

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

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Memorandum

July 24, 2011

To: Forestry Files, Hugo Neighborhood Association
& Historical Society



Reference: 240-acre BLM Parcel (Tax Lot 100, Section 21,
T.34S., R.6W., W.M.) & Copper Queen Grove

On July 24, 2011 Tom Walker, Randy Anderson, Cindy Walker, Pan Tangible, Boyd Peters, Larry and Bridget McStravog, Suzy Liebenberg, and Mike Walker participated in a three hour field trip to a 240-acre BLM parcel (Tax Lot 100, Section 21, T.34S., R.6W., W.M.) located on the ridge of Grave Creek Hills (Map 1). The group understood that the BLM has allocated the parcel to Matrix - Southern Forest Management Area, which means its primary management purpose is fiber production.

They were able to drive the BLM Copper Queen Access Road No. 34-6-11.1 to the site and park at the eastern edge of the parcel (Map 1). In the southeast area of the 240-acre parcel is a stand the group identified as the Copper Queen Grove (for consistency use BLM name if there is one). The northern boundary of the stand was basically the ridge line of Grave Creek Hills (Map 1).



Photo 1. Tom Walker, Randy Anderson, & Cindy Walker

On the Sunny Valley side is Mill Creek, a tributary of Dog Creek. The parcel is roughly a mile north of Hugo and the terrain drains into Bummer Creek. It's elevation ranges from 2, 200' to 2,500'.

Management of the BLM parcel is via a road system off Quartz Creek Road No. 35-6-8 to 34-6-30, 34-6-19.2 (located over Tunnel No. 9), and to a gate where 34-6-20 starts into the BLM parcel (Map 2). The hike was approximately one-half mile on a quad trail from the eastern boundary of the BLM parcel west to the Grave Creek Hills' saddle, and back out for a total of a mile. BLM Road No. 34-6-20 was encountered in

the saddle.

The following is what they observed as a group on the hike. The group was not sure, but felt they were viewing a remnant multi-aged old-growth stand ranging from small pockets of young Douglas-fir to larger fir some estimated upwards of 300 to 500 years old (Appendix A). The stand could be younger based upon the high forest productivity which was estimated from thick tree rings at several stumps from an adjacent logged unit. The group resolved to research BLM's inventories for the 240-acre parcel (i.e., operations and timber production inventories; Appendix B).

Douglas-fir is dominant, interspersed with dozens of big dead Black Oak boles on the forest floor and many still standing. At one time they thrived with the Douglas-fir, but were now soon to disappear. A few Sugar Pine and Ponderosa Pine were present. A few large Madrone were vigorous. There were several large dead standing fir snags and many large decaying fir logs on the ground.



Photo 2. Pan Tangible, Suzy Liebenberg, & Boyd Peters

Perhaps a third of the stand had broken tops or had been otherwise damaged. Except for dozens of very small pockets of young fir the trees were widely spaced with a clear forest floor generally

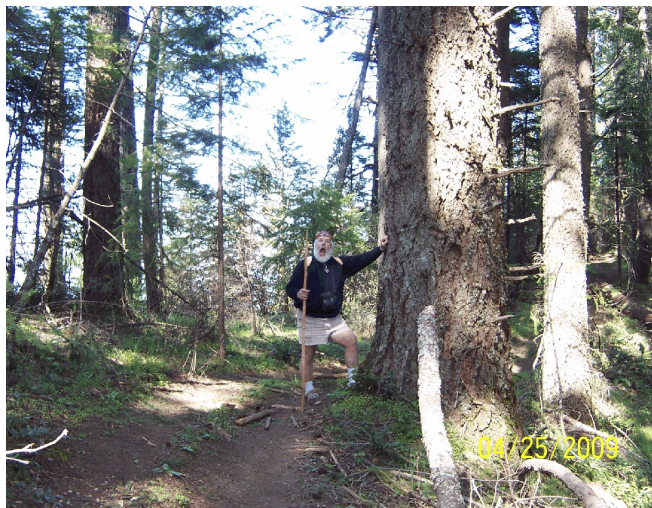


Photo 3. Mike Walker

lacking understory shrubs or other emerging tree species. The group assumed the openness was because of the stand's mostly closed canopy and lack of sunlight reaching the forest floor, and perhaps the grove's fire history that could be seen on some of the large trees. Several of the larger trees had visible signs of lightning strikes.

The stand appeared to have characteristics of Late Successional Reserves (LSR), or "old growth", with a distinct mix of downed trees, snags and standing trees predominantly conifer, mixed with a few substantially sized black oaks which are also living; snags; and fallen. This could indicate a transition from a

black oak forest to the current LSR mix. The oaks seemed to be more near the top to the leeward side of the ridge, where high wind damage appears to be a constant.

The tree size classes ranged from one inch dbh Douglas firs to a large five feet plus dbh fir category. There were a few large-aged Madrones, including one of 12' 1" circumference. Other trees measured were three Douglas Fir, 15' 6", 15' and 11'. Slightly outside of this more shielded area, which is approximately 1/4 miles south from the ridge top, two Doug Firs located at the ridge line circumferences were measured at 15' 7", and 17' 2" respectively. Most of the Douglas fir trees were 1' - 2' feet dbh (measurements taken during a previous May 13, 2009 field trip).



Photo 4. BLM Timbered Parcel Viewed From Railroad Tracks By Hugo Hitching Post Store Looking North

The conifer mix of Doug Fir, Ponderosa, White Pine, Sugar Pine (one SP measured 12' 2" circumference) and other conifers are in a relatively untouched ridge-top area (Photo 4). The area also had other tree species and one area with 14 old and large looking conifers within 125' of each other. The hiked area had a fairly complete canopy; a relatively complex biological diversity, and dips and mounds throughout.



Photo 5. Vertical Structure

Deep forest birds seen or heard on the May 13, 2009 field trip were three territories of Mt. Quail, at least four territories of Hermit Warbler, and Pileated Woodpecker. Edge species were Lesser Goldfinch, Oregon Junco, Flicker, Hairy WP., Nashville Wblr., MacGillivray Wblr., Red Br. Nuthatch, Blk. Capped Chickadee, W. Tanager, Scrub Jay, Mourning Dove, Pair of Ravens, Turkey Vulture, Hutton's Vireo, N. Flicker, and Ruffed Grouse.

A great time was had by all. Pan could not get over how big and juicy the wild black cap raspberries were on the Grave Creek Hills ridge line just before entering the forest.

Mike :)

Mike Walker, Education Chair
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

Appendix A. Old-Growth Forest

Old-growth forest (also termed primary forest, ancient forest, virgin forest, primeval forest, frontier forest) is a type of forest that has attained great age and so exhibits unique biological features. Old-growth forest typically contains large and old live trees, large dead trees (sometimes called "snags"), and large logs. Until the stand is hit by stand replacing disturbance only individual tree mortality takes place. This process creates gaps in the main canopy layer. Hence, the light can penetrate the main canopy and create favorable photosynthetic conditions for the understory. That is why the understory in old-growth forest is more developed than in mature stands. Old growth forests are unique usually having multiple horizontal layers of vegetation representing a variety of tree species, age-classes and sizes as well as pit and mound soil shape with well established fungal nets. Due to the fact that old-growth forest is structurally diverse it provides higher diversity habitat than forests in other stages. Thus, sometimes higher biological diversity can be sustained in old-growth forest or at least a biodiversity that is different from other forest stages.

Appendix B. BLM Forest Inventory For Tax Lot 100, Section 21, T.34S., R.6W., WM (Map 1)

Operations Inventory (OI) (also Forest Operations Inventory - FOI) - An intensive, site-specific forest inventory of forest and stand location, size, silvicultural needs, and recommended treatment based on individual stand conditions and productivity (USDI, BLM, Medford District Office. June 1995. *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*. provides, in relevant part, page 110).

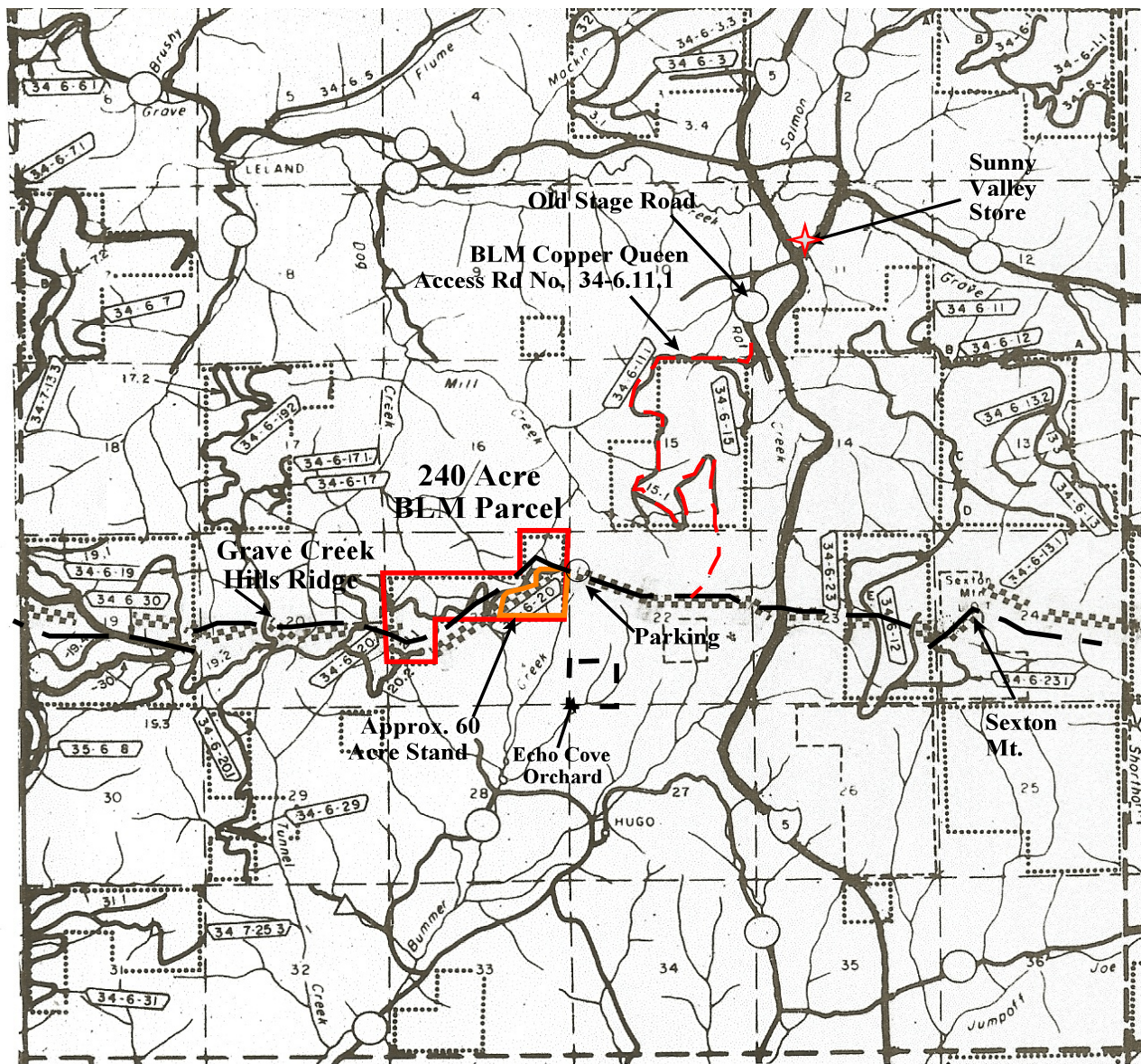
Operations Inventory Unit (OIU) - An aggregation of trees occupying an area that is sufficiently uniform in composition, age, arrangement and condition to be distinguishable from vegetation on adjoining areas (USDI, BLM, Medford District Office. June 1995. *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*. provides, in relevant part, page 110).



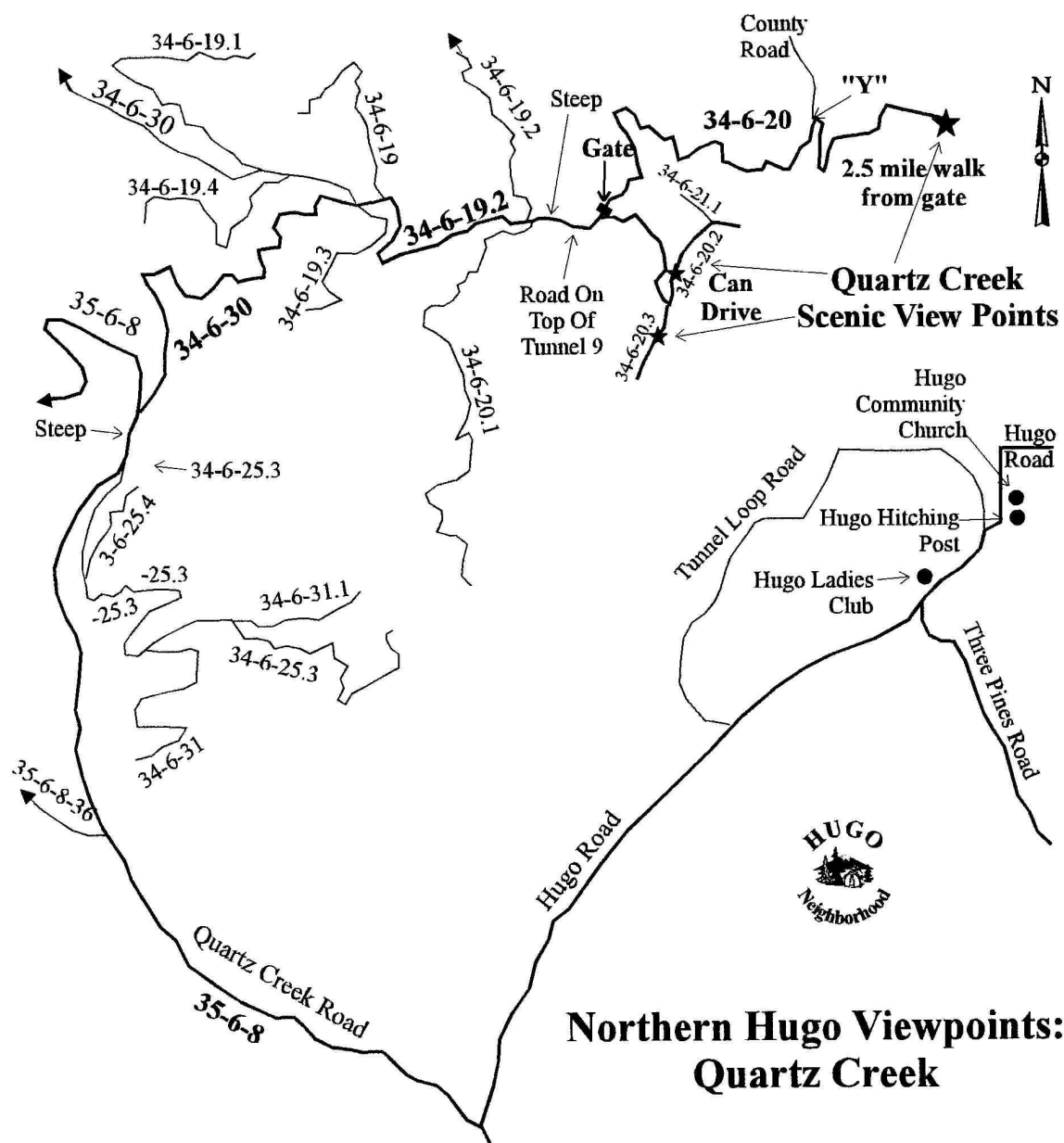
Photo 6. Downed Log

BLM Operation Inventory (OI) Unit Summary Reports for Timber Capability Production Classification

Timber Capability Production Classification (TPCC) - The process of partitioning forestland into major classes indicating relative suitability to produce timber on a sustained yield basis (USDI, BLM, Medford District Office. June 1995. *Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*. provides, in relevant part, page 116).



Map 1. 240-Acre BLM Forest Parcel: Tax Lot 100, Section 21, T.34S., R.6W., W.M.



Map 2. Northern Hugo Viewpoints: Quartz Creek