

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Klamath Falls Resource Area**

**Finding of No Significant Impact  
Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction  
EA OR 014-03-02**

**Background:**

The Interdisciplinary Team for the Klamath Falls Resource Area, Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and analyzed a proposal to reduce sediment delivery from roads to streams. The proposed project areas are located in four streams located in the vicinity of Gerber Reservoir (Ben Hall, Barnes Valley, Pitch Log, and Miller Creeks). The project will contribute to meeting the goals of improving water quality and implementing the Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan.

The proposed action is to reduce sediment production from roads by adding a layer of gravel to the existing cinder road surface. In addition, sediment delivery to streams will be reduced by installing cross-drain culverts that will re-route water flowing in roadside ditches away from streams. In one area (Ben Hall Creek) a short length of road that contributes large volumes of fine sediment to the stream will be obliterated.

The issues addressed in the EA concern potential impacts to fish habitat, water quality, and other resources as they affect aquatic life and humans in the proposed project area. The design features of the Proposed Action and alternatives are described in the attached Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction EA.

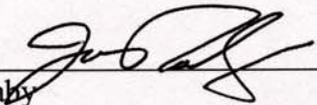
**Determination:**

The anticipated environmental effects contained in this EA are based on research, professional judgement, and experience of the Interdisciplinary (ID) team and Klamath Falls Resource Area staff. Based on the information within the Environmental Assessment, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitute a significant impact affecting the quality of the human environment greater than those addressed in the:

- Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/FEIS, September 1994) and its Record of Decision (ROD, June 1995)
- Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994), also known as the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP).

- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (1993).

Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement, or a supplement to the existing RMP or Environmental Impact Statement, is not necessary and will not be prepared.

  
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Jon Raby

Acting Field Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area

3/21/03  
Date

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
LAKEVIEW DISTRICT  
EA COVERSHEET

RESOURCE AREA: Klamath Falls

FY& EA #: OR-014-03-02

ACTION/TITLE: Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction

LOCATION: Klamath Falls Resource Area

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mike Turaski  
Klamath Falls Resource Area, BLM  
2795 Anderson Avenue, Bldg. 25  
Klamath Falls, OR 97603  
541-883-6916

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND RESPONDENT'S PERSONAL PRIVACY INTERESTS:** The Bureau of Land Management is soliciting comments on this Environmental Assessment. Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the above address during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Environmental Assessment No. OR-014-03-02

for

## Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction

Klamath Falls Resource Area – Lakeview District  
Klamath Falls, Oregon



**Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction**  
**EA Number: OR-014-03-02**

PROJECT TITLE/TYPE: Gerber Watershed Road Sediment Reduction

PROJECT LOCATION:

Road crossings will be improved at the following locations (also see attached map):

- Ben Hall Creek at Gerber Road (T39S-R13E-Section 2-NW);
- Miller Creek at Round Valley Road (T39S-R13E-Section 13-NW);
- Pitch Log Creek at Mainhaul Road (T39S-R14E-Section 25-NE);
- Barnes Valley Creek at CCC Road (T39S-R14E-Section 22-NE); and,
- Barnes Valley Creek at Mainhaul Road (T39S-R14E-Section 24-SE).

BLM OFFICE: Klamath Falls Resource Area, Lakeview District

LEASE/SERIAL/CASE FILE #: N/A

APPLICANT (if any): N/A

CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAND USE PLAN: This proposed action is subject to one or more of the following land use plans.

- Klamath Falls Resource Area Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (KFRA ROD/RMP) (June 1995).
- Final Klamath Falls Resource Area Management Plan and EIS (KFRA FEIS) (September 1994).
- Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 1994), also known as the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP).
- Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of Northern Spotted Owl (FSEIS) (Feb. 1994).
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (July 1993).
- Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP) (December 2000). The science findings of this planning effort were utilized in developing the proposed action.

PURPOSE and NEED FOR ACTION:

There is a need to improve water quality and shortnose sucker spawning habitat in perennial and intermittent streams around Gerber Reservoir. The purpose of this project is specifically to reduce sediment loading to those streams. A total of more than one mile of road (at five stream crossing sites) would be affected by the project. The project is consistent with management direction to restore water quality and aquatic habitat, as described in the KFRA ROD/RMP, the Miller Creek Canyon Area of

Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) evaluation, and the Biological and Conference Opinions on Horsefly, Dry Prairie, and Pitchlog Grazing Allotments.

#### DESCRIPTION of PROPOSED ACTION:

The objective of the project is to reduce sediment loading to streams, thereby improving water quality and shortnose sucker spawning habitat in perennial and intermittent streams around Gerber Reservoir. A total of more than one mile of road (at five stream crossing sites) would be affected by the project. At each site, drainage and surfacing on approach roads that deliver water and sediment to stream channels would be modified to address water quality concerns. In addition, approximately 200 feet of road would be obliterated at one site.

#### ALTERNATIVES:

#1) No Action – No road improvements designed to reduce sediment delivery to streams would be pursued at this time.

#2) Alternative 1 – Proposed Action

The following actions would occur (either alone or in combination) at each site:

- Adding or retrofitting road drainage features to reduce flow from roadside ditches into streams; and,
- Reducing road-surface erosion potential by resurfacing roads with gravel and adjusting road maintenance procedures.

Additionally, at one site (Ben Hall Creek) a short length of road (approximately 200 feet) that is impacting hydrologic processes and is not needed for resource management would be obliterated. At another site (Pitch Log Creek), waterbars would be installed on spur roads that contribute sediment to ditches that drain into the stream.

Ditch-relief culverts and, where necessary, lead-off ditches would be installed to reduce the volume of water flowing in ditches and the length of ditchline flowpaths (Figure 1). Resurfaced roads would have 4” of gravel rolled and graded onto the existing road surface. In some areas (Pitch Log Creek) the roadside ditch would be reshaped. The road to be obliterated would be recontoured to the adjacent hillslope, blocked with logs, revegetated with native vegetation, and fitted with waterbars or other appropriate features designed to dissipate flow.

#### AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT:

All project sites are within the Gerber Reservoir 5<sup>th</sup>-field watershed. Ben Hall, Barnes Valley, and Pitch Log Creeks are tributary to Gerber Reservoir, while Miller Creek flows out of the reservoir. The area is characterized by mixed conifer and shrub-steppe vegetation on the uplands, with wet meadows and riparian vegetation around springs and along watercourses. Most streams in the area are intermittent or perennial interrupted (i.e., water occurs only in pools during the summer). These streams provide important habitat for shortnose suckers and redband trout, as well as other fish and herptiles. The habitat quality within Miller Creek was one reason that the Miller Creek Canyon was designated an ACEC. Sedimentation of streams from road crossings and bank erosion has degraded water quality and spawning habitat.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

The potential environmental impacts resulting from the alternatives relative to the following critical resource values were evaluated as to whether they would be affected (beneficially or otherwise) by the proposed action. The following is a summary of the results:

Critical Element/ Resource Value	Affected		Critical Element/ Resource Value	Affected	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Air Quality		X	T & E Species	X	
ACEC/RNAs	X		Wilderness		X
Cultural Resources		X	Wild & Scenic Rivers		X
Farmlands, Prime/Unique		X	Hazardous Wastes		X
Floodplains		X	Water Quality	X	
Native American Cultural/ Religious Concerns		X	Wetlands/Riparian Zones		X
Low Income/ Minority Populations		X	Noxious Weeds		X

DESCRIPTION of OTHER IMPACTS:

*Areas of Critical Environmental Concern*

The proposed action would beneficially affect the characteristics for which Miller Creek Canyon was designated an ACEC. The proposed action is consistent with the management recommendations for the Miller Creek Canyon ACEC.

*Water Quality*

A total of about 11 miles of stream are downstream from the proposed project areas and would benefit

from the proposed action.

Sediment delivery to streams would be reduced and water quality would be improved by the proposed action. Adding a layer of gravel to the existing cinder surfacing would reduce rutting of the road during wet periods, and would also reduce the production of fine sediment. The flow in roadside ditches and the length of ditches that drain directly into streams would be reduced, thereby reducing sediment delivery to streams. At the Pitch Log Creek site, improving the ditch and its drainage will reduce lateral erosion into the road prism by flows in the ditch.

In the short-term (approximately 2 years, based on Luce and Black, 2001) following project implementation at the Pitch Log Creek site, production of fine sediments may be increased due to disturbance of portions of the roadside ditch. All of the excess sediment may not reach the stream channel, however. This is because 400 feet of well-vegetated ditch separate the stream from the portion that is to be re-graded, and because the installation of a cross-drain above that portion of ditch will reduce ditch flows and sediment transport. Sediment production is not expected to increase in the short-term at the other project sites, since only the roads (and not the ditches) will be graded (Luce and Black, 1999).

#### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

Reduced delivery of fine sediment to streams would result in improved spawning conditions for the shortnose sucker and redband trout populations that utilize the area. The project will address concerns regarding pool frequency and spawning gravel embeddedness, as described in the Biological and Conference Opinions on Horsefly, Dry Prairie, and Pitchlog Grazing Allotments (USFWS, 1995, pp. 9-11.)

#### DESCRIPTION of MITIGATION MEASURES and RESIDUAL IMPACTS:

##### Cultural Resources

1. Required cultural surveys will be completed prior to any ground disturbance.
2. All cultural resources will be marked in the field prior to the start of the project and all project activities shall avoid disturbance to these resources. If project activities result in the discovery of new cultural resources, all ground disturbing activities shall cease and the KFRA Archeologist shall be notified. Resumption of activities in that area will be allowed only after all mitigation fieldwork has been conducted.

##### Riparian Reserves

1. All refueling and maintenance operations will take place 240 feet or more from the stream and its riparian area. Refueling areas must be selected so that a potential spill would not be capable of running into water. Fuels, if stored on site, must be kept in a lined and bermed location capable of holding the entire stored fuel volume.
2. Work will be conducted during the dry season to reduce the likelihood of erosion occurring at project sites during project implementation.
3. Silt fences or stacked hay bales will be installed in ditches that are reshaped (and thus likely to produce sediment). The sediment trapping devices will be installed prior to the onset of the wet season and will be kept in place through at least the first wet season after project completion.

Trapped sediment will be removed from ditches and placed in stable locations (i.e., low relief areas not connected to watercourses).

#### Noxious Weeds and Special Status Plants

1. Required botanical surveys will be completed prior to any ground disturbance. All sites located will be managed to minimize detrimental impacts.
2. All vehicles and equipment (including chainsaws) will be cleaned off prior to operating on BLM lands. Removal of all dirt, grease, and plant parts that may carry noxious weed seeds or vegetative parts is required and may be accomplished with a pressure hose.
3. Noxious weeds in the immediate area of operations shall be mowed to ground level prior to the start of project activities.
4. All equipment and vehicles operating off of main roads shall be cleaned off prior to leaving the job site when the job site includes noxious weed populations. Removal of all dirt, grease, and plant parts that may carry noxious weed seeds or vegetative parts is required and may be accomplished with a pressure hose.

#### PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED:

USFWS Ecosystem Restoration Office  
Klamath County Public Works Department

#### PREPARER(S):

Mike Turaski	Hydrologist
Brian McCarty	Engineer
Scott Snedaker	Fisheries Biologist
Tim Canaday	Archaeologist
Lou Whiteaker	Botanist

#### REFERENCES:

Luce, C.H. and T.A. Black, 1999. Sediment production from forest roads in western Oregon. *Water Resources Research*, 35(8), pp. 2561-2570.

Luce, C.H. and T.A. Black, 2001. Spatial and temporal patterns of sediment production from forest roads, pages 165-178 in *Influence of Urban and Forest Land Uses on the Hydrologic-Geomorphic Responses of Watersheds*, Edited by M.S. Wigmosta and S.J. Burges. Water Resources Monographs, American Geophysical Union, Washington, DC.

USFWS, 1995. Biological and Conference Opinions on Horsefly, Dry Prairie, and Pitchlog Grazing Allotments. 27 pages.

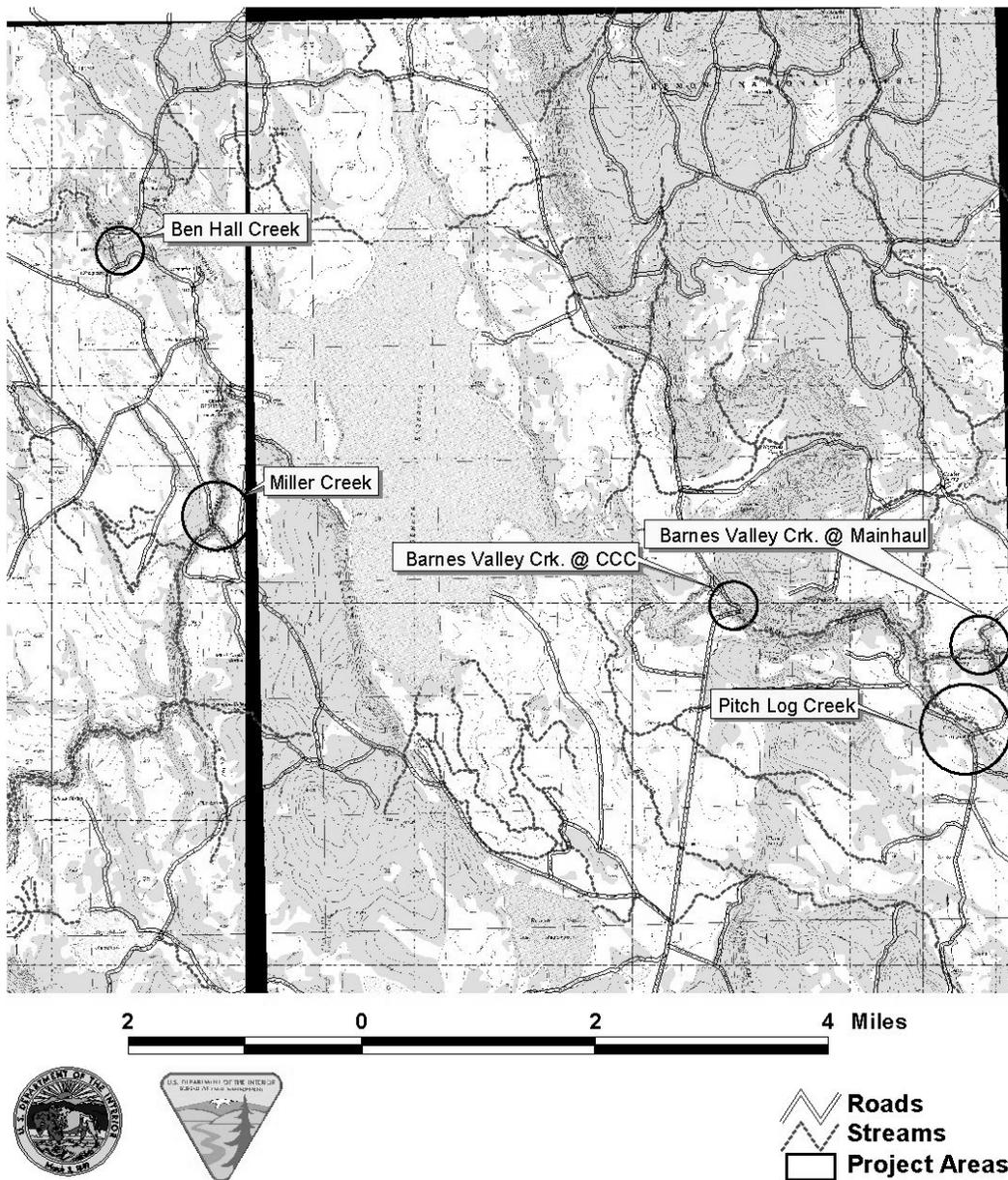


Figure 1. Location map of proposed road treatment sites (USGS Goodlow Mountain and Gerber Reservoir quadrangles; Township 39S, Range 13E, sections 2 and 13, and Township 39S, Range 14E, sections 22, 24, 25).



Cinder-surfaced Round Valley Road adjacent to Miller Creek. Note inboard ditch and berm along outer edge of road. The proposed project would add ditch-relief culverts and a layer of gravel to a portion of the road.



Cinder-surfaced Gerber Road as it approaches Ben Hall Creek. Drainage and sediment from the entire length of road shown, plus 500 additional feet of Gerber Road and 200 feet of a short spur road, is transported into the creek. The proposed project would add ditch-relief culverts along a portion of the road and obliterate the spur road.



CCC Road as it approaches the Barnes Valley low-water crossing. The approaches on both sides of the crossing tend to develop ruts through the course of the wet season, leading to sediment delivery directly to the stream. To address this problem while still providing a safe approach to the crossing, the proposed project would add ditch relief culverts and a layer of gravel to the approaches.

Figure 2. Photos of proposed project sites.

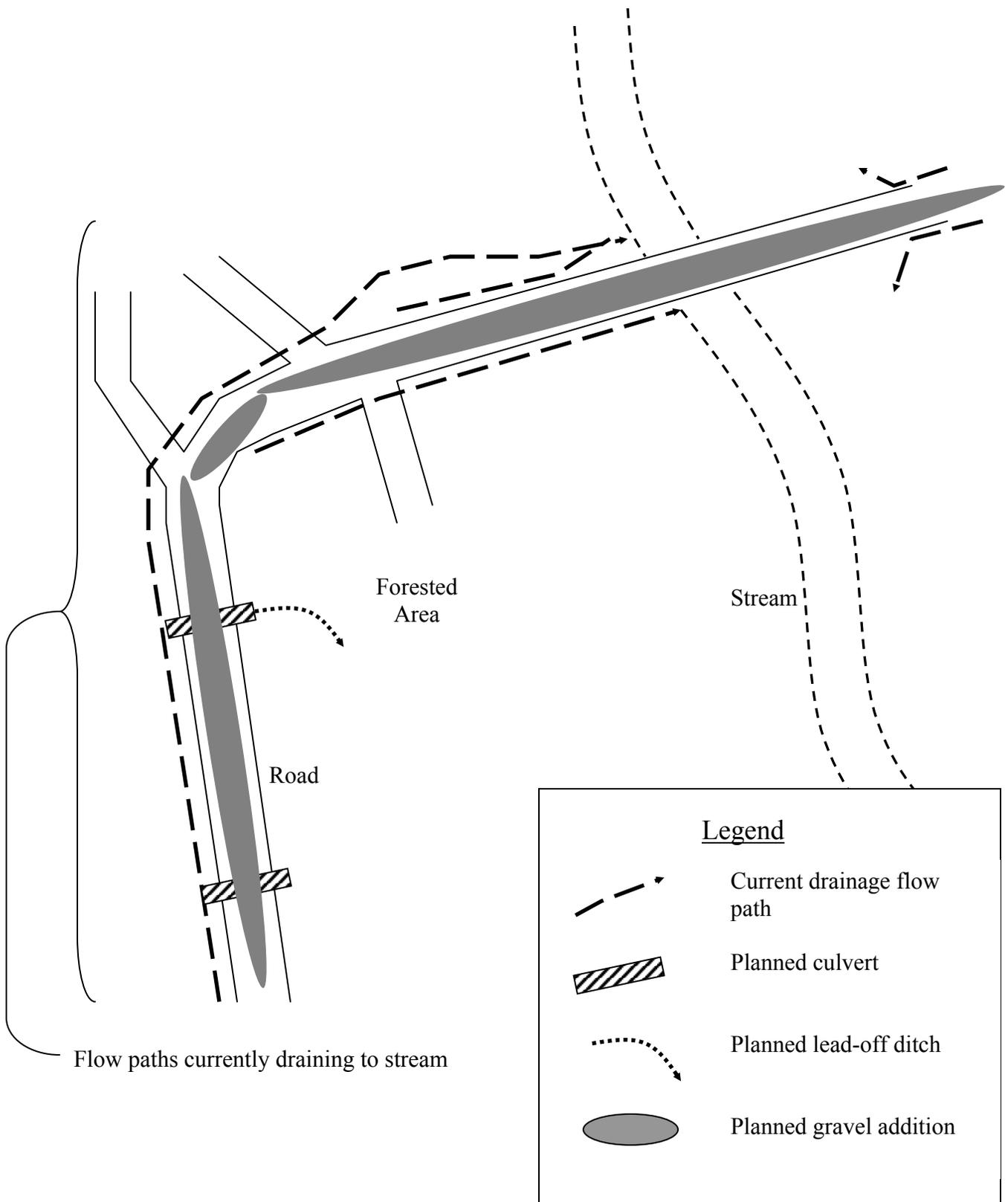


Figure 3. Generic example of proposed project treatments.

03-02

EA

Klamath Falls Resource Area Project Proposal Routing Slip for Internal Review

Project Name: GERBER WATERSHED ROAD SEDIMENT REDUCTION EA  
 Date Initiated: 2/19/2003

Resource or Staff Responsible	Review Priority	Preliminary Review Date/Initials	Comments Attached/Incorporated	Final Review Date/Initials
Manager: Teri Raml	Last		Looks great!	TR 3/26/03
Branch Chief: Barbara Ditman	Second to Last			
Branch Chief: Larry Frazier	Second to Last	3/12/03	Note comments Doc	No change 3/25/03 DLF
Branch Chief: Mel Crockett	Second to Last			
Planner/EC: Don Hoffheins, <del>Kathy Lindsey</del>	Third from Last	3/10/03 dkh		
Range: Bill Lindsey Range: Dana Eckard		BL 2/19 DE 2/19/03	NOTE ATTACHED	DE 3/14/03
Wild Horses: Tonya Pinckney	N/A			
Fire/Air Quality: Joe Foran	N/A			
Silviculture: Bill Johnson, Gabi Sommerauer	N/A			
Timber: Mike Bechdolt	N/A			
Botany/ACEC//Noxious Weeds: Lou Whiteaker		JW 2/20/03	Areas surveyed some weed sites	JW 3/11/03
Soils: Jannice & Mike Cutler	N/A			
Cultural: Tim Canaday		TC 2/19/03	See note on page 4	TC 3/14/03
Minerals/HazMat: Tom Cottingham	N/A			
Lands/Realty: Linda Younger	N/A			
Recreation/Visuals/Wilderness : Scott Senter	N/A			
Hydrology/Riparian: Mike Turaski, Andy Hamilton		MRT 2/19/03		MRT 3/14/03
Wildlife/T&E: Gayle Sitter		GS 2/19/03		GS 3/22/03
Fisheries/T&E: Scott Snedaker		SS 2/20/03	see attached email to USFWS	SS 3/19/03
W/S Rivers: Grant Weidenbach	N/A			
Engineering: Brian McCarty		BMC 3/3/03		BMC 3/3/03
Clearances/Surveys	Needed	Done/Attached	<p><b>*This document will not sit on your desk for more than 8 hours. Please check on calendar to make sure that the next person will be available to review the document.</b></p> <p><b>**Some resource areas may not apply for all projects. If so, just mark "N/A" in "Review Priority" column.</b></p>	
Cultural		TC 2/19/03		
Botanical		JW 2/20/03		
T&E, BA & or Consultation	None for wildlife DLAA letter to USFWS	GS 2/20/03 SS 3/17/03		
R-O-W Permits				