

**Finding of No Significant Impact
Carpenter Road Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation**

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District
Border Field Office
1103 North Fancher Road
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Border Field Office prepared the Carpenter Road Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) Environmental Assessment (EA-DOI-BLM-ORWA-W030-2015-0014-EA) to consider the implementation of emergency stabilization and rehabilitation treatments in the Carpenter Road Fire in Stevens County, approximately 7 air miles east of Fruitland, WA. The BLM is proposing to implement ESR actions within portions of the Carpenter Road fire. The proposed actions will stabilize structure and function to fire damaged ecosystems and repair management infrastructure that was damaged. The Carpenter Road ESR project area is located within the Northeast Management Area of the Spokane District's Border Field Office.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

I have reviewed Carpenter Road ESR Environmental Assessment. I have determined that the proposed ESR treatments as analyzed in this Environmental Assessment will not have any significant impacts on the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

In reaching this conclusion, I considered the implementing regulations for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR 1508.27) that provide criteria for determining the significance of effects. Significantly, as used in NEPA requires consideration of both context and intensity. The text below cites 40 CFR 1508.27, with an explanation following each criterion, stating why the proposed action would not have significant impacts.

a) Context: This means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant:

The disclosure of effects in the EA found the actions are limited in context. The project area is limited in size and the activities are limited in duration. The proposed treatments would occur on approximately 1,500 acres. Effects are local in nature and are not likely to significantly affect regional or national resources.

b) Intensity: This refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following are considered in evaluating intensity:



1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effects will be beneficial.

Impacts associated with the project are discussed in the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences section of the EA. These impacts are within the range of those identified in the RMP. While the overall impacts of this proposal are expected to be primarily beneficial to natural resources, the impact on any resource is not expected to be significant.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The proposed hazard tree removal and road maintenance and repair activities (see EA, p. 3) were designed to reduce risks to public safety. The Carpenter Road ESR project area is within the Huckleberry Mountains. The Huckleberry Mountains area is a high use area, with public camping, recreating, and hunting throughout the year. Removing hazard trees will reduce risks to visitors to the area. Road work was designed to ensure that no pooling sediment deposition or erosion would occur; this will reduce the possibility that roads would washout or become impassable.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are no unique characteristics or ecologically critical areas within the project area. Many cultural resources, mostly associated with the mining history of the area, are located in the project area. The area is within the traditional use areas for local Native American groups. Huckleberry bushes, cedar trees, and game species are important. The proposed treatments were designed to preserve and stabilize historic sites associated with mining and to preserve or promote recovery of native species used by local Native American groups.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The effects of implementing the proposed treatments are not likely to be highly controversial. BLM routinely conducts post-fire emergency stabilization treatments and the effects of such treatments are well understood.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The effects of the proposed treatments are not uncertain and do not involve any unique or unknown risks. BLM routinely conducts post-fire treatments and monitors the effects of those treatments.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The proposed action does not set a precedent for any future action or represent a decision in principle for any future project.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

A careful review of the cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Action and reasonably foreseeable future actions found there would be no significant cumulative effects on the environment.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

There would be no adverse impacts to cultural resources identified in the Carpenter Road ESR project area. Consultation with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation was completed on November 3, 2014 when they concurred with BLM's finding that no adverse effect would occur to historic properties.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Action found there was not likely to be adverse impacts to listed species or their habitat. There are no threatened or endangered species that are known to occur in the project area.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The proposed action does not violate any Federal, State, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Based upon my review of the criteria for significance and the environmental analyses conducted, I have determined that the actions analyzed for the Carpenter Road ESR project do not constitute a major federal action and that its implementation will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared for this project.

/s/ Lindsey Babcock

11-6-2015

Lindsey Babcock
Field Manager

Date