Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District
1103 North Fancher Road
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

A. Background

BLM Office: Wenatchee Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.:

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-OR-134-2013-0024

Proposed Action Title: Yakima River Canyon Tree Planting

Location of Proposed Action: T. 15 N. R 19 E. Sec. 4, 16

Description of Proposed Action: Planting trees in the BLM Yakima River Canyon Big Pines Recreation Area

The Proposed Action would improve riparian habitat, create screening between campsites and recruit future riparian vegetation on a 20 ac. portion of the Big Pines Recreation Area as described and analyzed in the Big Pines site improvements Environmental Assessment (EA No. OR134-06-EA-01, pg. 2). The proposed project area currently supports a linear riparian layer of ponderosa pine on the western edge of the recreation area. The proposed action would include planting 12-15 trees that would be approximately 15 feet tall. The planting of larger trees would increase the survival of these trees that are exposed to droughty conditions and heavy recreation use. Planting would be followed by supplemental watering to increase the survival rate of the planted trees. Watering would take place using the a pump and water tank on the back of a pickup truck or hand watering.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Spokane Resource Management Plan
Date Approved/Amended: Approved 1987/Amended 1992

☒*Option 1 (conforms with LUP):* The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):
1) Vegetative manipulation projects would be designed to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and to improve it whenever possible." (Spokane Resource Management Plan 1987, p. 53).
2) "Vegetation manipulation projects would advance ecological condition" (Spokane Resource Management Plan 1987, p. 86).

OR

☐*(Option 2: not explicitly provided for in the LUP)* 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 decision(s) (*objectives, terms, and conditions)*:

C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document(s) or other related document(s) that cover the proposed action

Name and date of NEPA document(s):
EA No. OR134-06-EA-01, Big Pines Recreation Site Improvements Environmental Assessment (June 2006).

Name and date of other relevant document(s):
Spokane Resource Management Plan Decisions include:

General Management Direction to "Maintain and/or improve range productivity", "Manage upland habitat for nongame and game species", and consider "enhancement of state listed or endangered species habitat" (BLM 1987 RMP ROD, p. 12).

General Woodland Management direction includes "opportunities to complement other resources" (BLM 1987 RMP ROD, p. 24).

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 primarily a feature of and (with respect to one aspect of the action) essentially similar to Alternative 1 analyzed in the Big Pines Site Improvements Environmental Assessment (OR134-06-EA-01, June 2006); Alternative 1 was the Proposed Action for that EA and was adopted as the Final Decision and found to have no significant impact (6/09/2006).

The Proposed Action in the Big Pines EA analyzed revegetation specifically in the Analysis Area for the Big Pines Recreation Sites Improvement EA (this Proposed Action). This Proposed Action would allow for tree planting in the Big Pines Recreation Site Improvement EA (p. 2) and be a feature or subset of the 20 ac. of revegetation analyzed.

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 Proposed Action implements Alternative 1 of the Big Pines Recreation Site Improvements Environmental Assessment (OR134-06-EA-01, June 2006) adopted as the Decision in the FONSI (06/09/2006) for that EA. Alternative 2 of OR134-06-EA-01 is still appropriate given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values. Alternative 3 is the No Action Alternative and is still appropriate. EA OR134-06-EA-01 considered a range of Alternatives appropriate with respect to the new proposed action.

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 previous EA identified a requirement for wildlife, botany, and cultural surveys and indicated that these would be done prior to construction.

Because the current proposed action is substantially similar to that analyzed in the EA, and there were no impacts on these resources based on surveys completed, no additional impacts are expected as a result of the tree planting. There have been no changes in policies or science that would change analysis or implementation of the current Proposed Action. No species that have the potential to occur within the Affected Environment have been listed under the Endangered Species Act or added to BLM sensitive species lists. No new information is known that would substantively change the analysis.

Cultural surveys of the action area for the Big Pines Recreation Site Improvements (this Proposed Action) were performed and received concurrence with a determination of no effect from Department Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP); tribes were consulted and did not provide responses.

A botany survey was completed on 7/03/13 and no species of concern were found in the project area. The only plant expected would be Pediocactus, a BLM Sensitive species. The survey did detect any of the cacti.

Wildlife surveys of the action area for the Proposed Action identified conditions similar to those described generally for the area analyzed in EA OR134-06-EA-01. Coordination with USFWS specifically for this proposed action occurred to minimize disturbance to greater sage-grouse. USFWS suggestions were incorporated in the Proposed Action as described here.
Botany surveys of the action area for the Proposed Action included a review of botany records; no special status plants are documented in the project area. During site review, neither special status plants or habitat suitable for the special status plants known nearby was observed.

Mid-Columbia River Steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss) and Columbia River bull trout (Salvelinus confluentus), both federally listed as threatened use the Yakima River primarily as a migratory corridor . The Yakima River is considered critical habitat for these species. EA # OR134-06-EA-01 found that there would be "no expected effects to water or fisheries habitat in the Yakima River" (p. 6). NOAA Fisheries was informally consulted on this Finding.

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?
Yes. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of recreation site improvements including, and revegetation for this new Proposed Action were fully considered for the Proposed Action in EA No. OR134-06-EA-01; the effects remain the same.

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

Yes. Public involvement and agency review considering recreation site improvements and revegetation occurred associated with the Big Pines Recreation Site Improvements Environmental Assessment (OR134-06-EA-01, June 2006) adopted as the Final Decision and found to have no significant impacts (6/09/2006). Areas in this new Proposed Action were included in that analysis.

E. Persons/Agencies/Consulted (BLM Staff Consulted are listed on the coversheet attached to this document, or available at the BLM office identified in Section A, above).

Name	Title	Resource/Agency Represented
William Meyer	Habitat Biologist	Washington State Fish and Wildlife
Scott Nicolai	Fisheries Biologist	Yakama Indian Nation
Justin Yeager	Not identified (EA, p. 9)	NOAA Fisheries

F: Conclusion

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.

/s/ Linda Coates-Markle July 29, 2013

(Signature of Responsible Official) (Date)

Name: Linda Coates-Markle
Title: Wenatchee Field Manager

G. Contact Person
For additional information concerning this DNA, contact Mark Williams, Forester, at 509-665-2100.

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. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.