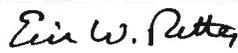
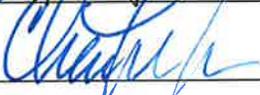
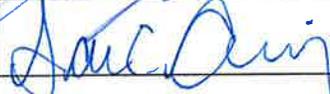


**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
REDDING FIELD OFFICE**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION

Baker Cypress Survey

NEPA DOC#: DOI-BLM-CA-N060-2016-0013-CX

POSITION	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
AIR, SOIL, & WATER	Manuel R. Silva		23 Mar 2016
BOTANY & RANGE	Kendra Fallon		3/23/16
CULTURAL RESOURCES (Paleontology, Social Justice)	Eric W. Ritter		3/23/16
FIRE & FUELS MANAGEMENT	Tim Bradley		3/23/16
FORESTRY	Kendra Fallon (acting for Jeff)		3/23/16
LANDS (Use Authorizations, Land Tenure Adjustments)	CHARLES WRIGHT		3/23/16
MINERALS	Manuel R. Silva		23 Mar 2016
RECREATION (Wilderness Character, VRM, Engineering)		William Kuntz	3/23/16
WILDLIFE & FISHERIES			3/23/16
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR	Lion Grudzinski		3/23/16
RESOURCES SUPERVISOR	Sara Acridge		3/25/16

Project Lead:

Laura Brodhead

Printed Name



Signature

3/28/16

Date

General Location: 8 miles south-southwest of Burney, just east of Tamarack Road in Shasta County.

Legal Location: Western halves of Sections 24 and 25, T. 34N, R. 2E

Map Location: See attached project map

A. Description of Proposed Action, including any Stipulations

This area is known as the “Upper Burney Creek Baker Cypress stand” and is home to Baker cypress (*Hesperocyparis bakeri*), a rare tree. A habitat enhancement project and scientific study of the species is being considered, which would require an environmental analysis be conducted to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be covered under a separate document.

Before an environmental assessment of the habitat enhancement project can be completed, biological, botanical and cultural surveys need to be performed at the site in order to determine if sensitive resources occur within the project area. The dense brush in parts of this site make these surveys extremely difficult and, in some instances, impossible to perform. The proposed action for the purposes of this CX is to construct “p-lines” in order to gain access across the site and adequately survey the project area for sensitive resources.

In order to complete the surveys for sensitive resources, approximately 4-5 miles of small pathways known as “p-lines” must be walked through the project area. When dense thickets of brush are encountered, workers would use brush loppers or chainsaws to cut the minimal amount of limbs or stems necessary to walk through and see the ground. No ground-disturbing activities would occur. The primary brush species that would be cut are manzanita (*Arctostaphylos spp.*), bush chinquapin (*Chrysolepis simpervirens*), and snowbrush (*Ceanothus velutinus*). Some downed trees or limbs of live trees may be cut to create a path. No live tree stems over 4-inches DBH would be cut during this project. Any cut materials will be lopped up and scattered in the immediate vicinity. The material will be scattered close to the ground to promote faster decomposition. If any suspected cultural sites are encountered, additional brush clearing around this site may occur in order to better observe and survey the site.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

This action conforms to the Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP) and June 1993 Record of Decision because it is specifically provided for or is clearly consistent with the RMP objectives and decisions as follows:

This area is designated as a Research Natural Area and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The BLM defines RNAs as “special management areas designated... to preserve and protect typical or unusual ecological communities, associations, phenomena, characteristics, or natural features or processes for scientific and educational purposes. They are established and managed to protect ecological processes, conserve biological diversity, and

provide opportunities for observation for research and education”. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act defines ACECs as areas where “special management attention is required... to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources and other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards”.

Additionally, the Redding RMP and June 1993 Record of Decision defines the resource condition objectives of this area as to (1) “protect the habitat and existing stands of Baker cypress” and (2) “encourage research of this species in conjunction with genetic and habitat studies of other stands of Baker cypress.”

This project would facilitate the biological, botanical and cultural surveys of the project area. After performing these surveys in the project area, further projects to enhance the Baker cypress habitat and conduct research on the species would be possible. These goals are clearly consistent with the land use allocations and resource condition objectives for this area in the Redding RMP and June 1993 Record of Decision.

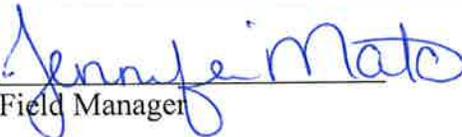
C. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

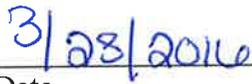
The action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 C.4. This forestry categorical exclusions states that “pre-commercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices” are excluded actions.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate for this action 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 (see attached).

I considered the impact that this project might have on cultural or biological resources and have determined that there would be no impact.

D. Signature


Field Manager


Date

E. Contact

For more information, contact Laura Brodhead, Forest Ecologist, Redding Field Office, lbrodhead@blm.gov, 530-224-2176.

Review of Extraordinary Circumstances

The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) requires review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (516 DM 2 Appendix 2) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional environmental analysis/documentation.

1) *Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

Yes No

Comments:

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.*

Yes No

Comments: There are no known cultural resources in the project area. The proposed action would have no effect on known cultural resources. BLM Archaeologist, Eric Ritter, determined that the cutting of small paths through the brush would not impact unidentified cultural resources because there would be no ground disturbance. Additionally, at least one trained Archaeological Technician would be assisting with the path layout in case any cultural resources are encountered. If any suspected cultural sites are encountered in the project area they would be noted and reported to the BLM Archaeologist.

3) *Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].*

Yes No

Comments:

4) *Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*

Yes No

Comments:

5) *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

Comments:

6) *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

Comments: This action is related to a probable future action in the project area that would consist of a forest thinning, prescribed fire, planting, and research activities. Future actions in the project area would be analyzed in a separate NEPA document at that time. The effects of the actions within the project area would be less than significant, both individually and cumulatively. There are no other known related actions.

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.*

Yes No

Comments: There are no known cultural resources in the project area; therefore the proposed action would not have any impact on known cultural resources. BLM Archaeologist, Eric Ritter, determined that the cutting of small paths through the brush would not impact unidentified cultural resources because there would be no ground disturbance. Additionally, at least one trained Archaeological Technician will be assisting with the path layout in case any cultural resources are encountered. If any suspected cultural sites are encountered in the project area they will be noted and reported to the BLM Archaeologist.

8) *Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat.*

Yes No

Comments:

BLM Wildlife and Fisheries Biologist, Gary Diridoni, reviewed the project and determined there would be no effect to wildlife or fisheries species listed or proposed to be listed on the ESA, or their Critical Habitat. Given the scope of the project (both direct and indirect effects), there would be no effect to T&E species because the project occurs outside the range of the species or, for those species whose ranges include the project activity area, specific habitat components are lacking (e.g. vernal pools). Consequently, there would be no project activities which would translate to an affect to listed or proposed species or their Critical Habitat.

BLM Ecologist, Kendra Fallon, reviewed the project and determined there would be no effect to listed or proposed plant species or their Critical Habitat. This is because the project occurs outside the range of T&E species or, for those species whose ranges include the project activity area, specific habitat components are lacking (e.g. vernal pools). Consequently, there would be no project activities which would translate to an affect to listed or proposed species or their Critical Habitat. Additionally, the targeted removal of manzanita, snowbrush, and chinquapin would limit impacts to any sensitive plants species.

9) *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

Yes No

Comments:

10) *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

Yes No

Comments:

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).*

Yes No

Comments: The project area does not contain or provide access to any known Indian sacred sites.

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).*

Yes No

Comments: Implementation of this project is limited in nature and size, and would not introduce or contribute weeds beyond that which would be reasonably expected from normal recreational visitation to the site.

Redding Field Office Consistency Review of Northwest Forest Plan Implementation

Does the proposed action occur within either the California Klamath or California Cascades Physiographic Zones of the Northwest Forest Plan?

Yes No

This project does not occur within the area encompassed by the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP); therefore, NWFP project compliance documentation is not necessary.

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Redding Field Office
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA

**Decision Record for a Categorically Excluded Action
DOI-BLM-CAN060-2016-0013-CX**

Introduction and Background

This area is known as the “Upper Burney Creek Baker Cypress stand” and is home to Baker cypress (*Hesperocyparis bakeri*), a rare tree. A habitat enhancement project and scientific study of the species is being considered, which would require an environmental analysis be conducted to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be covered under a separate document.

Before an environmental assessment of the habitat enhancement project can be completed, biological, botanical and cultural surveys need to be performed at the site in order to determine if sensitive resources occur within the project area. The dense brush in parts of this site make these surveys extremely difficult and, in some instances, impossible to perform. The proposed action for the purposes of this CX is to construct “p-lines” in order to gain access across the site and adequately survey the project area for sensitive resources.

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Decision and Rationale

The action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 C.4 “Pre-commercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices”.

Compliance with Laws, Regulations, Policies and Land Use Plans

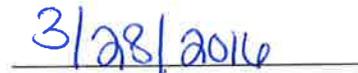
The proposed action is in conformance with the Redding Resource Management Plan, 1993.

All necessary steps were taken by a qualified staff specialist(s) to identify, record, and evaluate effects on cultural properties if present. These steps comply with all standards and guidelines of the 2014 Protocol Agreement between BLM and the California State Historic Preservation Officer. Based on design features identified in this environmental analysis, there will be no adverse impacts to eligible, potentially eligible, or listed National Register of Historic Places site(s) district(s), or Traditional Cultural Properties.

Administrative Remedies

Administrative remedies may be available to those who believe they will be adversely affected by this decision. Appeals may be made to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior, Board of Land Appeals (Board) in strict compliance with the regulations in 43 CFR Part 4. Notices of appeal must be filed in this office within 30 days after publication of this decision. If a notice of appeal does not include a statement of reasons, such statement must be filed with this office and the Board within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed. The notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Department of Interior, 2800 Cottage Way, E-1712, Sacramento, CA 95825.


Field Manager


Date

United States Department of the Interior



**Bureau of Land Management
Redding Field Office**
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, California 96002-0910
phone (530) 224-2100, fax (530) 224-2172



In reply refer to:
(8100) CA-360
CACA 42560

DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT

PROJECT: Baker Cypress Survey

REPORT #: N/A

This action is being taken in order to facilitate a cultural resources survey and the preparation of a cultural resources report for a habitat enhancement project in the area. Thus, there is no cultural resources report for this action. However, it has been determined that the action will not affect any cultural resources that are potentially in the area.

DATE(S) COMPLETED: N/A

ELIGIBLE OR LISTED PROPERTIES: N/A

DETERMINATION OF EFFECT: No Effect No Adverse Effect Adverse Effect

SHPO CONSULTATION/106 COMPLETED: N/A

DATE NHPA STATUS POSTED ON NEPA WEB: 12/22/15

DISCUSSION: This provides documentation that I have reviewed the Baker Cypress Survey Categorical Exclusion document and have found that all professional standards have been met. Pursuant to the Statewide Heritage Protocol, February 2014, between BLM, California and the California State Historic Preservation Officer, I affirm that all necessary steps have been taken to identify, record, and determine effects on cultural resources with the project's/action's Area of Potential Effect.

Eric W. Ritter

Eric W. Ritter, Field Office Archaeologist

12/22/15

Date

I concur with the findings of this analysis:

Jennifer Mata

Jennifer Mata, Redding Field Office Manager

3/28/2016

Date