

George & Frances Alderson

112 Hilton Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

January 4, 2006

Bureau of Land Management
Brian Amme, Vegetation EIS Project Manager
PO Box 12000
Reno NV 89520-0006

Dear BLM:

- 1 Please include this letter as our comment on the programmatic EIS for vegetation treatments. The proposed action involves applying chemical herbicides to as much as 930,000 acres per year and non-chemical treatments to as much as 5 million acres per year. I (George) grew up in Oregon, studied natural resources in Utah, and have visited BLM public lands in 12 of the states listed for this project. Our family and friends live in most of those states and visit BLM public lands.
- 2 **Lands Affected:** We oppose the inclusion of BLM-administered national monuments and national conservation areas among the lands to be sprayed with herbicides. We believe broad herbicide treatments are not consistent with the mandates in the laws and presidential proclamations that established those special units. Those lands have been designated for protection of nature and the processes that sustain a natural ecosystem.
- 3 **Alternatives:** We urge BLM to adopt Option C, which avoids broad-scale herbicide treatments and relies on non-chemical treatments. Over the past 40 years scientists and land management researchers have developed a number of vegetative treatments that achieve the objectives of this project without the use of widespread herbicides.
- 4 **Impacts:** We are concerned about the impacts of such large amounts of herbicides being applied on BLM public lands because they have an adverse effect on the native ecosystem. We believe the long-term future of these lands lies in making the most of the native ecosystems found all over these 17 states, because their flora and fauna are well adapted to soils and climate of each area. We know from working in our own garden that when we apply herbicides, the population of soil-dwelling organisms goes down. We believe that impact reverberates through the ecosystem, probably taking a toll on birds, mammals and aquatic life forms. The wiser course is to avoid broad use of chemicals.
- 5 In conclusion, we ask BLM to adopt Option C and devote constructive efforts such as fire, biological, cultural, mechanical and manual controls toward restoring natural ecosystems on the BLM public lands. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,


George & Frances Alderson