

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND  
DECISION RECORD**

**for the  
*Pseudomonas fluorescens* strain D7 Field Project Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2016-0007-EA**

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

I have reviewed the *Pseudomonas fluorescens* strain D7 Field Project EA (DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2016-00007-EA), including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts, and reviewed and thoroughly considered public comments regarding the EA. I have reviewed the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27 which define significance and found the actions analyzed in the *Pseudomonas fluorescens* strain D7 Field Project EA do not constitute a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared.

The definition of significance includes both “context” and “intensity.” These ten significance criteria are all related to “intensity.”

- (1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and/or adverse.
- (2) The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.
- (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.
- (4) The degree to which the effects on the quality or the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.
- (5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.
- (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.
- (7) Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.
- (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.
- (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.
- (10) Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

This document is adequate and in conformance with the Dillon Resource Management Plan (RMP) as required by 43 CFR 4100.0-8.

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Dillon Field Manager

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Date

## PROPOSED DECISION

I have decided to authorize the implementation of the treatment of cheatgrass with the *Pseudomonas fluorescens* – D7 bacterium as proposed in alternative B of the ***Pseudomonas fluorescens* strain D7 Field Project Environmental Assessment** (DOI-BLM-MT-B050-2016-00007-EA) (Pursuant to 43 CFR 4160.3(f)). These treatments will take place on a twenty-five acre parcel, of BLM administered land, located north of the parking lot for the Bear Trap Wilderness northern trailhead (T3S, R1W, section 15).

## DECISION RATIONALE

Downy brome (cheatgrass) is an annual or winter annual that was introduced from the Mediterranean region and was first found near Denver, Colorado. It is now widely spread throughout North America and is common along roadsides, waste areas, misused pastures and rangelands, and cultivated crop areas. The plant competes with more desirable perennial grasses for moisture because of its winter and early spring growth habit. Being highly flammable when dry it increases the frequency and spread of wildfire in certain communities.

Overall cheatgrass is very difficult to control due to the narrow window of time during which burning or herbicides will be effective. All the studies that have been done and the analysis done in the environmental assessment show that the bacterium attacks only the target species: cheatgrass, medusahead rye and jointed goatgrass. The proposed treatment of cheatgrass with the D7 bacterium will give BLM data on how well the bacterium works in a rangeland setting where other treatments are occurring. With this information BLM can advance forward towards adding another more environmentally friendly alternative to the control of cheatgrass.

## PROVISION FOR APPEAL

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the authorized officer (*November 16, 2015*) and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay. 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: 1005 Selway Drive, Dillon, MT 59725. 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.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall 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 irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and

(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the authorized officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, P.O. Box 31394, Billings, Montana 59107-1394, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

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Authorized Officer

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Date