



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Salem District Office
1717 Fabry Road S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97306
<http://www.or.blm.gov/salem/>



In Reply To:

5410 (084.0)
Highland Fling Thinning
EA OR-080-08-05

FEB 19 2008

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering a forest thinning project in the Cascades Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management, Salem District. The purpose of this project is to achieve specific objectives identified in the Salem BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Matrix and Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocations on approximately 760 acres of BLM-administered lands by reducing the density of trees in developing forest stands. Other potential activities may include road construction or the renovation of existing roads that access thinning areas, and the decommissioning or blocking of roads after thinning.

The Highland Fling Thinning project is in the Milk Creek, Clear and Foster Creeks, Upper Clear Creek, and North Fork Clackamas River watersheds generally between the City of Colton and the City of Estacada in Clackamas County, Oregon. The proposed thinning units are located within Section 35 of Township 3 South, Range 3 East; Sections 1, 21, 27 and 29 of Township 4 South, Range 3 East; Sections 21, 27 and 29 of Township 4 South, Range 4 East; and Section 18 of Township 4 South, Range 5 East, Willamette Meridian (see enclosed map).

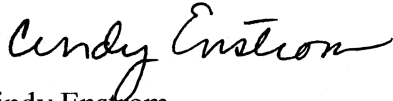
You have been identified as someone who might have specific knowledge or interest in this area. The purpose of this letter is to give you an opportunity to share any information or concerns you may have about the project. The input you provide will help an interdisciplinary team of BLM natural resource specialists to develop design features for the project and to assess the potential environmental effects.

The enclosed map shows the locations of the potential thinning units. Detailed maps are available upon request. Also enclosed are Question and Answer Information Sheets and Project Comment Forms. I would appreciate your written comments by March 20, 2008. Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Salem District Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of environmental analysis documents or related correspondence.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact Keith Walton at (503) 375-5676 or by email to Keith_Walton@blm.gov. Written comments may be sent to Cindy Enstrom, Cascades Field Manager, BLM – Salem District, 1717 Fabry Road SE, Salem, Oregon 97306.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Enstrom".

Cindy Enstrom
Cascades Resource Area Field Manager

Enclosures (3):

- 1 – Location and Project Map
- 1 – Question and Answer Information Sheet
- 1 – Project Comment Form

Highland Fling Thinning Project

Frequently Asked Questions

February 2008

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recognizes the potential public interest in this project. Below are some questions and answers that we hope will provide helpful information about this project.

What is BLM's management direction for this area?

The BLM-administered lands in these projects are identified in the Salem District Resource Management Plan (RMP, May 1995) as having a Matrix or Riparian Reserve Land Use Allocation.

- Management direction for Matrix calls for providing a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products in a manner that contributes to community stability and jobs while providing for important ecological functions (RMP p. 21).
- Riparian Reserves are designated corridors around streams and wet areas with a management direction that focuses on meeting the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives identified in the Salem District RMP (RMP pp. 5-6, 9). The minimum width is based on the potential height of conifer trees on each site, typically about 200 feet on each side of streams without fish and 400 feet each side of streams with fish. They may be wider to accommodate the topography or ecological features. Thinning may be applied to develop vegetation characteristics needed to attain ACS Objectives.

What is the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS)?

The Aquatic Conservation Strategy is designed to meet the following objectives to maintain and restore: watershed and landscape scale to protect aquatic habitat systems; aquatic habitat connectivity; the physical integrity of the aquatic system; water quality; sediment regimes; instream flow patterns; floodplain and water table cycles, species composition and structural diversity of plant communities and provide for coarse woody debris; and to support populations of riparian dependent species (RMP pp. 5-6).

Why are we proposing this project now?

Our management planning process has identified approximately 760 acres of BLM-administered lands in this area for which thinning at this time would maintain or enhance healthy growth. These stands range from approximately 25-70 years in age, and are overstocked with trees. Stands with very high tree densities (overstocked) generally have slower tree growth, increased tree mortality, and reduced overall forest health and diversity. Thinning these stands now will contribute to the management objectives identified in the RMP for each land use allocation, and will result in more diverse wildlife habitat conditions in a shorter period of time.

What are the benefits of this project?

The majority of the trees removed would be smaller and less healthy, leaving the larger more dominant trees. Removing these trees would allow the remaining trees to grow larger, faster. In the General Forest Management Area, the larger trees would be more suitable for future timber harvest and the stands would provide more diverse forest structure for wildlife habitat until the next harvest. In the Riparian Reserves, some of the larger trees that result from thinning will eventually become snags and down logs that are important to many forest animals, and some will fall into streams, providing long-lasting structure to the aquatic habitat. More sunlight would reach plants in the understory, creating a more diverse plant community and complex forest structure that provides habitat for a broader range of wildlife. Thinning also decreases the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

What would the thinned areas look like?

The forest stand would be thinned from below, removing smaller trees, giving the largest, healthiest trees more room to grow. Spacing between trees would be approximately 25-30 feet. There would be some observable disturbance to understory vegetation and the forest floor immediately after thinning activities, but this would be short-term. Disturbance resulting from harvest activities should be difficult to see within one to three years.

What is next in the planning process for this project?

The Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) will continue to gather information on stands in the project area. The IDT will also review public response received as a result of this letter, and work to address substantive comments during the design of the project.

Highland Fling Thinning Project Comment Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Representing _____ Telephone _____

Do you want to be added to the mailing list for this project? Yes No

Comments: _____

Please fee free to enclose additional sheets if needed.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Salem District Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays) and may be published as part of environmental analysis documents or related correspondence. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

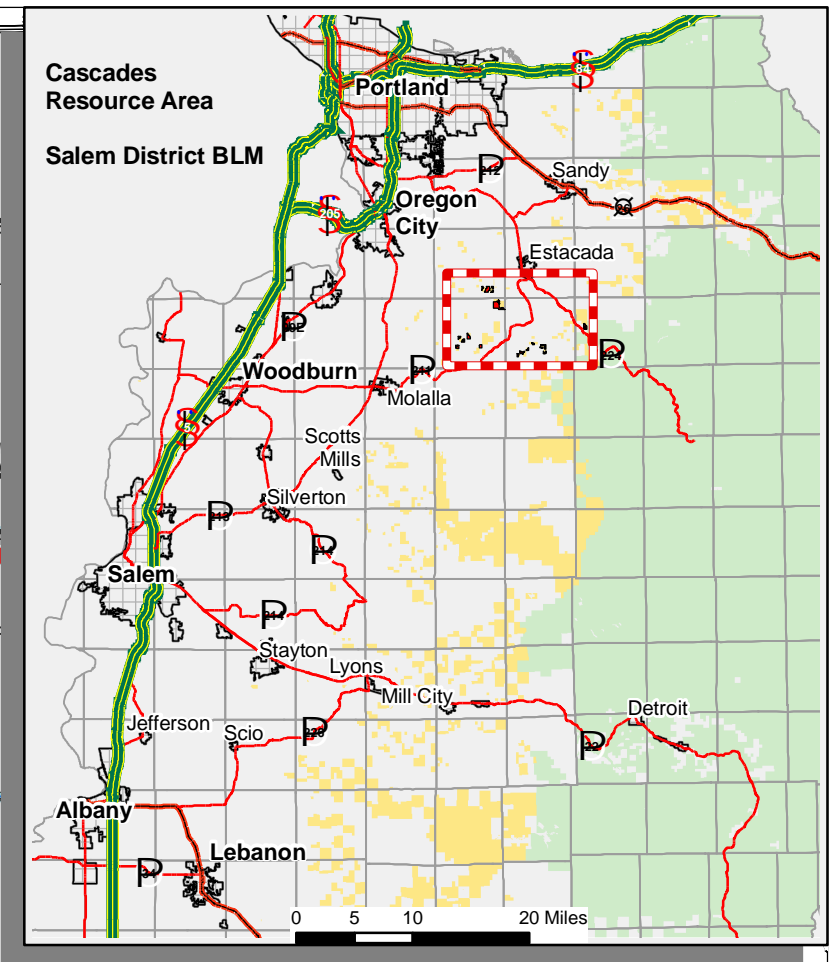
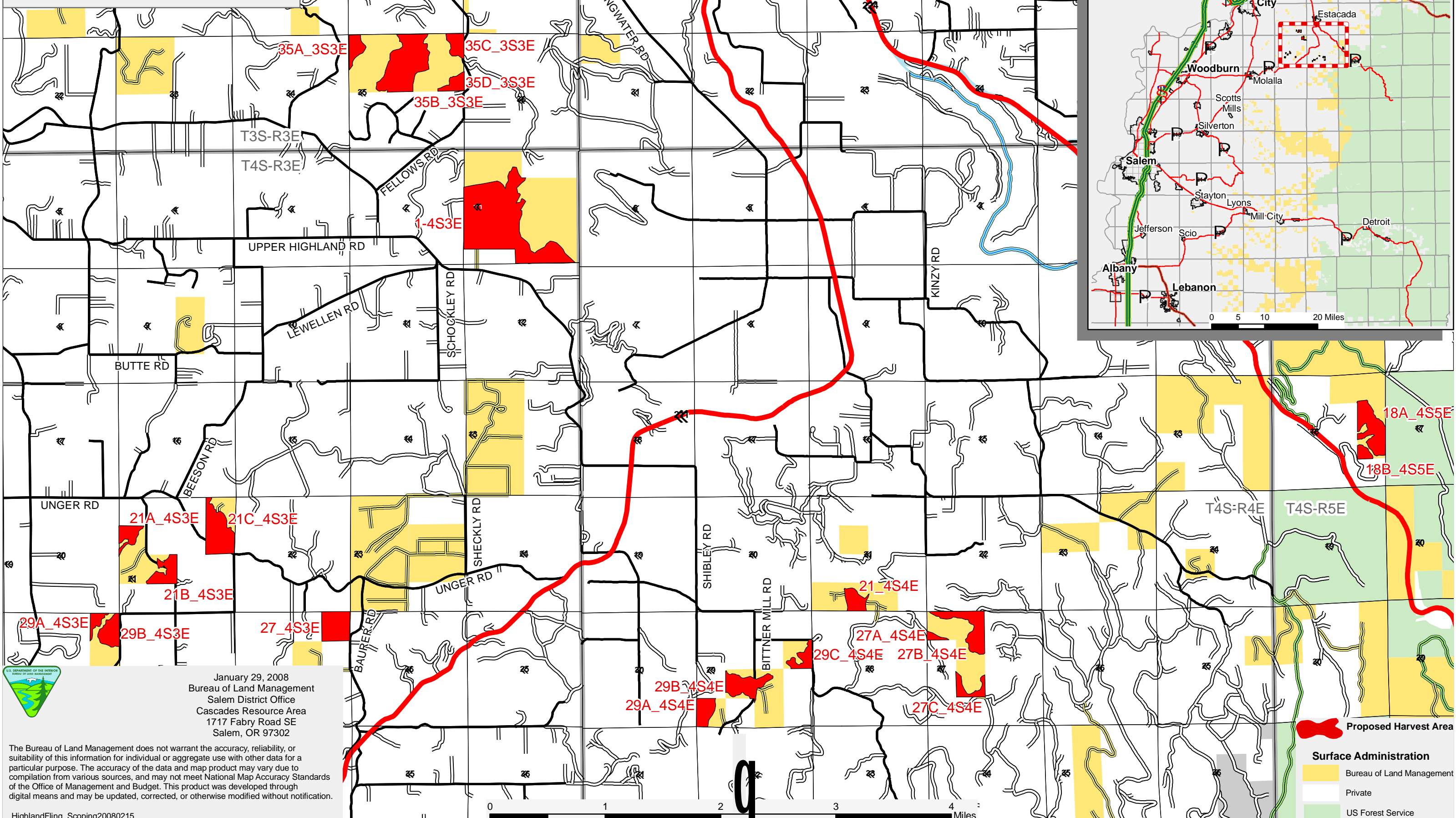
Bureau of Land Management
Salem District Office
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Please
place
stamp
here

Attention: Cindy Enstrom
Cascades Field Manager
BLM – Salem District
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97306

Highland Fling Timber Harvest Proposal

T. 3 S., R. 3 E.; T. 4 S., R. 3 E.
T. 4 S., R. 4 E.; T. 4 S., R. 5 E.



January 29, 2008
Bureau of Land Management
Salem District Office
Cascades Resource Area
1717 Fabry Road SE
Salem, OR 97302

The Bureau of Land Management does not warrant the accuracy, reliability, or suitability of this information for individual or aggregate use with other data for a particular purpose. The accuracy of the data and map product may vary due to compilation from various sources, and may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards of the Office of Management and Budget. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated, corrected, or otherwise modified without notification.

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Proposed Harvest Area

Surface Administration

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- US Forest Service

