

RECORD OF PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) DETERMINATION

CX Log #: OR-014-CX-07- 14

Lease or Serial #: N/A

Project Name: Pleasant Valley Section 13 Fire Salvage

Location: T.41S., R.6E., Section 13

County: Klamath County

BLM Office: Lakeview District, Klamath Falls Resource Area

Phone #: 541-883-6916

Address: 2795 Anderson Ave., Bldg. 25, Klamath Falls, OR 97603-7891

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Background

In the spring of 2007, the Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) implemented the Pleasant Valley prescribed burn as analyzed under the Pleasant Valley Hazardous Fuels Treatment categorical exclusion (CX) #06-16. In addition to the prescribed burning, treatment of mixed-conifer and juniper stands will occur based on that CX. Some of the objectives of the combination thinning and follow-up prescribed burn included:

- Improving the resiliency of residual trees from drought, insects, and disease.
- Reducing the fuels hazards associated with high fuel loading and overstocking that makes these stands vulnerable to stand replacing wildfires.

Approximately 650 acres were underburned over a three week period in April 2007. Overall, the burn resulted in minimal mortality with the exception of 115 acres where some spotted but concentrated mortality occurred (see attached Map 1 – Pleasant Valley General Salvage Area). In the eastern portion of section 13, the prescribed fire resulted in mortality of a number of commercial size (>7"DBH) trees. Monitoring of the mortality in this area since April indicates a number of commercial size trees were killed with an associated increased buildup of bark beetles in both the dead and severely scorched and stressed trees.

Proposed Action

In order to capture the highest economic value of the dead and severely scorched and stressed trees prior to deterioration, the following actions are proposed:

1. Within the Pleasant Valley 2007 burned areas in the eastern part of Section 13, cut and yard all dead, severely scorched, and stressed trees two (2) inches DBH and greater. The commercial trees (trees > 7"DBH) will be sold as sawlogs, the submerchantable material (trees <7" DBH) will be removed and chipped for biomass. Approximately 115 acres of the burned area will have the material cut and yarded (see attached Map 1 – Pleasant Valley General Salvage Area). Approximately 100 to 150 MBF of commercial sawlogs will be removed.
2. This salvage work is in the same area as the thinning proposed under CX-06-16 referenced above, and is planned to be included on the same Task Order (see attached Map 2 - Pleasant Valley Task Order Map for Combined Thinning and Fire Salvage Treatments).
3. A dead tree is defined as a tree that has no live crown remaining. A severely scorched or stressed tree is defined as any tree that has lost more than 60%-70% of its original live canopy, and/or has evidence of recent bark beetle attacks.
4. Volume from the salvage harvest would count towards meeting the KFRA ASQ target for 2007.
5. Ground based logging systems would be used including mechanized harvesters and rubber tired skidders.
6. No new or temporary road construction would be constructed.
7. Existing landings would be utilized directly adjacent to existing roads.
8. Maintenance of some unimproved roads may be required.
9. Some areas of the burn areas that do not meet the minimum or target stocking level standards (150-300 trees per acre) will be replanted in the spring of 2008 or 2009.
10. All of the mortality proposed to be salvaged is located on westside Matrix allocated lands.

PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed project has been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the:

Klamath Falls Resource Area Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan and Rangeland Program Summary (KFRA ROD/RMP/RPS), approved June 1995

- Page 55 - *“Provide for salvage harvest of timber killed or damaged by events such as wildfire, windstorms, insects, or disease, consistent with management objectives for other resources.”*
- Page E-4 - Salvage of Mortality Volume: *“All silvicultural systems provide for salvage under prescriptions designed to ensure that such actions meet the requirements of the allocation. Mortality in established stands results either from competition and self-thinning or from*

IDENTIFICATION OF EXCLUSION CATEGORY

The proposed action has been identified as a categorical exclusion under **Bureau of Land Management Categorical Exclusions 516 DM 6, Appendix 5.4, C – Forestry (2)**:*“Sale and removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute safety hazard, and where access for the removal requires no more than maintenance to existing roads.”*

COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further analysis or documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provided none of the Extraordinary Circumstances listed in 516 Departmental Manual 2, Appendix 2 (5/27/04) are met. The proposed action will:

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?		X
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks?		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?		X
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office?		X
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		X
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?		X
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		X

The proposed action would not create adverse environmental effects, meet any of the above extraordinary circumstances, or fail to comply with Executive Order 13212 (Actions to Expedite Energy-Related Projects) – to avoid direct or indirect adverse impact on energy development, production, supply, and/or distribution

DOCUMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

Note: although none of the conditions for the above extraordinary circumstances are met, some resources discussed may potentially be affected. Mitigation Measures and Project Design Features in the table below will be applied to prevent the adverse conditions discussed in the extraordinary circumstances:

Exception No.	Can Be Mitigated	Cannot Be Mitigated	Mitigation Measures and/or Project Design Features

The mitigating measures described below would minimize the impacts associated with the proposed action.

Cultural Resources

- All proposed harvest areas have been surveyed for cultural resources. All identified cultural sites would be protected from disturbance.

Special Status Plants

- All proposed harvest areas were last surveyed for special status plants in 1998. No special status plants are known to occur in the treatment area

Riparian Reserves

RMP Guidelines:

- Riparian Reserve widths as specified on page D-8 of the RMP would be implemented.
- Page D-9 states *“no timber harvest will be planned within Riparian Reserves as part of the sustained yield timber management program. Where catastrophic events such as fire, flooding, wind or insect damage result in degraded riparian conditions, allow salvage and firewood cutting if required to attain Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives. Remove salvage trees only when watershed analysis determines that present and future woody debris needs are met and other Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives are not adversely affected.”*
- Page D-9 (2) states: *“Retain all snags in the Riparian Reserves except where safety or fire hazard dictates removal (RA-2). Guidelines for woody debris in streams are discussed in Riparian Reserves in the Timber Harvest section.*

Existing Condition: There are no riparian reserves within the proposed harvest area.

Wildlife

- Snags - Leave at least 2 snags / acre within every harvest unit. Within Riparian Reserves, leave 4 snags / acre. At least one of these should be greater than 20 inches in DBH or the largest size available. The others should be at least 12 inches DBH. Burned areas with suitable snags that are inaccessible or left unsalvaged for other reasons would suffice for snag clumps and larger leave areas.
- An active Cooper’s hawk nest was located after the prescribed burn within the unit. One nestling was found in the nest. The nest tree will be retained from harvest. Follow up visits showed the nestling had either fledged or perished therefore no seasonal restrictions would be necessary for this nest in 2007.

Soil Protection Measures

Implement the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- Harvest operations will occur when the soil moisture at a six (6) inch depth is 20% or less.
- Skid trails would be limited to 12% of the area.

- Detrimental soil disturbance would be limited to 20% of the area. Detrimental soil disturbance in excess of this amount would be mitigated.
- Slash would be placed on skid trails and other disturbed areas to minimize erosion and impede surface water runoff.

Noxious Weed Control

- All harvesting equipment and associated vehicles would be washed off prior to entering the BLM lands to prevent introduction or spread of noxious weeds. Botanical surveys in 1998 found no concentrations of noxious weeds in the treatment area.

Remarks

Results of post treatment monitoring of previous fire salvage sales indicate that when the above mitigation measures are implemented, adverse effects on the environment are minimized. The Klamath Falls Resource Area completed the post-treatment monitoring of the Bull Springs Fire Salvage on 84 acres in 2002. This salvage sale was the result of the Indian Springs Fire that burned in the summer of 2001. The monitoring report indicated that adverse impacts were minimized when similar project design features were implemented.

As is the case with most fire salvage, particularly with ponderosa pine timber, the sooner the fire-killed timber can be harvested, the greater the economic recovery of merchantable material before significant wood deterioration takes place. The mitigation measures described above are designed to minimize adverse impacts and allow for quick recovery of the material.

SURVEYS AND CONSULTATION

Surveys and/or consultation may be needed for special status plants and animals, for cultural resources, and other resources as necessary (appropriate fields are Initialed and Dated by responsible resource specialist):

Surveys	Are Completed	Will Be Completed	Are Not Needed
SS Animals	SH 07/24/07		
SS Plants	7/16/07		
Cultural Resources	MAD 07/25/07		
Survey and Manage	SH 07/24/07		
Consultation	Is Completed	Will Be Completed	Is Not Needed
SS Animal Consultation*	SH 07/24/07		
Botanical Consultation			7/16/07
Cultural Consultation		MAD 7/25/07	
*(SS = Special Status)			

Survey and Manage

The salvage area was surveyed for Survey and Manage species in the Spring of 1998 and again in the Spring of 2001 for Terrestrial Mollusks. No survey and manage species were found (see attached Survey and Manage compliance form)

ESA Consultation

This project was consulted on with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Roaming Salvage II BA and letter of concurrence (1-10-04-141)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CX DETERMINATION

The proposed action would not create adverse environmental impacts or require the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). The proposed action has been reviewed against the criteria for an Exception to a categorical exclusion (listed above) as identified in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, and does not meet any Exception. The application of this categorical exclusion is appropriate, as there are no extra ordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action is, therefore, categorically excluded from additional NEPA documentation.

Prepared By: Mike Bechdolt, Lead Forester

Reviewed By: Interdisciplinary Team

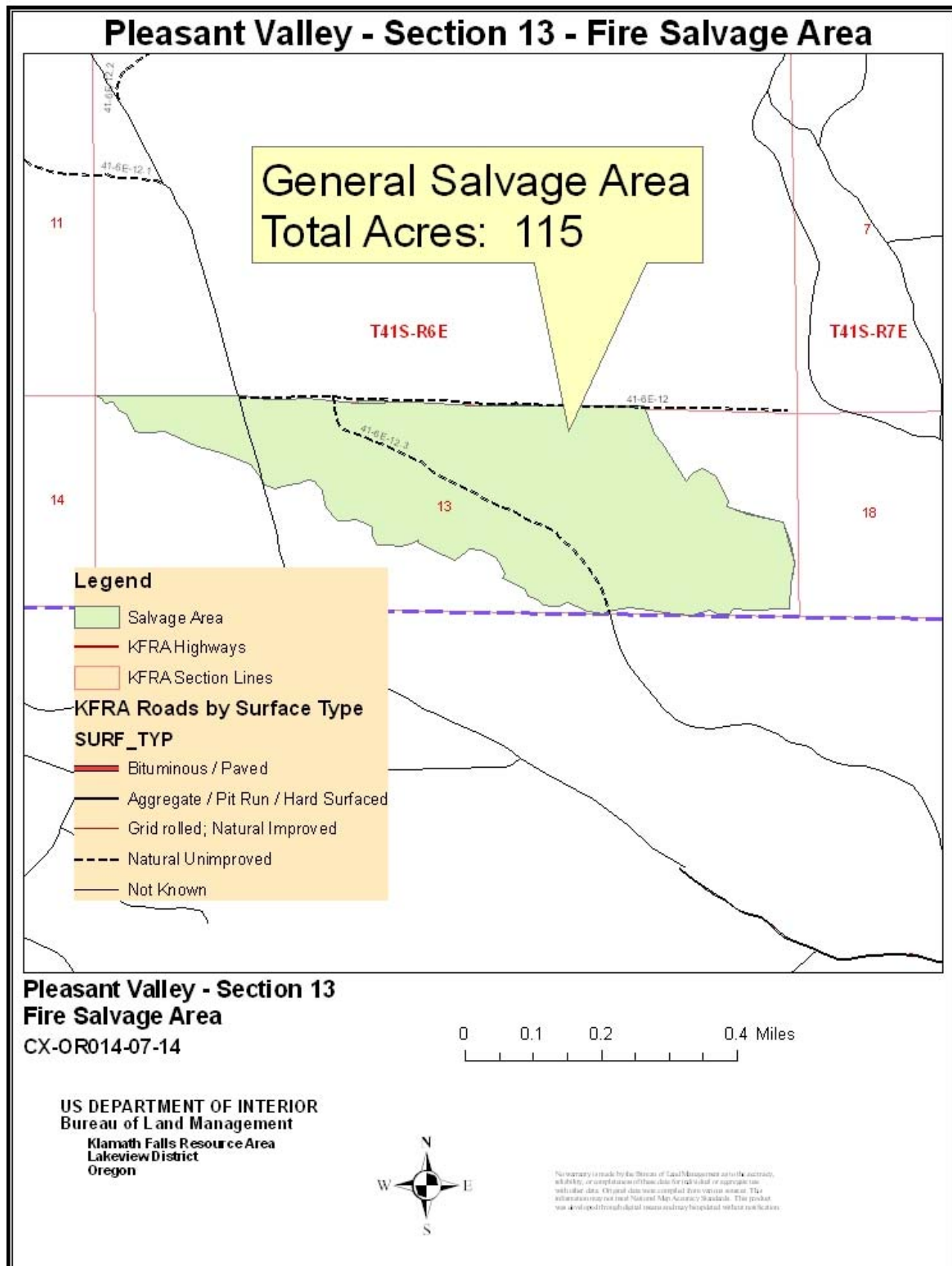
Approved By: (Signature)	Name: Donald Holmstrom <i>/s/ Donald J. Holmstrom</i>	Title: Resource Area Manager	Date: 9/13/07
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CONTACT PERSON

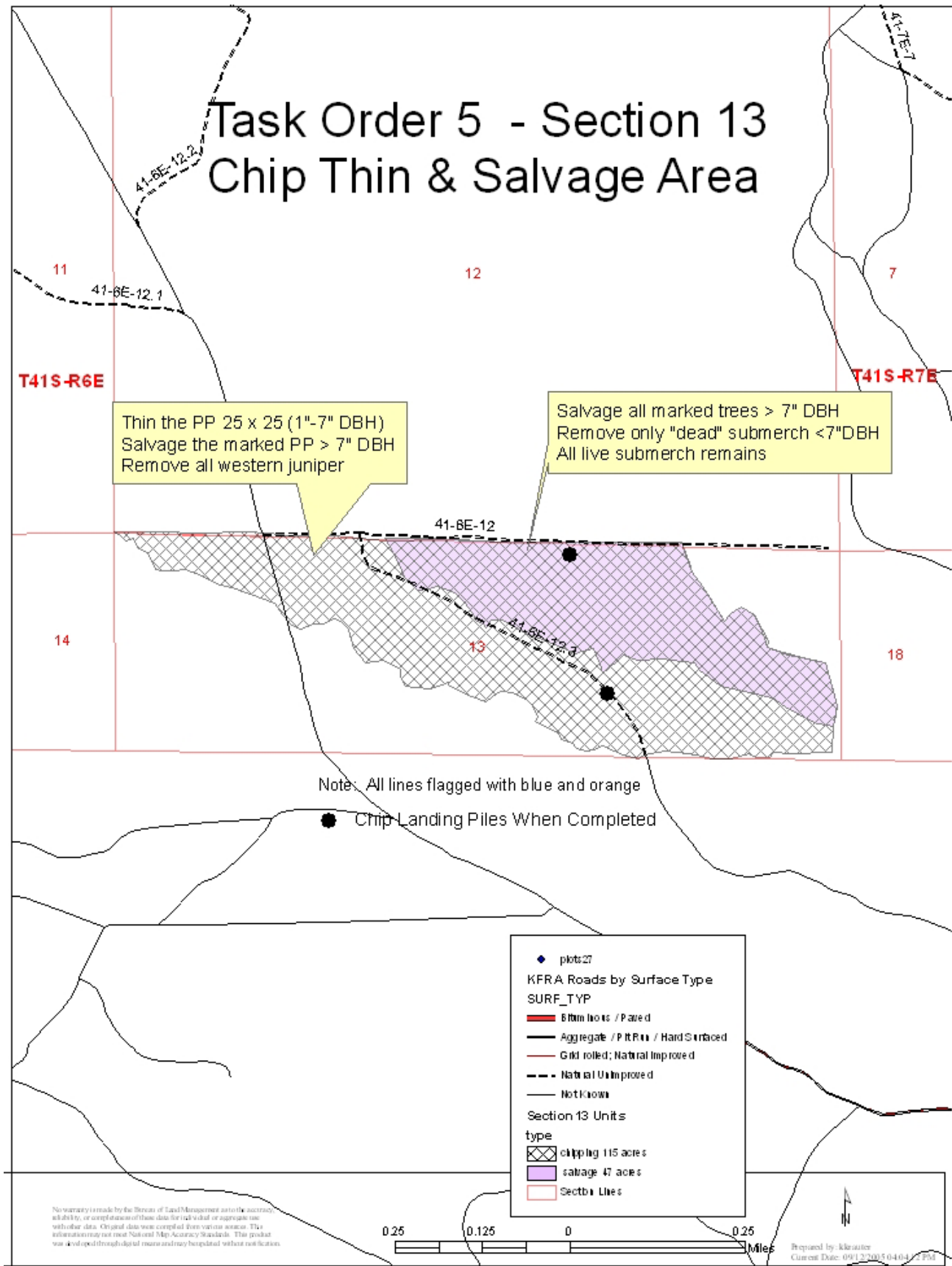
For additional information concerning this project, contact:

Mike Bechdolt, Klamath Falls Resource Area, 2795 Anderson Avenue, Building 25, Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603-7891 or telephone: 541-884-2907.

Map 1 – Pleasant Valley General Salvage Area.



Map 2 - Pleasant Valley Task Order Map for Combined Thinning and Fire Salvage Treatments



2001 ROD Compliance Review: Survey & Manage Wildlife and Botany Species

Environmental Analysis File

Lakeview District BLM – Klamath Falls Field Office

Project Name: Pleasant Valley Salvage

Prepared By: Steve Hayner

Project Type: Timber Harvest

Date: 07/25/07

Location: T41S, R6E, Section 13

S&M List Date: December 29, 2003

Species listed below were compiled from the 2001 Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines (Jan 2001) and include those vertebrate and non vertebrate wildlife and non vascular and vascular botanical species whose known or suspected range includes the Klamath Falls Resource Area according to the protocols listed below. (Refer to Table A - Survey & Manage Wildlife and Botany Species.)

- Survey Protocols for Survey and Manage Strategy 2 Vascular Plants Version 2.0 (December 1998)
- Management Recommendations for Survey and Manage Lichens Version 2.0 (March 2000)
- Natural History and Management Considerations for the Northwest Forest Plan Survey and Manage Lichens Based on Information as of the Year 2000 (USDA Forest Service R6-NR-S&M-TP-03-03 2003). Survey Protocols for Survey and Manage Category A & C Lichens in the Northwest Forest Plan Area Version 2.1 (2003)
- 2003 Amendment to the Survey Protocol for Survey and Manage Category A and C Lichens Version 2.1 (2003)
- Survey Protocols for Survey and Manage Component 2 Bryophytes Version 2.0 (1997)
- Survey and Manage Protocols Protection Buffer Bryophytes 2.0 (1999)
- Handbook to Strategy 1 Fungal Species in the Northwest Forest Plan (PNW-GTR-476 October 1999), and Handbook to Additional Fungal Species of Special Concern in the Northwest Forest Plan (PNW-GTR-572 January 2003)
- Survey Protocol for the Great Gray Owl within the Range of the Northwest Forest Plan v3.0 (Jan. 2004)
- Survey Protocol Aquatic Mollusk Species From the Northwest Forest Plan Version 2.0 (Oct. 1997)
- Draft Survey Protocol for Terrestrial Mollusk Species From the Northwest Forest Plan Version 2.0 (1997)
- Survey Protocol for S&M Terrestrial Mollusk Species v3.0 (Feb. 2003).

Statement of Compliance

Pre-disturbance surveys and management of known sites required by protocol standards to comply with the *2001 Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (as the 2001 ROD was amended or modified as of March 21, 2004) were completed for the Pleasant Valley Salvage Sale. The Pleasant Valley Salvage Sale also complies with any site management for any Category B, D, and E species as identified in the 2001 ROD (as modified): no sites of any of these species (B, D, E) is present in the planning area.

Based on the survey results, there are currently no known sites of Survey & Manage species that require management within the project area. Therefore, based on the information presented in Table A below regarding the status of surveys for Survey & Manage wildlife species and the results of those surveys, it is my determination that Pleasant Valley Salvage Sale complies with the provisions of the *2001 Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (as the 2001 ROD was amended or modified as of March 21, 2004). For the foregoing reasons, this contract is in compliance with the 2001 ROD as stated in Point (3) on page 14 of the January 9, 2006, Court order in Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Rey et al.

/s/ Donald J. Holmstrom

9/13/07

Field Manager
Klamath Falls Field Office

Date

Table A - Survey & Manage Wildlife and Botany Species

Species	S&M Category	Survey Triggers			Survey Results			Site Management
		Within Range of Species?	Contains Suitable habitat?	Project may negatively affect species/habitat?	Surveys Required?	Survey Date Month/ year	Sites Known or Found?	
Vertebrates								
Great Gray Owl (Strix nebulosa) ¹	A	Yes	No	No	No	NA	0	
Mollusks								
Siskiyou Sideband (Monadenia chaceana) ²	B	Yes	No	No	No	NA	#	
Crater Lake Tightcoil (Pristiloma arcticum crateris) ³	A	Yes	No	No	No	NA	#	
Evening Fieldslug (Deroceras hesperium) ⁴	B4	Yes	No	No	No	NA	#	
Fluminicola no. 3 ⁵	A	Yes	No	No	No	NA	#	
Fluminicola no. 16 5	A	Yes	No	No	No	NA	#	
Vascular Plants								
Cypridium fasciculatum	C	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	July 1998	0	No
Cypridium montanum	C	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	July 1998	0	No

****FOOTNOTES WILL CHANGE BASED ON PROJECT****

¹ Pre-disturbance surveys for great gray owls are not required since there is no suitable nesting habitat within the project area. No nesting habitat is available on the proposed sale area. The required habitat characteristics of suitable habitat include: (1) large diameter nest trees, (2) forest for roosting cover, and (3) proximity [within 200m] to openings that could be used as foraging areas (Survey Protocol for the Great Gray Owl within the range of the Northwest Forest Plan v3.0, January 12, 2004). This area was part of the Grenada West TS and portions of the remaining part of the sale were surveyed. No Great Gray owls were located.

² Equivalent-effort pre-disturbance surveys are not required for the Siskiyou Sideband (IM-OR-2004-034). (Survey Protocol for S&M Terrestrial Mollusk Species v3.0, 2003). High priority habitat for *M.chaceana* on the KFRA is rocky outcrops, riparian and seepy areas. (Nancy Duncan per.comm 2005). The proposed salvage area does not contain suitable habitat.

³ Suitable habitat for the Crater Lake tightcoil is “perennially wet situations in mature conifer forests, among rushes, mosses and other surface vegetation or under rocks and woody debris within 10 meters of open water in wetlands, springs, seeps and riparian areas...” (pg. 43, Survey Protocol for S&M Terrestrial Mollusk Species v3.0, 2003). Within the project, suitable habitat is confined to the stream-side areas that are contained within Riparian Reserves. The proposed salvage area does not contain suitable habitat.

⁴ The evening field slug’s range was extended to include the KFRA in March 2003 (pg 2 and 3 2002 Annual Species Review and Appendix A, pg 32., Survey Protocol for S&M Terrestrial Mollusk Species v3.0, 2003). Their habitat is typically associated with wet meadows in forested habitats in a variety of low vegetation, litter and debris. Surveys may be limited to moist surface vegetation and cover objects within 30m of the stream (Survey Protocol for S&M Terrestrial Mollusk Species v3.0, 2003). The proposed salvage area does not contain suitable habitat.

⁵ Fluminicola sp no. 2, 3 and 16 are found in cold seeps and springs (Aquatic Mollusk Survey Protocol Version 2.0 October 1997). No suitable habitat exists in the proposed salvage area.