



Bureau of Land Management

Boise District Office
Bruneau Field Office
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Boise, ID 83705
<http://www.id.blm.gov>

Determination of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management

A. BLM Office(s): Boise District - Bruneau Field Office

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-ID-B020-2012-0014-DNA

Lease/Serial Case File No.:

Proposed Action Title/Type: East Rock Fire G4ZN ESR Plan

Location/Legal of Proposed Action: Approximately 72 miles Southeast of Boise, ID / T09S R06E Section(s) 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26, 36; T 09S R 07E Section(s) 19, 29, 30, 31, 32

Applicant (if any): N/A

Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures:

Emergency Stabilization Treatments

S2 – Ground Seeding - Approximately 1,800 acres would be drill seeded with ‘Vavilov’ Siberian wheatgrass using a rangeland drill in a three drill-cart configuration.

S5 – Noxious Weeds - Noxious weeds observed and treated in, and adjacent to, the recently burned area include perennial pepperweed, rush skeletonweed, Scotch thistle, tamarisk, and whitetop. The risk of invasion into newly burned areas by noxious and invasive weed species is high, given the proximity to existing populations.

Noxious weed inventory and spot herbicide treatment would occur during the first year following the fire within the burned area. Noxious weeds would be treated with BLM-approved chemicals in accordance with the Noxious Weed EA and Record of Decision for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007 (Vegetation Treatment EIS). Appendix B of the Record of Decision includes a list of Standard Operating Procedures that would be strictly adhered to for vegetation treatments using herbicides.

S6 – Soil Stabilization - Approximately 20 straw check dams would be placed at strategic locations to reduce the potential for the movement of sediment from the uplands into the Bruneau River Canyon and side canyons. The locations will be determined by topography, fire intensity, soil type, and recovery potential of the vegetation.

S7 – Fence/Gate/Cattleguard - Approximately 6 miles of temporary protective fence would be constructed to BLM specification for wildlife to restrict livestock access into the burned area while vegetation establishment and recovery occurs. The fencing would allow livestock to access the remaining 86% of the East Canyon View allotment and 98% of the Big Lake pasture of the Blackstone allotment during plant establishment and recovery of the burned area.

S12 – Closures - The burned area would be closed to livestock use to allow for seeded plant species to establish until treatment objectives identified in the monitoring section have been achieved.

S13 – Monitoring - Monitoring will be conducted on treatments and is described in detail in the Monitoring section of the plan.

Burned Area Rehabilitation Treatments

R3 – Aerial Seeding - Approximately 1,310 acres of the 2,619 acres of burned BLM land would be broadcast seeded with Wyoming big sagebrush using aerial application methods. The BLM lands within the burned area have been identified as Preliminary General Habitat (PGH) for Greater sage-grouse. The seed would be flown on in strips resulting in half (1,310) of the total area (2,619) receiving seed. This will enable heavier seeding rates, using the same amount of seed, and covering a larger portion of the area. Prior to seeding the portion of the burned area within the wilderness boundaries, permissions and protocol would be established with the wilderness supervisor to ensure wilderness characteristics are protected.

R5 – Noxious Weeds – The treatment described under S5, would continue for two additional years.

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

LUP/Document	Sections/Pages	Date Approved
Bruneau Management Framework Plan (MFP)	See below	May 1983

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

These proposed actions meet the MFP objectives to:

- Provide for protection and conservation of rare and endangered species within the planning unit (RM-5);
- Protect and/or improve endangered species habitat within the BPU (WL-1);
- Manage sensitive species habitat in the BPU to maintain or increase existing and potential populations (WL-2);
- Maintain and/or enhance unique or special habitats to retain and/or improve their character and value for wildlife, research, and human enjoyment. Protect habitats supporting nongame wildlife with high public and/or biological interest (WL-5);
- Maintain stability of 408,300 acres classified as moderate, high, and critical erosion hazard by reducing or minimizing wind and water erosion (WS-1);

The proposed treatments in the ES and ER plans conform to the 1983 Bruneau MFP. The interdisciplinary team developed objectives and treatments which respond to the identified issues and concerns. The BLM would evaluate the plans based on the success or failure in meeting these objectives.

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action. List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

NEPA/Other Related Documents	Sections/Pages	Date Approved
Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and the Vegetation Treatments on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report (http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/veg_eis.html)	Record of Decision and Appendix B - Standard Operating Procedures	June, 2007
Boise District Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA	All	February 6, 2007
Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management	All	August 1997
Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan EA	All	May 12, 2005

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, a range of proposed actions were analyzed under the 2005 Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment (NFESRP EA). These included; ground and aerial seeding, herbicide uses for noxious weed treatments, and livestock management actions. An interdisciplinary team review of this fire determined that the resource values, concerns, and rehabilitation needs are substantially similar to those discussed and approved in the NFESRP EA and best meet the vegetative, watershed, and soil objectives of this Plan and the Bruneau Framework Management Plan (MFP).

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

Yes, the range of alternatives analyzed in the NFESRP EA is appropriate for this action. An alternative action that would not implement ESR treatments, was considered, but eliminated from detailed analysis because it was not consistent with BLM policy or the Purpose and Need Statement of the EA. The No Action Alternative which would continue to use existing 1987/1988 NFESRP EAs was analyzed as an alternative to the Proposed Action. The overall objective of the Purposed and Need of the NFESRP EA is to stabilize and return a burned site 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. The proposed actions of the East Rock ES&R plan are designed to accomplish that objective for the area burned by the East Rock Fire (G4ZN).

- 3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (e.g., riparian proper functioning condition reports; rangeland health standards assessments; inventory and monitoring data; most recent USFWS lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

Yes, the proposed treatments, especially the seeding of shrubs, will stabilize soils and protect habitat for the Bruneau hot springsnail by reducing the potential for soil movement from the uplands into the river corridor. The proposed treatments are covered under the Biological Assessment for the 2005 NFESRP EA, which addresses the proposed treatments; the subsequent Biological Opinion is in concurrence with the Assessment.

The livestock closure will minimize potential displacement impacts to wintering big game from remaining patches of suitable habitat within the burned area. All temporary fences will be constructed consistent with the NFESRP EA (p. 24) in big game habitat. The analysis in the NFESRP EA (p. 65) is valid.

Based on the new information gained during recent inventory and survey of the burn area, existing analysis from the NFESRP EA is adequate. The proposed actions within the treatment area and their effects to the above species were analyzed in the plan and found to be insignificant.

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 analyses of the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action remain unchanged from those outlined in the existing NEPA document. The impacts outlined in the document directly correlate to those impacts expected from the current proposed actions of drill seeding, aerial seeding, noxious weed treatment, and infrastructure repair. The direct and indirect impact analysis does not analyze the impacts of the fire and the resulting loss of habitat, which is outside the scope of the document. The NFESRP EA analyzes site-specific impacts to resources such as vegetation, wildlife, soils, and sensitive species as a result of the proposed treatments outlined in the ES and BAR plans. All specific design features outlined in the NFESRP EA will be followed during implementation of the emergency stabilization and rehabilitation treatments.

The cumulative impacts analyzed in the existing NEPA document are adequate with the addition of the proposed action. Special status and non-status plants and animals would be protected by the general and species-specific design features and would benefit from a return to more natural fire cycles and improved ecosystem function including better habitat/population connectivity, migratory corridors, habitat structure, forage, and suitability.

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 document is adequate for the current proposed action. The EA states on page 77 that “scoping letters informing the public of the purpose and need for action were sent to 1,077 interested publics including organizations, and federal and state agencies in October, 2003.” The general publics and other agencies included interest from ranchers, academia, conservation groups, Tribal governments, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and ESA consultation with the USFWS.

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Resource/Agency Represented
Barbara Chaney	Biologist	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Shoshone-Paiute Tribes	Wings and Roots	Native American Nation

Boise District Staff Consulted

Name	Title	Agency Represented/Duty Station
Kathi Kershaw	Fuels Botanist/Ecologist	BLM – Boise District
Robert Bennett	Operations	BLM – Boise District
Kavi Koleini	Ecologist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
Jon Haupt	Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	BLM - Bruneau Field Office
Holly Beck	Botanist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
Bruce Schoeberl	Wildlife Biologist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
Dave Mays	Fisheries Biologist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
Seth Flanigan	NEPA Specialist	BLM – Boise District
Alex Webb	Operations	BLM – Boise District

Note: Refer to the EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

F. Mitigation Measures: List any applicable mitigation measures that were identified, analyzed, and approved in relevant LUPs and existing NEPA document(s). List the specific mitigation measures or identify an attachment that includes those specific mitigation measures. Document that these applicable mitigation measures have been incorporated and implemented.

No Mitigation Measures have been identified.

G. Conclusion (If one or more of these criteria is not met, you will not be able to check this box.)

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

/s/ Kathi Kershaw
Kathi Kershaw
Preparer

9/27/2012
Date

/s/ Seth Flanigan
Seth Flanigan
NEPA Specialist

9/27/2012
Date

/s/ Aimee D. Betts (acting for)
Arnie Pike
Bruneau Field Manager

9/27/2012
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.