

Subject: ESA Species Wildlife Review (Non-Discretionary) for Road Construction/Renovation
Date: 17 January 2018
Prepared by: Angie Worthing, Wildlife Biologist
BLM DARC #: OR-104-2018-02
Requestor: Lone Rock Timber Management Company
ROW Agreement: R-617
Projects (Project Location): F260202 (T26S-R02W-02 NE/SW)

Project Summary: Lone Rock Timber Management Company requests to construct two new roads on BLM-administered lands to facilitate harvest of timber on their lands. The request includes construction of Spur 3 off the 26-2-23.0 spur and Stub Spur 1 off of Spur 3 in T26S – R02W – Section 02. Both of the new roads will be constructed to a 14-foot subgrade width and will remain a natural dirt surface. Also, the request states that “All exposed dirt surfaces on BLM lands will be grass seeded and hay mulched before the fall of 2018. The road will be waterbarred for winter drainage. The road will be blocked at the junction of the 26-2-23.0 road so that Spur 3 is only accessible during summer months. Due to the potential for rock drilling required to construct the road on Spur 3, LRT would like to begin construction in late May – early June 2018.”

With respect to the *Endangered Species Act (ESA)*, this request is a *non-discretionary* action on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. If BLM becomes aware of a *non-discretionary* activity involving BLM administered lands that may affect listed or proposed species, BLM should notify the person or persons involved with the activity (OR/WA BLM 2008, 6840 Section A1. 1F1c(1)). The following review determines potential impacts or concerns to listed *ESA* species (i.e., northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) and marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) or *Special Status Species* known on BLM lands or is known to occur inside or within close proximity of the project area.

Federally-Threatened Species

Table 1. Forest Stand and ESA Species Habitats:

Project Name	BLM T-R-S (¼ or 1/16 ¼)	BLM Acres Affected	Stand Age ¹ (years)	LUA ^{1,2}	NSO ³		MAMU ³		
					Habitat Type/ Function ⁴	Critical Habitat (Subunit #)	Habitat Type/ Function ⁵	Potential Platform Trees Present ⁶ ?	Critical Habitat (Unit #)
F260202	26S-02W-02 NESW	2.8	128	HLB and DDR (TPCC)	NRF	WCS 6	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹If the request is located in more than one stand, the information for those stands will be listed in order of west to east or north to south.

² Land Use Allocations as defined under the Northwestern & Coastal Oregon Resource Management Plan (2016): LSR = Late Successional Reserve; RR = Riparian Reserve; DDR = District Defined Reserve (TPCC = Timber Productivity Capability Classification); and HLB = Harvest Land Base.

³ NSO = Northern Spotted Owl; MAMU = Marbled Murrelet

⁴ NRF = Nesting, Roosting, and Foraging Habitat; typically stands > 80 years of age, unless field verification has determined otherwise. Dispersal-only = typically stands aged between 40 and 79 years of age, unless field verification has determined otherwise. Capable = forest habitat that is capable of becoming dispersal-only and NRF habitat in the future, and are typically stands 0-39 years of age.

⁵ Nesting = typically stands > 80 years of age, unless field verification has determined otherwise. Recruitment = typically stands aged between 40 and 79 years of age, unless field verification has determined otherwise. Capable = forest habitat that is capable of becoming dispersal-only and NRF habitat in the future. N/A = Not applicable to this species because the project is located outside of its distribution range.

⁶ Within Recruitment habitat, the presence of suitable nest trees (aka “platform trees”) is considered for disruption and disturbance impacts. If these areas have not been field reviewed, the potential presence of platform trees is based in GIS using aerial photo or Lidar interpretation. Nesting habitat will always contain a high density of platform trees.

Table 2. Habitat and Disruption Concerns for the Northern Spotted Owl (NSO)

Project Name	NRF Habitat within 0.5 miles Surveyed To Protocol ¹ ?	Occupied ² Sites Present within 0.5 miles of Action?	Action Within or Within 65 yards of Occupied Stand ² ?	Action Within Occupied Nest Patch?	Action Within Unoccupied Historic Nest Patch?	Disruption Concern ³ ?	Removal or Modification of Habitat Concern ⁴ ?	Acres Removed or Modified
26S-02W-02	No	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No	Yes	Yes	2.8

¹ TDSA = Tye Density Study Area where surveys have been completed annually since the 1990s.

² If NRF habitat within a project area has not been surveyed to protocol for NSO within the last two years, unsurveyed habitat is assumed to be occupied by NSO.

³ **No** = There is **no disruption concern** if road construction occurs during the breeding season from March 1st through September 30th, because a residential single or pair of northern spotted owls have not been detected within at least the last two years of survey effort (including the current survey season), or the project would occur more than 65 yards from unsurveyed or occupied habitat.

Yes = There is a **disruption concern** if road construction occurs during the breeding season from March 1st through September 30th because a residential single or pair of northern spotted owls have been detected within at least the last two years of survey effort (including the current survey season;); or protocol survey effort has not been completed within the last two consecutive years and therefore, is assumed occupied.

⁴ **NRF** - Cutting trees for road construction that are cut for safety reasons or pulled over would modify NRF habitat for the northern spotted owl and **increases risk of damaging or removing suitable habitat structure**, and may result in the loss of potential roost and/or nest trees for the northern spotted owl.

Dispersal-only – Road construction increases risk of damaging or removing habitat structure, including potential roost trees for the northern spotted owl.

Special Status Species and/or Species of Concern

There are no known Special Status Species (e.g. known raptor nests) within one-half (0.5) mile of the project area.

Mitigation Recommendations:

The following recommendations would reduce impacts to the following ESA Federally-threatened species:

Disruption

Table 3. Recommended Disruption Mitigations for ESA-listed Species

Project Name	NSO		MAMU		
	Disruption Concern?	Recommended Disruption Mitigation ¹	Inland Mgmt Zone	Disruption Concern?	Recommended Disruption Mitigations ¹
26S-02W-02	Yes	A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ A. Implement Seasonal Restrictions during the breeding season from March 1 - September 30.

B. Implement Seasonal Restrictions during the critical breeding season from March 1-July 15.

Habitat: Consider the following mitigations to avoid removal of suitable habitat structure and/or nest trees for the northern spotted owl -

- **Avoid removing large trees 30 inches in diameter at breast height with broken tops, obvious cavities or nest platforms, or large limbs (>4 inches).**
 - **Field review by a BLM biologist (Worthing, 1/9/2018) of Spur 3 and Stub Spur, located three (3) trees close to the clearing limit flagging within the proposed road construction; it is recommended that these trees not be cut and retained within the stand.** The trees are identified with pink “Wildlife” flagging wrapped around trunk and include the following (from north to south): 1) Douglas fir (72 inches DBH), 2) Douglas fir (35 inches DBH) and 3) Douglas fir (57 inches DBH) (Figure 1.)
- **Avoid the removal of large snags 20 inches in diameter at breast height.** If snags need to be felled for safety reasons, leave as downed wood outside of the proposed road prism.
- **Avoid the destruction of existing large down wood** (greater than 20 inches) by moving intact large pieces to areas outside of the proposed road prism.

Figure 1.

