

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Decision Record**

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**Grand Staircase Escalante Partners  
Escalante River Restoration Project  
DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0042-DNA**

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**August, 2015**

***Location:*** Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

***Applicant/Address:*** Grand Staircase Escalante Partners  
745 Highway 89 East  
Kanab, UT 84741

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
669 South Highway 89A  
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# DECISION RECORD

## Determination of NEPA Adequacy

### Grand Staircase Escalante Partners Escalante River Restoration Project DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0042-DNA

#### DECISION

The work would consist of cutting or girdling Russian olives using chainsaws, handsaws, and other hand tools. After trees are cut or girdled there would be an application of herbicides to the cambium layer of the tree, (the live tissue between the bark and the wood). If trees are dropped they would be cut to lengths shorter than four feet. Girdled trees would remain standing for wildlife habitat. Piles would be made on the river banks in such a way that water isn't blocked. These piles would be washed away with flash floods. Piles would also be created in the riparian zone and / or floodplains; these would eventually be washed away by large flash floods. Herbicides to be used are glyphosate and imazapyr. These herbicides are on the BLM approved list, and their use is unrestricted. The work would be conducted by conservation corps members, volunteers, GSEP staff, and GSENM staff.

Restoration efforts on the Escalante River would be passive in nature. Work done previously along and in the riparian zone has shown when woody invasives are removed the native vegetation is able to grow in rapidly. If sites are found to not restore themselves with the surrounding native vegetation steps would be taken to restore those areas by actively restoring them with native materials collected from the Escalante River system.

Proposed total acres that would be treated in fall 2015;

- Manual, use of chainsaw, 228 acres, new treatments.
- Manual, use of hand tools, 542 acres, re-treatment
- Chemical treatments, 770 acres, this is new treatment and retreatment areas combined.
- It should be noted that the re-treatment acres are low density infested areas; whereas the new treatments are high density areas.
- Occasionally the use of a chainsaw is needed when missed trees in re-treatment areas are discovered.

These activities are described in the Determination of NEPA Adequacy worksheet (DOI-BLM-UT-0300-2015-0042-DNA). This authorization will allow:

Work will take place in these areas along the **mainstem of the Escalante River**: Sand Creek, Phipps Wash, Boulder Creek, and below Brigham Tea bench. Work will also take place in Harris Wash. Acres to be treated in these areas total:

- New treatment = approximately 228 acres
- Re-treatment = approximately 542 acres

Please view maps for more details.

Work would not occur during migratory bird season, April 1- July 15, or during Mexican Spotted Owl breeding/brooding season, March 1 through August 31.

### **Conservation Corps Groups**

Three conservation corps would work with GSEP and GSENM conducting woody invasive species removal along the Escalante River and its tributaries. The Utah Conservation Corps (UCC), South West Conservation Corps Ancestral Lands Program (SCC-AL), and Canyon Country Youth Corps (CCYC), GSEP field staff, and GSENM staff would oversee the corps members. GSEP field staff would frequently camp with the groups on a rotating schedule. Conservation corps groups would be eight people maximum, generally operating three or four chainsaws. Each work site would have two groups that alternate work week.

#### *Summary of Schedule for Conservation Corps*

Two CCYC crews would work at the Sand Creek and Phipps Wash work sites beginning September 1 through October 27.

Two UCC crews would work upstream from the Boulder Creek confluence and two UCC crews would work at the site below Brigham Tea bench. The Brigham Tea crews would work in the downstream direction while the Boulder Creek crews would work in the upstream direction. The section between these two sites has already been cleared of woody invasive trees. The UCC crews would begin September 2 and finish November 2.

SCC-AL would work in Harris Wash for two weeks beginning October 5. This crew is a five person crew. They would work from the Harris Wash Trailhead in the downstream direction towards the Escalante River. This crew will not be horse supported and camping location will be away from the trailhead out of the flash flood zone.

One retreatment crew consisting of four people will be roaming. This crew will work in a variety of places in both frontcountry and backcountry settings. These areas are located on the overall project map. The two GSEP field staff and one AmeriCorp intern would also do retreatment in various locations, most likely when they are passing through areas needing retreatment while supporting the crews.

#### *Summary of schedule for Volunteer Groups*

Great Old Broads would work for the week of September 27 - October 3 and camp along the Escalante River by the Phipps Wash confluence.

River Restoration Adventures for Tomorrow would be placed at the Boulder Creek project site during the week of October 11-17.

Volunteer groups would have a maximum of 12 people. Volunteers use hand tools only (loppers and hand saws) to cut Russian olive saplings and prune larger trees. Under the direction of the GSEP field staff, the volunteers would use unrestricted herbicides to spray the saplings that are cut in the work area.

For more details including maps and stipulations see the 2015 DNA.

### **DECISION RATIONALE**

After reviewing the attached Determination of NEPA Adequacy worksheet, I have determined that existing programmatic environmental assessment (DOI-BLM-UT0300\_2011-009-EA) adequately analyzes the environmental effects of these woody invasive treatments. I have also determined there is no need to prepare new or supplemental analysis.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES**

My decision shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2920.2-2(b)).

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. Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of this decision. Any notice of appeal must be filed with the Monument Manager, at 69 South Highway 89A, Kanab, Utah 84741. The appellant shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs on each adverse party named in the decision, not later than 15 days after filing such document (see 43 CFR 4.413(a)). Failure to serve within the time required will subject the appeal to summary dismissal (see 43 CFR 4.413(b)). If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the IBLA, 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 Monument Manager.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. If you wish to file a petition 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 following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the 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; and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In the event a request for stay or an appeal is filed, the person/party requesting the stay or filing the appeal must serve a copy of the appeal on the Regional Solicitor's Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street Mailstop 201, Salt Lake City, UT 84138.

### **Authorizing Official**

*Cynthia Staszak*

Cynthia Staszak  
Monument Manager  
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

8-31-15

Date