Galena Watershed Analysis--Supplement 2002

Ecosystem Analysis : Mid-scale review of seven Subwatersheds in the Middle Fork of the John Day River in Supplement to Ecosystem Analysis at the Watershed Scale—Galena Watershed Analysis

Lead Agency: USDA Forest Service
Malheur National Forest
Grant County
John Day, Oregon

Responsible Official: Roger Williams, Acting Forest Supervisor

For more information Contact:[1] Michael L. Montgomery District Ranger
Blue Mountain Ranger District
PO Box 909
John Day, OR 97845
(541)575-3000 FAX:(541)575-3001

Abstract: *This is mid-scale review of 7 subwatersheds in the Middle Fork of the John Day River in supplement to Ecosystem Analysis at the Watershed Scale—Galena Watershed Analysis (1999). This analysis documents the five alternatives of recommended action, including a no action alternative* ***(Alternative 1)****, for the Southeast Galena Restoration on the Blue Mountain Ranger District of the Malheur National Forest.* ***Alternative 2,*** *would initiate restoration management reversing adverse hydrologic and vegetation trends. In this alternative, projects may include: heavy equipment within stream channels to create a meandering nature to affected streams; riparian planting to create shade and bank stability; removal of a dispersed campsites from riparian area; and improvement of trail crossings over drainages are recommended to improve hydrologic function and fisheries habitat; prescribed harvest and fire could take place to reduce risk of uncharacteristically severe fires, insect infestations, and disease infections due to forest stand density and composition. Recommended prescriptions include areas within designated roadless areas, (i.e., Land and Resource Management Plan "Appendix C," Dixie Butte and Greenhorn Mountain Roadless Areas). Additional actions include: relocation or roads located in riparian conservation areas (RHCAs); road decommissioning; reconstruction of roads; and closing of roads; aspen enhancement; and noxious weed treatment. Chemicals could be used to: reduce competing vegetation within the reforested area; reduce competition of native vegetation with noxious weeds; and reduce seedling mortality due to pocket gophers.* ***Alternative 3*** *was developed to reduce potential short-term impacts to the analysis area from the direct impacts of the recommended restoration projects. For instance, where practical hand labor, rather than heavy equipment could be used to improve stream channel function dispersed campsites and trail projects could be included. Prescribed harvest and fire is recommended , however no harvest could occur in roadless areas. No chemicals could be used to reduce competition with competing vegetation, noxious weeds, or pocket gophers. A variety of roadwork and aspen enhancement could occur.* ***Alternative 4*** *is similar to Alternative 3 in that it could improve hydrologic function by implementing stream channel enhancement (with instream work accomplished by hand crews where practical), plantings, dispersed campground, and trails projects. This alternative takes a departure from the other action alternatives in that it strives to enhance and improve vegetative character through the use of prescribed fire and pre-commercial thinning, without harvest. Where practical and appropriate, prescribed fire and pre-commercial thinning, could still be applied within designated roadless areas as in Alternative 3. No chemicals would be used in combating competing vegetation noxious, weeds, or pocket gophers. Road projects and aspen enhancement would be included.* ***Alternative 5*** *treatment duplicates Alternative 2. However, forest stand treatment could take place on a larger scale. Hydrologic projects emulate that of Alternative 2, including the use of heavy equipment. Vegetation projects include additional tractor skidding and less helicopter yarding. To accomplish this additional new roads are recommended with the majority of these roads remaining open upon completion of the restoration projects. Under Alternative 5, the Roadless Area could receive management as described in Alternative 2. A variety of road relocations, decommissions, and closures could occur and aspen stands could be enhanced.*