

Pre-Operations Report 2010 Sale

Operation Name: Perkins Creek North
County: Douglas County
Management Basin: Umpqua

Table 1. Operation Areas, Types and Acres

Area	Harvest Type	Gross Acres	Net Acres
1	Partial Cut	104	92
2	Heavy Thinning	18	18
Total		122	110

I. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION AREA:

Perkins Creek North is in the Umpqua watershed in the Cow Creek drainage west of Glendale. There is a stream that goes through the middle of the ownership, running north to Cow Creek. To the east of this drainage the topography rises quickly to a north-south ridge. A north-east facing slope covers 68 acres of the sale area. Slopes across the sale area range from mild to steep, but the majority of the sale is in the 30-60% range. The north-south ridge is accessible from the south with new road construction on 20-40% slopes.

Approximately 70% of the soils are of the Acker-Norling (5F) complex. Soils of this type are loamy, moderate to deep (20-60 inches deep to bedrock), and well drained. Water erosion and rutting are potential concerns for this type, as are slope and soil strength during road construction and harvesting.

Seedling mortality is a concern for this type as is windthrow during periods of strong winds when the soil is saturated.

The Beekman-Vermisa Complex (19G) soils cover about 20% of the sale area. It is loamy, high in rock fragments, well drained, and is 10-40 inches deep to bedrock. Steep slopes, erosion hazards, and rutting concerns limit road building across this type. There is low risk for seedling mortality and damage due to fire for this soil.

The remaining 10% of the sale area consists of smaller inclusions of other soil types.

II. CURRENT STAND CONDITION:

Overstory: The stands within the timber sale are of three timber types, mixed conifer hardwood east of the ridge, primarily hardwood with some conifer between the ridge and the stream, and a similar type that is lower density mixed conifer and hardwood

west of the stream. The primary species are Douglas-fir, chinkapin, and madrone, with some minor species conifers. These stands are considered closed single canopy; they are dense, allowing a small amount of light to the forest floor. The western most area is more open with more understory vegetation than the other two types.

Understory: The primary vegetative species found in Perkins Creek North include vine maple, Oregon grape, Salal, bear grass and evergreen huckleberry. After the sale, the tanoak, chinquapin, and madrone will sprout aggressively.

Snags: Area 5137 has 2.2 snags/acre 14-17". The conifer snags in area 5138 are in the rotting decay class five; there are 3 snags per acre 19 inches and larger. This area has numerous hardwood snags that are in the 6-8 inch size class (21 snags per acre). Area 5139 has 4 chinkapin snags per acre 10" and greater.

Down woody debris: Area 5137 has 6 pieces per acre over 14" (120-150 cubic feet/acre). Area 5138 has 1,308 cubic ft/acre total (1092 conifer) and 390 cubic feet in class 1 and 2 (208 conifer). Area 5139 has 952 cubic ft/acre total (905 conifer) in the rotting stages.

Current Stand Structure: The current stand structure is in closed single canopy mixed conifer and hardwood, and in understory development conifer (See Table 3).

Insects and disease: This area does not have a high occurrence of forest pathogens of concern. Root rots including laminated root rot (*Phellinus weirii*) are not a significant problem. The climate is too dry for Swiss needlecast (*Phaeocryptopus gaeumanni*) to be a concern. There is some occurrence of the fir engraver (*Scolytus ventralis*) in true firs in this area. True firs are not a significant component of these stands and thinning them will reduce the susceptibility to fir engravers. Sugar pine, if planted, may become infected with white pine blister rust (*Cronartium ribicola*).

Table 2. Stand Inventory Information

Area	Prescription	Stand ID ¹	Species	Age 2010	DBH	BA	TPA	SDI	Acres ²
1	Partial Cut- Thin	5137	DF, PM, CQ, SP, BM	80	12	195	249	67	17
	Target ³				12	110	140	32	
	Partial Cut- Thin	5138	DF, CQ, PM, PP, SP	83	14	225	218	70	55
	Target ³				16	140	100	34	
	Partial Cut- Thin	5139	DF, CQ, PM, SP	78	9	171	423	81	20
	Target ³				10	100	200	32	
2	Heavy Thinning	5139	DF, CQ, PM, SP	78	9	171	423	81	18
	Target ³		DF, SP		16	60	20	15	

¹The source of stand inventory information is Stant Level Inventory from 2006).

²The net acres are based on GIS excluding roads and stream buffers.

³The Target identifies expected stand characteristics (DBH, BA, TPA and SDI) after harvesting has been completed.

III. DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION/VISION:

The purpose of the following stand management treatments is to reduce moisture stress and competition, lowering the risk presented by disease and wildfire, and to raise revenue for the Counties by removing a small amount of timber. Thinning will help reduce interspecies competition and stress on the trees helping to prevent beetle outbreaks and disease. Removing some of the ladder fuels will help prevent fire from reaching the canopies and killing the dominant overstory trees.

The stand is classified to grow into Layered and OFS sometime in the future. The thinning will help it along that trajectory. The thinning will help create layering with some hardwoods acting as the mid-layer. About 20 acres near the ridge in Area 2 will receive a heavy thinning, or modified clearcut to convert this mostly hardwood area into a conifer forest. Some scattered conifer and hardwoods will remain after harvest. There will be site preparation and replanting in this area. The remaining conifer will act as the overstory layer and the replanted conifer and some hardwoods will grow into the lower layer.

Table 3. Stand Structure Information

Area	Stand ID	Current	Post Harvest ¹	Desired Future	Acres (net)
1	5137	UDS	UDS	LYR	17
	5138	CSC	UDS	OFS	55
	5139	CSC	UDS	LYR	20
2	5139	CSC	REG	LYR	18

¹ The stand is expected to develop into this condition in the five to ten years after this operation is completed.

IV. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION:

Desired Silvicultural Results: Stand 5137 and 5138 will receive a basal area thinning from below to remove the suppressed, intermediate and some of the codominant trees from these stands. Some of the healthy advanced understory will be retained to promote layering. An upper diameter limit will be established to preserve the largest and healthiest trees in the stands. Density management will increase growth and development of the overstory and understory. Thinning these stands will increase the health and vigor of the residual conifer and hardwood trees as well as reduce the likelihood of insects, disease, wildfire, or other stand replacing events. Portions of the sale area will remain in unthinned patches at least 1 acre in size due to limitations in logging capabilities. The largest and healthiest trees will be left throughout the sale, as well as any trees that have the Old Growth characteristics of rough bark, large limbs and deformed tops. In 30 acres of stand 5139, 90% of the hardwood overstory trees will be removed to create growing space for conifers. The combination of residual conifers, hardwoods and planted understory conifer will eventually lead to a layered forest.

Snags: Snag creation will be required. An estimated 1 to 1.5 snags per acre will occur as a result of logging and natural mortality. The sale area will be assessed after logging to determine the amount of snags to create. It is likely that an additional 1 snag per 2 acres will be created by tree topping or girdling tops. All pre-existing snags that are not safety or fire hazards will be retained. Any snags that are felled will be retained for down woody debris.

Down woody debris: Approximately 100 cu. ft. per acre of class 1 debris will be added through normal logging operations including trees that are damaged and eventually blow down and cull log segments required to be left on the ground. Additionally any time a stand is opened up from management activities the possibility of isolated blow down or top breakage exists.

Insects and disease: The sale will focus on removing the trees that have the smaller, less developed crowns, poor vigor and thus are more susceptible to insects and disease.

Fuels Modification: Residual slash, tree tops and limbs, will be burned if unacceptable accumulations remain after harvest.

Regeneration: Regeneration from seed will occur naturally as a result of the thinning, especially in group selection areas. Areas of Heavy Thinning or hardwood conversion will be planted.

V. ESTIMATED TIMBER AND REVENUE OUTPUTS:

Table 4. Timber and Revenue

Ownership		Sale Type	
BOF	CSL	Cash	Recovery
100%	0%		X
Planned Quarter:		4th	

	Conifer	Hardwood	Total
Net Volume (MBF)	440	60	500
Stumpage Value (\$/MBF)	\$150	\$50	
Estimated Gross Value	\$66,000	\$3,000	\$69,000
		Project Costs:	\$10,000
		Estimated Net Value:	\$59,000

VI. HARVESTING AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS:

Access: Existing roads will be used to access the majority of the ODF managed land. A BLM license agreement will be required to haul the timber to the county road. Landowners will have concerns about dust; log trucks will have to keep speeds below 15 MPH. A BLM road accesses the southern portion of the sale in the east. This road will be extended up to the ridge for that portion of the sale.

Harvesting: Cable yarding in the summer.

Table 5. Transportation Management Summary (Miles)

Activity	Mainline	Collector	Rocked Spur	Dirt Spur
Construct				0.4
Improve				
Block (Closed)				
Vacate				

VII. AQUATIC RESOURCES AND WATER QUALITY:

Perkins Creek, a fish-bearing stream, flows northward through the block of land into Cow Creek. There are two streams shown on the map in the eastern 40 acres. These are not likely to be fish-bearing streams. They may be perennial, but will be verified on the ground. All streams will be surveyed prior to sale preparation. One other stream is shown in the southwest. All streams will be posted according to the Southwest Oregon Forest Management Plan riparian management area rules.

The goal for harvesting within 100 feet (Inner Zone) of type F streams is to achieve mature forest condition in a timely manner. Management in the Inner Zone will result in larger diameter trees in a shorter time frame than if no harvesting were to take place and will maintain all snags and downed wood. Once mature forest condition is achieved there will be no management in the inner zone of type F streams. The same prescriptions described stand #5137 will be used to achieve the desired riparian conditions.

Small type N streams can influence stream temperature of downstream fish-bearing streams. Sufficient trees will be retained within 500' of the confluence with type F streams to achieve 80% shade over streams to minimize potential increases in stream temperature on the F stream.

VIII. WILDLIFE AND T&E SPECIES CONSIDERATIONS:

Northern Spotted Owl: The SOA Wildlife Biologist has determined that the sale is suitable for Northern Spotted Owls due to the age and size of the trees. Surveys for NSO's have taken place over several years and will continue in 2009. As a result of these surveys, 2 northern spotted owl sites have been identified within 1.3 miles of this sale.

A preliminary Biological Assessment was prepared by the ODF SOA Biologist when this sale was an alternate in the 2009 AOP to assure that the appropriate measures were taken to provide sufficient habitat on the landscape consistent with ODF's policy on Northern Spotted Owls.

Marbled Murrelet: This sale lies outside the Southwest Oregon Survey Zone and does not require murrelet surveys.

Threatened and Endangered Fish: There is one medium fish-bearing stream in the sale area, and three unknown seasonal, or perennial streams.

Threatened and Endangered Plants: The sale area was checked against District knowledge for any listed plant location as well as the Oregon Natural Heritage Program (ONHP) database of known listed plant locations.

IX. SLOPE STABILITY AND GEOTECHNICAL ISSUES:

A hazard assessment of slope stability is conducted by a Geotechnical Specialist if there are any issues with structures downstream of the sale. This sale does not have any structures downstream. There are no high landslide hazard locations within the sale.

X. RECREATION RESOURCES:

There are no developed trails or facilities in close proximity to the sale.

XI. CULTURAL RESOURCES:

The sale area was checked against a cultural resources database and maps. The sale area is not likely to have cultural resources. During sale preparation, the sale area will be reviewed for cultural artifacts.

XII. SCENIC RESOURCES:

The Visual Classification is rated as Level III – Low Sensitivity.

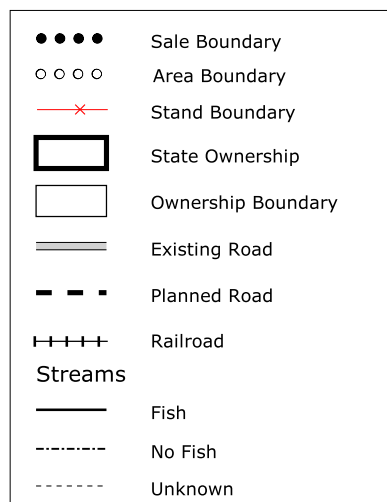
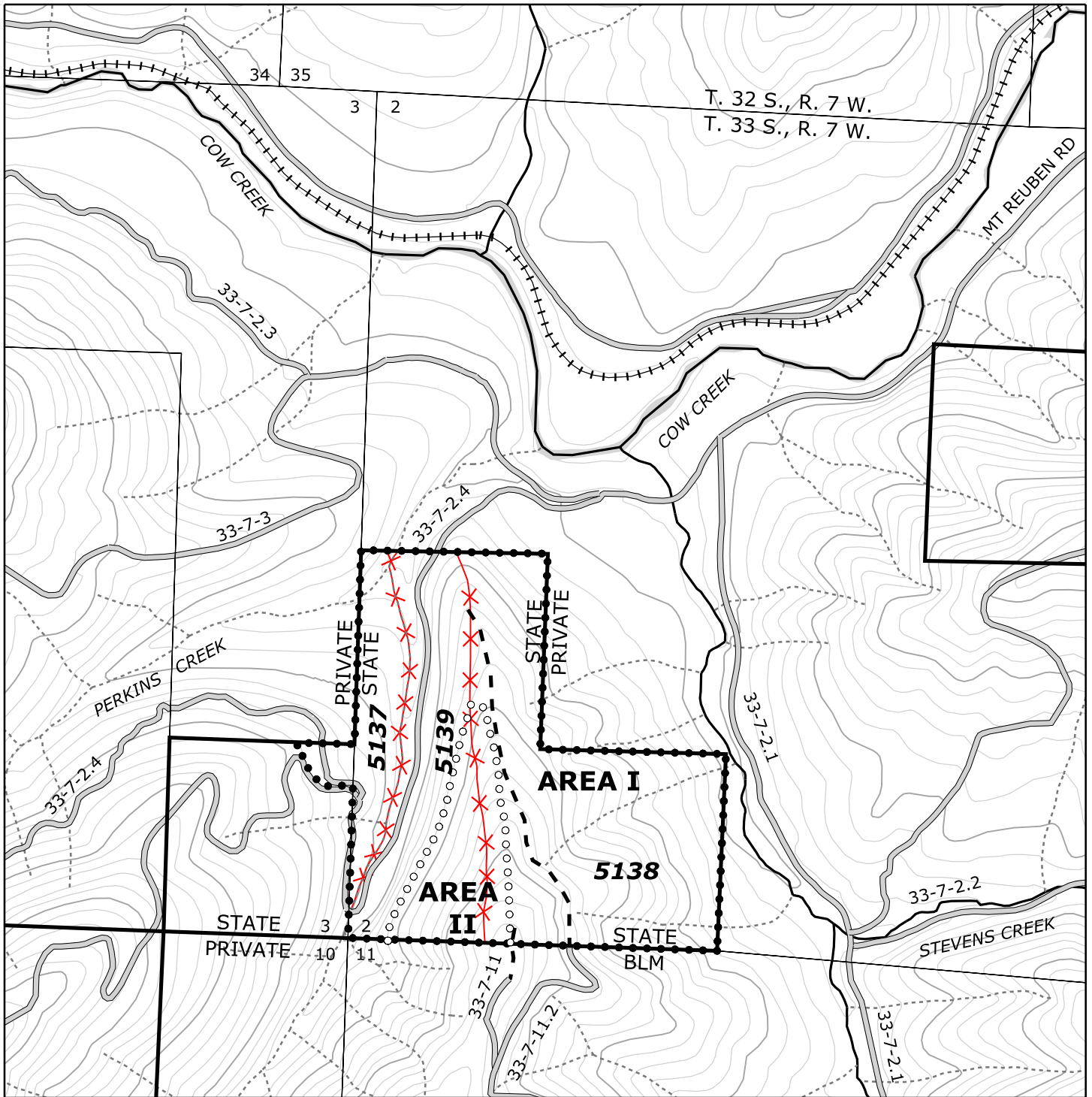
XIII. OTHER RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no other resource considerations within or adjacent to the sale area.

XIV. LAND MANAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY:

The sale has streams that receive “focused” or “special stewardship”. Small seasonal streams receive focused stewardship in the inner and outer RMA zones where a specified basal area retention is required. Small perennial streams receive special stewardship or specific stream buffer protection in the stream bank zone. The inner and outer RMA zones of the perennial streams receive focused stewardship. The small fish-bearing streams receive the above stewardship with an added emphasis, or special stewardship in the aquatic and inner riparian management areas. The stewardship is accomplished through stream buffers of increasing size as the stream becomes larger

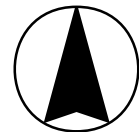
and supports fish. Specific requirements are listed in the appendix of the Southwest Oregon Forest Management Plan riparian management area rules.



Perkins Cr. North

S.W.O. District - 2010 Annual Operations Plan

T. 33 S., R. 7 W., Sec. 2; W.M.
Douglas County, Oregon



ACRES (est. gross)	
AREA I	: 104 acres
AREA II	: 18 acres
TOTAL	: 122 acres

500 0 500 1000 1500 2000 Feet



Contour Interval : 40 feet

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Rudd
FROM: Randy Smith
SUBJECT: Preliminary Biological Assessment for the **Perkins North Thin** Timber Sale
DATE: January 31, 2008

Executive Summary

Perkins North Thin is a proposed sale in the 2009 Annual Operations Plan of the Southwest Oregon District and is located within the home range of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl sites.

No spotted owls have been observed within the sale area during protocol surveys.

After harvest of the sale, 62% and 70% suitable habitat will remain post harvest within the 0.7 mile circles for the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle activity centers and 65% and 74% suitable habitat will remain within the 1.3 mile circles. Suitable habitat within all circles will exceed the ITG.

This sale is 47 miles from the Pacific Ocean but is within the federal exclusion zone where surveys for marbled murrelets are not required.

As currently proposed, the Perkins North Thin timber sale is expected to have a low risk of negatively affecting the occupancy and productivity of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl sites.

Introduction

Purpose

The Southwest Oregon District is proposing the Perkins North Thin timber sale in their 2009 Annual Operations Plan. This sale contains suitable habitat for northern spotted owls. Portions of the sale are within the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles for the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl activity centers. This memo presents the relevant biological information needed to assess the potential effects of the Perkins North Thin timber sale on northern spotted owls.

Policy Direction

Northern Spotted Owls

In the Southwest Oregon District, the standard for protection of northern spotted owls, according to ODF policy (Holloway 2002), is to apply the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rescinded Incidental Take Guidelines (ITG) as outlined in "Procedures leading to Endangered Species Act compliance for the northern spotted owl" (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1990). According to the ITG, the best available habitat is identified for a 70 acre core area; at least 500 acres of suitable habitat should be maintained within a 0.7 mile radius and within the home range circle (in this province 1.3 miles), approximately 40% suitable habitat (1,336 acres) should be maintained. Additional factors to be considered and documented in this biological assessment include proximity of the operation to a site, the prescription proposed, the size of the operation, the history of management activity near the site, and other relevant factors.

Background

Survey History and Site Information

Perkins Creek

Potential spotted owl habitat surrounding the timber sale was surveyed according to protocol endorsed by the USFWS (Anonymous, 1991). In 2000, a single sub-adult male was found. A single

male response was detected at night in 2001. A new pair attempted to nest but failed at the site in 2002. The female is suspected as being a SpottedXSpotted/Barred hybrid. The pair was found not nesting in 2003, 2004 or 2005. In 2006, the historic male was paired with a new female and did not nest. The historic pair nested in a new tree in 2007 but a dead juvenile was located on the ground below the nest. The AC was moved to the 2007 nest tree.

Reuben Rattle

In 2000, a pair nested and fledged two young. The pair attempted to nest but failed in 2001. In 2002, the pair did not nest. The pair attempted to nest but failed in 2003. In 2004, the pair nested in a new tree and fledged two young. The activity center was moved to the 2004 nest location. The pair did not nest in 2005. In 2006, the pair nested but failed to produce young. The historic male was found paired but non-nesting with a new female in 2007.

Sale Area Information

According to Stand Level Inventory (SLI) information from 2006, the Perkins North Thin sale consists of 122 gross acres in two sale areas. Stands in sale area are currently classified as closed single canopy (CSC) and the desired future condition is layered (LYR) and older forest structure (OFS). The sale is comprised of 75-80 year-old Douglas-fir with large amounts of madrone, chinquapin, incense cedar and various oak species. Area 1 is a mixed conifer hardwood stand with an average conifer DBH of 16-18 inches and 60-90 TPA. Area 2 is primarily smaller diameter, fully stocked and dense hardwood stands with some small conifer scattered throughout. The hardwoods in this area average 8 inches DBH with 380 TPA. The brush layer for both areas consists of vine maple, Oregon grape and salal. SLI reports 2-3 snags per acre >12 inches DBH in Area 1 with a few older conifer snags greater than 24 inches. There are numerous small diameter hardwood snags in Area 2 due to density dependent mortality. Both sale areas have approximately 1,000-1,300 cubic feet per acre of existing down wood in all decay classes. I have been to all areas of this sale and consider them to be suitable habitat for northern spotted owls.

Prescription

The commercial prescription will primarily be a basal area thinning from below to remove the suppressed, intermediate and some of the co-dominant trees from these stands. Some of the healthy advanced understory, including hardwoods, will be reserved to promote layering. An upper diameter limit will be established to preserve the largest and healthiest trees in the stands. Thinning these stands will increase the health and vigor of the residual conifer and hardwood trees as well as reduce the likelihood of insects, disease, wildfire, or other stand replacing events. Approximately 5% of the sale area will remain in unthinned patches at least 1 acre in size. These unthinned patches will be randomly placed throughout the sale area. An estimated 1 to 1.5 snags per acre will occur as a result of logging and natural mortality and, in addition, approximately 1 snag per 2 acres will be created by topping or girdling. Existing down wood will be retained and approximately 100 cubic feet/acre of class 1 wood will be added through normal harvest operations. Regeneration from seed will occur naturally as a result of the thinning, especially in group selection areas. Area 2 will likely be planted with various conifer species. No suitable habitat will be removed outside the sale area due to new road construction.

Area 1 is 85 gross acres of thinning from below of the intermediate size classes of conifer and a majority of the hardwoods. The target will be to retain a mixed species stand with a stand basal area (BA) of 80-140 square feet/acre distributed across stand diameters and 75-100 trees per acre (TPA). A goal of the thinning in this area is to promote development of layered and older forest structure stands while reducing fuel loading lowering the risk of a stand replacement fire. Existing down wood and snags that are not safety hazards will be retained.

Area 2 is 37 gross acres of heavy thinning removing approximately 90% of the hardwood trees while retaining the small number of conifers and selected hardwoods. The post harvest target for the area is a mixed species stand with a total BA distributed across stand diameters of 60 square feet/acre

and 20 TPA. The goal in this area is to reduce the hardwood density and move the stand towards a mixed conifer and hardwood layered forest while reducing fuel loading lowering the risk of a stand replacement fire. Existing down wood and snags that are not safety hazards will be retained.

Assumptions

Defining the Home Range

We do not have specific information about the home range of the northern spotted owl site affecting this thinning sale. According to "Procedures leading to Endangered Species Act compliance for the northern spotted owl" (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1990), the median home range size for spotted owl pairs in the Klamath Province is 3,340 acres, or the equivalent of the area encompassed by a circle with a radius of 1.3 miles. Although spotted owls generally do not have circular home ranges, in the absence of more specific information about the home range of this site, I will assume that a 1.3 mile radius circle around the nest or activity center approximates the home range of this site. All stands for this analysis were digitized and circle radii/acreages were calculated using ArcMap 9.2 software.

Defining Suitable Habitat

Although spotted owl habitat has generally been described as old growth, spotted owls are known to use a variety of forest types in this part of the Oregon Klamath province. The home ranges of spotted owls in this region contain large percentages of stands in intermediate stages of stand development (Anthony and Wagner 1999). Spotted owls are known to nest in stands as young as 60-80 years old that have suitable structures on state forest lands in the Southwest Oregon District (approximately 40% of known nests on ODF lands in the District are in this age class) and to forage in even younger stands.

A complicating factor in identifying suitable spotted owl habitat on this District is the land ownership pattern. The area around the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle spotted owl site includes lands managed by federal, state, private industrial and private non-industrial landowners. Because specific stand data on private and some federal ownership was not available for our use, this assessment of habitat suitability within the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle home range circles is based on aerial photos. Determination of habitat status within the owl circles was done by considering 2005 series air photos, 2007 field assessments, and owl use data.

Impact Assessment and Discussion

Landscape Analysis

The following discussion assesses the habitat situation within 0.7 and 1.3 miles of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle spotted owl activity centers, as recommended by the ITG (Table 1, Figure 1).

Perkins Creek. The Perkins North Thin timber sale will partial cut 21 acres within the 0.7 mile circle for the Perkins Creek spotted owl site. A habitat analysis of the Perkins Creek spotted owl site indicates that there are approximately 631 acres of suitable habitat within 0.7 miles of the activity center. If the sale area is excluded from the suitable habitat, 610 acres (62%) of suitable habitat are available within 0.7 miles of the activity center. The Perkins North Thin timber sale will partial cut 122 acres within the 1.3 mile circle for the Perkins Creek spotted owl site. A habitat analysis of the Perkins Creek spotted owl site indicates that there are approximately 2325 acres of suitable habitat within 1.3 miles of the activity center. If the sale area is excluded from the suitable habitat, 2203 acres (65%) of suitable habitat are available within 1.3 miles of the activity center. Based on this preliminary habitat analysis, this site will maintain enough unmodified suitable habitat within both the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles after harvest to be consistent with the ITG.

Reuben Rattle. The Perkins North Thin timber sale will partial cut 43 acres within the 0.7 mile circle for the Reuben Rattle spotted owl site. A habitat analysis of the Reuben Rattle spotted owl site

indicates that there are approximately 736 acres of suitable habitat within 0.7 miles of the activity center. If the sale area is excluded from the suitable habitat, 693 acres (70%) of suitable habitat are available within 0.7 miles of the activity center. The Perkins North Thin timber sale will partial cut 122 acres within the 1.3 mile circle for the Reuben Rattle spotted owl site. A habitat analysis of the Reuben Rattle spotted owl site indicates that there are approximately 2625 acres of suitable habitat within 1.3 miles of the activity center. If the sale area is excluded from the suitable habitat, 2503 acres (74%) of suitable habitat are available within 1.3 miles of the activity center. Based on this preliminary habitat analysis, this site will maintain enough unmodified suitable habitat within both the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles after harvest to be consistent with the ITG.

Effects of the Prescription

The effects of thinning on spotted owl habitat are not well understood. Spotted owls are known to use stands that have been thinned for foraging and for nesting (Anthony et al. 2000; Tappeiner et al. 1999), and this research indicates that in the long term, thinning is a tool that can develop spotted owl habitat (Tappeiner et al. 1999). However, the short-term effects of thinning are less clear. In a case study of a thinning near an owl core area in Clatsop County, spotted owls displaced their foraging activity for at least a couple of years after the harvest (Anthony, et al. 2000). Other anecdotal evidence on state forest lands in this District indicates that on at least one occasion, spotted owls have used recently thinned stands for nesting within two years of harvest.

Following completion of the partial cut operations, I do not anticipate the sale area will be suitable northern spotted owl habitat for many years. I believe that the lack of canopy closure, sparse understory vegetation, and a reduced conifer basal area will not provide suitable habitat for owls or prey species for some time after harvest operations have been completed.

Discussion

The Perkins Creek spotted owl site is 0.6 miles from the proposed Perkins North Thin timber sale. Approximately 21 acres of the sale are within the 0.7 mile circle and 122 acres are within the 1.3 mile circle. Although sale areas within the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles will not be suitable immediately post-harvest, the proposed thinning prescription will retain habitat elements and enhance future development of habitat important to northern spotted owls. The Perkins Creek spotted owl activity center is on BLM ownership and is not located within a Late Successional Reserve (LSR). Federally managed land makes up 36% of the area within 1.3 miles of the spotted owl activity center, 7% is managed by ODF and 60% is managed by other landowners. There is a patch of approximately 340 acres of high quality contiguous habitat around the activity center on state and federal lands which likely serves as a core use area. This area is likely becoming increasingly important as potentially more of the private lands to the north and east of the AC are being operated upon and becoming more fragmented.

The Reuben Rattle spotted owl site is 0.4 miles from the proposed Perkins North Thin timber sale. Approximately 43 acres of the sale are within the 0.7 mile circle and 122 acres are within the 1.3 mile circle. Although sale areas within the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles will not be suitable immediately post-harvest, the proposed thinning prescription will retain habitat elements and enhance future development of habitat important to northern spotted owls. The Reuben Rattle spotted owl activity center is on BLM ownership and is not located within a Late Successional Reserve (LSR). Federally managed land makes up 40% of the area within 1.3 miles of the spotted owl activity center, 8% is managed by ODF and 52% is managed by other landowners. There is a patch of approximately 280 acres of high quality contiguous habitat around the activity center on federal lands which likely serves as a core use area. The remaining habitat on state and other lands near the both these spotted owl activity centers is of lower quality but still appears to be able to provide contiguous ample foraging and roosting opportunities for spotted owls.

The habitat analysis of this site indicates that the ITG will be met within 0.7 and 1.3 miles of the activity center after harvest of the sale area.

Conclusions and Risk Assessment

Biological Risk

As currently proposed, the Perkins North Thin sale is expected to have a low risk of negatively affecting the occupancy and productivity of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle spotted owl sites. Although the sale is located relatively near to the spotted owl activity centers, I believe the following factors minimize potential negative impacts:

Perkins Creek

- ◆ Habitat quality and quantity immediately surrounding the activity center is high along with good connectivity to habitat North and South of the activity center;
- ◆ There has been very little recent harvest activity within the 0.7 mile circle and limited harvest along the outer edge of the 1.3 mile circle;
- ◆ Approximately 62% of the 0.7 mile circle and 65% of the 1.3 mile circle will remain as unmodified suitable habitat after harvest of the sale, exceeding the ITG;

Reuben Rattle

- ◆ Habitat quality and quantity immediately surrounding the activity center is high along with good connectivity to habitat surrounding the activity center;
- ◆ There has been limited recent harvest activity within both the 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles;
- ◆ Approximately 70% of the 0.7 mile circle and 74% of the 1.3 mile circle will remain as unmodified suitable habitat after harvest of the sale, exceeding the ITG;

Compliance with Policy

After completion of harvest operations associated with the Perkins North Thin timber sale, the remaining suitable habitat within the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle owl circles will exceed the standards identified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rescinded Incidental Take Guidelines. Assessment of other relevant factors indicates that the risk of negatively impacting these owl sites is low.

Consultation

Tod Lum, District Wildlife Biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, had no additional comments on this BA and agreed with the conclusions and risk assessment.

Literature Cited

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. 1990. Procedures leading to endangered species compliance for the northern spotted owl. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, July 1990. 15 pp.

cc: Dan Thorpe
 Rob Nall
 Marcia Humes
 Greg Kreimeyer
 Tod Lum, ODFW Roseburg

Table 1. Acres of suitable habitat within 0.7 and 1.3 mile circles of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl activity centers. Suitable habitat determined through 2005 air-photo analysis and 2007 field assessment.

	Acres	Perkins Creek		Reuben Rattle	
		0.7 mi	1.3 mi	0.7 mi	1.3 mi
Suitable Habitat:					
State		55	157	42	176
Federal		357	776	426	1014
Private		219	1392	267	1434
Total		631	2325	736	2625
Sale acres in circle removed as habitat	122	21	122	43	122
Unmodified suitable habitat remaining		610	2203	693	2503
% suitable post harvest		62%	65%	70%	74%

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Rudd

FROM: Randy Smith

SUBJECT: **Addendum** to Preliminary Biological Assessment for the **Perkins North Thin**
Timber Sale

DATE: March 6, 2009

Executive Summary

The Perkins North Thin was originally a proposed sale in the 2009 Annual Operations Plan (AOP) of the Southwest Oregon District. The sale was located within the home range of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl sites. A preliminary Biological Assessment (BA) was prepared January 31, 2008 which concluded the sale would present a low risk to the occupancy and productivity of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl sites. The USFWS reviewed the BA and in a March 27, 2008 letter, agreed with the assessment that this sale was "not likely to result in incidental take of spotted owls". This sale has since been forwarded into the 2010 AOP and there have been no changes to the owls or habitat situation within either 1.3 mile circles for the Perkins Creek or Reuben Rattle owl sites, there have been no changes to the sale boundary or total sale acres but there has been one change to the prescription within the two sale areas. The original harvest plan called for 85 acres of moderate thinning in Area 1 and 37 acres of heavy thinning in Area 2 for a total of 122 acres. The revised harvest plan calls for 104 acres of moderate thinning in Area 1 and 18 acres of heavy thinning in Area 2 also for a total of 122 acres and is shown in the revised Figure 1. This modified prescription reflects a net positive change for owls as 17 fewer acres will receive a heavy thinning prescription from within the Reuben Rattle 0.7 mile circle, and Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle 1.3 mile circles.

All other assumptions and conclusions stated in the original BA are still valid.

As currently proposed with the modified prescription, the Perkins North Thin timber sale is still expected to have a low risk of negatively affecting the occupancy and productivity of the Perkins Creek and Reuben Rattle northern spotted owl sites.

cc: Dan Thorpe
Rob Nall
Jennifer Weikel
Greg Kreimeyer