

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District
Border Field Office
1103 North Fancher Road
Spokane Valley, Washington 99212

A. Background

BLM Office: Border Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: WAOR 52540-07 and WAOR 52540-08

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-ORWA-W030-2016-0005 CX

Proposed Action Title: WA DNR Road Access License Agreement (Allen and Deer Fire Timber Salvage Sales)

Location of Proposed Action: See Exhibit A Map – Allen Timber Sale

Willamette Meridian, Stevens County, Washington at:

T. 29 N., R. 37 E., sec. 1, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

T. 29 N., R. 37 E., sec. 12, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

T. 29 N., R. 38 E., sec. 6, lot 4;

T. 29 N., R. 38 E., sec. 18, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.

The areas described contain approximately 4.9 acres.

See Exhibit B Map – Deer Fire Timber Sale

Willamette Meridian, Stevens County, Washington at:

T. 29 N., R. 37 E., sec. 1, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

T. 29 N., R. 37 E., sec. 12, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

T. 29 N., R. 38 E., sec. 6, lot 4, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$.

The areas described contain approximately 3.7 acres.

Proposed Action:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to authorize a new right-of-way to Washington Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR) for road access, improvements, maintenance, and a landing pile area for two future timber sales they are administering in the south Huckleberry Mountains, south and east of the Deer Trail Mine in Stevens County, Washington.

WA DNR is planning two salvage timber sales called the Allen Fire Salvage and Deer Fire Salvage sale to commence early spring of 2016. The timber salvage harvest is being proposed a result of the Carpenter Road fire that occurred in August of 2015. For safety reasons as well as an economic value for the tax payers, WA DNR is requesting to



salvage the timber as soon as possible, preferably early spring of 2016. To access state lands for the timber sale, WA DNR is requesting road access through 4 different sections of public lands in the south Huckleberry Mountains where road improvement and logging activities have been on going on behalf of the BLM for its timber harvesting program and during the summer as firefighting activities in the area. An Environmental Assessment for the Huckleberry Mountains Forest Management project was completed by the BLM in 2005. The BLM improved the road in sections 1, 6, and 12 of the access request. In Section 18 of T. 29 N., R. 38 E., the road will need some minor improvements to include light pre and post haul blading with some trimming of ditches along a two track road. No culverts will be installed, curves widened, or other types of extensive excavation will be performed as part of this proposed action. The approximate road distance that may need improvement is approximately 715 feet long.

The total distance requested for access through public lands is approximately 18,300 feet with an approximate width of 12 feet encompassing 5 acres of public land. Just adjacent to the road in section 18, the approximate 100 feet by 100 feet landing pile will be located on the west side of the road.

WA DNR and its timber sale purchaser/contractors are planning on using the road for accessing state lands for the harvesting of salvage timber and replanting. The DNR anticipates harvesting 1,120 million board feet (MMBF) of timber from the Allen Fire Salvage and 1,700 million board feet (MMBF) of timber from the Deer Fire Salvage and hauling will likely occur in early spring of 2016 or possibly sooner dependent on road conditions. All forest management work will be completed by July 30, 2018; the license agreements will expire at that time.

The DNR is making this request pursuant to an existing Cooperative Right-of-Way Agreement between the BLM and DNR. Article II of the Agreement states that whenever a licensee (i.e. timber sale purchaser/contractor) of either the DNR or BLM desires to use the road system of the other agency, the "licensee" will enter into a license agreement with the agency having jurisdiction of the road. In actual practice, the agency planning the sale requests the license agreement from the road owner upfront, to ensure that suitable access will be available to their timber sale purchaser. Later, when the unit is actually sold, the BLM and the DNR's purchaser complete the license agreement. The license agreement will include a number of provisions for use and restoration of the roadway and landing pile, including weed control and will apply to the above described lands.

The proposed action is to authorize road access through the south Huckleberry Mountains for Washington DNR and its timber sale purchasers/contractors for utilization of a landing area and road access, improvement, use, and maintenance and issue license agreement pursuant to BLM-DNR Cooperative Right-of-Way Agreement of 1968; Public Law 86-649, Section 102 (43 U.S.C. 1363).

Land Use Plan Name: Spokane Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Date Approved/Amended: Approved 1987/Amended 1992

The proposed action is in conformance with the Spokane RMP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): Keep public lands open for exploration/development of

mineral resources, rights-of-way, access, and other public purposes with consideration to mitigate designated resource concerns (BLM 1987, p. 12).

C. Compliance with NEPA

The proposed action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The proposed action is a kind of action that has been determined to fit within a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have significant effects on the human environment. The proposed action falls within the category of actions at 516 DM 11.9.E (12): Grants of right-of-way wholly within the boundaries of other compatibly developed rights-of-way.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation 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 43 CFR 46.215 apply, as described below:

- a. The proposed action would not have significant impacts on public health or safety. The authorization of this right-of-way will have no new or significant impacts on health or public safety. The access roads and landing pile area has been used by the BLM within the past several years to harvest timber on public lands. The BLM activities were approved in an Environmental Assessment for the Huckleberry Mountains Forest Management project in 2005. Issuing the road access and landing pile as proposed would not have an impact on public health or safety.
- b. The proposed action would not 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. These roads and landing pile exist; any road management activities will be minor and will have no significant impacts to natural or cultural resources.
- c. The proposed action would not have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]. The effects of issuing a license agreement to authorize utilization and maintenance of existing roads and a landing pile are well understood. There are no highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning this action.
- d. The proposed action would not have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. The effects of issuing a license agreement to authorize utilization and maintenance of existing roads and a landing pile are well understood. There will be no highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
- e. The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. Issuing an

authorization for the use of existing roads and landing pile would not set a precedent for any future action.

f. The proposed action would not have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. The authorization of use for these existing roads and landing pile does not have a direct relationship to actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant effects. Operation and maintenance of these roads have been utilized by the BLM over the last several years for its own timber harvest activities; WA DNR's use of the same roads and landing pile would result in a continuation of impacts that have been ongoing in the same area since 2005. No new or additional impacts that would result in cumulatively significant impacts are predicted to occur as a result of continued operations.

g. The proposed action would not have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau. The approval of this authorization will entail no new rights or additional ground disturbance other than what has been previously done by the BLM and as a result, there are no requirements to consult with SHPO and the tribes. The proposed action of approving this would not have an impact on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.

h. The proposed action would not 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 for these species. The proposed action would not change the amount or suitability of wildlife habitat in the project area as the roads and landing pile area currently exist. Therefore, no effects to species listed, proposed to be listed, or their designated critical habitat were identified from this proposed action.

i. The proposed action would not violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. All applicable laws are being followed in authorizing this proposed action.

j. The proposed action would not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).

k. The proposed action would not 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). There are no identified sacred, ceremonial, or religious Indian sites within the area of the proposed action.

l. The proposed action would not 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). The license agreement authorization includes stipulations that address the control of noxious weeds and invasive plants.

D. Signature

/s/ Lindsey Babcock
Lindsey Babcock
Border Field Manager

1/28/2016
Date

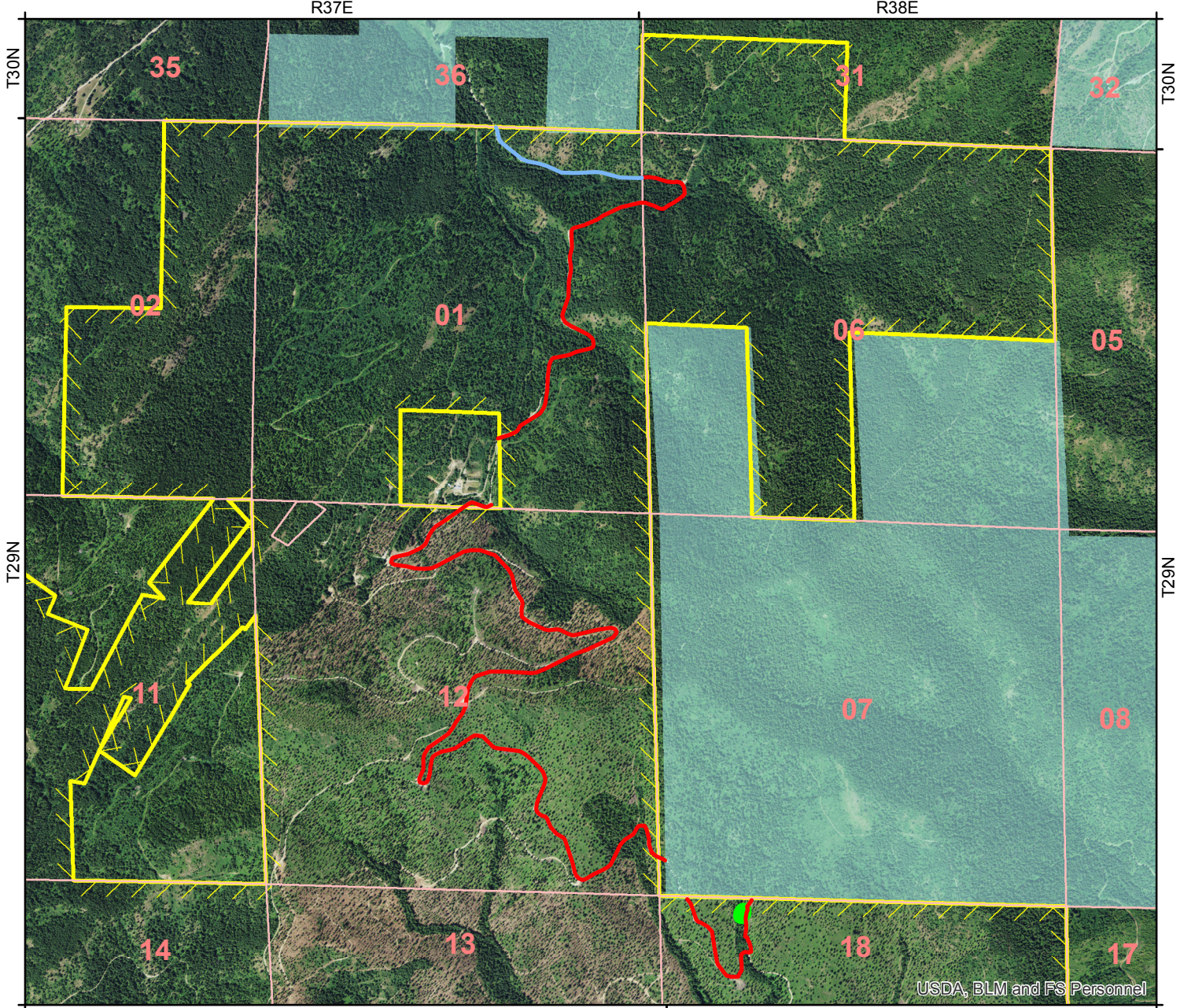
E. Contact Person & Reviewers

For additional information concerning this Categorical Review, contact Heidi Lee Honner, (509) 536-1216.

Reviewers	Resource	Initials	Date
Jason Lowe	Wildlife, Special Status Wildlife	JL	1/28/16
Kim Frymire	Botany, Special Status Plants	KF	1/28/16
Anne Boyd	Historic/Cultural	AB	1/28/16
Heidi Lee Honner	Lands and Realty	HLH	1/28/16

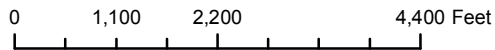
Note: A separate decision document has been prepared for the action covered by this CX.

**Exhibit A -
WA DNR WAOR 52540-07
Road Access for Allen Timber Salvage
Huckleberry Mountains, Stevens County, WA.**



USDA, BLM and FS Personnel

January 28, 2016



Scale 1:25,000

Willamette Meridian,
Stevens County, Washington
T. 29 N., R. 37 E., secs. 1 and 12;
T. 29 N., R. 38 E., secs. 6 and 18.
3.3 miles long, 12 feet wide for 4.9 acres.



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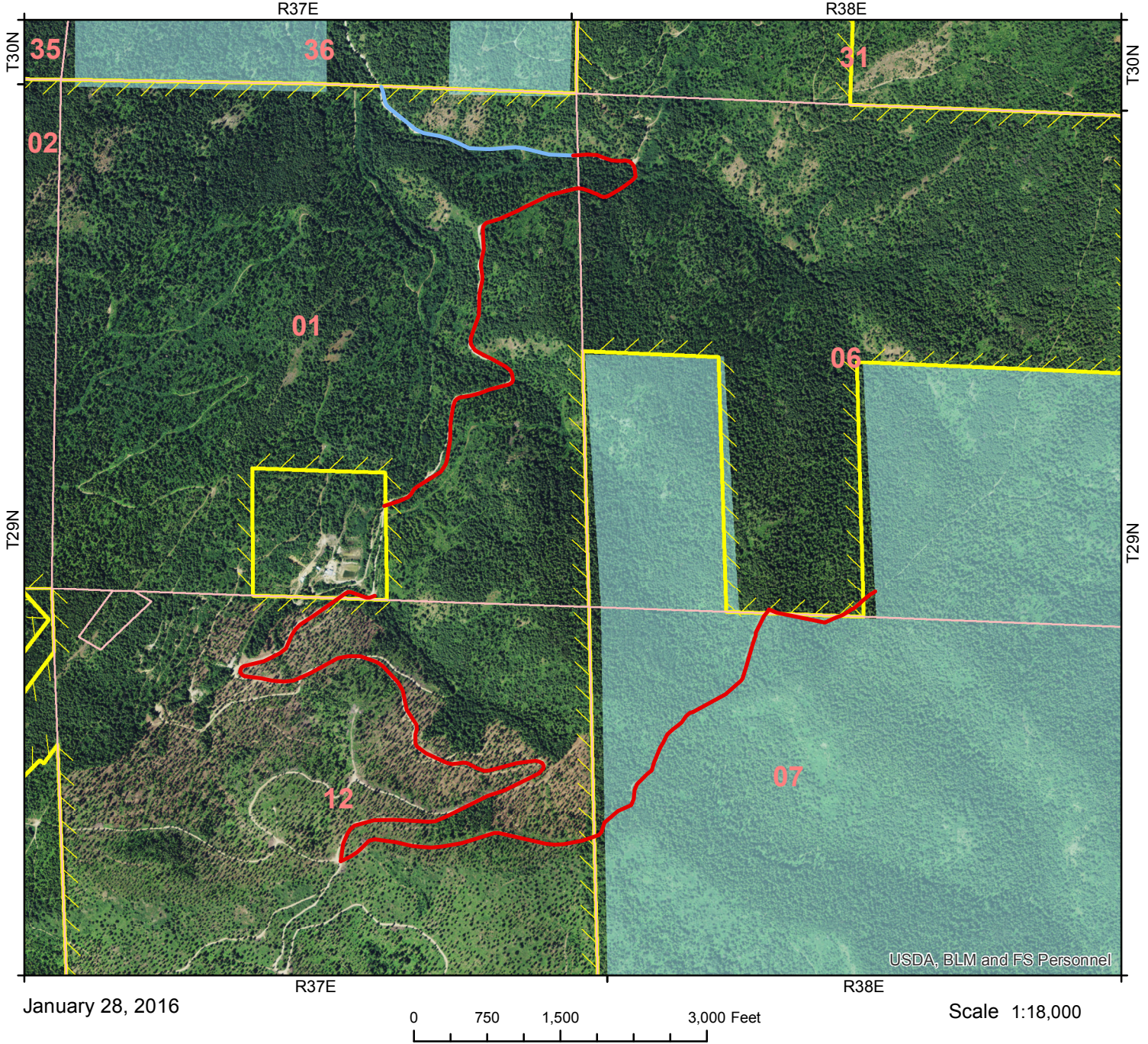
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

Legend

-  DNR Road Easement
-  DNR Road Access
-  DNR Landing Pile
-  BLM Lands
-  WA DNR



**Exhibit B -
WA DNR WAOR 52540-08
Road Access for Deer Fire Timber Salvage
Huckleberry Mountains, Stevens County, WA.**




Willamette Meridian,
Stevens County, Washington
T. 29 N., R. 37 E., secs. 1 and 12;
T. 29 N., R. 38 E., sec. 6.
2.5 miles long, 12 feet wide for 3.7 acres.



Legend

- DNR Road Access
- DNR Road Easement
- BLM Lands
- WA DNR



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