

# **Olalla-Lookingglass LSR Density Management ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

South River Field Office  
EA# OR-105-06-06

Date Prepared: December 20, 2007

## **Finding of No Significant Impact**

The South River Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Olalla-Lookingglass LSR Density Management project. Two alternatives are analyzed in detail, consisting of Alternative One, No Action (p. 4), and Alternative Two, the Proposed Action (pp. 4-11). One additional alternative was considered but not analyzed in detail (EA, pp. 11-12).

Units proposed for treatment were identified through operational inventories, stand exam, and field verification by silviculture and wildlife staff. The units are located in: Section 27, T. 28 S., R. 8 W., W.M.; Sections 7 and 19, T. 30 S., R. 7 W., W.M.; and Sections 1, 11, 13, and 23, T. 30 S., R. 8 W., W.M.

### *Unaffected Resources*

As addressed in the EA (p. 12), the following Critical Elements of the Human Environment will not be affected because they are absent from the project area: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; wilderness; waste, solid or hazardous; and Wild and Scenic Rivers. No unique characteristics will be impacted (Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations - 40 CFR § 508.27(b) (3)).

### *Environmental Justice*

The Olalla-Lookingglass LSR Density Management project is consistent with Executive Order 12898 which addresses Environmental Justice in minority and low-income populations. As discussed in the EA (p. 12), no potential impacts to low-income or minority populations have been identified by the BLM internally or through the public involvement process. Employment associated with the project will be performed by local contractors engaged in similar types of work throughout Douglas County. Correspondence with local tribal governments did not identify any unique or special resources in the project area which provide religious, employment, subsistence, or recreation opportunities.

### *Cultural and Historical Resources*

As described in the EA (p. 32), a cultural resource inventory was conducted for the Deep Six units but did not identify any prehistoric or historic sites within any of the proposed units. An inventory conducted on the Olly Cat units identified two cultural sites. One site was located along the western edge of Unit B. The unit boundaries were modified to exclude the site.

The second site was located near, but outside of Unit J. The potential for disturbance is small given the topography, but as an extra measure notice will be given to the contract administrator so that he can make certain that the site is not affected. Consequently, there will be no adverse impacts to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR § 1508.27(b) (8)).

## *Wildlife*

### **Threatened and Endangered Species**

As described and illustrated in the EA (pp. 17, 18 and 42), four northern spotted owl home ranges overlap some of the density management units. Density management will modify dispersal-only habitat but spotted owls are expected to continue to use the stands because canopy cover will exceed 40 percent with mean tree diameters greater than 11 inches, figures widely accepted as a threshold for dispersal function. Also, individual trees considered suitable for nesting will be retained and continue to contribute to the long-term development of nesting, roosting and foraging habitat for the spotted owl.

As stated in the EA (p. 19), none of the Deep Six units are located within a critical habitat unit designated for the survival and recovery of the **northern spotted owl** (*Strix occidentalis caurina*). All of the Olly Cat units are located within Critical Habitat Unit OR-62.

No effect to spotted owls from noise disruption is expected because, excepting Deep Six Unit D, all density management units are more than one-half mile from any known spotted owl activity centers, and there is no unsurveyed suitable habitat within the appropriate disturbance threshold distances. Operations on Deep Six unit D will be subject to seasonal restrictions from March 1 to June 30. Seasonal restrictions may be waived if surveys indicate that spotted owls are not present, not nesting, or failed in nesting. These factors will ensure that noise disruption will not cause spotted owls to abandon nests or fledge prematurely.

As stated in the EA (p. 21), all of the Deep Six units are in Critical Habitat Unit OR-06-d, which was designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the survival and recovery of the **marbled murrelet** (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*). None of the Olly Cat units are within a marbled murrelet Critical Habitat Unit.

As described in the EA (p. 21), suitable murrelet nesting habitat is present in Olly Cat Unit P and within 100 yards of Olly Cat Units B, C, D, E, and P; and Deep Six Unit A. Two years of protocol surveys have been conducted to determine if murrelets occupy any of this suitable nesting habitat and no detections were made. Consequently, no disturbance to marbled murrelets is expected. Olly Cat unit P has been marked with the direction of a wildlife biologist to retain suitable nest trees and maintain habitat functionality so that the project will not affect suitable nesting habitat.

**Townsend's big-eared bats** (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), **Pacific pallid bats** (*Antrozous pallidus pacificus*), and **fringed myotis bats** (*Myotis thysanodes*) might also be expected in the project area where they would use large, remnant trees in the forests stands for roosting. As discussed in the EA (p. 45), roosting opportunities could be reduced by density management, but such limited removal is not expected to result in the extirpation of these bat species, if present, from the project area. Density management will benefit these species by accelerating the development of large trees suitable for roosting. Consequently, the project is not expected to contribute to the need to list these bat species as threatened or endangered.

Surveys were conducted in units containing suitable habitat for the **Chace sideband** (*Monadenia chaceana*), **green sideband** (*Monadenia fidelis beryllica*), and **Oregon shoulderband** (*Helminthoglypta hertleini*) snails. Olly Cat Units C, M, and P were surveyed to protocol standards and these snail species were not found. The Deep Six units were surveyed to protocol in the fall of 2006 with none of these snail species being found. Surveys of the remaining Olly Cat units were completed in the spring of 2007. The results of the surveys were negative and no effects to either species are anticipated.

Density management could decrease foraging and nesting opportunities for **hermit warblers** and **Wilson's warblers**, the effects lasting 10-15 years. It will also remove some structural complexity that provides habitat for the **winter wren**. However, maintaining "no-harvest" buffers along streams and unthinned areas dispersed throughout the units will provide refugia and continuity of use for these species. Retaining coarse woody debris, creating additional coarse wood, and fostering the development of greater structural diversity and canopy stratification will provide higher quality habitat in the long term.

### *Fisheries*

There are no listed fish species in the project area or on the entire Roseburg District. As described in the EA (p. 31), Essential Fish Habitat is more than 0.8 miles downstream from all density management units. The only potential effect to fish identified is with respect to sediment, but with implementation of the project design features and best management practices described in the EA (pp. 6-10) the risk for sediment will be localized and the risk of adverse effects to fish and to Essential Fish Habitat downstream of the project area is considered negligible.

### *Botany*

As described in the EA (p. 31), the density management units were surveyed in the spring of 2007 for Special Status Species that might be expected in the project area (EA, Appendix D). No Special Status plant species were located and no direct effects are anticipated.

Known sites of Bureau Sensitive fungi species will not be affected by density management because of the spatial distances documented in the EA (pp. 31-32). Density management could result in loss of unknown sites, but is not expected to lead to a need to list any of these species under the Endangered Species Act because suitable habitat will remain abundant and well-distributed throughout the Olalla Creek-Lookingglass Creek fifth-field watershed (EA, p. 56).

For the reasons described above, there will be no significant adverse impacts to any special status species (40 CFR § 1508.27 (b) (9)). The anticipated impacts will be within the range and scope of those analyzed in the *Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS).

The project is consistent with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws (40 CFR § 1508.27(b) (10)).

Implementation of the District *Integrated Weed Management Program*, in association with project design and contract provisions will minimize risk of introduction or spread of noxious weeds in association with road construction and timber harvest. Weed establishment will be discouraged by mulching disturbed areas, seeding with native grasses, or revegetating with indigenous plants. Pressure washing or steam cleaning logging and road construction equipment prior to move-in will remove soil and other substances that may be contaminated with weed seed or other propagative materials to reduce the risk of introducing weeds from outside the project area (EA, p. 32). These actions are consistent with the requirements of the Lacey Act; the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, as amended; and Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species.

Of the ten points listed under 40 CFR § 1508.27(b), the following were considered and were found not to apply to the proposed action: significant beneficial or adverse effects; significant effects on public health or safety; effects on the quality of the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial; anticipated cumulatively significant impacts; highly uncertain or unknown risks; and no precedents for future actions with significant effects.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that the density management project will not have significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and that an environmental impact statement is not required. I have determined that the density management project is in within the scope of impacts anticipated in the PRMP/EIS, and is in conformance with the *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP) for the Roseburg District, approved by the Oregon/Washington State Director on June 2, 1995.

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Date