

Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
Flat Top 2 Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan
#DOI-BLM-ID-T030-2012-0038-DNA
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
Twin Falls District
Shoshone Field Office/Craters of the Moon National Monument

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Flat Top 2
Fire Number	G40J
District/Field Office	Twin Falls/Shoshone
Admin Number	LLIDT03000
State	Idaho
County(s)	Lincoln
Ignition Date/Cause	8-05-2012/Lightning
Date Contained	8-12-2012

Jurisdiction	Acres
BLM	133,969
National Park Service	1,264
State	3,955
Private	1,766
Other	0

Total Acres	140,954
Total Costs	\$3,673,000
Costs to LF20000ES	\$3,324,000
Costs to LF32000BR	\$349,000

A. BLM Office: Shoshone Field Office **Lease/Serial/Case File No.** N/A

Proposed Action Title/Type: Flat Top 2 Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) Plan.

Location of Proposed Action:

Meridian	Township	Range	Affected Sections
Boise	T3S, 4S, 5S, 6S	R20E, 21E, 22E, 23E, R24E	Various

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is to implement the Flat Top 2 Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation plan as prescribed by the Shoshone Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment and outlined in the ES and BAR plan. The proposed action entails 14,202 acres of vegetation treatment by drill seeding a grass, forb and shrub mix, 12,189 acres of aerial seeding a grass and forb mix, 50,000 acres of aerial seeding a sagebrush seed mix, implementing detection and control of noxious weeds on 133,969 acres, 21 miles of fence repair, a livestock grazing closure, and monitoring.

Applicant (if any): N/A

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans.

The applicable land use plans for the ES and BAR project are the 1985 Monument Resource Management Plan and the 2006 Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve Management Plan.

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions.

Monument Resource Management Plan, 1985

The Monument RMP states that lands administered by the BLM in this area will be managed in order to:

- 1) Maintain or improve wildlife habitat for crucial mule deer winter range;
- 2) Improve poor or fair condition rangeland;
- 3) Maintain, improve, protect, and restore watershed conditions; and
- 4) Control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands and eradicate them where possible and economically feasible.

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve Management Plan, 2006

The Craters MP states that lands administered by the BLM, in relation to ESR activities, will be managed to:

- Emphasize protection of vegetation resources in North Laidlaw Park

- Maintain a road network suitable for aggressive fire suppression and restoration activities within the Monument
- Promote a proactive Integrated Weed Management Program
- Proactively protect and restore sagebrush steppe communities

Additionally, the Craters MP states “In the event of wildland fire, burned areas will be rehabilitated when necessary to restore the proper mosaic of sagebrush species and subspecies, along with a diverse perennial understory, and to suppress invasive and noxious weeds” (p.28). The Craters MP also indicates that native plants will be emphasized in rehabilitation and restoration projects (p.27) and allows that restoration treatments may be active or passive and may include but are not limited to the following: prescribed fire, thinning, mowing, herbicide treatment, seeding, temporary removal of livestock and/or changes in grazing regimes or facilities, and road closures (p. 26). The emergency stabilization treatments outlined here are consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the 2006 Craters MP and rangeland management agreements for the affected grazing allotments.

C. Identify applicable NEPA document(s) and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

The proposed action is addressed in the following NEPA documents.

1. Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM lands in the 17 Western States Programmatic EIS. September 29, 2007.
2. Shoshone Noxious Weed Control EA (ID-050-EA-92-031), March 25, 1992.
3. Burley and Shoshone Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan, May 24, 2005

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., source drinking water assessments, biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, rangeland health standard’s assessment and determinations, and monitoring the report).

1. Biological Assessment for the Burley and Shoshone Field Office NFRP and Concurrence, OALS #1-4-04-I-633.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes, the proposed action is a feature of the proposed actions outlined in the 2005 NFRP.

Documentation of answer and explanation: An interdisciplinary resource team review of this fire has revealed that the resource values, concerns, stabilization and rehabilitation needs are essentially the same as those analyzed in the 2005 NFRP and best meet the

wildlife, watershed, and soil objectives in the Monument RMP and Craters MP. The primary purpose of the ES and BAR plan is to stabilize soils from erosion impacts by assuring that the pre-existing native plants and proposed seeded plants are protected from grazing use, and allowed to recover, maximize growth, and provide a source of live and litter ground cover for the protection of the soil resource.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values, and circumstances?

Yes, the range of alternatives in the existing NEPA documents is appropriate considering the current proposed action.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The range of alternatives analyzed in the NFRP is appropriate with respect to the Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation activities. Two alternatives to the proposed action were analyzed in the NFRP EA. They included an alternative action that would not implement ES and BAR treatments, but was eliminated from detailed analysis because it was not consistent with BLM policy, and the No Action Alternative which would have continued to use the Burley (1990) and Shoshone (1989) NFRPs. The current proposals follow the NFRP proposed action with the overall objective of stabilizing and rehabilitating the burned area to its previous native and/or seeded condition in the shortest time frame to enhance and protect the watershed, soil, wildlife habitat, and livestock forage values of the area.

3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (Such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new the proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is still valid.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The NFRP was approved on May 24, 2005. No new information that would change the proposed action or invalidate the analysis contained in the NFRP has been identified. During the interdisciplinary review, team members consulted the most recent list of Threatened and Endangered species (August 17, 2011) and BLM sensitive species for the Shoshone Field Office.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

Yes, the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from the ES and BAR project are similar to those analyzed in the 2005 NFRP EA.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The current proposed action would result primarily in impacts to soils and vegetation. These impacts were considered in the NFRP on pages 40-44. With native vegetation recovery and establishment of the drill and aerial seedings, the area susceptible to wind erosion would be reduced.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, the public involvement and interagency review of the NFRP is adequate for the current proposed actions.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Scoping letters informing the public of the purpose and need for action were sent to approximately 700 interested publics including organizations, and federal and state agencies beginning in November of 2003. The public and other agencies included interest from ranchers, academia, conservation groups, the Tribes, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and ESA consultation with the USFWS.

The ES and BAR plan along with the Decision Record would be posted on the Idaho BLM's NEPA website and is available upon request.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Name	Title	Resource Represented
Joe Russell	Fire Ecologist	Fuels
Danelle Nance	Natural Resource Specialist	Fuels
Scott Uhrig	Fire Rehabilitation Specialist	Operations
Dan Patten	Range Management Specialist	Range
Lisa Cresswell	Archaeologist/NEPA Coordinator	Cultural/NEPA
Gary Wright	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife

F. Mitigation Measures:

Burn areas will be monitored for recovery and establishment of the drill and aerial seeding treatments prior to allowing resumption of livestock grazing. Cultural resource inventories will be completed prior to ground disturbing activities (drilling) to avoid any potential adverse effects to significant cultural sites.

CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the Craters MP and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLMs compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/s/ Joseph E. Russell
Joe Russell
Project Lead

9-4-2012
Date

/s/ Lisa Cresswell
Lisa Cresswell
NEPA Coordinator

9-4-2012
Date

/s/ Jim Tharp
Jim Tharp
Acting Shoshone Field Office Manager

9-4-2012
Date

/s/ Holly Hampton
Holly Hampton
Craters of the Moon Monument Manager

9-4-2012
Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.