

# **Decision Memo**

## **Bruno Meadows Area Road Decommissioning Project**

**April 2003**

<b>Lead Agency:</b>	<b>USDA Forest Service Willamette National Forest Detroit Ranger District</b>
<b>Responsible Official:</b>	<b>Diana Bus Acting District Ranger</b>
<b>For Information Contact:</b>	<b>David Klug Detroit Ranger District HC73 Box 320 Mill City, OR 97360 503-854-4216</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>T. 11S., R.7E, Sec. 8, WM Linn County, Oregon</b>

## I. Proposed Actions and Decision

It is my Decision to decommission approximately 0.8 miles of road including Road 2234-175 and its spurs, Roads 2234-176 and 2234-177 (T.11S., R.07E.) and to revegetate with forage seed and transplanted trees at the entrance. The objective of this project is to obscure the entrance to this minor road system and provide a more effective barrier to off-highway vehicle use, thus eliminating the need for gates and protecting area resources. This project enhances wildlife habitat with forage seeding and protects water quality by stabilizing stream banks and draining the roadbed. To reduce potential impacts to the northern spotted owl, the project will not be implemented between March 1<sup>st</sup> to July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Using heavy equipment and hand crews on Road 2234-175, this project will:

- Obliterate approximately the first 100 feet of the entrance of the road and cover disturbed ground with large woody material (LWM). The LWM will be collected from nearby stands along roads and within reach of the excavator.
- Remove all culverts
- Restore the natural shape of a stream crossing
- Construct waterbars through the road prism
- Scarify the road beyond the obliterated section (approximately 0.75 miles)
- Spread non-invasive forage seed on scarified and other disturbed ground
- Cover exposed soils with seed-free straw mulch and/or native wood chips
- Transplant larger, roadside trees from an adjacent plantation to the obliterated entrance section.

On Roads 2234-176 and 2234-177 heavy equipment and hand crews will:

- Scarify the road beds along the entire length of each road
- Remove all culverts
- Construct waterbars through the road prism
- Spread non-invasive forage seed on scarified and other disturbed ground
- Cover exposed soils with seed-free straw mulch and/or native wood chips

## II. Rational for Decision

The purpose of this project is to develop a trend toward providing more wildlife habitat of high quality in the area, while reducing disturbance to wildlife and other resource values, resulting from motorized vehicle use. The Detroit District Ranger has determined that there is a need for the following actions affecting approximately 0.8 miles of road at the described location:

- This road system will not be needed for management in the foreseeable future. Any unforeseen need for access, such as fire suppression, can be provided by other roads within one-half mile away. The area lies in a Late Successional Reserve (LSR); an area managed to protect and enhance conditions of the forest

ecosystem, which serve as habitat for late-successional and old-growth related species including the northern spotted owl.

- There is a need to more effectively protect selected areas of big game habitat along the 2234 road system, and to enhance the quality of this habitat;
- There is a need to repair a road failure along a Bruno Creek tributary and stabilize Road 2234-175.

### **III. Result of Scoping or Public Involvement:**

Forest Service specialists were contacted to provide agency concerns and potential issues with the proposed action. Under internal scoping, the District interdisciplinary team raised no issues and found no effects in relation to implementing this project.

This road decommissioning project has been included in the Willamette National Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) since the Winter of 2003. Comments received from the public included support for this project from Karen Sjogren to improve habitat and protect big game.

A Linn County Commissioner stated their policy is to not decommission any roads used for recreation or other purposes; roads are considered investments in Linn County. Currently, because of a washed out culvert near the entrance of Road 2234-175, other drivable roads in the vicinity, and the lack of management in the foreseeable future, the road is not accessible and has no need for use.

### **IV. Reasons for Categorically Excluding the Proposed Action:**

The proposed actions fall into the category described in Section 31.2 (6) of Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 Chapter 30. Section 31.2 (6) states “...Wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction.”

No extraordinary circumstances exist for the proposed project with the implementation of the mitigation measures described in the Findings section of this document. Therefore, this project may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment pursuant to Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 (6).

## Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations:

1. This proposed action will meet standards and guidelines described in the ***Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (FEIS 1990)*** as amended by the ***Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, ROD (NWFP 1994)***.
2. The proposed action will meet the National Historic Preservation Act. Surveys for this project area have determined that this project has no effect on Heritage Resources.
3. Survey protocols outlined in the Forest Plan and related direction for Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species, Survey and Manage and Management Indicator Species have been met.
4. This project is consistent with the *North Santiam River Watershed: City of Salem and Detroit Ranger District Joint Water Quality Monitoring Plan (12/96)*.

<b>Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>Present?</b>	<b>Significant Effect?</b>
a. Steep slopes or highly erosive soils	No	No
b. Threatened and Endangered species or their critical habitat	Yes. Spotted owl (March 1 to July 15 seasonal restriction)	No
c. Flood plains, Wetlands, or Municipal Watersheds	No	No
d. Congressionally designated areas such as Wilderness, Wilderness Study, or National Recreation areas	No	No
e. Inventoried Roadless Areas	No	No
f. Research Natural Areas	No	No
g. Native American religious or cultural sites, archeological sites, or historic properties or areas	No.	No

**Implementation Date:**

The Bruno Meadows Area Road Decommissioning project may be implemented immediately.

**Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities**

This decision is not subject to appeal under 36 CFR 215.8 paragraph 4.

**For Information Contact:** David Klug  
Hydrological Technician  
Detroit Ranger District  
HC 73 Box 320  
Mill City, Oregon 97360  
Phone: (503) 854-4216

**Responsible Official:** *Diana Bus* *April 14, 2003*  
DIANA BUS Date  
Acting District Ranger