

## Attachment 10E(1)

### Explanatory Note for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Report November 2, 2011

This transmits the BLM's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) report for projects that are funded under Section 1609 (c) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The BLM NEPA report documents the NEPA status for all BLM ARRA projects through September 30, 2011.

The NEPA reporting procedures and requirements have been completed for BLM ARRA projects. NEPA compliance for BLM ARRA funded projects consist of the following NEPA actions: Categorical Exclusions (CEs), Environmental Assessments (EAs), and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs).

BLM has completed all the NEPA actions (100%) that were associated with Recovery Act projects. The BLM has 818 NEPA actions for Recovery Act projects for 610 ARRA projects. Historically, the BLM was reporting only one action per project when in some cases there were multiple NEPA actions associated with each project. The correct number of NEPA actions associated with each project is now reflected in our *NEPA ARRA Section 1609 Report Data* submission.

The BLM submits the following explanations summarizing BLM's changes from the previous report.

Progress towards obligating funds - For the period ending 9/30/2011, we had obligated \$293,495,807. This is a decrease of \$2,468,423 in a 3 month period. The decrease is due to projects being completed without using all of the obligated funds and canceled projects. This report includes agreements with other agencies to accomplish various components of the ARRA projects which are not included in the amounts reported on Recovery.gov.

Total ARRA appropriations for MLR and Construction Funds – The appropriation totals reflected in this report are only for the project categories and do not include the funds allocated towards administrative support of ARRA.

NEPA Not Applicable – The BLM has a total of fourteen projects where NEPA was determined to be not applicable. The fourteen ARRA projects that are still listed as “not applicable” are in the *Remediation of Abandoned Mines* category. They are now covered under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and not NEPA.

#### **ARRA Project example(s) that benefitted from the NEPA process**

The Lime Kiln Salvage Road project north of Lewistown, Montana, was successful in large part due to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) NEPA public involvement process. The public involvement process was instrumental in helping to design a road system to access and salvage blow down timber as well as recognize the recreational values of the area. The public emphasized the need for the area to be maintained as a non-motorized use area but also came to recognize the need to address the blow down timber and subsequent forest health issues. Several proposals were presented, discussed and refined during public meetings and ultimately led to the decision to build a road to access salvage logging and then close the road to motorized use. Additionally, portions of the road will be

rehabilitated to the extent possible while other portions will be incorporated to expand the existing recreational trails in the existing Limekiln Trail System and provide future recreational opportunities.

The Lakeview District's Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) submitted two American Recovery and Reinvestment Act biomass utilization projects totaling \$1,400,000 (LLORL00000 LRHR10000 LXHAB1310000 & LXHAB1380000). Implementation of these projects hinged on completing a thorough NEPA analysis (EAs) on approximately 5,000+ acres of cut and piled western juniper and the subsequent decision on what to do with the piles. The first EA, 2008 Juniper Disposal EA No. OR 014-08-06, was signed on June 11, 2009, and the second EA, 2009 Juniper Disposal EA No. DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2009-0008, was signed on February 5, 2010. Under the leadership of Donald Holmstrom, Field Manager for the KFRA, the interdisciplinary team analyzed three alternatives; leave the piles lay, burn the piles, or utilize all or a portion of the piles for a variety of forest products including biomass. The two EAs analyzed the potential resource impacts as a result of the three proposed alternatives. Some of the key resource issues analyzed included; noxious weeds, soils, air quality, and socioeconomic benefits.

Since the initiation of the National Fire Plan, the Lakeview District has been aggressively treating juniper woodlands for primarily two purposes; rangeland restoration and fuel hazard reduction. Over the past 10 years, the KFRA has treated over 30,000 acres of western juniper woodlands. With a growing emphasis on biomass utilization and concerns to reduce green house gases resulting from smoke emissions, the Lakeview District has been working with local entrepreneurs, industry, and the general public to develop markets for western juniper. Through a combination of available funding, stewardship contracting, and innovative contractors, the KFRA has been successful in utilizing western juniper since 2004. The EAs and NEPA assisted the resource area specialists in determining areas where it would be ecologically appropriate to remove the juniper. Of the 5,000+ acres analyzed in the EAs, the decision was made to utilize approximately 3,000 acres and burn approximately 2,000 acres.

The public was notified about these proposed treatments and public comments were received and incorporated. No protests or appeals were received on these decisions.

Key contacts regarding this project and the NEPA process are: Madeline Campbell (541-885-4130) and Shane Durant (541-885-4123).

If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding this report, please contact Andrew Pierpan, ARRA Project Manager at 202-912-7076 or Ryan Robin, ARRA Deputy Project Manager at 503-375-5713.

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