

“DRAFT”

**Myrtle Creek Watershed Restoration  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

South River Field Office  
EA# OR-105-02-05

Date Prepared: February 3, 2003

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

The South River Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Myrtle Creek Watershed Restoration analysis. Two alternatives were analyzed consisting of a “Proposed Action” identified as Alternative 1, and “No Action” identified as Alternative 2. The Alternatives are described in Chapter 2 of the EA (pp. 3-6).

The following Critical Elements of the Human Environment are not relevant because they are not present in the project area and would not be affected: Wild and Scenic Rivers; Wetlands; Wilderness; Wastes, Hazardous or Solid.

The following Critical Elements of the Human Environment would not be affected by the proposed culvert replacement: Air Quality; Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); Prime or Unique Farmlands; Visual Resources; Water Quality. No unique characteristics would be impacted, as described in Council on Environmental Quality Regulations contained in the Code of Federal Regulations at 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(3).

The proposed restoration projects are consistent with Executive Order 12898 which addresses Environmental Justice in minority and low-income populations. There would be no impacts to low-income or minority populations that have been identified by the BLM internally or through the public involvement process. Correspondence with local Native American tribal governments did not identify any known unique or special resources in the project area which provide employment, subsistence or recreation opportunities.

Correspondence with local Native American tribal governments did not identify any religious concerns or values associated with the proposed restoration projects and project sites, so there would be no effect on Native American Religious Concerns (40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(8)).

Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act have been completed by the BLM in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols. A review of current inventories and subsequent pedestrian surveys did not identify any extant cultural or historical resources in the project area that would be affected so there would be no impacts to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(8)).

Terrestrial special status species known to utilize lands in proximity to proposed restoration project sites are limited to the Federally-threatened northern spotted owl. Federally-threatened Kincaid's lupine (*Lupinus sulphureus* var. *kincaidii*) is also known to occur in the watershed and may be present in proximity to proposed project sites.

The BLM has made a determination of "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" for the spotted owl, based on the potential for minor modifications to habitat that would consist of the cutting of smaller trees that do not provide nesting, roosting and foraging habitat. A determination of "no effect" was made for Kincaid's lupine, because if the lupine is located in site surveys, individual projects would be modified to protect the plant populations, or dropped if no suitable project modification is available. The BLM is engaged in informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for concurrence on these determinations.

The Myrtle Creek watershed provides spawning and rearing habitat for the Oregon Coast coho salmon, a Federally-threatened species, and the Oregon Coast steelhead trout, a candidate for listing as threatened.

The effects of the proposed restoration projects on the coho salmon and steelhead trout are primarily derived from fine sediment generated by erosion of disturbed areas, stream bank disturbance, and in-stream activities associated with the projects. These effects were determined to be "likely to adversely affect" coho salmon and steelhead trout in the short term, but would not jeopardize the continued existence of either species. Effects on Essential Fish Habitat are considered substantively the same.

In the long term, the projects would beneficially affect salmon and trout. Access would be restored to approximately 21 miles of habitat. An overall reduction in fine sediments would improve the condition of spawning gravels, and improve habitat and water quality in general.

The National Marine Fisheries Service addressed the effects of projects of this nature in the October 18, 2002, Programmatic Biological and Conference Opinion for Programmatic Activities Affecting SONC Coho Salmon, OC Coho Salmon, and OC Steelhead. This opinion sets forth Reasonable and Prudent Measures, and Terms and Conditions, in conjunction with authorization of Incidental Take. These restoration projects are consistent with these Reasonable and Prudent Measures, and Terms and Conditions, and as a consequence, would not have any significant adverse impacts to coho salmon, steelhead trout and Essential Fish Habitat, within the context of 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(9).

As a consequence, there would be no significant adverse impacts to any special status species (40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(9)), and any impacts would be within the range and scope of those analyzed in the Roseburg District *Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS).

The projects proposed in the Myrtle Creek Watershed Restoration analysis are consistent with applicable Federal, State, and local laws (40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(10)). The impacts of the proposed actions on the human environment do not exceed those anticipated and addressed in the Roseburg District PRMP/EIS.

Of the twelve points listed under 40 CFR § 1508.27(b), the following were considered and found not to apply to the proposed action: significant beneficial or adverse effects; significant effects on public health or safety; effects on the quality of the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial; anticipated cumulatively significant impacts; highly uncertain or unknown risks; and no precedents for future actions with significant effects.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider the effects of this decision on the President's National Energy Policy. Within the project areas, there are no known energy resources with the potential for commercial development, nor are there any pipelines, electrical transmission lines, or energy producing or processing facilities. As a consequence, the proposed Myrtle Creek Watershed Restoration projects would have no known adverse effect, either direct or indirect, on National Energy Policy.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the EA, I have determined that the proposed action will not have significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and that an EIS is not required. I have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the Roseburg District PRMP/EIS and *Record of Decision/ Resource Management Plan* (June, 1995).

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Date