



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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In Reply Refer To:  
9214 (AZP000)  
DOI-BLM-AZ-P030-2014-0006-DNA

## DECISION

**Agua Fria Grassland Fuels Reduction DNA**  
DOI-BLM-AZ-P030-2014-0006-DNA

## INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management, Hassayampa Field Office has prepared the Agua Fria Grassland Fuels Reduction Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) (DOI-BLM-AZ-P030-2014-0006-DNA) to evaluate the potential impacts related to the thinning of juniper on the Agua Fria National Monument.

The proposed action is to conduct juniper thinning and prescribed fire to an additional 946 acres (See Map 1) in the Agua Fria Grassland Fuels Reduction Project (EA No. AZ-020-2004-005). The treatments would include thinning of juniper by mechanical means, piling and burning, or lopping and scattering, the resulting slash in preparation for management-ignited broadcast burning.

## BACKGROUND

The BLM Phoenix District has conducted prescribed burning since 1993 to reduce fuels and restore native semi-desert grasslands on Black Mesa, Perry Mesa, Sycamore Mesa, and adjacent areas which comprise the Agua Fria National Monument. In 2004, the BLM conducted an environmental assessment (EA # AZ-020-2004-005) which included the use of mechanized equipment to reduce the woody vegetation from encroaching into the grasslands and to restore the grasslands. Implementing the proposed action would reduce the density of juniper trees within the specified area. By reducing woody species abundance, an increase in ground cover, increase in perennial grass vigor and production, an increase in annual grass/forb production and overall improvement to pronghorn habitat suitability will occur as well as provide a safer suppression environment for firefighters in the event of a wildland fire.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The public was provided the opportunity to participate in the EA in compliance with 43 CFR 1610.2. The proposed action is the same as that covered in the Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment for the Agua Fria Grasslands Fuels Reduction Project- April 13, 2005. Public involvement and interagency review on the original project involved public meetings with other agencies and general public inquiries.

## **DECISION**

After reviewing the analysis presented in Agua Fria Grassland Fuels Reduction DNA it is my decision to approve the proposed action as described in the DNA.

## **RATIONALE**

This action is intended to improve wildlife habitat and reduce hazardous fuels within the project area. By decreasing woody vegetation, the risk of unwanted wildfire will be greatly reduced. The severity and intensity of wildfire will also be minimized. Wildlife habitat will be improved by increasing ground cover, increasing perennial grass, and increasing annual grass/forb production.

## **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.) 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

10/6/14

Date