

DECISION RECORD/FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
WYOMING SAGEBRUSH BEATING FOR WILDFIRE FUEL BREAKS

EA OR-025-03-05

INTRODUCTION: Following a 30-day comment period of the Wyoming Sagebrush Beating for Wildfire Fuel Breaks Environmental Assessment (EA) OR-025-03-05, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is issuing a decision for the sagebrush beating within the project area in the southwest quarter of the Three Rivers Resource Area of the Burns District. The decision is to implement the proposed action of the EA.

DECISION: Having considered a range of alternatives and associated impacts and based on the analysis in the Wyoming Sagebrush Beating for Wildfire Fuel Breaks EA, it is my decision to implement the proposed action which establishes criteria and objectives to increase the likelihood of containment of wildfire in Wyoming sagebrush, to protect areas of high resource value from wildfire and vegetative community conversion to cheatgrass, to minimize wildlife and Bureau Special Status Species (SSS) habitat loss, and to reduce the cost of fire rehabilitation by reducing the size of wildfires. 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 protects the area from large-scale fire disturbances by breaking up the continuity of wildfire fuels and modifying the fuel arrangement to create defensible spaces for suppression forces. In addition, it helps to protect important sage-grouse habitats over large areas, and allows for some age class diversity in the Wyoming sagebrush community.

Public involvement consisted of direct mailing to 21 individuals, organizations, tribes, agencies, and a notice in the local newspaper. I did not receive any comments during the Finding of No Significant Impact/EA review period.

It is in conformance with Section 7(a)1 of the Endangered Species Act.

It is in compliance with the Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (1992) and Bureau policy for SSS (BLM policy 6840).

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

It is in compliance with State, local, and Tribal land use plans and regulations.

The decision does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation.

I have also considered alternatives to the proposed action including:

Alternative 1 - No Action: This alternative proposed no fuel reduction treatments would take place. I did not select this alternative because it was not responsive to improving the conditions in the habitat types that are identified in the purpose and need of the EA.

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 must be filed in the Burns District Office, 28910 Hwy 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738 by November 21, 2002. 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.

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

7/24/2003
Date