

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/ DECISION RECORD**

### **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

After studying the potential impacts of the proposed action as described in the Pecos River Grassland Restoration Environmental Assessment and after careful consideration of public comments received, I do not anticipate any significant impacts on the quality of the human environment. I base my finding of no significant impacts on the factors related to context and intensity of impacts as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) at 40 CFR, parts 1500-1508. I conclude that the implementation of the proposed action would not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation and an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

### **DECISION**

It is my decision to approve the Turkey Track Grassland Restoration Project as described in the Proposed Action in the attached environmental assessment (EA No. NM-510-2006-182). The mitigation measures identified in the attached EA (section IV, E. Mitigation Measures) along with specific project design features relative to vegetative treatments on public lands have been formulated into stipulations. This decision incorporates, by reference, those stipulations identified in the attached Environmental Assessment.

### **RATIONALE FOR DECISION**

Approval of the Proposed Action is the most economical and environmentally acceptable method of restoring the desired desert grassland communities, reducing dead and decadent fuel loadings, and reducing desert brush encroachment in the Pecos River Grassland Restoration Project area. Consequently, watershed functions, soil stabilization, wildlife habitat and livestock management will be improved. This action will authorize treatment of up to 91,000 public land acres by the use of prescribed fire, mechanical, manual extraction and/or herbicides in the project area for the purpose of meeting specific desired plant community objectives and improving vegetative composition for rangeland health considerations. The proposed action is limited to the upland sites where targeted brush species have exceeded the threshold of desired density and composition. Floodplains, as well as wetlands and riparian zones would not be treated and would be buffered out of treatment areas.

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Roswell Resource Management Plan and the Fire and Fuels Management Plan Amendment for Public Lands in New Mexico and Texas. The treatments will be conducted when the windows are appropriate to safely meet treatment objectives. These types of treatments are expected to benefit many wildlife species, as well as restore and promote watershed functionality.

If you wish to protest this proposed decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, you are allowed 15 days from receipt of this notice within which to file a protest with the Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 2909 West 2<sup>nd</sup>, Roswell, NM 88201. This protest should specify, clearly and concisely, why you think the proposed action is in error.

If a protest is filed within the time allowed, the protest statement of reasons and other pertinent information will be considered and a final decision will be issued with the right to appeal (43 CFR 4160.3 (b) and 4160.4).

In the absence of a protest within the time allowed, the above decision shall constitute my final decision. Should this notice become the final decision, you are allowed an additional 30 days within which to file an appeal for the purpose of a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge, and to petition for stay of the decision pending final determination on the appeal (43 CFR 4.21, 4.470 and 4160.3 (c)). If a petition for stay is not requested and granted, the decision will be put into effect following the 30-day appeal period. The appeal and petition for stay should be filed with the Field Manager at the above address. The appeal should specify, clearly and concisely, why you think the decision is in error. The petition for stay should specify how you will be harmed if the stay is not granted.

/s/Larry D. Bray

1/8/2007

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Larry D. Bray, Acting Roswell Field Manager

Date