

**United States Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Coos Bay District**

Categorical Exclusion Review (CX)

DOI-BLM-ORWA-C030-2016-0003-CX

Date: April 13, 2016

A. Project

Name: Sky Blue and Middle Overlook Progeny Site Fence Removal and Disposal CX

Location: Coos County, Oregon, Willamette Meridian

Sky Blue—T. 26 S., R. 12 W., Sec. 26

Middle Overlook—T. 27 S., R. 11 W., Sec. 21

Description:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Umpqua Field Office is proposing to remove approximately 7,500 feet of fencing surrounding two progeny tree sites. The Sky Blue and Middle Overlook project areas are approximately 8 miles and 14 miles southeast of Coos Bay, Oregon, respectively.

The project sites are existing 2nd generation progeny plantations (approximately 20 years old) that were fenced to protect planted trees from big game wildlife browse and damage. The trees at these two sites are no longer in danger from wildlife browse or damage. The BLM, therefore, no longer needs the fencing material in place and proposes to remove it.

The project consists of the removal of all fence fabric, gates, hinges, metallic fasteners, and wire used in the construction of the fence surrounding the progeny test sites. Fence material consists of 4-foot high panels of chicken wire and 4-foot high panels of galvanized woven wire field fence of 4×4-inch mesh wire. The BLM would leave all fence posts in place to help preserve a spatial reference to the site. The BLM would have all metal attached to the fence posts removed and collected for disposal.

The project areas are very brushy, which would require chainsaw work, where necessary, to access the fence line for removal. The BLM would prune trees—where necessary—to facilitate fence removal. The BLM would cut or girdle any live trees with fencing material growing into the wood.

The BLM would allow use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) to aid in the removal of fence materials.

Fence removal (and disposal) operations would take approximately 30 calendar days. The BLM estimates that the fence removal operations would occur after October 3, 2016.

Project Design Features:

The following project design features (PDFs) are included in the site-specific design of the proposal to eliminate or minimize adverse effects. These PDFs are resource protection measures identified by the interdisciplinary team and Best Management Practices identified in the *Coos Bay District Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan (RMP)*.

Special Status Species - Including T&E and S&M Species

- Allow fence removal operations at the Sky Blue progeny site only from September 15 to April 1 to avoid potential disturbance to marbled murrelet habitat (i.e., outside of marbled murrelet breeding season).

Noxious Weeds

- ATVs would be washed with a pressure washer or at a commercial facility prior to entry to any project site to minimize the spread of noxious weeds. All dirt, brush, and vegetative material would be removed from the frame, grill, bumpers, undercarriage, drive train, and wheel wells.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance Review

The BLM developed this project under the management direction of the 1995 *Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (1995 ROD/RMP). The analysis supporting this decision tiers to the *Final Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* (USDI 1994). This 1995 *Record of Decision* is also supported by, and consistent with, the 1994 *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its associated *Record of Decision* (USDA/USDI 1994).

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

...eliminate impacts associated with habitat manipulation, poaching, and other activities that threaten the continued existence and distribution of native wildlife inhabiting federal lands (RMP p. 27)

The project areas do not contain habitat for Survey and Manage species, therefore it is consistent with the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan as amended by the 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (2001 ROD).

C: Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with Department of Interior Manual 516 DM 11.9 A (1):

Modification of existing fences to provide improved wildlife ingress and egress.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists reviewed the proposed action and no extraordinary circumstances described under 43 CFR § 46.215 apply.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Reviewed by:	Initials	Date
(1) Health & Safety Hazardous Materials	Hazardous Materials Coordinator	<i>JJ</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(2) Unique Resources	Port-Orford-cedar Coordinator	<i>CN</i>	<i>4/14/2016</i>
(3) Controversial Effects	NEPA Coordinator	<i>HP</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(4) Risks	NEPA Coordinator	<i>HP</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(5) Precedent	NEPA Coordinator	<i>HP</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(6) Cumulative	NEPA Coordinator	<i>HP</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(7) Cultural & Historic	Archaeologist	<i>SRS</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(8) T& E Species	Wildlife Biologist	<i>JMS</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
	Fisheries Biologist	<i>JEF</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
	Botanist	<i>JS</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(9) Violate Laws	NEPA Coordinator	<i>HP</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(10) Environmental Justice	Environmental Justice Coordinator	<i>SRS</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(11) Native American	District Native American Coordinator	<i>SRS</i>	<i>4/13/2016</i>
(12) Noxious Weeds	Noxious Weed Coordinator	<i>CN</i>	<i>4/14/2016</i>

A summary of the extraordinary circumstances is listed below. The action must have a significant or a disproportional adverse effect on the listed categories to warrant further analysis and environmental review.

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
Rationale: The BLM did not identify any significant impacts on the public health or safety from the proposed action. Operations would follow Federal and State Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards designed to prevent job-related illness or injuries. The proposed activity would be in remote, forested locations outside of 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 principle drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
<p>Rationale: The project area is within a previously disturbed area; it is not within any of the unique areas described above.</p>		
<p>2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102 (2)(E)]</p>		X
<p>Rationale: Based on past experience, this type of activity is not highly controversial. The ROD/RMP establishes the land use allocation and goals for the affected lands; as such, there are no unresolved conflicts regarding other uses of these resources.</p>		
<p>2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks</p>		X
<p>Rationale: The Coos Bay District has removed fencing from other progeny sites before. Past experience from this type of activity has shown no highly uncertain, potentially significant, unique, or unknown risks.</p>		
<p>2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		X
<p>Rationale: The BLM's fence removal proposal does not establish a precedent or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. The fence removal proposal represents implementation of the land use plan.</p>		
<p>2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects</p>		X
<p>Rationale: The District has removed fencing from other progeny sites before. There is no evidence that this type of activity has potentially significant environmental effects.</p>		
<p>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.</p>		X
<p>Rationale: The BLM archaeologist reviewed this project. The project areas do not contain any properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>		

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Threatened or Endangered Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
<p>Rationale: The project area is within an area that was previously disturbed.</p> <p>The Umpqua Field Office Wildlife Biologist determined that the Sky Blue and Middle Overlook project areas do not contain habitat for northern spotted owls. Both project areas are outside of the disturbance distance for northern spotted owls.</p> <p>The Umpqua Field Office Wildlife Biologist determined that the proposed fence removal sites are outside of known or suspected marbled murrelet habitat; however, the Sky Blue project area is within 0.25 miles of mapped occupied marbled murrelet habitat. The BLM proposes to implement seasonal restrictions on the Sky Blue site to eliminate potential effects to marbled murrelet.</p> <p>The Umpqua Field Office Wildlife Biologist also determined that there is no habitat for Survey and Manage species, and there is no habitat for other Special Status species.</p> <p>The Umpqua Field Office Botanist determined that no threatened or endangered plants occur in or near the project areas.</p> <p>The Umpqua Field Office Fisheries Biologist determined that the Sky Blue and Middle Overlook project areas are uplands and do not contain any streams.</p>		
2.9 Violate a Federal, State, Local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
<p>Rationale: The proposed fence removal conforms to the direction given for the management of public lands in the Coos Bay ROD/RMP, which complies with all applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal laws.</p>		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
<p>Rationale: The Coos Bay District BLM, either internally or through public involvement in BLM project planning in the past, has not identified any potential effects that would indicate that this type of project would have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on low income or minority populations.</p>		

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
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: The District Archaeologist reviewed this project; no sites of sacred, religious, or ceremonial value have been identified in the project areas. Fence removal would not act to limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or significantly affect the physical integrity of a sacred site.		
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: Fence removal is not likely to introduce weed seed or create conditions favoring seed germination or movement of propagules. Fencing would be removed by hand, leaving posts in place, causing little bare soil and using no potential seed-bearing materials. Vehicles accessing the general project area would stay on existing roads or trails, reducing the potential of picking up and dispersing noxious weeds. The routes to both sites along BLM roads 26-12-35.0 (Sky Blue) and 27-11-7.0 (Middle Overlook) already possesses moderate to heavy populations of noxious weeds, and as such motor vehicle washing prior to entering BLM-managed lands would not be required. The BLM would require ATVs to be cleaned of soil and plant parts prior to entering the sites to minimize the risk of introducing or spreading noxious weeds within the progeny sites. The BLM would monitor and apply weed control measures to the noxious weed populations along the 26-12-35.0 and 27-11-7.0 roads.		

D. Signature

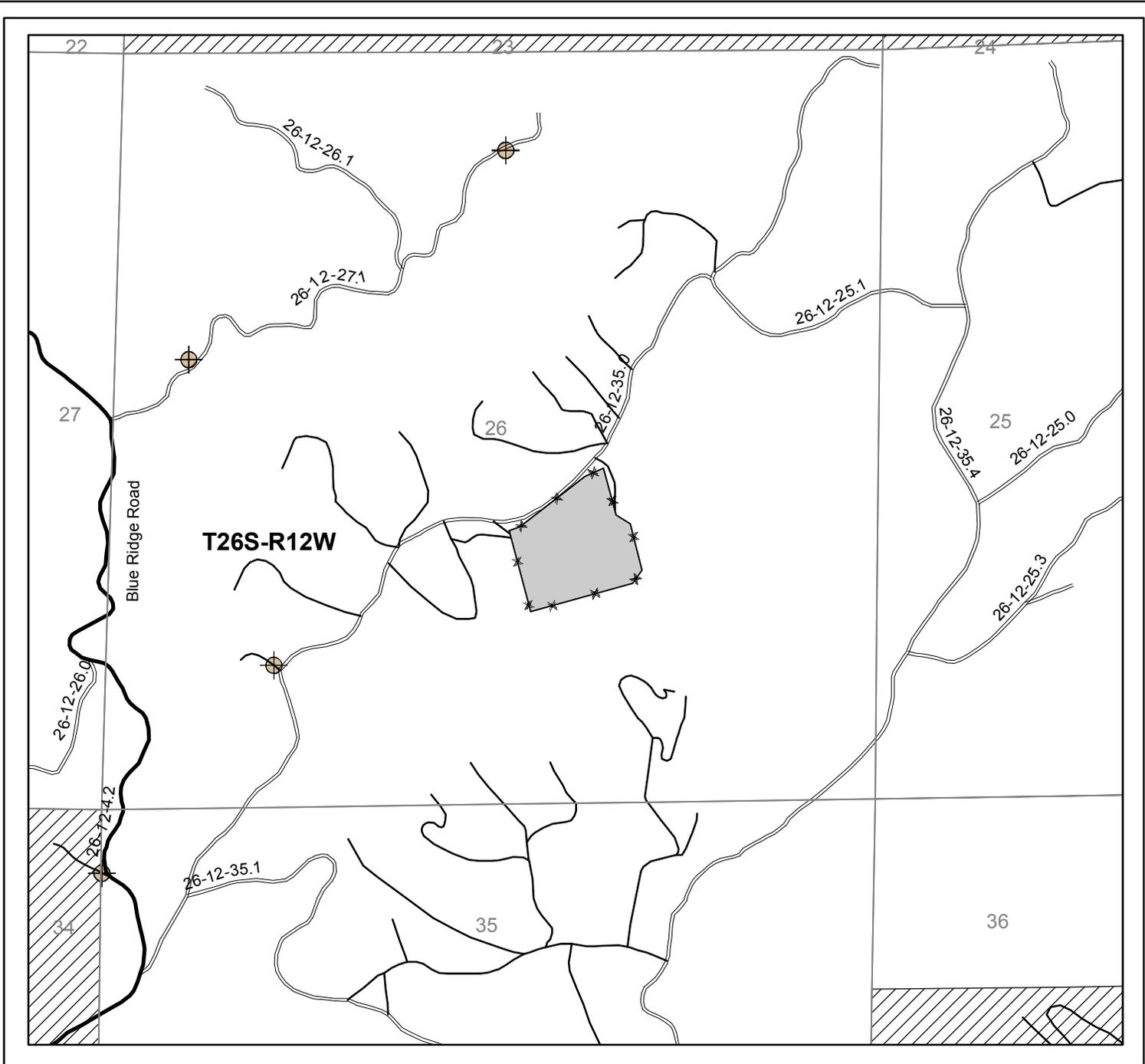
Authorizing Official:

Field Manager: /s/ Todd D. Buchholz

Date: April 14, 2016

E. Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Heather Partipilo at Bureau of Land Management, Coos Bay District, 1300 Airport Way, North Bend, Oregon 97459, (541) 751-0100, or email at BLM_OR_CB_Mail@blm.gov, Attn: Heather Partipilo.



Sky Blue Progeny Fence Removal and Disposal

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Legend

	Fence Location		Progeny Sites
	Paved Road		Gate
	Dirt Road		Road Block
	Gravel Road		Private Lands



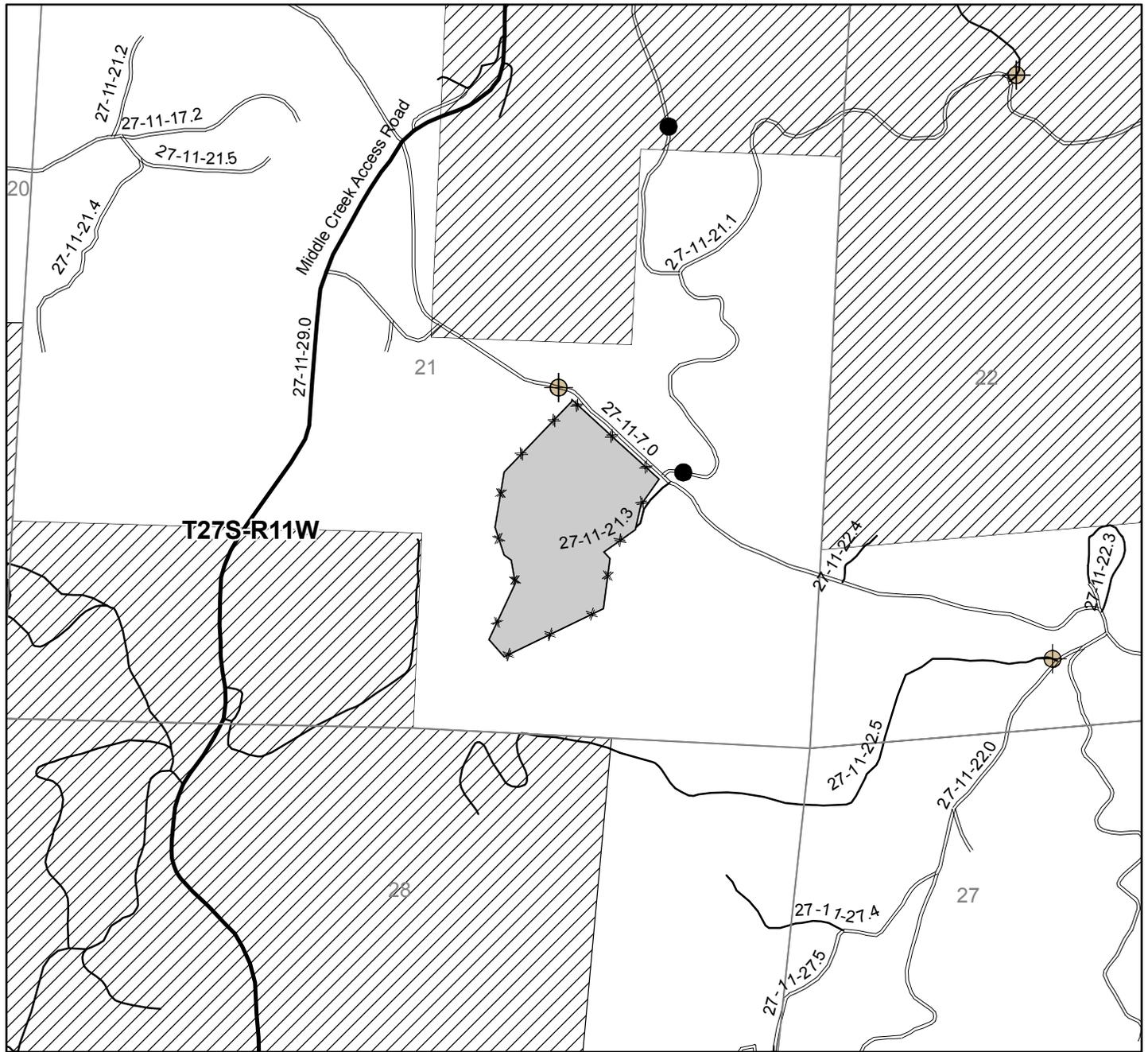
US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

Coos Bay District Office
Umpqua Field Office

1 inch = 1,000 feet

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.

2016 Progeny Test Site Fence Removal



Middle Overlook Progeny Fence Removal and Disposal DOI-BLM-OR-C030-2016-0003-CX

Legend

	Fence Location		Progeny Sites
	Paved Road		Gate
	Dirt Road		Road Block
	Gravel Road		Private Lands



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