

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

A. Background

BLM Office: **Prineville**

NEPA Log #: **DOI-BLM-OR-P040-2009-0068-DNA**

Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #: **LF31020NW JM0000 LFHFMD310000**

Location: **T21S R21E; Sec 3, 9, 10, 15, 16**. The area is approximately 4 miles north of Hampton, Oregon. The units sit approximately 48 miles southeast of Prineville, Oregon.

Proposed Action Title/Type: **Rogers Prescribed Burn**

Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures:

Conduct a prescribed burn of approximately 916 acres (five units) of BLM land. Hand ignition will be the only ignition method. The Burn will be conducted in the late fall and winter when soil moistures are higher. The burn will be considered a jackpot burn and will target the juniper slash and have minimal impacts on the grasses and forbs.

This original project area was 5,336 acres which was previously burned in 2002. Following the original burn, mechanical treatments were made to pockets of existing juniper which created 916 acres of juniper slash. This action will reduce the fuel loadings and return the site to more natural asotics.

The goal of this burn is to break up the fuel continuity of the juniper slash and minimize the impacts on the soils by reducing the fuel loading in the winter as opposed to the summer when the broadcast burns normally occur. The primary focus is to burn the remaining juniper slash to reduce hazardous fuel loadings.

Prior to burning, a burn plan will be completed and will cover resources objectives and follow all the required information in the COFMS burn plan template.

Purpose of and Need for Action:

Restore and maintain ecosystems consistent with land management uses and historic fire regimes with prescribed fire. Reduce areas of high fuel loading that may contribute to extreme fire behavior.

Prescribed fire is intended to reduce the hazardous fuel loadings from previous mechanical thinning projects.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: **Brothers/ La Pine Resource Management Plan, 1989.**

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable plan because it is specifically provided for in the following land use plan decisions:

“...the use of prescribed fire (both planned and unplanned ignitions) to reduce fuel loads, manage habitat and forage or control vegetation in rights-of-way, weed infestation areas, etc.” (Brothers/La Pine Resource Management Plan, 1989. Pg. 101)

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

High Desert Prescribed Burn Project, EA, 1998. EA # OR-050-98-005

“This action would help restore the health and diversity of the vegetation, control the spread of western juniper, reduce hazard fuels, improve hydrological regimes, and increase forage for wildlife and livestock.”

(High Desert Prescribed Burn Project, EA, 1998, FONSI pg. 1)

“Reduce fuel levels in order to decrease the chance of extreme habitat loss through stand replacing or catastrophic wildfire.” (High Desert Prescribed Burn Project, EA, 1998, Pg. 2)

Brothers/Lapine Final Environmental Impact Statement, 1988.

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 a feature of Alternative 1 of the **High Desert Prescribed Burn EA**.

“This alternative would result in prescribed burning multiple units (to be identified, and surveyed before treatment) within the High Desert. Fire would be reintroduced for several reasons including juniper reduction, aspen regeneration, weed reduction, riparian enhancement and to improve forb and grass cover.” – (page 5 High Desert Prescribed Burn EA)

- This project is within the same analysis area and the geographic and resource conditions are sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the High Desert Prescribed Burn EA - (Map 1 High Desert Prescribed Burn EA)

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?

Yes, the alternatives analyzed in the High Desert Prescribed Burn Project EA considered a range of alternatives adequate for the type and scale of treatment proposed at this time.

- Alternative 1 – Proposed Action (prescribed burn)
- Alternative 2 – No Action

- Alternative 3 – Chaining to control shrubs and trees and release herbaceous species. This alternative was considered but eliminated from detailed analysis in the EA. This alternative was eliminated from detailed analysis because “...chaining is less economically efficient than burning and is not a natural process in the ecosystem.” - (page 6-7 High Desert Prescribed Burn EA)
- Alternative 4 – Wait for natural fire starts to burn to proposed area. This alternative was eliminated from consideration “...because natural fire would be unlikely to achieve the stated objectives in a reasonable amount of time...” - (page 7 High Desert Prescribed Burn EA)

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 all new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

There are some wilderness characteristics in the lower portion of the unit. A dirt road separates the division. No vehicles will travel south into the area that has wilderness characteristics. However, some of the juniper slash lies within it. The reduction of the juniper slash will create more of a natural landscape. These concerns will also be addressed in the burn plan.

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(s)?

Yes, the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed action are similar to those analyzed in the High Desert Prescribed Burn EA. Section IV of the EA (page 15 – 23) covers the Environmental Consequences of Alternative 1. This includes the impacts on; Vegetation, Livestock Grazing Management, Wildlife, Special Status Species, Soils and Water, Noxious Weeds, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Visual Resource Management, Recreation, Natural Areas, Air Quality, and Wetland and Riparian Areas.

- Additionally Section VII of the EA (page 23) discusses the Residual Impacts. “It is not known exactly what the cumulative impacts of multiple prescribed burns would be. However, since fire is a natural occurring event in the High Desert, it is thought that prescribed fire conducted at low-intensities in a mosaic pattern should not add any major impact to the area.” - (page 23 High Desert Prescribed Burn EA)

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

Yes. Many of the individuals/organizations on our current “interested publics” list are the same as those on the mailing list for the RMP/EIS referenced above. A notice regarding the proposed action was included in the spring 2008 and 2009 Prineville District Schedule of Proposed Actions, published quarterly on the internet. A copy of this DNA is/will be posted on the Prineville District internet page.

