

USDI, Bureau of Land Management
Three Rivers Resource Area, Burns District

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

And
Decision Record
For

Slocum Allotment Management Plan
Environmental Assessment
OR-025-04-37

INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed to analyze the effects of implementing the Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Slocum #05593 Allotment. The Slocum Allotment is located approximately 37 miles east-southeast of Burns, Oregon. This encompasses a change in management. This area is characterized by sagebrush grasslands, and juniper sagebrush grasslands. The Slocum Evaluation determined that management had not met Standards for Rangeland Health or Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for public lands administered by the BLM in the states of Oregon and Washington.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Prescribed livestock management is a two pasture graze/defer grazing rotation on the Slocum Allotment as specified in the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

This proposal is in conformance with objectives and land use plan allocations in the 1992 Three Rivers Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It is in conformance with the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Management for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the States of Oregon and Washington (August 12, 1997.) Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and all other information, I have determined that the proposed action and alternatives analyzed do not constitute a major federal action that would significantly impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Rationale:

This determination is based on the following: The following critical elements of the human environment have been analyzed in the Three Rivers RMP/Final EIS, and are not known to be present in the project area or affected by enacting either alternative: Air Quality, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Prime Farmlands, Paleontology, Floodplains or Hazardous Materials. The following critical element is not discussed in the Three Rivers RMP/EIS, but is either not known to be present or affected: Environmental Justice. All potentially affected resources were analyzed in the EA specific to the proposed action. The following resources were analyzed in the EA: cultural heritage and American Indian religious concerns, noxious weeds, livestock management, vegetation, soils, wildlife, and recreation and visual resources. Effects to these resources are considered nonsignificant (based on the definition of significance in 40 CFR 1508.27 for the following reasons:

Cultural Heritage and American Indian Religious Concerns

There are no proposed projects which would knowingly affect cultural heritage or American Indian religious concerns.

Noxious Weeds

Improvement in riparian and upland conditions would assist in reducing the spread of invasive nonnative vegetation. Weed infestations would be prevented and/or reduced by adherence to the Burns District noxious weed plan.

Range

a. Vegetation

Upland and riparian conditions would improve as plants are given an opportunity to reproduce and gain vigor under a graze/defer rotation system.

b. Soils

The upland soils would be maintained by the vegetation increase due to use during times when the plants are not actively growing

Grazing Management

Grazing management would function as a two pasture deferred rotation system with each pasture deferred every other year. The maintenance of the plant community composition and improvement in vigor and condition of the plants could increase forage value on the allotment with associated weight gains for the livestock.

Wildlife

Livestock management to enhance native perennial vegetation would enhance critical Mule deer winter range in the area.

Recreation and Visual Resources

There would be no change in the visual aspects of the area. Hunting opportunities would not be affected by the proposed action. Upland and riparian areas visual aspects will be improved by improved vegetation through livestock management. Off Highway Vehicle use would not be affected.

Joan M. Suther
Three Rivers Resource Area Field Manager

Date

DECISION RECORD:

DECISION: Having considered a range of alternatives and associated impacts and based on the analysis in the Slocum AMP/EA, it is my decision to implement the proposed action which proposes to improve upland health, and improve important wildlife habitat. This decision pertains only to land administered by the BLM.

Rationale for Decision: I have selected the proposed action for the following reasons:

The proposed action would increase the health and vigor of the native vegetation in the Slocum Allotment.

It promotes and sustains healthy ecosystems.

Based on past experience there is a high likelihood for success.

Public involvement consisted of direct mailing to 3 individuals, tribes, and agencies and a notice in the local newspaper. We did not receive any comments during the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/EA review period.

It is in compliance with the Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (1992).

It is in compliance with Federal laws that mandate the management of public land resources (Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976).

The calculated AUMs as stated in the Slocum AMP/EA were based on information that was inaccurate and the estimated total AUMs for the allotment is 880 which will be maintained as established by the 1983 Slocum Allotment Management Plan and the Three Rivers Resource Management Plan, Record of Decision, and Rangeland Program Summary of 1992.

I have also considered alternatives to the proposed action including:

Alternative I - No Action: This alternative proposed no changes in current livestock management identified in the Proposed Action. I did not select this alternative because it did not address allotment specific objectives or meet the standards for Rangeland Health.

This decision 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 and Form 1842-1. If an appeal is filed, your notice of appeal must be filed in the Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, OR 97738 by September 27, 2004. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed is in error.

If you wish to file a petition, pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 4.21, for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for

stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. 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 Appropriate Office of the Solicitor(see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
4. Whether or not the public interest favors granting the stay.

Signature on file
*Joan M. Suther
Three Rivers Resource Area Field Manager

10/4/2004
Date