

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

Twin Falls District
Jarbidge Field Office
2536 Kimberly Road
Twin Falls, ID 83301

**Worksheet
Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**

NEPA No. DOI-BLM-ID-T010-2012-0021-DNA

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

Proposed Action Title/Type: Diamond Ranch (G6D1) Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&BAR) Plan.

Location of Proposed Action: The Diamond Ranch Fire is located in Owyhee County about 4 miles west of Murphy Hot Springs, Idaho, and covers portions of T16S R08E Sections 13, 24, 25; T16S R09E Sections 17-20, 28-32; and T47N R58E Section 5. The fire burned portions of the Columbet/Dorsey Table and Horse pastures of the Diamond A livestock grazing allotment.

Applicant (if any): N/A.

A. Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action is to implement the Diamond Ranch ES&BAR plan as prescribed by the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment. Treatments and associated design features and monitoring are detailed in the Diamond Ranch Fire (G6D1) ES&BAR plan. The proposed action consists of the following treatments :

- Inventory and treat 3,028 acres for noxious weeds for 3 years.
- Hand plant up to 25,000 containerized or bare-root low sagebrush seedlings and 5,000 Wyoming big sagebrush seedlings. Planting would occur in early spring or late fall and would utilize contract-grown plants using seed from a local source, if possible.
- Close the burned area to grazing until resource objectives have been met.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Jarbidge Resource Management Plan (RMP).

Date Approved/Amended: March 23, 1987.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Jarbidge RMP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives):

- Improve lands in poor ecological condition (p. II-59).
- Manage big game habitat for mule deer, antelope, and bighorn sheep (p. II-59).
- Maintain current condition of riparian habitat (p. II-60).

In addition, the proposed action addresses the following RMP Resource Management Guidelines:

- Terrestrial Wildlife (pp. II-83 – II-84):
 - Manage all ecological sites on mule deer, pronghorn, elk, bighorn sheep and sage-grouse habitat currently in fair or poor ecological condition, for good ecological condition.
 - Manage all wildlife habitat within the resource area to provide a diversity of vegetation and habitats.
- Control of Noxious Weeds (p. II-94):
 - BLM will control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands where possible, where economically feasible, and to the extent that funds are prioritized for that purpose.
- Fire Management (p. II-89):
 - All grazing licenses issued that include areas recently burned and/or seeded will include a statement concerning the amount of rest needed in the seedings or burned area. Normally two years of rest will be necessary to protect these areas. This rested area may include remnant stands of desirable species that survived the fire.

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

The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent the following NEPA documents:

- Decision Record for the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050), approved May 12, 2005. The Diamond Ranch ES&BAR project meets the following treatment criteria outlined in the NFRP (p. 10):
 - Areas where the soil is susceptible to accelerated erosion either because of soil characteristics, steep topography, or recurrent high winds.
 - Areas where perennial grasses, shrubs, and forbs have been depleted and cannot reasonably be expected to provide soil and watershed protection within two years after a wildland fire.
 - Areas where noxious weeds or exotic annual grasses may readily invade and become established following a wildland fire.
 - Areas that contain crucial habitat for wildlife and/or special status species.
 - Areas where ESR is necessary to meet land use plan objectives.

The NFRP contains analysis of treatment types included in the proposed action, including noxious and invasive weed treatments (pp. 14-16); hand planting shrub seedlings (p. 12); and livestock grazing closure (p. 19).

- Decision Record for the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA (#ID100-2005-EA-265) for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office, approved January 25, 2007. This EA analyzed chemical, mechanical, and biological control methods for managing noxious and invasive weeds. The Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA also includes general design features that would be applied in the proposed action (pp. 7-10).
- Record of Decision (ROD) for the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007. Appendix B of the ROD includes a list of standard operating procedures that would be used for vegetation treatments using herbicides.
- Decision Record for the Jarbidge Field Office Shrub Planting EA #ID-201-2008-EA-359), approved February 2, 2012. This EA analyzed the effects of hand and mechanical planting upland and riparian shrubs. Design features were included in the ES&BAR plan to reduce or eliminate potential impacts to sensitive resources.

Other Relevant Documents

Treatments are consistent with current Bureau policy (Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043) for enhancement and restoration of sage-grouse habitat, specifically:

- In Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation plans, prioritize re-vegetation projects to (1) maintain and enhance unburned intact sagebrush habitat when at risk from adjacent threats; (2) stabilize soils; (3) reestablish hydrologic function; (4) maintain and enhance biological integrity; (5) promote plant resiliency; (6) limit expansion or dominance of invasive species; and (7) reestablish native species.

The proposed treatments address also conservation measures identified in the 2006 Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho, which recommended seeding or planting the appropriate species and subspecies of sagebrush as part of restoration or burned area rehabilitation treatments (pp. 4-19 through 4-20), re-establishing sagebrush in seeded perennial grasslands (pp. 4-85 through 4-87), and noxious weed control in burned areas (p. 4-20).

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 treatments included in the Diamond Ranch ES&BAR plan were analyzed in the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office NFRP, Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment, and Jarbidge Field Office Programmatic Shrub Planting EAs. Treatment types meet the criteria listed on page 10 of the NFRP for protection and treatment of burned areas (see section C above).

The proposed action is contained in the applicable geographic analysis area for all of the NEPA documents listed above. Resource conditions are also within the range considered in all of the pertinent NEPA documents.

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, resource values, and circumstances?

Yes. The alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA documents are appropriate to the proposed action. Two other alternatives were analyzed in the NFRP EA. These included a No Action alternative that would have continued implementation of the 1987/1988 NFRPs, and an alternative to not implement ES&BAR treatments. The latter alternative was eliminated because it is inconsistent with BLM policy. The current proposed action is intended to protect soils and vegetation within the burned area from degradation and is appropriate relative to the existing analysis and resource conditions. The proposed treatment to restore sagebrush cover to the burned area is consistent with current sage-grouse conservation policies.

In addition to the selected alternative, four other alternatives were considered in the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA. These included a No Action alternative that would have continued implementing the 1998 weed control program, an alternative that considered not using herbicides, an alternative that considered not treating weeds, and an alternative limited to treating juniper and sagebrush. The noxious weed and invasive plant treatments proposed in the Diamond Ranch ES&BAR plan are consistent with the selected alternative and are appropriate given existing resource conditions.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, or 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 proposed action?

Yes. The existing analyses contained in the NEPA documents listed in section C continue to be valid because no new information or changed circumstances have been identified that would cause the BLM to consider a new or revised proposed action. During the interdisciplinary review, team members consulted the most recent list of Threatened and Endangered species (see <http://www.fws.gov/idaho/species/T&E/TE072611IFWOREV.pdf>, accessed August 20, 2012) and BLM sensitive species for the Jarbidge Field Office (see <http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/id/publications.Par.18638.File.dat/Idaho%20Special%20StatusPlants2011.pdf>, accessed August 20, 2012).

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 NEPA documents listed in section C above adequately analyzed the environmental effects that would result from implementation of the treatments proposed in the Diamond Ranch ES&BAR plan. No new treatment types have been identified that will deviate from those analyzed

in these documents. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects analyses contained in these existing NEPA documents continue to be current and accurate.

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 existing NEPA documents is adequate for the current proposed action. Scoping letters were sent to interested publics, including individuals, organizations, and federal and state agencies, as summarized in the table below. In addition, government-to-government consultations were performed with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall. Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultations were performed for these programmatic documents.

NEPA Document	Number of Scoping Letters	Date of Scoping
NFRP EA	1,077	October 2003
Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA	102	April 2003
Jarbidge Field Office Programmatic Shrub Planting EA	18	April 2010

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Resource/Agency Represented
Julie Hilty	Fire Ecologist	Fuels/BLM
Scott Uhrig	Fire Rehabilitation Specialist	Operations/BLM
Krystle Pehrson	NEPA Coordinator	NEPA/BLM
Jeff Ross	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources/BLM
Erik Kriwox	Rangeland Management Specialist	Range/BLM
Michael Haney	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife/BLM
Mark Fleming	Regional Wildlife Habitat Manager	Wildlife/Idaho Department of Fish and Game

CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the Jarbidge RMP and that the existing NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/s/ Julie Hilty 9/4/2012
Julie Hilty, Project Lead Date

/s/ Krystle Pehrson 9/5/2012
Krystle Pehrson, NEPA Coordinator Date

/s/ Brian W. Davis 9/5/2012
Brian W. Davis, Field Office Manager 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.