

## **Appendix H: Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions**

The following actions were considered in cumulative effects analysis for each resource: fuel treatments and fire, range management, dam construction and maintenance, recreation, timber management and vegetation treatment, reforestation, road management, special uses, and noxious weed treatment. Below is a description of these actions. Reasonably foreseeable and present actions on National Forest System lands considered in cumulative effects analysis are shown in Table XX, which was developed by reviewing the July – September 2008 Schedule of Proposed Actions.

Many actions have some potential for increasing road density either temporarily or permanently: timber management (site preparation, planting, thinning, harvesting), prescribed fire, juniper removal, aspen enhancement, wetlands creation and maintenance, and recreational site development and maintenance.

### ***Fuel Treatments and Fire***

Approximately 10,000 acres are proposed for fuel treatments per year across the forest: 4,000 acres of prescribed burns and 6,000 acres of mechanical and physical fuel treatment. Present and reasonably foreseeable fuel projects are listed in Table XX. The fuels program does not build roads to carry out treatment. Cross-country travel may be required either by truck or OHV.

Wildfire and associated suppression and rehabilitation measures sometimes require the creation of temporary roads and fuel breaks that in the past have been used by the public and turned into unauthorized routes on the forest.

### ***Range Management***

Grazing allotments occur on most of the Modoc National Forest. Presently there are 76 active allotments, 12 vacant allotments, and 3 allotments that have been closed to grazing. There are approximately 122,500 animal unit months (AUMs) of grazing permitted on the forest. Actual use differs annually from permitted use depending on economics, weather conditions, market conditions, etc. During 2007, actual use was about 95,700 AUMs. There is also one wild-horse territory with an estimated population of 450 head.

Individual range-management projects include installing cattle guards, fencing, developing water sources, and thinning juniper. Projects such as fencing and juniper thinning, and administering permits (e.g., scheduling on- and off-dates) have restored riparian areas. Range management generally does not include the creation of new roads. Present and reasonably foreseeable range projects are included in Table XX.

### ***Dam Construction and Maintenance***

There are 152 dams and water impoundments on the forest, which are used for livestock ponds, irrigation, recreation, and wildlife habitat. Thirty-four of these are considered as dams by the State of California. Associated with irrigation dams are canals used to transport water. Many of these structures are maintained by range permittees.

## ***Recreation***

On the Modoc National Forest, there are 34 developed campgrounds and several other developed recreation sites, including boat launch facilities, trail heads, etc., and numerous dispersed recreation sites (primarily dispersed campgrounds). Present recreation projects are shown in Table XX. There is not any road construction shown in the SOPA for the proposed projects.

Travel management and the restriction of cross-country travel will impact recreation users by eliminating a certain type of recreation opportunity. However, many of the recreation opportunities will still be available.

There is a variety of recreation-associated activities, including firewood gathering, mineral gathering, hiking, camping, and horse use.

## ***Timber Harvest and Vegetation Treatments***

The forest estimates a timber harvest of approximately 15-20 MMBF (million board-feet) annually for the next 5 years. About half of that will be the board-foot equivalent in tons of chips for biomass power generation, and half in sawtimber. Past vegetation management actions are tracked in the FACTS (Forest Activity and Tracking System) database. This database contains information about vegetation management activities back to 1954. Since 1954, there have been over 169,939 acres of vegetation treatments on the forest. On average, 2,500 acres are harvested annually for saw logs, with an additional 3,000 acres for wood fiber. Harvest prescriptions vary from clear cutting to understory thinning; however, clear cutting has been greatly reduced in over the past ten years.

In the past, road construction was supported by timber harvest. The existing forest transportation system was developed, in part, through the need to provide timber to the public after World War II. This trend continued until the late '70s or early '80s. In the future, the forest plans to evaluate each project on a site-specific basis for existing roads that can be used, and for the possible decommissioning of roads that are no longer necessary. There may still be a need for temporary road construction and for the reconstruction of existing roads to allow for use of new equipment and for adjusting to specific logging systems required for steeper ground.

The Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy, a reasonably foreseeable action, is a programmatic analysis for treating 1,254,200 acres of juniper on the Modoc National Forest, BLM Alturas Field Office lands, and surrounding federal lands that lie within the sage steppe ecosystem. Treatment would be through mechanical treatments, hand treatments, or prescribed fire. This project consists of restoring sagebrush communities that have been invaded by juniper over the last 100 to 150 years. There will be no new permanent roads built to support this project.

## ***Reforestation***

Reforestation will occur as needed after wildfires or timber management. Past activities associated with replanting trees included the use of herbicides and mechanical and physical site preparation to reduce the competition for soil nutrients and sunlight from grasses and shrubs (release). Existing roads are used for reforestation projects.

## ***Road and Right-of-Way Management***

A system of federal, state, and county highways provides access to the Modoc National Forest. Forest system roads are extensions of these highways, and provide access to and mobility within the forest. Roads allow protection, management, use, and development of forest resources on which local communities depend. The forest road system consists of approximately 4,996 miles.

Integrated with the system are approximately 416 miles of private roads. There are also approximately 491 miles of non-system roads on the forest.

### ***State and County Easements***

Sixty miles of state highway cross portions of the Modoc National Forest. The highway right-of-way is managed according to the terms of the specific easement. Vegetation management within the right-of-way is done according to the laws and regulations of the State of California.

Modoc County maintains about 1,040 miles of roadway through the Modoc National Forest. These roads are maintained by agreement with the forest, or as easements. The rights-of-way are maintained according to county standard.

### ***Railroads***

Two railroads cross portions of the Modoc National Forest. Railroad rights-of way are embedded in the forest and are owned by the railroad.

### ***Special Uses***

Approximately 325,000 acres of privately owned lands lie within the forest boundary (2,000 state acres, 1,000 tribal acres, and 323,000 acres of land owned by companies and individuals).

The Modoc National Forest has a caseload of about 160 special-use authorizations annually for apiaries, ditches, dams, water sources, roads, recreational residences, utility transmission and communication sites, outfitters and guides, a ski hill, and miscellaneous permits. Special uses on the forest encompass over 125,000 acres and result in a return of over \$70,000 in fees to the U.S. Treasury. Special-use permits authorize facilities and services necessary for public health, welfare, safety and security, such as communications sites for local 911 radio repeaters to support local law enforcement and emergency response entities. Others provide basic needs such as power and telephone lines to private homeowners.

All new authorizations are issued with specific terms and conditions; road construction is generally not part of a new authorization.

The Modoc National Forest administers slightly over 3,000 acres authorized for the purpose of transmitting or distributing power in the form of electricity and natural gas. In many cases these acres overlap because power and pipeline facilities are located within designated corridors.

Currently there is analysis for a proposal for vegetation maintenance for the U.S. Department of Energy's Western Area Power Authority, Sierra Nevada Region (right-of-way vegetation maintenance for high-voltage power lines), including two 500-kV transmission lines through the Doublehead Ranger District. The proposal includes the maintenance of vegetation within the right-of-way with manual methods (cutting, girdling, topping and trimming), mechanical methods (mowing), and use of herbicides. The proposal specifies maintaining 30 feet of clearance around each transmission tower or structure.

The Modoc National Forest administers 1,460 acres rented to public and private agencies for communications purposes. Over 900 acres of that is authorized to the Department of Defense for a radar installation. The remaining acres are within nine designated communications sites or are parallel to transportation, power line, or pipeline facilities. These authorizations require prior approval for removal of vegetation.

## ***Past Road Construction and Decommissioning***

Over the past ten years there have been 9.5 miles of new road constructed and 76.8 miles decommissioned. See Table XX below.

**Table B-1. Road Construction and Decommissioning from 1998 to 2007**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Decommissioning (miles)</b>	<b>Construction &amp; Reconstruction (miles)</b>
1998	13.5	0.0
1999	20.0	0.0
2000	9.4	0.0
2001	15.0	0.0
2002	14.9	0.0
2003	4.0	0.3
2004	0.0	9.1
2005	0.0	0.1
2006	0.0	0.0
2007	0.0	0.0

## ***Other Federal Lands in California***

### **National Forest Lands**

The Modoc National Forest abuts the Klamath and Shasta-Trinity national forests on the western flank. The Lassen National Forest administers some of these lands, and also has land that lies roughly 2 to 4 miles south of the Big Valley District.

**Klamath National Forest-Goosenest District:** There are approximately 1,005 miles of NFTS (National Forest Transportation System) roads on the district and 309 miles of unauthorized routes.

**Lassen National Forest:** The Lassen National Forest is doing its travel management process. It has completed a notice of intent; the proposed action includes adding 37 miles of unauthorized routes, 12 miles of additional mixed use routes, and 26 acres for open use.

**Shasta-Trinity National Forest:** The Shasta Trinity is currently in the travel management process and intends to publish its notice of intent in July, 2008. The forest has 6,754 miles of NFTS roads and 175 miles of NFTS trails. Their proposed action will designate 33 miles of roads and 11 miles of trails. There will be no open-use areas, but there will be a change in the designation of “below high-water areas.”

### **Federal Lands under Other Administration**

**Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge:** The refuge has an existing road system and does not propose to create any new roads for public use in the near future.

**Modoc National Wildlife Refuge:** The refuge has an existing road system and does not propose to create any new roads for public use in the near future.

**BLM-Alturas and Surprise Valley Offices:** Both the Alturas and Surprise Valley offices recently completed resource management plans (RMPs) and signed records of decision in April 2008. Both offices included a section on travel management. In both areas, OHV travel will be “limited to existing roads and trails” year-round, except where further restrictions are specifically assigned (i.e., “open”, “closed,” “seasonally closed”, or “limited to designated routes”).

The Alturas Field Office manages approximately 503,045 acres in northeastern California. The geographic area consists of BLM-administered lands within the counties of Modoc, Lassen, Shasta, and Siskiyou, California. There are 902 miles of system roads in the Alturas District and

OHV travel would be ‘Limited to Existing Roads and Trails’ year-round, except where further restrictions are specifically assigned off-highway vehicle. Eighty acres are designated open, 498,140 acres are designated as ‘limited to designated routes’ and 4,825 acres are designated closed. The RMP also proposes to construct approximately 66 miles of new motorized and non-motorized trails, including a 40-mile stretch of the abandoned Modoc Line rail bed.

The Surprise Valley Field Office manages approximately 1,220,644 acres in northeastern California and northwestern Nevada. The geographic area consists of BLM-administered lands within the counties of Modoc and Lassen (California) and Humboldt and Washoe (Nevada). The Surprise Valley office will manage 1,809 miles of routes as the designated route network for access to BLM-administered lands, and close 92 miles of routes within WSAs (wilderness study areas). OHV use would be designated as 0 acres open, 1,208,670 acres “limited to designated routes”, and 11,994 acres closed. An OHV special recreation management area would be developed if the need arises. Commercial, competitive, and other organized OHV activities would be managed with special recreation permits. Road maintenance would continue at a rate of 30 to 75 miles per year.

## **Private Land**

There are currently 416 miles of non Forest Service roads within the Forest Service boundary. This includes roads managed by the county across FS lands and private roads on private land that are within the Forest Service boundary. Because private landowners do not typically publish their long-term management plans, actions on private land are difficult to analyze. Some new roads could be built on private lands to support restoration projects, however new roads on private lands would likely not be open to the public. (Sage Steppe EIS) Cross country travel will most likely continue across private land by ranchers and others in their day to day business and for recreation. Timber production will continue on private land and road construction associated with that will likely occur. These roads will probably be temporary and will support timber operations. Firewood gathering will continue to occur on private land but most likely will use existing roads and travel cross country will be for short distances only. There are two existing utility corridors that cross private land and there are no future plans for additional corridors in the future.

**Table B-2. Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions<sup>1</sup>**

Activity	NEPA Project Name	District
Fuels Management	Rush2 Vegetation Treatment	BV
Fuels & Vegetation Management	Devil's Garden Plantation Management	DG
Fuels & Vegetation Management	Cedar Pass Forest Health	WM
Fuels & Vegetation Management	Lassen Creek Watershed Forest Health and Restoration Project	WM
Fuels & Vegetation Management	North Warner Roadside Fuel Break Management	WM
Fuels & Vegetation Management	Fletcher Fire Salvage	DG
Grazing Management	Crank Springs, Gerig, Kramer, Shawville and Happy Camp Allotments	BV
Grazing Management	Pit River Fence	BV
Grazing Management	Riparian and Upland Enhancement at Pit river Allotments Adjacent to Shaw Ranch	BV
Grazing Management	Spring Hill Allotment Stockpond	BV
Grazing Management	Triangle Allotment Grazing Management Project	DG
Grazing Management	Crummes Allotment EA	DH
Grazing Management	Tucker Grazing Allotment EA	DH

Minerals and Geology	Geothermal Leasing - Lake City KGRA	WM
Road Management	BIA Road Improvement Lauer Reservoir Access	DG
Road Management	Medicine Lake Highlands Road Closure	DH
Special Use and Recreation	Warner Mountain Relay Event	WM
Special Uses	Ewind Testing Project for Existing Sites	BV, DH
Special Uses	Ewind Testing Project for Potential Sites	BV
Special Uses	Fandango Pass Wind Energy Project	WM
Vegetation Treatment	Noxious Weed Treatment	Forest-wide
Vegetation Treatment	Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy	Forest-wide
Vegetation Treatment	Ash Vegetation Treatment	BV
Vegetation Treatment	Black Mountain Plantation Thinning and Fuels Treatment	DH
Vegetation Treatment	Clear Lake Quaking Aspen Restoration Project	DH
Vegetation Treatment	Highlands Roadside Safety Improvement Project	DH
Wildlife Improvement	Devils Garden Guzzlers	DG

<sup>1</sup> Projects listed on the 07/01/2008 to 09/30/2008 Schedule of Proposed Actions for the Modoc National Forest

