



United States Department of the Interior



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IN REPLY REFER TO:

5400 (014)

**DECISION RECORD #1
FOR
ROAMING SALVAGE II EA NO. OR014-03-06
PROJECT: Baldy Salvage Timber Sale Area**

INTRODUCTION

This Decision Record (DR) contains site specific information pertaining to the proposed action in the Roaming Salvage II Environmental Assessment (EA). The proposed action includes implementation of one or more timber sales in the Baldy Salvage Timber Sale Area.

This DR is the first DR that will authorize work to begin on actions proposed and analyzed in the Roaming Salvage II EA No. OR014-03-06. This DR addresses the Baldy Salvage Area (see map 1) that is located in a portion of the project area presented and analyzed in the EA. I will be making further decisions based on the proposed actions outlined in the Roaming Salvage II EA.

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) interdisciplinary team designed the Roaming Salvage II EA based on: (a) current resource conditions in the project area, (b) expected/potential timber mortality, (c) the results of monitoring the previous decade of salvage activities under the precursor Roaming Salvage EA, and (d) meeting the objectives and direction of the KFRA Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Northwest Forest Plan (NWP). The proposals presented and evaluated in the Roaming Salvage II EA reflect what the interdisciplinary team determined to be the best balance and integration of resource conditions, resource potential, competing management objectives, expressed interests of the various publics that commented, and the concerns of surrounding communities.

DECISION

It is my decision to implement Alternative A, the Preferred Alternative, and the Project Design Features (Appendix A of EA) proposed in the Roaming Salvage II EA (EA No. OR014-03-06). The approved action will result in one or more timber sales within the analysis area. Specifically, this decision will result in:

- Approximately 150 acres of scattered dead, dying, and damaged timber will be salvaged over 2,500 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in T. 38 S., R. 5 E., Sections 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21, W. M. Salvaged acres means only the acres actually salvaged, rather than the entire stands where widely scattered salvage is located.

- Approximately 2 million board feet (MMBF) of timber will be salvage harvested.
- Approximately 150 acres will be tractor logged using primarily existing skid trails and landings. Salvage acreage estimates include skid trail and landing areas.
- Salvage will consist primarily of windthrown and wind damaged trees along with trees killed or dying from bark beetle infestations, fire damage, and root rot infection centers.
- Salvage activities will occur entirely within the matrix land use allocation (see KFRA FEIS pages 2-18 to 2-23 for definition of matrix lands). No salvage activities are planned for withdrawn areas such as Riparian Reserves (RRs), District Designated Reserves (DDRs), and Research Natural Areas (RNAs).
- Access to the sale areas will be on existing road systems. No new roads will be constructed. No temporary spur roads will be constructed.
- Following salvage harvest, areas with inadequate stocking will be replanted with conifer seedlings. Up to 20 acres will be replanted with conifer seedlings.
- Planting and harvest treatments as a result of this Decision will take place over the next 3-5 years or up until the reforested areas are fully stocked.
- Road maintenance, including grading, ditch cleaning, culvert cleaning, and roadside brushing will be accomplished within the Baldy Salvage Area.
- Roads used during salvage activities will include:
 - 38-5E-17.0, -17.1, -17.2, -17.3, -17.4,
 - 38-5E-18.0, -18.1, -18.2, -18.3, -18.4, -18.5, -18.6,
 - 38-5E-19.0, -19.1, -19.2, -19.3, -19.4,
 - 38-5E-20.1, -20.2,
 - 38-5E-21.1, -21.2, -21.3,
 - 38-5E-28.3,
 - and the Keno Access Road.
- All blocked roads that are opened to facilitate logging will be reblocked upon completion of salvage activities. These roads include:
 - 38-5E-17.1, -17.2, -17.4,
 - 38-5E-19.3, 19.4,
 - 38-5E-21.2,
 - and 38-5E-28.3.
- Concentrated Areas of the BLM special status green-flowered wild ginger (*Asarum wagneri*) will be avoided during yarding operations and/or yarding will be conducted on snow (minimum 20 inches of snow, see winter logging PDFs in Appendix A of The Roaming Salvage II EA).
- Noxious weed populations within the Baldy Salvage Area would be treated as described in the Noxious Weed Prevention PDFs and the Road Maintenance PDFs of the Roaming Salvage II EA (Appendix A).
- Stream restoration actions would occur within the identified RR. Logs would be retained on site or utilized for restoration actions in nearby RRs in order to enhance stream channel function as identified by the fishery/hydrology specialists.
- The perennial and intermittent streams containing, or connecting to, fish populations will be buffered and protected as described in the PDFs (Appendix A) of the Roaming Salvage II EA and the Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Appendix D of the KFRA ROD/RMP.

- All other drainages within the Baldy Salvage Area will be buffered and protected as described in the PDFs of the Roaming Salvage II EA (Appendix A) and the BMPs in Appendix D of the KFRA ROD/RMP.
- Green tree thinning will occur as described in the Roaming Salvage II EA around individual high resource value pines and Douglas-firs. Up to 100 high resource value trees will have thinning accomplished within their drip lines or to a maximum 60 foot radius around the high resource value tree.
- Salvage harvest activities will not occur within ¼ mile of spotted owl nest sites or within ¼ mile of the concentrated use area (from radio telemetry study) of the displaced spotted owl pair currently using the SW1/4NE1/4 of section 20, T38S, R5E, W.M. until after the nesting season is over.
- At least 2.5 snags per acre will be reserved for wildlife and coarse woody debris recruitment as required by the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) and KFRA RMP. At least one of the 2.5 snags/acre will be 20 inches DBH or larger (see PDFs, Appendix A, Roaming Salvage II EA).
- The PDFs described in Appendix A of the Roaming Salvage II EA will be implemented for all actions conducted in the Baldy Salvage Area. In addition, the BMPs applying to salvage harvests and logging activities in the KFRA ROD/RMP, Appendix D will be implemented for all actions conducted in the Baldy Salvage Area.

Monitoring

Monitoring requirements will be met as described in the Roaming Salvage II EA and in Appendix K of the KFRA ROD/RMP. In accordance with the monitoring sections of the above documents, at least 20 percent of all ground disturbing management actions will be examined prior to project initiation and re-examined following project completion.

Monitoring related to salvage harvest activities will include soil impacts, numbers and spacing of skid trails, size and location of landings, coarse woody debris requirements, snag retention (size and numbers), establishment and adherence to riparian reserve buffers, T and E species buffers, cultural resources buffers, seasonal use restrictions, etc.

Mitigation

All PDFs described in Appendix A of the Roaming Salvage II EA and all BMPs in Appendix D of the KFRA ROD/RMP that pertain to timber harvesting, and in particular to salvage harvesting, and to the resources listed in the Site Specific Information section above will be implemented.

SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The Baldy Salvage Timber Sale Area is located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands approximately 30 miles west of Klamath Falls, Oregon in T. 38 S., R. 5 E., Sections 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21, W.M. Elevations within the sale area range from 5,100 feet to 6,300 feet.

Vegetation

The dominant conifer vegetation within the Baldy Salvage Area is white fir (*Abies concolor*) and Shasta red fir (*Abies magnifica*). Other tree species include Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), western white pine (*Pinus monticola*), and incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*). For more

information on vegetation in the area see pages 3-10, 3-25 to 3-31, and 3-58 to 3-66 of the KFRA Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Wind and snow storms during the winters of 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 resulted in large amounts of wind throw and tree damage (broken, root sprung, split, etc.). In addition, recurring drought conditions over the past several years combined with overstocked stand conditions (healthy stocking levels range from 90 to 160 square feet of basal area per acre in the Baldy Salvage Area, currently basal areas ranging from 150 to over 350 square feet per acre are common) have weakened many of the trees in the Baldy Salvage Timber Sale area to the extent that they are succumbing to bark beetles and competition. Other agents causing conifer mortality in the sale area include fire damage and root rot. Conifer mortality in the area exceeds snag levels needed for wildlife and coarse woody debris recruitment. The BLM has identified approximately 2 million board feet (MMBF) of excess wind throw, wind and snow damage, and tree mortality in the Baldy Salvage Area.

Hydrology, Water Resources, Riparian Reserves

The Baldy Salvage Area is located in a portion of the Jenny Creek Tier One Key Watershed and the Johnson Creek Watershed. Within the proposed Baldy Salvage Area, ¼ mile of perennial fish bearing stream exists in the southwest ¼ of Section 21, T38S, R5E, W.M. Another ¼ mile of perennial fish bearing stream (Johnson Creek) and a 5 acre wetland exist within the withdrawn Surveyor DDR in the southeast portion of Section 21, T38S, R5E, W.M. Approximately two miles of intermittent streams exist within the remaining portions of Section 21 and in the southwest and southeast portions of Section 17, T38S, R5E, W.M. The perennial streams, the intermittent streams, and the wetland will be buffered and protected as described in the Project Design Features (PDFs) (Appendix A) of the Roaming Salvage II EA.

All drainages in the proposed salvage area drain into Johnson Creek which is part of the Jenny Creek Watershed. More information about the Jenny Creek Watershed is available in the Jenny Creek Watershed Assessment and Analysis.

Soil Resources

Soils in the Jenny Creek Watershed vary with landform and parent material. Common soils in the upper east portion of the watershed (the Baldy Salvage Area) include; Oatman (136E), Pokegama (147C), and Woodcock (205E). These soils are deep, low density, and well drained with gravelly to very cobbly subsoils. Soils in the area are generally stable and occur on gentle to moderate slopes. More soil information is available in the Jenny Creek Watershed Assessment and Analysis (pages 7 and 8).

Wildlife and Special Status Species within Baldy Salvage Area

The proposed salvage area hosts many of the wildlife species common to the west side of the resource area (see KFRA FEIS pages 3-37 to 3-47 and the Jenny Creek Watershed Analysis pages 43 to 53).

Northern Spotted Owl

There are four known spotted owl home ranges within the Baldy Salvage Area. Each home range has or had a pair of spotted owls. All four home ranges are part of a radio telemetry

study and are being monitored year-round. Three of the home ranges are associated with reserve areas. The other spotted owl home range overlaps the Baldy Salvage Area by about 100 acres in the very southwest corner and is not associated with a reserve area. Two of the spotted owl pairs occupying home ranges in the Baldy Salvage Area have been displaced by barred owls. One of these displaced spotted owl pairs has left the area. The other pair has moved away from its normal home range but is still in the Baldy Salvage Area. The three remaining spotted owl pairs in the Baldy Salvage Area attempted nesting this year and one pair produced two young.

Great Gray Owl

Although no nests have been found, there have been visual detections of two great gray owls on US Forest Service (USFS) lands in Section 7, T38S, R5E, W.M. adjacent to the Baldy Salvage Sale Area. These sightings were detected during goshawk surveys. Follow-up great gray owl surveys produced visual detections in the same area but no nest sites were located.

Northern Goshawk

There are two known goshawk territories in the salvage area. One is currently active (young in the nest), the other has not been surveyed in the past several years although the known nest sites are located in adjacent USFS lands and a spotted owl reserve area (Pederson DDR) where no salvage activities are planned.

American Marten

During winter carnivore surveys in 2000, five martens were detected within or adjacent to the Baldy Salvage Area.

Mollusk Species

Currently, the BLM conducts surveys for two former Survey and Manage mollusk species that have been moved to the Special Status Species list, *Deroceras hesparium* (evening field slug) and *Fluminicola no. 3*. Surveys are only conducted in high priority habitat. No such high priority habitat exists in the proposed salvage area.

Fisheries

Sections of perennial streams in Section 21, T38S, R5E, are considered fish bearing. The eastern most perennial stream is Johnson Creek and the other perennial stream drains into Johnson Creek. Johnson Creek flows into Jenny Creek approximately nine miles downstream from the Baldy Salvage Area. Redband trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss sp*), a BLM sensitive species, is present in streams within and adjacent to the project area. Speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus*) inhabit portions of streams in or near the project area. Jenny Creek smallscale suckers (*Catostomus rimiculus sp*), a BLM sensitive species, along with other fish species, inhabit lower portions of Jenny Creek (Rossa 1999). No Threatened and Endangered species are known to inhabit the stream sections in or adjacent to the Baldy Salvage Area.

Special Status Plant Species

In 2003 vascular plant surveys were conducted over sections 17, 18, 19, and 20 of the proposed salvage area by a contractor (Burt/Buck Survey Area, Special Status Vascular Plant and Noxious Weed Survey, Rabe Consulting, summer 2003). The surveys were

accomplished by walking routes that covered a representative cross section of all major topographic and special features in the proposed salvage areas.

No Threatened and Endangered plant species were found. All four sections have scattered populations of the BLM designated special status plant green-flowered wild ginger (*Asarum wagneri*). Noxious weed species located in the Baldy Salvage Area include St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), Dalmation toadflax (*Linaria genistifolia ssp. dalmatica*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*).

Section 21 of the proposed Baldy Salvage Area will be surveyed for special status plants in the summer of 2004. No salvage activities will occur in section 21 until surveys are completed. If Special Status Plant Species are found during 2004 summer surveys of section 21, they will be protected and/or treated as described in the PDFs of the Roaming Salvage II EA (Appendix A).

Grazing

The Baldy Salvage Sale Area is part of the Buck Lake Grazing Allotment. The allotment allows grazing of 50 head of cattle from June 15 to September 25 on BLM lands. Approximately 100 acres of the Surveyor DDR and Campground are fenced to prevent livestock access.

Cultural Resources

The Klamath, Modoc, and Shasta tribes were present in the Baldy Salvage Area prior to European settlement. However, no known cultural resource sites exist within the Baldy Salvage Area. For a more thorough discussion of cultural resources see pages 3-49 and 3-50 of the KFRA FEIS.

The entire proposed salvage area has been surveyed for cultural resources. BLM class 3 cultural surveys (30 meter transects) were conducted in 1997, 1998, and 2001 by BLM and contract crews. No sites were located. If any cultural resources are discovered during salvage harvest activities, operations would be immediately halted and the Field Manager and archaeologist would be notified. Operations would not resume until the Field Manager approved a protection plan.

Recreation

The BLM administered Surveyor Campground is located in the Surveyor DDR in the extreme eastern portion of the Baldy Salvage Area. The semi-developed campground is forested with large conifers dominating the landscape. Some of the trees in and immediately adjacent to the campground are dead, dying, and defective and could present hazards to recreationists. A ½ mile section of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) is located in the very southwest corner of The Baldy Salvage Area.

Visual Resources

The majority of the area is managed as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class IV, where major modifications to the existing character of the landscape are allowed. Other areas are managed as VRM Class II including areas within ¼ mile of Surveyor Campground

and the Pacific Crest Trail. Management activities in VRM Class II areas must retain the existing character of the landscape (see KFRA FEIS pages 2-40, 3-50, and Map 2-5).

Special Areas

The following “Special Areas” are present within the Baldly Salvage Timber Sale Area: The Pederson DDR, The Surveyor DDR, a portion of the Johnson Too DDR, and a portion of the Old Baldy Research Natural Area. In addition ½ mile of the Pacific Crest Trail runs through the southwest corner of the area. No salvage activities are planned in the DDRs or RNA.

Resources Not Present

The following resources are not present within the proposed Baldy Salvage Area: prime and unique farmlands, mining claims, paleontological resources, Native American religious sites, hazardous materials, roadless areas, wilderness areas, and wilderness study areas.

Environmental Consequences

Implementation of the proposed action is consistent with the effects analysed for the Roaming Salvage II EA. The PDFs from the Roaming Salvage II EA and the BMPs from the KFRA ROD/RMP will protect the affected resources and result in no impacts greater than those described in the EA and the KFRA ROD/RMP.

RATIONALE

The decision to implement this proposal, Alternative A, meets the purpose and needs identified in the EA and furthers the intent established in the Northwest Forest Plan and the Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) to salvage timber mortality and protect other resource values.

Alternative B, salvage without limited thinning, is rejected because it would not provide a benefit to old-growth ponderosa pines and Douglas-firs. Some old-growth ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir trees are declining or dying due to understory competition, primarily from white fir. Many individual old-growth trees will be lost if measures, such as targeted/limited thinning, are not taken to reduce understory competition.

Alternative C, the No Action Alternative, is rejected because it does not meet the resource management objectives for the Matrix identified in the Klamath Falls RMP and the Northwest Forest Plan. Beneficial economic opportunities from salvaged timber in the adjacent communities would be foregone and no thinning or fuels reduction benefits would be realized.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Pursuant with the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Section 7 consultation was completed with the US Fish and Wildlife Service resulting in a BLM Biological Assessment dated May 12, 2004 and a US Fish and Wildlife concurrence letter dated June 4, 2004.

The May 12, 2004 Biological Assessment written by BLM biologists determined that the proposed actions in the Roaming Salvage II EA would constitute a “may affect, but is not

likely to adversely affect” northern spotted owls, bald eagles, and Lost River and shortnose suckers. In a June 4, 2004 letter, the US Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the BLM’s “may affect but is not likely to adversely affect” determinations. For the species listed above, no incidental take is anticipated or exempted for the proposed actions.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The KFRA requested public comments on the Roaming Salvage II EA on two different occasions. The first was an initial scoping letter dated February 5, 2004 that outlined the proposed treatments for the analysis area. Three written comments were received. Upon completion of the EA, the public was again notified on April 4, 2003 and allowed to comment during a formal thirty (30) day public comment period. Again, three comments were received. The main issues raised in the comments include:

1. The EA is not site specific as required by law.
2. An EA is not the appropriate NEPA document to use for salvage activities. The BLM could use other authorities such as Categorical Exclusions.
3. Insect and fire mortality are natural processes and should be allowed to continue without salvage.
4. Dead trees have more value in the woods than at a mill.
5. No trees larger than 21 inches should be harvested to comply with east side screens.
6. Salvage within withdrawn areas including riparian reserves is inappropriate.
7. No actions within roadless areas or late-seral stands.
8. The EA relies on inadequate and outdated snag and down wood requirements.
9. Hazard tree removal should not be an excuse to harvest timber volume.
10. During fire salvage, all live trees should be protected. The BLM overestimates the amount of mortality from fire damage.
11. Regarding thinning, old-growth trees cannot be saved, older trees should be harvested to make room for younger trees.
12. Increase the amount of ripping and road obliteration.
13. No new road construction.

I have reviewed the public comments summarized above and have discussed them with the interdisciplinary team of specialists on my staff. The EA and this DR contain the requisite site specific information to implement the proposed action. The comments received do not provide any substantially new information or new analysis. Nor do they identify substantial new data gaps that would indicate additional analysis is needed. Finally, the comments do not identify any significant new data which would alter the effects described in the EA. I am confident that the Roaming Salvage II EA plus the supplemental information contained in this DR represents a thorough analysis of impacts to affected habitats and species, in light of the more comprehensive analysis done in the Klamath Falls Resource Area RMP and Northwest Forest Plan to which the EA is tiered.

CONCLUSION

A. Plan Consistency

Based on the information in the Roaming Salvage II EA and in the record, I conclude that this Decision Record is consistent with The Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan, The Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines on Management of

Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, both The Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (January 2001), and The Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement To Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines (January 2004). This decision is also consistent with the Endangered Species Act, The Native American Religious Freedom Act, cultural resource management laws and regulations, and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice).

This decision will not have any adverse impacts to energy development, production, supply and/or distribution (per Executive Order 13212).

B. Summary

In accordance with the BLM Forest Management Regulations (43 CFR 5003.2(1)), the decision for the Baldy Salvage Timber Sale Area will not become effective, or be open to formal protest, until the first Notice of Sale appears in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located. This newspaper is the Klamath Falls Herald and News.

/signed/ *Jon Raby*

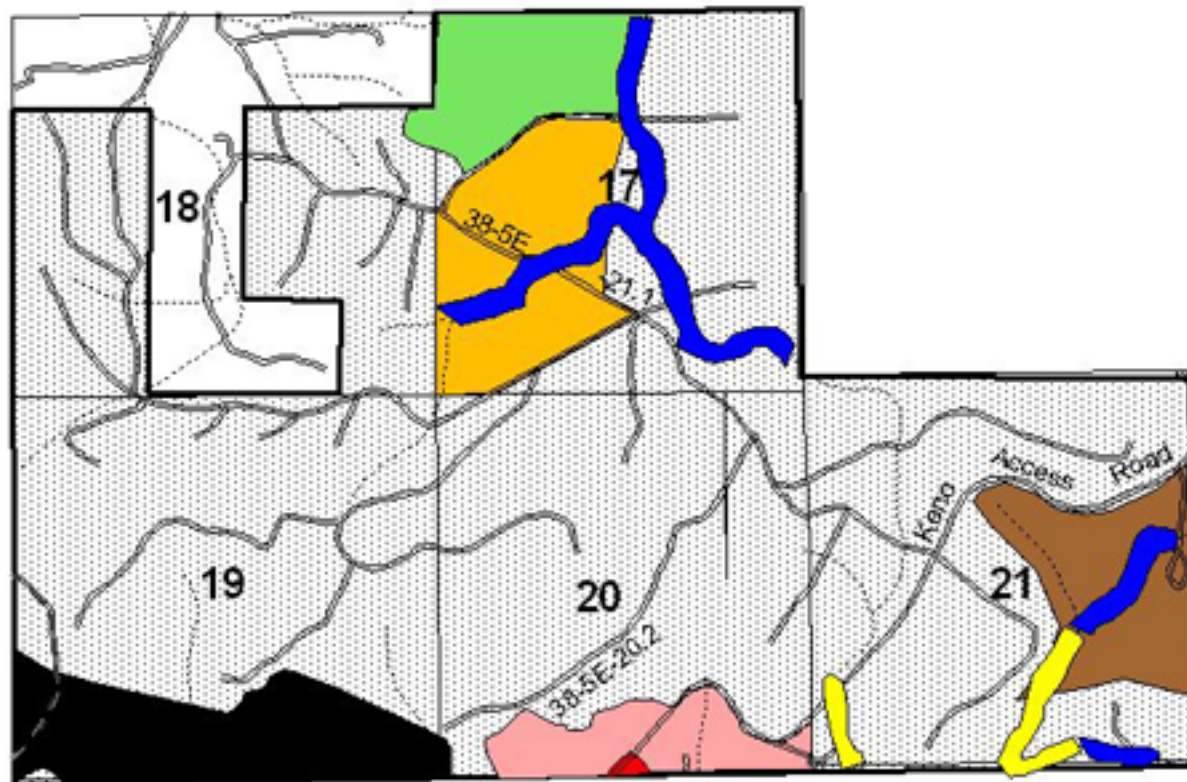
6/24/04

Jon Raby, Manager
Klamath Falls Resource Area
Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management

Date

Baldy Salvage Treatment Area

Map 1



LEGEND

-  Riparian Reserve Buffer Fish Bearing
-  Riparian Reserve Buffer Intermittent Streams
-  Roads
-  Drainage
-  Johnson Too District Designated Reserve
-  Johnson Too District Designated Reserve Buffer
-  Pederson District Designated Reserve Buffer
-  Pederson District Designated Reserve
-  Surveyor District Designated Reserve
-  Pacific Crest Trail
-  Sections
-  Old Baldy Research Natural Area
-  BLM Matrix Lands Salvage Area

T.38S., R.5E., W.M.

