South River Programmatic Restoration
Environmental Assessment
(EA # OR-105-04-03)

Decision Documentation
Culvert Replacement on Rice Creek

South River Field Office, Roseburg District
Date Prepared: April 12, 2007

Decision:

It is my decision to authorize replacement of a stream-crossing culvert located on Rice Creek. The project site is located on BLM-managed lands in the NE¼NE¼, Section 25, T. 29 S., R. 7 W., Willamette Meridian, where Rice Creek crosses beneath BLM Road No. 29-7-24.0. Field Office hydrology and fisheries personnel, and District Office engineering staff have identified the culvert as a source of sediment, at risk of failure in the near term, and an impediment to upstream and downstream passage by both native and anadromous fish.

The existing 9' x 30' corrugated metal pipe will be replaced with a concrete-decked single-lane bridge supported on concrete abutments, armored with rip-rap. The design life of the structure is 75 years. A temporary bypass road will be constructed to provide access around the project site during removal of the culvert and construction of the bridge. Installation of the bridge will not involve the instream placement of any grade-control structures.

Design of the bridge incorporates requirements of *the Oregon Road/Stream Crossing Restoration Guide* published by the Oregon Department of Forestry in 1999. Installation will incorporate Best Management Practices from the *Roseburg District Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (ROD/RMP, Appendix D, pp. 134-136). Among the project design features and controls to be implemented are:

- Required pressure washing or steam cleaning of all excavation and earth-moving equipment prior to mobilization into the project site, to minimize the risk of introducing soil from outside the project area that may be contaminated with noxious weed seed or root materials. Disturbed areas will be seeded and mulched or otherwise revegetated.
- Restriction of instream work to the period between July 1 and September 15, during low summer stream flows.
- Diversion of any surface stream flow or pumping of water around the project site during construction activities and in-stream equipment operation minimized to the extent practicable.
- Installation of absorbent booms, prior to the commencement of work, downstream of the project site to contain any inadvertent spillage of petroleum products.
- End haul of any resulting waste material to an authorized upland disposal site.

Rationale for the Decision:

This project was analyzed under Alternative 2, the "proposed action", of the South River Programmatic Restoration EA. Implementation of the project will meet the objective of reducing sediment associated with roads and stream crossings, and will restore access by fish to an estimated one mile of upstream habitat. Alternative 1, the "no action" alternative, would not achieve these ends.

Replacement of the existing culvert with a bridge will not result in any undue environmental degradation, and is consistent with Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives (ROD/RMP, pp. 20-21). Specifically, it will aid in maintenance and restoration of: in-stream flows; spatial and temporal connectivity in the watershed; natural sediment regime; and aquatic habitat. It is also consistent with the management objective "To preclude stream crossings from being a direct source of sediment to streams thus minimizing water quality degradation and provide unobstructed movement for aquatic fauna." (ROD/RMP, p. 134)

Potential effects to fish and Essential Fish Habitat are associated solely with sediment. With application of the project design features described above and identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service *Programmatic Biological and Conference Opinion for Programmatic Activities Affecting SONC Coho Salmon, OC Coho Salmon, and OC Steelhead* the effects will be localized and short term, and will not have an adverse effect on Essential Fish Habitat located. Removal of the existing culvert and replacement with a bridge will also restore access by adult and juvenile fish to approximately one mile of aquatic habitat.

The project area is located within an easement crossing private lands, and as a consequence is not subject to surveys or management for Special Status or Survey & Manage botanical and wildlife species as provided by the Northwest forest Plan and other BLM policy.

Construction of the bypass road will not modify any suitable habitat for northern spotted owls, and will occur outside of the breeding, nesting and fledging season. Consequently, no effects to northern spotted owls are anticipated.

Public Comment:

No issues were identified by any local or tribal governments, State agencies, or other Federal agencies. The EA and Finding of No Significant Impact were made available for public review from May 5, 2004, through June 4, 2004. Comments were received from two organizations. These comments did not constitute new information or identify any issues not already considered and addressed in the South River Programmatic Restoration EA, the ROD/RMP, or the Roseburg District *Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.*

Monitoring:

Monitoring will be done in accordance with provisions contained in the ROD/RMP, Appendix I (p. 84 and 195-198), focusing on the following resources: Water and Soils; and Fish Habitat.

Protest Procedures:

As outlined in Title 43 CFR § 5003 - Administrative Remedies, protests may be filed with the authorized officer within 15 days of the publication date of the Decision Notice in *The News-Review*, Roseburg, Oregon.

In Title 43 CFR 5003.3 subsection (b) it is stated that "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail or facsimile protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Roseburg District Office will be accepted.

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Ralph Thomas
Field Manager
South River Field Office

Date