

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT (IPM)-KEMMERER, PINEDALE AND ROCK SPRINGS FIELD OFFICE(S)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WY-090-EA09-52

JULY 7, 2009

Introduction

This IPM EA is a multi-field office analysis of potential effects that could result from the implementation of the *Proposed Action*. The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any "significant" impacts could result from the analyzed actions. "Significance" is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27.

Invasive plants are defined as "non-native plants whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health," based on the definition provided in Executive Order 13112. Invasive plants are compromising the ability to manage BLM lands for a healthy native ecosystem and can create a host of environmental and other effects, most of which are harmful to native ecosystem processes, including: displacement of native plants; reduction in functionality of habitat and forage for wildlife and livestock; increased potential for soil erosion and reduced water quality; alteration of physical and biological properties of soil; loss of long-term riparian area function; loss of habitat for culturally significant plants; high cost (dollars spent) of controlling invasive plants; and increased cost to maintaining transportation systems and recreational sites.

Summary of Proposed Action

The BLM proposes to manage invasive plants throughout the entire KFO, PFO, and RSFO, by utilizing integrated pest management such as biological, chemical, and manual/physical control methods, as detailed in the EA.

Rationale

The Proposed Action and Conditions of Approval found in the accompanying Record of Decision will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of public land. Resource review and analyses has been coordinated with other federal and state agencies. Environmental protection measures incorporated into the Proposed Action are outlined in the Record of Decision. Resources determined to be potentially impacted were analyzed in the EA specific to the Proposed Action. These resources are: Air Quality, Cultural and Historical Resources, Hazardous and Solid Wastes, Special Status/Sensitive Species, Invasive Non-Native Species, Migratory Birds, Water Quality and Quantity, Vegetation, Land Use Authorizations, Socioeconomics, Soils, Wildlife, Vegetation, and Noise/Odor/Light.

Increased use of public land has contributed to habitat degradation as invasive plants replace native vegetation. Invasive vegetation reduces soil productivity, water quality and quantity, native plant communities, wildlife habitat, wilderness values, recreational opportunities, and livestock forage. The

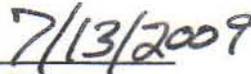
percentage of land infested by invasive plants is relatively low in the KFO, PFO, and RSFO, thus providing an opportunity to aggressively treat new and existing infestations. The current untreated, known weed-infested acreage is estimated at 335,000 acres (not including areas infested with cheatgrass). However, most of the KFO, PFO, and RSFO areas have not been inventoried for noxious and invasive species; thus, the actual number of acres needing treatment has not been established. Historically, the KFO, PFO, and RSFO have treated approximately 25,000 acres of vegetation per year. The current treatment focus is on Wyoming state listed noxious weeds¹; however, controlling other invasive species (halogeton, black henbane, and cheatgrass) that cause management problems related to livestock, wildlife, and human activities is a secondary focus. Surface disturbing activities associated with natural gas development, such as pad, road, and pipeline construction, are increasing the presence of these invasive species.

Finding of No Significant Impact

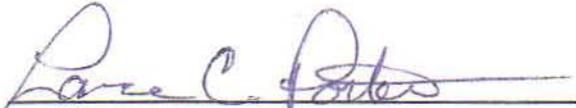
Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts detailed in the attached EA, and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Pinedale Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (November 26, 2008), Kemmerer Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (August 8, 2008) and the Green River Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (August 8, 1997), I have determined that the impacts of the Proposed Action, when coupled with mitigation measures and environmental protection measures presented and detailed in the EA and accompanying Record of Decision, are not significant per the definition of significance in 40 CFR 1508.27. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required.



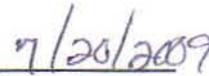
Chuck Otto
Field Manager
Pinedale Field Office



Date



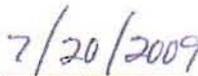
Lance Porter
Field Manager
Rock Springs Field Office



Date



John Christensen
Field Manager
Kemmerer Field Office



Date

¹ WYOMING NOXIOUS WEED – Legal designation by the Wyoming Department of Agriculture