

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kremmling Field Office,
2103 East Park
Kremmling, CO 80459**

DETERMINATION OF NEPA ADEQUACY (DNA)

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-120-2013-0001-DNA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER:

PROJECT NAME: Sporleder Fuels Forestry Project

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T. 12 N., R. 81 W., Sections 27, 28, 33, 34, and 35;

T. 11 N., R. 81 W., Sections 3, 4, and 5; 6th P.M.

Jackson County, Colorado

APPLICANT: BLM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

The Sporleder Fuels/Forestry Project is a new project within the DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment.

The proposed actions for the Sporleder Fuels/ Forestry Project are best defined in two forms:

- Forestry related in the form of timber harvest or service work by mechanical means, and
- Utilization of fire/fuels management tools via the use of prescribed fire in the forms of broadcast burning, pile or jackpot burning, and mechanical hazard fuel mitigation.

Both styles of management support the same desired condition goals of improved forest health, public safety, and catastrophic fire event mitigation.

Forestry Methods: Under the proposed action, one unit encompassing approximately 40 acres of trees in intermediate-aged, mature and over mature forested stands in the analysis area would be harvested, where the emphasis is to regenerate dead and dying stands, improve forest health conditions, reduce hazardous fuels and provide forest products.

The unit would be best treated through a sanitation/salvage harvest, removing dead, currently infested and beetle susceptible trees, as well as trees that are likely to be windthrown (primarily large subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce). Minimum harvest diameters would be five inches DBH for lodgepole pine.

Minimum harvest diameters for subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce would be nine inches DBH. Smaller diameter lodgepole pine and other conifer trees, as well as aspen, would be retained where feasible.

Smaller diameter lodgepole pine could be cut to remove dead, diseased, or beetle-hit trees, some damage to the residual stand would occur as a result of logging operations.

Leftover logging slash would be piled for burning by the BLM at a later date.

To facilitate harvest, an estimated .5 miles of temporary road would need to be constructed. Temporary roads are not displayed on the enclosed map as location and extent is somewhat dependent on the type of equipment used. Temporary road locations would be approved by the BLM prior to development. After harvest operations are completed, the temporary roads would be reclaimed, unless needed for post-treatment activities. Temporary roads would be out-sloped, and roads and landings would be scarified, as necessary. Temporary roads, landings and major skid trails (as necessary), would be seeded with a BLM approved mixture of forbs and grasses. Temporary roads, or portions thereof, may also be slashed in. Post-harvest treatment of units would include noxious weed control and the felling of residual undesirable live trees. The cutting of undesirable live trees after treatment is referred to as release & weeding, whereby live trees that were not harvested are cut down because they would not contribute or may be a detriment to the future stand (i.e. diseased, competing with more desirable trees, physical defects, etc.).

Proposed Action with Forestry Methods		
Unit	Size (acres)	Treatment Method; explanatory notes
Sporleder Forestry Project	40	Sanitation/Salvage Harvest
Release & Weed	40	The cutting of undesirable live trees after treatment is referred to as Release & Weeding, whereby live trees that were not harvested are cut down because they would not contribute or may be a detriment to the future stand (i.e. diseased, competing with more desirable trees, damage or physical defects, etc.). All units would be assessed at sale closure. Release and Weed treatment would take place where it would benefit future stand. All acres could be treated.

Proposed Action with Fire/Fuels Methods: As mentioned within the Forestry Proposed Actions, the Fire Management treatments would be utilized to accomplish similar goals and objectives as to regenerate dead and dying stands, improve forest health conditions, reduce hazardous fuels and provide forest products in the future. The type of fire to be utilized would vary across the project from low intensity ground fire to high intensity stand replacement type prescriptions. Fire would most likely be used in areas that are steeper ground, isolated or non-accessible units, or non-commercially viable to harvest.

Proposed projects include Sporleder Prescribed fire, the Trapper Gulch Rx Fuel break, and the Sporleder fuel break. The Sporleder Prescribed fire project would use broadcast burning to remove, consume, and escalate the deterioration process of the dead and dying component of MPB killed trees. Referenced

areas (see Map) delineate proposed areas for prescribed fire operations. The Prescribed fire projects would be most likely completed in the spring to early summer, using snow or high live fuel moistures to help increase control lines. Spring burns would utilize snow covered aspects as control lines and would target melted areas. The targeted fuels would be primarily dead and down lodgepole pine, but it is likely that single tree torching and group torching would occur. Surface fuels would be affected due to the intensity of the dead lodgepole burning. The size of the burns would be dependent on the snow coverage in the spring and dependent on the previous burns and completion of the fuel breaks in the summer. Overall prescribe burning in the Sporleder Prescribe Fire area would target 450-500 acres. Once the targeted areas are completed, then areas between timber salvages units and burned areas may be burned, but actual acreages and timing of burns must be agreed upon by the ID Team. All burn areas would be rested for two growing seasons, or until adequate ground cover stabilizes the site to pre-burn conditions. Natural ignitions would use the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS). WFDSS would be used to help in managing the fire by setting the parameters to be used in monitoring the beneficial characteristics of natural fire; design features from this document would be loaded into WFDSS to help aid in the fire management decision. Prescribed fire would follow these guidelines to help reduce effects on resources:

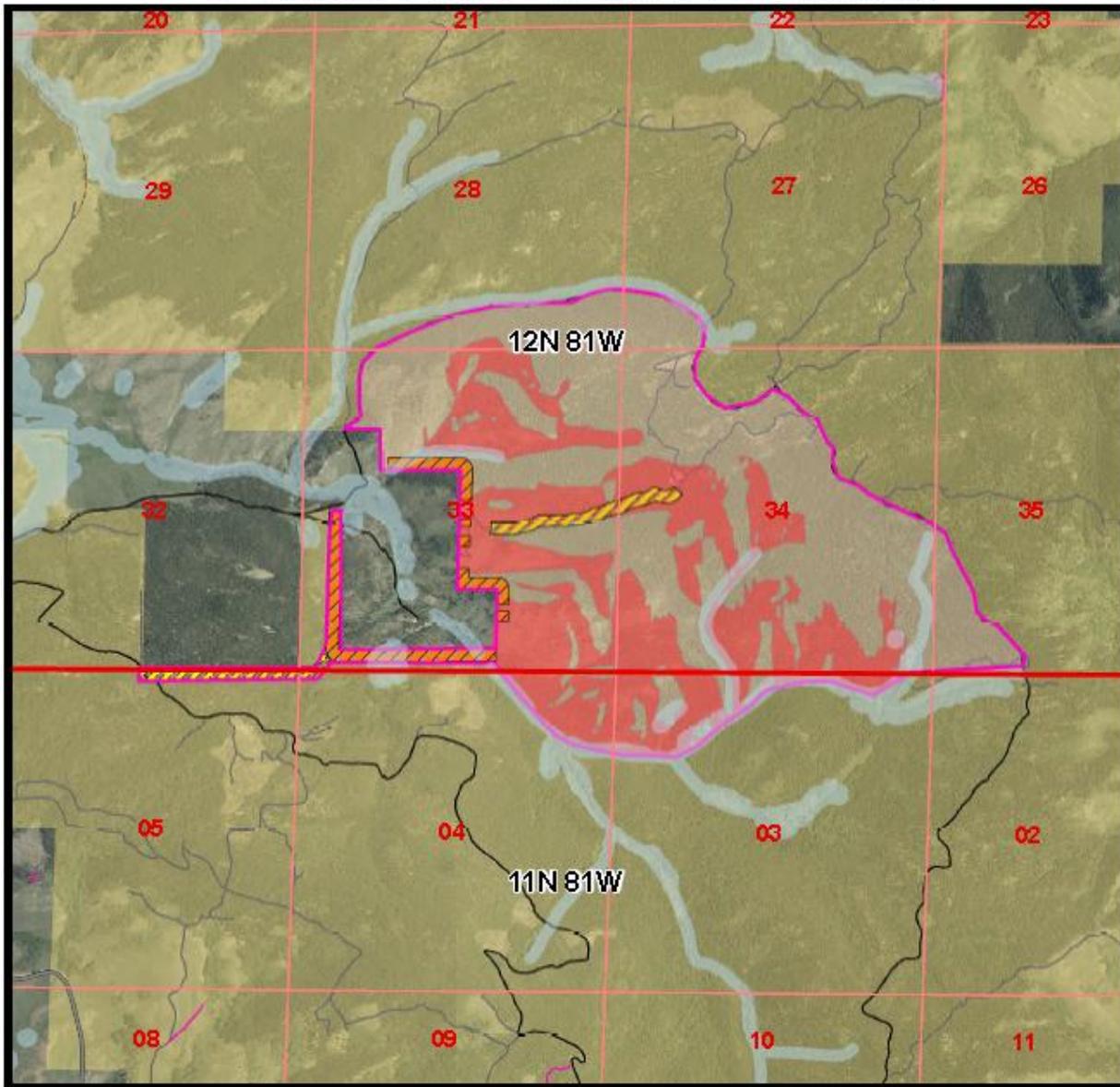
- Prescribed fire ignitions would not take place in advanced regeneration stands that have been previously thinned or are in regeneration stages for protection purposes, but low intensity fire that creeps, spots, and or slops in may occur.
- Prescribed fire ignitions would not occur within 150 feet of the drainages shown on the project map, but low intensity fire that creeps, spots, and or slops in may cross this buffer in areas.
- Drainages shown in the project map would need to have snow cover and or a fuel high moisture that would reduce the chance of fire burning in these drainages

The Trapper Gulch Rx Fuel Break and the Sporleder Fuel Break would use mechanical and prescribed fire treatments to alleviate hazards to the public and allow for use as fire containment lines in the event of a large wildfire. These projects would generally follow a treatment specification of up to 125 feet from either side of the BLM road 2503-4-cort, up to 125 feet from the south side of BLM road 2503-A, and up to a 100 feet from the BLM side of the Sporleder property fence. Hazard trees, beetle-killed trees, and disease infested trees would be removed, and live trees that are left would have spacing of 10-30 feet depending on tree height to create a shaded fuel break. Mechanical treatment objectives are as follows:

- Remove all dead tree species;
- Leave identified live aspen, lodgepole pine, Englemann spruce, and subalpine fir trees;
- Cut identified living tree species over five inches in diameter at breast height, to reduce the threat of windblown trees;
- Mechanical areas would have the product removed for salvage or be piled;
- All piles would be burned, and or mulched by machinery;
- 100 foot clearing on the BLM side would occur along fence lines;
- Machine piles would be a minimum of 15'x 15'x10' and no larger than 30'x 30'x 20'.

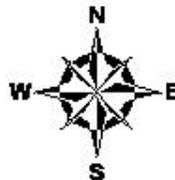
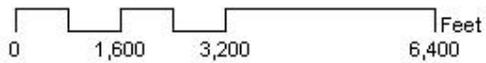
Proposed Action With Fire/Fuels Methods		
Unit	Size	Treatment Method
Sporleder Rx	1118 acres	Prescribed Fire
Trapper Rx Fuel break	15 acres	Hazardous Fuel Reduction
Sporleder fuel break	15 acres	Hazardous Fuel Reduction

Sporleder Fuels Forestry Project Map



Legend

- Township Range
- Sections
- Wetland Riparian areas 100ft buffer
- Sporleder DNA boundary 1154 acres
- Sporleder RX fuelbreak 15 acres
- Trapper RX Fuelbreak 15 acres
- Sporleder Forestry Project 40 acres
- Sporleder RX 1118 acres
- Targeted Burn Area 449 acres**
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Created by Kevin Thompson 1/06/14

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: Kremmling Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: 12/19/1984

Decision Number/Page: Decision 6, Page 9, sections b. and c.

Decision Language: : b. “ The planned actions will emphasize improving forest vigor and growth as well as minimizing losses caused by insects disease, or fire.”
“Intensive management activities could include timber harvesting techniques, artificial regeneration, stand conversion, stand improvement, precommercial thinning, and commercial thinning. Limited management activities will involve primarily custodial practices such as fire protection and salvage.”

c. Special Implementation Needs: “Fire management support is needed for management of natural and prescribed fire.”

REVIEW OF EXISTING NEPA DOCUMENTS:

List by name and date all existing NEPA documents that cover the Proposed Action.

Name of Document: DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment

Date Approved: 8/25/2010

Name of Document: CO-120-2007-19-CX Independence Mountain/ Parsons Draw/ Fischer Draw Fuels Treatment Projects

Date Approved: 3/19/08

NEPA ADEQUACY CRITERIA:

1. Is the new proposed Action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document? 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? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

The Sporleder Fuels Forestry project is essentially the same as the Independence Mountain Fuels Forestry Project. The purpose of both projects is to reduce the amount of beetle killed trees, reduce stand densities and aid in the effect to help reduce catastrophic

fire. The Sporleder Fuels Forestry Project is within the analysis area for the Independence Mountain Fuels Forestry Project and the geographic and resource conditions are similar to those analyzed in the Independence Mountain Fuels Forestry Project EA.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document appropriate with respect to the new Proposed Action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Two alternatives (Proposed Action and No Action Alternative) were analyzed in DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project. No issues were identified to trigger analysis of additional alternatives and these alternatives are considered to be adequate and valid for the 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, 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?

There is no new information and no new circumstances since the previous environmental assessment. Thus the analysis from the Independence Mountain Fuels/Forestry Project is still valid.

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?

The direct, indirect and cumulative effects that would result from the implementation of the new Proposed Action are substantially similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment. The DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment consisted of 1100 acres of timber units, 525 acres of hazard tree roadside units, and 12,030 acres of prescribed fire units. With the addition of the Sporleder DNA the timber units would increase to 1140 acres, a four percent increase, the hazard tree roadsides would increase to 555 acres, a six percent increase, and the prescribe fire units would increase to 13,148 acres, a nine percent increase. Over all the total increase in acres that could be treated would be 1188 acres, a 9 percent increase overall.

5. Is the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA documents adequate for the current Proposed Action?

Public involvement and interagency review were adequately addressed in the DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment and the CO-120-2007-19-CX Independence Mountain/ Parsons Draw/

Fischer Draw Fuels Treatment Projects. All agency and adjacent private landowners in the area were notified by a scoping letter during those project timeframes. Both NEPA documents were posted on the Kremmling Field Office Internet NEPA register and public room NEPA board for public review and comment. Two comments were received from the two previous scoping letters and both were positive comments for the projects.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

The Proposed Action was presented to, and reviewed by the Kremmling Field Office interdisciplinary team on 01/07/2013. A complete list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the Kremmling Field Office. The table below lists resource specialists who provided additional remarks concerning cultural resources and special status species.

Name	Title	Resource	Date
Tom Adamson	Forester	Forest Management	12/10/13
Bill Wyatt	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	01/16/2014
Megan McGuire	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species	01/07/2013
Hannah Schechter	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Visual Resources	03/19/2013

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: A Class III cultural resource inventory (CR-14-03) was conducted and located one historic site 5JA2446 that was determined to be not eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. The project is determined to be a **no effect**, there are **no historic properties affected**.

Native American Religious Concerns: Tribal consultation was initiated on December 10, 2012, and to date no tribe has identified any area of traditional spiritual or cultural concern.

Threatened and Endangered Plant and Wildlife Species: The proposed project would not cause any additional impacts beyond those discussed in the Independence Mtn. Fuels/Forestry Project Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-CO-120-2009-0004-EA).

MITIGATION: None

NAME OF PREPARER: Kevin Thompson

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWER: Susan Cassel

CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the Proposed Action and constitutes the BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____/s/ Susan Cassel_____
Associate Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 1/23/2014

ATTACHMENTS: Design Features

Note: The signed Conclusion in this DNA 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.

Attachment

Design Features

1. Fences damaged from the timber salvage operation would be fixed by the contractor. Fence damage due to fire would be fixed by the BLM.
2. The BLM would monitor disturbed areas for noxious weeds for two growing seasons after the project is completed. Noxious weed control, if needed, would be coordinated by the BLM.
3. Prior to moving off-road equipment (includes all logging and construction machinery except for log trucks, service trucks, pickup trucks, and similar vehicles) onto the sale area, the Purchaser shall clean such equipment of seeds, soil, vegetative matter, and other debris that could contain or hold seeds, to minimize the likelihood of spreading or introducing noxious weeds to the Contract Area. Any logging or road building equipment removed from the Contract Area during the duration of the contract must be cleaned before it is returned to the Contract Area.
4. Prior to treatments, a contrast rating form would be completed to ensure visual changes resulting from treatments are consistent with VRM Class criteria.
5. Mining claimants holding active mining claims within the project area would be informed of proposed management activities. Mining claimants would be notified on an individual basis, at least 48 hours prior to any on the ground forestry and/or fire/fuels activities, if the proposed activities would occur within the boundaries of the claimant's active mining claim.
6. Vegetative buffers for wetland and riparian areas would be required to protect wetland vegetation and to reduce sediment deposition in the wetlands. No vehicles or large equipment would operate within the buffer. Limited surface disturbance would be allowed within the buffers:
 - 50 foot buffer for small drainages (intermittent and ephemeral)
 - 100 foot buffer for fens and perennial streams (See preliminary project map)
7. No mechanical equipment would be allowed to travel in a wetland or riparian area. If areas must be crossed, best management practices would be required to reduce alteration of the hydrology or vegetation. Section 404 permits and stormwater permits, where necessary, would be obtained for any roads that would remain open to the public after forest/fuel treatments.
8. Prescribed burns and use of natural ignitions would be monitored after the burn for two growing seasons. Depending on the completeness and intensity of the burn, erosion control practices would be required to be implemented in a timely manner, prior to the next runoff producing event (i.e. thunderstorm or snowmelt). Future treatments that are tributary to the same drainage would be postponed until prior treatments have soil stabilizing vegetation.
9. If an active golden eagle nest is located at any time during project activities, there will be a ¼ mile no surface disturbance stipulation and a 1/2 mile seasonal restriction where no activities would be permitted December 15 through July 15.
10. Prescribed Fire, ignition devices would include; drip-torches, fusees and similar devices, terra-torch, Physical Sphere Device (psd), and heli-torch.
11. If an active goshawk nest is located within a timber sale unit, a 1/8th mile buffer around the nest site would be required.
12. In the event public motorized travel along reclaimed or slashed-in temporary routes occurs, additional measures such as signage, gates and/or fencing would be installed.
13. All logging crews would maintain in their vehicles a shovel and ABC fire extinguisher.
14. Adjacent landowners and holders of ROWs in the vicinity of a proposed prescribed fire would be notified prior to burning.
15. Special Recreation Permit holders would be notified when timber harvesting, hauling or prescribed fire will occur.
16. Signs informing the public when timber harvesting, hauling or prescribed fires are taking place would be posted at major access points to the project area.