

**Decision Record**  
**Fishtrap Pile Burn**  
Environmental Assessment  
EA-DOI-BLM-OR-135-2013-0002

**Decision**

I have decided to implement Alternative 1 – Proposed Action (EA, p. 5), hereinafter referred to as the “selected alternative”. This decision is based on site-specific analysis in the *Fishtrap Pile Burn* (EA-DOI-BLM-OR-135-2013-0002), the supporting project record, as well as the management direction contained in the 1987 Spokane District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and 1992 RMP Amendment to which the EA tiers. The *Fishtrap Pile Burn* Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) indicates that the selected action has been analyzed in an EA and has been found to have no significant environmental effects. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

My decision is summarized as follows:

- The BLM would treat 1,150 acres of hand piles over multiple years using prescribed fire. Five treatment units have been defined. These units are mapped in the EA.

**Project Design Features**

The following environmental protection measures would be implemented prior to and during treatment activities to avoid or reduce potential impacts to resources as a result of the project. The following measures are fundamental components of the selected alternative.

**Fuels Management**

- Prior to conducting prescribed burns in the project area, a burn plan will be prepared to address burning objectives and operational concerns. The plan would identify mitigation measures necessary to protect site-specific resource values, notification procedures for local area residents, potential fire behavior and precautions to be consistent with this Environmental Assessment. Pile consumption targets would remove 75-100 percent of piled biomass.
- Prescribed fire would be contained within a distance of 10-15 feet from each pile. This would be obtained by utilizing environmental factors in an approved burn plan that would limit the spread distance to 10-15 feet from each pile. These environmental factors include wind, precipitation (rain or snow), temperature, relative humidity, and fuel moistures.

**Cultural Resources**

- Cultural resources will be protected from impacts of the proposed project. All sites within 100 feet of the piles will be flagged with high visibility flagging prior to project implementation.
- If archaeological sites are encountered during project implementation, the disturbing activity will be halted, the authorized BLM official will be contacted, and the resource protected until a BLM archaeologist has assessed the historic significance of the resource.

**Vegetation/Special Status Plants**

- All known special status plant species occurrences have been avoided during the thinning and piling phases of this project (BLM 2007).

## **Wildlife**

- Bald eagle winter roost: If bald eagles are observed within 400 feet of the project area during the winter roosting season (November 15-March 15), all operations within 400 feet of the known roost sites will be suspended until after March 15.
- Eagle (bald or golden): If active or inactive eagle nests are found during treatments, no activities will occur within 660 feet or 330 feet, respectively, during the period February 1-July 31.

## **Recreation / Visual Resources**

- Prescribed burning activities will not be completed during high visitation or recreational use periods (hunting seasons, scheduled recreational activities, etc.).
- Public will be notified through outreach and signage prior to any prescribed fire activity occurring on this project.

## **Rationale for the Decision**

I have reviewed the information provided by this office in the EA and from public comments generated during the NEPA process. All comments were considered in the development and decision of this project. The EA is consistent with the Spokane Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (RMP/ROD) (1987) and the Spokane RMP Amendment Record of Decision (1992). The RMP Amendment (1992) specifies that Forest Management, Wildlife Habitat, Recreation, and Livestock Grazing are programs of emphasis for this management area.

The selected alternative would best fulfill the purpose and need of the project. The selected alternative would help to abate or reverse the trends of disease and heavy fuel loading in the project area. By treating these stands, the BLM is helping to reduce the risk to homes or other nearby structures, reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire in the project area, increase fire manageability, and contribute to public safety during wildfires.

## **Public Involvement**

The BLM mailed information postcards to all adjacent landowners and to all parties who had previously indicated interest in similar BLM projects. The BLM also mailed scoping letters and maps to anyone who requested more information about the project. Additionally, the BLM provided information about the project on the Spokane District website.

## **Administrative Appeal**

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:

Border Field Manager  
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, it is my decision to approve Alternative 1 – Proposed Action for the development or treatment of this federal parcel as generally described in the attached EA.

Approved:

/s/ Linda Clark

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Linda Clark  
Field Manager  
Border Field Office

November 22, 2013

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Date

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**  
**Fishtrap Pile Burn Project**  
Environmental Assessment  
EA-DOI-BLM-OR-135-2013-0002

**Background**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA- DOI-BLM-OR-135-2013-0002) which analyzes the effects of pile burning on approximately 1,150 acres of BLM managed public lands in Spokane and Lincoln County, Washington.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

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:** This project would be implemented only on BLM managed lands as analyzed in the EA. Furthermore, Project Design Features have been incorporated to minimize impacts to all resources, including cultural and wildlife resources.
- 2.** Public health and safety would not be adversely impacted. **Rationale:** Public health and safety are not expected to be adversely impacted. Conversely, this project would benefit public health and safety by reducing hazardous fuels thus reducing the potential for occurrence of intense wildfire and related property damage and human safety.
- 3.** There would be no adverse impacts to wetlands, floodplains, areas with unique characteristics or ecologically critical areas. **Rationale:** These areas are located within the project boundaries. Where they do occur (e.g., floodplain and riparian areas), treatment activities are appropriately limited and treatments are anticipated to promote or enhance the sustainability of riparian habitat conditions.
- 4.** There are no highly controversial effects on the environment. **Rationale:** The public scoping process, Interdisciplinary Team review, and Environmental Assessment have not identified any highly controversial effects of the project.
- 5.** There are no known effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk. **Rationale:** As with all wildland or natural fire events, there is some degree of uncertainty. However, the intent of the project is to help narrow the range of potential fire behavior scenarios in the event of a wildland fire start in this area. The factors and effects associated with this project are not particularly unique or uncertain for a fuels management project.

**6.** This alternative does not set a precedent for other projects that may be implemented in the future. **Rationale:** The proposed project consists of routine forestry and fuels management techniques. The implementation of this alternative does not set a precedent for other projects.

**7.** No cumulative impacts related to other actions that would have a significant adverse impact were identified or are anticipated. **Rationale:** Given the relatively small size of the project area, the overall potential for this project to measurably contribute to the effects of other projects is limited. No cumulative effects related to other actions with potential for significant effects are anticipated.

**8.** Based on previous and ongoing cultural resource surveys, and through required mitigation, no adverse impacts to cultural resources were identified or anticipated. **Rationale:** As specified in the EA, if any cultural material is discovered during project implementation, project activities will cease and a BLM Archaeologist will be contacted. Various Project Design Features have been incorporated to altogether avoid or minimize the risk to cultural resources in the project area. No adverse effects to these resources are anticipated as a result of this alternative.

**9.** No adverse impacts to any threatened or endangered species or their habitat that was determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act was identified. **Rationale:** No federally threatened or endangered wildlife or plant species occur in the project area.

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

/s/ Linda Clark

November 22, 2013

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Linda Clark  
Field Manager  
Border Field Office

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Date