

RED TOP SALVAGE I
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EA# OR105-96-16
Decision Documentation

Bureau of Land Management-Roseburg District
South River Resource Area
Date Prepared: July 18, 1997

Decision:

It is my decision to authorize salvage/harvest of approximately eight million board feet (MMBF) from approximately 450 acres in T29S R2W Sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 16, and 17 and a portion of T28S R3W Section 23. The harvest is located in General Forest Management Area (GFMA) and Connectivity land allocations, and the Adaptive Management Area (AMA). The tentative sale date is August 26, 1997.

The salvage is located on approximately 240 acres in sections 4, 5 & 8 which are GFMA and approximately 75 acres in sections 9 and 17 which are Connectivity. The salvage in section 23 covers approximately 12 acres. These areas will be salvaged using a cable or ground base system, and approximately one mile of temporary road will be constructed. Some standing trees may need to be cut in the right-of-way in order to get adequate road width.

Two units (approximately 130 acres) with considerable blow-down and broken-top timber in sections 16 and 17, have been identified for final harvest. Five acres are in GFMA and the remainder in Connectivity. Timber would be cable harvested. One temporary spur, approximately .75 miles long, is necessary for harvest. Units would be handpiled and burned for hazard reduction and site preparation. The two units will be planted.

Rationale for Decision:

The decision is based on the following objectives; the proposed action applies the ecosystem management approach as outlined in the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (ROD) and meets the objectives for Matrix lands as stated in the Roseburg District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP, p. 33). The salvage/harvest will contribute to the allowable sale quantity (ASQ) (ROD/RMP, p. 60) for the resource area as originally proposed.

The salvage/harvest in sections 16 and 17 is in Connectivity where retention tree requirements are 12-18 trees per acre (TPA). These areas were identified for final harvest since the number of undamaged trees remaining after harvest, would not be significantly more than the required 12-18 TPA required for retention trees. In order to manage the stand to Connectivity standards, it is not feasible to plan a second harvest in this stand in the near future, or leave the stand understocked for an extended period, and it will thus be harvested at this time.

The project design features (mitigation) identified for the proposed action, are listed on pages 3-6 of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and will be formulated into contract stipulations and applied during sale layout and implementation. Best Management Practices (ROD/RMP, Appendix D) will be implemented. The Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives would be met. Impacts are not expected to exceed those discussed in the RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Vol. I, p. 4-7 thru 4-99). The salvage/harvest is in conformance with the Standards and Guidelines in the ROD.

No issues were identified by other agencies or Native Americans during the scoping process. Comments were received from one member of the public and were considered during the development of this decision. None of the comments provided new information or issues which have not been addressed the EA or EIS. There were also two requests to be sent a copy of the EA/Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and decision.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has concurred with the proposed project. Potential impacts to cultural resources have been mitigated. Buffers have been marked for two Threatened and Endangered (T & E) plant species. The Biological Opinion (BO) applicable to the harvest, was received from the National Marine

Fisheries Service (NMFS). The action generates a "may affect, likely to adversely affect" on the Umpqua River cutthroat trout (URCT). The NMFS believes that the incidental take of URCT that is likely to occur as a result of the action(s) (those actions included in the September 26, 1996 BO), has been adequately minimized by project design and mitigation. Therefore, reasonable and prudent measures to further reduce this incidental take are not necessary.

The BO dated March 25, 1996 and the revised Incidental Take Statement dated January 23, 1997 from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), have been received. The removal of suitable Northern spotted owl habitat results in a "may affect likely to adversely affect" determination. Mitigation (p. 4-EA) will be applied in order to reduce the impacts on suitable habitat. Terms and Conditions will be implemented.

Compliance and Monitoring:

Monitoring would be conducted as per the guidance given in the ROD/RMP (Appendix I).

Protest and Appeal Procedures:

As outlined in 43 CFR Subpart 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests may be filed with the authorized officer, at the above address, within 15 days of the first publication date of the sale notice in the News Review which is planned for July 29, 1997.



Alan Wood, Area Manager & Authorized Officer
South River Resource Area

7-21-97
Date