

Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)

**Lurch
Commercial Thinning & Density Management**

Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District
EA# OR-104-07-10

Lurch Commercial Thinning & Density Management will occur on five units (approximately 159 acres) of mid-seral, second-growth forest approximately 39-49 years old located in the Elk Creek/Umpqua River 5th Field Watershed in Section 13 of T. 23 S., R. 5 W. and Sections 7 and 19 of T. 23 S., R. 4 W, Willamette Meridian (see Figures 1 & 2). Of the 159 acres of treatment, approximately 6 acres will be removed for the development of spur roads and rights-of-ways. In addition, approximately 1.4 acres of timber will be removed for the development of spur roads and rights-of-ways on private industrial forest lands.

This project is within the General Forest Management Area (GFMA, 95 acres) and Riparian Reserve (64 acres) Land Use Allocations and will provide approximately 1.829 million board feet (1.829 MMBF) of timber available for auction. Approximately 934 thousand board feet (934 MBF) of timber will come from the GFMA and 895 thousand board feet (895 MBF) will come from the Riparian Reserve land use allocations. This project is in conformance with management direction from the ROD/RMP.

Test for Significant Impacts.

1. Has significant impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (1))?

Yes No

Remarks: Any impacts will be consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS).

2. Has significant adverse impacts on public health or safety (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (2))?

Yes No

Remarks: The increase in fuel loadings of four tons per acre will not dramatically increase the fire risk to the area for several reasons (EA, pgs. 27-28):

- o Lurch has several gates along the access road which will decrease the risk of human-caused wildfires by limiting access to the public; and

- down woody debris created at landings by the action will be machine piled and burned to reduce concentrated fuel loads. The remaining fuels created by the action will be predominately small (i.e. less than three inches in diameter) and scattered over the harvest areas, which will degrade within two years after harvest decreasing the risk of a fire building in intensity to consume larger diameter fuels.

Treatment of logging slash by prescribed fire has the potential to affect air quality locally. Burning will be accomplished under guidelines established by the Oregon Smoke Management Plan and Visibility Protection Plan to avoid adverse effects. Any impacts to local air quality will be localized and of short duration, consistent with the range and scope of those effects analyzed and described in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/EIS, pp. 4-9 to 4-12).

3. Adversely effects such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains or ecologically significant or critical areas including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (3))?

Yes No

Remarks: Unique geographic characteristics (such as those listed above) are absent from the project area and will not be affected.

4. Has highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (4))?

Yes No

Remarks: The BLM conducts thinning and density management regularly across western Oregon. There is also a wide body of literature describing the environmental effects of such forest management activity. No effects are expected to be highly controversial. The public was afforded several opportunities to comment on the current proposal, and no comments indicated controversy over the nature of the effects on the human environment

5. Has highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks to the human environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (5))?

Yes No

Remarks: The risks to the human environment from the project were analyzed and found not to be highly uncertain or unique (EA, Appendix A, pgs. 54-56).

6. Establishes a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (6))?

Yes No

Remarks: The advertisement, auction, and award of a timber sale contract allowing the harvest of trees is a well-established practice and will not establish a precedent for future actions.

7. Is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (7))?

Yes No

Remarks: The cumulative impacts to forest vegetation (pg. 21), wildlife (pgs. 26-27), fire and fuels management (pg. 28), hydrology (pgs. 37-38), soils (pgs. 32-33), fish populations and habitat (pg. 43) were analyzed in the Elkhead EA and found not to be significant.

8. Has adverse effects on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (8))?

Yes No

Remarks: The BLM conducted surveys for cultural resources and completed Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols (EA, pgs. 17, 47). No cultural resources were discovered (EA, pg. 17). It has been determined that there will be no effect to scientific, cultural, or historical resources (EA, pg. 47).

9. May adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (9))?

Botanical Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Fish Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Wildlife Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Remarks: Surveys did not identify the presence of any federally threatened or endangered botanical species; therefore the action will have no effect on listed botanical species (EA, pg. 45).

On February 4, 2008 NOAA Fisheries announced its listing of the Oregon coast coho salmon evolutionary significant unit (ESU) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and included the designation of critical habitat (EA, pg. 42). Lurch was found to have no effect on the Oregon Coast coho or their critical habitat (EA, pg. 47).

The closest Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho salmon or Chinook salmon is approximately 0.4 miles from Lurch Commercial Thinning and Density Management (EA,

Appendix F, pg. 64). However, the proposed project would not adversely affect EFH in the Elk Creek Watershed (EA, pgs. 43-44).

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the federally threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat (EA, pg. 47).

A Letter of Concurrence was received from the USFWS (*Reinitiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities* [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]) dated June 24, 2005 which concurred with the Roseburg District's conclusion that the commercial thinning or density management activities are not likely to adversely affect Northern spotted owls and are not likely to adversely affect the Northern spotted owl as a result of disturbance (EA, pgs. 23-24). Project design features (EA, pgs. 12-16) will be implemented in compliance with the letters of concurrence.

10. Threatens to violate Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR §1508.27(b) (10))?

() Yes (✓) No

Remarks: The measures described above insure that Lurch Commercial Thinning and Density Management will be consistent with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws. The impacts of the silvicultural treatment on the human environment will not exceed those anticipated by the Roseburg District PRMP/EIS.

Based on the analysis of potential impacts contained in the environmental assessment, I have determined that Lurch Commercial Thinning and Density Management will not have a 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 effects of the silvicultural treatment would be within those anticipated and already analyzed in the *Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS, 1994) and will be 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.

Marci L. Todd, Field Manager
Swiftwater Field Office

Date