

FY 2002 Commercial Thinnings (West)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

The Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management, has analyzed a proposal called the **FY 2002 Commercial Thinnings (West)**. In the proposed action, commercial thinning and density management harvest of young growth timber would occur in the Elk Creek Watershed located in Section 31, T21S, R4W; Section 7, T22S, R4W; and Section 3, T23S, R6W; W.M.

The Environmental Assessment (EA), OR-104-02-02, contains a description and analysis of the proposed action. A summary of the analysis contained in the EA shows:

- 1). Approximately 460 acres were analyzed for potential harvest activity, which represents less than 0.2% of the watershed landbase.
- 2). The Interdisciplinary Team identified **How do we treat the Riparian Reserve?** as the key issue to be analyzed in this EA.
- 3). The project would not be expected to impact any special status plants (EA, page 11) or cultural resources (EA, page 12).
- 4). Informal consultation with the US Fish & Wildlife Service has been completed. Their Letter of Concurrence (May 31, 2001) concluded that the proposed action is " . . . not likely to adversely affect spotted owls, murrelets, and their critical habitat".
- 5). Informal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service has been completed. Their Letter of Concurrence (July 15, 2001) concurred with BLM's determination that the action would result in a **not likely to adversely affect** (NLAA) for the OC [Oregon Coast] steelhead and coho salmon."

This proposal is in conformance with the *"Final - Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS) dated October 1994 and its associated Roseburg District Record of Decision and Resources Management Plan (RMP) dated June 2, 1995*. This proposal is located on lands within the Matrix and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations. The RMP permits ". . . timber harvest and other silvicultural activities in that portion of the matrix with suitable forest lands, according to management actions/directions . . ." (RMP, pg. 33). The RMP (pg. 25) also permits silvicultural practices within the Riparian Reserves in order to ". . . acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy [ACS] objectives." This proposal would also help to provide ". . . a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products that will help maintain the stability of local and regional economies . . ." (RMP pg. 3). Three alternatives were analyzed: the "no action" and two action alternatives. Alternative B would not harvest timber within the Riparian Reserve but allow selective falling and girdling of trees to enhance riparian habitat. Alternative C (the "proposed action" alternative) would harvest timber within the Riparian Reserves as well as selective falling and girdling of trees to enhance riparian habitat. Road renovation and closure would also be accomplished on certain existing roads as part of the proposed action.

Finding of No Significant Impacts: I have reviewed the tests of significance as described in 40 CFR 1508.27 (see attached). Based on the site specific analysis summarized in the EA and noted above, it is my determination that the proposed action does not constitute a major federal action with significant impacts to the quality of the human environment therefore an Environmental Impact Statement does not need to be prepared. In accordance with the Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs, pg. B-10) I find that the proposed activity is consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives and meets or does not prevent attainment of these objectives.

Jay K. Carlson
Swiftwater Field Manager

Date

Test for Significant Impacts. (40 CFR 1508.27)

1. Has impacts (both beneficial and adverse) determined to be severe? Yes No

Remarks: No identified impacts are judged to be severe.

2. Has significant adverse impacts on public health or safety? Yes No

Remarks: Considering the remoteness of the project to local population centers, and the design features governing the proposal (EA, pg. 6 through 10), the likelihood of the project affecting public health and safety is remote and speculative.

3. Adversely effects such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains or ecologically significant or critical areas including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks? Yes No

Remarks: Reviews (Cultural, Recreation, Wildlife, Hydrology and Fisheries) does not show that the proposed action would adversely affect any of the above characteristics (EA, Appendix E).

4. Has highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment? Yes No

Remarks: No controversial effects were noted as a result of environmental analysis or public review.

5. Has highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involves unique or unknown environmental risks? Yes No

Remarks: The analysis does not indicate that this action would involve unique or unknown risks.

6. Establishes a precedent for future action or represents a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? Yes No

Remarks: The advertisement, auction, and award of a timber sale contract allowing the harvest of trees is a well-established practice and does not establish a precedent for future actions.

7. Is directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? Yes No

Remarks: We find that this action would not have a cumulatively significant impact on the environment beyond that already identified in the EIS.

8. Has adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places? Yes No

Remarks: The EA (pg. 23) does not indicate that this action would not adversely affect any sites, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

9. May adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973?

Aquatic Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
Botanical Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
Terrestrial Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No

Remarks: Consultation with NMFS (July 15, 2002) resulted in a "not likely to adversely affect" determination for listed fish. Botanical surveys did not identify the presence of any T&E plants therefore consultation was not required. Formal consultation with the FWS (May 31, 2001) for FY 2001-2 programmatic actions concluded that activity is not likely to adversely affect spotted owls, murrelets and their critical habitat.

10. Threatens to violate Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment? Yes No

Remarks: We find that this action would not threaten a violation of Federal, State, local or tribal law imposed for the protection of the environment.