



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Klamath Falls Resource Area
2795 Anderson Avenue, Building 25
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603-7891
Phone: (541) 883-6916 | Fax: (541) 884-2097
E-Mail Address: BLM_OR_KF_Mail@blm.gov
Website: <http://www.or.blm.gov/Lakeview/kfra/index.htm>

October 20, 2015

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1790 (ORL040)

To All Interested Citizens:

Public Scoping Input

The Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing the Summit Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the effects of various vegetation treatments on wildlife habitat, soils, hydrology, and other resources. The proposed project area consists of approximately 766 acres of BLM land, located in southwest Klamath County (see attached map).

The project area for the Summit EA is a portion of the Walter's Glade Project which was scoped in November 2013, with 3,300 acres proposed for treatment. The Walter's Glade EA was not completed. The Summit Project was identified to meet timber harvest requirements for 2016 - 2018 while minimizing impacts to the northern spotted owl (NSO). Treatments are proposed on approximately 690 acres of BLM lands and would include thinning and regeneration harvest. The lands in the Summit Project are allocated as 762 acres of Matrix lands and 4 acres of Riparian Reserves (RR). There are no lands designated as District Designated Reserve (DDR) or Late Successional Reserve (LSR) within the Summit Project.

The majority (86%) of the project area is located within Designated Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) and proposed management actions will be designed to be consistent with the NSO Critical Habitat Rule (USFWS 2012) and the Recovery Plan (USFWS 2011) for the NSO. Both the Critical Habitat Rule and the Recovery Plan provide recommendations on proposed management within designated critical habitat and spotted owl sites. These recommendations include the following:

- focus management on areas outside of LSRs (i.e., Matrix)
- avoid or minimize activities in active NSO territories (or the high-quality habitat within these territories)
- prioritize known and historic NSO sites for conservation and/or maintenance (Recovery Action (RA)10), and maintain and restore older and structurally complex forests (RA 32)

Sixty-six acres in the project area are classified under Recovery Action 32 of the NSO Recovery Plan and will be managed as such.

Purpose & Need for Action

The purpose of this project is to implement objectives in the 1995 KFRA Resource Management Plan (RMP), which include the following:

- Contribute to meeting KFRA's annual Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) of 5.91 million board feet (MMBF). This project is expected to provide approximately 2-3 years of ASQ volume.
- Improve the resiliency of forest stands to drought, insect, and disease
- Reduce hazardous fuels to lower the risk of high intensity, stand-replacing wildfires

Need

The BLM has a statutory obligation under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), which directs that "[t]he Secretary shall manage the public lands in accordance with the land use plans developed by him under section 202 of this Act . . ." The KFRA RMP of June 1995 is the current land use plan that guides and directs management on these BLM lands. The RMP has allocated the majority of lands being analyzed to Matrix. The RMP objective of Matrix lands is to produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest commodities as stated in the Oregon and California (O&C) Lands Act of 1937, which can be met by offering commercial timber products and other forest commodities to local and regional timber-related businesses.

Proposed Treatments

The following treatments have been identified as part of the proposed action for this EA:

- **Small Diameter Thinning** – Approximately 113 acres of non-commercial (small diameter) thinning in previously planted stands and natural stands is proposed throughout the treatment units. Manual and mechanical harvesting methods would be used to cut and remove designated trees.
- **Timber Sales**- As part of the proposed action, approximately 577 acres would be harvested using uneven-aged silvicultural prescriptions or regeneration harvest. Regeneration harvest would be applied over multiple years to a maximum of 131 acres per year. Uneven-aged management would be applied in areas adjacent to regeneration harvest. Manual and mechanical harvesting methods would be used to cut and remove designated timber. Portions of these areas may be planted with conifers where applicable.
- **Hazardous fuels treatments**- Underburning is proposed in regeneration harvest areas to reduce fuels. Stands would be evaluated following harvest to determine if underburning is necessary.
- **Road Management** - Harvesting would occur primarily from existing roads; the condition of the road system would be improved as needed for forest product removal. An estimate of approximately one-half (0.5) mile of temporary road spurs would be constructed where necessary to reduce log skidding distances and associated impacts to soils and other resources.
- **Riparian Reserves** - No treatment is proposed in riparian reserves.

Initial Issues and Concerns

Besides internal concerns raised by the interdisciplinary team regarding management of resources, recent public input, lawsuits, and administrative actions have highlighted the need to focus our analysis and alternative development on the following potential issues and concerns:

- Meeting objectives of the Recovery Plan and Designated Critical Habitat for the northern spotted owl
- Providing for sustainable timber production as required by the O&C Act
- Managing timberlands to improve forest health and vigor

Comments Requested

The BLM is asking for your help in identifying issues and concerns that you may have regarding the proposed Summit Project described above. We are seeking your comments to assist in developing alternatives to the proposed actions.

Please submit your comments by November 20, 2015 to be most effective in BLM's planning schedule. To submit issues or questions about the proposed treatments, I encourage you to submit them via email at the following address: BLM_OR_KF_Mail@blm.gov and identify your comments as being for the "Summit EA." If you desire to send a letter via regular mail, please use the address in our letterhead, ATTN: Field Manager.

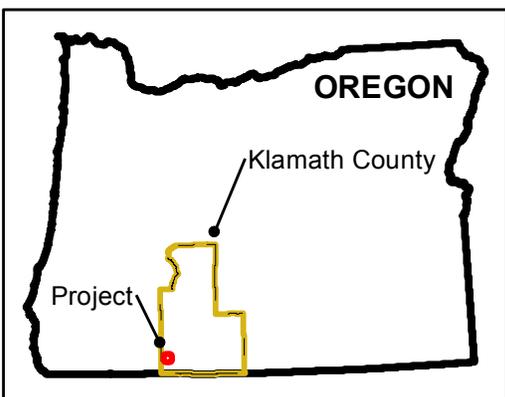
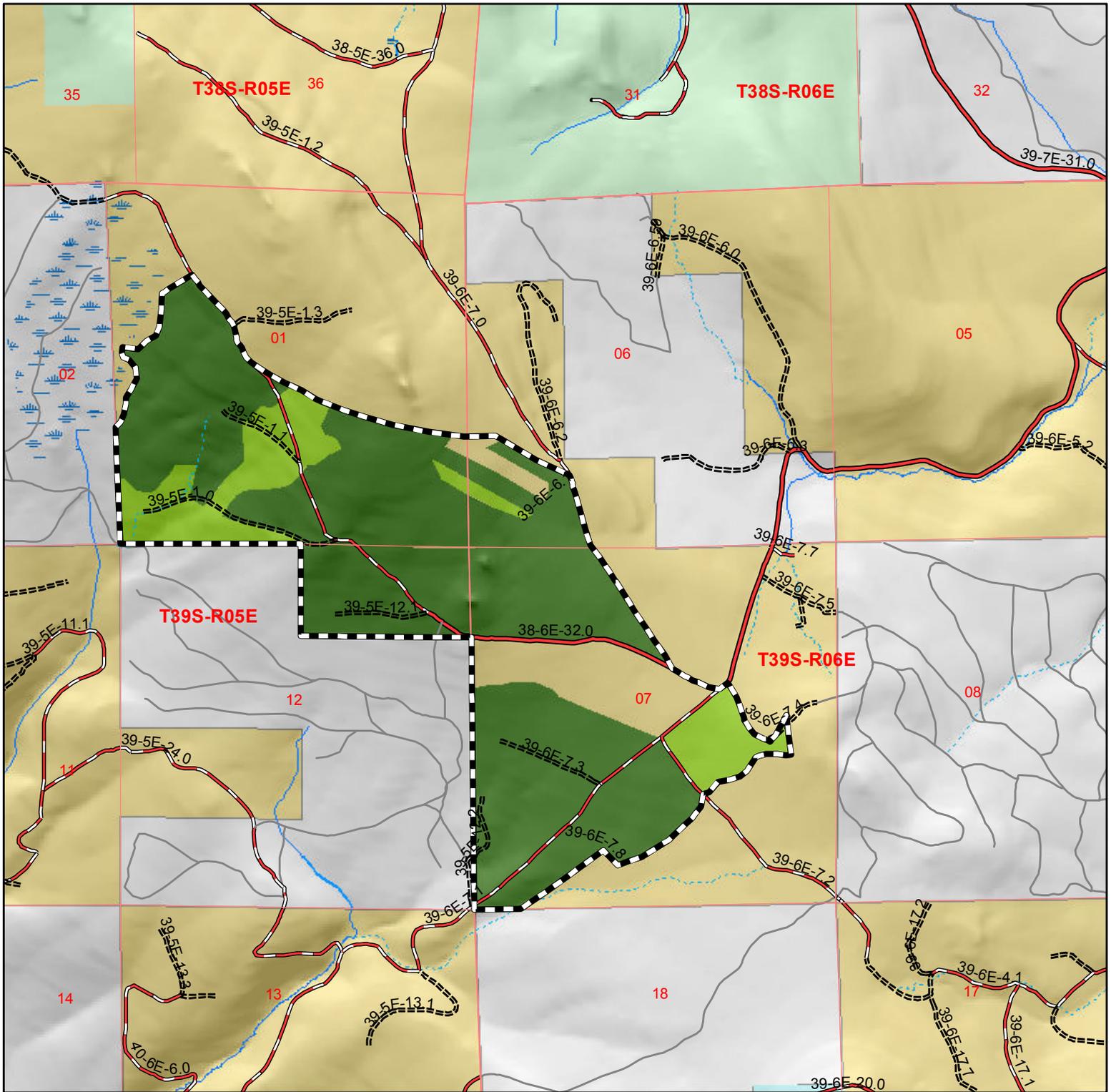
Once an Environmental Assessment has been prepared, the public will be notified again and will have an opportunity to review and provide comments on the proposed action and analysis.

NOTE: Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Sincerely,

/s/ Terry Austin, acting for

Donald J. Holmstrom
Field Manager



1:24,000

-  Summit EA Project Area
-  Timber Sale
-  Thinning
-  BLM
-  State
-  Private
-  USFS



Summit EA Scoping Map

Klamath Falls Resource Area
Lakeview District - Bureau of Land Management
 2795 Anderson Ave. #25
 Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603
 (541) 883-6916



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 and may be updated without notification.