

**United States Department of Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Coos Bay District**

**Categorical Exclusion Review (CX)**

**DOI-BLM-OR-120-2009-0004-CX**

Date: October 10, 2008

**A. Background**

**Project:** Fiscal Year 2009 Fire Line Construction

**Location:** Various locations throughout the Coos Bay District.

**Project Description:**

Fire line construction in support of slash disposal operations is commonly performed throughout the region. The topography and terrain often dictate where the location for fire lines is most beneficial. The checkerboard ownership pattern often necessitates that an adjacent landowner locate fire lines on neighboring BLM lands. Fire lines would be strategically located on both BLM and privately owned lands thus maximizing prescribed fire managers opportunities to safely contain and control the prescribed burn. Proper location of fire lines will reduce the chances of an escaped fire and thereby help to reduce potential impacts to watershed resources in the general area of the burn operations.

Seasonal restrictions may be required to minimize impacts to T&E species, as outlined in the current Biological Opinion.

Fire lines would be cleared of vegetation to a width of eight (8) feet. Within the fire line the fire trail would be cleared to mineral soil to a width of three (3) feet. Water bars would be constructed across all fire trails following the slope guidelines below. Water bars would consist of a six inch deep trench oriented at a 30- to 45-degree angle with respect to the fire line. Water bars would extend approximately six inches beyond the width of the fire trail.

Trail Slope:	0% to 9%	1 water bar every 300 feet
	10% to 29%	1 water bar every 200 feet
	30 % to 100 %	1 water bar every 100 feet

On BLM managed lands, fire trail construction would not be allowed within 20 feet of stream channel crossings, flowing or not. Removal of non-coniferous vegetation (brush and shrubs) at stream crossings within the fire line clearing limits will be permitted. Water bars will be placed at or near the end of the mineral soil exposures to direct surface water flow away from stream buffers and onto vegetated forest floors.

Wherever possible the cutting of snags and green trees during the course of constructing fire lines would be avoided. Exceptions to this restriction would occur only when the safety of personnel and fire proofing of the fire lines would be compromised if such snags or trees were left uncut. Cutting of any trees along stream banks should be avoided.

Refueling of power equipment including chainsaws would occur at a location at least 150 feet distant from any body of water. Under no condition should power tools be re-fueled over a stream channel or at a stream side. Heavy equipment would be cleaned in accordance with the District Noxious Weed Policy.

Fire lines would be rehabilitated after the burned units are declared out. Rehabilitation could include re-construction of water bars, replacement of bucked out log sections and pulling litter and cut vegetation back into and over the exposed soil portions of the fire trails. Residual impacts (if any) to BLM land would consist of short term loss of vegetative cover and possibly some snag habitat.

**B. Land Use Plan Conformance Review:** This project is tiered to and in conformance with the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement* (USDI BLM 1994) and its *Record of Decision*, as supplemented and amended, (USDI BLM 1995) and the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (Northwest Forest Plan [NFP])* (USDA/USDI 1994) and its *Record of Decision* (USDA/USDI 1994a).

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

Continue to make BLM-administered lands available for needed rights-of-way where consistent with local comprehensive plans (page 65).

**C: Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM2, Appendix 1, §1.7:

Routine and continuing government business, including such things as supervision, administration, operations, maintenance and replacement activities having limited context and intensity; e.g. limited size and magnitude or short-term effects.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 Appendix 2 apply.

A summary of the extraordinary circumstances is listed below. The action must have a significant or a disproportional adverse effect on the listed categories to warrant further analysis and environmental review.

<u>Extraordinary Circumstances</u>	<u>Applies</u> (Yes/No)	<u>Comments<sup>1</sup> and Source<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Initials</u>	<u>Date</u>
(1) Health & Safety	No			
Hazardous Materials	No	Reviewed by Hazardous Materials Coordinator;	Pa	10/21/08
(2) Unique Resources	No	Reviewed by Port-Orford Cedar Coordinator	JR	10/22/08
(3) Controversial Effects	No			
(4) Risks	No			
(5) Precedent	No			
(6) Cumulative	No			
(7) Cultural & Historic	No	Reviewed by Archaeologist	SAB	10/23/08
(8) T & E Species	No	Reviewed by Wildlife Biologists, Fisheries, and Botanist <i>Required Bio Review to assure no loss of suitable owl or murrelet habitat</i>	VP JLS	10/23/08 10/23/08
(9) Violate Laws	No			
(10) Environmental Justice	No	Reviewed by Environmental Justice Coordinator	SAB	10/23/08
(11) Native American Religious Concerns	No	Reviewed by District Native American Coordinator	SAB	10/23/08
(12) Noxious Weeds	No	Reviewed by Noxious Weed Coordinator	AT	10/14/08

<sup>1</sup> Indicate applicability if the exception.

<sup>2</sup> List data source on which exception determination is based.

**D. Signature**

Authorizing Official: District Manager: Mark E. Johnson Date: 10/27/08

**E. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Steven Fowler; District Planning & Environmental Coordinator; Coos Bay District Office; 1300 Airport Lane; North Bend, OR 97459.

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Decision Record for Categorical Exclusion

**Decision:**

It is my decision to allow construction of fire trails by adjacent landowners on BLM lands as described in DOI-BLM-OR-120-2009-0004-CX

**Decision Rationale:**

The proposed action has been reviewed by Resource Area Staff and appropriate project Design Features as specified will be incorporated into the proposal. Based on the NEPA Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined that the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further analysis is required.

**Signature of Authorizing Official:**

  
District Manager

Date: 10/27/08

**Administrative Remedies:**

Notice of the forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR section 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.