

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

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND  
DECISION RECORD  
Cottage Grove/Big River Watershed Restoration Plan  
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-00-03

**BACKGROUND**

The Bureau of Land Management prepared an environmental assessment (EA) which analyzed the effects of this proposed action and alternatives. The EA and a preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) were made available for public comment in January and February 2000. No public comments were received.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

On the basis of the information contained in the EA (OR090-00-03) and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those 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), with which this EA is in conformance, 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 or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

**DECISION**

It is the decision of the Bureau of Land Management to implement the Cottage Grove Lake/Big River Watershed Restoration Plan (the Proposed Action as described in EA No. OR090-00-03). The EA and FONSI analyzed the selected alternative and found no significant impacts. An environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Implementation of this decision will result in watershed restoration activities including culvert replacement, in-stream habitat improvements, riparian area hardwood conversion, individual tree release, snag creation, young stand thinning and road decommissioning. All design features of the Proposed Action described in the EA (pp. 1-3) will be implemented.

The selected alternative is in conformance with the following documents:

"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;

"Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," June 1995.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

In addition to the Proposed Action, the EA considered two other alternatives in detail: Alternative A would be similar to the Proposed Action but would include additional road closures within the Elk Emphasis Area. The No Action Alternative would involve no management activities at this time (EA, p.3). Alternatives to specific features of the Proposed Action were not analyzed in detail because they would not result in measurable differences in impacts (EA, p. 3).

## **RATIONALE FOR SELECTION**

The purpose of the action is to manage the Cottage Grove Lake/Big River Watershed on a landscape level to accomplish the goals outlined in the Eugene District RMP.

The Proposed Action would most effectively meet the purpose of the action in the watershed because restoration needs across the landscape would be addressed. The Proposed Action provides a variety of restoration activities within the watershed and eliminates many unneeded roads, while continuing to recognize the human element in the watershed. The Proposed Action is consistent with the standards and guidelines in 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. Based on the analysis discussed and presented in the EA, the Proposed Action is consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy and the objectives for the Riparian Reserves, and would not prevent or retard attainment of any of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives (EA, p. 4-5). The Proposed Action is consistent with the analysis and recommendations in the Cottage Grove Lake/Big River Watershed Analysis (May 1997).

Alternative A also meets the purpose of the action (EA, p. 7). Alternative A includes additional road closures to restrict public access in the Elk Emphasis Area to a greater extent than does the Proposed Action. However, the additional road closures would only be seasonal and could be open during management activities on private lands. Thus, Alternative A's additional restrictions on public access would not result in substantial improvement to the watershed (EA, p. 7) beyond those realized through the Proposed Action.

The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose of the action because it would not consider restoration activities over a broad landscape (EA, p. 3). Additionally, Alternative B would not provide for watershed scale transportation management activities.

## **CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

Projects that may affect threatened or endangered species would undergo consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on an annual basis. Projects planned for a certain year would be addressed in a biological assessment and reviewed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Any mandatory Terms and Conditions that are received in the biological opinion from the Service would be incorporated into the project designs.

A public notice advertising the availability of the EA and preliminary FONSI appeared in the Eugene Register-Guard on January 19, 2000. Additionally, the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals and organizations (EA, p. 10). A 30-day public comment period closed on February 18, 2000. No comments were received.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES**

The decision to implement this project may be appealed to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. If an appeal is taken, the notice of appeal must be filed in this office within thirty (30) days of the publication of the notice of this decision in the Eugene Register-Guard for transmittal to the Board. A copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs, must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region,

U.S. Department of the Interior, 500 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 607, Portland, Oregon, 97323, within the same time frame. In taking an appeal, there must be strict compliance with the regulations. In accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, an appellant has the right to petition the Office of Hearing and Appeals to stay the implementation of the decision; however, an appellant must show standing and present reasons for requesting a stay of the decision. The petition for stay must be filed together with a timely notice of appeal (43 CFR 4.21(a)(2)).

Signed by: Steven A. Calish  
South Valley Field Manager

Date: 4/13/2000