

**United States Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management,  
Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA)  
Four Rivers Field Office and Center Allotment of the Bruneau Field Office (BFO)  
Fenceline Prescribed Fire Project  
BLM-ID-B010-2010-0016-EA**

## **Decision Record**

**Proposed Action:** The proposal would reduce hazardous fuels build-up associated with cured exotic invasive plant species (tumbleweeds) along 998 miles of fenceline within the NCA and BFO Center Grazing Allotment over multiple years using prescribed fire. Prescribed fire operations would be conducted by qualified BLM personnel in the late fall, winter, and spring months as needed.

**Decision:** It is my decision to implement the activities and actions described in Alternative B (Proposed Action) of BLM-ID-B010-2010-0016-EA for 780 miles of fenceline within the NCA and BFO. This portion of the proposed action includes fences on public land in the project area that are not currently classified as potential or occupied slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*) habitat (see attached Maps). The BLM has entered into formal consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on threatened and endangered species within the project area including slickspot peppergrass, Bruneau hot springsnail, and bull trout. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion (BO) for this project is anticipated in late summer/fall of 2011. The wildlife effects analysis in this EA states there will be no effect to the Bruneau hot springsnail or its' habitat and the bull trout or its' critical habitat as a result of the proposed action due to the proximity of all proposed fenceline burning to the Bruneau River (more than 150 feet away from any snail or trout habitat). The decision(s) concerning implementation of prescribed burning along the 218 miles of fenceline located within either potential or occupied slickspot peppergrass habitat will be made in the future following completion of the consultation process and botanical clearances.

**Rationale and Authority:** Implementing the proposed action effectively addresses the purpose and need identified in this EA which is to reduce the build-up of hazardous fuels and subsequent wildland fire hazard along fencelines within the NCA and Center Grazing Allotment of the Bruneau Field Office area. Reducing fuel build up will provide a safer environment to conduct suppression operations during wildland fires, alleviate public safety concerns along major travel corridors, and extend the life and investment in the fences.

The proposed action implements the intent of both the 2008 NCA Resource Management Plan and the 1983 Bruneau-Kuna Management Framework Plan which directs the agency to:

- 1) "... make the protection of native plant communities one of the highest priorities for fire suppression (NCA Plan ROD page 2-28)"
- 2) "... Use a combination of prescribed fire, herbicides, and mechanical treatments where appropriate, on all vegetation treatment projects, including ESR (NCA Plan ROD page 2-28)."

- 3) "... Manage all watersheds to achieve stable conditions and, where feasible/economical, strive to maintain or establish good perennial vegetation cover (Bruneau-Kuna Plan Watershed Objectives section)."
- 4) "... Use prescribed burning as the primary tool; for habitat management. (Bruneau-Kuna Plan Wildlife Objectives section)"

The proposed action is also in conformance with the Ada County All Hazards Mitigation Plan (2006), Elmore County Wildfire Mitigation Plan (2006), and Owyhee County Wildfire Mitigation Plan (2005).

**Public Involvement:** External scoping was conducted in January 2010, in the form of letters and maps sent to adjacent landowners and interested organizations, tribes, and individuals.

The project appeared in the online Four Rivers Field Office Schedule of Proposed Actions in December 2009 and January 2010. BLM staff met with the Shoshone Paiute Tribe on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in a government to government consultation process, and provided Shoshone Paiute Tribal representatives with archaeology, botany, and wildlife clearance reports for the project. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the BLM received positive comment from the Shoshone Paiute Tribe.

**Appeal:** Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the authorized officer at the Bureau of Land Management Four Rivers Field Office 3948 Development Avenue, Boise Idaho, 83705. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St. Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the authorized officer.

To file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR part 4.21(b), it must accompany your notice of appeal and must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the authorized officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons, and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the *Office of the Solicitor, Field Solicitor-U.S. Department of the Interior, University Plaza, 960 Broadway Avenue, Suite 400, Boise, Idaho 83706*, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

If you have any questions regarding this decision, or your appeal rights, please contact Sarah Heide, Boise District Fire Ecologist, at (208)384-3396.

/s/ Patricia S. Roller  
Patricia S. Roller  
Morley Nelson Birds of Prey NCA Manager

3/31/11  
Date

/s/ Arnold L. Pike  
Arnold Pike  
Bruneau Field Office Manager

3/30/11  
Date