

## Decision Record

Swick Creek Prescribed fire, DOI-BLM-ORWA-P000-2016-0006-DNA  
US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management  
Prineville Field Office, Oregon

### Description of the Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing to allow prescribed burning on an isolated 160 acre block of BLM managed public land within a larger block of public land on which the Forest Service is conducting fuel treatments. The project area is about six miles north of Seneca.

### Background

The Malheur National Forest analyzed 13,700 acres of prescribed fire in the Damon Wildland Urban Interface Project Environmental Assessment (EA) and issued a decision in June 2010. Although the surrounding National Forest lands were analyzed for prescribed fire in the EA, an isolated 160 acre block of BLM managed public land within the project area was not included in the analysis. The BLM subsequently adopted the EA, completed a determination of NEPA adequacy and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Burning the BLM parcel in conjunction with the larger Forest Service project would reduce the need for constructed fire lines by enabling the burning to occur "road to road." Burning the BLM parcel would accomplish the same objectives as those described in the Damon EA, including reducing fire hazard through fuel reduction, improving vegetative condition, improving habitat for a variety of wildlife species, and minimizing losses to commercial tree species.

The Damon EA, Swift Creek Prescribed Fire DNA (DOI-BLM-ORWA-P000-2016-0006-DNA), the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and this Decision can be viewed on the BLM's ePlanning website at: [https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa\\_register.do](https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do).

### Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: *John Day Basin Resource Management Plan*  
Date approved (ROD): *April, 2015.*

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable plan, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following land use plan decisions (objectives, terms, conditions):

*Objective F1, page 34: Provide for the safety of firefighters and the public from the effects of wildland fire. Restore and maintain the integrity of ecosystems.*

*Management Actions*

1. Accomplish prescribed burns in accordance with approved fire management plans (see glossary), prescribed fire plans (see glossary), and the State of Oregon smoke management plan (ODEQ 2006a; ODEQ 2006b).

*Objective W1, page 56: Improve and maintain vegetative condition to benefit wildlife.*

#### *Management Actions*

1. Manage upland habitat for diversity to provide for a variety of wildlife.
2. Maintain or improve habitat for threatened and endangered species.
3. Maintain or improve winter range for deer and elk.

*Objective W2, page 57: Maintain or improve habitats to support healthy, productive, and diverse populations and communities of native plants and animals.....*

*Maintenance or improvement of habitats will consider habitat patch size, disturbance, quality and connectivity of habitats required to sustain wildlife. Provide effective wildlife habitat for individual species, groups of species, or habitats.*

#### *Management Actions*

1. Maintain or improve habitats using a variety of techniques, such as mowing vegetation, wildland fire, livestock grazing, commercial timber harvest, non-commercial tree cutting, planting, seeding, and water developments.
2. Increase desirable big game browse species where appropriate.

## **FONSI**

On the basis of the information contained in the Damon Wildland Urban Interface Project EA, the Swick Creek Prescribed Fire DNA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the alternatives are in conformance with the John Day Basin Resource Management Plan; and (2) neither alternative would constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an EIS or a supplement to the existing EIS is not necessary and will not be prepared. The full FONSI can be viewed on the BLM's ePlanning web site.

## **Public, tribal and other involvement**

The initial collaboration process for the Damon Project spanned 11 months, from June 2008 through April 2009, when it was selected as the second collaboration project to be undertaken by the Blue Mountains Forest Partners, and the first large landscape project on the Malheur National Forest. The collaboration process included meetings and several field trips. In March, 2009 the Proposed Action that was developed through the collaboration process was sent out to the public mailing list. This included Federal, State and local agencies, Grant County Court, Tribes, permittees, nearby property owners, advocacy groups, and the general public.

There are no indications that the collaboration process, interagency review and public involvement associated with the Damon projects are not adequate for this new proposed action.

### **Rationale for the Decision**

Based on my review, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

### **Protest and Appeal Opportunities**

This decision constitutes my final decision and may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office (3050 N.E. Third Street, Prineville, OR 97754) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. Notice of appeal must be sent certified mail. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error. Any request for stay of this decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21 must be filed with your appeal. A notice of appeal and/or request for stay electronically transmitted (e.g., email, facsimile, or social media) will not be accepted. A notice of appeal and/or request for stay must be on paper.

Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Department of Interior, 805 SW Broadway, Suite 600, Portland, OR 97205.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
H.F. "Chip" Faver  
Field Manager, Central Oregon Resource Area

5-23-16  
Date