



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Phoenix District  
Hassayampa Field Office  
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In Reply Refer To:  
9210 (AZP010)  
DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2014-0030-EA

### DECISION

#### **Hassayampa Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Defense System DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2014-0030-EA**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Bureau of Land Management, Hassayampa Field Office has prepared the Hassayampa Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Defense System Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2014-0030-EA) to evaluate the potential impacts related to hazardous fuels reduction treatments.

The project area consists of 22,084 acres of BLM administered land and all of those acres will be targeted for treatment.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The purpose and need of the action is to reduce the intensity and severity of future wildland fires in the WUI by reducing hazardous fuels on the ground and by creating a defensible buffer to provide for a safer suppression environment. Specifically, this would be accomplished by:

- Reducing shrub density from current hazardous levels
- Reducing overall fuel loading (burnable above-ground biomass) in the WUI
- Reducing average height and decreasing horizontal continuity to reduce anticipated fire behavior in WUI
- Reducing shrub fuel loadings in hazard areas in order to reduce fire behavior in the WUI
- Restoring native vegetation in areas where non-native and noxious weeds have taken over in the WUI.

#### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The public was provided the opportunity to participate in this EA in compliance with 43 CFR 1610.2. The EA was made available through the NEPA Register for a 30 day comment period

and letters were sent to interested public. The BLM did not receive any comments during the open comment period.

Tribal consultation letters were sent to the following tribes: Pueblo of Zuni, Yavapai-Prescott, Tohono O'odham Nation, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Hopi Tribe, Gila River Indian Community, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, and the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

### **DECISION**

After reviewing the analysis presented in the Hassayampa Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Defense System EA and making a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), it is my decision to approve the Proposed Action. The following will be applied as part of the approval of this project:

- Guidelines For Handling Sonoran Desert Tortoises Encountered On Development Projects-Arizona Game and Fish Department (Revised October 23, 2007)
- Herbicide Treatment Standard Operating Procedures

### **RATIONALE**

The proposed action in combination with the analysis in the EA, and the enclosed FONSI, show that all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted and that unnecessary or undue degradation of the public lands will not occur as a result of the Hassayampa WUI Fire Defense System.

This decision is in conformance with the *Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (April 2010)*.

In 2003, Congress passed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) (Public Law [P.L.] 108-148). For all EAs completed under the HFRA, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must use the *Guidance for Environmental Assessments for Forest Health Projects*, provided in a December 9, 2002 memorandum from the CEQ. This EA has been prepared in accordance with CEQ's guidance for preparing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents authorized under the HFRA of 2003 (USFS 2012).

### **RATIONALE FOR FULL FORCE AND EFFECT DECISION**

I have determined that:

- Vegetation, soils and other significant natural and human resources;
- The private and public properties of the communities within the WUI and surrounding Federal Lands;
- Public safety; and
- The current potential working environment for all wildland fire fighters

are all at substantial risk from the threat of wildland fire.

Implementation of the proposed action will reduce this risk to the communities and their infrastructure and reduce the risk of fire ignited on private land and spreading to the wildland and improving fire management within and adjacent to these communities.

I am making this rangeland wildfire management decision effective on the date this document is signed per the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4100-Grazing Administration-Exclusive of Alaska, Subpart 4190.1.

#### **AUTHORITY**

This Decision is in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) as amended (72 USC 4321 et. seq.); Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (P.L. 88-578) as amended; and the General and Title V of the Federal Land Management Policy Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

#### **APPEAL OF THE DECISION**

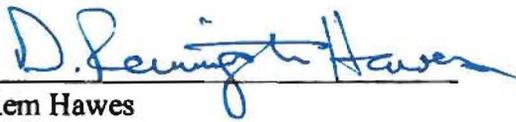
This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office at the above address within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the Decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulation at 43 CFR 3256.11 or 43 CFR 3200.5 for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the IBLA and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed in this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to 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.
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.



Rem Hawes  
Field Manager  
Hassayampa Field Office

2/13/2015  
Date