

**DECISION RECORD AND RATIONALE
BLM/BOISE/FRFO
BENWALK FIRE (G1MC) DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2012-0049-DNA**

Applicant: (if any) None - BLM Proposal		Proposed Action: ESR	Fire #: G1MC	Project No.:	E.A. No.: ID-B010-2012-0049
State: Idaho	County: Elmore	District: Boise	Field Office: Four Rivers & Birds of Prey NCA		Authority: FLPMA
Prepared By: (signature) Michael McGee		Title: Wildlife Biologist	Field Exam Date(s): 7/13/2012	Report Date: 7/26/2012	

LANDS INVOLVED

Meridian	Township	Range	Section(s)	Subdivision(s)	Acres
Boise	T 3S & 4S	R 7&8E (T3S) R 7,8,&9E (T4S)	T4S R9E Sec28 - Fire Origin		35,163

RATIONALE AND PLAN CONFORMANCE

This emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ES&BAR) plan is consistent with the three applicable land use plans for the project area including the Jarbidge Resource Management Plan and associated Record of Decision (ROD) dated March 23, 1987, the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan and associated ROD dated September 30, 2008, and the Kuna Management Framework Plan dated March 30, 1983. The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the Boise District Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050), the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA (#ID100-2005-EA-265) for the Boise District. Treatments are consistent with existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass. On August 26, 2009, Idaho BLM signed a Conservation Agreement (CA) with the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service). In this CA, BLM agreed to develop and implement activities that provide for the conservation and recovery of slickspot peppergrass. On September 16, 2009, BLM initiated consultation with the Service on existing land use plans. On November 30, 2009, the Service issued a Biological Opinion (BO) which further recommended implementation of conservation measures contained within the CA, which was attached as an appendix to the BO.

In addition, programmatic conference reports were prepared in 2006 by the Boise District Office for Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment (144-2006-IC-0918) and Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (14420-2006-IC-0975) programmatic actions. These programmatic actions were developed to include all field offices in the Boise District. These Conference Reports were confirmed December 15, 2009 (14420-2010-TA-0103). BLM also consulted with the Service regarding programmatic shrub planting activities and received a letter of concurrence on January 27, 2012.

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

In ES&BAR 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.

Our decision will result in the most beneficial, quickest recovery, and least costly stabilization and rehabilitation efforts for the pre-existing vegetation and soil resources of the burned area.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES

This wildfire management decision is issued under 43 CFR Part 5003.1 (or 43 CFR 4190.1 for rangelands) and is effective immediately. The BLM has made the determination that vegetation, soil, or other resources on the public lands are at substantial risk of wildfire due to drought, fuels buildup, or other reasons, or at immediate risk of erosion or other damage due to wildfire. Thus, notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. The Interior Board of Land Appeals must decide an appeal of this decision within 60 days after all pleadings have been filed, and within 180 days after the appeal was filed (43 CFR 4.416).

DECISION

It is our decision to implement the Benwalk Fire ES&BAR plan pending approval of funding. We have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with an approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required.

/s/ Patricia Roller
Approving Official Birds of Prey NCA

9/24/2012
Date

/s/ Terry A. Humphrey
Approving Official Four Rivers FO

9/24/2012
Date