

## Attachment 11C(1)

### Explanatory Note for Wildland Fire Management Report February 1, 2010

Attached to this memorandum is the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Report as required under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Section 1609(c). The OWFC was approved for ARRA funding under one Treasury Appropriations Fund: Hazardous Fuels Reduction, WUI.

**Projects Withdrawn in the OWFC Report** – One project (line #59) was withdrawn since the previous report. It was determined that the land status changes resulting from passage of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 would have required new NEPA for the project, and that the class of NEPA would have been an EIS, which could not have been completed in the timeframe mandated by the ARRA.

**New Entries in the OWFC report** – Two new projects have been entered in the report, on rows #77 and #78. All NEPA actions (EAs) and all federal environmental reviews and documents are completed for these two new projects.

**Consolidation of NEPA Actions** – For increased transparency and because of the relatively limited number of projects, OWFC projects are listed individually; we have not grouped projects.

**Compliance Documents Completed Prior to ARRA** -- For some projects, compliance documents were completed several years ago. For each of these projects, we have confirmed that there are no significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts, and that the conditions of and around the projects have not changed significantly.

**Pending Categorical Exclusion Actions** -- All NEPA actions have been completed for projects that were proposed to be implemented under categorical exclusions.

**Pending Environmental Assessment Actions** -- One environmental assessment remains pending within the time line that was established for the project (line #46). The EA was finalized and the FONSI signed January 19, 2010 and will be reported completed in the next reporting cycle.

**Change in Total Pending NEPA Actions Since Previous Report** – The total number of pending NEPA actions decreased from 16 percent of the total NEPA actions on our previous report to 2 percent (one single action on one project) for this report. We anticipate completing all NEPA actions during Q2 of FY 2010. Additionally, the number of projects needing completion of federal environmental reviews and documents decreased from 38 percent of all projects to 21 percent during this reporting period.

**Class of Action Changes** -- No project had a class of action change since the previous report.

**Difference Between Appropriation and Total Obligations to Date** – Currently 48 percent of the total appropriations have been obligated. Most of the hazardous fuels projects are being implemented through contracts, which are not awarded until all environmental reviews and documents are completed. Implementation of the projects is usually depended on seasonal effects, such as weather conditions and wildlife habitat considerations. Contracting officials prioritize contract preparation based, in part, on when the contract could be implemented. On-the-ground implementation occurs shortly after a contract is award. Once proper conditions for implementing the remaining projects nears, we expect a sharp increase in the hazardous fuels project contract obligations.