

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Environmental Assessment
Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0204-EA**

PREPARING OFFICE

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Environmental Assessment
Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation
DOI-BLM-UT-G010–2014–0204-EA

Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal Field Office
Vernal, Utah

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Finding of No Significant Impact

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0204-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0204-EA, I have determined that the proposed action will not have any significant impacts on the environment and an environmental impact statement is not required.

Signatures:

Approved by:

/s/ Troy Suwyn

Troy Suwyn

Fire Management Officer

10/10/2014

[Date]

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Decision Record

Decision

Based on my understanding of the information contained in the *Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation EA* and my subsequent finding of no significant impact, it is my decision to authorize the actions needed to restore the sagebrush vegetation type, and reduce fuel loads as set out in DOI-BLM-G010-2014-0204 EA

The following actions will be realized:

- Apply the aerial seeding, drill seeding, and chaining over the project area.
- Apply ongoing weed control efforts following treatment, including the application of Plateau (Imazapic) herbicide.

Rationale for Decision:

My decision to authorize implementation of the proposed action alternative will not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation to wilderness characteristics, threatened or endangered species, cultural resources, or matters pertaining to Native American religious freedoms or their customs. Realization of the proposed action is in conformance with the existing Vernal RMP (2008) and is consistent with the Uintah County Land Use Plan. The No Action Alternative was not selected because that alternative would not meet the stated purpose and need of restoring vegetation and reducing the risk of continued wildfires within the area.

Implementation of the proposed action will result in the improvement towards a vigorous and healthy sagebrush vegetative type. The treatment will result in the following positive result:

1. Decrease the risk of unplanned fire events.
2. There would be increased forage for both livestock, big game species, and Greater sage-grouse.
3. Habitat values for sagebrush related keystone species would be restored.

Protest and/or Appeal Provision:

The decision or approval may be appealed to the Interior Board Of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR 4.21. Within 30 days of receipt of the decision, an appeal must be filed to: Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, Virginia, 22203. A copy of the notice of appeal must also be filed in the Vernal Field Office at 170 South 500 East; Vernal, Utah, 84078, as well as with: Office of the Solicitor, 125 South State Street, Suite 6201, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84138. Public notification of this decision will be considered to have occurred on , July 09, 2014. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR 3150.2(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2. The likelihood of the appellants success on merits,
3. The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and
4. Whether the public interest favors the granting of the stay

Authorizing Official:

/s/ Troy Suwyn

Troy Suwyn
Fire Management Officer

10/10/2014

[Date]

Chapter 1. Introduction

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1.1. Introduction

The Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze the Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation project. The EA is an analysis of potential impacts that could result with the implementation of a proposed action or no action alternative. The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any “significant” impacts could result from the analyzed actions. “Significance” is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27. An EA provides evidence for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a statement of “Finding of No Significant Impact” (FONSI). A FONSI statement, is a document that briefly presents the reasons why implementation of the selected alternative will not result in “significant” environmental impacts (effects) beyond those already addressed in the Vernal Resource Management Plan (2008). This document provides the environmental assessment for the Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation.

1.2. Identifying Information:

1.2.1. Location of Proposed Action:

Location:

Uintah County, Vernal, Utah

T. 03 South, R. 21 East; Sections 19-22, 27-30, 32-34 SLB&M.

1.2.2. Name and Location of Preparing Office:

Lead Office - Vernal Field Office and number NEPA #DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0204-EA

1.3. Purpose and Need for Action:

The purpose of the Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation project is to implement fire rehabilitation actions to reduce erosion from the burned area and to prevent the establishment of noxious and invasive weeds. Rehabilitation of the burned area is needed to maintain long term soil productivity; and maintain ecosystem integrity, diversity, and habitat for keystone species. The Taylor Mountain Road Fire burned approximately 2,862 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered lands, and the proposed fire rehabilitation efforts are targeted towards rehabilitating 2,200 acres that are the most susceptible to erosion and weed infestation.

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Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives

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This EA focuses on the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives. The No Action Alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed action.

2.1. Description of Alternatives, Including Proposed Action:

Proposed Action:

The proposed action involves rehabilitation of 2,200 acres of burned BLM Administered lands through the following treatments;

1. Aerially apply seed to the 2,200 acre project area.
2. Cover approximately 1,200 acres of the seed with an Ely anchor chain, which will be dragged over the project area by two Caterpillar type tractors, excluding riparian areas and flood plains.
3. Drill seed approximately 200 acres with the range drill adjacent to private property, values at risk and strategic locations.
4. Reinstall OHV trail signs along OHV routes.
5. Apply Plateau (Imazapic) herbicide to 2,200 acres to eliminate the cheatgrass understory within the project area. Plateau would be aerially applied in the fall to eliminate any cheatgrass plants that germinate in the fall. Plateau would be applied at the rate of 5.5oz. per acre.

The following Standard Operating Procedures would be adhered to during the application of the Plateau herbicide:

- The herbicide product label would be followed for use and storage.
- Only licensed applicators would apply the herbicide.
- Herbicide application would be avoided during times of adverse weather conditions.
- Label instructions and buffer distances in the 2007 BLM Vegetation Treatment using Herbicides Environmental Assessment and/or the Vernal Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment would be followed.
- Aerial application of the herbicide would not occur when surface winds exceed 3 mph.
- Herbicide will not be applied within 300 feet from any permanent water, canal or agricultural field.
- Drift control agents and low volatile formulations would be used in the herbicide formulation to reduce drift hazard to non-target areas.
- A Pesticide Use Proposal will be obtained from the Utah State Office by the Vernal Field Office outlining buffer areas for protection of the flood plains and public water reserves prior to any herbicide application.
- All equipment would be cleaned and power washed prior to entering and leaving the project area.

Seed: Common Name	Seed: Scientific Name	Bulk Pounds per acre
Alfalfa	Medicago sativa	0.5
Bluebunch Wheatgrass	Agropyron spicatum	1
Annual Sunflower	Helianthus annuus	0.2
Big Bluegrass	Poa ampla	0.1
Blue Flax	Linum perenne	0.2
Blue Grama	Bouteloua gracilis	0.1
Crested Wheatgrass	Agropyron cristatum	1
Forage Kochia	Kochia prostrata	0.2
Fourwing Saltbush	Atriplex canescens	1
Scarlet Globemallow	Sphaeralcea coccinea	0.1
Indian Ricegrass	Oryzopsis hymenoides	2
Needle and Thread	Stipa comata	0.5
Palmer Penstemon	Penstemon palmeri	0.1
Rocky Mountain Bee Plant	Cleome serrulata	0.5
Siberian Wheatgrass	Agropyron sibericum	1
Sainfoin	Onobrychis viciifolia	2
Sand Dropseed	Sporobolus cryptandrus	0.05
Slender Wheatgrass	Agropyron trachycaulum	1.5
Small Burnet	Sanguisorba minor	1.5
Snake River Wheatgrass	Elymus wawawaiensis	1.5
Russian Wildrye	Elymus junceus	0.5
Western Wheatgrass	Agropyron smithii	1.5
Western Yarrow	Achillea millefolium	0.05
Wyoming Sagebrush	Artemisia tridentata	.10
Yellow Sweetclover	Melilotus officinalis	0.5

Actual seed mixture may change with availability and cost at the time of purchase. No new access roads would be needed to access the project area and access would be via existing roads and trails. No permanent man-made structures would be established or left remaining after treatment work is completed.

1. A pre-project weed inventory would be conducted following existing trails, to determine the presence of noxious weeds. If weeds were found, they would be: a) mapped and reported; b) removed or treated prior to surface disturbance; c) and removed or treated prior to seed set when possible.
2. All equipment would be power-washed, outside of the project area, prior to entering the project area.
3. All vehicles and equipment would be power-washed after driving through a noxious weed infestation, outside of the project area.
4. Staging areas would be located in weed free sites within previously disturbed areas, including existing roads.
5. Annual monitoring of the project area for weed establishment would occur.
6. Annual treatments of weeds would be conducted under the authority of existing Vernal Field Office Pesticide Use Proposals, and following existing policy (Vernal Field Office Surface Disturbing Weed Policy 2009).
7. No treatments will be allowed in riparian areas or flood plains.

*Chapter 2 Proposed Action and Alternatives
Description of Alternatives, Including Proposed
Action:*

Due to the potential for weed invasion within the project area, the following weed prevention measures would be adhered to:

No chemicals subject to SARA Title III in amounts greater than 10,000 pounds would be used. No extremely hazardous substances as defined in 40 CFR 355 in threshold planning quantities would be used.

No treatment work will be completed within riparian areas, or flood plains.

No treatments are proposed on SITLA, private lands or public water reserves.

Livestock grazing use would be deferred in the seeded area for a minimum of two growing seasons.

Treatment work is expected to occur in the fall of 2014. No chemicals subject to SARA Title III in amounts greater than 10,000 pounds would be used. No extremely hazardous substances as defined in 40 CFR 355 in threshold planning quantities would be used.

No Action Alternative:

Under this alternative, no rehabilitation actions would be taken. Current resource conditions and trends would continue. An analysis of impacts associated with this alternative is discussed in Section 4.3

2.2. Conformance

The alternatives considered in this EA are in conformance with the Vernal Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (2008). The specific citation is listed below:

Page 77 in section Fire-3 reads: Following any wildland fire event, the BLM will evaluate any burned areas to determine if Emergency Stabilization Treatments (ESR) are needed. If the Interdisciplinary team determines that ESR treatments are necessary, the team will develop an ESR plan with site specific measures designed to minimize resource losses, both on and off site, following the wildfire. Consideration will be given to sensitive resource values in preparation of the ESR plan including WSAs, special emphasis areas, critical soils, cultural resources, and special status species habitat. ESR treatments may include, but will not be limited to seeding, seedbed preparation practices, fencing, chemical applications, water retention structures, and control of livestock and wildlife grazing. Site specific ESR plans will be tiered to the existing Normal Fire Year Rehabilitation Plan for the VPA. Criteria for developing ESR actions are determining:

- Areas where the risk of imminent soil loss is high.
- Areas that contain T&E Species or state sensitive species habitat.
- Areas that contain municipal watersheds; and areas where there is a high potential for invasive weed species establishment.

2.2.1. Relationships To Statutes, Regulations and Other Plans

Uintah County's General Land Use Plan, as amended in 2011 relative to public land concerns:
All alternatives considered in detail in the EA would be consistent with the County's general planning objectives which state:

- To insure that public lands are managed for multiple use and sustained yield and to prevent waste of natural resources.
- To support the wise use, conservation and protection of public lands and its resources including well-planned management prescriptions.
- Management of forage resources directly affect water quality and water supplies.
- The proper management and allocation of forage on public lands is critical to the viability of the Basin's agricultural, recreation and tourism industry.

Federal Statutes and Regulations.

- Protection Act of September 20, 1922 (42 Stat. 857; U.S.C. 594).
- Taylor Grazing Act of June 28, 1934 (48 Stat. 1269; U.S.C. 315).
- Reciprocal Fire Protection Act of May 27, 1955(69 Stat. 66; 42 U.S.C. 1856, 1856a).
- Economy Act of June 30, 1932 (47 Stat. 417; 31 U.S.C. 686).
- The Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (Public Law 94-579; 43 U.S.C. 1701).
- Disaster Relief Act, Section 417 (Public Law 93-288).
- 2007 BLM Handbook H-1742-1 "Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation" describes authority and policy for ESR treatments use on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- 2007 BLM "Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States."
- 2001 Updated Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy Update).
- 1998 Departmental Manual 620 Chapter 1, Wildland Fire Management General Policy and Procedures.
- September 2000, "Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment."

Chapter 3. Affected Environment:

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3.1. Introduction:

This chapter presents the potentially affected existing environment (i.e., the physical, biological, social, and economic values) of the project area as identified by the interdisciplinary team analysis and as presented in Chapter 1 of this assessment. This chapter provides the baseline for comparison of impacts/consequences described in Chapter 4.

3.2. General Setting

The project area is located on the Taylor Mountain Road northwest of Vernal. The vegetation in the area (prior to the fire) consists of dominant stands of Pinyon-Juniper with minor amounts of native grasses, forbs, and shrubs in the understory.

3.2.1. Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns

The Taylor Mountain Road Fire occurred within the Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC. The Relevant and Important Values (R&I) within the 24,285 acres are listed as: relict plant communities, high value archaeological and paleontological sites, watershed and crucial deer and elk habitat. For distinct examples of each R&I value, refer to the specialist reports in the Environmental Assessment or Interdisciplinary Team Checklist.

Special management attention will include maintenance and development of OHV or non-OHV routes, minimal facilities development necessary for human health and safety, and protection of watershed values, relict vegetation communities, and crucial deer and elk winter habitat. OHV use will be limited to designated routes.

3.2.2. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils, and Vegetation

Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds

Known noxious weeds that occur within and adjacent to the project area include cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*). Other invasive weed establishment would be expected to follow the fire event.

Soils

Soils in the project area are comprised primarily of the Semi-desert Shallow Loam. This soil is well drained moderately deep loam that contains a high degree of flagstone size stones. This soil consists of Slope alluvium derived from sandstone. This soil is located on slopes between 50 and 80 percent. The runoff class is medium and the removal of the protective vegetative cover from the fire has increased the risk of water erosion from medium to severe.

Vegetation

Vegetation prior to the fire was comprised of a Utah juniper dominated vegetative community. The vegetative community was dominated by juniper, and Wyoming sagebrush vegetative types, with minor understory of grasses, forbs.

3.2.3. Livestock Grazing

The project area is located within the Red Mountain allotment, administered by the Vernal BLM FO in Utah. Under the Vernal Utah BLM administration Harley D. and Vickie Jackson, Leland N Sowards Partnership, and Douglas B. Murphy are permitted to graze the Spring Creek and Red Mountain Allotments from May 1 to December 25 of each year.

Utah BLM Allotment	Operator	Season of Use	Kind	AUMs	Livestock #
Red Mountain	Harley D. and Vickie V Jackson	5/1 -06/1	Cattle	55	30
	Harley D. and Vickie V Jackson	9/1-12/25	Cattle	55	107
	Leland N Sowards Partnership	5/12-5/31	Cattle	137	139
Spring Creek	Harley D. and Vickie V Jackson	5/1 -5/31	Cattle	15	15
	Douglas B. Murphy	5/10-6-1	Cattle	68	180
		11/15-12/9	Cattle	74	180
	Dean Johnson	5/1-6/1	Cattle	38	36

3.2.4. Plants: BLM Sensitive

The following UT BLM Sensitive plant species are present or expected in the same or an adjacent subwatershed as the proposed project: Huber's pepperweed (*Lepidium huberi*). Suitable habitat for the UT BLM Sensitive plant species park rockcress (*Arabis vivariensis*) is present in the Project Area, but individual plants or populations of the species have not been documented.

3.2.5. Recreation

The Taylor Mountain Road Fire occurred in an area that is designated as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). The Approved RMP responds to recreation by providing SRMAs for visitors who come to the Vernal planning area. The Red-Mountain-Dry Fork SRMA was designated to continue providing opportunities for OHV and non-motorized trail activities.

Currently, there are miles upon miles of designated OHV trails, the Moonshine Hiking Trail, Jeep Road and the Rojo mountain biking trail.

3.2.6. Visual Resources

The Vernal Field Visual Resource Inventory (November 2011) serves as the baseline information for assessing potential effects to visual resources for proposed projects. The project area falls within Unit #19 – Dry Fork Community. This unit was given a scenic quality rating of B and is described as the unit north of Little Mountain having a variety of landforms including red to buff sandstone and including Dry Fork Valley and the bluffs above. The Landscape Character was defined as:

Landscape Character			
	Land Form/Water	Vegetation	Structure

Form	Steep cliffs, spire features, rounded conical	Irregular massings along drainages	(residential and agricultural) Geometric forms, rectangular
Line	Horizontal, vertical, concave, angled	Directional line with landform and drainage	Horizontal, vertical, angled
Color	White, buff, red, dark brown, grey	Light green, dark green, gray, white	Varies
Texture	Smooth faces of cliffs	Stippled on ridges, denser in valley, medium	Clustered

The Vernal RMP identified the project area as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II & III Lands. The objective of the VRM II is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. New projects can be approved if they blend in with the existing surroundings and don't attract attention (i.e., small-scale picnic area or primitive campground in valley shielded from view that blends with natural appearance).

The objective of class III is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. New projects can be approved that are not large scale, dominating features (i.e., geothermal power plant or major mining operation would not be approved).

3.2.7. Wildlife

Migratory Birds

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) was implemented for the protection of migratory birds. Unless permitted by regulations, the MBTA makes it unlawful to pursue, hunt, kill, capture, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird, including the feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, or migratory bird products. In addition to the MBTA, Executive Order 13186 sets forth the responsibilities of Federal agencies to further implement the provisions of the MBTA by integrating bird conservation principles and practices into agency activities and by ensuring that Federal actions evaluate the effects of actions and agency plans on migratory birds.

The Utah Partners In Flight (UPIF) has prioritized migratory birds that are considered "most in need of conservation action, or at least need to be carefully monitored throughout their range within Utah." These are also the species "that will be most positively influenced by management as well as those species with the greatest immediate threats" according to UPIF (Parrish et al. 2002). In addition, The Utah Steering Committee has identified approximately 542,967 acres of Bird Habitat Conservation Area's (BHCA) within the VPA (USC 2005). BHCA's are intended to display areas where bird habitat conservation projects may take place, predicated on concurrence, collaboration, and cooperation with all landowners involved; however, the BHCA's have no official status. Numerous species may migrate through, or nest within the project area. This

section identifies migratory birds that may inhabit the project area such as the Diamond Mountain BHCA or those that are classified, as High-Priority birds by Partners in Flight*, according to the habitat types found within the project area:

- *Sagebrush-Steppe*: horned lark, sage sparrow, sage thrasher*, Brewer's sparrow*, western kingbird, Say's phoebe, prairie falcon, green-tailed towhee*, and Swainson's hawk.
- *Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands*: black-chinned hummingbird*, gray flycatcher*, gray vireo*, Lewis' woodpecker, Clark's nutcracker, pinyon jay, western scrub jay, black-throated gray warbler, bushtit, juniper titmouse*, northern shrike, Virginia's warbler*, broad-tailed hummingbird*, mountain bluebird*, and Say's phoebe.

Raptors

Some of the more visible birds in and near the project area include golden eagles and red-tailed hawks. The BLM raptor database was reviewed and there are no known nests within the project area. Habitats in and around the project area provide diverse breeding and foraging habitat for raptors. These habitats include rocky outcrops, pinyon-juniper woodlands, and sagebrush shrub lands.

Non-USFWS Designated (Big Game Species)

Mule deer and Rocky Mountain elk are the primary big game species found within the project area. Use typically occurs from year around, when elk and deer utilize the project area for foraging, thermal cover and escape cover. Crucial winter elk and deer habitat was identified within the project area. These designations were made in the Vernal Field Office RMP.

Other wildlife species that are likely to occur in the project area include black bear, mountain lion, coyote, and bobcat, as well as a large variety of small mammals. Many of these species are habitat generalists, meaning they are not tightly restricted to specific habitat types. These species have not shown negative impacts by fire rehab technics; therefore, they will not be discussed further in this document.

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate

Greater Sage-grouse (Federal Candidate, BLM Sensitive, Utah State Sensitive)

The greater sage-grouse is an important game bird found in Utah. These birds inhabit sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant of quality habitat. Factors involved in the decline in both the distribution and abundance of greater sage-grouse include permanent loss, degradation, and fragmentation of sagebrush-steppe habitat throughout the western states including Utah (Heath et al. 1996, Braun 1998). Documented severe populations declines (approximately 80%) occurred from the mid-1960s to mid-1980s. Research and conservation efforts in the last 20 years have help stabilize and recover many populations. Populations appear to have taken a slight positive turn in recent years. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) identifies occupied and winter habitat within the project area. There is a portion, 615 acres, of the project area that is within the Uintah Sage Grouse Management Area (SGMA), as identified by the state's Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse in Utah. Currently, the BLM identifies occupied habitat as Preferred Priority Habitat (PPH, BLM IM 2012-043). Approximately 615 acres of the project area fall within BLM PPH.

Chapter 4. Environmental Effects:

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4.1. Introduction

This Chapter analyzes the direct and indirect impacts that the proposed action and the no action alternative have on the resources identified in Chapter 1 and explained in Chapter 3. It also analyzes the cumulative impacts expected from other land use activities and recognizes actions that could take place in the reasonably foreseeable future.

4.2. Alternative A — Proposed Action

4.2.1. Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns

Under the Proposed Action, areas of the Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC would be chained and reseeded, as well as sprayed by herbicide. The potential impacts for the R&I values are addressed by specialists in the fields of archaeology, botany, hydrology, paleontology, recreation and wildlife.

4.2.2. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils, and Vegetation

Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds

Under this alternative, invasive and noxious weed control would be implemented across the burned area using rapid detection and early treatment under an integrated weed treatment strategy. Noxious weed control actions would be implemented through spot treatment in order to avoid spray drift to unknown populations of special status species. Control of the noxious weed species listed would prevent expansion of these species across the project areas and to adjacent areas.

Soils

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, 2,200 acres of burned land would be aerially seeded, covered by an anchor chain, and have herbicide applied. The chaining treatment would not be conducted during periods of saturated soil conditions. Establishment of the seeded species would provide long term protective ground cover for the soils resource. Ground cover would be expected to increase greatly in these areas that were quite lacking in perennial vegetation due to the nature of the tree dominated sites. Reduction of both the invasive and noxious weeds through weed control efforts would also be expected to improve watershed conditions over the long term

Vegetation

Under this alternative, 2,200 acres of burned land would be aerially seeded, covered by an anchor chain, and have herbicide applied. Under the proposed seed mixture, non-native (introduced) plant species would be applied as part of the proposed aerial seeding. These species are used because they typically germinate fairly readily, and then provide for a vegetative protective cover for the soils resource. Over time the native species are expected to eventually become established and provide for increased ground cover, which results in decreased amounts of erosion and sediment yields. Past ESR and other project related aerial seeding's with these species has shown that these species are typically short lived, and tend to fade away as the native species eventually reoccupy their previous ecologic niche. Personal observations along with some limited monitoring studies in these treatment areas has indicated that after 5-6 growing seasons, these introduced species eventually disappear, or are reduced to less than 1% basal ground cover.

4.2.3. Livestock Grazing

Under this alternative, there would be a loss of grazing use for at least two years pending success of the treatment, within the Spring Creek Allotment and the Red Mountain Allotment. Two years of rest is required for ESR seeding projects, however, climate and follow-up monitoring may result in a longer period of rest following the seeding treatment. In the long term, the proposed action would provide for increased livestock forage in terms of both quantity and quality, as the seeding becomes established. The establishment of a reliable amount of herbaceous forage available each year would also help in developing and maintaining a sound grazing management strategy.

4.2.4. Plants: BLM Sensitive

The Proposed Action would have no adverse effects to the UT BLM Sensitive plant species, including *Lepidium huberi*, found within the fire perimeter. Weed control methods would reduce infestations of invasive plants and noxious weeds in the Project Area, resulting in an indirect beneficial impact to sensitive plant species. Over time, there would be indirect beneficial impacts to UT BLM Sensitive plant species as seeded native species become established. As a result of the Proposed Action livestock grazing would not occur within the allotments in the Project Area for at least two years, which would result in beneficial effects to UT BLM Sensitive plant species by reducing grazing by livestock. Impacts from livestock use, including both grazing and trampling, are a potential threat to these species. Grazing can adversely affect these species through removal of plant material and prevention of flowering and fruiting. Trampling can damage or destroy individual plants, and can also affect the habitats of plants through compaction of the soil or damage to streambanks.

4.2.5. Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, 2,000 acres within the SRMA would be chained, reseeded and sprayed with an herbicide. The SRMA has been impacted by the fire, but possible adverse effects that may occur due to the chaining and seeding is denudation from route proliferation and the lack of standing trees. Proliferation could continue at a higher pace with the erosion rates and soil types that are in the SRMA. Mitigation measures are in place and they include:

- Clearing the existing trails to encourage use.
- Signs to mark designated routes and to mark closed routes
- Increased presence in staff both in the parking areas and on the trail system
- Limit the trails through vegetation due to the reseeding effort

4.2.6. Visual Resources

The Taylor Mountain Road Fire has drastically altered the landscape character as defined by the Visual Resource Inventory 2011 (VRI). The Proposed action of chaining and reseeding the area would enhance the vegetation to a degree that VRM standards might be met in the future.

4.2.7. Wildlife

Migratory Birds

Seeding, drilling, and chaining are planned to occur October-November of 2014. Herbicide treatments will be applied in the fall of 2015. No direct impacts are anticipated from the fire rehab actions. Indirect impacts could occur if species are migrating through the area in October. Short term impacts would include temporary displacement from equipment operations.

Raptors

Impacts would be the same as the migratory bird section. Treatments would be planned to occur after October 1.

Non-USFWS Designated (Big Game Species)

The Taylor Mountain Road Fire burned approximately 3,145 acres of crucial winter habitat. Of the 3,145 acres approximately 2,404 was BLM administered lands. There would be no direct impacts from fire rehab operations anticipated to big game species. An increase in human presence during the winter months could cause short term impacts (increased stress, increased energy expenditure, temporary displacement) to big game species. Fire rehab seeding operations are planned to occur from October 1 — November 30, and herbicide treatments will take place in September of 2015. Fire rehab treatments can successfully return this area into a grassland/shrubland community, thus enhancing and promoting the return of sagebrush and other perennial understory species which will benefit big game habitat for the long term. No treatment activities will be allowed during elk and deer wintering months, from December 1 – April 31, unless big game species are not present.

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate

Greater Sage-grouse (Federal Candidate, BLM Sensitive, Utah State Sensitive)

The BLM has designated PPH and UDWR has identified approximately 615 acres of occupied winter habitat in the project area. Sage-grouse have been observed using the northern portion of the burn during the winter when snow levels on Taylor Mountain are high. Winter habitat almost exclusively consists of sagebrush, which is the main diet of sage-grouse in the winter. There would be no direct impacts (mortality of individual grouse from equipment) anticipated from fire rehab treatments as these activities would not be conducted during the winter months. Treatments will take place between October — November for the seeding, and September for the herbicide application. Overall, treatment activities can successfully return this area into a grassland/shrubland community, thus enhancing and promoting the return of sagebrush and other perennial understory species. The proposed action conforms with the policies and procedures outlined in the BLM's Greater Sage Grouse Interim Management guidance (BLM 2011), and the Uintah SGMA.

4.3. Alternative B — No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no seeding or weed treatments would take place within the fire boundary.

4.3.1. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Under the No Action Alternative, the R&I values would not be enhanced or diminished by management actions.

4.3.2. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils and Vegetation

Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds

Under this alternative, there would be no seeding of the burned area and weed control efforts would continue across the Field Office, but not actively focused on the project area. Due to the sparse ground cover under the Pinyon-Juniper vegetative type prior to the burn, and following the burn, erosion is expected to increase over the long term. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds would be expected to increase over time, which would add to the expected decline in watershed values.

Soils

Under this alternative there would be no seeding of the burned area and weed control efforts would continue across the Field Office, but not actively focused on the project area. Due to the sparse ground cover under the Pinyon-Juniper vegetative type and the steep slopes, erosion rates and sediment yields are expected to increase over the long term. Watershed values for the project area and areas downstream of the project area are expected to decline as erosion rates and sediment yields increase for the long term..

Vegetation

Under this alternative, there would be no seeding of the burned area. The project area would be expected to slowly re-vegetate over time, as the site recovers from the fire. However, it is also expected that Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds would increase and occupy the burned area by an unknown amount instead of native vegetation, which would decrease the overall amount of desirable species available for watershed protection and wildlife forage use. Over time, there would be no natural replacement by younger sagebrush plants as the dense understory of cheatgrass would out compete any chance of sagebrush seedlings becoming established. Eventually, the project area would be comprised of a nearly pure stand of cheatgrass. Once the site has been converted to a pure stand of cheatgrass, then the risk of unplanned fire events greatly increases. The conversion to a pure stand of cheatgrass could then potentially promulgate a cycle of continuous cheatgrass expansion and fire for the long term.

4.3.3. Livestock Grazing

Under this alternative there would be no aerial seeding, and weed control efforts would continue across the Field Office, but not actively focused on the project area. With the lack of seeding and focused weed control efforts, long term decline in available perennial forage could be expected across the project area as both the invasive and noxious weeds expand due to lack of competition and weed control efforts. The cheatgrass component would increase resulting in a long term reduction of authorized grazing use over time.

4.3.4. Plants: BLM Sensitive

Under the No Action Alternative, seeding of the burned area would not occur. The Project Area would be expected to slowly re-vegetate over time, as the site recovers from the fire. Infestations of invasive plants and noxious weeds would not be controlled in the Project Area, which would decrease the amount of suitable habitat for UT BLM Sensitive plant species.

4.3.5. Recreation

Under the No Action Alternative, no chaining or reseeded would take place. No signs designating trails or marking closed trails would be placed. No increased BLM presence would occur. The standing dead trees would limit the route proliferation in areas, but the bottoms would turn into sand dunes or miles of route proliferation. No existing trails would be cleared as well.

4.3.6. Visual Resources

Under the No Action Alternative VRM standards would not be met, especially where no vegetation exists. The proliferation of cheatgrass would continue to dominate the vegetation and the color tan would dominate what should otherwise be a light green, dark green, gray, white color.

4.3.7. Wildlife

Migratory Birds

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no seeding of the burned area. The project area would be expected to slowly re-vegetate over time. It is expected that Invasive Plants/Noxious weeds would increase and occupy the burned area, which would decrease the overall amount of desirable species available for nesting and foraging. There would be no natural replacement by younger sagebrush plants as the dense understory of cheatgrass would out compete any chance of sagebrush seedlings becoming established. The overall quality of the sage-steppe habitat type would be lost.

Raptors

Same as Migratory Birds

Non-USFWS Designated (Big Game Species)

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no seeding of the burned area. The project area would be expected to slowly re-vegetate over time. It is expected that Invasive Plants/Noxious weeds would increase and occupy the burned area, which would decrease the overall amount of desirable species available for foraging. There would be no natural replacement by younger sagebrush plants as the dense understory of cheatgrass would out compete any chance of sagebrush seedlings becoming established. The overall quality of big game winter habitat would be lost.

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate

Greater Sage-grouse (Federal Candidate, BLM Sensitive, Utah State Sensitive)

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no seeding of the burned area. The project area would be expected to slowly re-vegetate over time. It is expected that Invasive Plants/Noxious weeds would increase and occupy the burned area, which would decrease the overall amount of desirable species available for winter foraging. There would be no natural replacement by younger sagebrush plants as the dense understory of cheatgrass would out compete any chance of sagebrush seedlings becoming established. The overall quality of 615 acres of sage-grouse winter habitat would be lost.

4.4. Cumulative Impact Analysis

“Cumulative impacts” are those impacts resulting from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions.

For this project, the Cumulative Impact Analysis Area (CIAA) is the Taylor Mountain Burn perimeter, which consists of approximately 3,145 acres, unless stated otherwise.

4.4.1. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The 2,200 acres that burned in the Taylor Mountain Road Fire causes the temporary and possibility of permanent loss to valuable relict plant communities, crucial deer and elk winter habitat. To date, 611 acres have been treated to increase or maintain the relict plant community and the crucial deer and elk habitat. Total treatments after the ESR work is completed for the Taylor Mountain Road Fire will be 2,811 acres.

4.4.2. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils and Vegetation

Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds

The proposed fire rehabilitation treatment of 2,200 acres, which includes noxious and invasive weed control, is another project in a series of vegetative treatments that have been completed within the allotments between 2005 and 2006. Each of these completed projects has had weed control efforts included as part of the proposed action. The current proposal would treat an additional 2,200 acres within the allotments. To date, approximately 611 acres have been treated, or less than 8% of the allotment. Together these vegetative treatment projects are expected to increase the cover of forbs, grasses, and shrubs, and at the same time reduce the overall amount of noxious and invasive weeds present. Increased ground cover of these desirable species also relates to increased competition with noxious and invasive weeds, resulting in a decline of these undesirable species. Introduced plant species are expected to continue to be applied as part of a comprehensive effort to provide interim plant cover until the native vegetation can re-establish itself, in order to reduce soil erosion and potential weed infestations. The completed vegetative projects have also been accompanied by project specific weed control, which has also resulted in a decline of undesirable or noxious weed species. Field office weed monitoring and control program would continue to treat weed infestation areas. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

Soils and Vegetation

*Chapter 4 Environmental Effects:
Cumulative Impact Analysis*

The proposed fire rehabilitation treatment of 2,200 acres, which includes noxious and invasive weed control, is another project in a series of vegetative treatments that have been completed within the allotments between 2005 and 2006. Beyond previous treatments, the current proposal would treat an additional 2,200 acres within the allotments. To date, approximately 611 acres have been treated, or less than 8% of the allotments. Together these vegetative treatment projects are expected to increase the cover of forbs, grasses, and shrubs, and at the same time reduce the overall amount of bare ground along with a decline in the sediment yield rate. Introduced plant species are expected to continue to be applied as part of a comprehensive effort to provide interim plant cover until the native vegetation can re-establish itself.

Within the CIAA, there are also numerous exiting OHV trails, that have resulted in surface disturbance actions that have generally increased the sediment yield rate in the area of the development. Continued development of the OHV trails could continue to result in increased erosion and sediment yield rates across the CIAA. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.4.3. Livestock Grazing

The CIAA for livestock is the boundary of the Spring Creek and Red Mountain Allotments, which consists of approximately 19,513 acres. The proposed fire rehabilitation is another project in a series of vegetative treatments that have been completed within the allotments between 2005 and 2006. The current proposal would treat an additional 2,200 acres within the allotment. To date, approximately 611 acres have been treated, or less than 8% of the allotment. Together these vegetative treatment projects are expected to reduce the cover of pinyon pine, juniper, and sagebrush and increase cover of grasses, forbs, and a younger age class of browse which should improve quantity and quality of forage for livestock and wildlife. Increased ground cover of grasses and forbs should also reduce erosion. Field office weed monitoring and control program would continue to treat weed infestation areas within the allotments.

Within the CIAA, there are also multiple OHV trails, which have resulted in surface disturbance. These types of actions have resulted in a loss of grazing forage for livestock. Continued development of OHV trails could continue to result in a decline of forage available for livestock use. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.4.4. Plants: BLM Sensitive

The CIAA for UT BLM Sensitive plant species is the boundary of the Spring Creek and Red Mountain Allotments. The Proposed Action is another project in a series of vegetative treatments that have been completed within the allotments in the Project Area between 2005 and 2006. The Proposed Action would treat an additional 2,200 acres within the allotments in addition to previous treatments. To date, approximately 611 acres have been treated, or less than 8% of the allotments. Together these vegetative treatment projects are expected to increase the cover of forbs, grasses, and shrubs, and at the same time reduce the overall amount of bare ground along with a decline in the sediment yield rate. Introduced plant species are expected to continue to be applied as part of a comprehensive effort to provide interim plant cover until the native vegetation can re-establish itself. While these treatments may not be able to restore plant communities and suitable habitat for sensitive plant species, it would help prevent areas dominated by invasive species from spreading post-fire. It would lessen the impacts to perennial grasses, thus allowing

them to better recover from the fire, and to better compete with non-native annual grasses such as cheatgrass. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.4.5. Recreation

The 3,145 acre perimeter of the Taylor Mountain Road Fire cuts directly across the Red Mountain-Dry Fork SRMA. Cumulative impacts include continued route proliferation during the reseeding process and the possibility of a less than successful reseeding due to current and continued use of the area for OHVs. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.4.6. Visual Resources

The perimeter of the Taylor Mountain Road Fire is the CIAA. The burn has denuded the area and left a black scar on the soils, as well as stumps in the ground, altering the landscape. Past fuels reduction treatments have served as restoration projects to restore the vegetation to a pioneer community. Given the past success of such projects, it is expected that the black area will turn green and meet the VRI and VRM objectives of the area. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.4.7. Wildlife

Migratory Birds and Raptors

The Cumulative Impact area for wildlife is the Vernal Field Office. The Vernal Field Office has been involved in restoring declining habitat conditions in the sage steppe habitat type. These habitat improvement projects would typically be comprised of removing P-J encroachment from sage brush, restoration of cheatgrass infested sage brush types, and sage brush manipulation projects that have a seeding component that improves understory conditions. It is expected that habitat treatments within sage steppe habitat types would continue to occur in the future. Nesting and foraging habitat should improve as the sage-steppe habitat type returns. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

Non-USFWS Designated (Big Game Species)

The Cumulative Impact area for vegetation is the South Slope/Bonanza Vernal hunt boundary, which consists of approximately 1,310,000 acres. Due to a precipitous decline in deer numbers in the early 1990's deer hunting has been limited and/or closed. Current population estimates for the deer in the Vernal Unit is 11,100, well below the population objective of 13,000. Conversely, elk numbers have risen substantially in the same time span. Current population estimates for the Vernal Unit is 2,500, which is at the current population goal. Presently, the Vernal Unit is open to limited entry permits for both deer and elk. Since present deer numbers are below the established herd management objective numbers, deer numbers will continue to increase in the future, until herd objective numbers are realized. As herd numbers increase, then the continued need for vigorous and productive vegetative types would increase. The Vernal Field Office has been involved in restoring declining habitat conditions in the sage steppe habitat type. These habitat improvement projects would typically be comprised of removing P-J encroachment from sage

brush, restoration of cheatgrass infested sage brush types, and sage brush manipulation projects that have a seeding component that improves understory conditions. It is expected that habitat treatments within sage steppe habitat types would continue to occur in the future. Field office weed monitoring and control program would continue to treat weed infestation areas within the allotments, including restoration of cheatgrass infested sage brush types. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate

Greater Sage-grouse (Federal Candidate, BLM Sensitive, Utah State Sensitive)

The Cumulative Impact area for Greater Sage Grouse is the Uintah Sage Grouse Management Area, as outlined in the state's plan. Approximately 615 acres in wintering sage-grouse habitat was lost due to the fire. Reasonable foreseeable actions within the project area include increased recreational activities (OHV use, camping, hiking, and hunting) and grazing. Sage-grouse across the area have been declining precipitously over the last decade, due to a myriad of factors, including declining habitat conditions in the sage-steppe habitat type. The Vernal Field Office has been involved in restoring declining habitat conditions in the sage steppe habitat type across the Field Office. It is expected that habitat treatments within sage steppe habitat types would continue to occur in order to prevent the further decline of sage grouse population numbers and the potential for ESA federal listing from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These habitat improvement projects would typically be comprised of removing P-J encroachment from sage brush, restoration of cheatgrass infested sage brush types, and sage brush manipulation projects that have a seeding component that improves understory conditions. Field office weed monitoring and control program would continue to treat weed infestation areas within the allotments, including restoration of cheatgrass infested sage brush types. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

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**Chapter 5. Tribes, Individuals,
Organizations, Preparers, or Agencies
Consulted:**

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During preparation of the EA, public involvement consisted of posting the proposal on the Utah BLM Environmental Notification Bulletin Board (ENBB) on January 18, 2012. Issues or impacts identified through the interdisciplinary team analysis process are described in Appendix B.

Table 5.1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	National Historic Preservation Act Section 106	SHPO Concurrence
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)	Coordination with the habitat manager, Miles Hanberg.	Miles was on-site at the fire, and agreed with the rehab techniques and seed mix.
Grazing Permittee	Coordination with grazing permittee	Contacted by phone and they agreed to rest the allotments during the rehab process.

For a list of preparers see Appendix A

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Chapter 6. References

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Parrish, J.R., F.P. Howe, and R.E. Norvell. 2002. Utah Partners In Flight Avian Conservation Strategy Version 2.0. Utah Partners in Flight Program, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. 1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116. UDWR Publication Number 02-27. i-xiv 302 pp.

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Approved March 31, 2010. Statewide Management Plan for Elk. State of Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Resources, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Approved December 4, 2008. Statewide Management Plan for Mule Deer. State of Utah Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife Resources, Salt Lake City, Utah.

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Utah Steering Committee (USC). 2005. Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation In Utah. Intermountain West Joint Venture.

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U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 2009. Vernal Field Office Surface Disturbing Weed Policy

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Appendix A. Interdisciplinary Team Checklist

Project Title: Taylor Mountain Road Fire Rehabilitation

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0204-EA

File/Serial Number:

Project Leader:

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: (Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED (INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES APPENDIX 1 H-1790-1)				
NI	Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Air quality impacts from the projected levels of emission are expected to be negligible. Minimum quantities of dust emissions are anticipated because the volume of traffic from this proposal would be less than one or two vehicles per day during the project, and the project is estimated to take 10 days to complete.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
NI	BLM Natural Areas	None present as per GIS and RMP layer review	Jason West	7/14/2014
NI	Cultural: Archaeological Resources	The cultural inventory for the Taylor Mountain Fire (U-14-SQ-0711b) has been completed. Twelve new “eligible” sites were identified, and twenty “not eligible” sites were also identified. We consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on October 3, 2014. We received their concurrence with our treatment plans on October 3, 2014.	Kathie Davies	10/01/14

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Cultural: Native American Religious Concerns	Tribal consultation was sent on July 24, 2014. We received one response from the Hopi Tribe on August 8, 2014. They request a copy of the cultural inventory after completion. They were provided a copy of the draft report for review. No other comments were received.	Kathie Davies	10/01/14
PI	Designated Areas: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Red Mountain ACEC present	Jason West	7/14/2014
NP	Designated Areas: Wild and Scenic Rivers	None present as per GIS and RMP layer review	Jason West	7/14/2014
NP	Designated Areas: Wilderness Study Areas	None present as per GIS and RMP layer review	Jason West	7/14/2014
NI	Environmental Justice	No minority or economically disadvantaged communities or populations are present which could be affected by the proposed action or alternatives.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
NP	Farmlands (prime/unique)	There are no Prime Farmlands located in the project area because there are no irrigated lands in the project area, which is a pre requisite for the resource designation.	Dixie Sadlier	7/14/2014
NI	Fuels/Fire Management	<u>Fuels</u> : The project is an attempt to improve the potential hazardous fuels; the proposed action would be a positive impact by reducing the concentration of cheatgrass. <u>Fire Management</u> : Large amounts of cheatgrass will increase the risks of wildland fires reoccurring on a frequent basis; WY sagebrush with PJ woodlands has a 40-60 year fire return interval. An environment primarily containing cheatgrass has a 3 to 5 year fire return interval; thus, increasing the risk of wildland fires on private property and other values of risk. The project will improve the site versus a no-action scenario.	Blaine Tarbell	8/6/2014
NI	Geology/Minerals/ Energy Production	Geology and minerals will not be impacted by this project.	Betty Gamber	7/21/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
PI	Invasive Plants/ Noxious Weeds, Soils & Vegetation	IP/NW: The spread of invasive plants/noxious weeds is anticipated to be reduced as a result of the Proposed Action. Soils & Veg. Soils are anticipated to be stabilized as a result of the Proposed Action. Revegetation in the Project Area is anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
NI	Lands/Access	A review of the VFO GIS layer files and MTPs show no restrictions of access or conflict with existing trails or roads would occur. The proposed action does not currently impact lands and realty actions in the proposed action area, however, written notices are being provided to the existing ROW holders for coordination and approval. No treatments will occur in sec. 24.	Cindy Bowen	8/11/2014
NI	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)	No impacts associated with Lands with Wilderness characteristics from the proposed project.	Jason West	7/14/2014
PI	Livestock Grazing & Rangeland Health Standards	Impacts to livestock grazing due to mandatory rest following the proposed ES&R seeding.	Alec Bryan	7/23/2014
NP	Paleontology	No fossils present in the area according to GIS layer	Betty Gamber	7/21/2014
PI	Plants: BLM Sensitive	The following UT BLM Sensitive plant species are present or expected in the same or an adjacent subwatershed as the proposed project: <i>Lepidium huberi</i> . Suitable habitat for the following UT BLM Sensitive plant species is present in the Project Area: <i>Arabis vivariensis</i> .	Christine Cimiluca	7/22/2014
NI	Plants: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate	No plant species designated as threatened, endangered, and proposed or candidate under the ESA are present in the Project Area, per BLM GIS review. Riparian areas present in the Project Area may have suitable habitat for Ute ladies'-tresses (<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>) but the species has not been documented in the Project Area per BLM GIS review	Christine Cimiluca	7/22/2014
NI	Plants: Wetland/Riparian	There is one mapped riparian area (associated with Steinaker reservoir) in the Project Area per BLM GIS review. Chain dragging in the Project Area would avoid riparian areas.	Christine Cimiluca	7/22/2014
PI	Recreation	OHV designated Trails	Jason West	7/14/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Socio-Economics	Due to the small scale project size, socioeconomics are not expected to be measurably impacted by this proposed project.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
PI	Visual Resources	Impacts to VR from new seed growth and from OHV use in the area.	Jason West	7/14/2014
NI	Wastes (hazardous/solid)	<i>Hazardous Waste:</i> No chemicals subject to reporting under SARA Title III in an amount equal to or greater than 10,000 pounds will be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of annually in association with the project. Furthermore, no extremely hazardous substances, as defined in 40 CFR 355, in threshold planning quantities, will be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of in association with the project. <i>Solid Wastes:</i> Trash would be confined in a covered container and hauled to an approved landfill. Burning of waste or oil would not be done. Human waste would be contained and be disposed of at an approved sewage treatment facility.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
NI	Water: Floodplains	There are a number of floodplain environments in close proximity to the proposed action according to V.F.O GIS layers. The Ashley Creek Floodplain is a 100 year mapped floodplain that sees influences depending on runoff events and seasonal fluctuations in precipitation rates. Since the project will not take place on these depositional features, detailed analysis is not recommended at this time.	James Hereford II	7/28/2014
NI	Water: Groundwater Quality	Groundwater will not be impacted by this project.	Betty Gamber	7/21/2014
NI	Water: Hydrologic Conditions (stormwater)	The proposed project takes place within the Ashley and Brush Creek hydrologic unit boundary. Most of the water that flows through this area ends up in Ashley Creek and then later into the Green River. The proposed area can see periodic fluctuations in precipitation rates, and during seasonal runoff periods. The current hydrologic conditions will not be affected by a fire rehabilitation project to a degree that would require detailed analysis.	James Hereford II	7/28/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Water: Surface Water Quality	The Ashley Creek is close to the proposed project. This creek is a major source of drinking water and also feeds into the Green River during high flow events. This project although is taking place near Ashley creek, it is not expected that this rehab project will affect the water quality to a degree that would require further detailed analysis at this time.	James Hereford II	8/6/2014
NI	Water: Waters of the U.S.	Although waters of the U.S exist down gradient to the proposed project, the proposal will not affect these waters to a degree that would require detailed analysis at this time. Typically a fire rehab project will stabilize the site for long term growth, this will reduce potential increases in erosion through stabilization procedures' and not contribute to flowing waters miles down gradient.	James Hereford II	8/6/2014
NP	Wild Horses	VFO GIS layers indicate that there are no Wild Horse areas present in the project area.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
PI	Wildlife: Migratory Birds (including raptors)	Fire rehab activities will take place in the fall after the nesting season. There could be short term impacts to migrating individuals.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
PI	Wildlife: Non-USFWS Designated	BLM has designated crucial winter habitat for elk and mule deer within the project area.	Dixie Sadlier	8/11/2014
PI	Wildlife: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate	No T&E habitat or species were identified within the project area. The wildlife did burn through approximately 615 acres of sage-grouse habitat. The proposed action is consistent with the guidelines established in Utah IM-2012-043. Personal communication with UDWR Sensitive Species Biologist 2014. Yes x No If the answer is yes, the project must conform with WO IM 2012-043.	Dixie Sadlier	7/9/2014
NI	Woodlands/Forestry	Impacts to forest and woodlands will be consistent with those described for vegetation in general.	David Palmer	7/21/2014

FINAL REVIEW:			
Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator	/s/ Jessica Taylor	10/10/2014	
Authorized Officer	/s/ Troy Suwyn	10/10/2014	