



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT
100 Oregon Street
Vale, Oregon 97918
<http://www.or.blm.gov/Vale/>



Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy Clarks Butte Fire (F9NH) Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan

Office: Jordan Field Office

Tracking Number: V060-2011-063

Proposed Action Title/Type: Clarks Butte Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

Location: See attached map

A. Describe the Proposed Action

Background

The Clarks Butte fire was started on 8/06/2011 by lightning and was contained on 8/11/2011 after burning a total of 13,300 acres. The location of the fire is identified on (Map 1). The treatment area includes parts of several Special Management Areas (SMAs), including Clarks Butte Wilderness Study Area (WSA), Jordan Craters Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). A portion of the area also includes parts of a citizens proposed Clarks Butte WSA addition. The proposed addition was evaluated for wilderness characteristics in April of 2011 and was found to have wilderness character. Protection from grazing, seeding of sagebrush and weed treatments would stabilize the site, protect SMA and wilderness character values, prevent the loss of habitat and prevent proliferation of invasive weeds.

Planned Actions

The area burned by Clarks Butte Fire is in need of treatment to ensure desirable vegetation will stabilize the site and prevent invasion of undesirable and or noxious weeds. This can be met by seeding sagebrush and protecting the area from grazing during a period necessary for establishment and recovery of health and vigor of desired vegetation. Construction of four miles of temporary fencing and repair of 1 ½ miles of allotment division fence is needed to protect the burn area and minimize soil movement, preserve on-site productivity, reduce the invasion of undesirable flammable annual plants, and reduce the potential for noxious weeds. The site will be monitored for the establishment of noxious weeds. If found, they would be treated in accordance with national and district guidelines for noxious weed treatment.

The vegetation on the area burned by the fire was dominated by Wyoming big sagebrush and bunchgrass. Monitoring of the burn area would consist of livestock use supervision and vegetation recovery monitoring.

The Clarks Butte Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plans further details planned actions.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP) Date Approved 2002

* List applicable LUPs (e.g., Resource Management Plans and activity, project, management, or program plans, or applicable amendments thereto)

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan

Rangeland Vegetation,
Pages 38-41
Wildlife Habitat
Pages 50-51

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

Vale District Normal Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFESRP) Environmental Assessment (2005)

Draft (1998) and Final (2001) Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan

Vale District Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (1989)

Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program EIS (1987)

The Final EIS for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in Oregon (2010)

Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Report for Vegetation Treatments on Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the Western United States, Including Alaska (2007)

The Interim Management Policy (IMP) and Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review (BLM Manual H-8550-1)

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

None

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?

Documentation of answer and explanation: The current proposed actions are identified in the Vale District NFESRP (Natural recovery, pg 6; Seeding & planting, pg. 7-9; Weed control, pg. 9; Protective fence, pg. 11; Design features, pg.13&14) and are substantially the same actions as analyzed in that

document. The proposed action is in the Jordan Resource Area of the Vale District and was covered in the Vale District NFESRP. Actions within WSAs would be in conformance with the Interim Management Policy (IMP) and Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review (BLM Manual H-8550-1)

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Documentation of answer and explanation: The NFESRP and SEORMP analyzed a range of alternatives including no action with respect to current concerns, interests and resource values.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and 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?

Documentation of answer and explanation: The treatment area includes parts of several Special Management Areas (SMAs), including Clarks Butte Wilderness Study Area (WSA), Jordan Craters Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). A portion of the area also includes parts of a citizens proposed Clarks Butte WSA addition. The proposed addition was evaluated for wilderness characteristics in April of 2011 and was found to have wilderness character. Protection from grazing, seeding of sagebrush and weed treatments would stabilize the site, protect SMA and wilderness character values, prevent the loss of habitat and prevent proliferation of invasive weeds.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action?

Documentation of answer and explanation: The methodology and analytical approach used in the NFESRP would continue to be appropriate for the proposed action.

5. 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?

Documentation of answer and explanation: Direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action are substantially the same as those analyzed in the proposed action, pages 37-46 of the NFESRP and SEORMP. Cumulative impacts of the proposed action are substantially the same as those analyzed in the NFESRP on page 47 and SEORMP.

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

Documentation of answer and explanation: The NFESRP and SEORMP were analysis documents reviewed by a diverse representation of publics, including federal, state and local agencies as well as private entities. The notice of availability of the environmental assessment and opportunity to comment on the NFESRP was sent to over 400 individuals, organizations, agencies, local governments, state governments, and federal governments.

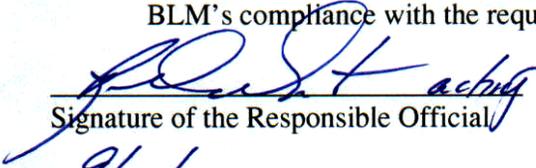
E. Interdisciplinary Analysis:

The following team members conducting or participating in the preparation of this worksheet.

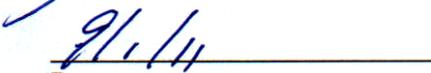
Randy Eyre – Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Garth Ross - Wildlife Biologist
Don Rotell - Archeologist
Brian Watts – Fire Planning
Lynne Silva - Weeds Specialist
Aimee Huff – Rangeland Management Specialist
Richard White – Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist
Carolyn Chad – Field Manager

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 NEPA.



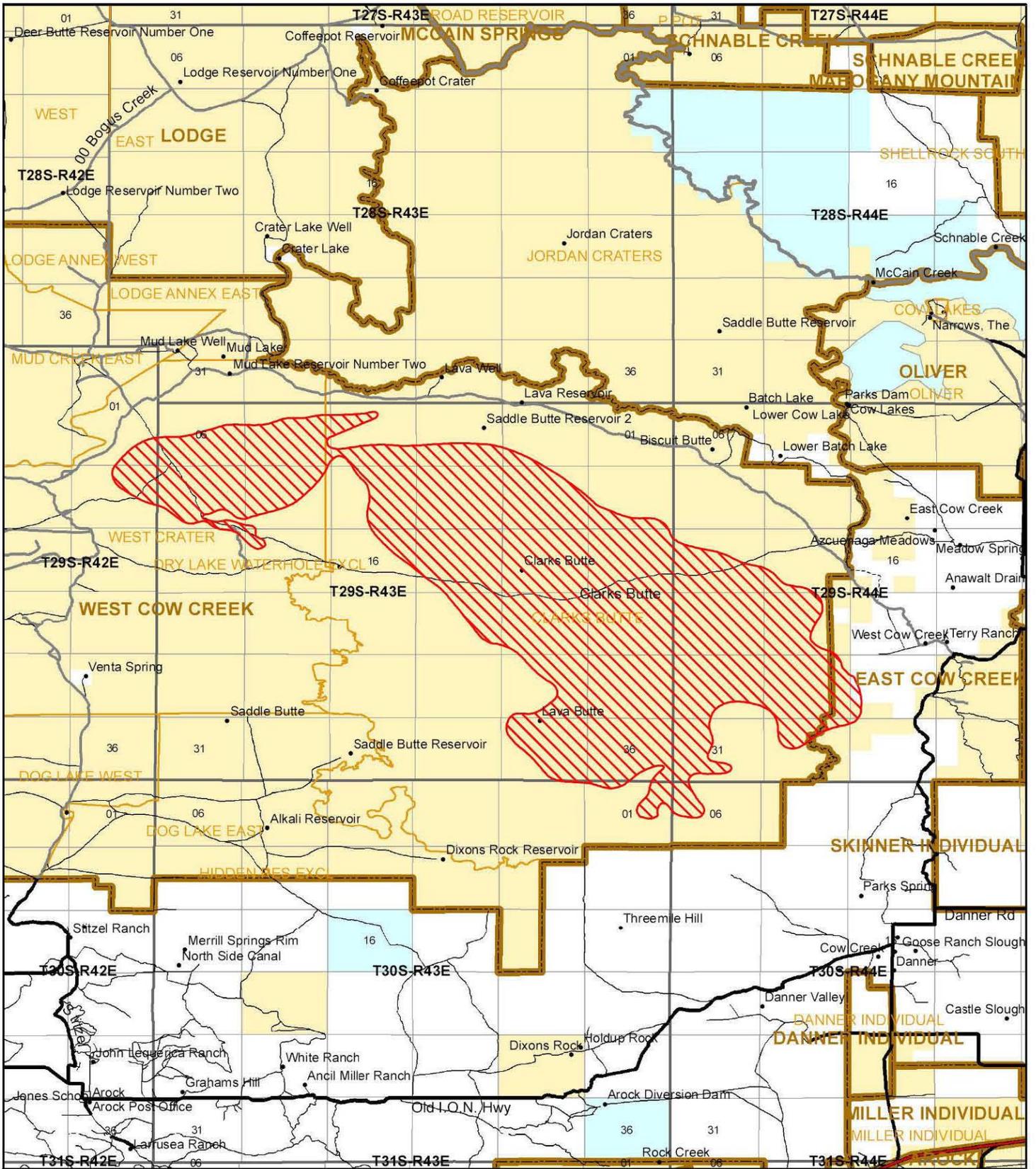
Signature of the Responsible Official



Date

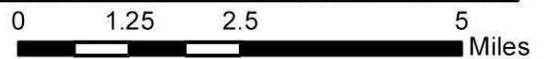
Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision.

Map 1, Clarks Butte Fire



Legend

- Clarks Butte Fire
- Allotment
- Pasture
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Other Federal
- U.S. Forest Service
- Private
- State Lands
- Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- WATER



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