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EA-02-06  
5401  
E-00-303  
Twin Prairie

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

DECISION RECORD and FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
Twin Prairie Timber Sale  
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-02-06  
Sale Tract No. E-00-303

**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 February, 2002. One public comment was received.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

On the basis of the information contained in the EA (OR090-EA-02-06), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed 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) and the "Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," (June 1995); (2) the Proposed Action and alternatives are in conformance with the Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan; and (3) the Proposed Action and alternatives do not 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 select the Proposed Action (Alternative 5) described in the Twin Prairie Timber Sale EA. This EA and the FONSI analyzed the selected alternative and found no significant impacts.

Implementation of this decision will result in forest management activities including: density management of both Matrix and Riparian Reserve by commercial timber harvest (heavy thinning Matrix; moderate thinning Matrix and Riparian Reserve); and road construction, renovation, and decommissioning within the Matrix. All design features identified in the EA (pp. 5-6) will be

implemented.

The selected alternative 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," (NSO ROD, April 1994), and the "Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," (RMP, June 1995), as amended by the "Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines," (January 2001).

## **ALTERNATIVES**

In addition to the selected alternative, the EA considered five other alternatives in detail (EA, pp. 2-6). Alternative 1 would be density management of Matrix only, with cross drain culvert installation, and skid roads and landings constructed in Riparian Reserves. Alternative 2 would be similar to the Proposed Action except that two additional Riparian Reserve acres would be harvested, two haul roads in the Riparian Reserve would be constructed, and a cross drain culvert would be installed. Alternative 3 would be similar to Alternative 1 except that there would be no heavy thinning. In Alternative 4, fewer Matrix acres would be harvested, and no activity would take place in the Riparian Reserves. Alternative 6 is the "no action" alternative and would involve no management activities.

## **RATIONALE FOR SELECTION**

The purpose of the action in the Matrix is to promote the development of late-successional forest structure over longer rotations while providing an output of merchantable timber and maintaining forest health and productivity. All five action alternatives would meet this purpose of the action. The purpose of the action in the Riparian Reserves is to hasten the development of some late-successional forest structural characteristics. Only the Proposed Action and Alternative 2 would meet this purpose.

The Proposed Action would most effectively meet the purpose of the action. It provides forest products by density management. It would hasten the development of late-successional forest structural characteristics through acceleration of diameter growth of retention trees in both the Matrix and Riparian Reserves, hastening canopy layering and increased crown ratios.

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. 13, 14). Silvicultural practices in the Riparian Reserves will help acquire desired vegetation characteristics needed to attain ACS objectives (EA, pp. 13-14).

The Proposed Action and the other action alternatives would degrade habitat for spotted owls on a local, short term basis; ultimately, late-successional habitat would be enhanced (EA, p. 15). Alternatives 1, 3, and 4 would provide approximately the same amount of timber (Alternative 1) to less timber (Alternatives 3 and 4) (EA, p. 2) and would have lesser short-term effects on spotted owl habitat because fewer acres would be harvested (EA, p. 14-15). However, fewer acres would benefit by achieving late-successional forest structure characteristics more quickly through density management (EA, pp. 14-15). Alternative 2 would provide slightly more timber, would have slightly greater short-term effects than the Proposed Action, and would produce over time slightly more acres with late-successional forest structure characteristics through density management.

Alternative 6 (no action) would not meet the purpose of the action within the Matrix or Riparian Reserves. Alternative 6 would provide no timber, nor would it reduce stand density. Of all the alternatives, Alternative 6 would result in the slowest development of late-successional forest structural characteristics (EA, pp. 13, 15). Alternative 6 would have no immediate effects on wildlife habitat.

## **CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

A public notice advertising the availability of the EA and FONSI appeared in the Eugene Register-Guard on February 6, 2002. Additionally, the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals and organizations (EA, p. 20). A 30-day public comment period closed on March 8, 2002. One comment letter was received and is addressed in the EA.

Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, consultation was completed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which found that the action " ...[is] not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl."

Consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service is not required for this Proposed Action or the Alternatives.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has been notified of this proposal and has determined, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.5(b), that the proposed undertaking would have no effect on cultural resources.

The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz and the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde were notified of this project during the scoping process, requesting information regarding tribal issues or concerns relative to the project. No response was received.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

This decision will be implemented by a timber sale contract. A timber sale contract will implement the road construction, timber harvest, and decommissioning of roads used for timber harvest operations described in the Proposed Action (EA, pp. 3-5).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES**

The decision to implement the timber sale portion of this project may be protested under 43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies. In accordance with 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for the timber sale portion of this project will not be subject to protest until the notice of sale is first published in the Eugene Register-Guard on July 31, 2002. This published notice of sale will constitute the decision document for the purpose of protests of the timber sale portion of this project. 43 CFR 5003.2(b) Protests of the timber sale portion of this decision must be filed with this office within fifteen (15) days after first publication of the notice of sale.

The decision to implement the service contract/non-timber sale portion of 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 first publication of the notice of this decision in the Eugene Register-Guard on July 31, 2002, 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).

\_\_\_\_\_/s/ Steven Calish

Date: 7/24/02

Steven A. Calish  
Field Manager