

SCOPING/INFORMATION NOTICE

South Fork Crab Creek Riparian and Wetland Restoration Environmental Assessment

Introduction

This information package summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposal to enhance and restore riparian and wetland conditions on BLM-administered lands in the lower South Fork of Crab Creek drainage in Lincoln County, Washington.

Federal actions must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences.

The purpose of this scoping notice is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. Analysis of the proposal is ongoing, and will be documented in an Environmental Assessment (EA). Public comments received in response to this solicitation will be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action and to identify alternatives to the proposed action that will also fulfill the purpose of and need for the project.

Project Area Description

BLM-administered lands on the South Fork of Crab Creek are located approximately twelve miles north of Ritzville, Washington in Lincoln County (see attached map). The legal description of the lower South Fork of Crab Creek area is:

T. 21 N. R. 35 E, Section 23 (Portion)

Background

The riparian and wetland restoration and enhancement project area includes approximately 50 acres of pasture within the boundaries of the Rocky Ford Allotment and is located approximately 12 miles north of Ritzville, Washington (Vicinity Map). The Rocky Ford Allotment is approximately 725 acres in size.

Preliminary Purpose and Need

The purpose of the South Fork Crab Creek Stream Restoration project is to restore or improve riparian and wetland conditions and improve aquatic habitat and water quality along the South Fork of Crab Creek.

This action is needed to meet direction in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Spokane District's Resource Management Plan (RMP). FLPMA directs the BLM to protect the quality of ecological, environmental, and water resources and provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife and domestic animals (43 U.S.C. 1701). The Spokane District's RMP identifies protection and enhancement of water quality as a Management Objective (RMP 1987 ROD, p. 12). Additionally, the RMP identifies restoration of natural functions and general habitat improvement as goals for riparian habitat areas, wetlands, and floodplains (RMP 1987 ROD, p. 19).

Preliminary Proposed Action

The preliminary proposed action includes the following construction activities in lower South Fork of Crab Creek:

1. Installation of a hardened creek crossing to minimize cattle impacts on stream banks and water quality.
2. Bank terracing and planting of riparian enhancements to restore native vegetation and improve riparian habitat.
3. Creation and enhancement of wetland areas in the lower South Fork of Crab Creek floodplain.

Public Input Needed

The BLM is seeking comments about this proposal. Please submit your comments on the proposed action and other issues to be considered to the address noted below by **June 26, 2014**. Comments will be most useful if they provide additional information about the preliminary issues identified above, identify new issues or concerns, or propose alternative actions to accomplish the purpose and need and/or to resolve issues.

Public comments may be submitted electronically or by U.S. Mail to the addresses noted below.

Please send electronic comments to: BLM_OR_SP_Mail@blm.gov with "**South Fork Crab Creek Restoration**" in the subject line.

Please send U.S. Mail comments to:

BLM–Border Field Office Attn: **South Fork Crab Creek Restoration**

1103 North Fancher Road Spokane, WA 99212

For all comments submitted, please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization.

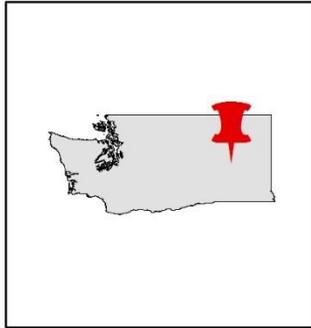
Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have questions, please contact Chris Sheridan, Restoration Program Coordinator, at 509-665-2118.

Public comments may be submitted electronically or by U.S. Mail to the addresses as noted.

Enclosure: Project Area Map

South Fork Crab Creek Restoration Project Area



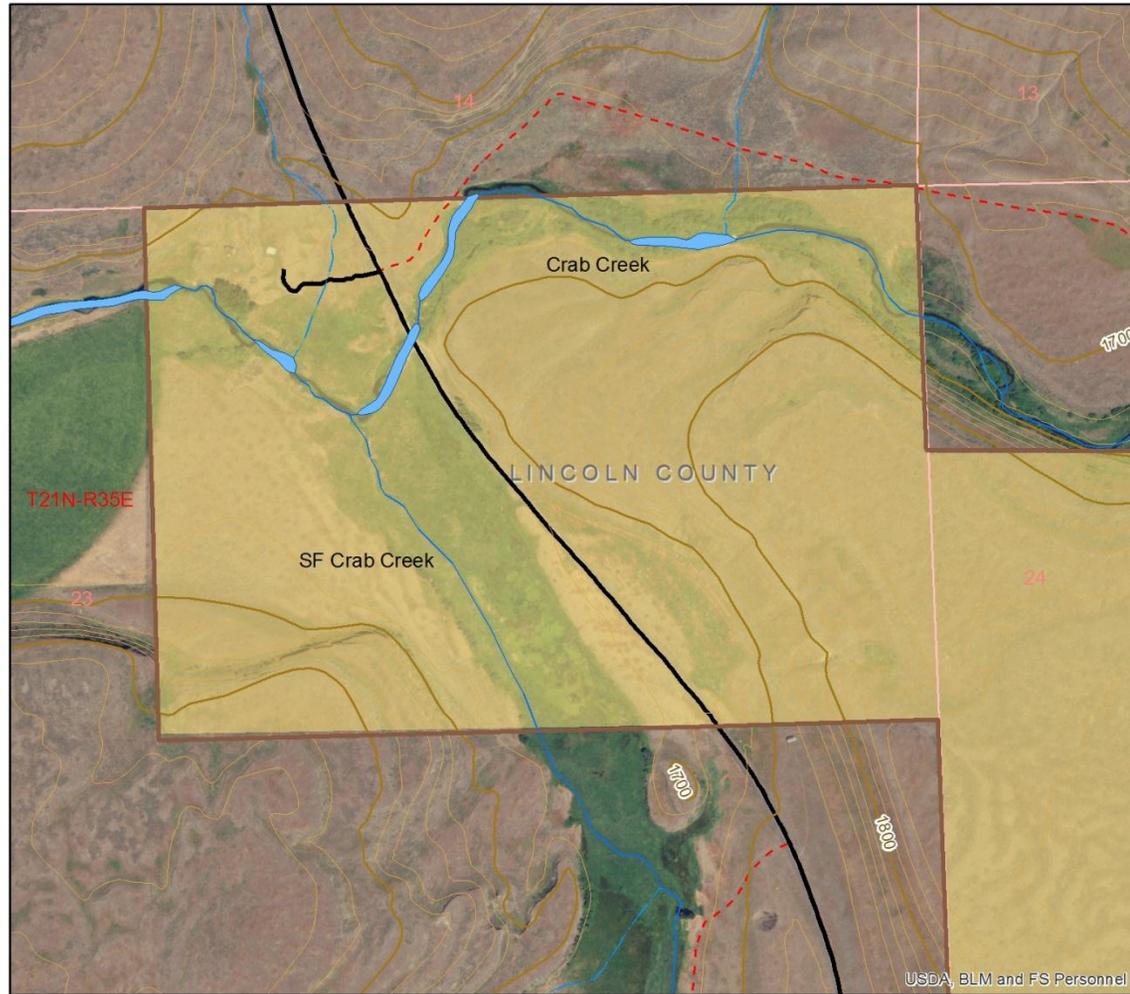
Map Area
Washington State

Legend

-  Bureau of Land Management
-  Stream
-  BLM Allotment
-  Rocky Ford Rd. N.
-  Section



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USDA BLM and FS Personnel