

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
for  
CHINA GULCH FUELS REDUCTION USING MANAGED GOAT GRAZING  
EA No. OR-110-02-036

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

The Bureau of Land Management's Medford District has analyzed, through the attached China Gulch Fuels Reduction Using Managed Goat Grazing Environmental Assessment, a proposal by southern Oregon Goat Producers to manage sprouting madrone on 83 acres located in China Gulch.

The proposed action and project design features are further described in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA). This FONSI and attached EA are tiered to the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (USDI, USDA 2001) and the *Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (RMP) (USDI 1995b). These Resource Management Plans incorporate the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management: Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (NFP) (USDA and USDI 1994). These documents are available at the Medford BLM office and the Medford BLM web site at <<http://www.or.blm.gov/Medford/>>.

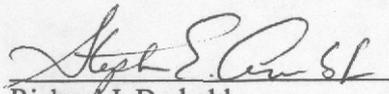
Through the EA process, the interdisciplinary team reviewed the following critical elements of the human environment as they relate to this project: air quality, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), cultural resources, environmental justice, farmlands, floodplains, Native American religious concerns, invasive nonnative species, threatened and endangered species, hazardous/solid wastes, water quality, wetlands/riparian zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and wilderness. No substantive site-specific environmental changes would result from implementing the proposed action or alternative as discussed in the associated EA. Should threatened or endangered plants or additional cultural or paleontological resources be discovered, they would be protected.

The China Gulch Fuels Reduction Using Managed Goat Grazing EA was advertised for a 20-day public review period beginning on September 3, 2002. This review provided the public with an opportunity to comment on the BLM's determination that there are no significant impacts associated with the proposed action, and that a project-specific environmental impact statement is not necessary. No public comments were received.

The estimation of impacts was based on research, professional judgment, and the experience of the interdisciplinary team. This method of estimating effects on the environment reduces the uncertainties to a level involving no highly **unknown** or unique risks. The project design features identified in the attached EA would assure that no significant site-specific nor cumulative impacts would occur to the human environment other than those already addressed in the Medford District Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan and the Record of Decision/Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards & Guidelines.

FONSI Determination

On the basis of the information contained in the attached EA and all other information available to me as summarized above, it is my determination that the proposed action Alternative does not constitute a significant impact as defined by 40 CFR § 1508.27, beyond those previously identified in the tiered Medford District RMP Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For this reason, a new EIS will not be prepared.

  
Richard J. Drehabl  
Ashland Field Manager

9-26-02  
Date

Decision Record  
for the  
China Gulch Fuels Reduction Using Managed **Goat** Grazing  
**EA No. OR-110-02-036**

Decision Record & Rationale

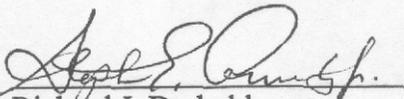
It is my decision to implement the proposal by Southern Oregon Goat Producers to manage vegetation on 83 acres in China Gulch as described in this decision and the attached China Gulch Fuels Reduction Using Managed Goat Grazing EA No. OR-110-02-036. This project proposal has been approved to receive multi-year funding under Title II of the *Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000*.

Vegetation in the project area was non-commercially thinned in 1999 to improve forest health and to reduce fire hazard. Pacific madrone is resprouting and is contributing to fire hazard and competing with conifers for water. Goats will be grazed on 83 acres in China Gulch each spring for two years. Fenced grazing and open range herding techniques will be used to during the grazing operation. Herd managers will be present at all times to ensure goats are maintained within the project boundaries, and for the protection of the herd from predators. Project design features, as described in the Proposed Action of the EA, are required as part of my decision to prevent and/or minimize adverse effects of implementation.

Southern Oregon Goat Producers, as part of their funded proposal, will also implement monitoring and public education. Monitoring will determine the effectiveness of this treatment in meeting the objective of reducing madrone sprouting and the resulting fire hazard. The results of monitoring will be presented to inform and educate the public concerning the use of managed goat grazing. The public education component of this project is also designed to generate interest with a local workforce in the development of agricultural business opportunities.

My decision to implement this project proposal will result in the accomplishment of hazardous fuels reduction that is needed in order to maintain healthy and more fire resilient forest stands in the China Gulch area. Implementation of this project also provides an opportunity for small business development and the creation of employment opportunities. The implementation of this project will contribute towards meeting the overall objectives of the *Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000*.

Based on the analysis documented in the EA, I have determined this action is in conformance with the Medford District Resource Management Plan.

  
Richard J. Drehobl

for  
Ashland Field Manager

9-26-02  
Date