

Decision Memorandum on Action and for Application of:

Departmental Categorical Exclusion 1.13

Wragg Fire Emergency Stabilization

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Ukiah Field Office
Ukiah, California

Description of Proposed Action and the Purpose and Need for the Action

The Wragg Fire began on July 22, 2015 along Highway 128, near the Monticello Dam (Lake Berryessa) in Napa County, CA. The cause of the fire was a vehicle fire that spread to surrounding vegetation. The fire threatened numerous structures, including homes, high tension power lines, and roadside rest areas. The Wragg fire burned a total of 8,051 acres, of which, 1,751 acres were Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands. Impacts to BLM lands include areas of complete vegetation loss, unstable slopes, dead trees that have the potential to fall on trails, and damage to recreation structures and signs. The primary purpose of the proposed action is to provide post-fire rehabilitation activities within the Wragg Fire perimeter. The proposed action includes:

1. Replace trail signage that was damaged or destroyed by the fire,
2. Replace a 50 foot stairway and 21 miles of fencing along established trails, and
3. Monitoring and placement of erosion control in areas where slope instability is observed.

Another post-fire related project that will occur is the management and removal of non-native invasive plant species that emerge post-fire. However, this is will be addressed in a separate Environmental Assessment document that will be produced at a later date.

The project is located at the southern portion of the newly designated Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, south of Lake Berreyessa in Napa County.

Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the Ukiah Resource Management Plan and Final EIS (2006).

- Section 2.10, Fire Management, Fire Rehabilitation, Stabilization & Restoration (pg 18); “Rehabilitate burned areas to mitigate adverse effects of fire on soils, water, cultural and vegetation.”
- Section 2.10, Fire Management, Fire Rehabilitation, Stabilization & Restoration Management Actions(pg. 19):

“Native species would be used in reseedings to minimize noxious weed invasion.”

“Develop local or regional “Normal Fire Year Rehabilitation Plans”

“Monitor rehabilitation efforts to facilitate future planning and implementation.”

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM, Appendix 1, 1.13. ~~Post-fire rehabilitation activities not to exceed 4,200 acres (such as tree planting, fence replacement,~~ habitat restoration, heritage site restoration, repair of roads and trails, and repair of damage to minor facilities such as campgrounds) to repair or improve lands unlikely to recover to a management approved condition from wildland fire damage, or to repair or replace minor facilities damaged by fire. Such activities: Shall be conducted consistent with agency and Departmental procedures and applicable land and resource management plans; Shall not include the use of herbicides or pesticides or the construction of new permanent roads or other new permanent infrastructure; and Shall be completed within three years following a wildland fire.

The application of this categorical exclusion in this situation is appropriate because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects which may significantly affect the environment. For this project, none of the exceptions apply. The extraordinary circumstances are contained in 516 DM, 2 Appendix 2.

Person and Agencies Consulted

Consultation with the Bureau of Reclamation, California Fish and Wildlife Service, UC Davis, and Tuleyome was conducted in the development of the action as post-fire emergency stabilization and repair as they have adjacent lands to BLM in which the trail system traverse through.

Decision and Rationale on Action

I have decided to implement the proposed treatments listed in the Description of Proposed Action Section. These actions meet the purpose and need by providing post-fire rehabilitation on BLM lands within the Wragg Fire perimeter. In addition, I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required.

Implementation Date

This project will be implemented upon completion of analysis, advertisement of decisions, and protest periods.



Rich Burns
BLM Ukiah Field Office Manager

12/4/2015
Date

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

The decision in the Categorical Exclusion for post-fire emergency stabilization is subject to a 15-day comment period. If no comments are received, this decision will become effective upon completion of the Decision Record. If comments are received, this decision will become effective upon BLM's completion of its review and response to the comments. Any contest of this decision should state specifically which portion or element of the decision is being protested and cite the applicable CFR regulations.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision, contact:

Molly Nilsson, Environmental Protection Specialist
Ukiah Field Office
2550 North State St
Ukiah, CA 95482
707-468-4098

