

**Worksheet**  
**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**

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Office: Burns District BLM – Hines, OR

Tracking Number (DNA #): DOI-BLM-OR-B050-2012-0001-DNA

Case File/Project Number:

Proposed Action Title/Type: Juniper cutting/machine piling/pile burning

Location/Legal Description: Portions of T21S R32.5E Sec 36

Applicant (if any): Harney County Soil and Water Conservation District

**A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

The proposal is to use Harney County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) funding and contractor(s) to treat juniper encroachment on BLM-administered lands. SWCD is working with a private landowner to treat juniper encroachment on private land immediately adjacent to this area, and may have money to extend the work onto BLM lands. The private land completely surrounds a juniper encroached 80-acre parcel of BLM land that lies between two intermittent creeks which empty into East Cow Creek. Another 20 acres of BLM land directly to the west of the private land also has juniper encroaching into a small draw with chokecherry that provides deer, elk, and other wildlife habitat. As funding permits, the juniper would be cut in these areas with chainsaws and then piled with a grapple-equipped excavator or other type of heavy machinery. Piles would then be burned in the winter when the ground is frozen or wet to reduce the risk of fire spreading from the piles. This same treatment is being completed on adjacent private land, and has also been completed successfully over the past several years on BLM lands in the surrounding area of Camp Harney and Cow Creek allotments.

The area would be surveyed for cultural, botanical, wildlife resources, and noxious weeds prior to implementation to avoid or minimize potential impacts. Machine piling would not occur on steep slopes to minimize erosion, and would be implemented in a manner to minimize the need for crossing the drainages. The burned piles would be seeded with a mix of desirable plants to reduce the potential for erosion and invasion by noxious weeds. Vehicles and equipment would be cleaned prior to site entry to minimize risk on introducing noxious weeds. This area would be monitored for noxious weeds for three years post treatment and infestations would be treated using the appropriate control method.

Pre-settlement (Euro-American) juniper trees and trees with obvious signs (i.e. cavity, nests) of wildlife use would be retained.

## B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name\* Three Rivers RMP Date Approved - 1992

Other document  
Greater Sage-grouse Conservation  
Assessment and Strategy for Oregon Date Approved - 2011

Other document  
Burns District Integrated Weed  
Management Plan Date Approved - 1998

Other document  
BLM National Sage-grouse Habitat  
Conservation Strategy Date Approved - 2004

Other document  
USFWS 12-Month Finding on Petition  
To List Greater Sage-grouse Date Approved - 2010

Other document  
Greater Sage-grouse: Ecology and  
Conservation of a Landscape Species  
And Its Habitats Date Approved - 2011

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions:

- Restore, maintain or enhance the diversity of plant communities and wildlife habitat in abundances and distributions which prevent the loss of specific native plant community types or indigenous wildlife species habitat within the Resource Area (WL-7)
- Maintain, restore or enhance the diversity of plant communities and plant species in abundances and distributions, which prevent the loss of specific native plant community types or indigenous plant species within the Resource Area (V-1)
- Maintain, restore or enhance the habitat of Candidate, State listed and other sensitive species to maintain the populations at a level which will avoid endangering the species and the need to list the species by either State or Federal governments (SSS-2)

**C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.**

Three Rivers Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (1991)

Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration Project EA – OR-06-025-054 - 2007

**D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

The proposed action is the same as the proposed alternative analyzed and selected in the Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration Project EA OR-06-025-054. Although the proposed action is not within the Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration Project boundary, it is within the same watershed and has the same vegetation types, terrain, and resource concerns. The outcome of the proposed project is expected to be similar to the results of the Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration treatments, providing benefits for the vegetation and wildlife communities in the area.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

The range of alternatives was sufficient in the Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration EA, analyzing vegetation treatments (especially juniper control) in four distinct vegetation communities. The EA was completed in 2007, and there are no new substantial environmental concerns for the area since then. Although greater sage-grouse was elevated to Candidate status in March 2010, it does not alter the analysis because sage-grouse was already (and still is) a BLM special status species at the time the EA was completed. The proposed action would improve habitat quality for sage-grouse and other wildlife by contributing to the ongoing juniper reduction effort in the area, while retaining intact sagebrush, chokecherry, and other important habitat components.

The proposed action would not take place in a Citizen's proposed Wilderness Study Area.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

The current rangeland health assessment determined the proposed area was meeting all standards and guidelines. Greater sage-grouse has been elevated to Candidate status (USFWS 2010), but remains a BLM special status species (it was analyzed as a BLM special status species in the Camp Harney-Cow Creek EA 2007). The proposed action would improve habitat quality for sage-grouse and other wildlife species with minimal, short-term disturbance, and no new information or circumstances would change the analysis of the new proposed action. Archaeological clearances were completed in October 2011, and no sites were found.

The Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon (Strategy) (Hagen 2011), provides recommendations for long-term conservation of sage-grouse in Oregon based on the best available science. The Strategy informs decision-makers regarding the biological consequences of various actions or lack of actions on sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat. Similar to the earlier version of the Strategy (Hagen 2005), the recent version lists juniper encroachment into sagebrush as the biggest risk to sage-grouse habitat in the Burns District (Hagen 2011). Recommendations for juniper removal provided in the Strategy indicate the "chainsaw cutting, machine piling, and then pile burning" treatment proposed in this DNA is an effective method of restoring native vegetation communities for sage-grouse and other sagebrush associated species.

The updated Strategy (Hagen 2011) considered and incorporated where appropriate the 12-Month Finding on the Petition to List Greater Sage-grouse as Threatened or Endangered (USFWS 2010) and the Greater Sage-grouse: Ecology and Conservation of a Landscape Species and Its Habitats (Sage-grouse Monograph) (Knick and Hanser, eds. 2011). The chapters in the Sage-grouse Monograph are recognized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the primary source of science for the 12-Month Finding for Petitions to List the Greater Sage-grouse as Threatened or Endangered.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

The proposed action is the same as analyzed in the Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration EA, and therefore, the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects are expected to be similar quantitatively and qualitatively to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document. The proposed treatment would be shorter in duration, and occur on substantially less acreage (up to 100 acres) than was analyzed in the 16,201-acre Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration Project Area. The proposed treatment would cumulatively contribute up to a hundred acres of habitat improvement in the area.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

Public and interagency involvement was appropriate for the scope of the project. The Camp Harney-Cow Creek Ecological Restoration EA was reviewed internally by fifteen BLM resource specialists, and agencies consulted include Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Forest Service, Burns Paiute Tribe, and Harney County Court. Fifteen adjacent landowners were also contacted during the project planning. The current proposed project would be a collaborative effort between a private landowner, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District, and the BLM.

**E. Interdisciplinary Analysis:** Identify those team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Specialist Signature and Date: Juan Bunn, Wildlife Biologist  
*Insert Name and Title*

Specialist Signature and Date: J. Reine, District Forester  
*Insert Name and Title*

Specialist Signature and Date: Shonda Danga, District P+EC  
*Insert Name and Title*

Specialist Signature and Date: Shay Jentor, GIS Specialist 10/14/11  
*Insert Name and Title*

Specialist Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Insert Name and Title*

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Specialist Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Insert Name and Title*

Specialist Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Insert Name and Title*

Note: Refer to the E/AEIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

**F. Others Consulted:** Identify other individuals, agencies or entities that were consulted with as part of completing the NEPA analysis.

Harney Soil and Water Conservation District  
Andy Root, private landowner

**Conclusion** (If you found that one or more of these criteria is not met, you will not be able to check this box.)

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

Title and Signature of Project Lead: Wildlife Biologist, Jason Burns

Title and Signature of NEPA Coordinator: Shonda Kauger, District P+EC

Title and Signature of the Responsible Official:

Date: 10/14/2011

Richard Roy

**Decision:** It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action with Project Design Elements (if applicable) as described above.

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with regulations contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 4 and Form 1842-1. If an appeal is filed, your notice of appeal should be mailed to the Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, within 30 days of receipt of the decision but no later than November 21. The appellant has the burden of showing the decision appealed is in error.

A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents should also be sent to the Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 500 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 607, Portland, Oregon 97232. If the notice of appeal did not include a statement of reasons for the appeal, it must be sent to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 801 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22203. It is suggested appeals be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

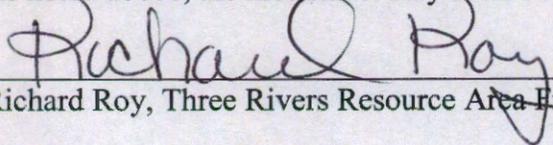
### ***Request for Stay***

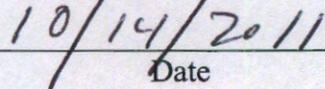
Should you wish to file a motion for stay pending the outcome of an appeal of this decision, you must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

- The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.

- The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
- Whether or not the public interest favors granting the stay.

As noted above, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer.

  
Richard Roy, Three Rivers Resource Area Field Manager

  
Date

# PROJECT MAP

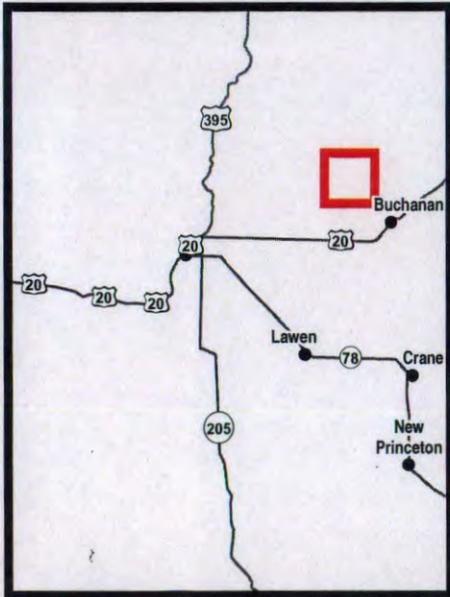
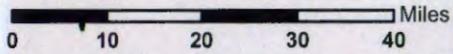
## East Cow Creek Road Maintenance

CS TC  
 SF BC  
 JT

1 inch = Approx 3,333 feet  
 2011

\*\*Ownership Boundaries are accurate within plus or minus 200 feet\*\*

-  Road Maintenance
-  Streams
-  Pasture Boundary
-  Allotments
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  U.S. Forest Service
-  Private/Unknown
-  Steens Mtn Wilderness
-  BLM Wilderness Study Area



US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 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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