FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2013-0066-DNA
North Willow Forest Service Prescribed Burn

INTRODUCTION:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) (DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2013-0066-DNA) for the adoption of environmental analysis conducted for the Southwest Fuels Healthy Forest Initiative Project by the Big Horn National Forest. The new proposed action would include approximately 170 acres of BLM land in the North Willow Unit Prescribed Burn. The BLM has conducted an environmental analysis (DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2013-0066-DNA) for a proposed action to address Big Horn National Forest Prescribed Fire in the North Willow Pasture of the Forest Service Ten Sleep Allotment in Washakie County. The project would involve approximately 170 acres of BLM administered land to complete their burning. The underlying need for the proposal would be met while accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Provide for the safest and most efficient place to complete burn perimeter.
2. Reduce hazardous fuels.
3. Enhance forage for livestock and wildlife.

DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2013-0066-DNA is attached to this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). A no action alternative was analyzed in the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively, with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the Washakie RMP/FEIS. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

Context: The project is a site-specific action directly involving approximately 170 acres of BLM administered land that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

Intensity: The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into resources and issues considered (includes supplemental authorities Appendix 1 H-1790-1) and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders.

The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

1. **Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse**.

   The proposed action would impact resources as described in the EA. Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to soils were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives by the application of specific times that the treatment will be applied. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA and associated appendices are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Washakie FEIS.

2. **The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety**.

   The proposed action is a prescribed fire in which the Big Horn National Forest proposes using Bureau of Land Management lands as part of the boundary for their prescribed fire. The area they are proposing is the safest and most feasible location as a boundary. This project will not adversely affect public health or safety.

3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas**.

   The following components of the Human Environment and Resource Issues are not affected because they are not present in the new proposed project area: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), BLM Natural Areas, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Environmental Justice, Prime or Unique Farmlands, Floodplains, Geology, Lands/Access, Native American Religious Concerns, Wetlands/Riparian Zones, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness/WSA, Wild Horses and Burros, and Areas with Wilderness Characteristics.

   Components of the Human Environment and Resource Issues were analyzed in detail in the EA. None of these would be significantly impacted because of the treatment timing.

4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial**.

   There is no scientific controversy over the nature of the impacts.

5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks**.

   The project is not unique or unusual. The BLM has burned on the Big Horn National Forest before. By using BLM lands to complete the perimeter of the burn reduces risk for fire managers and the risk for escape. The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in the EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.**

   The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the selected alternative and all other alternatives is described in the EA.

7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts – which include connected actions regardless of land ownership.**

   The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the project is contained in the EA.

8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.** The project will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, or the degree to which the action may adversely affect: 1) a proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat, or 2) a species on BLM's sensitive species list**.

   The EA considered effects to Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species and concluded:

The Forest received a list of species from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to consider for projects, dated April 18th, 2006. The list included the Canada lynx and the bald eagle. The project does not take place within any identified lynx habitat, lynx are not known to occur in the project area or on the Forest, and the project does not take place in key linkage corridors. There are no known bald eagle roosts or nests in the project area or on the Forest. Proposed disturbances would not measurably affect potential foraging habitat for eagles.

Forest Service sensitive species are designated by the Regional Forester, and comprise a list of species for which viability may be of concern. Surveys for sensitive plant and wildlife species occurred for this project. Conservation measures were incorporated into project design to mitigate potential adverse effects to potential habitat or species' occurrences. These findings with their associated determinations for the species are summarized in the table in Appendix 3 of the EA.

Though effects to individual species varied, the proposed action was not found to lead to a trend toward federal listing of any sensitive species, and was found to have no effect on any threatened or endangered species.

No additional effects to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species of plant or animal were identified in review of this analysis within the new project area.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of a federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements.

The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

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Authorized Officer Date