

Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management
Grand Junction Field Office, Colorado
Horsethief Tamarisk Removal
DOI-BLM-CO-134-2014-0004-DNA

A. Purpose and Need:

The purpose of the action is for the protection of the cottonwood galleries located in Horsethief Bottom within the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (MCNCA) from fire, to reduce the suppression costs associate with fighting these fires, and to improve land health of the area by reducing cover of invasive species. The need for the project is that land health standards are not being met in the Horsethief bottom area, largely due to the invasive species tamarisk and Russian knapweed.

B. Proposed Action:

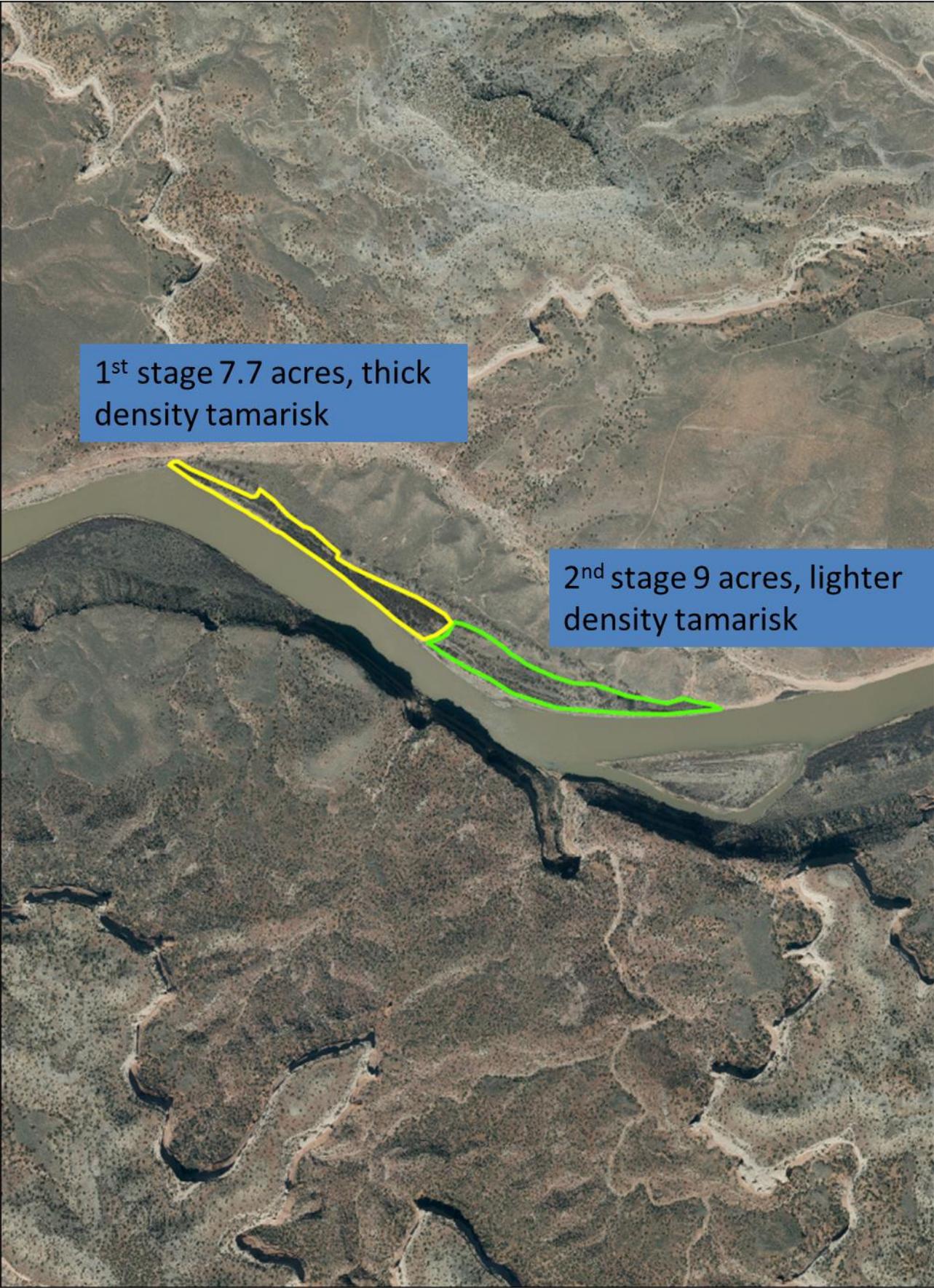
The Proposed Action is to remove tamarisk using a small dozer with a fecon head (masticating head) located along the Colorado River within the MCNCA. This will be a fuels reduction project and will be accomplished in phases. The first phase will be the mechanical removal of tamarisk (approximately 2 years). The second phase will be chemical treatment of resprouts and Russian knapweed and other weeds (approximately 2 years). The third phase will be potentially seeding and planting native shrubs. Potential shrub plantings would include planting seedlings from tube containers, no more than 12 in deep and 6 in across, with no more than 20 total seedlings planted. The need for this will be evaluated once weeds have been controlled. The following design features would reduce potential impacts from the project:

1. To prevent the spread of noxious weeds, equipment would be cleaned through established procedures as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Policy.
2. Fueling and maintenance activities should not be conducted within 100 feet of any drainage or watercourse. All spills of fuel and lubricants should be reported to the BLM and should be cleaned up promptly. Fueling of machinery and storage of fuel would be accomplished through established BLM procedures.
3. Existing roads and trails would be used by agency personnel to eliminate development of new routes and trails. When driving off roads, personnel would avoid repeatedly driving back and forth via the same route.
4. Schedule project work outside of the dates May 15th and July 15th, to protect species identified by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
5. All road, telephone, and power line rights-of-ways and facilities will be located and flagged prior to commencement of the project to assure that no damage will occur.
6. Heavy equipment use will not occur when soils are saturated to a depth of three inches or more. All drainage courses will be protected from any impacts associated with operation of heavy equipment (e.g. bank shearing, de-stabilization of existing drainage patterns, etc...). In these areas closest to drainages, alternative methods for treating vegetation (e.g. hand crews) will be used.

7. Direct application of herbicide to surface water can result in water quality degradation. Therefore, herbicide application must be in conformance with the BLM Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides PEIS to avoid impacts to water quality from treatments. The use of heavy equipment on steep stream banks may also present a water quality concern as well as erosional problems (sediment production to surface waters). To avoid these impacts, utilized hand crews for mechanical thinning on steep banks adjacent to the river.
8. The Proposed Action includes mitigation for fuels use/management for the dozer. Refueling and maintenance should be conducted away from the river, ideally out of the river bottom. Any spills will be promptly cleaned up and contaminated soil will be disposed of properly. For the chemical treatment, it would be sufficient that the Proposed Action include a simple statement to the effect that the herbicides will be used and applied in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. These would adequately mitigate any concerns.



Horsethief bottom 7/11/2011



1st stage 7.7 acres, thick density tamarisk

2nd stage 9 acres, lighter density tamarisk

C. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name: Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Record of Decision (ROD)

Date Approved: September 2004

Decision Number/Page: 2-14

Decision Language: The BLM will attain, or maintain, DPC (Desired Plant Community objectives determined in the Ruby Canyon/Black ridge Integrated RMP and will maintain existing areas meeting land health standards (see Appendix 8). Vegetation restoration and reclamation projects will be implemented on those areas currently not meeting land health standards, in concert with other programs that will improve the land health on all priority areas, including the River Corridor, Rabbit Valley, Black Ridge, as well as on other sites that will benefit from treatment for various resources such as sage grouse, desert bighorn, and prairie dogs.

Decision Number/Page: 2-14

Decision Language: “The BLM will manage noxious weeds using an Integrated Weed Management (IWM) ... Tamarisk will also be managed at select sites in the River Corridor.”

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

Name of Document: Integrated Weed Management Plan and Programmatic Environmental Assessment
(DOI-BLM-CO130-2010-0031-EA)

Date Approved: December 2010

Name of Document: Fish Park Gunnison Sage-Grouse Habitat Improvement Project
(DOI-BLM-CO-N030-2016-EA)

Date Approved: 9/30/15

E. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the current Proposed Action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current proposed action located at a site specifically analyzed in an existing document?

The current Proposed Action allows for mechanical and herbicide treatment of weeds in a riparian area, which are analyzed under Alternative B the Proposed Action in the Integrated Weed Management plan and programmatic environmental assessment (DOI-BLM-CO130-2010-0031-EA). The area to be treated falls within the boundary of the area analyzed in that EA. Analysis of impacts from seeding and planting shrubs is included in both the Integrated Weed Management Plan EA and the Fish Park Gunnison Sage-Grouse Habitat Improvement EA (DOI-BLM-CO-N030-2016-EA).

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?

The Proposed Action area has the same environmental concerns, interests, and resource values as the area analyzed in the existing NEPA document. The Proposed Action falls within the range of alternatives provided in the original NEPA document. No historic properties or threatened and endangered species are present in the immediate project area.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances?

Yes. Since the 2010 EA a biological control (*Diorabda carinulata*) has become more active in this area. The beetle tends to weaken Tamarisk making mechanical and chemical treatments more affective. This new information does not substantially change the analysis. Therefore, no circumstances or information has changed that would result in impacts that were not analyzed in the existing 2010 EA.

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

Yes. The area is within the analysis area for the referenced EA and the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing 2010 EA would be the same if a new EA was written.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action?

Yes. The direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Action are the same as those identified in the existing NEPA document, because the Proposed Action is the same as the action in the preferred alternative of the referenced EA, the resources and resource concerns are the same. Additionally, we have followed the Standard Operating Procedures for Weed Treatments (Appendix E) and have had necessary surveys completed.

6. Are the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

Yes, this action combined with the actions analyzed in the existing EA would provide additional weed treatment. Cumulative impacts in the area are limited and would remain the same as those analyzed in the referenced EA.

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

This Proposed Action is consistent with the actions of the existing 2010 EA in which scoping and public meetings were held.

F. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Name	Title
Nikki Grant-Hoffman	Ecologist
Natalie Clark	Archaeologist
Mark Taber	Natural Resources Specialist/Invasive, Non-native Species
Andy Windsor	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Kevin Hyatt	Hydrologist
Alan Kraus	Hazmat Coordinator
	Geologist/Paleontology
Christina Stark	Assistant Field Manager (Resources/P&EC)

Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Effects sufficiently analyzed/mitigated in previous NEPA document or proposed action?	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date
Air and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	KEH6/2/16
Water (surface & subsurface, floodplains)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	KEH6/2/16
Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	KEH6/2/16
Geological/Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 11/20/12
Special Status Plants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JT 11/27/12
Special Status Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JT 11/27/12
Migratory Birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JT 11/27/12
Other Important Wildlife Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JT 11/27/12
Vegetation, Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	SC 12/4/12
Invasive, Non-native Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	MT 5/16/16
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CARS 11/27/12
Cultural or Historical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 5/27/16
Paleontological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 11/20/12
Tribal & American Indian Religious Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	NFC 5/26/16
Visual Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 11/30/12
Social/Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CE 12/7/12
Transportation and Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 11/30/12
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AK 11/20/12
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Effects sufficiently analyzed/mitigated in previous NEPA document or proposed action?	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date
					11/30/12
Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs, WSR)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 11/30/12
Wilderness & Wilderness Characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CPP 11/30/12
Range Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	SC 12/4/12
Wild Horse and Burros	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CE 12/7/12
Land Tenure, ROW, Other Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	RBL 12/6/12
Fire/Fuels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JP 12/4/12

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Christina Stark

DATE: 6/10/16

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U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management
McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area
Grand Junction, Colorado**

**Horsethief Tamarisk Removal
DOI-BLM-CO-N034-2013-0001-DNA**

CONCLUSION

 X 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.

 Based on the review documented above, I conclude that either the proposal does not conform with the land use plan, or that additional NEPA analysis is needed.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:



National Conservation Area Manager

DATE SIGNED:

6/16/16

The signed Conclusion on this document 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.