

DECISION NOTICE / DESIGNATION ORDER
and
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Establishment of Sand Lake Research Natural Area

USDA - Forest Service
Siuslaw National Forest
Hebo Ranger District
Tillamook County, Oregon

By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the Chief of the Forest Service in Forest Service Manual Section 4063, I hereby establish the Sand Lake Research Natural Area (RNA). It shall be comprised of 241 acres of land in Tillamook County, Oregon, on the Hebo Ranger District of the Siuslaw National Forest, as described in the section of the Establishment Record entitled "Location."

The Sand Lake Research Natural Area was recommended for establishment in the Record of Decision for the Siuslaw National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), March 7, 1990, to provide a relatively undisturbed parabola dune system on the Oregon Coast. That recommendation was the result of an analysis of the factors listed in 36 CFR 219.25 and Forest Service Manual 4063.41. Results of the Regional Forester's analysis are documented in the Forest Plan and accompanying Final Environmental Impact Statement which are available to the public.

The Regional Forester has reexamined the Sand Lake area to ensure that the environmental effects of establishing the area as a Research Natural Area (RNA) have not changed since 1990. This analysis is documented in the attached Environmental Assessment. Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment, it is my decision to adopt Alternative A, to establish Sand Lake as a Research Natural Area. Alternative A is selected because it provides long-term protection and recognition of a native unstabilized dune grassland and associated adjacent mature Sitka spruce and western hemlock forest. The Sand Lake RNA will be managed in compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and Forest Service Manual direction regarding RNAs, and in accordance with the management direction identified in the Forest Plan, pages IV-104 through IV-107.

The alternative considered was Alternative B, the "No Action" alternative, which would continue management of the Sand Lake area as a "proposed" RNA. Alternative B was not selected because it would only guarantee protection of the Sand Lake area for a short-term--10 years or less--until the Forest Plan is amended or revised.

Alternative B is consistent with the Forest Plan. The proposed action (Alternative A) is also consistent with the management direction, but it is not consistent with the land allocation for the Sand Lake area in the Forest Plan. The Siuslaw Forest Plan is hereby amended to change the allocation of the Sand Lake area from "proposed" to Established RNA. This is a non-significant amendment of the Forest Plan, because it is not significant in relation to the National Forest Management Act regulations [36 CFR 219], and is consistent with the long-term resource management goals and objectives of the Forest Plan [36 CFR 219.10(f)].

Based on the environmental analysis documented in the Environmental Assessment, it has been determined that the proposed action is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This determination is based on the following factors [40 CFR 1508.27]:

A. Context

Although this is an addition to the national system of RNAs, both short-term and long-term physical and biological effects are limited to the local area.

B. Intensity

1. There are no known effects on public health and safety.
2. No significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts to the natural resources or other components of the human environment are anticipated.
3. Effects on the human environment are not uncertain, do not involve unique or unknown risks, and are not likely to be highly controversial.
4. There are no known effects on historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or wild and scenic rivers. Effects of establishing the RNA are to protect the ecologically unique area. No significant adverse effects are anticipated to any environmentally sensitive or critical area.
5. The action is not likely to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects.
6. The proposed action will not adversely affect any federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species or Regionally sensitive species of plants or animals or their critical habitats.
7. The proposed action is consistent with the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (USDA, USDI 1994).
8. The proposed action is consistent with Federal, State and local laws and requirements for the protection of the environment.

Legal notice of this decision will appear in The Oregonian. The Forest Supervisor of the Siuslaw National Forest shall notify the public of this decision and mail a copy of the Decision Notice/Designation Order to all persons on the Siuslaw Forest Land and Resource Management Plan mailing list.

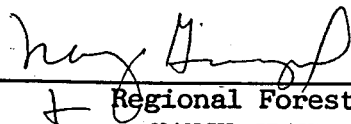
Implementation of this decision shall not occur within 7 days following publication of the legal notice of the decision in The Oregonian.

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any written Notice of Appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9 (Content of a Notice of Appeal) and must include the reasons for appeal. A written notice of appeal must be submitted to:

Chief, USDA Forest Service
14th and Independence Ave., S.W.
PO Box 96090
Washington, D.C. 20090-6090

within 45 days of the date of legal notice of this decision.

For further information, contact Cindy McCain, Siuslaw National Forest, P.O. Box 1148, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333, or by phone at (503) 750-7000.



Regional Forester
NANCY GRAYBEAL (for)
Deputy Regional Forester

March 29, 1995

Date