

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ROSEBURG DISTRICT

**NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW**

**A. Background:**

BLM Office: Roseburg District  
777 NW Garden Valley Blvd  
Roseburg, Oregon, 97470  
Phone: 541-464-4930

CX#: OR-103-09-02

**Proposed Action Title: 2009 Sample Tree Felling for the Roseburg District**

**Location of Proposed Action:** The general project area is the Roseburg District. Individual units occur in the following locations:

Sale Name	Legal Description (Township-Range-Section)	Land Use Allocation <sup>1</sup>	Resource Area
Basin Arizona	T.24S., R.7W., Sec. 7, 18	LSR	Swiftwater
Bucko	T.21S., R.4W., Sec. 35	CONN	Swiftwater
Corvid	T.25S., R.3W., Sec. 34, 35 T.26S., R.3W., Sec. 3	GFMA	Swiftwater
Cox Pit	T.22S., R.4W., Sec. 20, 21	CONN	Swiftwater
Craven Raven	T.25S., R.3W., Sec. 13, 23, 25	CONN, GFMA	Swiftwater
General Lee	T.22S., R.4W., Sec. 9, 15	CONN	Swiftwater
Milk Shake	T.23S., R.4W., Sec. 33 T.24S., R.4W., Sec. 5	GFMA	Swiftwater
Mr. Bennet	T.22S., R.4W., Sec. 23, 27 T.23S., R.4W., Sec. 3	CONN	Swiftwater
Old Crow	T.25S., R.3W., Sec. 23, 27, 33	CONN, GFMA	Swiftwater
Sherlock Home	T.27S., R.3W., Sec. 19 T.27S., R.4W., Sec. 25	AMA, GFMA	Swiftwater
Slim Big Jim	T.27S., R.3W., Sec. 9	AMA	Swiftwater
38 Special	T.29S., R.7W., Sec 11, 15, 31	GFMA	South River
Baby Boomer	T.29S., R6W., Sec 23, 31 ,33 T.30S., R6W., Sec 5	CONN,GFMA	South River
Coffin Corner	T.29S., R.2W., Sec 8, 17, 18, 19	CONN, GFMA	South River
Hardwood Table	T.30S., R.8W., Sec 25, 27 & 35	LSR	South River

<sup>1</sup> AMA – Adaptive Management Area, CONN – Connectivity/Diversity Block,  
GFMA – General Forest Management Area, LSR – Late Successional Reserve

The land use allocations listed in the table are according to the 1995 Roseburg ROD/RMP. These land use allocations are expected to change under the revised RMP, however, no decision has been made to adopt the Proposed RMP at this time. While land use allocations may change, all above-listed sales are expected to move forward. Note that treatment may occur within Riparian Reserves associated with CONN and GFMA land use allocations.

Kryptonite	T.29S., R.6W., Sec 19 T.29S., R.7W., Sec 13	GFMA	South River
Single Buck	T.27S., R3W., Sec 31	CONN	South River
Thin Air	T.29S., R.3W., Sec 27	CONN	South River
Tin Horn	T.29S., R.2W., Sec 21 T.30S., R.2W., Sec 3, 9, 11& 15	CONN/GFMA	South River
Treetop Flyer	T30S., R.3W., Sec 15, 21 & 23	GFMA	South River

For unit configuration, see attached maps.

**A. Description of Proposed Action:** The Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to fell, buck, and scale sample trees (“sample tree felling”) to ensure accuracy of timber cruises for commercial thinning and density management sales limited to the 2009 calendar year. Sample trees would only be felled within proposed sale units in locations detailed above. Current unit configurations are illustrated on attached maps. Only trees selected for harvest would be felled; these trees would be randomly selected and would be bucked to standard, merchantable lengths for direct measurement of volume and evaluation of condition and value. Fell, buck, and scale sampling:

- Shall be limited to an average of one tree per acre or less,
- Shall be limited to gas-powered chainsaws or hand tools,
- Shall not include any road or trail construction,
- Shall not include the use of ground based equipment or other manner of timber yarding.

Sample tree felling would be one of the last activities completed during preparation of timber sales. Sample tree felling would occur as part of the timber cruising process, prior to issuance of the sale decision, but after completion of: planning and environmental analysis by an interdisciplinary team, all site inventories (for example, wildlife, botany, and cultural resources), and sale layout and preparation. If consultation is required for timber sales, sample tree felling would be included as a component of timber sales in that consultation. In the event a unit or sale is not logged (for example, if sale of the timber is unsuccessful), any felled trees would remain on site; otherwise, felled sample trees would be yarded during the harvest operations of the timber sale.

**Design Features of the Proposed Action**

- When operating within Riparian Reserves, trees would be directionally felled away from the stream channel. Riparian buffers established within the Environmental Assessment for that particular sale would be observed.
- If, during implementation of the proposed action, any BLM Special Status Species are found that were not discovered during pre-disturbance surveys, felling that may affect that site would be suspended until further review by BLM specialists is completed and application of any necessary measures is applied.
- If, during implementation of the proposed action, a raptor nest is found, felling that may affect the nest site would be suspended until further review by BLM specialists could be completed and necessary measures applied.

- If, during implementation of the proposed action, any cultural resources are found that were not discovered during pre-disturbance surveys, felling that may affect the newly discovered site would be suspended and appropriate measures would be implemented before felling would be resumed.
- Where felling of a sample tree would be contingent upon the felling of snags greater than or equal to 20 inches diameter at breast height, that particular sample tree would not be felled.
- No chainsaw work would occur within 65 yards of unsurveyed suitable northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) habitat, known activity centers from March 1<sup>st</sup>-July 15<sup>th</sup> unless current year surveys indicate that northern spotted owls are not present, are present but not attempting to nest, or that nesting attempts have failed.
- No chainsaw work would occur within 100 yards of any marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) site or unsurveyed suitable nesting habitat in Zone 1 or within the Zone 2 Restriction Corridor from April 1<sup>st</sup>– August 5<sup>th</sup>. Chainsaw work would be subject to daily operating restrictions from August 6<sup>th</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup>; these daily operating restrictions prohibit commencement of operations until two hours after sunrise and require operations cease two hours before sunset.
- In Zone 2 outside the Restriction Corridor, chainsaw work within 100 yards of any marbled murrelet site or unsurveyed suitable nesting habitat would be subject to daily operating restrictions (discussed above) from April 1<sup>st</sup> – August 5<sup>th</sup>.
- When operating in critical habitat for northern spotted owl or marbled murrelet, no potential nest trees would be sampled.

#### **B. Plan Conformance Review:**

The proposed action is in conformance with the *Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision* (ROD/RMP, 1995) as amended, and is consistent with the RMP decision to provide a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products (ROD/RMP p.60).

#### **C. Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with **516 DM 11.9, C. Forestry, (6)** – Felling, bucking, and scaling sample trees to ensure accuracy of timber cruises.

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

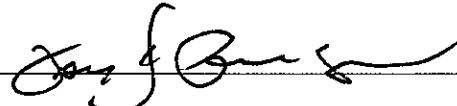
### D. Categorical Exclusions - Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: All proposed activities follow established Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules concerning health and safety. The proposed sample tree felling is in remote, forested locations away from population centers.		
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
Rationale: Trees to be felled are only within proposed timber sale units (see maps); these units are, by design, outside of unique areas such as those discussed above. No tree felling will occur in parks, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands. Felling an average of one sample tree per acre (or less) would not change the overall habitat function of the stand or remove habitat at the species level; as such, the proposed action would not have significant impacts on migratory birds.		
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
Rationale: Past experience has shown that the environmental effects of felling individual trees (not to exceed an average of 1 per acre) within the forest are not highly controversial. The 516 Departmental Manual 11 was revised using a public process in 2006-2007. This revision proposed, and finally included, sample tree felling as an action available for categorical exclusion for use. The BLM received numerous comments during the 30 day public comment period, none of which raised substantive questions regarding the environmental effects of utilizing the sample tree felling CX (72 FR 45504, August 2007). The ROD/RMP establishes the land use allocation and goals for the affected lands; as such, there is no unresolved conflict regarding other uses of these resources.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
Rationale: Past felling of individual trees has shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique or unknown risks. The 516 Departmental Manual 11 was revised using a public process in 2006-2007. This revision proposed, and finally included, sample tree felling as an action available for categorical exclusion for use. The BLM received numerous comments during the 30 day public comment period, none of which raised substantive questions regarding the environmental effects of utilizing the sample tree felling CX (72 FR 45504, August 2007).		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Sample tree felling has taken place throughout the State of Oregon and the Roseburg District for years. There is no evidence that this action, improving the accuracy of timber cruises, has potentially significant environmental effects. Sample tree felling is a discrete action completed as part of timber sale preparation – it does not commit the BLM to pursuing further actions, and as such would not establish a precedent or decision for future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
Rationale: Sample tree felling has been conducted in the past and this activity had no significant direct, indirect, or cumulative effect. Sample tree felling is a cruising tool used to improve the timber sale process, but this action is not integral to the timber sale process. The District timber sale program was analyzed in the RMP's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and individual sales are further analyzed in site-specific NEPA analysis (environmental assessments, or EAs) tiered to this EIS, which historically result in findings of no significant impact (FONSI).		

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
Rationale: Cultural resources inventories would be conducted prior to implementing the proposed action. If cultural resources are found within a unit through pre-disturbance inventories or during implementation of the proposed action, appropriate mitigation would be applied.		
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, as an Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
Rationale: Surveys, as required for consultation, would be conducted for listed species and species proposed for listing prior to sample tree felling. If sites are found, implementation of the Project Design Features would minimize disturbance effects to individuals. Some proposed units are within critical habitat for northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. However, felling an average of one sample tree per acre (or less) would not change the overall habitat function of the stand or result in the loss of critical habitat. Project Design Features would prevent removal of primary constituent elements prior to the completion of consultation with the US Fish & Wildlife Service.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
Rationale: The proposed action conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Roseburg District ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable laws, such as the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and others.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 2898).		X
Rationale: The felling of individual trees would not affect low income or minority populations – the activity is dispersed across District-administered land which is largely interspersed with private, industrial forest land. Furthermore, this action ensures that the public, including low income and minority populations, receive a fair price for the public resources (timber) being sold.		
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
Rationale: Cultural resources inventories would be conducted prior to implementing the proposed action. If cultural resources are found within a unit through pre-disturbance inventories or during implementation of the proposed action, appropriate measures would be applied.		
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
Rationale: Felling of individual trees would not measurably change the rate of introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or invasive species. Vehicles accessing the project area would stay on existing roads, reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds or seed.		

I considered the proposed action and its design features in my evaluation and I find the proposed action would not have significant impacts to the human environment.

**E. Signature:**

Authorizing Official: 

Date: 12/4/08

Name: Jay K. Carlson  
Title: District Manager

**F. Contact Person & Reviewers:**

For additional information concerning this Categorical Review, contact:

Meagan Conry

Roseburg District BLM

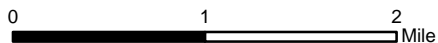
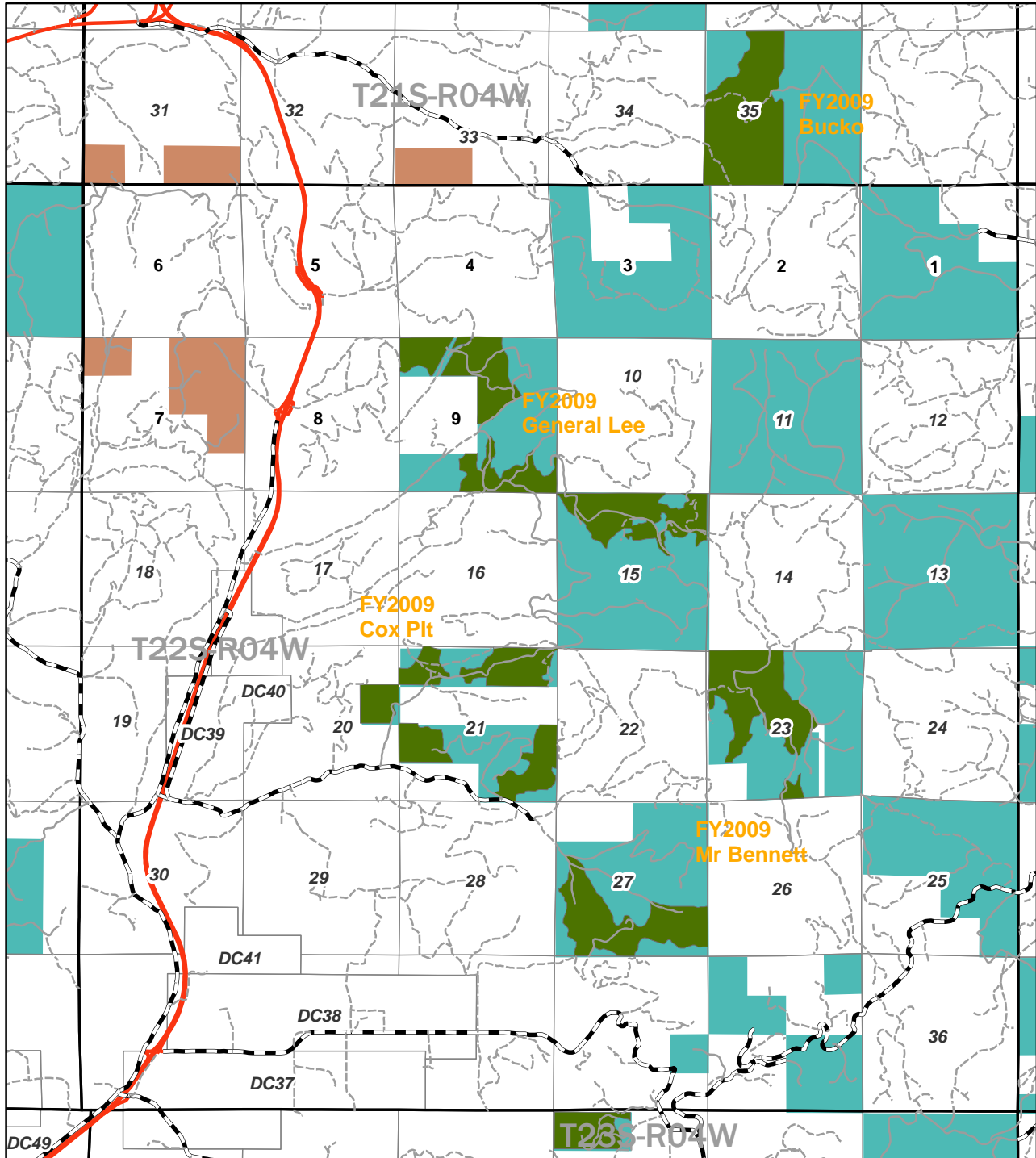
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Reviewers	Resource	Initials	Date
Meagan Conry	Planner	MMC	12/4/08
Scott Lightcap	Fisheries Biologist	SL	12/4/08
Christopher Foster	Wildlife Biologist	CF	12/4/2008
Susan Carter	Botanist	Susan Carter	12/4/2008
John Royce	Forester	JR	12/4/2008
Steve Wetherell	Cruiser/Appraiser	SW	12/4/08
Isaac Barner	Archaeologist	IB	12/4/08

# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## Swiftwater Resource Area Timber Sales

Map 1



- Legend**
- Commercial Thinning and Density Management Timber Sale Areas**
  - BLM Landuse Allocation**
  - Adaptive Management Area
  - Connectivity
  - General Forest Management Area
  - Late Successional Reserve
  - Ownership**
  - US Forest Service Managed Land
- Roads**
- County Road
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Private Road



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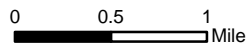
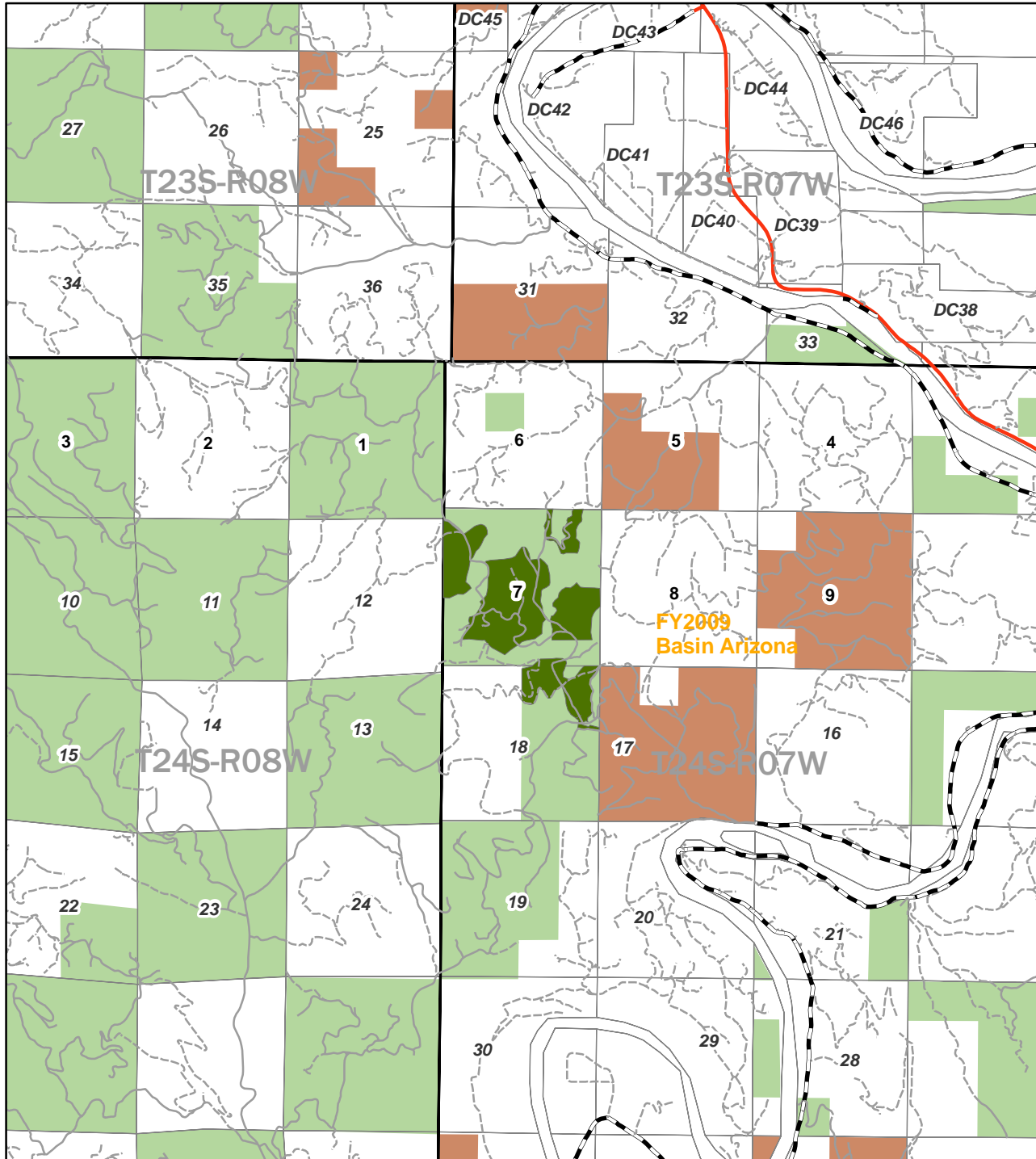
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## Swiftwater Resource Area Timber Sales

Map 2



### Legend

- Commercial Thinning and Density Management Timber Sale Areas
  - Adaptive Management Area
  - Connectivity
  - General Forest Management Area
  - Late Successional Reserve
  - Ownership
  - US Forest Service Managed Land
- Roads**
- County Road
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Private Road



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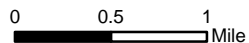
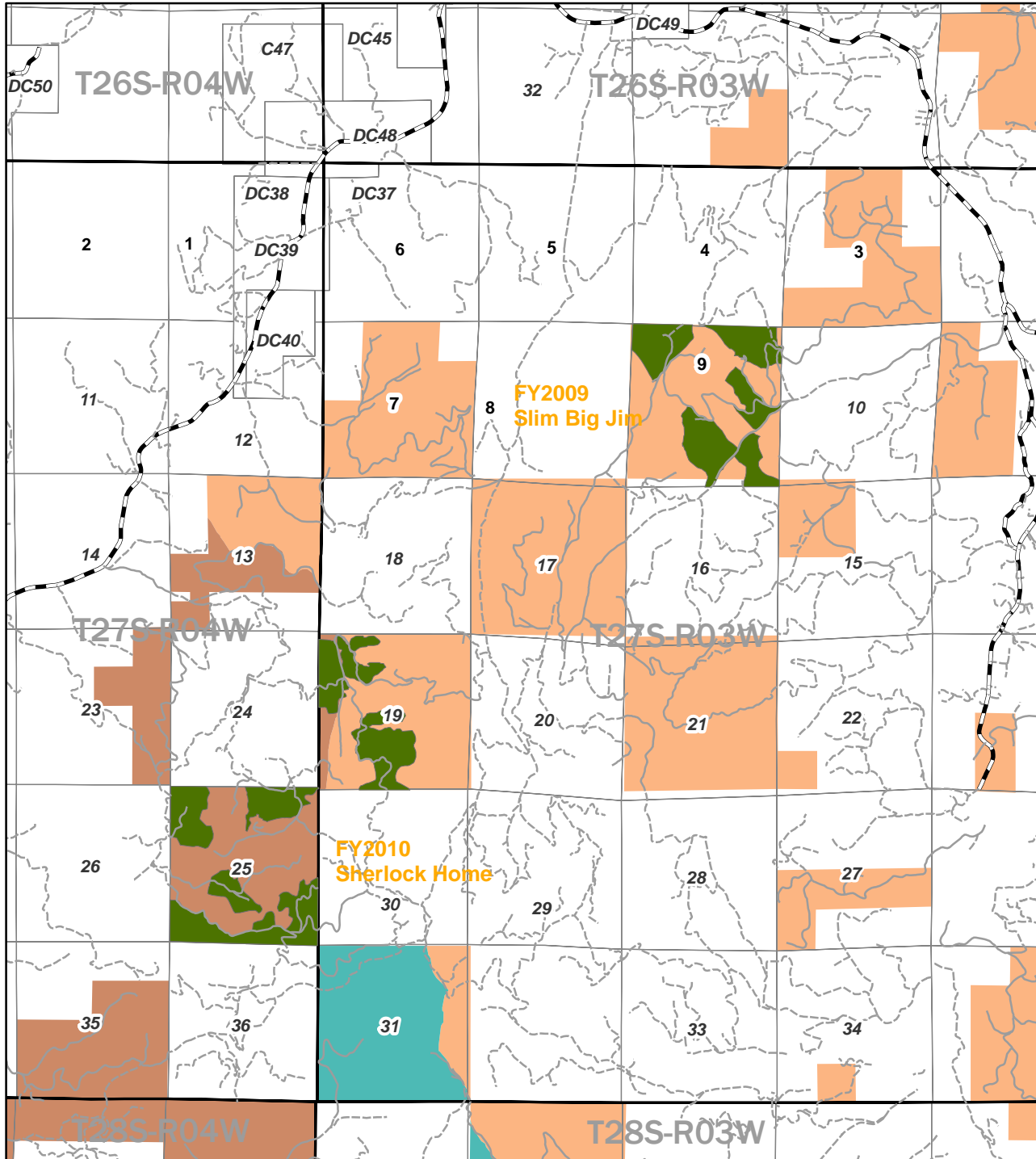




# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## Swiftwater Resource Area Timber Sales

Map 3



- Legend**
- Commercial Thinning and Density Management Timber Sale Areas**
  - Roads**
    - County Road
    - Bureau of Land Management
    - Private Road
  - BLM Landuse Allocation**
    - Adaptive Management Area
    - Connectivity
    - General Forest Management Area
    - Late Successional Reserve
  - Ownership**
    - US Forest Service Managed Land



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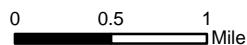
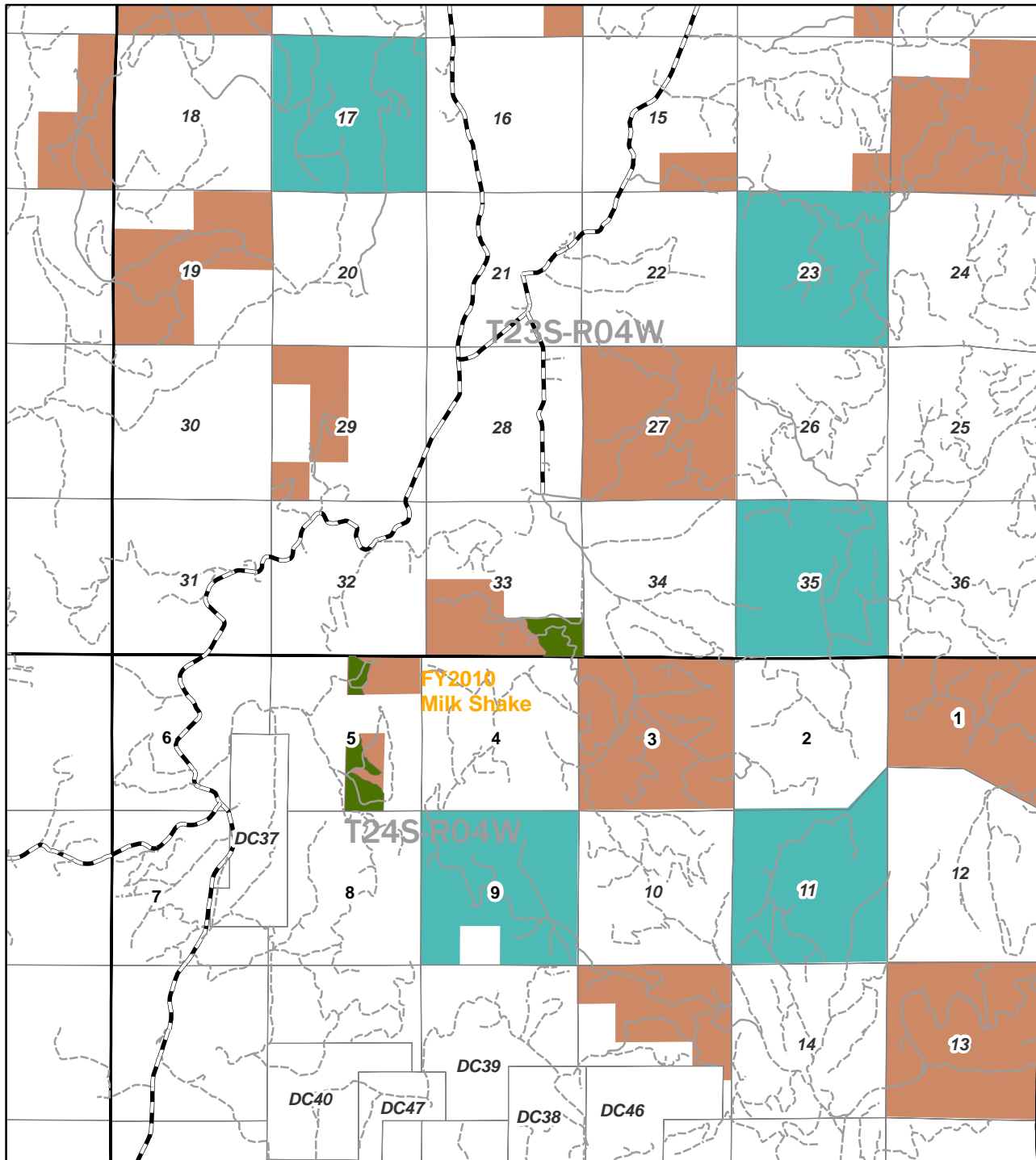
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## Swiftwater Resource Area Timber Sales

Map 4



- Legend**
- Commercial Thinning and**  
Density Management Timber Sale Areas
  - Roads**
    - County Road
    - Bureau of Land Management
    - Private Road
  - BLM Landuse Allocation**  
Adaptive Management Area
  - Connectivity
  - General Forest Management Area
  - Late Successional Reserve
  - Ownership**  
 US Forest Service Managed Land



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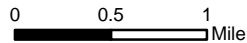
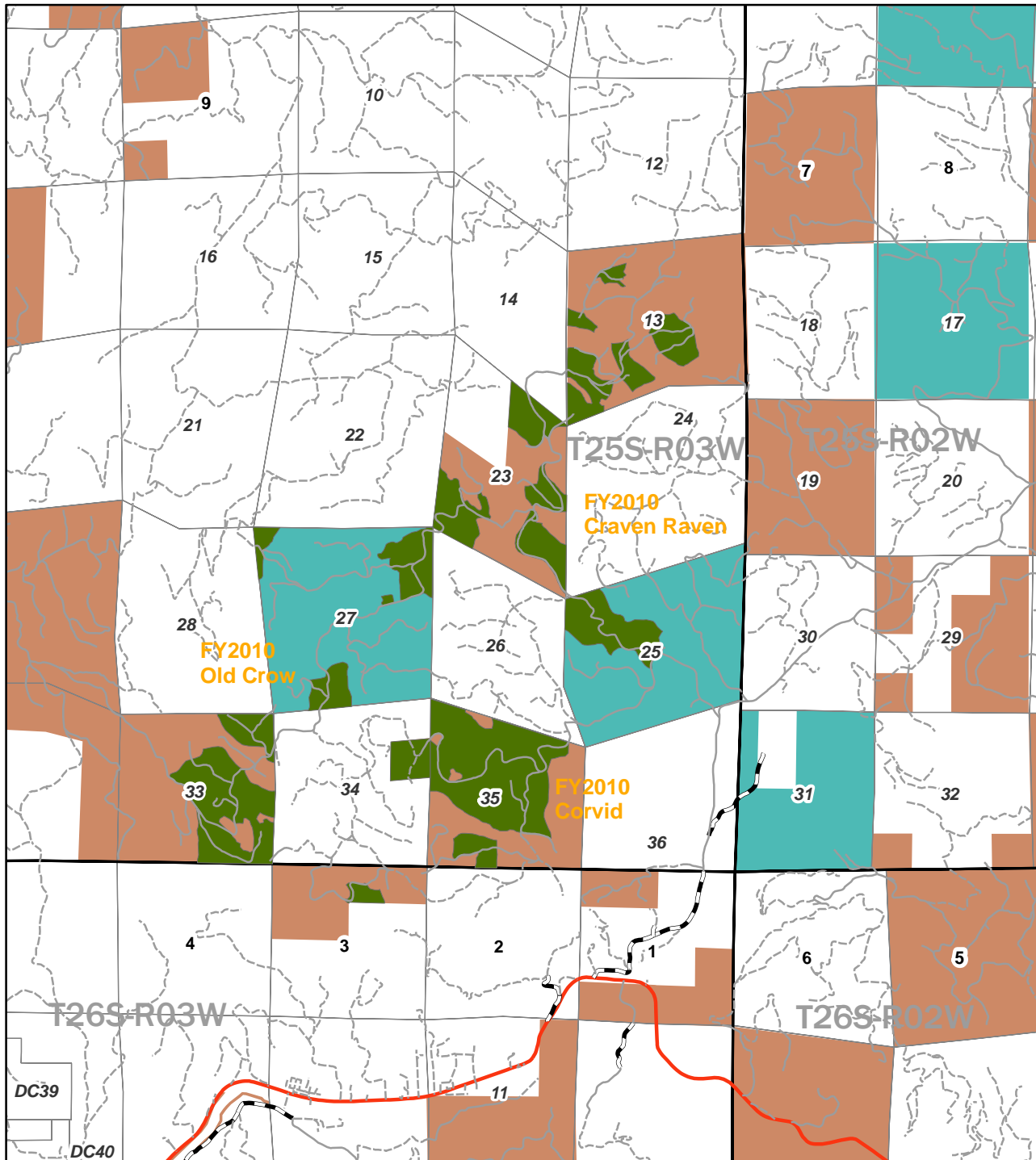
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## Swiftwater Resource Area Timber Sales

Map 5



- Legend**
- Commercial Thinning and Density Management Timber Sale Areas**
  - BLM Landuse Allocation**
  - Adaptive Management Area
  - Connectivity
  - General Forest Management Area
  - Late Successional Reserve
  - Ownership**
  - US Forest Service Managed Land
  - Roads**
  - County Road
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Private Road



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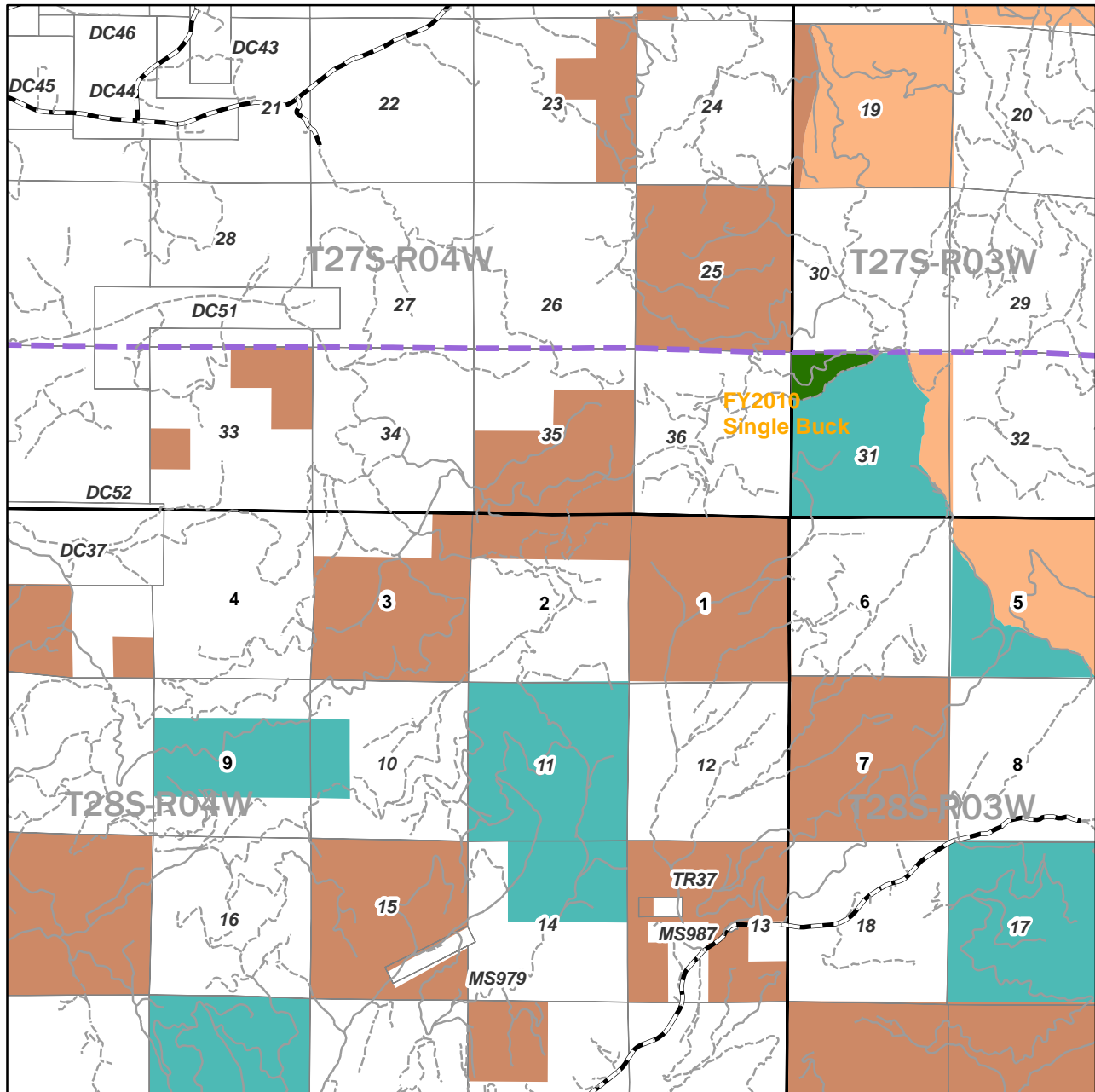
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion












## South River Resource Area

Map 6



0 0.5 1 Mile

### Legend

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>   |  Adaptive Management Area       |
|  Roseburg District Boundary                   |  Connectivity                   |
|  Resource Area Boundary                       |  General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>   |  Late Successional Reserve      |
|  County Road                                  | <b>Ownership</b>   |
|  Bureau of Land Management                    |  US Forest Service Managed Land |
|  Private Road                                 |  |



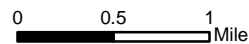
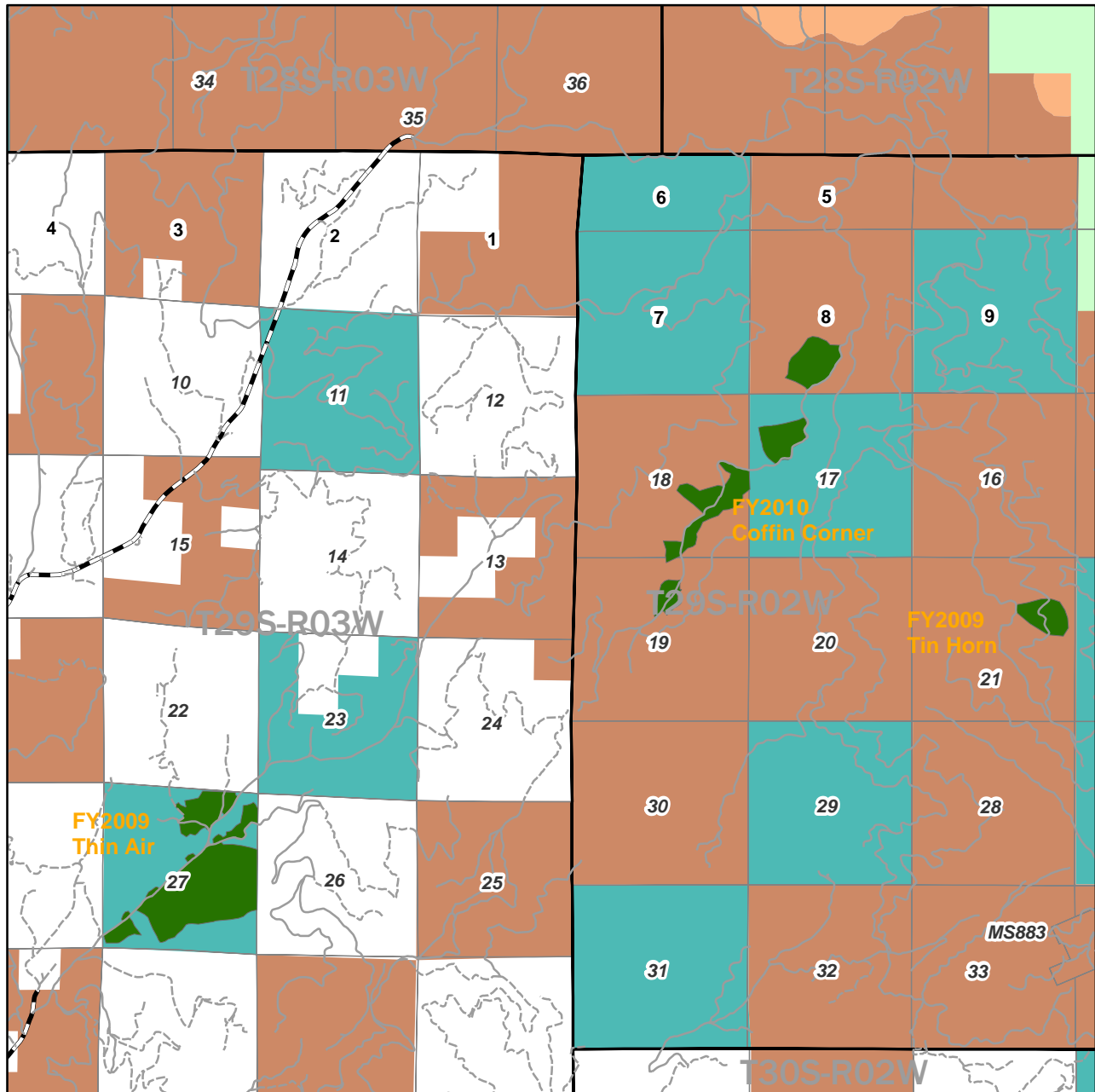
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## South River Resource Area

Map 7



### Legend

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>               | Adaptive Management Area       |
| Roseburg District Boundary                   | Connectivity                   |
| Resource Area Boundary                       | General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>                                 | Late Successional Reserve      |
| County Road                                  | <b>Ownership</b>               |
| Bureau of Land Management                    | US Forest Service Managed Land |
| Private Road                                 |                                |



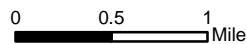
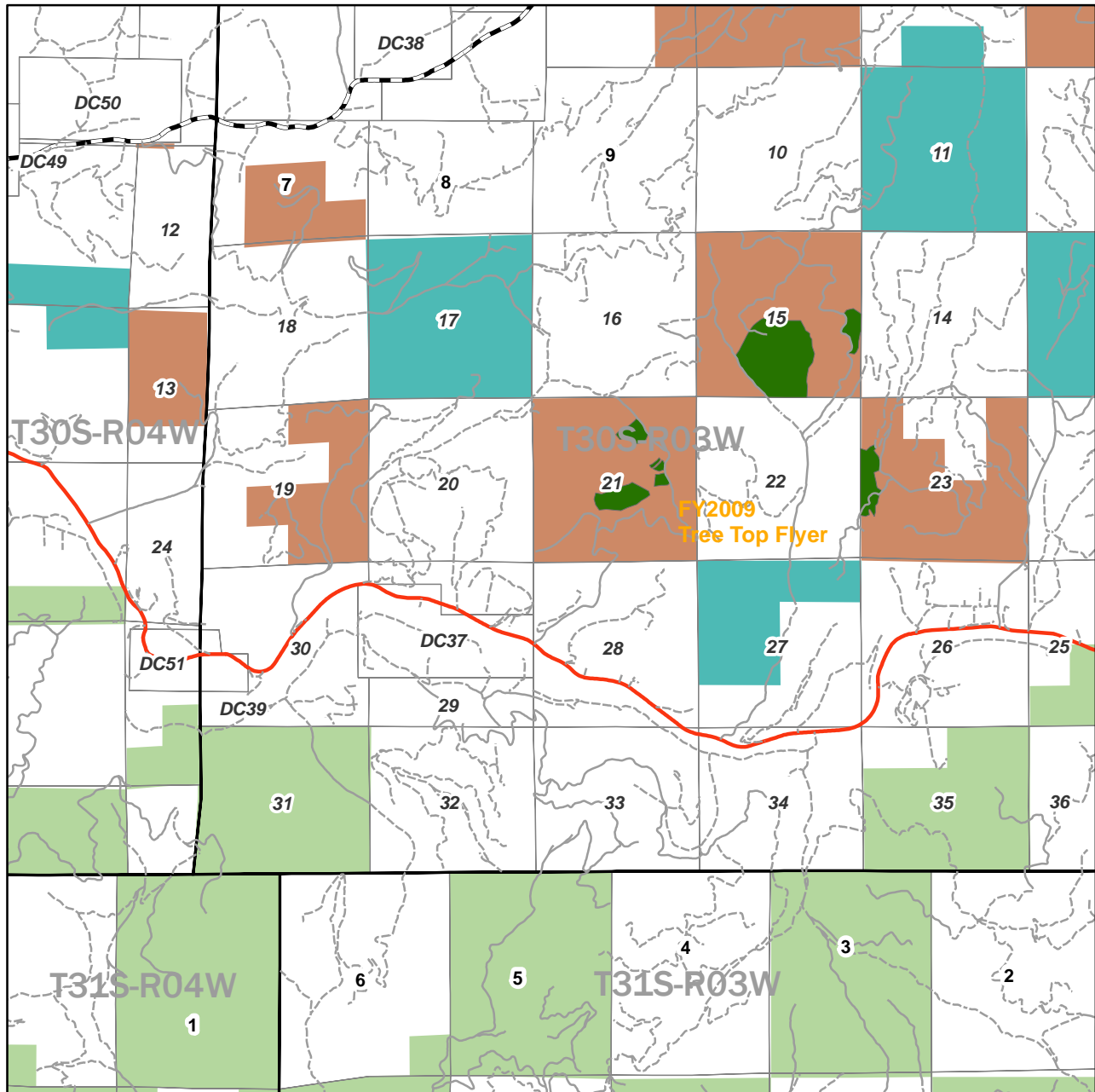
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## South River Resource Area

Map 8



### Legend

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>               | Adaptive Management Area       |
| Roseburg District Boundary                   | Connectivity                   |
| Resource Area Boundary                       | General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>                                 | Late Successional Reserve      |
| County Road                                  | <b>Ownership</b>               |
| Bureau of Land Management                    | US Forest Service Managed Land |
| Private Road                                 |                                |



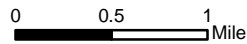
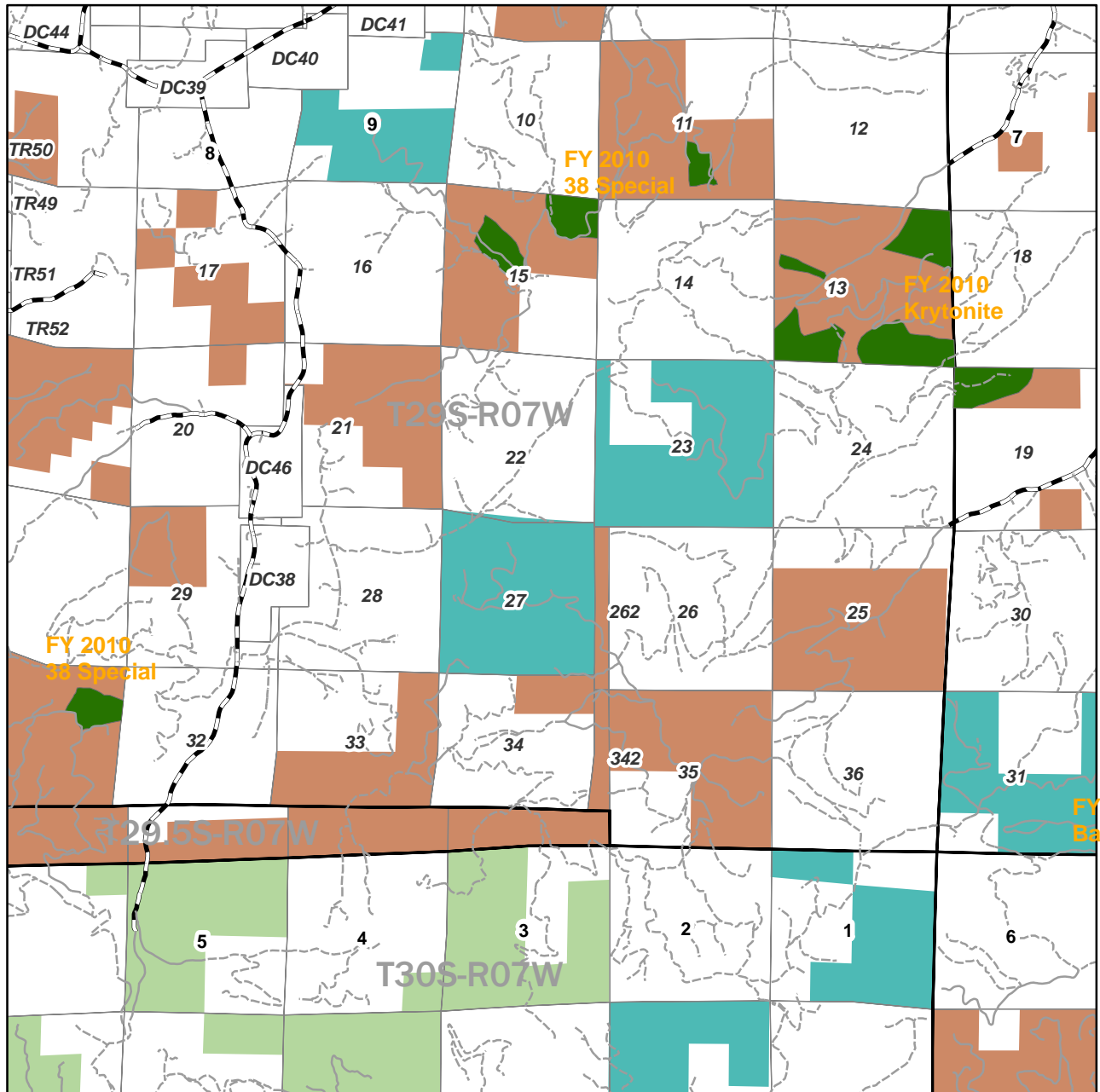
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## South River Resource Area

Map 9



### Legend

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>               | Adaptive Management Area       |
| Roseburg District Boundary                   | Connectivity                   |
| Resource Area Boundary                       | General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>                                 | Late Successional Reserve      |
| County Road                                  | <b>Ownership</b>               |
| Bureau of Land Management                    | US Forest Service Managed Land |
| Private Road                                 |                                |



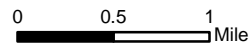
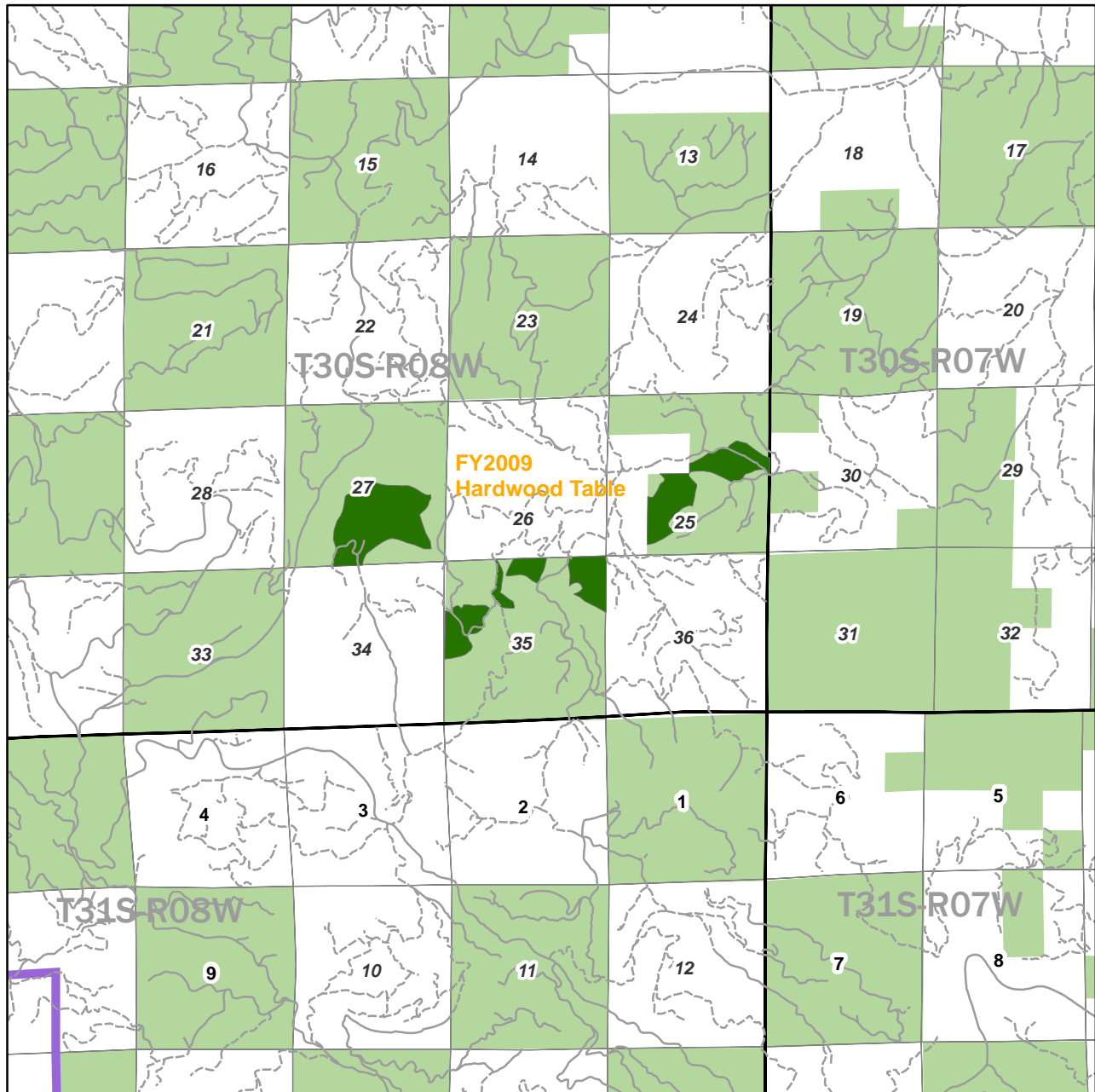
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# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## South River Resource Area

Map 10



### Legend

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>               | Adaptive Management Area       |
| Roseburg District Boundary                   | Connectivity                   |
| Resource Area Boundary                       | General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>                                 | Late Successional Reserve      |
| County Road                                  | <b>Ownership</b>               |
| Bureau of Land Management                    | US Forest Service Managed Land |
| Private Road                                 |                                |



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

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Bureau Of Land Management  
777 Garden Valley Blvd.  
Roseburg, Oregon 97470

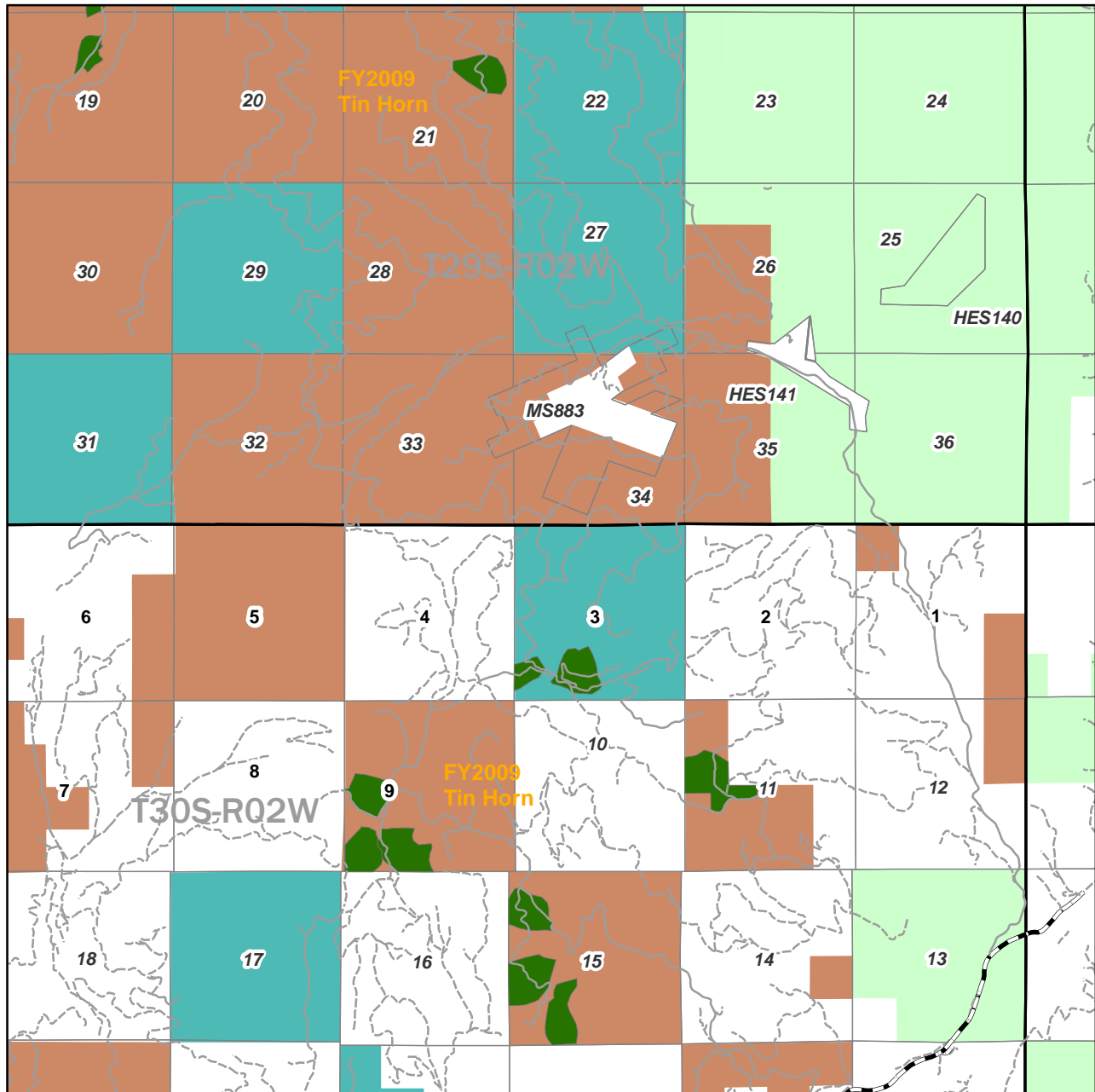




# Roseburg District Sample Tree Falling Categorical Exclusion

## South River Resource Area

Map 12



0 0.5 1  
Mile

### Legend

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Commercial Thinning/Density Management Areas | <b>BLM Landuse Allocation</b>  |
| <b>Administrative Boundary</b>               | Adaptive Management Area       |
| Roseburg District Boundary                   | Connectivity                   |
| Resource Area Boundary                       | General Forest Management Area |
| <b>Roads</b>                                 | Late Successional Reserve      |
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ROSEBURG DISTRICT

**DECISION RECORD**

Based upon the attached Categorical Exclusion (CX), OR-103-09-02, I have determined that the proposed action, sample tree felling, involves no significant impacts to the human environment and requires no further environmental analysis.

It is my decision to implement sample tree felling on commercial thinning and density management sales limited to the 2009 calendar year. Sample tree felling will help ensure accuracy of these timber cruises. I make this decision within the bounds of the authority provided to me within the Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11 (516 DM 11). This authority is the result of an open public process, in which extensive public comment was considered (72 Federal Register 45504, August 14, 2007). The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act, in accordance with 516 DM 11.9(C)(6).

My decision to fell, buck, and scale sample trees is based on the need for the best available information in sustainably managing public resources and to ensure full market value to the public for the timber sold in current and future timber sales. Collecting such data is a long-standing part of BLM's inventory, monitoring, and quality assurance programs. It is a separate action from any proposed density management or thinning projects. It is my determination that this sampling procedure does not constitute an irrevocable commitment to market the sample trees or proceed with specific thinning projects. I base this determination on the limits described in the proposed action and the project design features which provide substantial "circuit-breaker" protections for a wide array of sensitive resource values. As described in the CX OR-103-09-02, sample tree felling will be implemented in proposed sale units. These sales have only been proposed; no decision has been issued.

Notice of this forest management decision will be posted on the Roseburg District website, at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/roseburg/plans/index.php>. The forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion is subject to protest under 43 CFR subpart 5003. Under 43 CFR 5003.2 subsection (c), "a notice of decision will be published in local newspaper(s)". Under 43 CFR 5003.3 subsection (a), protests may be filed with the authorized officer within 15 days of the publication date of the notice..." Under 43 CFR 5003.3 (b), "protest filed with the authorized officer shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision". Protests must be received by close of business (4:30 pm PST), December 26, 2008.

Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

Date: 12/4/08

Jay K. Carlson  
Roseburg District Manager