



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Helgeson, Brown, Mital, Simpson and Carlson
FROM: Karl Morgenstern, Property, Facilities & Source Protection Supervisor
DATE: June 23, 2017
SUBJECT: Leaburg Forest Management
OBJECTIVE: Informational update on upcoming selective timber harvest activities

Issue

In June 2016, EWEB completed a Stewardship Plan for the 900-acre Leaburg Forest to guide the management of these properties to meet multiple goals that support Generation, Drinking Water Source Protection, and Property Management. As part of implementation of the Stewardship Plan, EWEB will be working with its forestry consultant, Trout Mountain Forestry, to conduct a selective harvest on nearly 60 acres.

Background

The Leaburg Forest is a patchwork of properties bordering the Leaburg Power Canal consisting of over 900 acres. EWEB purchased the land in the 1920s during construction of the Leaburg hydroelectric project, largely to safeguard the canal from landslides. The Forest reseeded naturally following pasture abandonment and early logging.

Since the early 1970s, activity in the area has been limited to hazard tree removal. The current second-growth forest is now dense and uniform, with low tree vigor and declining growth. There is an opportunity to improve forest conditions for fish and wildlife habitat, to mitigate fire and nuisance risks, and maintain the stable slope conditions above the canal that are necessary for safe canal operation?

In 2015, EWEB contracted with Trout Mountain Forestry to create a Stewardship Plan for the Leaburg Forest. The plan's objective is a diverse forest comprised of native trees and understory vegetation that is resilient to weather, insects, and disease, and provides rich wildlife habitat. As part of the utility's drinking water source protection activities, the plan aims to demonstrate best practices that protect forest health and water quality. Forest management goals include:

- Demonstrate conservation-based practices to protect water quality
- Identify reserve areas where special habitat areas and legacy tree stands are protected
- Employ light-touch harvest methods to protect soil and understory vegetation
- Comply with Federal dam license requirements for public safety, habitat enhancement, public education, and recreation
- Reduce wildfire risk

Discussion

The first timber harvest is planned to begin July 18 and will continue through mid-September. The light-touch thinning approach will enhance growth of the largest trees, and create gaps to establish new seedlings and native shrubs that benefit wildlife. Approximately 60 acres of the Forest have been identified for treatment (see attached maps), with legacy trees, snags, hardwoods, and minor conifers retained to increase the age and species diversity of the forest. The average age class associated with this initial harvest includes 39 acres of 85 year old trees and 21 acres of plantation units that are approximately 35 year old.

Approximately 925 MBF will be harvested using variable density thinning (where about 40% of the trees are removed) and in four areas that have poor thinning potential, small 2-4 acre gaps will be created that leave 15% of the trees. It is anticipated that given the current robust lumber market, this thinning will generate over \$300,000. We will have a better idea about revenue generation by the end of June, once potential market contracts are identified.

The light-touch thinning approach will enhance growth of the largest trees, and create gaps to establish new seedlings and native shrubs that benefit wildlife. Invasive weeds will be controlled using an Integrated Vegetation Management approach that reduces potential environmental impacts. Oregon State University Extension Service will be conducting monitoring before and after the thinning treatment in order to measure forest response to these types of management activities.

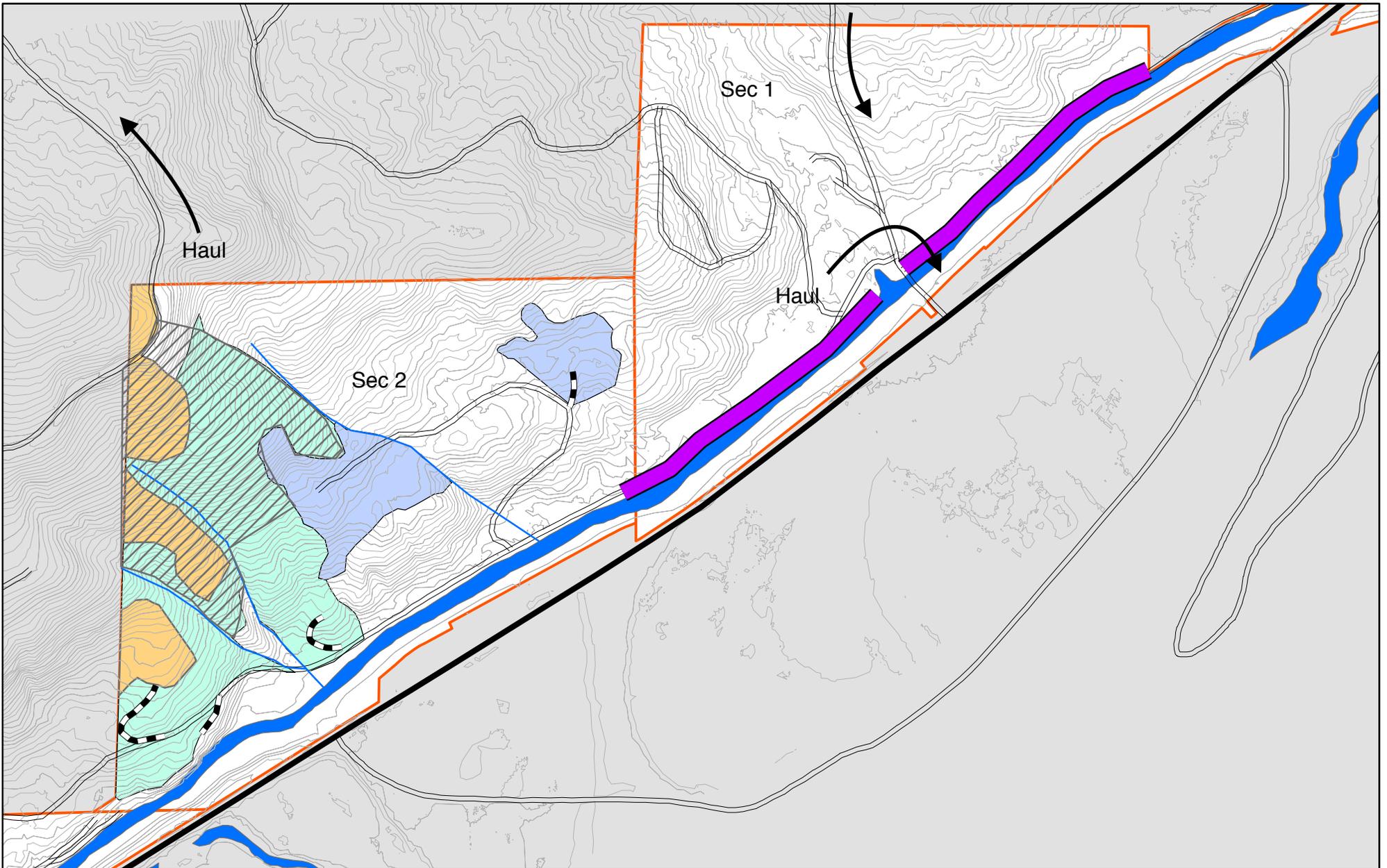
Local contractor Shiloh Forestry, Inc. will be conducting the timber harvest operations. EWEB will be posting signs on the canal roads and providing a news release to McKenzie River Reflections a couple weeks before operations begin to warn residents and users of the canal roads to avoid the work area for safety reasons. It is anticipated that small scale thinning harvests will be done every 5 years on different parts of the forest over time.

Recommendation

This is for information only.

Requested Board Action

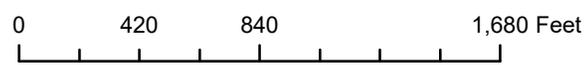
No action required at this time.



- Patch Cut
- Thinning Areas
- Early Thin Areas
- New road
- EWEB Ownership
- Cable Yarding
- Canal Veg Removal

EWEB Leaburg Forest East Harvest Plan 2017

T17S R1E Sections 1&2



Map Date: February 15, 2017

