

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-060-2013-0041-DNA

Project/Lease/Serial/Case File #:

Applicant: None

Location: T21S, R18E, Sec. 26, 35, 36; TS21S, R19E, Sec. 20, 29, 31; T22S, R17E, Sec. 12, 14, 15; T22S, R18E, Sec. 1, 2, 7, 11, 12; T22S, R19E, Sec. 6, 7.

Proposed Action Title: Playa North Juniper Treatments

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action was developed and analyzed under Alternative 2 in the High Desert Shrub Steppe Restoration Environmental Assessment (HDSSREA), April 2011. The proposed action is to reduce western juniper on 4,600 acres where trees are expanding into shrub-steppe and infilling into juniper woodlands. Treatments will include chainsaw thinning and prescribed burning. Juniper will be cut between October 1, 2013 and February 14, 2014. No trees greater than 16 inches DBH, trees with stick or cavity nest, bearing trees, or trees with two or more old-growth characteristics (e.g. rounded tops, dead tops, furrowed bark, lower spreading branches, and fruticose lichen) will be cut. Public or commercial firewood harvesting in some areas may occur following completion of juniper cuts when soils are stable and the chance of wildfire is reduced. Jackpot burns will occur during the winter or spring months when soils are wet, frozen or covered with snow. Pastures will not be rested from livestock grazing following juniper cuts. Pastures may be grazed following prescribed burns or rested for up to two years depending on an interdisciplinary team review. If livestock rest was necessary, as a result of IDT decision, the permittee would get enough notification early to plan for the rested pastures. No treatments will occur during the sage-grouse breeding/nesting season February 15 – July 1. Project boundaries that are adjacent to private lands will be flagged approximately 250 feet from private land. Project boundaries will meander, so no sharp vegetation cut lines are introduced to the landscape. Jeep trails will not be blocked by cut trees. Minor compaction will occur during firewood harvesting. Minor soil disturbance will occur during jackpot burns. Archaeology, botany, and wildlife clearances have been completed and sensitive resources will be excluded from all treatments. If any new resources are observed during project implementation, then the project would stop and the BLM Resource Specialist would be notified and assess the situation.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Brothers/LaPine Resource Management Plan
Date approved (ROD): July 5, 1989

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions (objectives, terms, conditions):

- Page 12, objective, "Provide optimum habitat diversity for game and non-game wildlife species."
- Page 12, objective, "Use prescribed fire to meet management objectives throughout the planning area".
- Pages 88-89, Guidelines for juniper and shrub control projects, "Mosaic patterns will be incorporated into all control projects"
- Page 90, standard operating procedures, e.g., "All actions will be consistent with the BLM's Visual Resource Management criteria," "In crucial wildlife habitat...work will be scheduled during the appropriate season to avoid or minimize disturbances," "Surface disturbance at all project sites will be held to a minimum."

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

The following NEPA document covers the proposed action:
High Desert Shrub Steppe Restoration Environmental Assessment (HDSSREA), April 2011

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)? Yes. The proposed action is to cut juniper with chainsaws, remove tree boles, and jackpot burn which is analyzed under Alternative 2, pages 13-20. 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)? Yes, the new proposed action is in shrub-steppe and juniper woodlands located in sage-grouse habitat, the same as analyzed in the existing EA pages 5, 13-16.
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 looked at a no action alternative (Alt. 1), an alternative that emphasized mechanical treatments (Alt. 2), and an alternative that emphasized burning (Alt 3.). These ranges of alternatives are consistent with the current concerns and actions for this project.

Acres treated annually	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Cut, mow or crush vegetation	0	10,200	3,400
Prescribe burn live vegetation	0	3,400	10,200
Prescribe burn areas already cut, mowed or crushed	0	5,100	1,700
Seed or transplant forbs, grass and shrubs	0	500	500

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)? Yes, the existing analysis is valid because no new information other than a recent Wilderness Inventory Update is available. A 2009 BLM Wilderness Inventory Update of the Frederick Butte Unit (OR-054-048) determined that no wilderness values existed in Subunit G, a large area that included this project area.

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 and indirect effects of the proposed action are similar to those analyzed on pages 13 – 20 in the HDSREA.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action? Yes. The existing EA and subsequent decision were posted on the BLM’s public web site on April 15, 2011 and mailed to agencies, local governments, organizations and interested public. The current livestock grazing permittee has been notified about the new proposed action.

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff consulted

Name	Title	Resource
Christopher R. Anthony	Natural Resource Specialist	Wildlife, Botany, Weeds
Jennifer Moffitt	Soil Scientist	Soils
Emily Lent	Rangeland Management Specialist	Range
Ryan Griffin	Archeology Technician	Archeology
Guy Chamness	Fuels Specialist	Fuels
Barry Phelps	Recreation	Recreation, Visual, Wilderness Char.
Steve Castillo	Forester	Forestry
Teal Purrington	NEPA Coordinator	NEPA

Bill Dean

Assistant Field Manager

Manager

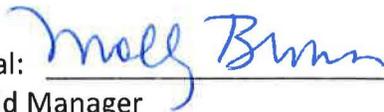
Note: Refer to the EA/EIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis.

Conclusion

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

Signature

Responsible official:



Molly Brown Field Manager

9/19/13

Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. The 2011 decision on the HDSSREA was to adopt Alternative 2 of the EA. Since the new proposed action was covered in Alternative 2 of the HDSSREA, and circumstances and anticipated effects have not changed since then, the BLM will not issue a new decision at this time.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Christopher R. Anthony, Prineville Field Office, 3050 NE 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754, telephone (541) 416-6756 / cranthon@blm.gov.