

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Eugene District Office

Monte Carlo Thinning 2

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW

Background: The *Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994), and the Eugene District ROD/RMP (June 1995) direct the use of silvicultural treatments to benefit the creation of late-successional forest conditions in young stands in the Late-Successional Reserves. Dense plantations, including those in the Late-Successional Reserves, have typically been pre-commercially thinned to approximately 200-300 trees per acre, evenly spaced. Dense and even spacing of trees is not consistent with the development of several characteristics of late-successional forests, including variability in tree spacing, multi-layered canopies, canopy gaps, and patchy understories.

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to cut trees using a probabilistic ("Monte Carlo") selection method to benefit the creation of late-successional forest conditions. Specifically, the method is designed to increase the variability of tree spacing and reduce overall tree density. The Proposed Action is to cut approximately half to two-thirds of the Douglas-fir trees in two one-acre plots within a 28-year-old plantation in Section 31, Township 20 South, Range 5 West, Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon, in the South Valley Resource Area of the Eugene District of the Bureau of Land Management (see attached map). Only Douglas-fir trees would be cut. The cut trees would be left on the ground. A one-acre plot was cut in this stand using this Monte Carlo method in Fall, 2001 (CE-01-55). That action cut approximately half of the trees, selecting one tree at a time. These additional two plots would employ variations on the original prescription: one plot would cut approximately two-thirds of the trees, selecting one tree at a time; the other plot would cut approximately half of the trees, selecting two trees at a time. These Monte Carlo thinning methods are proposed at this time to provide an opportunity to demonstrate and further evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the method.

The Proposed Action would occur within the Late-Successional Reserve land use allocation, but not within Riparian Reserves. The Proposed Action is consistent with the Late-Successional Reserve Assessment - Oregon Coast Province - Southern Portion, which recommends stand density treatments in dense, uniform, conifer stands (LSR Assessment, p. 43). The Proposed Action is consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994), and the Eugene District ROD/RMP (June 1995).

Decision: The proposed action described above is approved to be carried out during calendar year 2002.

Rationale: The proposed action qualifies as categorical exclusion C.4. ("Precommercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices") as described in the Departmental Manual (*516 DM 6, Appendix 5), and does not meet any of the exception criteria.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Exception Criteria Review Checklist

Proposed Action: Monte Carlo thinning 2 demonstration

Review the proposed action against each of the 10 criteria listed below. If the project meets one or more of the criteria, it is an exception from categorical exclusion and **MUST** be analyzed in an EA or EIS. To qualify as a Categorical Exclusion the proposed action may not meet any of the criteria. If the criterion does not apply, indicate "Not Applicable." Any mitigation measures (such as contract stipulations or terms and conditions on permits) necessary to ensure that the proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion should be identified at the bottom of the page.

Exception Criteria		Comments
1.	Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety	Not applicable
2.	Have adverse effects on unique resources (i.e., parks, recreation, refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, wetlands, flood plains, etc.)	Not applicable
3.	Have highly controversial environmental effects	Not applicable
4.	Have highly uncertain environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks	Not applicable
5.	Establish a precedent that could result in significant impacts	Not applicable
6.	Be directly related to other actions having cumulatively significant effects	Not applicable
7.	Have adverse effects on cultural or historical resources	Not applicable
8.	Have adverse effects on species listed or proposed as threatened or endangered or have adverse effect on designated critical habitat for these species.	No effect
9.	Require compliance with E.O. 11988 (flood plain management), E.O. 11990 (protection of wetlands), or the Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act	Not applicable
10.	Threaten to violate Federal, State, Local or Native American law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment	Not applicable
Mitigation measures needed to qualify as CE:		

Reviewed By: /s/ Rick Colvin

Date: 3/18/02

Above mitigation measures have been adopted and will be implemented.

Area Manager: /s/ Steven Calish

Date: 3/18/02