

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Cottonwood Field Office  
1 Butte Drive  
Cottonwood, ID 83522

**Decision Memorandum on Action and for Application of Departmental  
Categorical Exclusion 43 CFR 46.210 (I)**

Tepee Springs Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan  
DOI-BLM-ID-C020-2016-0004-CX

**Description of the Proposed Action**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to implement treatments prescribed in the Tepee Springs Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation plan. The need for these treatments is to address resource concerns on BLM lands impacted by the Tepee Springs Fire in the Little Salmon and Salmon River drainages south and east of Riggins, Idaho. Treatments categorically excluded include seeding of perennial grass, planting of conifer seedlings, stabilization and protection of cultural resource sites, road and trail stabilization and drainage improvement.

Seeding of desirable plant species may occur in riparian areas where monitoring shows fire intensities were such that supplementing on-site perennial plants with desirable vegetation would promote streambank stabilization. The seed will be broadcast spread using a seeder spreader mounted on a UTV or by hand. Weed free straw mulch may be applied where needed to provide seed coverage. It is expected that less than five acres of total seeding will occur.

Conifer seedlings will be planted at reforestation sites in the Little Salmon drainage totaling approximately 140 acres to achieve forest restocking goals. Approximately 500 acres in the Salmon River watershed will be surveyed and prioritized for planting. Resource specialists are concerned that there may be a lack of mature trees and natural seedling establishment adequate to ensure stabilization of slopes and recovery of overstory species in an adequate timeframe. Silvicultural prescriptions based on habitat type will be prepared specific to each planting site. The prescriptions will detail the reforestation objectives as well as planting densities and species mix appropriate to achieve the objectives. Survey of riparian conservation areas (RCAs) will occur to determine if adequate natural recovery of vegetation is occurring to stabilize soils and provide streamside shading. If determined to be beneficial, seedlings may be planted in RCAs to aid in vegetation recovery goals.

Cultural inventory and survey will be conducted in portions of the fire area. If determined necessary, cultural and historic resource stabilization may occur. Stabilization could include seeding of desirable species, placement of straw barriers or waddles, mulching, or other activities to stabilize the site.

Road and trail segments located within the fire perimeter will be surveyed to assure drainage structures are functional and adequate to assure maintenance of infrastructure. As necessary, equipment or hand tools will be utilized to clear, improve, or install drainage or repair the road or trail surface.

## **1. Location**

Idaho County, Idaho

Boise Meridian, T. 24 N., R. 3 E.

T. 24 N., R. 2 E.

T. 21 N., R. 1 E.

T. 22 N., R. 1 E.

### Land Use Plan Conformance

In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), this proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with the Cottonwood Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved December 21, 2009. It is consistent with the following decisions from the RMP:

#### ***Vegetation – Forests (VF)***

**Objective VF-1.1**—Manage for forest health and/or habitat diversity in desired future condition blocks.

**Action VF-1.1.2** – Design treatment projects to enhance forest health and/or habitat diversity.

#### ***Vegetation – Riparian and Wetlands (VR)***

**Objective VR-1.1** – Strive to improve degraded riparian and wetland vegetation relative to site potential and potential natural vegetation composition and habitat diversity.

**Action VR-1.1.1** – Improvement of riparian condition may be accomplished in a variety of ways, examples include: (1) riparian restoration (e.g., plantings, seedings) . . .

#### ***Vegetation – Rangelands (VN)***

**Objective VN-1.2**—Plant communities dominated by nonnative annual plants will be managed to promote soil stability and rehabilitation opportunities.

**Action VN-1.2.3**—Implement actions to accomplish the conversion of nonnative plant communities to desired plant communities. Consider the use of available technologies and plant materials to achieve the desired outcome.

#### ***Wildlife and Special Status Wildlife (WS)***

**Objective WS- 1.6**—Manage rangeland and forest vegetation habitats to provide for diversity, cover, structure, forage, and security to contribute to healthy populations of rangeland and forest dependent species and other wildlife.

#### ***Aquatic Resources, fish, and Special Status Fish (AF)***

**Objective AF-1.1**—Provide for diverse and healthy aquatic habitats that contribute to the recovery of listed fish species and conservation of BLM sensitive fish species.

#### ***Cultural Resources (CR)***

**Objective CR-1.2**—Identify cultural properties requiring physical or administrative protection measures to protect site integrity and implement necessary measures.

**Action CR-1.2.3**—Implement site protection measures to protect at-risk sites.

### ***Wildland Fire Management (WF)***

**Objective WF-1.4**—Determine appropriate response, rehabilitation actions, and fuels treatment type based on resource values to be protected and values at risk identified in the RMP, through the fire planning process and documented in the fire management plan.

**Action WF-1.4.3**—Use rehabilitation and emergency stabilization to mitigate the adverse effects of fire on the soil, vegetation, and water resources in a cost-effective manner.

### ***Recreation (RC)***

**Objective RC-1.3**—Manage existing and develop new recreation facilities to attain recreation and other resource goals.

**Action RC-1.4.2**—Maintain all recreation facilities and recreation use areas for public safety and aesthetics.

### ***Wild and Scenic Rivers (WR)***

**Action WR-1.2.1**— . . . Maintain the free-flowing character, preserve or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values, and allow no activities within the river corridor that will alter the tentative classification.

### ***Transportation and Travel Management (TM)***

**Objective TM - 1.4**—Implement the RMP travel management decision, including . . . environmental monitoring, and facility maintenance.

**Action TM - 1.4.1**—Barriers: . . . may be installed as needed to prevent vehicular access.

**Action TM - 1.4.6**—Implement Road Management Guidelines for road planning, design, and maintenance.

### ***Visual Resources (VR)***

**Objective VR-1.1**—Manage activities to protect scenic quality in accordance with VRM class guidelines.

## **2. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under NEPA in accordance with 43 CFR 46.210 (1).

*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 must comply with the following:*

- (1) Shall be conducted consistent with bureau and Departmental procedures and applicable land and resource management plans;*
- (2) Shall not include the use of herbicides or pesticides or the construction of new permanent roads or other new permanent infrastructure; and*
- (3) Shall be completed within three years following a wildland fire.*

Application of this categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply.

### **3. Persons and Agencies Consulted**

The Nez Perce Tribe, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office and internal specialists were consulted regarding the development of the proposed action.

### **4. Decision and Rationale on Action**

I have decided to implement the proposed action to address resource concerns that resulted from the Tepee Springs Fire. These actions meet the need for action. 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.

### **5. Implementation date**

The affected lands are in immediate need of stabilization and rehabilitation. Therefore, in accordance with 43 CFR 4190.1, this decision is effective immediately. This project will be implemented on or after May 17, 2016 thru fall 2018.

/S/ Richard White  
Richard White  
Field Manager

05/17/2016  
Date

### **6. Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with regulations contained in 43 CFR 4. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed with the Field Manager, BLM Cottonwood Field Office, 1 Butte Drive, Cottonwood, Idaho 83522.

Any person whose interest is adversely affected by this decision may appeal the decision for the purpose of a hearing before an administrative law judge, following the requirements in 43 CFR 4.411. You are allowed thirty (30) days from the date the final decision becomes effective to file such an appeal with me at the above address (43 CFR 411). Any appeal must state clearly and concisely why you think this decision is in error.

Should you wish to file a motion for stay pending the outcome of an appeal of this decision, you must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

- The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
- The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.

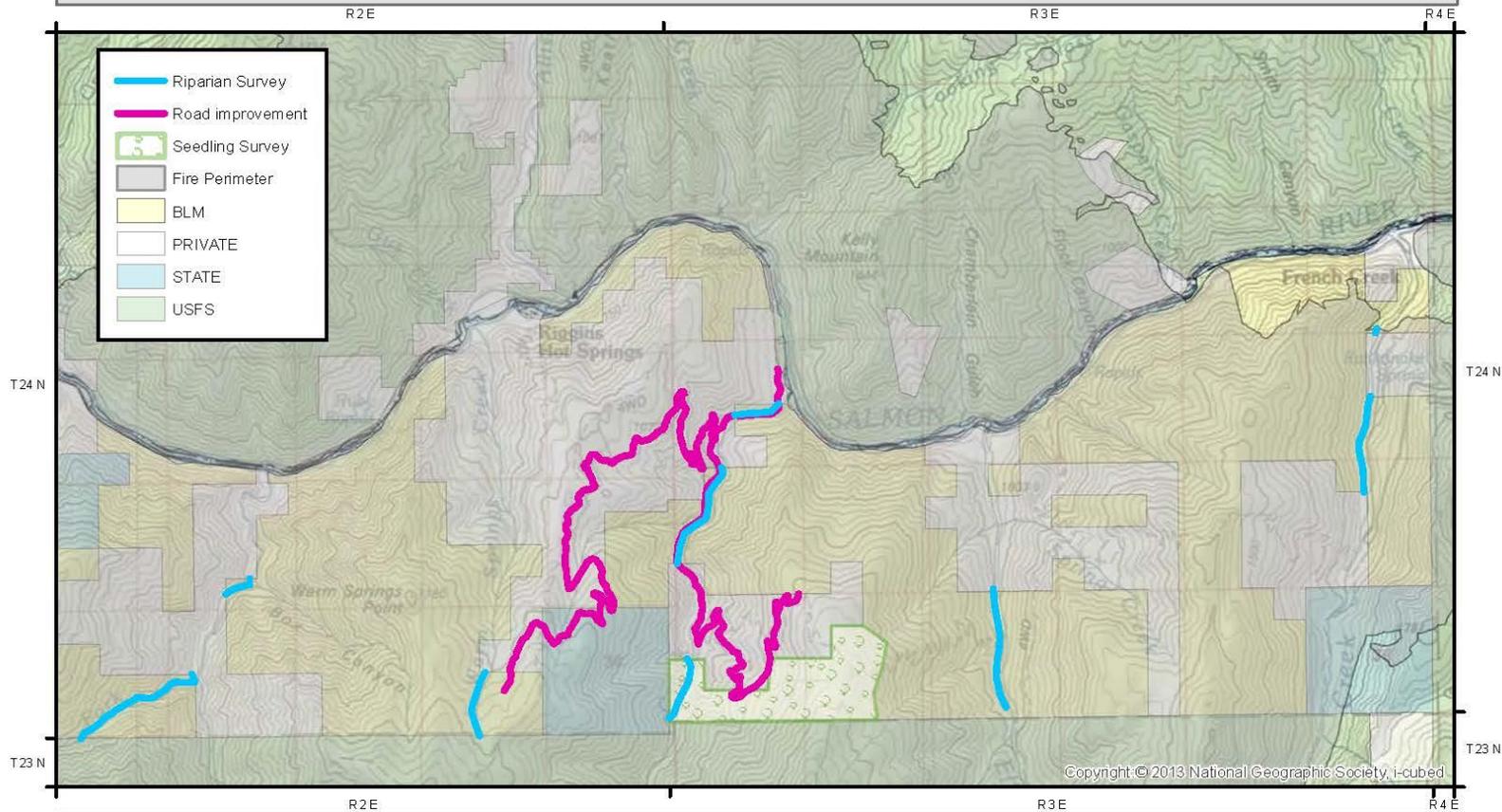
- Whether or not the public interest favors granting the stay.

As noted above, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer.

## **7. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this review, contact: Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, Cottonwood Field Office, 1 Butte Drive, Cottonwood, ID 83522, Telephone (208) 962-3797, email [ldanly@blm.gov](mailto:ldanly@blm.gov).

# Tepee Springs ESR Salmon River



Map Created: 3/10/2016

The surface management status ("land ownership") should be used as a general guide only. Official land records, located at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other offices, should be checked for up-to-date information concerning any specific tract of land.

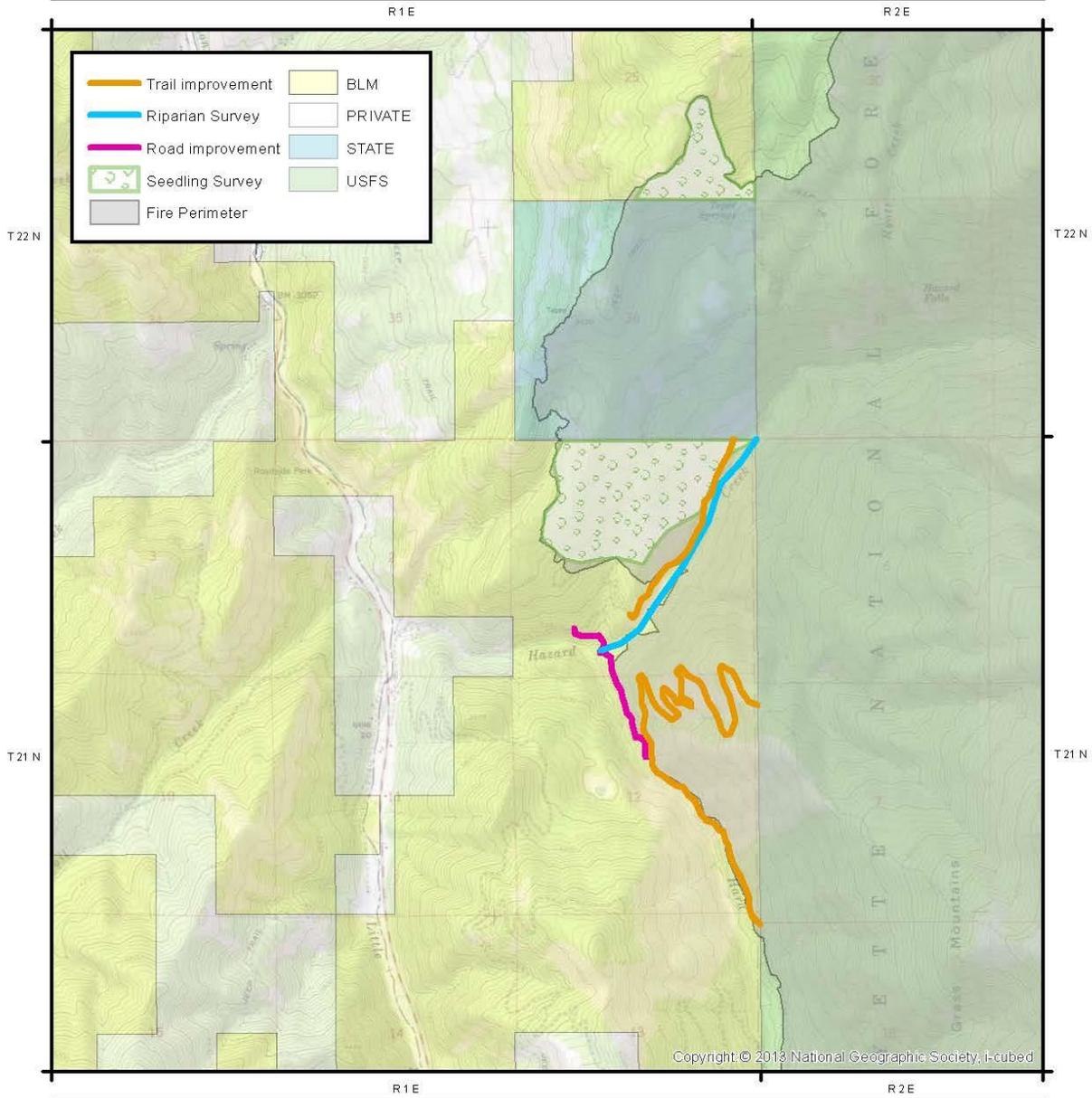
*No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. The following cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with its data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.*



Map Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11 N



# Tepee Springs ESR Little Salmon River



The surface management status ("land ownership") should be used as a general guide only. Official land records, located at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other offices, should be checked for up-to-date information concerning any specific tract of land.



Map Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. The following cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with its data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.

Map Created: 11/9/2015

**Extraordinary Circumstances Review**  
 Tepee Springs Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan  
 DOI-BLM-ID-C020-2016-0004-CX

*The BLM has reviewed the proposed action to determine if any of the following extraordinary circumstances apply, as listed in the Departmental NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46.215).*

| Extraordinary Circumstances  | Applies |
|--|---------|
| <p><b>2.1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The BLM did not identify any significant impacts on the public health or safety from the proposed action. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>  | No      |
| <p><b>2.2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no known impacts to historic or cultural resources. Some areas of potential road and trail work have not yet been identified that may require inventory and evaluation if proposed in the near future. <i>David Sisson, Archeologist, 5/11/16.</i></p> <p><i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no significant impacts on parks, recreation lands, wilderness areas, national natural landmarks, prime farmlands, or national monuments. Activities may take place in the Lower Salmon River ACEC but are expected to assist in the retention of the characteristics for which the area was designated. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p> <p>Lower Salmon River, French Creek, Hazard Creek were determined to be suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System as recreational segments. Proposed activities will not impact the WSR eligibility status but are expected to assist in the retention of the free-flowing nature of the river, and the retention or repair to the outstanding remarkable values (French {scenic and fisheries}, Hazard {scenic and geologic}, Lower Salmon {scenic, fisheries, geologic, recreation and cultural}). <i>Judy Culver, Outdoor Recreation Planner, 2/16/2016.</i></p> <p><i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no significant impacts on natural resources, unique geographic characteristics, refuge lands, drinking water aquifers, wetlands (EO 11990), floodplains (EO 11988), migratory birds, and other ecologically significant or critical areas. <i>Craig Johnson, Fisheries/Wildlife Biologist, 02/12/2016.</i></p> | No      |
| <p><b>2.3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no highly controversial environmental effects or unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>   | No      |

| Extraordinary Circumstances   | Applies |
|---|---------|
| <p><b>2.4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no highly uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects or unique risks associated with the proposed action. <i>Lynn A. Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>   | No      |
| <p><b>2.5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposal does not establish a precedent or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>  | No      |
| <p><b>2.6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> Numerous activities are occurring in the project area as a result of the Tepee Springs Fire. The Payette and Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests are implementing components of their burned area emergency rehabilitation plans. Timber salvage activities are occurring on lands managed by the BLM, Idaho Department of Lands and private landowners in the project area. Private landowners are conducting rehabilitation efforts and infrastructure repair on their own lands. Execution of the <i>Tepee Springs Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan</i> is independent of these other actions and not directly related to their implementation. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p> | No      |
| <p><b>2.7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the Bureau or office.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no known impacts to properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places. Some areas of potential road and trail work have not yet been identified that may require inventory and if sites located then evaluation of such properties for eligibility to listing on the National Register of Historic Places would be completed. <i>David Sisson, Archeologist, 5/11/16.</i></p>   | No      |
| <p><b>2.8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> There are no significant impacts on species listed, candidate, or proposed to be listed (Endangered Species Act - ESA) or significant impact on designated Critical Habitat for these species. Project design measures will avoid or minimize potential for adverse effects to ESA-listed species. A <i>no effect</i> determination is concluded for all ESA listed, proposed, or candidate species. <i>Craig Johnson, Fisheries/Wildlife Biologist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>   | No      |
| <p><b>2.9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposal adheres to laws imposed for the protection of the environment. <i>Lynn Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p>  | No      |
| <p><b>2.10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898).</b><br/> <i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposal will not disproportionately effect low income or minority populations. <i>Lynn A. Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016</i></p>   | No      |

| Extraordinary Circumstances   | Applies |
|---|---------|
| <p><b>2.11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007).</b></p> <p><i>Comments/Explanation:</i> No limits to access to or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or significant adverse effects to the physical integrity of such sites are known. <i>David Sisson, Archeologist, 5/11/16.</i></p>  | No      |
| <p><b>2.12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112).</b></p> <p><i>Comments/Explanation:</i> The proposal contains treatments designed to reduce noxious weeds and invasive species through seeding and re-establishment of native forest plants. None of the items proposed in the action are expected to promote or introduce unwanted plants. Weed Risk was rated as low for the project. <i>Lynn A. Danly, Natural Resource Specialist, 02/12/2016.</i></p> | No      |