

**NORMAL FIRE REHABILITATION PLAN SUPPLEMENT  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
AND  
DECISION RECORD  
OMNI FIRE, Z511  
BLM/EK/PL2000/044**

**Finding of No Significant Impact:**

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan Supplement Environmental Assessment BLM/EK/PL2000/044, I have determined that the proposed action will not have significant impacts on the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

**Decision:**

It is my decision to implement the Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) Supplement as described in the Environmental Assessment for the Omni Fire BLM/PL2000/044. Over 347 acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management Elko Field Office were burned during this fire. Approximately 347 acres of the burned public land acres will be rehabilitated by planting of multiple species seed mixtures. Approximately 4.3 miles of dozer line will be rehabilitated. Approximately 0.3 miles of existing fence will be repaired to facilitate closure of rehabilitated areas to grazing. Post-fire grazing management, including the period of time needed for closure, will be determined based on monitoring and achievement of site specific resource objectives.

**Rationale:**

Implementation of the proposed action described in the NFRP Supplement EA for the Omni Fire will protect soils in the burned area, including preventing potential loss of soil due to wind and water erosion; will reduce potential invasion and establishment of noxious weeds and cheatgrass; will provide quality forage for livestock and wildlife; and will facilitate meeting established standards and guidelines for livestock grazing.

The Elko Resource Management Plan is silent for the proposed action. The proposed action is consistent with the objectives of the RMP and is consistent with federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible

**Monitoring:**

Post-treatment monitoring studies will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed treatments and to determine the time frame for reopening lands for grazing.

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Helen Hankins  
Elko Field Office

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Date

**NORMAL FIRE REHABILITATION PLAN SUPPLEMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
OMNI FIRE (Z511)  
BLM/EK/PL-2000-044**

**Introduction:**

This Supplement Environmental Assessment (EA) tiers to the Elko Field Office FY 2000 Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment (NRFPEA) BLM/EK/PL2000/037. The Proposed Action includes NRFPEA Treatment # 1 (Construction and repair of fence to facilitate grazing closure), 2 ( Planting of multiple species seed mixtures), and 5 (Dozer line rehabilitation). The format of this Supplement EA follows the outline in the Emergency Fire Rehabilitation Handbook, BLM Manual Handbook H-1742-1 dated 7/27/99.

**List of Preparers:**

Rick Driggs	Civil Engineering Technician
Tom Warren	Rangeland Management Specialist
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Marlene Braun	Environmental Coordinator
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Ken Wilkinson	Wildlife Biologist
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Jenny Quade	GIS Specialist
Jim Glennon	Botanist
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**Project Area Description:**

A. Fire Description:

The fire was started by a lightning strike, was reported on June 24, 2000, and was declared out on July 1, 2000. It burned 347 acres of public land and 73 acres of private land between the Elko Mountains and Elko Hills. Only one grazing allotment was affected, the Ten Mile Creek Allotment, but less than 5% of the allotment acreage burned. No structures or fences were burned in the Omni Fire. Approximately 4.3 miles of dozer line was constructed during fire suppression efforts and 0.3 miles of existing fence were damaged.

B. Vegetation and Soil Description:

The burned area ranges in elevation from 5501 ft to 6500 ft and the topography is flat to rolling. There are no perennial streams in the Omni Fire area. Soils are mostly shallow to moderately deep with medium to rapid runoff. Vegetation at the site is primarily a sagebrush/bunchgrass complex with a significant understory of cheatgrass.

## **Proposed Project Treatments:**

### A. Revegetation:

#### 1. Rangeland aerial seeding:

Approximately 347 acres of rangeland and 4.3 miles of perimeter dozer line will be aurally seeded using Snake River bluebunch wheatgrass and rice hulls. (See attached specification sheets for seed and seeding rates per acre for this seeding treatment). Seed would be aurally applied between late October through December. If possible, seed would be broadcast on snow to aid in germination and reduce seed consumption by rodents and birds. The purpose of the seeding is to provide forage for livestock and wildlife and reduce the potential for the invasion of invasive, nonnative weed species.

### B. Structures:

#### 1. Fencing:

Approximately 0.3 miles of existing allotment boundary fence near the southwest perimeter of the burned area will be repaired to allow closure of seeded areas to grazing for a period to be determined by post-rehabilitation monitoring. The fencing repair is needed to protect the proposed seeding treatments and to allow for vegetation to become reestablished.

### C. Erosion Control Treatments:

#### 1. Dozer line rehabilitation:

See discussion under Rangeland aerial seeding above.

### D. Site Preparation: None.

## **Consideration of Critical Elements and Resources:**

The following critical elements of the human environment are not present or are not affected by the proposed action or alternative:

- ACECs
- Environmental Justice
- Farmlands, prime or unique
- Floodplains
- Wastes, hazardous/solid
- Water Quality, surface/ground
- Wetlands/Riparian Areas
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Wild Horses

## Wilderness

Critical elements and resources brought forward for analysis:

### A. Air Quality:

The burned area and dozer lines are highly susceptible to wind erosion until revegetation occurs. Wind erosion can increase Particulate Matter #10 (PM#10) emissions causing exceedence of PM #10 air quality standards which can negatively affect human health. In addition, airborne dust can cause visibility and safety problems on roads in the area. The proposed vegetation and erosion control treatments will encourage regrowth of vegetation, thus reducing future potential air quality impacts.

### B. Cultural Resources:

The Omni Fire occurred within an area known to archaeologists as the Central Great Basin which has been inhabited by humans for approximately 12,000 years. Archaeological sites and cultural properties in this area must be afforded protection whenever possible. Section 106 of the Natural Historic Preservation Act mandates that the federal government will account for cultural resources in its projects and undertakings, including fire rehabilitation efforts. Ground disturbing activities such as discing, drilling, dozer line rehabilitation, fence construction, and road repair could damage cultural sites. Therefore, areas designated for mechanized seeding and other ground disturbance will be inventoried for cultural resources before the disturbance occurs in accordance with the State Protocol Agreement Between BLM, Nevada and the Nevada State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO). At a minimum, to reduce potential impacts to cultural resources, activities that involve mechanized surface disturbance of less than 10 cm depth will generally have transect spacing of 100 meters. More intense inventory will be used for highly sensitive areas. If surface disturbance is greater than 10 cm, then 30 meter transect intervals will be used.

All cultural resources discovered or relocated will be plotted on maps and at a minimum will be recorded on the Nevada IMACS short form. Resources except those previously determined not eligible, by BLM and SHPO, or that have been fully mitigated, will be flagged for avoidance and avoided during rehabilitation activities. Flagging will be placed to minimize the potential for looting and vandalism and removed as soon as possible.

### C. Invasive, Nonnative Species:

Noxious weeds may be located in areas near the burn. Fire suppression efforts, including dozer line construction and use of engines and other mechanized vehicles, is likely to have introduced noxious weed species seeds into the burned area. In order to reduce the potential impacts of an invasion of noxious weeds, monitoring must be conducted after rehabilitation treatments are completed. If noxious weeds are discovered to have invaded the burn area, herbicide treatments would need to be implemented to reduce the spread of the noxious weeds. Such treatment would help to prevent or reduce any such noxious weed invasion of the Omni Fire burn area.

#### D. Native American Religious Concerns:

Native Americans will be consulted as appropriate prior to any ground disturbing activities such as discing and drilling. If traditional cultural properties or other areas having traditional or religious significance to Native Americans are discovered as a result of this consultation, then BLM will insure that measures are taken to avoid or reduce impacts to these areas of concern to Native Americans.

#### E. Threatened, Endangered, Candidate, or Sensitive Species:

No threatened or endangered plant species are known to occur in the burn area. The sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) has been designated by the BLM Nevada State Director as a sensitive species and therefore afforded the same protection as a candidate species. Although the suspected causes of sage grouse decline are numerous, loss of habitat, including loss by fire, ranks at the top of the list. Rehabilitation of sage grouse habitat, and the prevention of invasion by fire prone annual weeds such as cheatgrass, is a wildlife priority of both BLM and the Nevada Department of Wildlife. The proposed seeding treatments are designed to reduce the impacts from the invasion or re-invasion of fire prone annual weeds.

#### F. Visual Resources:

The burned area is within Visual Resource Management Class 3 and actions taken in the area should serve to preserve the existing character of the landscape as much as possible. Both the fire itself and fire suppression activities such as creation of dozer lines, have resulted in visual impacts to the area. Burn area seeding and dozer line revegetation efforts are designed to blend into the background without attracting undue attention and aid in restoring the area to a more characteristic landscape. Seeding of dozer lines would reduce adverse visual impacts as well.

#### G. Wildlife:

Wildlife could be adversely impacted by the Omni Fire, primarily through temporary loss of habitat through removal of vegetation. The proposed rehabilitation treatments include rangeland and dozer line seeding with seed mixtures conducive to wildlife use. This aerial seeding should help establish grass species that would out compete exotic invading plant species, as well as provide critical forage and cover.

#### H. Grazing:

The proposed closure to grazing within the burned area would protect seeding efforts and aid in natural revegetation of burned public rangeland, while reducing the potential for future noxious weed and cheatgrass infestations. Grazing closure will also improve future forage conditions for both livestock and wildlife. However, grazing closure and relocation of livestock will have some short term adverse impacts on ranchers in the area who normally use the allotment for grazing. The actual AUM losses suffered by ranchers have not been determined at this point. Through field inventories and monitoring, GIS analyses, and consultation, cooperation, and coordination with individual permittees, specific rest periods and other grazing management options will be

identified to reduce impacts to ranchers where possible.

**Project Cost Summary:** (the cost summary information can be found in the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Plan and Accomplishment Report for the Elko 13 Fire Complex)

**Project Maps:** (project maps can be found in the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Plan and Accomplishment Report for the Elko 13 Fire Complex)

**Cost/Risk Assessment:** (the cost/risk assessment can be found in the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Plan and Accomplishment Report for the Elko 13 Fire Complex)

**Native/Nonnative Worksheet:** (the native/nonnative worksheet can be found in the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Plan and Accomplishment Report for the Elko 13 Fire Complex)