

Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Missoula Field Office
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Missoula, Montana 59804-7204

OFFICE: Missoula Field Office

TRACKING NUMBER:

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: DOI-BLM-MT-B010-2016-0018-DNA

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Lower Blackfoot Corridor Conifer Cone Collection

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: BLM ownership within Townships 13 and 14 north, Ranges 15 and 16 west. Approximately 13 air-miles NE of Bonner MT, Missoula County. The project area will be referred to hereafter as the Lower Blackfoot Corridor (LBC).

APPLICANT (if any): BLM, Missoula Field Office

A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

The BLM, Missoula Field Office (MiFO) proposes to collect cones from conifer trees in the LBC. Cones from all species of conifers would be collected for the purpose of reforestation. Trees identified for cone collection would be climbed and sometimes felled in order to collect cones. Trees felled for the purpose of cone collection would not exceed 50 trees over a five year period and would occur only if it was deemed necessary to fell the trees due to safety issues for the climbers (such as: the limbs being too brittle to support the climber). Conifer seed collected would contribute to the MiFO seed cache, and be utilized for future reforestation projects. Because conifer seedlings must be planted in a similar geographical area and elevation as where the seed was collected, an extensive cache with seed of many species from a variety of locations and elevations is imperative to maintain the MiFO's ability to react to unanticipated reforestation needs (i.e. wildfire, insect outbreak), as well as to contribute to the ongoing effort of returning our lands to historic cover types.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name*: Garnet Resource Area Resource Management Plan, as amended.

Date Approved: January 10, 1986

Other document:

Date Approved: _____

Other document:

Date Approved _____

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

The Forestry Program Guidance (page 27) in the Garnet Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) states that stocking surveys should be conducted on all regenerated stands on a five year interval to determine stand stocking. The RMP indicates that if a stand is determined to be understocked, (<180 trees / acre) action should be taken. It is reasonable to assume that the decision maker's intent was for understocked stands to be planted. As stated, this project will contribute to the MiFO's seed cache for reforestation therefore: this action is in conformance with the RMP's Forestry Program Guidance.

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

May 6, 2014:

Chamberlain-Wales Resource Management Projects EA# DOI-BLM-MT-B010-2013-0017-EA

D. 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?

This proposed action is essentially indistinguishable to the cone collection component of the selected alternative in the Chamberlain-Wales Resource Management Projects EA. The project area of this action differs from the analysis area of the above EA, however it is geographically similar in that it is also located in the Blackfoot River watershed, located approximately 15 air miles to the west. The resource conditions with regard to cone collection in the LBC are essentially the same as the analysis area: the same habitat types exist in both areas, the vegetative communities are similar and the age and condition of the cone bearing trees will be alike. The geographic areas and resource conditions are comparable enough that the impact of cone collection on the LBC would be essentially similar to the impact of cone collection on Chamberlain-Wales project area.

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 values?

The alternatives analyzed were the Proposed Action and No Action. These alternatives are appropriate with respect to the new proposed action.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of

Maggie Wood

Signature of NEPA Coordinator

8/17/16

Date

Joe L. Astor

Signature of the Responsible Official

8/17/16

Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations. A Decision Document may be required (if the Decision Document for the previously-completed action does not apply), consistent with program requirements.