

BLM - Vale District

Baker, Jordan, and Malheur Resource Areas
Project and Planning Focus- 2001

Introduction

This bulletin is the latest in an on-going dialogue between you and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Vale District office. We hope that this Project and Planning focus will increase your awareness of BLM activities and your opportunities to discuss these activities with us. Through this bulletin we hope to continue our ongoing relationship with you. We will publish this bulletin each year to provide updates on our progress. This edition is also posted on our web site (www.or.blm.gov/vale).

Understanding NEPA

What is NEPA? NEPA is the National Environmental Policy Act. When we propose management actions that might affect the quality of the environment, the district uses an interdisciplinary approach to develop alternative proposals, including the proposed action, and to provide environmental analysis (EA) of possible effects of proposed actions. Another important aspect of NEPA is its requirement for public involvement in the planning process.

Categorical Exclusions (CE)

Under NEPA some proposed actions do not require EAs. These are called categorical exclusions (CE). These actions do not individually or cumulatively have significant environmental effects and may be excluded from environmental analysis if they qualify under BLM or Department of the Interior guidelines.

Environmental Assessments (EA)

Some proposed actions require an Environmental Assessment. These are management actions that are not exempted as categorical exclusions and are not covered under an existing NEPA document such as an EA or EIS.

When the EA is completed it is determined whether the proposed action will significantly affect the quality of the environment. If impacts are determined to be significant, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared. If impacts are determined to be insignificant, a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be prepared.

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)

Major federal actions significantly affecting the environment require an EIS. The analysis and resulting document describes an array of management alternatives including the preferred alternative, the environmental impacts of implementing the alternatives, adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed action is implemented.

How Can I be Involved?

You can let us know your views and concerns as comments on completed EAs and EISs during the formal comment periods. Resource management within the BLM and other government agencies is process oriented. In order to influence the decision, you must be a part of the process, and the earlier in the process the better. For many of the EAs, this project bulletin and the Vale District Internet website (www.or.blm.gov/vale) may be the only scoping notice you will receive prior to the notice of availability of the EA for public review. If you wish to comment on the proposed projects in the early planning stages, you should contact the designated project coordinator.

The following EA's are for projects that are completed or expected to be completed in fiscal year 2001. A notice is published in local newspapers when each EA is available for review by the public and a date when the comment period ends. A notice will be published in the Baker City Herald or La Grande Observer for EAs completed in the Baker Resource Area, and the Ontario Argus Observer paper for EAs done in the Malheur and Jordan Resource Areas. EAs when completed will also be available for downloading or viewing on the Vale District Internet website (www.or.blm.gov/vale). The website will also provide updated information on the status of EAs and planning documents including those that may not have been anticipated when this document was completed. If you are interested in receiving a copy of an EA or want to get involved in the NEPA process, please contact the designated project coordinator at one of the addresses/phone numbers listed below:

BLM Vale District

100 Oregon Street
Vale, Oregon 97918
(541) 473-3144
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (MST or MDT)
Monday through Friday

Baker Resource Office

3165 10th Street
Baker City, Oregon 97814
(541) 523-1256
7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (PST pr PDT)
Monday through Friday

An update on the status of these EAs will appear in the next Project and Planning Focus.

Malheur Resource Area

Environmental Assessments Planned for 2001

Name: East Rim North Fork Malheur River Fence

Contact: Ron Rembowski

Location: North Fork Malheur River

Description: Construct 1.0 mile of fence along East Rim of the North Fork of the Malheur River in the Whitley Canyon Allotment.

Status: EA completed May, 2001

Name: Warm Springs Irrigation Pump and Power line Right of Way

Contact: Jon Freeman

Location Malheur River at Vines Hill near Vale

Description: Placement of irrigation pump and power line right of way

Status: EA completed April, 2001

Name: Ritchie Flat Allotment Revised Grazing Schedule

Contact: Tom Hilken

Location: Ritchie Flat Allotment

Description: Revise Grazing Schedule for the Ritchie Flat Allotment

Status: Pending

Name: Allotment #2 Revised Grazing Schedule

Contact: Tom Hilken

Location: Allotment #2

Description: Revise Grazing Schedule for Allotment #2

Status: Pending

Name: Mountain Pasture Holding Fence

Contact: Tom Hilken

Location: Brian Creek Allotment

Description: Construct .5 mile of fence to develop a Holding Pasture in the Mountain Pasture located in the Brian Creek Allotment.

Status: Pending

Name: Sheaville Zeolite Mine EA

Contact: Bill Holsheimer

Location: Ten miles north of Jordan Valley located on east side of Hwy 95.

Description: Develop a Zeolite Mine and disturb less than 5 acres of upland vegetation.

Status: Pending

Name: Lower Succor Creek Noxious Weed Control and Restoration Project

Contact: Randy Eyre

Location: North of Succor Creek State Park

Description: Herbicide treatment and native plant restoration of 2,000 acres
Status: Pending

FY 2000 EA Status

Name: North Fork Malheur River Landscape Area Project - Carry over to 2001

Contact: Tom Dabbs, Natural Resource Specialist

Location: North Fork Malheur River Geographic Area encompassing 125,000 acres of public land west of Vale, Oregon

Description: Resource assessment and management plan for the North Fork Malheur River Geographic Area. Will include grazing permit assessment and renewal as well as projects and management prescriptions to meet resource objectives within the landscape area.

Name: Ramos Electric Power Line

Contact: Jon Freeman, Realty Specialist

Location: East of Owyhee Reservoir, T. 22 S., R. 45,46 E.

Description: Construction of electric power line to serve a FM broadcasting station

Status: Pending

Name: Owyhee Ridge Complex Communication Site Plan

Contact: Susie Manezes

Location: East of Owyhee Reservoir

Description: Management plan to guide use and development of communication site

Status: Pending

Ring Butte Diatomite Mine and Mill-Completed

Coyne Point Communication Site-Completed

Little Valley Fire Rehabilitation-Completed

Jackson Fire Rehabilitation-Completed

Wildhorse Spring Fire Rehabilitation-Completed

BAKER RESOURCE AREA

Environmental Assessments planned for 2001

Name: Ebell Lease #366011

Contact: Gary Guymon

Location: North Bridgeport Allotment #11302

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit

Status: Pending

Name: Bunch Family Trust #366105

Contact: Teresa Smergut

Location: Hollow Field Canyon #1030, Shirrtail Creek #1031, Pearce Gulch #1065, Morgan Mountain #1068, and Sisley Creek #1069 allotments.

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit.

Status: Pending

Name: Doman #366110

Contact: Teresa Smergut

Location: Jordan Creek #1045, Tunnel #1067, and Morgan Mountain #1068 allotments.

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit.

Status: Pending

Name: Patterson #366119

Contact: Teresa Smergut

Location: Trail Creek #1052 and Iron Mountain #1002

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit.

Status: Pending

Name: Langley #366122

Contact: Teresa Smergut

Location: East Table #1015, Powell Creek #1062, and Morgan Mountain #1068 allotments.

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit.

Status: Pending

Name: Colton #366210

Contact: Gene McLaughlin

Location: Salt Creek #2017, Crews Creek #2020, and Seeding #2021 allotments.

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit.

Status: Pending

Name: Jacobs #366224

Contact: Gene McLaughlin

Location: Five Mile #2004, River Individual #2008, Pritchard Creek #2074, and East Balm Creek #2116 allotments.

Description: Re-issue multi-year grazing permit

Status: Pending

Name: Bieber Road Right-of-Way OR-035-01-05

Contact: Steve Davidson

Location: Virtue Flat east of Baker City

Description: Improve existing primitive road, construct short segment of new road

Status date: Pending

Name: Pleasant Valley Quarry Site OR-035-01-04
Contact: Steve Davidson
Location: Near Pleasant Valley southeast of Baker City
Description: Quarry and stockpile site
Status: Pending

Name: Northern Rangelands Assembled Land Exchange
Contact: Jon Freeman
Location: Various BLM parcels in northern Morrow and Umatilla counties, private land parcels in northern Wallowa County
Description: Exchange of BLM and private lands
Status: Pending

Name: Panhandle Unit Restoration project.
Contact: Rubel Vigil
Location: T9S, R45E, sec.5, 7, 8; T10S, R45E, sec. 2,11,14;
T9S, T10S R45E, sec. 4,5,8,9,27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34; T9S, R46E, sec.7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20; T8S, R46E, sec. 19,30; T8S, R47E, sec. 18, 19, 28, 29, 30.
Description: The proposed project is to implement restoration activities on approximately 3,100 acres of BLM administered lands.
Status: Pending

Name: Dixie Creek Fence
Contact: Gary Guymon
Location: T. 13S., R. 42E., sec. 21, 22, 25, 26, 27.
Description: Install two and a half miles of fence to control use on a riparian area.
Status: Pending

Name: Keystone Mine Spring
Contact: Gary Guymon
Location: T. 9S., R. 44E., sec. 14, NE¹/₄SW¹/₄.
Description: Develop spring for use by livestock and wildlife.
Status: Pending

Name: Denny Flat Reservoir projects
Contact: Gary Guymon
Location: T. 12S., R. 37E., sec. 27, SE¹/₄SW¹/₄ , sec. 35, NE¹/₄SE¹/₄, T.13S., R37E., sec. 12, NE¹/₄NE¹/₄.
Description: Develop three reservoirs for use by livestock and wildlife.
Status: Pending

FY 2000 EA Status

Lookout Mountain Forest Health Project (OR-035-99-09) has been upgraded to an EIS with a New Target Date of January 2002

Vale District Integrated Noxious Weed Control Program, has been upgraded to an EIS with a new target date of January 2002

Haberman Road Right-of-Way (OR-035-00-04) new target date is summer 2001

Beamer's Landing Land Sale (OR-035-01-03) new target date is fall 2001

Voile Farmstead Land Sale (OR-035-01-02) new target date is fall 2001

Travel Information Council of Oregon R&PP Lease - project is completed

Level 3 Communications Fiber Optic R/W (OR-035-00-01) Decision Record Signed

Spring Recreation Site Vault Toilet -project is completed

Copper Creek Vault Toilet -project is completed

FY 1999 EA Status

Lime Hill Communications Site Plan (OR-035-99-04) new target date is spring 2001

City of Irrigon R&PP Conveyance (OR-035-99-05) out for public review May, 2001

Lime Hill Coordinated Activity Plan (OR-035-97-02) Decision Record Signed

Snake River Quarry Free Use Permit (OR-035-99-10) Decision Record Signed

Oregon Trail Vegetation Management Plan (OR-035-99-12) Decision Record Signed

Rattlesnake Forest Health Project (OR-035-98-06) Decision Record Signed

JORDAN RESOURCE AREA

Environmental Assessments Planned for 2001

Name: Birch Creek Ranch Water Storage Tank Replacement

Contact: Tom Christensen

Location: Birch Creek Ranch on Owyhee River

Description: Replacement of water storage tank at Birch Creek Ranch

Status: EA Completed October, 2000

Name: Southern Trout Creek Habitat Maintenance Prescribed Burn

Contact: Tom Miles

Location: Trout Creek Mountains

Description: Prescribed burning to restore habitat

Status: Pending

FY 2000 EA Status

Name: Sage Creek Fish Barrier

Contact: Cynthia Tait, Fisheries Biologist

Location: Zimmerman Allotment

Description: Construct a weir to block passage of undesirable fish.

Status: New target date of Fall 2001

Name: Indian Canyon West Pasture Fence

Contact: J. R. Epps, Rangeland Specialist

Location: Willow Creek Allotment

Description: Build a pasture division fence.

Status: on hold

Name: Whitehorse Allotment Cross Fence and Grazing System

Contact: J. R. Epps, Rangeland Specialist

Location: Whitehorse Allotment

Description: Fence construction and grazing system adjustment

Status: On hold

Name: Louse Canyon Geographic Management Area (GMA) Assessment

Contact: Tom Miles, Rangeland Management Specialist

Location: Louse Canyon GMA encompassing 521,451 acres of public land east of McDermitt, Nevada

Description: Resource assessment and evaluation. Will include grazing permit assessment and renewal as well as projects and recommendations to meet resource objectives within the G.A.

Status: Summer 2001

Name: Coyote Lakes Wild Horse Gather

Contact: Jim Johnson

Location: Coyote Lakes and Alvord/Tule Wild Horse Herd Management Areas

Description: Gathering of excess Wild Horse

Status: Completed Winter 2000-2001

FY 99 EA Status

Name: Antelope Pipeline Cantor Pit: New Target Date Fall, 2001

Name: McDermitt Complex Undesirable Species Control: New Target Date September, 2001

Name: Southern Trout Creek Habitat Maintenance: EA/FONSI/DR completed 5/2001

Name: Macaroni Spring: cancelled

