



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Medford District Office
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504
<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford>

1792(ORM060)

AUG 31 2016

DOI-BLM-OR-M060-2016-0004-EA

Dear Interested Party:

The Final Environmental Assessment (EA), Decision Record (DR), and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Nedsbar Forest Management Project are available on the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) ePlanning website at:

<https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=55341&dctmId=0b0003e880a55436>.

Based on internal and external review of the Environmental Assessment (including public comments), I have decided to release a Final EA for this project along with the Decision Record to respond to comments received in response to the to July 2, 2016 EA to clarify portions of the analysis and to make corrections to the EA.

The DR for the Nedsbar Forest Management Project authorizes commercial forest thinning/timber harvest on approximately 1,112 acres using a variety of silvicultural prescriptions and harvest methods. Additionally, non-commercial treatments for thinning understories and/or fuels reduction would be implemented on 1,027 acres. Approximately 1.33 miles of temporary road (to be decommissioned after use) and 0.42 miles of permanent road will be constructed to facilitate access to timber harvest units. Twelve helicopter landings (5 existing and 7 new constructions) and four designated skid trails outside of existing units will facilitate access to harvest units. About 61 miles of existing roads will be used as haul routes and maintained, improved, or renovated. Also authorized is 9.63 miles of road decommissioning (1.88 miles will be passively decommissioned) and 7.34 miles will be placed in long-term closure status.

The activities of the project are analyzed under the Nedsbar Forest Management Project Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-OR-M060-2016-0004-EA). The EA was made available for public comment from July 2, 2016 for a 30-day comment period and was extended an additional 7 days through August 8, 2016. The BLM's responses to substantive public comments are included with the DR and FONSI, and are titled *Appendix A – Response to Comments*. These comments were considered in reaching a final decision for the project.

This decision is a Forest Management Decision. Administrative remedies are available to persons who believe that they will be adversely affected by this decision. A protest may be filed within 15 days of the publication of a Notice of Decision or Notice of Sale in the Medford's *Mail*

Tribune and Grants Pass' *Daily Courier* newspaper.

When timber is offered for sale, a Notice of Sale will be published in the *Medford Mail Tribune* and Grants Pass *Daily Courier*. Publication of the first notice of sale establishes the effective date of the decision for those portions of this Decision Record to be implemented through a timber sale. The protest of the timber sale must be made within 15 days of the publication of the Notice of Sale.

In accordance with the BLM Forest Management Regulations 43 CFR §5003.2 (a and c), the effective date of this decision, as it pertains to actions which are *not* part of an advertised timber sale is the date of publication of a Notice of Decision in *Medford's Mail Tribune*. Any protest must be made within 15 days of the publication of Notice of Decision in *Medford's Mail Tribune*. Any contest of this decision should state specifically which portion or element of the decision is being protested and cite the applicable regulations.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (b) states: "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 (email) or facsimile (fax) protests. **Only written and signed hard copies of protests delivered to the Medford District Office will be accepted.** The Medford District Office is located at 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, Oregon.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (c) states: "Protests received more than 15 days after the publication of the notice of decision or the notice of sale are not timely filed and shall not be considered." Upon timely filing of a protest, the Authorized Officer shall reconsider the project decision to be implemented in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available to her. The Authorized Officer shall, at the conclusion of the review, serve the protest decision in writing to the protesting party(ies). Upon denial of a protest, the Authorized Officer may proceed with the implementation of the decision as permitted by regulations at 5003.3(f).

If no protest is received by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) within 15 days after publication of the Notice of Decision or Notice of Sale, the decision will become final. If a timely protest is received, the project decision will be reconsidered in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available, and the Ashland Resource Area will issue a protest decision.

For additional information contact me at (541) 618-2438. Hardcopies of the Final EA, DR and FONSI are also available at the Medford Interagency Office. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 7:45 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., closed on holidays.

Sincerely,



Kristi J. Mastrofini
Field Manager
Ashland Resource Area