

Salt Timber Harvest and Fuel Hazard Reduction Project

Transportation Report

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for:

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Abstract

The transportation specialist report summarizes the existing condition of the transportation system, and the anticipated changes by alternative. Management activities are defined in the body of the report.

Affected Environment

Existing Condition

The Salt Project area encompasses approximately 6.7 square miles. Within the project area, there are currently approximately 27.6 miles of existing Forest Service system roads, and 19.8 miles of existing unclassified roads. Forest Service system roads are permanent roads which were planned and constructed as a part of a transportation system designed to meet the needs of the agency in managing the resources over a large area. Unclassified roads are temporary roads which were used to access smaller areas for management purposes.

The current road system in the Salt Project is adequate for the purposes of the project: hauling timber and biomass materials from the project area, and providing access for pre-commercial thinning, fuel break thinning, hand fuel treatment, and road decommissioning. Two new short temporary roads will be needed to access several critical landings. Table 1 summarizes the types of roads within the project area and their usage for project activities.

Table 1: Existing Roads by Type and Project Need

Road Type	Needed for Project Activities	Miles
System	Yes	24.4
System	No	3.1
Unclassified	Yes	8.1
Unclassified	No	11.7
Total		47.4

Most of the existing roads in the project area have not received maintenance in a number of years. The roads identified for use under this project will require some level of reconstruction, pre-haul maintenance, or reopening prior to use. Reconstruction is defined as road improvements required due to an anticipated increase in traffic, service level or haul capacity. Reconstruction activities may include culvert upgrades, grading, rocking, paving, and drainage. Generally, reconstruction activities take place within the existing road prism. Maintenance is defined as work needed to bring the road back into its original condition. Maintenance activities include brushing, culvert replacement, grading, and rocking. Reopening of roads applies to the unclassified roads. Road reopening activities include barrier removal, brushing, grading, and temporary culvert installation. Table 2 summarizes the reconstruction and maintenance needs for the roads identified for use for both action alternatives in this project.

Table 2: Project Road Pre-Use Work Miles by Road Type.

Road Type	Pure-use Work Needed	Miles
System	Maintenance	5.0
System	None Needed	2.3
System	Reconstruction	17.1
Unclassified	Reopen	8.1
Total Miles		32.6

In 2007, a Roads Analysis Process (RAP) was performed on the Salt Project Area. The purpose of a RAP is to balance the needs of the agency and the public for a transportation system with the impacts of

the system on other resources. During a RAP, an interdisciplinary team weights the management and social benefit of each road against the resource impact of the road, resulting in a recommended disposition for the road to be further revised and analyzed (through the NEPA process) and implemented on a project specific basis. The RAP originally identified 18.5 miles of road which could be decommissioned in the project area. During the development of the scoping document, 8 miles of road decommissioning were proposed for this project

Subsequent to scoping two things occurred. The Forest decided to analyze the decommissioning of all roads identified in the Salt RAP for ‘short term decommissioning’ (5.1 miles), in a separate NEPA process along with roads identified in other RAP’s conducted on the South Fork Management Unit. ‘Short term decommissioning means these roads are not needed for future management or project activities and could be decommissioned in the short term. Secondly, more analysis determined a couple of routes (0.2 miles) were needed for management that had initially been planned for decommissioning. Currently, 13.8 miles of roads are identified which could be decommissioned after using them to access areas for treatment in this project (Table 3).

A decommissioned road is removed from the FS transportation system after it is effectively closed. Decommissioning may include removing culverts, ripping road surfaces, installing effective vehicle barriers, as well as other measures to meet site-specific needs. The goal is to prevent future uncontrolled use, and to control surface runoff, erosion, and mass failure.

Table 3: RAP Decommissioned Roads and Project Decommissioned Roads

Road Number	RAP Decommission Road	RAP Miles*	Will be analyzed for Decommissioning in Forest Watershed Restoration EA Analysis	Miles*	Salt Project Decommission Road	Salt Project Miles*
29N31D	X	0.3	X	0.3		
29N55A	X	0.6			X	0.6
30N07	X	0.7			X	0.7
30N07A	X	0.4			X	0.4
30N14A	X	0.4	X	0.4		
30N16Y	X	0.7			X	0.7
30N18A	X	0.3	X	0.3		
30N18B	X	0.8	X	0.8		
30N18C	X	1.0			X	1.0
30N27A	X	0.3	X	0.3		
30N45A	X	0.9			X	0.9
U29N31E	X	2.8			X	2.8
U29N31EAA	X	0.3	X	0.3		
U29N31EB	X	0.3	X	0.3		
U29N55B	X	0.8			X	0.8
U29N55BA	X	0.2			X	0.2
U30N07A	X	0.0			X	0.0
U30N07AA	X	0.1			X	0.1

Road Number	RAP Decommission Road	RAP Miles*	Will be analyzed for Decommissioning in Forest Watershed Restoration EA Analysis	Miles*	Salt Project Decommission Road	Salt Project Miles*
U30N07AB	X	0.0			X	0.0
U30N07AC	X	0.1			X	0.1
U30N07AD	X	0.2			X	0.2
U30N14A	X	0.1				
U30N14AA	X	0.2	X	0.2		
U30N14B	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N16YA	X	0.1			X	0.1
U30N18E	X	0.4			X	0.4
U30N27A	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27AA	X	0.6			X	0.6
U30N27AB	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27B	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27D	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27F	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27G	X	0.2	X	0.2		
U30N27H	X	0.2			X	0.2
U30N27I	X	0.2			X	0.2
U30N27J	X	0.1			X	0.1
U30N27K	X	0.0	X	0.0		
U30N27O	X	0.2			X	0.2
U30N27Q	X	0.8			X	0.8
U30N27S	X	0.1				
U30N27W	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N27X	X	0.2	X	0.2		
U30N27Z	X	0.0	X	0.0		
U30N28C	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N28D	X	0.1	X	0.1		
U30N28F	X	1.9			X	1.9
U30N28FA	X	0.2	X	0.2		
U30N28H	X	0.1			X	0.1
U30N45A	X	0.0	X	0.0		
U30N45B	X	0.2	X	0.2		
U36TRI03	X	0.5	X	0.5		
U36TRI03B	X	0.1			X	0.1
U36TRI05	X	0.1	X	0.1		
Total Miles		18.5		5.1		13.8

* Note: 0.0 means less than 0.1 miles, but contribute to the total summed miles.

Alternative – No Action

Indirect Effects

The existing road system is currently receiving very little maintenance. Some roads are contributing sediment through erosion, have compromised drainage structures, and may in some cases constitute a safety hazard. The no action alternative would not correct these problems.

Alternatives 2 and 3 – Action Alternatives

The transportation system needed to accommodate the proposed actions are common for both action alternatives, and the effects are identical.

Direct Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Harvest and treatment unit access, and log and chip hauling would utilize the existing road network and short, temporary roads. Road reconstruction and road maintenance on haul roads would be performed prior to and during harvest activities. Maintenance activities include clearing of brush and small trees within the road right-of-way, surface blading to provide a smooth road surface, water drainage control and dust abatement.

All temporary roads (0.3 miles in Alternative 2) used in conjunction with harvest activities would be waterbarred, revegetated and closed to vehicle use following harvest activities. In addition to this, Alternatives 2 and 3 would close an additional .4 miles of Forest System roads (Road number 30N08), and decommission 13.8 miles of system and unclassified existing roads. These roads could be reopened in the future to allow access for timber management. Table 4 summarized the changes to the transportation system for the action and no action alternatives.

Table 4: Changes to the Transportation System by Alternative

Management Activity	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternatives 2	Alternative 3
Miles of System Roads Closed	0.0	.4	.4
Miles of Roads Decommissioned	0.0	13.8	13.8
Miles of New System Roads	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miles of Haul Maintenance	0.0	32.6	32.6
Miles of Temporary Road	0.0	0.3	0.0

How the changes to the transportation system effect forest resources are analyzed in other resource reports.