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Karen Coulter,
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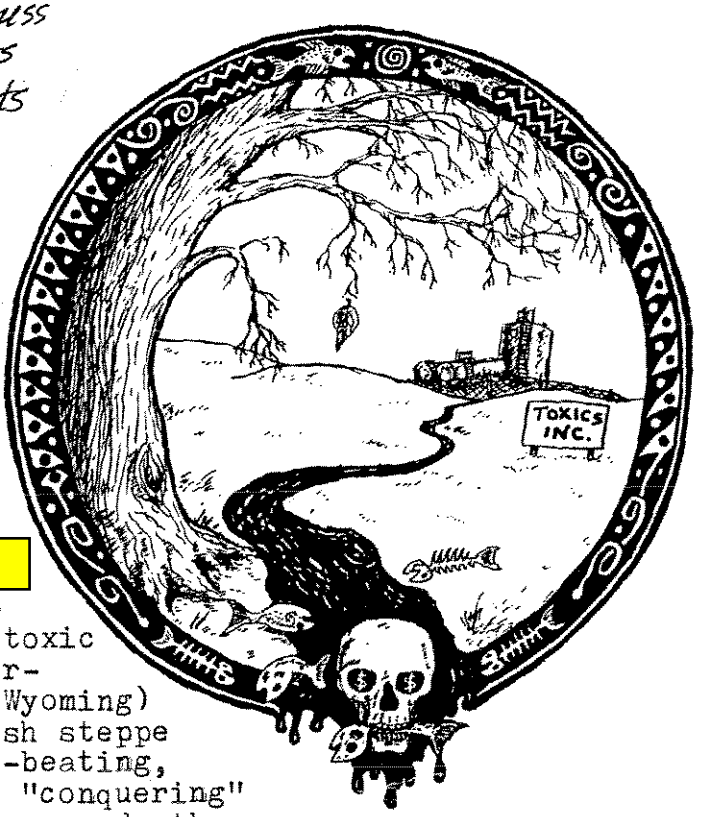
Comments re:
"Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides" PEIS



Covering the entire Northwest and West, including Alaska, as far east as the Dakotas and Oklahoma, and the Southwest, including Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, this programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and accompanying programmatic Environmental Report could set the tone--of poisoning 932,000 acres per year with toxic herbicides (about 70% of this in the Intermountain West in Oregon, Idaho, Nevada & Wyoming) and targetting the already abused Sagebrush steppe and high desert lands with burning, brush-beating, chaining juniper and similar militaristic "conquering" of Nature, supposedly to benefit Sage grouse and other wildlife--for the next 15 to 20 years! The Bureau of Land Management's preferred alternative would almost triple herbicide use from the current 325,000 acres per year amd increase non-chemical manipulation of the land from 500,000 acres a year to six million acres annually--a twelve-fold increase. Non-chemical manipulation includes the release of exotic bio-control insects that have generally not been tested for their appetite for native plants.

What's wrong with this picture? In addition to heavy-handed management instead of more natural, passive restoration techniques, the BLM's plan fails to deal with the many sources of invasive weed spread, such as the primary vectors of invasive plant introduction and dispersal: livestock grazing, logging, off-road vehicles, roads, and other ground-disturbing activities such as mining and gravel pits. You simply can't solve a problem by addressing the symptoms rather than the causes. Indeed, the real purpose of this plan may have more to do with clearing the land for more cattle and sheep than getting serious about controlling invasive plants. Although invasive plants and reducing the risk of "catastrophic" fire (a favorite Bush Inc. public relations rationale for logging and magic words for getting federal funding) are referenced in the text, the actual title of the draft EIS is "Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States"--rather than the purpose or goal being to control the introduction and dispersal of invasive plants, which is ostensibly the purpose, judging by the bulk of the text, the BLM made herbicide use itself the purpose: "The purposes of the proposed action are to provide BLM personnel with the herbicides available for vegetation treatment on public lands and to describe the conditions and limitations that apply to their use." (DEIS, p. 1-3) This automatically biases the decision toward their preferred action alternative, which is illegal under the National Environmental Policy Act. Such a narrow and mechanistic focus also de-emphasizes the whole range of prevention measures that could be implemented to limit invasive plant introduction and spread, such as weed-free livestock feed requirements; keeping livestock, heavy equipment and off-road vehicles out of invasive weed-infested areas; vehicle inspections and cleaning; limits on forest canopy removal and ground-disturbing activities which encourage

invasive exotics; public education and re-planting native plants in disturbed areas, etc. By contrast, the Forest Service's recent programmatic DEIS on managing invasive plants emphasized some of these prevention measures, although it did not go far enough in controlling the introduction and spread of invasives by logging, livestock use and off-road vehicle use (commercial interests and private corporate exploitation of public lands are allowed to outweigh the benefits of effective invasive plant control and not harming wildlife, fish, water quality, soils and human health with toxic chemicals--by both agencies.) 5 cont. 6

Alternatives offered in the DEIS include:

Alternative A: "Continue Present Herbicide Use"--20 active herbicide ingredients approved for use (including some very toxic herbicides also proposed for use in the proposed action--2,4-D, dicamba, picloram, triclopyr and metsulfuron methyl, etc.)--305,000 acres would be sprayed with herbicides annually. 7

Alt. B: "Expand Herbicide Use and Allow for Use of New Herbicides in 17 Western States"--the preferred Alt. of the BLM: 14 active herbicide ingredients now in use would be used (2,4-D, bromacil, chlorsulfuron, diuron, clopyralid, dicamba, glyphosate, hexazinone, imazapyr, metsulfuron methyl, picloram, sulfometuron methyl, tebuthiuron and triclopyr) plus four additional active ingredients: imazapic, diquat, diflufenzopyr in formulation with dicamba and fluridone. The BLM would also reserve the right to use new, unspecified active ingredients if they were registered by the EPA and the BLM determined the benefits of use outweighed the risks to public health and the environment. Incorporating approval of such future undefined toxic chemical use without assessment of potential risks at this stage is legally sketchy since it leaves the public and decision-makers in the dark as to what those future risks would be while approving them now. 8 9

Alt. C: "No Use of Herbicides"--There would be no use of herbicides, including those developed in the future but other vegetation manipulation would be used including fire and mechanical, manual and biological control methods. 10

Alt. D: "No Aerial Applications"--same herbicide active ingredients as in the preferred alternative but only ground-based methods of herbicide application, "which would reduce risk of spray drift impacting non-target areas" (Exec. Summary p.3)--would spray approximately 530,000 acres annually, includes allowing the use of new herbicides not assessed now. 11

Alt. E: "No Use of Acetolactate Synthase-inhibiting Herbicides"--This alternative submitted by American Lands Alliance would not use chlorsulfuron, imazapyr, metsulfuron methyl and sulfometuron methyl. However, the BLM could still use 10 active herbicide ingredients, including some that are highly toxic: 2,4-D, dicamba, triclopyr, picloram, tebuthiuron, diuron, clopyralid, glyphosate, hexazinone and bromacil, plus 3 new active ingredients: diquat, diflufenzopyr (if it becomes registered for herbicide use) & fluridone. Plus the BLM could use new herbicides not identified or assessed in this EIS. 12

12 Alt. E continued: 466,000 acres per year would be sprayed with herbicides. Alt. E would favor spot application over broadcast spraying. Herbicide use would be "discouraged" in areas with amphibians and herbicide free-zones would be established around culturally significant plant and wildlife resources to protect Native American and Alaskan Native rights. Alt. E would also place greater emphasis on passive restoration.

13 While Alternative E definitely has better limits and precautionary measures than alt. B, we think it doesn't go far enough. The BLM should consider and incorporate the Restore Native Ecosystems Alternative, a citizens' alternative submitted to the BLM that carefully outlines a thorough and scientifically defensible plan to prevent the introduction and dispersal of invasive plants, thus getting at the causes of the problem rather than endlessly dumping increasing amounts of poisons on the symptoms. If any herbicides are used, we feel they should only be used as a last resort and should not include the most toxic and persistent active ingredients, surfactants (such as the NPE additive used with some glyphosate formulations), "inert" ingredients (which may include kerosene, diesel fuel, etc.) and metabolites (which may be carcinogenic.) Please check out our summaries below of which are the most toxic and persistent herbicides

Specific Concerns

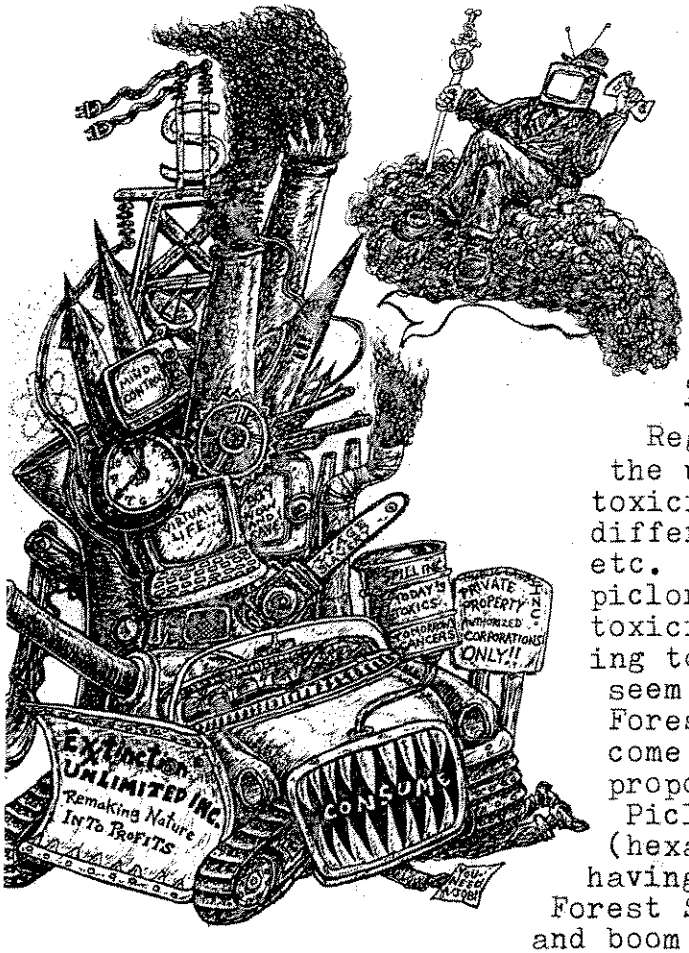
*We are especially concerned about the fate of amphibians, which are experiencing a global decline, in part, scientists suspect, due to herbicide exposure, and about herbicide threats to fish populations. Region Six of the Forest Service found their proposed use of 12 of the 18 herbicidest the BLM plans to use would be "likely to adversely affect" almost all federally listed Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive fish species in the region and all commercially important fish species, including salmon, steelhead trout and Bull trout. There should be no herbicide use in riparian areas or aerially. 14

*There is great cause for concern about cumulative impacts to Sage grouse from both proposed herbicide use in their habitat and planned clearing and burning of sagebrush. 15

*There is a huge list of "Special Status" species that may be threatened to the point of uplisting under the Endangered Species Act or locally or regionally extirpated by the preferred action, yet the DEIS fails to analyze how each species would be affected or require needed mitigation. 16

*There should be no herbicide use or vehicle use in Wilderness Areas as proposed. 17

*Biocontrols are exotic organisms that should not be released in the wild without stringent testing to ensure they will not decimate native plants. 18



Toxicity of herbicides proposed for use: 19

Region 6 of the Forest Service decided to drop the use of 2,4-D and dicamba due to their higher toxicity across various exposure scenarios for different wildlife species, humans, water quality, etc. Based on the Forest Service risk assessments, picloram and triclopyr are close behind for high toxicity and should be dropped from use. According to BLM assessments (although their tables seem to under-estimate risk compared to the Forest Service's), Diquat and Diuron consistently come out with higher toxicity risks than other proposed herbicides and should not be used. Picloram and clopyralid both contain an impurity (hexachlorobenzene) that has been identified as having potential to cause human cancer. The Forest Service analysis makes it clear that aerial and boom spraying greatly increase the risks of non-target plant, aquatic organism, wildlife and human hazardous exposures. The Forest Service also made the distinction that the sulfonylurea herbicides should not be aerially sprayed due to their high potency. The sulfonylurea herbicides (listed and banned under alt. E) pose a significant risk to fruit and seed production (including crop plants) and should not be used.

Unfortunately, the more risk assessments we have read, the harder it is to say that any herbicide is acceptable. The ones with the least impacts recorded happen to be those which have been studied the least. There are significant data gaps and lack of adequate risk assessment for several herbicides (and biocontrols) proposed for use. Generally the synergistic effects of combined active ingredients in formulas, chronic toxicity effects, effects on amphibians, insects and vital soil functions have not been well studied for most of these herbicides and studies have been on lab animals, not wildlife in wild conditions. The BLM admits that the "No Herbicide" alternative has the least environmental and human health risks and that their preferred alternative poses the most risks. 20 21 22

*At typical application rates, workers would be at risk when using diquat, 2,4-D, bromacil, diuron, hexazinone or tebuthiuron. At maximum application rates, workers would also be at risk from chlorsulfuron, fluoridone and triclopyr. (See Exec. Summary, p. 5) 23

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Attached are additional handwritten comments incorporated by reference - on separate pages and copied pages of the PEIS (aka "PEIS" or "BLM Herbicide Plan") for context, including information requests. We also hereby incorporate by reference all comments submitted by the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides and by the Pacific Native Ecosystems Coalition.

BLM Herbicide Plan ("Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides" PEIS) Comments by BMBP, p. 5

25 We incorporate by reference comments submitted by the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticide, which include many concerns with we concur, such as:

26 — The Programmatic Environmental Report (PER) should have been incorporated in the DEIS ("PEIS") and subject matter therein should have underwent much more detailed and rigorous analysis due to the tremendous expansion of non-herbicide control methods proposed — from 2 million to 6 million acres annually.

27 — New or more recent scientific findings as to the toxicity and other impacts of 2,4-D, glyphosate and other ~~inert~~ herbicide active ingredients, formulas, inerts, metabolites and impurities should have been disclosed and analyzed in the DEIS (examples given in the NCAP comments)

28 — Prevention of introduction and dispersal of invasive exotic plants should have been the overriding priority and emphasis in all of the BLM's action alternatives and thoroughly discussed and laid out as a strategic plan — treating symptoms endlessly with more and more toxic herbicide use does not address the causes of the problem and therefore does not meet the purpose and need of the project without a carefully planned prevention program.

29 — Many issues, such as potential impacts to Sage grouse, were not adequately analyzed with an eye to other cumulative impacts combined with the proposed action (eg. livestock grazing, roads, development, ORV use, hunting, mining, non-chemical control methods proposed, etc.) and the need to deal with root causes of invasive plant spread that are embedded in status quo management practices (eg. livestock grazing, logging, soil disturbance, quarries, roading, etc.) that are considered too sacrosanct to touch. (see al Sage grouse issue analysis in NCAP comments.)

Inadequate range of alternatives - There is no alternative offered that would emphasize prevention and only use the most ecologically benign herbicides in "last resort" scenarios where risks from invasives outweigh risks from herbicide use and no other non-herbicide control method has worked. In other words the introduction to use of new, less toxic herbicides is held captive to required continued use of existing, more toxic herbicides, so that those members of the public who want only the least toxic herbicides for potential use if needed are not allowed that option, as it is instead either "No Herbicides" or use of all herbicides proposed for use in offered alternatives. 30

Potential for Site-Specific Analysis at the Programmatic stage - 31

According to the DEIS, "- the BLM also reviewed information that was provided by local field offices in 2002 for development of this PEIS. This information included the location, treatment method, application method, vegetation class, and size of the treatment in acres for treatments proposed during the next 10 to 15 years." (DEIS (aka PEIS), p. 4-42) Obviously then, enough site-specific information was provided to give a much clearer picture of ecological and human health impacts that could result if the proposed herbicide applications took place - if only this information had been disclosed to the public and decision makers as region-specific sections or appendices to the PEIS. Even if only representative sample applications had been described for different states, portraying the range of typical situations, ecotypes, species, proximity to human habitation or use, etc. that would be affected and a scenario for each herbicide proposed for use in that state, that would have been much more informative and helpful to decision-making than the complete lack of such site-specific available detail in the PEIS & appendices.

32 Reassuring statements in the "Summary and Comparison of Effects on Resources by Alternatives" Table 2-8 such as "There would be risks to human health from vegetation treatments, but... use of less toxic herbicides have the potential to reduce these risks" (p 2-39 DEIS) and: "New herbicides are proposed for use should improve treatment success while having minimal impacts to aquatic organisms" (p 2-31 DEIS) ignore admissions buried in the text that: "~~Based on BLM patterns of use, 2,4-D, glyphosate, picloram, and tebuthiuron would comprise about 70% of the~~ only "[a]pproximately 10% of all treatment areas would be treated with the new herbicides." (DEIS p. 4-20)

33 There is no explanation as to why the BLM hasn't before been able to use herbicides in Alaska, Nebraska, and Texas (DEIS p. 4-20) — Is it because residents of those states don't want herbicides used? There should be analysis of current methods use in those states to control invasive plants or reduce fire risk, the need for these activities or herbicide use in those states, why herbicides haven't been used in those states and how current BLM plans to introduce herbicide use in those states relate to state law, local regulations and the public interest in Alaska, Nebraska and Texas, as well as any special ecological considerations regarding herbicide use in those states.

34 Unspecified "new" herbicides not analyzed in this programmatic EIS should not be allowed for use in the future without analysis at this scale. Otherwise the public and decision-makers have no idea what impacts they are agreeing to in choosing an alternative that allows for unspecified new herbicides to be used with risk assessment and analysis only at the District level, where less funding and scientific expertise is available for the kind of detailed risk assessment and analysis needed. Yet automatic adoption of unspecified new herbicides through such inadequate assessment at the District level is proposed for alternatives B, D, and E (see 2-1 - 2-13, DEIS)

35

Mitigation measures are inadequate to avoid significant impacts from herbicide use. There is lots of vague direction, open to widely varying interpretation, such as: "Minimize the use of terrestrial herbicides in watersheds with downgradient ponds and streams if potential impacts to aquatic plants exist." (DEIS p 2-23) What does "minimize" mean? Minimize to what level? Mitigation measures presented in Table 2-7 are generally lacking compulsory requirements or specific detailed instructions. There is alot of loophole language such as "where feasible", "consider", "minimize", "limit" and "regulate" rather than defining or requirement language such as "avoid," "Don't use more than X amount," "only use manual spot applications," "establish buffer zones as required by the herbicide label" etc. Language such as "where feasible" and "where practical" allows managers to disregard those mitigations if they are not convenient. Yet this weasel-word language is pervasive throughout the proposed mitigations. Eg: "Minimize the size of application areas, where practical, when applying ~~dicamba, diuron, glyphosate, hexazinone, tebuthiuron, and trichopyr~~ 2,4-D, bromacil, diuron, and Overdrive to limit impacts to wildlife...." (p. 2-23, Table 2-7) And what does "regulate" mean in this context? – "Regulate the use of diquat in waterbodies that have native fish and aquatic resources." (ibid.) Clearly any Finding of No Significant Impact for water quality, fish, aquatic organisms, wildlife, livestock, wild horses and burros, wilderness values, human health, etc. cannot rely on such weak and vaguely-defined mitigation measures, which may not even be applied at all in many cases where loophole language such as "where feasible," "where practical" or "evaluate", "consider" or "regulate" is used. (See all of Table 2-7, pp. 2-23-25.)

BLM Herbicide Plan – BMBP Comments 2/9/06

General Problems Re: Purpose & Need –

36 No discussion of past experiences w/using these herbicides – were they effective in controlling invasive weeds? In improving ~~water quality~~ riparian habitat quality? in reducing fire severity? How was effectiveness measured? What didn't work? What ecological & human health impacts resulted from their use? What impacts could not be measured but could still have taken place? What monitoring was done? How long did herbicide residues stay in soils? Were herbicides detected in ground or surface water? Were there repeated herbicide applications? Cumulative effects?

37 It's important to learn from past experience before escalating the use of any management method, especially toxic chemicals. Yet none of this evaluation of outcomes from past herbicide and biocontrol and manual/mechanical control methods appears in the DEIS or PER

38 This kind of evaluation is especially important given that the DEIS admits that "current treatment levels have been insufficient to control unwanted vegetation and reduce the risk of wildfire to life and property on public lands"... (DEIS p2-14)

39 Why were these control methods ~~insufficient~~ insufficient? It is likely that their insufficiency was due to failure to deal with the root causes of invasive plant introduction and dispersal, in which case, more of the same "treatment" will continue to be ineffective

40 It is not clear that proposed "control methods would "maintain or improve land health on most public lands" as they haven't so far, so there should have been further ~~consideration~~ analysis of alternatives dropped from further analysis, such as "Treat only acres needed to protect human health and safety." There does not appear to be any substantiation in the DEIS of the need to reduce wildfire risk or the extent of human lives and private property threatened by this risk across the BLM lands in question – no maps or figures

The use of toxic herbicides should not be expanded to control "competing vegetation" such as brush or herbaceous plants (native species) to make way for more livestock grazing or commercial tree growing, as the dangers of toxic chemical use are very real and the public consistently expresses concern and the need for caution regarding herbicide use, as admitted in the summary of public comments in various parts of the DEIS (aka PEIS) — eg. "Scoping Comments and Other Issues Evaluated in the Assessment" page 4-42: "Numerous scoping comments were centered around a desire for the BLM to focus on long-term ecosystem sustainability and biological diversity.... others wanted to ensure that weed control measures do not result in more ecological disturbances than the weeds themselves. A large number of comments recommended evaluating the impacts of herbicides on other plant and animal species within the areas considered for treatment. Several comments called for the PEIS to address the impacts of new generation, high potency pesticides on non-target plants. There was some concern about weeds becoming herbicide resistant, and about how the BLM would prevent the death of beneficial native plants from herbicides." 41

We share these concerns, and apparently herbicide use was the dominant concern of the public, giving rise to the BLM's unwise decision to split off the non-chemical methods of control out of the DEIS into the "less rigorously analyzed programmatic environmental report" (which is highly questionable legally) — yet the BLM still barges forward with a proposed action that not only plans to greatly increase the use of herbicides, including herbicides known to be highly toxic and new ones with inadequate testing and/or very high potency, but also to use them for rather frivolous unnecessary purposes: "— some treatments could be designed to reduce the size 42 43

or density of stands of trees or shrubs.... Herbicides could also be used to suppress or thin shrubs in favor of herbaceous vegetation." (PEIS p. 4-61)

44 Precommercial thinning and prescribed fire (and in some cases, shrub mowing) can be used to accomplish these ends without the hazardous use of toxic chemicals. In the case of prescribed fire, the effect is much more similar to natural processes. Herbicides should only be used as a last resort to control or eradicate exotic invasive species, if they are used at all, not to artificially clear land of sagebrush for livestock or thin stands of trees for maximum commercial plantation growth on public lands. Yet these expansions of the uses to which herbicides are applied are not analyzed or justified in the DEIS in violation of NEPA.

45 We are also concerned that there are references in the DEIS to setting back the successional stage of "rangeland" and forest to an earlier successional stage through the use of herbicides – for what? So that livestock graze on grasses rather than sagebrush and the sage grouse is eliminated as a restriction on livestock use? So that trees are more "vigorous" to grow for timber uses and "decadent" old growth habitat is eliminated, along with old growth-dependent species? This is not fulfilling the full public use and enjoyment mandate for public lands, which should not be managed as commercial private enterprises. We are also 46 very concerned by admissions on pp. 4-62 – 4-63 that even under the "No Action" alternative (status quo management) (and presumably under the preferred alternative, although this is not clear), herbicide application would focus on "controlling" many native desert species that no one but ranchers would usually consider a problem – including sagebrush, Rabbit brush, piñyon trees (a Native Cultura

plant of significance and limited occurrence), juniper trees, "other evergreen woodland species" (p 4-62) and plant community indicators in the Sonoran and Chihuahuan desert such as mesquite (also of Native cultural importance), creosotebush and snakeweed, as well as oak species! (p. 4-63) Who gave the BLM a mandate to "control" all these native desert species which form the critical underpinning of distinct habitat niches for adapted wildlife?! This seems like a thinly veiled plan to convert the temperate desert, temperate steppe, subtropical desert and subtropical steppe ecoregions to cattle and sheep pasture on a large scale. Artificial conversion via poisoning with toxic chemicals is even more insidious than using logging or prescribed fire in that the chemicals to be used are acknowledged to change the native plant species composition and biodiversity of the application sites. For example: 46

Re: temperate desert conversion (DEIS p. 4-62)

47 "Picloram may be active in soil for an extended period of time after application and is potentially more damaging to perennial grasses than 2,4-D. Application of picloram to control rabbitbrush and forbs in this ecoregion should decrease production of some desirable shrubs, forbs, and grasses.... Tebuthiuron is a broad-spectrum herbicide that has a long period of activity in the soil and is effective in thinning sagebrush. However, tebuthiuron may damage grasses and other desirable plants. Application of high rates of tebuthiuron has been shown to decrease perennial grasses and allow annual grasses, as well as rabbitbrush, to increase."

48 Re: Pinyon-Juniper woodland conversion:

"Picloram and tebuthiuron are the main herbicides used to treat pinyon-juniper woodlands. Both picloram and tebuthiuron may persist in the soil for several years and may injure understory grasses, shrubs, and forbs.... Using picloram on some sites

can also result in dominance by annual grasses, such as downy brome or medusahead, if these species become resistant to picloram." (DEIS p. 4-62)

Re: temperate steppe conversion -

49 "Applications of picloram may damage sensitive grasses as well as broadleaf plants, and can substantially alter the composition of grassland communities (USDI BLM 1991a)." (DEIS p. 4-62)

Re: Subtropical desert conversion -

"However, tebuthiuron can be injurious to many grasses and forbs, and may promote the development of annual forbs, including Russian thistle." (DEIS p. 4-63)

50 The use of toxic herbicides planned for use in these environments are thus acknowledged to potentially convert fundamental plant species composition, altering ecological niche habitats and affecting biodiversity as well as removing targetted native components of these ecosystems (e.g. pinyon pine, sagebrush, mesquite, etc.)

This planned conversion of native plant communities to something else (presumably livestock pasture) and the potential conversion of these native ecosystems to artificial environments, sometimes dominated by the very invasive plants the DEIS implies ~~are~~ it is the purpose of this program to eradicate (e.g. Downy brome, Medusahead and Russian thistle) must be analyzed thoroughly in the DEIS as part of the intentional or foreseen consequences and purpose of the action alternatives with herbicide use (and though tree and brush manual and fire-removal, part of the "No Herbicide use" alternative as well) yet the DEIS appears to incorporate no such analysis or admission that conversion to pasture is part of the plan. Without such admission and analysis, decision-making may be made in ignorance of the true intent or consequences of the program.

50 cont. The kind of analysis lacking includes evaluation of the impacts from such conversion of native habitats would result for native plant viability, biodiversity, wildlife composition and abundance, TES wildlife species viability, hydrology, soil integrity, aesthetic values, wilderness characteristics, recreational appeal, etc.

51 We find this planned conversion of native desert and steppe habitat to an artificial, controlled state outrageous and unacceptable - especially on public lands and without public awareness, disclosure or mandate. Based on past history of sagebrush eradication programs on BLM lands to provide forage for livestock (see NCAP comments), it is highly unlikely that all the management activity planned to "improve" sagebrush shrublands and create "openings" in sagebrush and rabbitbrush communities are really meant to benefit Sage grouse (Sensitive - listed and Candidate) species under the ESA) or would have that

52 effect. As the NCAP comments describe at length, it is known that herbicide use, livestock grazing and prescribed fire have all harmed Sage grouse and their essential habitat components, yet this was not analyzed in the DEIS (a violation of NEPA disclosure, analysis and scientific accuracy requirements) nor was the predictable loss of critical habitat for Sage grouse and possible direct loss of individual sage grouse adequately considered and mitigated (a violation of the APA and ESA.)

53 Livestock grazing is obviously within the scope of this DEIS as it could both contribute to the spread of invasive plants as a root cause of their introduction and dispersal (and has done so) and could benefit from invasive plant control. Yet the impacts of livestock grazing re: the spread of invasives are not analyzed in the DEIS.

It's interesting how enthusiastic the BLM is about using herbicides to counter the rapid expansion of invasive plants across public lands as "one of the primary threats to ecosystem health" (DEIS p. 4-93), when in reality, active management practices by the BLM, including livestock grazing, logging, mining, roading and allowing the use of off-road vehicles are far greater threats to the ecosystem and also all introduce invasive plants and disperse them throughout public lands. Yet known means to control these management practice vectors of invasive plant introduction and dispersal are not considered and analyzed, although dealing with them is absolutely essential to stopping or slowing the invasive weed problem. Similarly, there is no analysis in the DEIS of the need to change or reduce the scale of these management practices themselves (beyond vehicle cleansing to reducing overall soil disturbance, eliminating unnecessary roads, prohibiting larger forest canopy openings, reducing livestock numbers and access to riparian areas, banning open pit mining, controlling the number and vehicle access/use of quarries, etc.) The fall back argument is FLPMA's multiple use requirement, but there is no reason the BLM can't control (regulate) or change the nature of these management activities or reduce or prohibit them in sensitive areas, so these core roots of the problem are basic to the purpose and need of the BLM plan, within the scope of the project, and must be thoroughly analyzed and considered in an alternative (or more than one alternative) as required by NEPA. This could easily have been done by analyzing (and hopefully adopting) the "Restore Native Ecosystems Alternative" already carefully prepared. Why was this scientifically defensible citizen's proposal not included as an alternative to be considered instead of buried in an appendix? This is an obvious breach of NEPA's

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- There doesn't appear to be a safety plan established for human exposure to herbicides in either the PEIS or Human Health Assessment appendix. 56

- The following was not considered (as required) in the BLM PEIS or Appendices: "Project practices must be consistent with direction from the February 3, 1999 Executive Order on Invasive Species (Executive Order #13112), which requires federal agencies to use relevant programs and authorities to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species (Noxious Weed Risk Assessment, Appendix B)." (as quoted from the 18 Fire Competing Vegetation Control Environmental Assessment, p.60, emphasis ours - Deschutes National Forest, Bend-Fort Rock District) 57

- There is a need to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act in regard to prohibiting additional water quality impacts to 303(d) listed water quality-listed streams, which was not met by the BLM PEIS, PER or appendices regarding potential herbicide-induced water quality impairment to these streams. This should have been analyzed and additional herbicide or other management impairment to 303(d) listed streams prohibited at the programmatic level. 58

- The BLM has evidently not done wildlife population surveys for Management Indicator (or "Special Status") species as required by the National Forest Management Act. This prevents a Finding of No Significant Impact or "will not likely lead to a trend toward uplisting" finding for BLM Management Indicator, listed or Special Status species as population levels are not known and viability thresholds have not been established for these species, causing the PEIS or a ROD adopting one of the action alternatives (particularly any involving herbicide use) to be in violation of NFMA and the ESA. 59

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