



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Vale District Office
100 Oregon Street
Vale, Oregon 97918
<http://www.or.blm.gov/Vale/>

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1742
OR-030-02-032

September 10, 2002

Dear Interested Party:

The Environmental Assessment (EA No. OR-030-02-032) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Pinto Horse Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) Plan is available for viewing at <http://www.or.blm.gov/vale/> under NEPA Planning and Environmental Analyses, Schedule of Proposed Actions, or at the Vale District Office of the BLM, 100 Oregon Street, Vale, Oregon. A copy is available upon request.

On July 7, 2002 a lightning storm ignited the Pinto Horse Fire (N237) ten miles South of Arock, Oregon in T.32 S., R.43 E., sec 4 in the Owyhee River Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA). The Pinto Horse fire burned approximately 9,655 acres in the Jordan Resource Area in the Vale District. The burn consisted of 7,628 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and 2,027 acres of land administered by the State of Oregon. About 4,446 acres within the Owyhee River Canyon WSA burned, both above and below the rim. Below the rim of the Owyhee River Canyon, within the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River Corridor, about 928 acres were burned. Above the rim within the Arock Allotment, some 5,430 acres of public land burned and about 1,270 acres in the Rattlesnake Individual FFR Allotment. The Pinto Horse Fire was contained on July 8, 2002 and out on July 9, 2002.

The proposed action would allow seeding of 3,800 acres within the Arock Allotment and the Rattlesnake Individual Allotment, (1,800 acres within the WSA), which were burned by wildfire, with a mixture of adapted native perennial plant species. Twelve and one half miles of temporary electric protective fencing would also be constructed to protect the seedings and burned areas from livestock grazing (250 feet of which would be in the WSA). The ESR effort, as proposed, is expected to augment native range with adapted perennials and would: stabilize soils from wind and water erosion, reduce the probability of the establishment and site dominance of annual species and weeds, reduce future fire hazards, maintain or restore ecological integrity and function to the ESR area, restore vegetative structure in order to capture and hold snow during the winter months managing moisture on site more effectively, and establish a perennial forage base for wildlife and livestock.

The burned and seeded areas would be closed to livestock grazing for at least two growing seasons, or until sufficient establishment has occurred to allow grazing to resume.

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Vale District office during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as a part of the EA document or other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality.

If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

We are allowing a fifteen (15) day comment period which will end on September 25, 2002 prior to issuing a decision. All comments received within 15 days from the date of this letter will be taken into consideration prior to a decision being issued. A copy of the decision will be sent to those who comment or request it. All comments should be in writing and should be directed to the Jordan Resource Area Field Manager at the above address. Any questions regarding this plan or the analysis should be directed to Bill Lutjens at (541) 473-3144.

Sincerely,

s/Jerry L. Taylor

Jerry L. Taylor
Jordan Field Manager