

**South River Watershed Restoration  
Environmental Assessment  
South River Field Office  
EA # OR-105-00-05**

Date Prepared: March 1, 2002

**Partial Renovation and Partial Decommissioning  
of BLM Road No. 29-4-23.1  
Decision Documentation**

**Decision:**

It is my decision to authorize the renovation of 1,690 feet (Segment A) and the decommissioning of 1,760 feet (Segment B) of BLM Road No. 29-4-23.1, located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 23, T. 29 S., R. 4 W., W.M. Segment A is located on privately-owned and managed lands, and subject to the terms of Reciprocal Right-of-Way Agreement R-700 between the BLM and Sun Studs, Inc. It will be renovated rather than decommissioned, because Sun Studs, Inc. chooses to retain access rights on this segment of the road. Sun Studs has agreed to the decommissioning of Segment B, which is situated entirely within lands managed by the BLM.

Road renovation and decommissioning will incorporate Best Management Practices found in Appendix D (pp. 134-136) of the *Roseburg District Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP June, 1995).

Segment A will be surfaced with a 6-12 inch lift of crushed aggregate. Existing culverts will be cleaned and ditch lines reshaped. Up to 4 additional cross-drain culverts will be installed, and the roadside will be brushed. Brushing will not remove any trees greater than 5 inches diameter at breast height. Disturbed areas will be seeded and mulched with native materials to prevent surface erosion.

Decommissioning of Segment B will not include sub-soiling of the road bed, because it is anticipated that the road will be needed for future silvicultural and timber management access. A culvert will be removed from a crossing on an intermittent stream, and the stream channel will be recontoured and armored with rock. Rock-armored drain dips will be installed at engineered locations to drain the road grade. 150 feet of ditch line will be cleaned and reshaped at a location where the road enters an existing slip out. Rock-armoring and slope protection will be installed in the cleaned and reshaped ditch. Disturbed areas will be seeded and mulched with native materials to prevent surface erosion.

Other project design features to be implemented will include:

- Pressure washing or steam cleaning of excavation and earth-moving equipment prior to move-in on the project site in order to minimize the risk of introducing soil from outside the project area that may be contaminated with noxious weed seed.
- Endhaul of any waste material to an authorized upland disposal site.

**Rationale for the Decision:**

This project was analyzed under Alternative 1, the proposed action, of the South River Watershed Restoration EA. Its implementation will meet the objective of reducing road density in the watershed, and improving water quality by reducing sediment associated with roads that are improperly surfaced or drained. Alternative 2, the no action alternative, would not meet the identified objective or need.

The renovation and decommissioning will not result in any undue environmental degradation. The project is consistent with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives contained in the ROD/RMP (pp. 20-21) and Best Management Practices (ROD/RMP, p. 134). Specifically, the project will aid in the maintenance and restoration of the natural sediment regime, and preclude stream crossings from being a direct source of sediment to streams in order to minimize water quality degradation.

Surveys for botanical species listed under the Survey and Manage protocols have been conducted on those portions of the project area located on BLM-managed lands. There are no requirements or provisions for surveys on privately-owned lands. The results of the surveys were negative. The project would not remove any trees that would provide potential habitat for the red tree vole, and surveys for the presence of the red tree vole are no longer required within the central portion of the species' range.

Surveys were conducted for Kincaid's lupine (*Lupinus sulphureus var. kincaidii*) which is listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The results of the survey were negative.

The project will not remove any suitable nesting, roosting and foraging habitat for the threatened northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*). The site is not located within ¼-mile of any owl activity center, so the potential for disturbance from project operations does not exist. As a consequence, the project was determined to have "no affect" on the northern spotted owl.

The road maintenance and decommissioning described in this decision was determined to constitute no affect on the Oregon Coast coho salmon, Oregon Coast steelhead trout or Essential Fish Habitat for the following reasons:

- There are no fish-bearing streams or Essential Fish Habitat in the project area. The single stream that is present is intermittent in nature.

- Renovation and decommissioning activities would be restricted to the dry season, between May 15 and October 15. In-stream activities associated with removal of the culvert from the intermittent stream crossing would be restricted to the period between July 1 and September 15 when the intermittent stream would be dry.
- Aggregate surfacing of the renovated segment will prevent road surface erosion and eliminate sediment associated with the use of unsurfaced roads during wet weather.
- Cleaning of culverts, reshaping of ditch lines, installation of additional cross-drain culverts, and construction of rock-armored drain dips will distribute road run-off across the slopes where sediments will settle out, instead of allowing erosion of road surfaces and concentration of overland flows that could transport sediment downslope into active waterways.
- Stabilization of the existing slip out and armoring of cut slopes will reduce the probability of any landslides associated with roads.
- Seeding and mulching of disturbed areas will reduce the risk of soil erosion and possible transport of sediment.

### **Public Comment**

No issues were identified by any local or tribal governments, State agencies, or other Federal agencies. The EA and Finding of No Significant Impact were made available for public review from June 28, 2000, through July 28, 2000. Comments were received from one organization. These comments did not constitute new information or issues not already considered and addressed in the South River Watershed Restoration EA, the ROD/RMP, or the Roseburg District *Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*.

### **Compliance and Monitoring:**

Monitoring will be done in accordance with implementation monitoring objectives and requirements for Riparian Reserves, Water and Soils, and Fish Habitat resources contained in the ROD/RMP, Appendix I (pp. 190-191, and 195-198).

**Protest and Appeals Procedures:**

As outlined in 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests may be filed with the authorized officer within 15 days of the publication date of the Decision Notice in the Roseburg, Oregon, *The News-Review*.

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E. Dwight Fielder  
Field Manager  
South River Field Office

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Date