

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND  
DECISION RECORD**

**Implementation of the Hills Creek / Little Fall Creek  
Transportation Management Recommendations**

EA OR 090-01-07

**BACKGROUND**

The Interdisciplinary Team for the McKenzie Resource Area, Eugene District, Bureau of Land Management has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and analyzed a proposal to implement various road decommissioning and maintenance projects over a 5-year period in the Hills Creek / Little Fall Creek Watersheds located on BLM Land. The analysis looked at one action alternative: Road maintenance levels and road closures shown in the “Transportation Management Recommendations” (Appendix A in the EA-01-07) would be implemented over a 5-year period. Approximately 19.5 miles of road would be maintained and in some cases upgraded or repaired for future long term use, and up to 11.33 miles of existing roads determined to fit the criteria in the “Transportation Management Recommendations” would be decommissioned and left in an erosion resistant condition. Up to 9.46 miles would be fully decommissioned and removed from the road inventory. These road closures would be implemented to reduce road maintenance costs and in many cases reduce road surface erosion near stream channels. The EA and a preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) were made available for public comment January 17, 2001 to February 16, 2001.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

On the basis of the information contained in the EA (OR 090-EA-01-07) and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the Proposed Action 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* (May 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 the Land Management to implement the proposed action (Implement Hills Creek / Little Fall Creek Transportation Management Plan) and project design features identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA-01-07) for the McKenzie Resource Area. 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 decommission up to 11.08 miles of existing roads, and fully decommission up to 9.46 miles of road, which will be removed from the road inventory. All design features of the Proposed Action described in the EA will be implemented.

Public comments were received which resulted in some clarification and changes. The number of decommissioned miles changed from 11.33 to 11.08. A correction in one of the maps was made.

Some road actions are linked to future potential timber sales. This means roads listed in Table #1 (located in the Appendix of the EA) as being implemented under a potential timber sale will be needed for that timber sale and then decommissioned or fully decommissioned upon completion of the sale.

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,” May 1995.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment resulted in the following changes:

- S** Road number 18-1-7.3, located in 18S-1W-Sec. 7, the first 1/4 mile will not be decommissioned, but the remainder in the adjacent Section 17 will be decommissioned as planned.
- S** Road number 18-2-2.1, located in 18S-1W-Sec. 11, will be decommissioned to the BLM property line as planned.
- S** Road number 18-1-14.2, located in 18S-1W-Sec.13, will be decommissioned to the BLM property line as planned.
- S** Road number 18-1-21D, located in 18S-1W-Sec. 16, will be decommissioned (coordinate with Weyco.).
- S** Road number 18-1E-20.2A will not be decommissioned.

- S Road number 18-1E-21.1A will not be decommissioned as planned, leaving an alternative to route a road into Section 28 to the south.
- S The map showing 18S - 1E - S23 incorrectly displayed the southern portion of road number 18-1E-26.1 being decommissioned. The portion of road that will be decommissioned is north of the watershed boundary and would not be in conflict with any road right-of-way agreement.

## **RATIONALE**

The proposed road decommissioning would reduce the road mileage in several areas, thereby helping restore natural hydrologic flows, reducing sedimentation and reducing disturbance to wildlife.

Project design features adequately protect environmental resources and minimize the risk of adverse effects which might result from implementing the project.

The No Action alternative was not selected because the environmental damage associated with keeping these roads open will gradually increase over time, as well as road maintenance funding not able to keep pace with the needs. Retaining these roads would result in increased costs and erosion.

## **CONSULTATION**

The Proposed projects were consulted on with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and US National Marine and Fisheries Service through programmatic biological assessments and opinions.

Project work such as culvert removals would comply with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife time lines for working in stream channels. Water levels would be low and no fish are expected to be present in the project area during the period of work

A public notice advertising the availability of the EA and preliminary FONSI appeared in the Eugene Register Guard on January 17, 2001. Additionally, the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals and organizations (EA, p. 17). A 30-day public comment period closed on February 16, 2001.

Approved by: Emily Rice  
McKenzie Field Manager

Date: March 8, 2001