

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

DECISION RECORD  
I Spy I-5 Timber Sale  
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-02-22

**Background:**

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the I Spy I-5 Timber Sale were prepared by the Upper Willamette Resource Area, Eugene District Office. Timber harvest, temporary road construction, and road decommissioning would occur on Matrix lands as identified in the Northwest Forest Plan. The I Spy I-5 Timber Sale is located in Section 25 of T. 21 S., R. 4 W., Will. Mer.

The purpose of this action is to provide forest products while maintaining the health of the forest ecosystem. The need for the action is established in the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995), which directs that timber be harvested from matrix lands in a sustained yield manner and that habitat connectivity persists within the project area.

Four action alternatives were developed in addition to the No Action Alternative.

**Consultation:**

Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was accomplished in the "*Programmatic Biological Assessment for Projects with the Potential to Modify the Habitats of Northern Spotted Owls and/or Bald Eagles or Modify the Critical Habitat of the Northern Spotted Owl - Willamette Province FY 2003-2004*" and will conform to the guidance in this document. Based on this document, the project is determined to be a "may affect, likely to adversely affect" action for spotted owls. Incidental take has been authorized.

There will be no effect to spring Chinook salmon or their habitat. Consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service for Essential Fish Habitat is not required for "No effect" activities.

**Public Comment:**

Comments on the project proposal were solicited from affected tribal governments, adjacent landowners, and from the general public by the inclusion of this project in the Eugene District Planning Update "Eye to the Future," December 2002.

This EA and FONSI were advertised on May 28, 2003 in the Eugene Register Guard. The EA and FONSI were also available on the internet at <http://www.edo.or.blm.gov/nepa>. Copies of the EA and FONSI were also mailed to interested individuals. The public comment period ended on June 27, 2003.

One comment letter was received from the Oregon Natural Resources Council. Comments from this letter, and BLM responses, are shown below.

**Comment:** *ONRC supports an alternative that would conduct the density management, minus construction of spurs A and D.*

**Response:** This alternative was not considered or analyzed because it is within the range of alternatives analyzed in the EA. Any alternative can be selected by the deciding official as long as it is (a) within the range of alternatives analyzed; and (b) better meets the purpose for taking action than does other alternatives.

**Comment:** *The EA says that the harvest is being conducted near the edge of a spotted owl home range that is already below 40% suitable habitat. We are curious how the boundary of this home range was determined.*

**Response:** Home ranges are determined by applying a simple radius around an activity center. In the Willamette Province, spotted owl home ranges are 1.5 miles radius around an activity center.

**Comment:** *Contrary to the assertions in the EA, ACS objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 will be retarded by proposed regen harvest and road construction (partially within a riparian reserve) which will likely cause increased peak flows and erosion and sedimentation.*

**Response:** Under the Proposed Action, no road construction will occur in Riparian Reserves. As originally worded, the ACS analysis in the EA for the Proposed Action stated that the impacts would be the same as Alternative A. However, Spur A, the only proposed road within a Riparian Reserve, would NOT be constructed under the Proposed Action (see EA, pages 4, 6, and 16). Thus, the current condition of all of the Riparian Reserves in the project area would be maintained under the Proposed Action. Additionally, most of the project area is below the elevations where rain-on-snow events are likely (1,500 feet above sea level). The likelihood of increased peak flows, erosion, and sediment are extremely low.

### **Finding of No Significant Impact:**

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment (OR090-EA-02-23), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternative will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in 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) as amended by the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, January 2001. Environmental Assessment OR 090-EA-02-23 is in conformance with the above documents and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) or a supplement to the existing EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

### **Decision:**

Based on site-specific analysis in the Environmental Assessment, the supporting record, management recommendations contained in the Watershed Analysis (Cottage Grove Lake/Big River Watershed Analysis, 1997) as well as management direction contained in the RMP (Eugene District Resource Management Plan) dated June 1995, I have decided to implement the Proposed Action in the I Spy I-5 Timber Harvest Environmental Assessment as analyzed in EA OR090-EA-02-23. This Alternative will regeneration harvest an estimated 45 acres in the Matrix land use allocation and construct approximately 1,500 feet of native surface temporary road (to be decommissioned after completion of harvesting). An estimated 1.6 MMBF of timber will be harvested. The mitigation measures, design features and management requirements, logging methods, and road decommissioning goals as described in the EA, are hereby adopted.

### **Rationale for the Decision:**

This proposed action best meets the purpose and needs as described in the EA. This action will:

1. Contribute to meeting the need for a sustainable supply of timber by making 1.6 MMBF of timber available for harvest.
2. Continue to provide connectivity of habitat within the stand by leaving the core of the project area unharvested.

The "No Action" alternative, and Alternatives A, B, and C were not selected because they would either provide less connectivity after harvest, provide less timber, or require more road construction.

**Administrative Remedies:**

The decision to implement the timber sale may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for the timber sale will not be subject to protest until the notice of sale is first published in the Eugene Register-Guard on August 27, 2003. This published notice of sale will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests of the timber sale (43 CFR 5003.2(b)). Protests of this decision must be filed with this office within fifteen (15) days after first publication of the notice of sale.

Approved by: Emily Rice  
Field Manager, Upper Willamette Resource Area

Date: 8/12/03