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In Reply Refer To:
9210 (NVL0200)

Finding of No Significant Impact
Burnt Canyon Wildland Urban Interface Fuel Reduction Project
DOI-BLM-NV-L020-2011-0016-EA

Introduction

I have reviewed the attached environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Burnt Canyon Wildland Urban Interface Fuel Reduction (DOI-BLM-NV-L020-2011-0016-EA), dated February 7, 2012.

I have also considered the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA.

Context:

The project area being analyzed in this environmental assessment (EA) occurs around the private property in Burnt Canyon, Lincoln County, Nevada within Township 5 North, Range 69 East, Sections 13 and 24 and Township 5 North, Range 70 East, Sections 18, 19, and 30 (Map 1). All above locations are based on Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian (MDM). The primary vegetation within the project areas consists of brush and pinyon and juniper communities. The total project area perimeter includes approximately 558 acres, although only an estimated 75 percent of the total acreage (approximately 418 acres) within the boundary is targeted for treatment. All of the lands within the project areas perimeter are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Intensity:

The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into BLM's Critical Elements of the Human Environment list (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 that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The environmental assessment has considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed project. Considering all impacts, the project will reduce the fuel loads and continuity thus reducing the threat of wildland fire to the private property and structures in Burnt Canyon.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The proposed action will result in improved public health and safety by reducing the fuel loads and continuity within the wildland urban interface of Burnt Canyon. Treatment designs and mitigating measures incorporated into the proposed action will minimize impacts to public health and safety.

The treatments will be conducted according to BLM safety standards. Workplace hazard risks assessments will be completed by the workforce supervisor prior to on-the-ground activities.

The proposed action will have very minimal effects on air quality for the short term. Dust, during treatment activities is expected to occur but is not expected to exceed Nevada and National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Emissions from equipment will also occur, but air quality will not be affected beyond the current emission levels. Air quality will be minimally impacted, as wind will sufficiently transport particles from the area. All State and National air quality standards are expected to be met.

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

The project area is representative of the Great Basin in terms of vegetative condition and ecological functionality. Treatment design features and mitigating measures associated with the proposed action will reduce the overall fuel loading and continuity around the private property. The project area does not contain any park lands, wetlands or wild and scenic rivers or any prime and unique farmlands.

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

The methods of vegetation treatment activities are scientifically accepted, and are commonly employed to meet resource or management objectives. The effects of hazardous fuels reduction are well known and documented and are not highly controversial in that reduced fuels equate to reduced fire severity and better manageability. The effects from implementing the treatments are well known and documented and not considered to be highly controversial. No controversial issues were brought forward during the planning and scoping phases of this project.

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

There are no known effects of the proposed action identified in the EA that are considered uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. All vegetation treatment methods proposed are accepted standard management practices that have been successfully implemented in similar vegetation types within the Great Basin area.

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 proposed action will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. All future hazardous fuels reduction projects, if they occur would be subject to the same environmental assessment standards and independent decision making.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

All resources have been evaluated for cumulative impacts in the EA and no significant impacts were identified. Other fuels reduction and habitat improvement projects may be proposed within the Spring Valley South East Watershed based on fuel loading and vegetation conditions. These projects seen together with anticipated future proposed land disturbing activities in the area will not result in cumulatively significant impacts at the local or watershed scale.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources:

The proposed action will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical places. A cultural inventory has been completed and all historically significant resources will be avoided.

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:

It has been determined that no federally listed threatened or endangered species occur within the proposed project area.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The proposed action will not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

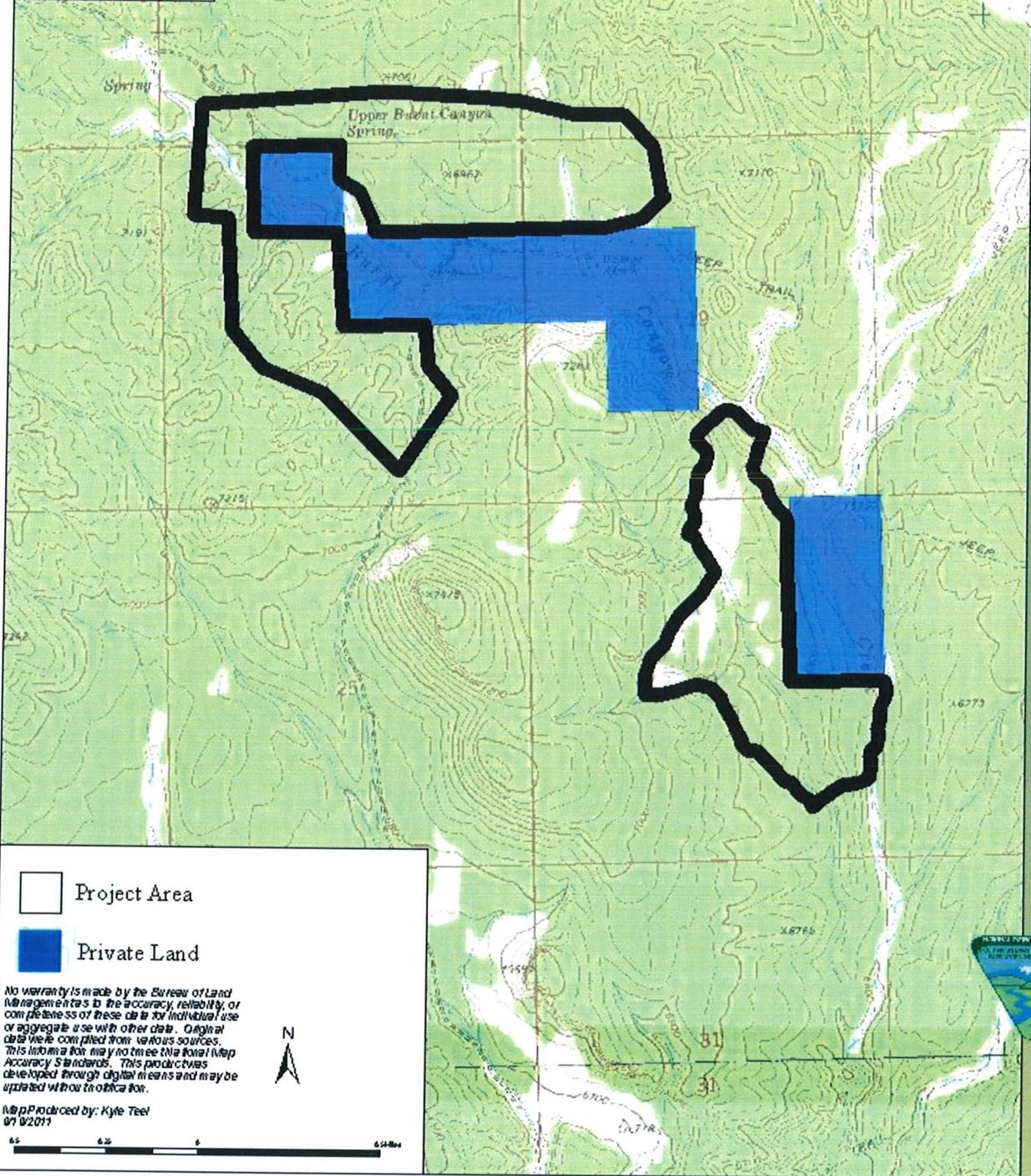
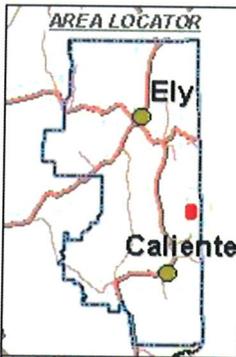
After consideration of the environmental effects as described in the Burnt Canyon Wildland Urban Interface Fuel Reduction (DOI-BLM-NV-L020-2011-0016-EA), I have determined that the proposed action with the design specifications, including minimization or mitigation measures identified in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.



Tye H. Petersen
Fire Management Officer
Ely District

2/7/12
Date

MAP 1: BURNT CANYON WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT AREA



-  Project Area
-  Private Land

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Map Produced by: Kyle Teel
07/02/17



Ely District Office

