

**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
Point Well Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan
#DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2016-0002-DNA
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
Twin Falls District
Burley and Shoshone Field Offices**

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Point Well
Fire Number	J3VD
District/Field Office	Twin Falls/Burley/Shoshone (Craters of the Moon National Monument)
Admin Number	LLIDT02000/LLIDT03100
State	Idaho
County(s)	Blaine
Ignition Date/Cause	9/23/2015/Unknown
Date Contained	9/23/2015
Jurisdiction	Acres
BLM	4,452
State	138
Private	99
NPS	70
Total Acres	4,759
Total Costs	\$354,000
Costs to LF2200000	\$291,000
Costs to LF3200000	\$63,000

A. BLM Office: Burley and Shoshone Field Offices. **Lease/Serial/Case File No.** N/A.

Proposed Action Title/Type: Point Well (J3VD) Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) Plan.

Location of Proposed Action:

Meridian	Township	Range	Affected Sections
Boise	T7S	R26E, R27E	Various

Description of the Proposed Action: The proposed action is to implement the Point Well ES and BAR plan as prescribed by the Twin Falls District Programmatic Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (PESRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) as outlined in the Point Well ES and BAR plan. The proposed action entails 1,000 acres of vegetation treatment by drill seeding, 4,452 acres of ground detection and control of noxious weeds utilizing herbicides, 2,500 acres of aerial sagebrush seeding, 5.5 miles of fence repair, 4.5 miles of temporary fence construction, a livestock grazing closure, and monitoring (See attached Point Well ES and BAR plan).

Applicant (if any): N/A

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans.

The applicable land use plans for the Point Well ES and BAR project area are the 1985 Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the 2006 Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve Management Plan (Craters MP) and FEIS which provides a framework for cooperative management of Monument lands by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Monument Resource Management Plan, 1985

The Monument RMP states that lands administered by the BLM in this area will be managed in order to:

1. Maintain or improve wildlife habitat for crucial mule deer winter range;
2. Improve poor or fair condition rangeland;
3. Maintain, improve, protect, and restore watershed conditions; and
4. Control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands and eradicate them where possible and economically feasible.

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve Management Plan, 2006

The Craters MP provides a framework for cooperative management of Monument lands by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The Record of Decision adopting the MP was signed on September 12, 2006 by the Idaho BLM State Director and the NPS Northwest Regional Director.

The key components of the approved Craters MP related to ES and BAR activities include:

1. Emphasizing the protection of vegetative resources;
2. Maintaining a road network suitable for aggressive fire suppression and restoration activities within the Monument;
3. Promoting a proactive Integrated Weed Management Program;
4. Proactively protecting and restoring sagebrush steppe communities.

In addition, the Craters MP states:

“In the event of a wildland fire, burned areas would be rehabilitated when necessary to restore the appropriate mosaic of sagebrush species and subspecies, along with a diverse perennial understory, and to suppress invasive and noxious weeds.”

“Use of native plants would be emphasized in rehabilitation and restoration projects, and only native plants would be used for rehabilitation or restoration projects within the Pristine Zone”.

Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed treatments in the Point Well ES and BAR plan conform to the Monument RMP and Craters MP. The ES and BAR team developed objectives and treatments which respond to the identified issues and concerns.

The project is also in conformance with the analysis of Alternative E, the selected alternative, in the 2008 Final Fire, Fuels and Related Vegetation Management Direction Plan Amendment (FMDA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Final FMDA/EIS amends only the Monument RMP to provide direction and guidance for fire/fuels and related vegetation management.

The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the 2013 Twin Falls District PESRP and EA (#DOI-BLM-ID-T000-2011-0001-EA).

Proposed ES and BAR actions conform with the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.

C. Identify the applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document(s) and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

The proposed action is addressed in the following NEPA documents.

1. Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM lands in the 17 Western States Programmatic EIS, September 29, 2007.
2. Burley Field Office Noxious Weed Management Plan, EA (#ID-020-88-16), 1988.
3. Shoshone District EA for Noxious Weed Control (EA# ID-050-EA-92031), 1992.

4. Twin Falls District Programmatic Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (PESRP) (DOI-BLM-ID-T000_2011_001_EA). October 31, 2013.
5. Resource Management Plan Amendment for the Greater Sage Grouse Sub-region of Idaho and Southwestern Montana, September 2015.

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., source drinking water assessments, biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, rangeland health standard's assessment and determinations, and monitoring the report).

6. Biological Assessment for the Shoshone and Burley Field Offices NFRP and Concurrence, OALS #1-4-04-I-633.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

Yes, the proposed action is a feature of the proposed actions outlined in the 2013 PESRP.

Documentation of answer and explanation: An interdisciplinary resource team review of this fire has revealed that the resource values, issues, stabilization and rehabilitation needs are essentially the same as those analyzed in the 2013 PESRP and best meet the wildlife, watershed, and soil objectives in the applicable land use plans. The primary purpose of the ES and BAR plan is to stabilize soils from erosion impacts by assuring that the pre-existing native plants and proposed seeded plants are protected from grazing use, and allowed to recover, maximize growth, and provide a source of live and litter ground cover for the protection of the soil resource.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances?

Yes, the range of alternatives in the existing NEPA documents is appropriate considering the current proposed action.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The range of alternatives analyzed in the PESRP EA is appropriate with respect to the ES and BAR activities. Two alternatives to the proposed action were analyzed in the PESRP EA. They included an alternative action that would not implement ES and BAR treatments, but was eliminated from detailed analysis because it was not consistent with BLM policy, and the No Action Alternative which would have continued to use the existing NFRPs. The current proposals follow the PESRP proposed action with the overall objective of stabilizing and rehabilitating the burned area to its previous native and /or seeded

condition in the shortest time frame to enhance and protect the watershed, soil, wildlife habitat, and livestock forage values of the area.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as Rangeland Health Standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, or updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is still valid.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The PESRP was approved on October 31, 2013. No new information that would change the proposed action or invalidate the analysis contained in the PESRP has been identified. During the interdisciplinary review, team members consulted the most recent list (August 11, 2014) of Threatened and Endangered species and BLM sensitive species for the Burley and Shoshone Field Offices.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

Yes, the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from the ES and BAR project are similar to those analyzed in the 2013 PESRP and EA.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The proposed action would result primarily in impacts to soils and vegetation. These impacts were considered and fully analyzed in the PESRP. With native vegetation recovery, seeding efforts and control of noxious weeds, the area susceptible to wind erosion would be reduced.

The PESRP adequately analyzed the actions proposed in the ES and BAR plan and it is anticipated that the cumulative impacts of the actions are not substantially different as analyzed in the PESRP. Therefore, there will not be any additional cumulative effects to consider under the plan.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, the public involvement and interagency review of the PESRP is adequate for the current proposed actions.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Scoping letters informing the public of the purpose and need for action were sent to approximately 700 interested publics including organizations, and federal and state agencies beginning in March 2007. On August 24, 2011 the PESRP EA was made available for further comment. Interest from the public and other agencies included ranchers, academia, conservation groups, the Tribes, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and ESA consultation with the USFWS.

The ES and BAR plan along with the Decision Record has been posted on the BLM E-Planning

NEPA website and is available upon request.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Name	Title	Resource Represented
Dustin Smith	Fire Ecologist	Fuels
Scott Uhrig	Fire Rehabilitation Specialist	Operations
Dan Patten	Range Management Specialist	Range
Suzann Henrikson	Archaeologist	Cultural
Jeremy Bisson	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife
Holly Hampton	Craters of the Moon National Monument Manager	Manager

F. Mitigation Measures:

The seed treatment areas will be monitored and managed to keep livestock from grazing for a minimum of two growing seasons to allow for recovery and maximum production of the newly seeded plants. Non-treated burn areas will be monitored for recovery prior to allowing resumption of livestock grazing. Cultural resource inventories will be completed prior to ground disturbing activities (drilling seeding) to avoid any potential adverse effects to significant cultural sites. The natural recovery of the burned area will be monitored and managed to keep livestock from grazing until natural recovery objectives are met.

CONCLUSION

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the Monument RMP and the Craters MP and that the existing NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM’s compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/s/Kenneth J. Crane 10/26/15
Kenneth J. Crane, Burley Field Manager Date

/s/Codie Martin 10/26/15
Codie Martin, Shoshone Field Manager Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM’s internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this Determination of NEPA Adequacy is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.