



**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** June 1, 2022

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District on the Deschutes National Forest is initiating scoping for three hazardous fuels reduction projects. You are invited to review and comment on these proposals. The projects are described below and will be analyzed separately. They are not related.

### ***Oregon Water Wonderland Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project***

This project proposes to reduce hazardous fuels on approximately 38 acres of Forest Service land surrounded by a private subdivision (Figure 1). The subdivision, Oregon Water Wonderland, is located south of Sunriver, Oregon, and north of Forest Service Road 42. The legal location of the project area is Township 20S, Range 11E, NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 18.

#### ***Management Direction***

The project area is located within the Forest Plan management area for Wild and Scenic Rivers (MA-17).

#### ***Purpose and Need***

There is a need for this project to reduce hazardous fuels because this land is within the Wild Urban Interface (WUI), in proximity to private property, and has a history of recent fires that originated within the project boundary. This area was identified in 2019 by the Upper Deschutes River Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) as an area of concern. The purpose of the project is to address the current hazardous fuel conditions; the existing fuels are dense lodgepole pine reproduction and an understory brush and bunchgrass.

#### ***Proposed Actions***

Planned treatments include thinning and hand piling of small diameter lodgepole pines followed by pile burning and mowing in areas where tree spacing allows, followed by maintenance mowing in 10-15 years.

### ***Forest Lane Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project***

This project proposes to reduce hazardous fuels on approximately 282 acres of Forest Service land along and adjacent to Forest Lane neighborhood (Figure 2). The project area is located approximately a mile west of Three Rivers, Oregon, and just south of Forest Service Road 42. The legal location of the project area is Township 20S, Range 10E, W  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Section 26.



### ***Management Direction***

The project area is located in the Forest Plan management areas for Wild and Scenic Rivers (MA-17) and Bald Eagle (MA-3).

### ***Purpose and Need***

There is a need to address hazardous fuels in this area is within the WUI and is an important ingress and egress route (Forest Service road 42). The purpose of this project is to maintain past fuels reduction efforts adjacent to private property in a condition which maximizes potential success of fire suppression efforts in this area. This area was identified in 2019 by the Upper Deschutes River CWPP representatives as an area of concern.

### ***Proposed Actions***

The proposed treatment is mowing, followed by maintenance mowing in 8-15 years.

## ***Fall River Estates Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project***

This project proposes to reduce hazardous fuels on approximately 1,125 acres of Forest Service land in the Fall River Estates area. The project area is located approximately five miles west of Three Rivers, Oregon, and just south of Forest Service Road 42. The legal location of the project area is Township 20S, Range 10E, Sections 31, 32, 33 and Township 21S, Range 10E, Section 5.

### ***Management Direction***

The project area is located within the Forest Plan management area for Intensive Recreation (MA-11).

### ***Purpose and Need***

There is a need to address hazardous fuels in this area because it is within the WUI, near powerline infrastructure, and an important ingress and egress route (Forest Service road 42). The purpose of this project is to provide spatial and temporal continuity to fuels treatments in the area, and to promote the growth and dominance of ponderosa pine, a fire tolerant and historically representative species. A patchwork of previous vegetation treatments exists within the project area (Figure 3). Historically, frequent fire maintained much of the area as a ponderosa pine dominated ecosystem. Due to historical logging practices and fire suppression lodgepole pine is now the dominant species across the project area. Lodgepole pine is highly susceptible to mortality if a fire occurs, and it naturally grows in densities which are more likely to support crown fire. Increasing ponderosa pine in this area would both promote a stand structure which is more likely to have fire intensities favorable to firefighting resources and create a landscape which is more resilient to fire.

### ***Proposed Actions***

Planned treatments include thinning and hand, or grapple piling, mastication, pile burning, mowing and prescribed burning



## ***Public Involvement and How to Provide Comments***

It would be most helpful to received input by June 24, 2022. Submit comments by email to: [comments-pacificnorthwest-deschutes-bend-ftrock@usda.gov](mailto:comments-pacificnorthwest-deschutes-bend-ftrock@usda.gov) and list “Fuels Reduction Projects” in the subject line. Please identify which project you are commenting on. Comments must be submitted as part of an actual email message, or as an attachment in Microsoft Word, rich text format (rtf), or portable document format (pdf) only. Comments submitted to other email addresses, in any other format, or that contain viruses will be rejected.

Electronic submissions are strongly encouraged. However, if necessary, comments may be submitted by post mail to: Kevin Larkin, District Ranger, Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District, 63095 Deschutes Market Road, Bend, OR 97701. Hand delivered comments are discouraged at this time. Names and contact information submitted with comments will become part of the public record and may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

This project falls within a category of action that may be excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. This proposal fits within a category listed in Section 605 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 6591 et seq.), which permits projects designed to address hazardous fuels in an insect and disease treatment area that was designated by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 502(b). For more information, please contact Cristina Peterson, NEPA Planner, at 541-383-4028 or [cristina.peterson@usda.gov](mailto:cristina.peterson@usda.gov).

Sincerely,

KEVIN W. LARKIN

District Ranger



Figure 1. Oregon Water Wonderland Project map showing proposed unit surrounded by subdivision.

# Oregon Water Wonderland Proposed Thin and Pile



Figure 2. Forest Lane Project map showing proposed treatment areas.

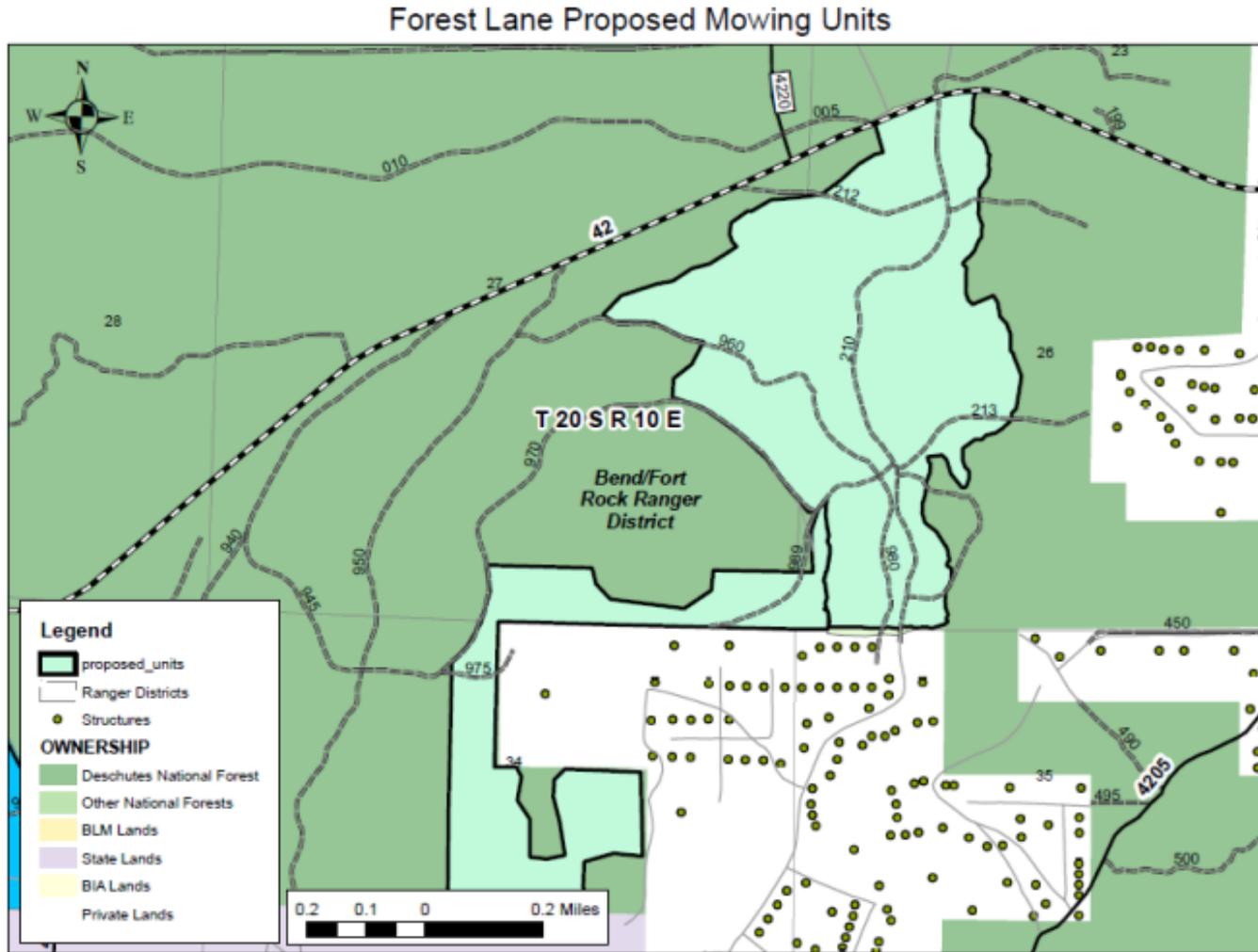


Figure 3. Fall River Estates Project map showing mixed land ownership in the area and past treatments.

