

# SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION REPORT

## Willy's Elk Density Management and Coarse Woody Debris Enhancement Project

September 26, 2001

USDI - Bureau of Land Management  
Oregon State Office  
Salem District  
Tillamook Resource Area  
Tillamook and Yamhill Counties, Oregon

### INTRODUCTION

The Willy's Elk project is located approximately 14 miles northwest of McMinnville, Oregon in the Willamina Creek 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed. Willamina Creek flows into the South Yamhill River and, eventually, into the Willamette River. The project consists of density management and coarse woody debris enhancement on approximately 127 acres of BLM administered land.

An environmental assessment (EA # OR-086-98-05) was completed on November 20, 1998 (Project Record Document 42). The Bureau issued a preliminary decision for the project on November 25, 1998, which was included with the EA when it was distributed for public comment (Project Record Document 43). Consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act was completed with United States Fish and Wildlife Service on October 4, 2000 (Programmatic Habitat Modification B.O. # 1-7-00-F-649) and National Marine Fisheries Service on April 17, 2001 (Project Record Document 63).

The purpose of this report is to document the recent review of this project for compliance with laws, regulations, executive orders, and Bureau direction, and to determine if additional environmental disclosures or changes to the proposed action are necessary as a result of the review.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

#### National Marine Fisheries Service:

This project occurs in the Willamina Creek Drainage, which is a 5<sup>th</sup> field watershed that is tributary to the South Yamhill River and, eventually, the Willamette River. There are no fish bearing streams within any project unit. Steelhead is the only anadromous salmonid native to the Willamina Creek Watershed (EA section 3.5.2.1).

The Willy's Elk Project was initially determined to “*may affect, likely to adversely affect*” the Upper Willamette steelhead trout due to potential of sediment entering streams during the various ground disturbing activities and log hauling.”

On March 17, 2000 the Upper Willamette ESU was designated critical habitat for the Upper Willamette steelhead trout and Upper Willamette Chinook salmon. The EA, which was produced prior to this designation, did include a discussion on the effects of the project on fish habitat. In an effort to reduce the potential impacts to fish resulting from the implementation of this project the haul route was modified to avoid Willamina Creek Road and use the paved Bald Mountain Road.

A Biological Assessment was written for the project with the revised haul route and it was “determined to be *may affect, not likely to adversely affect* Upper Willamette steelhead trout, and designated critical habitat for Upper Willamette steelhead trout and Upper Willamette chinook salmon” (Project Record Document 59). The revised project was submitted to NMFS for informal ESA section 7 consultation and a letter of concurrence was received by BLM on April 17, 2001 (Project Record Document 63).

#### United States Fish and Wildlife Service:

It is identified in the EA (Chapter 3.5.1.2.1) that the project area occurs within ¼ mile of unsurveyed suitable habitat for the marbled murrelet. Project design features included daily time restrictions for felling, yarding and hauling during the marbled murrelet critical nesting period (April 1 – August 5 of a calendar year) and buffers on the potentially suitable nest trees located in the vicinity of proposed treatment unit 32-1. Discussions between the BLM and USFWS regarding adequate buffers for the unsurveyed potentially suitable marbled murrelet habitat proved unfruitful. For this reason marbled murrelet surveys were conducted to protocol within the project area including all of the suitable habitat along the haul route between the harvest units and the paved Bald Mountain Road, where hauling activities are not expected to exceed the ambient noise level. Those surveys indicate that the habitat is not occupied (Project Record Document 65), as such the project is compliant with the stipulations of the Programmatic Habitat Modification Biological Opinion # 1-7-00-F-649 dated October 4, 2000.

Since marbled murrelets are not within the project area there is no need to maintain the daily and seasonal time restriction project design features that were intended to avoid operations and hauling during the critical nesting period for murrelets. Therefore, seasonal restrictions (felling and yarding) will only be necessary for the northern spotted owl critical nesting period, which is March 1 through July 7 (both days inclusive) of any one calendar year.

#### **MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT**

Pursuant to BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2001-158, the Bureau is required to consult with NMFS on all new Federal actions that have been determined to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat, while consultation is not required for actions determined not likely to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat. NMFS has agreed that ESA section 7 procedures described in the interagency streamlined consultation process are adequate to meet all Essential Fish Habitat consultation requirements for listed species.

As previously stated, the Bureau has recently completed ESA section 7 consultation with a finding of *may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect* the designated critical habitat for both the Upper Willamette steelhead trout and Upper Willamette chinook salmon. The Biological Assessment dated February 21, 2001, which was submitted to NMFS, included a determination

that the project is “not likely to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat for coho salmon or chinook salmon found in the Willamina Creek Watershed.” The NMFS letter of concurrence goes on to state that “chinook salmon do not occur in the part of the action area that includes the Willy’s Elk Project, nor are Chinook salmon known to have occurred there historically. This part of the action has not been designated as EFH.”

## **NORTHWEST FOREST PLAN: SURVEY and MANAGE**

### Botanicals

In January 2001, a ROD (*Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines*) was issued which amended “a portion of the Northwest Forest Plan by adopting new standards and guidelines for Survey and Manage, Protection Buffers, and other mitigating measures.” This document contained many features, among which are modifications to the number of species, and the level of protection afforded to some species, in the “Survey and Manage” portion of the Northwest Forest Plan. A Biological Evaluation was completed in June, 1999 for “Special Status Plant Species/Survey and Manage Species and Noxious Weeds” (Project Record Document 60). Several botanical species were found within the Willy’s Elk project area, which were removed from the Survey and Manage list (S&M ROD Table 1-2), eliminating the need to implement special measures for their management. The species removed are the lichens: *Loxosporopsis corallifera*, *Lobaria oregana*, *Lobaria Pulmonaria*, *Nephroma resupinatum*, *Peltigera collina*, *Platismatia lacunosa*, *Pseudocyphellaria anomal*; Mosses: *Antitrichia curtispindula*, *Ulota megalaspora*; and the Fungi *Omphalina erictorum*. One species found in the project area that remained on the list is *Pannaria saubinetii*, a category F lichen that requires no special protective measures (S&M ROD S&G p. 13, Table 1-1). The S&M ROD upgraded the lichen *Platismatia lacunose* from strategy 4 to Category C, and will be protected by protecting the host tree. The BE went on to recommend that additional fall fungi surveys be conducted in fall 1999 or 2000. These recommended surveys were completed in December 1999. Two category B fungi species were located. *Otidea leporina* was found in a riparian area that is not to be treated, so no protective measures are required. The other species *Gomphus clavatus* was located within treatment unit 32-1 and will be protected by maintaining a minimum 50 foot radius buffer. This is consistent with the management guidance specified in Appendix J2 of the FSEIS dated 1994 (Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl. A qualified Botanist and/or Biological Technician will participate in tree selection for the CWD project. This will ensure that no S&M botanical species are adversely affected by the CWD project.

### Wildlife

Surveys for the red tree vole were completed to protocol for the timber harvest units on April 11, 2000 and no sites were identified. As specified on page 28 of the EA, S&M mollusk surveys were completed in November 1998. No Survey and Manage mollusk species were identified. A qualified Wildlife Biologist or Biological Technician will participate in tree selection for the CWD project. This will ensure that no red tree vole is adversely affected by the CWD project.

## CONCLUSION

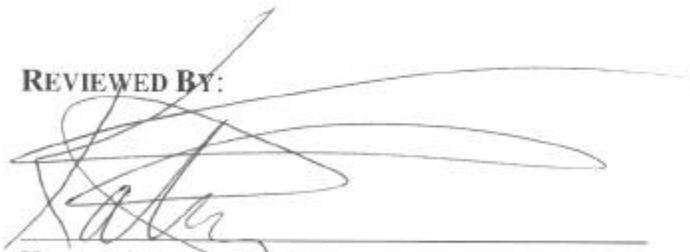
I have determined that a new Environmental Assessment is not necessary for the following reasons: 1/ The mitigations and/or adjustments to the Willy's Elk timber sale will have minimal impact on the timber sale area and will not reduce the sale volume; 2/ the existing EA for the Willy's Elk project fully covers the project as modified by the proposed mitigation and/or adjustments. There will be no substantial changes to the action as originally proposed in the EA. The action as amended is within the scope of the alternatives identified in the original EA, and the environmental impacts are within those described in the original EA and less than those anticipated for the proposed action alternative in that assessment; and 3/ there are no significant new circumstances, information, or facts relevant to environmental concerns or impacts which were not addressed in the EA. The EA anticipated protecting Survey and Manage species in accordance with the Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan and the Salem District Resource Management Plan. The additional surveys conducted for this sale completes the survey requirements for this timber sale. In addition, a qualified Wildlife biologist and Botanist will ensure that no red tree voles or their habitat or S&M botanical species are affected by the CWD enhancement project; 4/ no additional issues were identified during public scoping of the EA. Comments received on the EA and BLM responses to those comments are contained in Addendum I.

### PREPARED BY:

  
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David Roché, IDT Team Leader

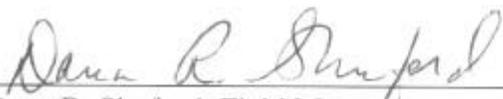
26 September 2001  
Date

### REVIEWED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Katrina Symons,  
Planning and Environmental Coordinator

9/26/01  
Date

### APPROVED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana R. Shuford, Field Manager

9/26/01  
Date