

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE
2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506
and
MOAB FIELD OFFICE
82 East Dogwood, Moab, UT 84532
DECISION RECORD**

**Fish Park Gunnison Sage-grouse Habitat Improvement
DOI-BLM-CO-N030-2015-0016-EA**

DECISION:

It is my decision to authorize the Proposed Action as described in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA). The Proposed Action is to authorize and complete habitat manipulation activities in the Piñon Mesa area known as Fish Park to improve Gunnison sage-grouse critical habitat. The project area is located west of Glade Park, Colorado within the Grand Junction and extends into the Moab Field Office. Habitat manipulations include vegetation treatments, fence building, and water development. The application of treatments will be phased over time and includes data collection and analyzes before treating larger areas within the project boundary. This project was developed in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Moab Field Office, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. The project area encompasses approximately 2,620 acres and spans across the Colorado-Utah border.

The Grand Junction Field Office and Moab Field Office together completed an EA and reached a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). No comments were received.

RATIONALE:

This decision is based on the EA and FONSI and is in compliance with the Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan (Record of Decision (ROD), 2015), which gives the following objective for Special Status Species: “Advance the conservation of Gunnison and Greater Sage-Grouse and their habitat in accordance with current national, state, and local working group recommendations and policy as well as the most current scientific literature and research.”

This decision is also in compliance with the Moab Field Office Resource Management Plan (ROD, 2008), which states the following Vegetation management decision: “Reclaim and restore up to 257,809 acres of sagebrush habitat and shrub-steppe ecosystems where appropriate in accordance with the BLM sagebrush conservation guidance. Reclamation/ restoration will be undertaken in cooperation with the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development (UPCD) and may include removing surface material, re-contouring, spreading topsoil, seeding or planting seedlings, and/or changing livestock grazing strategies, such as, changing season of use, type of

use, removing or reducing spring grazing, reducing livestock numbers, reducing grazing intensity, improving distribution, requiring rest rotation practices, or exclusion. Work in coordination with UDWR to reduce wildlife numbers, as necessary, to restore sagebrush habitat.”

This decision is also based on the fact that the Proposed Action is directly connected to the two programmatic documents prepared for the assessment of vegetation treatments and herbicide activities on public lands. This decision assumes that all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) identified in these reports that are applicable to this project would be followed. The Proposed Action is directly tiered to, influenced and supported by the Vegetation Treatments on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report (Vegetation PER) and the Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Herbicide PEIS).

This decision will allow for an acquisition of knowledge through practice on the best methods to increase plant species diversity and reestablish sagebrush cover with the intent to re-create Gunnison sage grouse summer and fall habitat within the burned areas at Fish Park.

MITIGATION MEASURES/MONITORING:

Specific measures to minimize impacts, beyond those described in the proposed action are included in Appendix A and B.

PROTEST/APPEALS:

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer, and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR §2801.10(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at Grand Junction Field Office, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado, 81506. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.

NAME OF PREPARER: Amanda Ewing

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Christina Stark

DATE: 9/30/15

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

Kate A Str
Grand Junction Field Manager

9/30/15
Date Signed

Beth Ransel
Moab Field Manager

9/30/15
Date Signed