

**Decision Record
for
Coyote Creek Junction Fuels Reduction Project
Revised EA #OR110-99-08**

I. Decision: I have decided to implement the Proposed Action and project design features based on the revised Coyote Creek Junction Fuels Reduction Project environmental assessment, dated January 3, 2001. This project will effectively treat seven units, totaling 103 acres, with prescribed fire. These 103 acres are located on BLM administered lands identified as non-forest or withdrawn from planned timber harvest.

I received one set of comments from one interested party following the release of the original Coyote Creek Junction Fuels Reduction Project EA to the public in 1999. I carefully reviewed these comments and agreed with the comment that the EA should provide a more detailed analysis. An interdisciplinary team revised the original EA to include updated survey and manage findings and the No Action Alternative. I signed the revised Coyote Creek Junction Fuels Reduction Project EA on January 17, 2001 and placed it in local newspapers on January 23, 2001. I again received new comments from the same interested party with a request that a plan for monitoring impacts to soils and coarse woody debris be added to the decision document.

After considering their request, I have determined that proposed monitoring outlined in the EA and the RMP is adequate. The Proposed Action has been analyzed to have minimal effects to the human environment.

II. Rationale: One main factor of my decision in selecting the Proposed Action is to create defensible space to reduce the risk of large catastrophic wildland fire (in the event a wildland fire should occur) and reduce the costs of wildland fire suppression. As a result of the exclusion of repeated, periodic fire from the landscape, much of the Glendale Resource Area has fuel loadings outside the range of natural variability. Prescribed burning in the Coyote Creek Junction project area is designed to also improve forest health and maintain or enhance wildlife habitat and forage opportunities.

Project design features adequately protect environmental resources and minimize the risk of adverse effects which might result from implementing the project. All surveys for threatened and endangered, and survey and manage plants and animals have been completed and effects are anticipated to be minimal.

The wildlife biologist determined that this project will not remove or degrade any suitable owl habitat and is beyond zone D for marbled murrelets. Therefore, a "no effect" determination was made for threatened and endangered wildlife. Formal consultation for federally listed Threatened and Endangered terrestrial wildlife is not required, as provided by the Endangered Species Act.

The proposed project was reviewed by fisheries, hydrology and soils specialists utilizing the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) process for making Section 7 Endangered Species Act (ESA) determinations of effects. Their findings were that the Proposed Action will have no effect on Southern Oregon/Northern California coho salmon (threatened) and Klamath Province steelhead (candidate) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat for OC coho downstream of the proposed project. A "no effect" determination was made. Therefore, ESA Section 7 consultation with NMFS is not required for this proposed project.

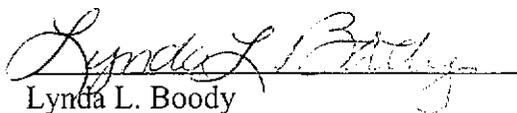
The Coyote Creek Junction EA mentions two types of post treatment monitoring. Surveys for the effects on the mollusk *H. hertleini* would be conducted and photo points to monitor the recovery and resprouting of the wedgeleaf buckbrush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*) community would be established. The projects environmental conditions were also taken into account for my decision not to provide for additional monitoring. Prescribed burning sites contain shallow, rocky soils that will be saturated with water during the time of burning operations. Added with the existing light, flashy fuels, the soils scientist anticipates that soil productivity and structure will be maintained after treatment.

These lands are generally non-forest meadows and contain low amounts of snags and down woody material. The wildlife biologist for the project anticipates that the type of burn being proposed would have no substantial impact on snags or coarse woody material. Other implementation monitoring may also occur as part of the established monitoring program discussed in the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP, 1995)

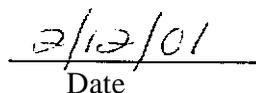
The No-Action Alternative was not selected because it did not meet the identified Purpose and Need of reducing wild fire fuel levels in the area.

This decision is consistent with the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land management Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (1994) and Record of Decision for the Medford District Bureau of Land Management RMP dated April 14, 1995, as well as the Endangered Species Act, The Native American Religious Freedom Act and cultural resource management laws and regulations. The Proposed Action will not involve Riparian Areas and is consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy described in the RMP.

The decision notice will appear in the Grants Pass Daily Courier, a newspaper of general circulation in the project area. The date of publication of the legal notice will constitute the decision date for purposes of protests and appeals under 43 CFR 5003. Protests must be tiled within 15 days of the publication of the decision or within 15 days of this decision record.


Lynda L. Boody

Field Manager, Glendale Resource Area
Medford District, Bureau of Land Management


Date