



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Grants Pass Interagency Office

2164 N. E. Spalding Ave

Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford>

In Reply Refer To:  
1790 (ORM070)

Dear Interested Party:

This letter is to inform you that the Decision Record (DR) for the Late Mungers Vegetation Management Project (Late Mungers project) has been signed. The project is located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered land in Josephine County, Oregon about two miles northwest of the unincorporated community and census-designated place of Williams.

The Late Mungers Vegetation Management Project Determination of NEPA Adequacy provides site specific implementation decisions based on the Integrated Vegetation Management for Resilient Lands Environmental Assessment and Decision Record (IVM-RL EA), signed in March 2022. The IVM-RL EA is a landscape-scale planning effort to reduce fire risk, restore forest health and improve habitat for special status species across much of the BLM Medford District. The IVM-RL EA provides tools for the BLM to increase the pace and scale of projects that develop and promote resilient forests.

The lack of frequent low-mixed severity fire has resulted in overabundant homogeneous dense dry forests needing restoration via thinning and fire. Currently, 51% of all forests in Southwest Oregon are overly dense and have the highest need for restoration in all of Oregon and Washington. Researchers have identified 50 communities in Oregon with the highest cumulative wildfire risk; nearly half of those communities are located in Southwestern Oregon. Williams is ranked as the 13<sup>th</sup> highest community exposure in that study. In addition, the 2011 USFWS Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl calls for active management in the frequent-fire dry forest to promote resilience and support NSO habitat persistence.

To meet this need, the BLM's IVM-RL EA, and by extension, the Late Mungers Project establishes three purposes:

- Promote and develop safe and effective wildland fire risk reduction and reduce fire risk to Highly Valued Resources and Assets
- Promote and develop fire and disturbance resilient lands and fire-resistant stands
- Promote and develop habitat for special status species and unique native plant communities

Forest management activities authorized under the Late Mungers project DR include prescribed fire, small diameter thinning, commercial thinning and selection harvest treatments:

Treatment Type	LAND USE ALLOCATION				
	Late-Successional Reserve - Moist	Late-Successional Reserve - Dry	Riparian Reserve - Dry	District Defined Reserve	Total
Commercial Thinning / Selection Harvest	3	799	28	0	<b>830</b>
Small Diameter Thinning/Prescribed Fire	14	6,447	1,067 <sup>1</sup>	6 <sup>2</sup>	<b>7,534</b>

Commercial treatments are in strategic locations designed to meet wildfire risk reduction, resilient stand and wildlife objectives. These treatments are the first priority because they increase the effectiveness of subsequent thinning and prescribed fire actions. Many of the commercial treatments are located along Potential wildfire Operational Delineation (POD) lines, which provide firefighters safe and effective means to engage fire when it occurs.

This project aligns with the objectives identified in *Executive Order 14072: Strengthening of the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies*, by deploying climate-smart forestry practices to improve the resilience of our lands, waters, wildlife, and communities in the face of increasing disturbances and chronic stress arising from climate impacts. Specifically, the BLM has planned actions to protect and grow large, old trees, including retaining fire tolerant legacy trees. The BLM has established size and age limits to protect large, older trees. Some units include radial thinning to culture large trees. By reducing competition and opening up the canopy, we are also providing suitable growing conditions for the next generation of large, old trees.

The vast majority of the project is comprised of small diameter thinning and prescribed fire. This work will be prioritized around communities and POD lines. These POD lines provide firefighters safe and effective means to engage fire when it occurs. Thinning and prescribed fire are critical to help protect these stands from disturbances such as fire, climate change, insects and disease and drought. Implementation of the thinning and prescribed fire components of the Late Mungers Project are expected to take place over the next ten years.

Implementation of the Late Mungers project will also include:

- 1.9 miles of new temporary roads and landings.
- Approximately 55.4 miles of road maintenance
- Approximately 2.3 miles of renovation/maintenance of existing roads

The Late Mungers Vegetation Management Project was posted to ePlanning for a 60-day public comment period on the draft Determination of NEPA Adequacy between April 28, 2022, and June 28, 2022. The BLM received 103 public comment letters. All public comments were logged and documented in the Administrative Project Record and the substantive comments were considered in the final decision-making process and are included in the Administrative Project Record.

A person who believes they will be adversely affected by this forest management decision may appeal the decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (Board), within the Office of the Secretary, Office of Hearings and Appeals. Appeals to the Board are governed by the Department's regulations at 43 CFR Part 4. The BLM has provided the attached Form 1842-1 as a courtesy to assist a member of the public who chooses to appeal this decision. However, the appellant (the person filing the appeal) bears the responsibility to know, understand, and comply with the appeal regulations.

To appeal this decision, the appellant or designated representative (see 43 CFR § 1.3) must file a notice of appeal within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of publication of this decision on the ePlanning website. Appeals must be addressed to the deciding official, Vince Randall, BLM, Grants Pass Interagency Office at 2164 NE Spalding Ave., Grants Pass, OR 97526. More information can be found at BLM's ePlanning site, address listed below.

The Late Mungers Vegetation Management Project Determination of NEPA Adequacy, appendices and Decision Record can be accessed on the BLM's ePlanning site:  
<https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/admin/project/2018484/510>

For additional information, please contact Valda Lockie, Planning and Environmental Specialist, at (541) 471-6523 or email @ vlockie@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Vincent Randall  
Acting Field Manager  
Grants Pass Field Office

Enclosure