

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

No. OR090-99-02

A Supplement to EA-94-01

CLAY CREEK TRAIL FOOTBRIDGE

I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. BACKGROUND

The proposed action is to install an approximately 45 foot log stringer footbridge across Clay Creek, a tributary to the Siuslaw River, to improve access to the Clay Creek Trail. Currently, access is accomplished by crossing Clay Creek by foot. This project is located near the BLM Clay Creek Campground, on the south side of the Siuslaw River. The site is in Section 19, Township 19 South, Range 7 West. The project is part of the original trail proposal addressed in Environmental Assessment (EA) 94-01 for the Clay Creek Trail, that was approved on 11/23/93. The trail has been built and in use for 3 years. Funding and technical support were not available for installing the bridge at the time of trail construction. The land use allocation is Riparian Reserve. (Two diagrams of the proposed bridge are attached.)

B. PURPOSE AND NEED

- ! provide better and safer access to the trail for all users
- ! keep hikers out of the streambed, to protect fish habitat and riparian resources

C. CONFORMANCE

This project plan is in conformance with the:

- *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994) and its accompanying Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives as listed on page B-11.
- *Eugene District Record of Decision, Resource Management Plan (RMP)* (June 1995)
- Plan maintenance documentation postponing surveys for 32 Component 2 and Protection Buffer species was recently completed ("Plan Maintenance Documentation, USDI Bureau of Land Management, To Change the Implementation

Schedule for Survey and Manage and Protection Buffer Species,” approved March 3, 1999). The Proposed Action and alternatives are in conformance with the direction provided in the Plan Maintenance Documentation. The implementation of the plan maintenance is provided for by BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-4).

The effect of the plan maintenance action was analyzed in an environmental assessment, “To Change the Implementation Schedule for Survey and Manage and Protection Buffer Species,” issued October 7, 1998 (“Schedule Change EA”). The analysis contained in the Schedule Change EA is incorporated into this document by reference. Both the Schedule Change EA and the Plan Maintenance Documentation are available for viewing at the Eugene BLM District Office or on the internet at <http://www.or.blm.gov/nwfp.htm>.

- On November 4, 1996, *Interim Guidance for Survey and Manage component 2 species: Red Tree Vole* was issued to implement component 2 of the survey and Manage Standard and Guideline Under the Northwest Forest Plan Record of Decision (BLM Instruction Memorandum No. OR-97-009). This 1996 memorandum contained both the management recommendations (interim guidance) and the survey protocol for the red tree vole. Instruction Memo 98-105 extended the interim guidance memo through FY 99 or until superseded by revised direction. The Proposed Action and alternatives are in conformance with this guidance.

D. ISSUES NOT ANALYZED

No site specific surveys were completed for any of the 32 Component 2 or Protection Buffer species listed in the Schedule Change EA. However, it is possible that individuals may reside in the project area. The issue of how the Proposed Action and alternatives would impact potential locations of these species was not analyzed because impacts are not expected to exceed those anticipated in the Schedule Change EA.

E. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

This project plan is consistent with previously completed documents including the:

- Clay Creek EA 94-01
- BLM’s RECREATION 2000: A STRATEGIC PLAN
- Late-Successional Reserve Assessment, Oregon Coast Range Province, Southern Portion (R0267, R0268)
- Siuslaw River Watershed Analysis (February 1996)

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action (refer to the attached 2 diagrams) consists of:

1. Installing a 45 foot log stringer bridge with a crane or other appropriate equipment. Installation could require equipment in the tributary, although every effort will be made to minimize equipment impacts in the stream bed. The footbridge would be

installed across the tributary at high ground level to access the entrance of the Clay Creek Trail. Any hazard trees endangering the pathway or installation would be removed. It is not foreseen that any conifers would be removed. The bridge would not be disabled accessible as the trail is not either. All wood would be pressure treated.

2. Installing 2 concrete foot pads (2'x2'x8') for the bridge. Placement of the footings would be at least 5 feet from the bank edge. Some dirt and vegetation would be removed to provide a flat surface under the footings. The footpads would be either poured by manual labor (requiring numerous trips across the stream by foot and wheelbarrow) or with a concrete truck from the road. The option to install ready-made concrete barriers as footings is also a consideration but not a preferred one.
3. Brushing vegetation and removing small hardwoods as necessary for installation.

Vegetation Mitigating Measures

- ! Require cleaning of heavy equipment prior to entering area to help minimize the spread of noxious weeds.
 - ! If reseeding is necessary, do not seed roadsides with non-native species mixtures to help maintain the existing native plant community. If deemed necessary for erosion control, seed area with an annual and perennial rye mixture with strict guidelines on seed purity (no crop or noxious weed content).
4. Construction hours limited between 2 hours after sunrise till 2 hours before sunset, for wildlife issues.
 5. A project time line during the summer of 1999, between July 1 and September 15 (low stream flow periods).

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

A No Action alternative would leave the trail crossing as it is through the stream (Clay Creek).

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The following section describes the existing environment that may be affected by the project plan. This information forms the basis for measuring changes as described in the next section, Environmental Consequences.

- A. AIR** - Air quality within the project area is excellent with visibility limited only by terrain. Minor localized sources of air pollution exist in the form of automobile exhaust, road dust, and smoke from nearby slash burns.
- B. CULTURAL/ARCHEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL** - No documented archeological sites have been found at this time within the project area.

C. FISH, WILDLIFE, REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (INCLUDING T&E AND SURVEY & MANAGE SPECIES)

Fish - Coho, chinook, steelhead, and coastal cutthroat trout are the major species in the Siuslaw River and its tributaries.

Wildlife - Habitat for the bald eagle, marbled murrelet, and spotted owl is adjacent and included in the project area.

Reptiles, Amphibians and Mollusks - While habitat exists for special status amphibians and reptiles, these species have not been found within the project area. The Survey and Manage Surveys completed in Fall of 1998 did not find or document any special mollusks species.

D. RECREATION MANAGEMENT SITUATION - General recreation activities within the project area include watching wildlife (usually fish), group picnicking, camping, water activities such as swimming, and the existing hiking use of the trail.

E. SCENERY - VISUAL RESOURCES - Vegetation is lush during the summer months, bright with colors in the fall, and basically bare in the winter.

The Eugene RMP designates the project area to be managed under Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II that allows management activities to retain the existing character of the landscape.

F. SOILS - The project area has predominantly Bohannon soils.

G. TOPOGRAPHY - The project area is flat but adjacent to a steeper hillside.

H. VEGETATION/RIPARIAN RESERVES - The proposed site is in the riparian zone. Vegetation at the bridge site is composed of red alder, salmonberry, vine maple, and sword fern-oxalis. There is a fair amount of herb and bryophyte cover although diversity of either is not remarkable. While there is *Cimicifuga elata*, commonly known as bugbane, near the trail, there is none where the bridge would be located. A pre-field review was completed as required followed by surveys where needed based on species range and habitat. Some Survey and Manage and Protection Buffer species may not have survey protocol or management recommendations completed. District Working Groups (district botany and wildlife specialists) have developed interim management guidelines utilizing Appendix J2 of the Northwest Forest Plan and local expertise where needed to implement the survey and manage standard and guidelines. No threatened or endangered, survey and manage (component 2), or protection buffer species were located within the project area.

I. WATER - The bridge would cross Clay Creek, a tributary to the Siuslaw River. During the summer the water flow is very low, making foot crossing an easy task. During the rainy season water flow is much higher and wider making it more difficult to cross by foot.

- J. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS** - Siuslaw River (Segment B) is located approximately 100 feet from this project area. It was identified in the RMP as a suitable river under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The Outstandingly Remarkable Values identified in the RMP are fish runs, rearing habitats for anadromous salmonids, and wildlife. The project bridge crosses Clay Creek a tributary to the Siuslaw River within 100 feet of its confluence. Therefore the project is within the WSR boundary.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The following are either not present or would not be affected by the Proposed Action or Alternatives: **air quality, cultural resources, farm lands, flood plains, Native American Religious Concerns, soils, topography, land ownership, scenery/visual resources, minority or low income populations, hazardous materials, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species, and wilderness.**

A. IMPACTS FROM THE PROPOSED ACTION

VEGETATION/RIPARIAN RESERVES

- ! Adverse impacts to vegetation would be short-term and minor during construction of facilities. Removal of some vegetation for bridge construction would occur. The bridge site has already been cleared of botany concerns. A site survey was completed on September 17, 1998 which did not find any sensitive, threatened, endangered, survey and manage (component 2) or protection buffer plant species. Soil disturbance associated with the proposed project that would increase the likelihood of non-native and potentially noxious species entering and /or increasing in the immediate vicinity. Impacts due to recreation are anticipated to improve following bridge construction because foot traffic would be on the designated bridge and trail, not on the stream bank vegetation. Mitigation measures listed in the Proposed Action section should help alleviate the potential for the increase or spread of non-native species.
- ! The proposed plan minimizes the removal of trees; however, some existing hazard trees (all small hardwoods) or potentially hazardous portions of these trees may be needed to be removed for bridge installation and/or visitor safety.
- ! The bridge construction would have direct short-term effects disrupting the riparian site with equipment and foot traffic, but it is anticipated any damage would recover within a growing season making beneficial impacts for the long-term.

RECREATION

- ! There would be improved access to the Clay Creek Trail, especially during higher flow periods. The recreating public would be able to enjoy the trail during all seasons of the year. This would be a beneficial impact.

FISH, WILDLIFE, REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (T&E and S&M)

Fish - Anadromous fish including coho use both streams. Other fish species are present as well. No fish impacts other than short-term disturbance are expected.

Wildlife - Increase in impacts to wildlife from this plan are expected to be negligible due to the fact that visitors and vehicles are always near the project area creating a norm for wildlife. The spotted owl was determined to be "Affect, but is not likely to Adversely Affect" due to the constant human presence in the area. This action was determined to "Affect, and is likely to Adversely Affect" the marbled murrelet due to the possible disturbance to these birds in unsurveyed suitable habitat that lies within 0.25 mile of the proposed activity. No habitat for the red tree vole is expected to be modified during this action. Removal of any hazard trees would not reduce the red tree vole habitat below the threshold considered adequate for this species.

Reptiles, Amphibians and Mollusks - Survey and Manage surveys for mollusks species were conducted in October and November of 1998 and none were documented as occurring in the project area.

WATER QUALITY - Work would be scheduled during low flow periods during the summer to maintain water quality. Work would also be monitored in accordance with the SEIS/ROD Standards and Guidelines and RMP management direction. This would minimize any short-term adverse effects to the project area.

COMBINED RESOURCES

- ! The proposed plan would have long-term impacts of reducing sediment, maintaining plant habitat, protecting fish habitat, maintaining the physical integrity of the shoreline and bank, and accommodating a 100-year flood event. (ACS objectives #3, 4, 5, and 9).
- ! The proposed action would only minimally disturb vegetation, water, and soils as bridge installation would be mostly constructed on preexisting roads and trails. Short-term adverse impacts expected would be minor vegetation trampling and soils compaction. Vegetation recovery would be expected to occur within a growing season.

B. IMPACTS FROM NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

- ! Some adverse bank erosion and vegetation disturbance would occur from foot traffic of trail users.
- ! Most visitors would be discouraged from using the trail due to the navigating a stream crossing, especially during high flow periods, making this an adverse situation.

V. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- A. PROPOSED ACTION** - The Proposed Action would not result in significant cumulative effects. The site specific effects on vegetation and soils described herein as well as other resources would be very minor and temporary in duration. Some

vegetation loss can be expected during facility development but is expected to recover quickly.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE - By not implementing the Proposed Action there would be no cumulative effects except for the continuing trend of crossing the tributary on foot and any streambank disturbance from that action.

C. OTHER IMPACTS - There are no other known activities scheduled within this project area other than routine trail and campground maintenance.

VI. MITIGATION

Surveys for the 32 species listed in the Schedule Change EA will begin if technical feasibility problems can be solved. If it is determined by species experts that survey feasibility issues have been resolved throughout the suspected range of any of the 32 species, and if a letter of direction is received prior to issuance of a Decision Record, surveys and appropriate management actions would be implemented.

VII. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Coho salmon are found in Clay Creek and Siuslaw River near the project site. Consultation is currently underway with the **National Marine Fisheries Service** (NMFS). This consultation was begun in September of 1998 with a submission of a programmatic BA.

The Clay Creek foot bridge was submitted for consultation with the **US Fish & Wildlife Service** (USFWS) in December 1998. This action was determined to “Affect, and is likely to Adversely Affect” the marbled murrelet and “Affect, but is not likely to Adversely Affect” the spotted owl due to the possible disturbance to these birds in unsurveyed suitable habitat that lies within 0.25 mile of the proposed activity. A Biological Opinion from the USFWS is due by March 1, 1999.

BLM employees who were **consulted** were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
John Applegarth	Wildlife Biologist (amphibians, mollusks)
Neil Armantrout	Fishery Biologist
Graham Armstrong	Hydrologist
Dan Crannell	T & E Biologist
Mike Payne	Park Ranger
Kathy Pendergrass	Botanist
Gerald Russell	Civil Engineer
Mike Southard	District Archaeologist
Dennis Smith	Recreation Maintenance
Mark Stephen	Forest Ecologist
Barry Williams	Soil Scientist

VIII. LIST OF PREPARERS

BLM employees who helped prepare this document were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Gary Hoppe	Landscape Planner/Environmental Coordinator
Jeanne Hutcheson	Editorial Assistant
Saundra Miles	Recreation Planner, lead writer

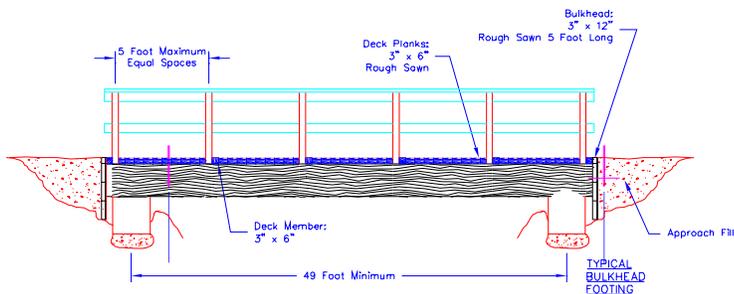
IX. MAILING LIST

This EA will be available for a 30-day public review and mailed to the following interested parties and organizations:

John Bianco - Creswell
Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, & Siuslaw Indians - Coos Bay
Governor's Forest Planning Team - Salem
Pam Hewitt - Marcola
Charles & Reida Kimmel - Eugene
Kalapooya Sacred Circle Alliance - Springfield
Lane County Land Management - Eugene
Ann Mathews - Eugene
Oregon Dept of Land Conservation & Development - Salem
(Oregon Coastal Zone Management)
Oregon Dept of Environmental Quality - Portland
Oregon Dept of Fish & Wildlife - Corvallis, Newport, Springfield
Oregon Dept of Forestry - Veneta
Oregon Natural Resources Council - Eugene
The Pacific Rivers Council - Eugene
John Poynter - Lorane
Peter Saraceno - Eugene
Harold Schoreder - Eugene
Mike Sheetz - Springfield
Craig Tupper - Eugene
Roseburg Forest Resources - Roseburg
Sierra Club - Many Rivers Group - Eugene
Swanson-Superior Forest Products - Noti
US Fish & Wildlife Service - Portland
USFS-Siuslaw National Forest - Mapleton
Jan Wroncy - Eugene

FOOT LOG TRAIL BRIDGE WITH 2 HANDRAILS

NOT TO SCALE



Notes:

- Pre-drill holes for log screws and insert by turning with a wrench. Do not drive with a hammer.
- Treat all cut surfaces with wood preservative
- Six inches compacted gravel under the concrete footings.
- All wood used shall be pressure treated, no untreated wood is acceptable.

SIDE VIEW

ITEM	SPECIES	TREATMENT TYPE	MIN RETENTION LBS/CUFT	NO.	SIZE	LGTH
STRINGER	D-FIR	ACZA	0.60		22" DIA	49'
GUARDRAIL	D-FIR	ACZA	0.60		2X6	
BULKHEAD	D-FIR	ACZA	0.60		3X12	
DECK PLANK	D-FIR	ACZA	0.60		3X6	
DRIFT PIN					3/4	32"
GALV NAILS					40 I	

DESIGNED	G. RUSSELL
REVIEWED	
APPROVED	
DRAWN	GAD
DATE	11-18-98
DRAWING NO.	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
DIVISION OF OPERATIONS OREGON STATE OFFICE
CLAY CREEK FOOTBRIDGE
ELEVATION

SCALE AS NOTED
SHEET 2 OF 3

8/11/98 10:30 AM

CLAY CREEK ROAD

Note: foundation to be set at 495 ft

CLAY CREEK ROAD

300

45 FEET

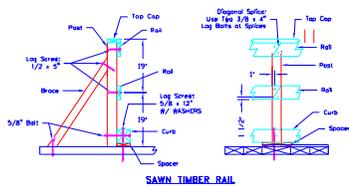
BRIDGE SITE 1

UNDERCUTTING ALONG BANK,
NEED TO MOVE FOOTING
MINIMUM 5 FT BACK FROM BANK EDGE

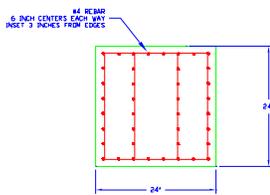
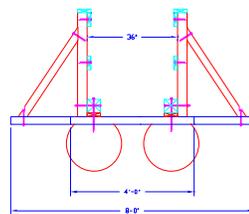
DESIGNED	G. RUSSELL
REVIEWED	
APPROVED	
DRAWING DATE	SCALE: AS NOTED
DATE: 11-16-98	SHEET 1 OF 3
DRAWING NO.	

CLAY CREEK ROAD

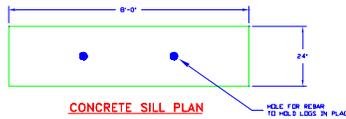
DECK AND HANDRAILS
NOT TO SCALE



SAWN TIMBER RAIL



CONCRETE SILL DETAIL



CONCRETE SILL PLAN

CONCRETE SILL DETAILS
NOT TO SCALE

REV. NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPROVED
	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT		
	DIVISION OF OPERATIONS OREGON STATE OFFICE CLAY CREEK FOOTBRIDGE RAIL & SILL DETAILS		
DESIGNED BY	BYSSSEL		
REVIEWED			
APPROVED			
DRAWING DATE	SCALE: AS NOTED		
DATE: 11-18-99	SHEET: 2 OF 2		
DRAWING NO.			

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Preliminary
Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Clay Creek Footbridge

Environmental Assessment No. OR090-99-02
Supplement to EA No. OR090-94-01

FONSI:

The Coast Range Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management has analyzed a proposal for the Clay Creek Trail. The proposed project prescribes installing a footbridge across Clay Creek, a tributary to the Siuslaw River in order that trail hikers can easily access the Clay Creek Trail. The attached environmental assessment (EA) #OR090-99-02 contains a detailed description and analysis of the proposed action. This EA is a supplement to EA 94-01, which proposed the Clay Creek Trail originally. This EA (99-02) was prepared under the guidance provided by the *Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994) and the *Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (June 1995).

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment and all other information available to me as summarized above, it is the determination of the Bureau of Land Management that the Clay Creek footbridge does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is unnecessary and will not be prepared.