

**DECISION RECORD**  
**For BRISKY CANYON FUELS REDUCTION**  
**Environmental Assessment #DOI-BLM-OR-134-2009-0036**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Wenatchee Field Office**  
**915 N. Walla Walla Ave**  
**Wenatchee, WA 98801**

### **I. Decision**

Under the authority of 43 CFR 4.356 and 43 CFR 4.416, it is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, including management actions, as described in the attached environmental assessment, EA# **DOI-BLM-OR-134-2009-0036**, for the Brisky Canyon Fuels Reduction Project. This decision provides for fuels and fire hazard reduction, and forest health treatments. Fuel reduction includes minimizing canopy fuels (crown thinning), ladder fuels, and surface fuels. Fuel reduction activities include commercial thinning, pre-commercial thinning, piling, chipping, and burning, or removal.

### **II. Rationale for Decision**

The No Action Alternative was not selected, because it will not accomplish the goal of reducing the fuel hazard on BLM-administered lands within the wildland urban interface. Continued growth of the vegetation in the absence of the natural fire return frequency would mean a continued increase in fuel hazard. The potential for severe wildfire and substantial loss to property and resource values in the project area would continue to increase. This alternative would not promote the goals of the National Fire Plan or restore and maintain forest habitats.

I have selected the Proposed Action Alternative, because this project will reduce hazardous fuel and improve the health of the forested lands in the project area. Activities to be undertaken in this alternative emphasize residential and structural protection by treating fuels most likely to provide fuel for wildfires. This alternative also will provide for forest products utilization, in the form of sawtimber, firewood and other biomass utilization. The proposed action would not result in significant impacts to the environment, as documented in the attached Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI).

Concerns identified by the public were considered in making this decision. These include:

- Access road use during project implementation will occur during the appropriate times of the year to minimize road damage.
- Hazardous fuels will be reduced by thinning, chipping, removal and burning.
- Woody material generated by project activities would be made available for use by the public.

### **III. National Fire Plan Context-Decision Rationale**

The National Fire Plan; a collection of various reports (*Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment, Integrating Fire and Natural Resource Management- A Cohesive Strategy for Protecting People by Restoring Land Health*); accompanying budget

requests; Congressional direction; and resulting strategies, plans, projects, and other activities have set the stage and provided impetus for an increased application and management of prescribed fire and various other fuel treatments on federally managed lands. This is further reinforced by the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, along with accompanying 2001 review update.

Much of the project area has been identified as a Fire Regime 1 (0-35 year fire frequency with low to mixed severity fire regime), and condition class 2 (Moderate departure from historical conditions). To restore the historical fire regime, these lands require some level of restoration through mechanical and prescribed fire treatments (Integrating Fire and Natural Resource Management-A Cohesive Strategy for Protecting People by Restoring Land Health, DOI, March 2001 Draft). The purpose of this project is to reduce the wildland fire potential on Federal Lands, reduce the wildfire threat to private property, and restore forestlands.

/s/ Karen Kelleher  
Karen Kelleher  
Field Manager, Wenatchee Field Office

10/18/2010  
Date

### **Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities**

As specified in 43 CFR 4.356 (appeals) and 43 CFR 4.416 (Appeals of Wildfire management Decisions), any party that feels they are adversely affected by this decision has 30 days from the date this decision is made available at the Spokane District Office to file an appeal. Filing a notice of appeal under CFR part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of this decision.

A notice of appeal must be sent to:

District Manager Spokane District  
Bureau of Land Management  
1103 N. Fancher Rd.  
Spokane, WA 99212

A copy of your notice of appeal must also be sent to:

Regional Solicitor Pacific Northwest Region  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
500 N.E. Multnomah St., Suite 607  
Portland, OR 97233

You may include a statement of reasons when you file the notice of appeal with the BLM District Manager and Regional Solicitor, or you may file the statement of reasons within 30 days after you file the appeal. If you file the statement of reasons separately, you must send it to:

Interior Board of Land Appeals Office of Hearings and Appeals  
801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 300

Arlington, VA 22203.

Any appeal should be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.

**Standards for Obtaining a Stay**

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
4. Whether or not the public interest favors granting the stay.

After a review of the EA content and response to the public comments, it is my decision to approve the Environmental Assessment for the development of this federal parcel as generally described in the attached EA.

Approved:

**Attachments:**

Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)  
Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-OR134-2009-0036

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Brisky Canyon Fuels Reduction Project**  
**Environmental Assessment #DOI-BLM-OR-134-2009-0036**

Based on the effects discussed in the environmental assessment, I have determined that the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) is not a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. None of the environmental effects identified meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR §1508.27. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared. This finding is based on the following:

1. Beneficial, adverse, direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts discussed in the EA have been disclosed. The physical and biological effects are limited to the site of the proposed action and adjacent lands. **Rationale:** Ground disturbance for this project will be limited to less than 200 acres. Stipulations will be included that minimize impacts to cultural and wildlife resources.
2. Public health and safety would not be adversely impacted. **Rationale:** Public safety would be enhanced by reducing the fuel loading within the project area.
3. There would be no adverse impacts to wetlands, floodplains, areas with unique characteristics or ecologically critical areas. **Rationale:** The project area does not include wetlands, floodplains or areas with unique characteristics or ecologically critical areas.
4. There are no highly controversial effects on the environment. **Rationale:** The BLM's analysis did not discern any controversy associated with this alternative.
5. There are no known effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk. **Rationale:** Because the proposed project treatments are identical or similar to treatments conducted on other lands in the region, there is a high degree of certainty as to the effects.
6. This alternative does not set a precedent for other projects that may be implemented in the future. **Rationale:** Each fuels project is individually judged based on its merits and the anticipated impacts. Approval of this project will not set a precedent for the approval of like projects.
7. This alternative is not related to any other existing or anticipated actions with cumulatively significant impacts. **Rationale:** No related projects or BLM management actions are in process, planned or anticipated for the lands in the vicinity of the project.
8. Based on recent cultural resource surveys, no adverse impacts to cultural resources were identified or anticipated. **Rationale:** As specified in the EA, if any cultural material is

discovered during project work, the disturbing activity will be halted and a BLM Archaeologist will be contacted.

9. Adverse impacts to threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act would not be significant. No adverse impacts to habitat determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act were identified. **Rationale:** Surveys concluded that the area is currently un-occupied by northern spotted owls. Section 7(c) consultation with US Fish and Wildlife Service concluded that there would be no “take” of spotted owls related to project implementation based on the absence of spotted owls. There are no habitats determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act present within or surrounding the proposed action area.

10. This alternative is in compliance with relevant Federal, State and local laws; and regulations and requirements for the protection of the environment. **Rationale:** The project is compliant with all relevant environmental laws, regulations and requirements.

11. Greenhouse gas emissions from the proposed action would be so small as to be negligible. The EA concluded that the proposed action would result in greenhouse gas emissions that would constitute 0.000016032% of current total global emissions and 0.0000668% of current total U.S. emissions (EA, p.37). This emission would be so small that its incremental contribution to global and national emissions would be immeasurable at the level of precision of the global and national emissions. This emission would be so small that it would not merit reporting under a recently proposed EPA rule on mandatory reporting of greenhouse gases, which presents a reporting threshold of 25,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for agriculture and livestock sectors (74 FR 16612 (April 10, 2009)).

/s/ Karen Kelleher  
Karen Kelleher  
Field Manager, Wenatchee Field Office

10/18/2010  
Date