

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

1792A  
EA-98-20

DECISION NOTICE  
Environmental Assessment No. OR090-EA-98-20

**Background:**

The Lost Creek Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact were prepared by the McKenzie Resource Area, Eugene District Office. The projects will occur within the Lost Creek Watershed in the McKenzie Resource Area. The Lost Creek EA contains several types of projects:

- Timber harvesting, road construction and road closures associated with the timber harvesting actions
- Road repair and road closures not associated with the timber harvesting actions
- Snag creation

The decision is for snag creation, road repair and road closures not associated with timber harvesting. The decision on timber harvesting actions and other road closures will be made at a later date. The decision made about snag creation and road repair and road closures not associated with timber harvesting does not predispose the decision to be made regarding timber harvest activities and other road closures. These actions are independent from the timber harvest activity. Implementing these actions will not lead to selecting a particular alternative for timber harvesting.

The proposed action would repair 0.58 mile of road, decommission 1.56 miles of road, fully decommission 1.0 mile of road and an estimated 4,000 to 7,000 snags would be created. The management objectives for the proposal are to:

- Manage the transportation systems adjacent to harvest areas and areas damaged by the 1996 floods, through road closures, improvements, and decommissioning to maintain or improve wildlife habitats, water quality, hydrologic function, and to reduce future road maintenance needs.
- Create snags to meet 40 percent cavity nester population in the General Forest Management Area (GFMA), and 100 percent cavity nester population in the Riparian Reserves (RR).

**Public Comments:**

The EA was advertised on March 17, 1999 in the Eugene Register Guard as available for a 30-day public review period. In addition, the EA was posted on the Eugene District Web Page. Comments were received during the review period. None of the comments pertain to the actions described above; the comments were about constructing new roads. The proposed action described above involves existing roads.

**Decision and Rationale:**

The decision is to proceed with the actions described below. These actions are common actions to Alternative 1 and Alternative 3. Design features that are associated with these actions, as discussed in the EA, will be implemented. As described in the EA, site-specific surveys for 32 Survey and Manage Component 2 species were not undertaken because it is technically infeasible to do so. No letter of direction was received informing the Eugene District that survey technical feasibility problems had been resolved for any of the survey and manage species discussed in the Schedule Change EA in accordance with Instruction Memo OR-99-047. Therefore, no additional surveys are needed and the mitigation measure discussed on page 11 on the EA will not be implemented.

- Road Repair

Road No. 20-1-14.1 Seg. B, which is located in T. 20 S., R. 1 W., Sec 13, had a portion of the road damaged during the 1996 flood. This road is needed to access BLM and private land with authorized use under a reciprocal Right-of-Way Agreement. The proposal is to realign Road No. 20-1-14.1 Seg. B, 24 feet east into the cutbank on stable ground, and provide for adequate drainage. The slump area would be shaped, contoured, and seeded for stabilization.

- Road Decommissioning and Full Decommissioning

Road No. 20-1-14.1 Seg. C (0.64 mile), Road No. 20-1-13.3 (0.38 mile), Road No. 20-1-13.4 (0.16 mile) and Road. No. 19-2-24.1 (0.38 mile) would not be utilized for the next 10-15 years, and they would be decommissioned. These roads are located in T. 20 S., R. 1 W. Sec. 13 and T. 20 S., R. 2 W. Sec. 1.

Road No. 20-1-21.4 (0.91 mile), and Road No. 20-1-21.6 (0.10 mile) are no longer needed and will be fully decommissioned. These roads are located in T. 20 S., R. 1 W. Sec. 21.

- Snag creation

The Proposed Action is to manage for cavity nesting wildlife in the Lost Creek Watershed. This involves the creation of snags for 40 percent cavity nester populations in the GFMA, and 100 percent cavity nester populations in the RR areas. Over the next four years, approximately 2,000 trees would be treated in the GFMA, and approximately 2,000 to 5,000 trees would be treated in the RR. Predesignated live trees would become snags by using either explosives to remove the tops of trees, cutting the tops of some trees, or inoculation of trees with a native fungus (inducing a rot into the tree).

The decision to implement these actions was made for the following reasons:

- to maintain primary access to BLM and private land access by Road No. 20-1-14.1
- to decrease the amount of roads in the watershed
- to provide snags for the cavity nester population

These actions address the management objectives described above. Alternative 1 (no action) is not selected because it fails to meet any of the management objectives.

The proposed action is included in the Willamette Province Programmatic Biological Assessment for both bull trout and spring chinook. This project will move the watershed towards the attainment of ACS objectives. Implementation of this project will meet all of the management objectives.

The decision is tiered to 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).

**Administrative Review Opportunities:**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4, within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

Approved by: Emily Rice  
McKenzie Resource Area Manager

Date: May 3, 1999