

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
BURNS DISTRICT OFFICE

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL

CX Number: DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2011-0049

Date: 08/24/11

File Code (Project/Serial Number):

Applicant:

Preparer: Louis E Clayburn

Title of Proposed Action: Alvord Seeding Re- Seed

**Description of Proposed Action and Project Design Elements (if applicable):** The Alvord seeding is located due north of the Alvord Ranch on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered land. It was first seeded in 1956 according to current records and was partially brush beat and re-seeded again in 2002. The current proposal is to use a brush roller to treat approximately 1468.5 acres which is half of the total 2937 acres that are within the seeding, a mosaic pattern will be used in the treated area. Range drills will be used to re-seed both crested wheatgrass and forage kochia. The need for this maintenance project is to improve forage quality, stabilize soil, prevent invasion by exotic and noxious weeds, and increase diversity and structure within the plant community for wildlife habitat. The areas of existing seeding would first be brush beat using a brush roller pulled behind a tractor to reduce the amount of brush allowing for better seed establishment. Rangeland drills would be used to drill in the seed mix. The seed mix that will be used contains crested wheatgrass and forage kochia. Seeding would begin as early as November 2011. The rate would be 8 pounds per acre for the crested wheatgrass and 1 to 2 pounds per acre for the forage kochia depending on seed costs. The forage kochia would be either mixed with the crested wheatgrass or broadcast seeded separate during the winter when viable seed is more available. The seed would be applied using rangeland drills with the tubes attached and /or tubes removed. Methods with tubes pulled or removed would replicate broad cast seeding. The permittee will provide labor, fuel and the tractor along with the brush roller in a cooperative agreement to assist in treatment implementation and cost. The BLM will provide the seed and rangeland drills. Archaeological sites found within the area to be brush beaten and re-seeded will be flagged with pink flagging in the field. They will be avoided during project operations.

**Legal Description:** T 33S, R 35E Sec 6, 7, 8,16,17,18 (see attached map)

**B. Conformance with Land Use Plan (LUP) (name):**

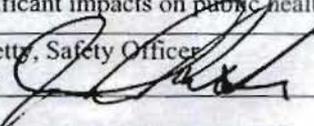
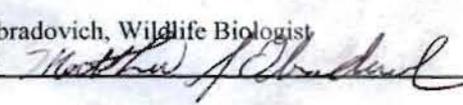
**Date Approved/Amended:** Andrews Management Unit RMP (2005)

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable Andrews Management Unit, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s): Objective 2. Manage desirable nonnative seedings to meet resource objectives. RMP pg. 30

**BLM Categorical Exclusion Reference (516 DM, Chapter 11):**

**DOI Categorical Exclusion Reference (516 DM 2, Appendix 1):** 1.7-Routine and continuing government business, including such things as...maintenance...activities.

**Screening for Exceptions:** The following extraordinary circumstances (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) may apply to individual actions within the categorical exceptions. The indicated specialist recommends the proposed action does *not*:

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION	
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety.
Specialist – John Petts, Safety Officer	
Signature and Date:	 7/30/11
Rationale:	No significant impacts on public health or safety.
2.2	Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); flood plains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.
Migratory Birds	
Specialist – Matt Obradovich, Wildlife Biologist	
Signature and Date:	 9/20/2011

Rationale: There would be no direct effects to migratory birds since the brush beating and reseeding would be completed during the winter when most migratory birds would have already moved south. There would be some loss of habitat for nesting sagebrush dependent birds the following spring but there is plenty of sagebrush in the area to accommodate displaced nesting birds. The mosaic pattern would still provide nesting habitat for some birds in the area. Sagebrush will return into the brush beat sections and provide nesting habitat again in about 10 years. Overall, there would be no effect on migratory birds or their population from this project.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Specialist – Scott Thomas, District Archeologist

Signature and Date: *Scott Thomas* 9/26/11

Rationale: No cultural or historic resources would be affected by this project.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern/Research Natural Areas

Specialist – Caryn Meinicke, Natural Resource Specialist (Botany)

Signature and Date: *Caryn Meinicke* 9-27-11

Rationale: There are no ACEC/RNAs within the proposed project area.

Water Resources/Flood Plains

Specialist – Daryl Bingham, Natural Resource Specialists (Riparian and Fisheries)

Signature and Date: *Daryl Bingham* 13 September, 2011

Rationale: There is no known perennial surface water in the project area. This area is not in a floodplain under the National flood Insurance Plan. There would likely be no measurable loss should this area flood during spring runoff

Soils, Biological Soil Crust, Prime Farmlands

Specialist – Caryn Meinicke, Natural Resource Specialist (Botany)

Signature and Date: *Caryn Meinicke* 9-27-11

Rationale: Soils in the project area are predominately of the Spangenburg-Enko-Catlow series and have a moderate risk of wind erosion. Re-seeding the area could disturb the soils and create soil loss through the creation of dust while seeding; however, overall impacts will be negligible with soil stability improving when the seeding is fully established. Tracks from vehicles could be present for 1-3 years depending on how quickly vegetation establishes and to what extent the top soil moves via wind or water. There are no prime farmlands within the proposed project area

Recreation/ Visual Resources

Specialist – Michael Kelly, Outdoor Recreation Specialist

Signature and Date: *Joe P. Bethel* 10-3-11

Rationale:

Recreation: There may be a short term disturbance to recreation during the seeding and brush treatments. However this is expected to be short term (Approximately one month). This action will be occurring during a slow time for recreation use in the area. Overall no long term impacts are anticipated for recreation uses.

Visual Management: The area where the work would occur is in a VRM 3, and the intention of VRM 3 is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. With the mosaic pattern that will be used and the anticipated benefits to the landscape from reseeding, the existing landscape will not be noticeably altered.

Wilderness/Wild and Scenic River Resources

Specialist – Eric Haakenson, Outdoor Recreation Specialist

Signature and Date: *Eric Haakenson* 9/20/11

Rationale: The proposed project does not occur within a wilderness, WSA, WSR or Lands with Wilderness Characteristics.

2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].

Specialist – Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator

Signature and Date: *Rhonda Karges* 9/20/11

Rationale: There are no known highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. The seeding has existing on the landscape since 1956. Implementation is maintenance of this existing seeding.

2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

<p>*Specialist - Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator  Signature and Date: <u>Rhonda Karges</u> 9/20/11</p>
<p>Rationale: There are no known highly uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks. The seeding has existing on the landscape since 1956. Implementation is maintenance of this existing seeding.</p>
<p>2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</p>
<p>Specialist - Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator  Signature and Date: <u>Rhonda Karges</u> 9/20/11</p>
<p>Rationale: Implementation would not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. The seeding has existing on the landscape since 1956. Implementation is maintenance of this existing seeding. Seeding maintenance is an on-going BLM activity.</p>
<p>2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</p>
<p>Specialist - Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator  Signature and Date: <u>Rhonda Karges</u> 9/20/11</p>
<p>Rationale: Implementation would not have any known direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulative significant environmental effects. The seeding has existing on the landscape since 1956. Implementation is maintenance of this existing seeding.</p>
<p>2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.</p>
<p>Specialist - Scott Thomas, District Archeologist  Signature and Date: <u>Scott Thomas</u> 9/26/11</p>
<p>Rationale: No National Register eligible or listed properties would be affected by this project.</p>
<p>2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</p>
<p><u>Endangered or Threatened Species-Fauna</u>  Specialist - Matt Obradovich, Wildlife Biologist  Signature and Date: <u>Matt Obradovich</u> 9/20/2011</p>
<p>Rationale: There are no known federally listed endangered or threatened fauna species, or fauna species proposed for listing, in the location of this project. There is no designated critical habitat for any listed species in this area that would be affected by the proposed project.</p>
<p><u>Endangered or Threatened Species-Aquatic</u>  Specialist - Daryl Bingham, Natural Resource Specialists (Riparian and Fisheries)  Signature and Date: <u>Daryl Bingham</u> 13 September 2011</p>
<p>Rationale: There are no Endangered or Threatened Aquatic Species Present in the Project Area.</p>
<p><u>Endangered or Threatened Species-Flora</u>  Specialist - Caryn Meinicke, Natural Resource Specialist (Botany)  Signature and Date: <u>Caryn Meinicke</u> 9-27-11</p>
<p>Rationale: There are no documented T &amp; E or Special Status plant species or critical habitat within the proposed project area.</p>
<p>2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</p>
<p>Specialist - Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator  Signature and Date: <u>Rhonda Karges</u> 9/20/11</p>
<p>Rationale: Implementation would not violate any known law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</p>
<p>2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).</p>
<p>Specialist - Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator  Signature and Date: <u>Rhonda Karges</u> 9/20/11</p>
<p>Rationale: No low income or minority populations exist within the project area.</p>
<p>2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).</p>
<p>Specialist - Scott Thomas, District Archeologist  Signature and Date: <u>Scott Thomas</u> 9/26/11</p>
<p>Rationale: Access and physical integrity of Indian sacred sites would not be affected by this project.</p>
<p>2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).</p>
<p>Specialist - Lesley Richman, Natural Resource Specialist (Weeds)</p>

\*Signature and Date: *Haley Richman* 9/27/2011

Rationale: Noxious weeds are known to be present in or in close proximity to this area. They are not present in sufficient quantity to be considered a significant impact at this time.

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION**

Additional review (As determined by the Authorized Officer):

RMP conformance and CX review confirmation:

Specialist – Rhonda Karges, District Planning and Environmental Coordinator

Signature and Date:

Signature: *Rhonda Karges*

Date: 9/20/11

**Management Determination:** Based upon review of this proposal, I have determined the Proposed Action is in conformance with the LUP, qualifies as a categorical exclusion and does not require further NEPA analysis.

Authorized Officer – Joan Suther, Andrews Field Manager

Signature:

*Rhonda Karges*

Date: 10/3/11



# Alvord Seeding Re-Seed

- |                                                                                    |                  |                                                                                     |                              |                                                                                     |                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | Project Boundary |  | Open Roads                   |  | Land Status               |
|  | Allotments       |  | Non-Paved Improved Road      |  | Bureau of Land Management |
|  | Range Seeding    |  | Natural/Unknown Road Surface |  | Private/Unknown           |
|                                                                                    |                  |                                                                                     |                              |  | BLM Wilderness Study Area |




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 Bureau of Land Management  
 Burns District, Oregon  
 Note: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.  
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