Resource Cultural Resources


Introduction

This report provides analysis of the potential effects of salvage tree harvesting on heritage resources that are and may be located within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The APE are the units identified for the harvest of fire killed trees and associated log landings.

Regulatory Framework / Management Direction

Management direction for cultural resources are found in the Deschutes National Forest Resource Management Plan, in the Forest Service Manual section 2360, in Federal Regulations 36CR64 and 36CFR800 (amended December 2000), in the 2004 Programmatic Agreement between the USFS and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer, and in various federal laws including the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended), the National Environmental Policy Act, and the National Forest Management Act.

In general, the existing management direction asks the Forest to consider the effects on cultural resources when considering projects that fall within the Forest’s jurisdiction. Further direction indicates that the Forest will determine what cultural resources are present on the forest, evaluate each resource for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), and protect or mitigate effects to resources that are eligible.

Relevant Forest Plan Standards and Guides include:
CR-2, which states that cultural resource properties located during inventory, will be evaluated for eligibility to the National Register.
CR-3, which states that in concert with inventories and evaluations, the Forest will develop thematic National Register nominations and management plans for various classes of cultural resources.
CR-4 indicates that project level inventories or the intent to conduct such shall be documented through environmental analysis for the project.

Analysis Methods

Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to Heritage Resources were analyzed by determining the degree of ground disturbance directly associated with the different types of proposed activities, any secondary affect indirectly associated with the proposed action, and the cumulative effects of all actions affecting the resource within the APE. A review of heritage resource files and data was completed to determine the presence or absence of resources within the APE.

Heritage Resources

Existing Condition –

Cultural History-
Life within the Deschutes River basin can be traced back 9,000 years. Inhabitants made seasonal hunting and gathering forays from as far away as the Great Basin valleys to the east and the Columbia River basin to the north. The climate was cooler then and wetter, which produced ample forage for large game animals. Central Oregon was a dramatically less desirable place 7,000 years ago. The harsh climate was intensely hot and dry, a situation compounded by violent eruptions from Mount Mazama (present day Crater Lake) and Mount Newberry. The eruptions left an 8- to 10-foot blanket of ash and pumice, which led to the temporary abandonment of much of the Central Oregon region in favor of areas with more water. Lava Butte, south of Bend, is the site of more recent volcanic activity that influenced prehistoric inhabitants. Indian groups in time adapted to life on the Central Oregon "high desert.” About 5,000 years ago the area's climate started to cool and the eruptive activity began to taper off. The Native people returned to gathering and preparing an amazing variety of foods from wild plants and from hunting and fishing. They also developed an elaborate weaving industry, producing beautiful baskets. Lava Island Rock shelter and other campsites along the river attest to the success of their lifestyle and their close relationship with nature. The hunting-gathering lifestyle remained substantially unchanged until contact with early settlers and trappers in the 1800s.

Ethnography-

Due to limited information, epidemic disease, and highly mobile populations during the early nineteenth century, it is unclear which of several groups may have occupied the Deschutes River basin area prior to Euro-American settlement. Given that the mountains were not conducive to winter occupation, the groups may who have come into the area could have migrated from all directions. The Klamath, whose main territory is in the Klamath Basin to the south, may have stopped at the high lakes en route to The Dalles trading centers. The Molalla, residents of the Cascades, may have traveled east to take advantage of the region’s resources. The Columbia River Sahaptin-speaking Tenino could have traveled this far south. In addition, the Numic-speaking Northern Paiute from east of the Deschutes River may have crossed into the area. No matter which group or groups visited the river basin, their use would likely be for various subsistence activities. The hunting of large and small mammals, water fowl and fish would be of great importance to the people in the area, along with gathering a wide variety of vegetable and fruit resources not available during winter conditions or at lower elevations.

History-

In 1826, Peter Skene Ogden of the Hudson’s Bay Company crossed the lower Deschutes River near Warm Springs and later visited Newberry Crater. After Ogden, several explorers and trappers arrived, most of them involved in the fur trade. Notable among those who left journals of their visits were John C. Fremont and Kit Carson.

Immigrant wagon trains headed for Oregon Territory soon followed. Traces of their journeys still exist on the Forest. From the mid-1800s on, there was considerable travel by wagon throughout the Deschutes region. Major settlements of the Bend area occurred in the early 1900s, about the time lumber companies were established. The upper Deschutes River provided power and water for early sawmills, and today farmers and ranchers depend on water from the river to irrigate and develop land. Much of Central Oregon’s grass seed, hay, and other agricultural products depend on water from the river, as do many residents.
In 1908, the Deschutes National Forest was established from parts of the Blue Mountains, Cascade, and Fremont National Forests. In 1911, parts of the Deschutes National Forest were split off to form the Ochoco and Paulina National Forests and parts of the Cascade and Oregon national Forests were added to the Deschutes. In 1915, the lands of the Paulina National Forest were rejoined to the Deschutes National Forest.

With the arrival of the railroad in 1911 expansion of commercial logging followed. By 1916 railroad logging started when Shevlin-Hixon and Brooks-Scanlon lumber companies acquired timber lands from the Forest Service. Logging camps to house woodsmen, and miles of railroad, from logging camps in the forest to sawmills, were constructed. The era of railroad logging came to an end in the late 1930s giving way to logging by truck and no longer a need for logging camps. Many of the railroad grades were converted to roads to accommodate logging by trucks. Evidence for this past era can be seen in segments of railroad grades, trash dumps, and remnants of logging camps scattered across the Forest.

Survey Results-

Approximately 14 percent or 144 acres within the APE have been previously inventoried to determine the presence or absence of heritage resources. These inventories resulted in the discovery and recordation of two archeological sites (considered heritage sites) within the APE, comprised of historic and pre-contact sites. One of the previously recorded sites dates from the historic era (at least 50 years old) and is associated with early Forest Service administration. The other site is pre-contact (prior to Euro-American contact or settlement). The pre-contact site types include resource gathering and processing sites and temporary camps.

Survey for cultural resources possibly affected by the removal of hazard trees along the haul routes was conducted as part of the Pole Creek Hazard Tree Abatement project. All known sites would be avoided and survey for the project produced no new sites. For a detailed analysis see the cultural section of the Pole Creek Hazard Tree Abatement Environmental Analysis report.

The Pole Creek fire encompasses some of the Whychus Wild and Scenic River designated area and as part of the Whychus Wild and Scenic River area designation, cultural and heritage resources were noted as being an outstandingly remarkable value. As an ancient travel route to the mountains, the area around Whychus Creek continues to protect an important record of how people in the past used resources and the landscape. The non-renewable and generally fragile nature of prehistoric resources is recognized and they are managed accordingly for the greatest scientific and public good in consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon. The heritage resources located in the watershed, such as Whychus House Cave, are evidence of the past use of the area by Native peoples and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon have declared their interest in treaty protected resources of the river corridor (Whychus Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan 2010). The Pole Creek Fire Timber Salvage project will have no effect on the cultural resources within the Whychus Wild and Scenic designated area as the APE falls outside of the wild and scenic river designated boundaries.
It is likely that the APE contains additional archaeological resources not visible on the surface. All high probability areas with trees that meet the harvest criteria laid out in alternative 2 and 3, within the APE have been surveyed. Those areas that had mixed mortality and trees with diameters smaller than the harvest criteria within the APE were not surveyed since no ground disturbing activity would occur. Survey of the area showed that the majority of the APE containing harvestable trees lies outside of the identified high probability areas, decreasing the likelihood of accidental discovery during the project.

**Direct and Indirect Effects—Alternative 1**

No treatments of any type would occur under this alternative. There would be no change in current management direction or in the level of ongoing management activities.

Because the area has already been affected by wildfire and salvage would not remove existing effects, no new effects would be created by not salvaging the fire killed trees.

**Direct and Indirect Effects—Alternative 2**

No direct effect would occur to known cultural sites since all known sites are being avoided. The 90 foot buffer around known sites should also mitigate any indirect effect from harvest operations. Because of the fire, any indirect effect from erosion should not be any greater than if no treatment took place. Burn piles would be placed on landings mitigating any direct effects to known or unknown sites located within the APE.

Treatment activities that use heavy equipment machinery for harvest have a limited visibility of the ground. This could have a direct effect on any unknown cultural resource site’s integrity due to damage by crushing, breaking, mixing, displacing, compacting, and otherwise disturbing the context of the artifacts and the associated soils on and in which they are deposited.

Activities that occur within an established road prism, including, applying surface treatments of any sort, watering and blading, or slope stabilization within the road prism should not have any new effects on a site, even if the road goes through a known site. The damage has already occurred during initial construction, while the reconstruction activities do not impact previously undisturbed site areas.

**Cumulative Effects—Alternative 2**

Within the APE for the Pole Creek Fire Timber Salvage project APE, the increased activities from the Pole Creek BAER projects, Pole Creek Hazard Tree Abatement occurring at the same time, could create an accumulative effect in those areas that projects overlap. This would be most likely to affect unknown cultural resources along or near travel corridors as all three projects utilize the same roads. Survey work has taken place for both the Pole Creek BAER project and Pole Creek Hazard Tree Abatement. No effect was determined for both projects as all known sites have been avoided for both projects in the APE, leading to no accumulative effect to known cultural resources in the APE.

**Direct and Indirect Effects—Alternative 3**

This alternative would have similar effects as alternative 2 except, the retention of snags greater than 21” diameter at breast height while covering the same area would decrease the duration and intensity
of the activities. Decreased duration and intensity would lower the disturbance of any unknown cultural resources in the APE.

Cumulative Effects – Alternative 3
The accumulative effects would be the same as Alternative 2.

Conclusion
There will be no effects to cultural resources within the APE for the project. Any features known or discovered through survey, associated with archaeological sites, would be flagged for avoidance. Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), via telephone, has occurred. The SHPO agrees that the project as designed would pose little to no threat to cultural resources as long as the high probability areas have been inventoried prior to project commencement.

In the event that archaeological materials are encountered during project implementation work should be halted and the District Archaeologist shall be contacted in order to assess the discovery and evaluate the significance. In the event that skeletal material or features of burial/interment are encountered, all work must be stopped immediately and contact must be established with local law enforcement, the SHPO and the affected Indian Tribes.