation Management Plan for the South Fork Coos and East Fork Coquille Watershed Analyses areas.
3. Re-establish the growth trajectory of over-stocked stands for the development of late-successional characteristics, while maintaining native species diversity.
4. Maintain and/or restore structural habitat complexity typically found in late-successional or old-growth forests, such as large green trees, large down logs, and large snags.
5. Ensure consistency with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.
6. Protect and/or restore rare and key habitats (wetlands, cliff habitats, talus habitats, grassy balds or meadows).

7. Provide cost effective management that enables implementation of these management objectives while providing collateral economic benefits to society.

Decision:

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action as it applies to Units 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4, 8, 12b, 13b, 14a, 14b, & 14c, now referred to as the Shotgun Density Management. The Proposed Action of EA OR125-99-05, which analyzed the environmental effects of the Tioga Creek Subwatershed Density Management and its Design Features described in the EA, hereby adopted.

The following EA estimates have been changed to reflect field verification:

Shotgun Density Management

<i>EA Unit Number</i>	<i>Shotgun DM Unit Number</i>	<i>Estimated Acres</i>	<i>Actual Acres</i>	<i>Estimated New Road Construction</i>	<i>Actual Road Construction</i>
8	1*	105	83	0.2	0.04
3a & 3b	2a & 2b	43	40	0.1	0
4	3	39	16	0	0
14a	4	30	19	0	0
24	5 & 6	116	67	0	0
14c (alder-fir stands)	7, 8 (17 acres), & 9c	100	66	0	0
14b	8(22 acres), 9b*, & 10	132	101	0.2	0.8
13b(alder-fir)	11	86	57	0	0
12b	12	48	22	0	0
2	13	8	6	0	0
1	14	16	12	0	0
Totals		723	489	0.5	0.84

* Unit 1 has about 10 acres of the stand with Port-Orford-cedar regeneration and unit 9b has about 5 acres of Port-Orford-cedar regeneration.

The Proposed Action, to manage the densities on 723 acres, has been reduced to 489, allowing some portion of the timber stands in the project area to develop on their own trajectory.

The Proposed Action, to construct 0.5 miles of road identified in the EA, has been increased to 0.84 miles and is within the scope of the Environmental Assessment.

The design features will be implemented as described in the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan* and its *Record of Decision* (RMP) (BLM, May 1995), as supplemented and amended, which conforms 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* (Northwest Forest Plan) and its *Record of Decision* (ROD) (Interagency, 1994) as supplemented and amended.

Actions within this density management will be consistent with the direction proposed in the Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan for Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts (USDI May 2004).

The proposed activities that may affect listed species within the project area were submitted for consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2) as amended]. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Biological Opinion (BO Ref. #1-15-04-F-0178) dated, May 7, 2004.

Based on analysis by the Field Office fisheries biologist, it has been concluded that the proposed actions will not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). There are no listed fish species within the project area and it is determined that the project will not affect the coho salmon, a species proposed for listing by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries. Therefore, consultation with the NOAA Fisheries is not warranted.

Rationale:

The Proposed Action is an alternative that meets the intent of the ROD for the Northwest Forest Plan restoring desired forest stand trajectories in the Late-Successional land use allocations. The projects are also consistent with the Riparian Reserve Standards and Guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan and the Aquatic Conservation Strategy, and will contribute to restoring the fifth-field watersheds of the project areas over the long-term. The proposed projects were intended to implement a subset of specific management opportunities identified in the South Fork Coos River Watershed Analysis (BLM 2000). The decision is consistent with the ROD for the *Northwest Forest Plan and the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement* and the *Record of Decision* as supplemented and amended.

Administrative Remedies:

In accordance with *Forest Management Regulations* at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective or be subject to formal protest until the *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 on July 29, 2004.

Decision recommended by:

Natural Resource Staff Administrator

Kathy Wall *Kathy Wall*

Date: 07/27/2004

Acting for Natural Resource Staff Administrator

Ralph Thomas *Linda Petterson*

Date: 07/27/2004

Decision approved by:

Acting for Umpqua Field Office Manager

M. Elaine Raper *Ralph Thomas*

Date: 07/28/2004