

DS-252

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: AP-ELO-01-08 Proposed Implementation Date: 2008-2011

Proponent: Sioux Ranger District of the Custer National Forest

Type and Purpose of Action: The request is for an alternative practice to the SMZ law exceeded the minimum tree retention requirements of a class II stream segment and to remove all submerchantable ponderosa pine within a class II stream segment in an attempt to stimulate the growth and regeneration of aspen, green ash, and other shrub species.

Location: NE ¼ Sec 33 Twn 1N Rng 58 E County: Carter

I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	Conducted a site visit with the DNRC Forester, Hydrologist Custer National Forest, Contract Officer Custer National Forest
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	None
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Retaining required #'s of leave trees within the SMZ continuing the encroachment of Ponderosa Pine into the draw bottoms and continuing the suppression and shading of shade intolerant shrub species.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES N = Not present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N] The soils within the SMZ and surrounding areas are generally developed in weathered sandstone with some siltstone. They are generally loamy and coarse loamy (moderately coarse to medium textured) with moderately rapid infiltration rates and high percolation rates. Runoff is uncommon in these areas. Active surface erosion is uncommon under vegetative cover.
5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] A short reach of Class II stream segment exists within the entire ephemeral draw bottom. This Class II stream segment is a spring fed seep that has overland flow for at least 6 months of the year. The lower reach of the Class II stream segment exhibits signs of cattle trampling making it difficult to determine a natural stream channel or vegetative community. A secondary objective of the proposed project is placement of large woody debris along the side slopes of the drainage in an attempt to limit cattle trailing within the SMZ and subsequent impacts of that cattle use.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]

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7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[Y] The objectives of the proposed action are to limit or eliminate the encroachment and subsequent competition of ponderosa pine on aspen, green ash, and other shrub species located within the draw features of the entire project area and specifically within the area of the Class II SMZ. Historic fire suppression activities have limited or altogether eliminated the low intensity high frequency fire disturbance regime allowing ponderosa pine to encroach upon and dominate sites that were historically dominated by shrub species. Several of the largest ponderosa pine trees within the SMZ will be retained, this coupled with the anticipated rapid response and re-occupation of the site by the shrub species should limit or eliminate impact to the functions of the SMZ
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[N]
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of other private, state or federal current actions w/n the analysis area, or from future proposed state actions that are under MEPA review (scoping) or permitting review by any state agency w/n the analysis area?	[N]
III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N]
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[N]

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so estimated number. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N]
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing? Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N]
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N]
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES: Is there a potential for other future uses for easement area other than for timber management? Is future use hypothetical? What is the estimated return to the trust. Are cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of this proposed action?	[N]

EA Checklist Prepared By: Chris Pileski Forester 1-15-2008
Name Title Date

IV. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Allow the alternative practice with suggested mitigations.
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No significant impacts are anticipated
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:	<input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By: Rick Strohmeyer Area Manager
Name Title

Rick Strohmeyer Signature 1-16-08 Date