

# **Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**

**Alpine County Forest Restoration Treatments**

**DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2016-0016-DNA**

Sierra Front Field Office

Carson City

Nevada

89701

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# ***Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)***

## **Worksheet**

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

OFFICE: Sierra Front Field Office, LLNVC02000

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Alpine County Forest Restoration Treatments

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Alpine County, California. T10N, R20E, S9&10.

Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures.

The Sierra Front Field Office proposes implementing a vegetation/fuels management treatment in the Indian Creek Recreation Area, Alpine County, California in the spring or fall of 2016 to help protect public and private improvements in the area from wildfire damage, provide a safer access/evacuation route and provide fire fighters a safer area in which to conduct fire suppression operations. The proposed project would restore healthy, diverse, and resilient ecosystems to conditions that minimize the potential for uncharacteristically intense wildfires.

Airport Road South (20 acres): The treatment is located in the Indian Creek Recreation Area, west of the Alpine County Airport, southeast of the residences on Airport Road (Project Area). The unit was mechanically treated by mastication in 2010 to thin overstocked Jeffrey pine and brush and reduce the amount of pinyon pine and white fir in the understory. The Proposed Action is to apply prescribed fire using hand held firing devices under approved prescribed fire and smoke management plans which specify required fuels and weather conditions, required notifications, required resources and other requirements. A minimum of three existing snags per acre and three down logs per acre, of the largest diameters present, would be retained and signed as necessary to discourage unauthorized removal. After use, prescribed fire hand lines would be restored by restoring the contour and water barring as necessary. A Class III cultural inventory was completed in 2001. No cultural resources eligible for the national register were identified in the Project Area. Tribal consultation including letters to and a field trip with the Washoe Tribe was conducted as part of the environmental assessment development in 2008. The implementation of this treatment would occur as early as spring 2016.

Resource protection measures (Section II, pages 16-17) are hereby incorporated by reference.

## **Land Use Plan Conformance**

|          |  |                |          |
|----------|--|----------------|----------|
| LUP Name | Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan | Date Approved: | May 2001 |
|----------|--|----------------|----------|

**The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:**

The Proposed Action described below is in conformance with the Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) (BLM 2001):

- FIR-2.1 Restore fire as an integral part of the ecosystem, improve the diversity of vegetation and to reduce fire hazard fuels;
- FOR-1.1 Forest and woodland management will be based on the principles of multiple use, sustained yield, and ecosystem management;
- WLD-2.4 Maintain and improve wildlife habitat, including riparian/stream habitats, and reduce habitat conflicts while providing for other appropriate uses.

The Proposed Action described below is consistent with direction in the Carson City Field Office Fire Management Plan (2005).

The Proposed Action is located in the Alpine Fire Management Unit (NV-030-05). Management direction applicable to this proposal includes the following:

FMU Prescribed Fire Strategy:

- Prescribed fire may be used in a coordinated manner with cooperators in critical areas to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, increase the manageability of wildfire, and maintain or improve ecosystem condition. Management action should appear to be natural and not create strong visual impacts.
- Utilize prescribed fire to modify vegetation communities and achieve fuels, habitat, watershed, and riparian objectives. Prescribed fire may be utilized to prevent pinyon and white fir encroachment into Jeffery pine and sagebrush sites, reduce fuel loads in Jeffery pine stands, create mosaic habitat patterns on a landscape scale, restore watershed functions, improve infiltration rates, and increase perennial stream flow.

### **Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.**

Name of Document: Alpine Forest Restoration Project Environmental Assessment  
Document No.: EA-NV-030-08-011  
Date of Approval: July 21, 2008

Name of Document: Alpine Forest Restoration Project FONSI and Decision Record (FONSI/DR)  
Document No.: EA-NV-030-08-011  
Date of Approval: July 21, 2008

### **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 action is identical to the action analyzed in Alpine Forest Restoration Project EA (Section II, page 7 of the EA) including the geographic location, purpose and need and Proposed Action. There are no unusual situations that affect the proposed treatment unit that would not be covered by the required resource protection measures. The original environmental assessment (EA) analyzed and authorized the use of prescribed fire on approximately 218 acres of public lands. The proposed use of prescribed fire on 20 acres in this DNA was among the previously authorized 218 acres (page 4, FONSI/DR).

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

Yes. The analysis of impacts for the Proposed Action in the Alpine Forest Restoration Project EA considered current information on natural and cultural resources, treatment methods and with the use of resource protection measures, how minimize potential impacts to resources of concern.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessments, recent endangered species listings, 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 analysis of the environmental consequences is still valid and relevant. There is no new information or circumstances that are applicable to the Proposed Action. The Project Area is not in delineated Bi-State sage-grouse or greater sage-grouse habitats.

**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. Resource concerns and impacts are substantially the same as those addressed in the Alpine Forest Restoration Project EA. Resource protection measures would ensure that implementation of the Proposed Action impacts are minimized or avoided during project implementation. The Alpine Forest Restoration Project EA included reasonably foreseeable future actions including projects that are likely to be completed over a 10 year period, 100-200 acres of vegetation treatment per year (BLM & USFS). The analysis continues to apply to the impacts of the Proposed Action.

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

Yes. The BLM provided a 30-day comment period for the draft EA from April 9 until May 7, 2008. Notifications were mailed to the Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Alpine Safe Council, California Department of Fish and Game, Cal Fire Amador-El Dorado Unit, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Humbolt-Toiyabe National Forest, Friend of Hope Valley, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and other interested individuals. The project was also discussed on May 6, 2008 during a meeting of the Alpine County Board of Supervisors. Letters of support were received from the Alpine County Board of Supervisors and the Friends of Hope Valley. The BLM received one comment letter from an individual. The comments were addressed and minor corrections and updates were made to the EA (page 5, FONSI/DR).

**BLM Staff Consulted**

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Resource/Agency Represented</u> |
|-------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
|-------------|--------------|------------------------------------|

See the original EA for a list of specialists involved in developing the project.

## Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the Proposed Action and constitute BLM's compliance with the requirement of NEPA.



/s/ Tim Rolde

Signature of Project Lead

Date 04.18.2016



Signature of Sierra Front Field Office NEPA Coordinator

Date

4-18-2016



Signature of Responsible Official  
Sierra Front Field Office

Date

4/18/2016

## Note:

This DNA documents that there are no new circumstances since the original EA was prepared in 2008. No changes are being proposed to the previously approved Proposed Action, therefore no new authorization/decision record is necessary.