Bear Creek Test Plantings
Categorical Exclusion CA-340-04-003

December 18, 2003

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Ukiah Field Office
Ukiah, California
Bureau of Land Management, Ukiah Field Office
NEPA Categorical Exclusion

Date: December 18, 2003

Categorical Exclusion Number: CA-340-04-003

Case File/Serial Number: None

Project Title: Bear Creek Test Plantings

Name and Address of Applicant: Bureau of Land Management
Ukiah Field Office
2550 North State Street
Ukiah, Ca. 95482.

Project Location: Bear Creek, Colusa County; public land portions of:
T. 14N. R5W. Sec 36
T.13N. R5W. Sec. 1, 12
T. 13N. R4W. Sec. 7, 18, 19, 30, 31, 32

Land Status Verified: Yes.

Affected Surface Area: 1 acre.

Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plan: This proposed action conforms to the conditions and guidelines of the Clear Lake Resource Area Management Framework Plan (MFP) Update, 1984.

Need for Action: BLM is currently involved in a tamarisk eradication effort on Bear Creek. Revegetation with suitable native species is a necessary follow-up component of the overall riparian restoration of Bear Creek. This project will provide further verification of which native species will be suitable for a broad scale revegetation of Bear Creek after the tamarisk has been eliminated.

Proposed Action: Sixty cuttings will be collected from each of the following native trees including narrow-leaved willow (Salix exigua), red willow (S. laevigata), mule fat (Baccharis solicifolia), and button willow (Cephalanthus occidentalis). Cuttings will be about 1 meter in length, with diameters up to 5 cm for species that have branches that thick. The main collection area will be Cache Creek near the confluence with Bear Creek. Collection will be spread out so as not to “over trim” any single tree. The normal collection guideline for cuttings used in revegetation projects limits the amount to no more than ⅓ of the branches from any donor tree.
After cuttings have been collected, they will be wrapped in WeedBlock cloth and submerged in Cache Creek for one week prior to planting. The planting site is located on Bear Creek approximately ¼ mile south of the existing bio-control beetle tent, and will be spread out for approximately 1 kilometer along the creek. This planting site is immediately adjacent to the meadows that were burned in June, 2003.

In addition to these cuttings, researchers will also be directly seeding other native trees at the test site, including 110 each of California buckeye (Aesculus californica), northern California black walnut (Juglans californica var. hindsii), and western redbud (Cercis occidentalis).

This is a continuing project that is being funded by Applications of Science Project 5776, *Determining the Feasibility of Native Species Regeneration of Bear Creek*. Project work is being conducted by researchers from University of Nevada-Reno, UC Berkeley, and USDA.
Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3.A. (3) provides for a review of the following criteria to determine whether the proposed action can be categorically excluded from NEPA requirements. Place an X to the left of the criterion to verify review. An environmental assessment (EA) must be prepared for any exception to the following criteria:

_X__ Has no significant adverse effects on public health and safety.
Comment: This project simply involves cutting twigs and planting them.

_X__ Does not adversely affect such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation, or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principle drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department’s National Register of Natural Landmarks.
Comment: Archaeological resources nearby will not be affected, as collecting will be done in the riparian habitat of the creek. The amount of cuttings that will be taken is so minimal as to have no real impact.

_X__ No highly controversial environmental effects.
Comment: We have received no comments indicating controversy. Revegetation in Bear Creek with native species has received much support from the public commenting on the Draft Cache Creek CRMP.

_X__ No highly uncertain environmental effects or does not involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
Comment: This type of project will have essentially no impact or unexpected or unknown environmental risks.

_X__ Will not establish a precedent for future action or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration with significant environmental effects.
Comment: Future cuttings may occur on a larger scale, dependent upon the success of this effort.

_X__ Is not related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.
Comment: There is such a large source of native trees to select cuttings from along Cache Creek that this won’t really have any impact on the native trees here.

_X__ Will not adversely affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
Comment: Archaeological resources are nearby, but won’t be impacted as all collection will occur in the riparian area of Cache Creek.

_X__ Does not affect a species listed or proposed for listing as a federal or state endangered or threatened species.
Comment: The only T&E species in the area is the bald eagle, which will not be affected by this project.

_X__ Will not threaten to violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law, or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment, or which requires compliance with Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplains Management), EO 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.
Comment: None of these laws will be violated by this project. This is a restoration project that will benefit the riparian habitat of Bear Creek.
Writer’s and Reviewers’ Signature Page
(Each of you should sign-off on this page only when you are satisfied that this NEPA.doc or CX is complete, correct, and accurate.)

Title of Project: Bear Creek Test Plantings

Preparing Office: Ukiah Field Office

Project Leader: Gregg Mangan  Title: Cache Creek Natural Area Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Preparers:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology, Forest Plan, and Rangeland Management</td>
<td>Pardee Bardwell</td>
<td>Soil, Water, and Air Specialist</td>
<td>Frank Arriaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realty Specialist</td>
<td>Alice Vigil</td>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>Steve Myers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeologist</td>
<td>Julie Burcell</td>
<td>Engineering and Rights-of-Way</td>
<td>Bill Dabbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire/Fuels</td>
<td>Jim Dawson</td>
<td>Geologist</td>
<td>(vacant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cache Creek Natural Area Manager (sign for CCNA projects only)</td>
<td>Gregg Mangan</td>
<td>Hazardous Materials</td>
<td>Dave Fatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Planner and Visual Resources Mgmt.</td>
<td>Jonna Hildenbrand</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Supervisor</td>
<td>Walt Gabler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHV Recreation Planner</td>
<td>Brad Colin</td>
<td>Energy (sign for energy projects only)</td>
<td>Rich Estabrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesticides (sign for pesticide projects only)</td>
<td>Tobey Ringuette</td>
<td>blank</td>
<td>blank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(s) Gregg J. Mangan  1-6-04

Project Leader  Date
REVIEW

We have reviewed this proposal for vegetative cuttings to be collected and used for test plantings in Bear Creek, and agree that a categorical exclusion is the appropriate level of review.

Gary Sharpe, Resources Supervisor

Dave Fatch, Environmental Coordinator

DECISION RECORD

1. The action is to authorize the collection of cuttings from native trees growing along Cache Creek to be used in revegetation efforts on Bear Creek to replace the tamarisk.

2. I have reviewed Categorical Exclusion CA-340-04-003 and concur that none of the nine exemptions apply. Therefore, it is my decision to approve and implement this project as proposed. Gregg Mangan will follow through with the attached monitoring plan.

(s) Rich Burns 1/16/04
Rich Burns Date
Manager, Ukiah Field Office
MONITORING PLAN

1. The collection area will be visited by Gregg Mangan during and after the collection of cuttings to see that the project is conducted as planned.

2. The revegetation site will be visited several times by Gregg Mangan and Pardee Bardwell as needed to determine whether the project actually resulted in the planned objectives being met.
NEPA Review Routing Sheet

NEPA Reviewers,

A scoping meeting for this project was held on December 15th. Scoping meetings must be scheduled by the project lead before the NEPA document is written. At the meeting the project lead will explain the project to the staff and answer questions. Initial issues, impacts, mitigations, etc, should be developed by the lead and the staff at this meeting.

Please review & comment on this NEPA Document.

As a NEPA Reviewer it is your responsibility to see that the author/writer of this NEPA document has accurately, completely, and correctly described the impacts anticipated to result from the project, particularly within your field of expertise, and that the proper mitigation has been developed to reduce those impacts. There should be a mitigation measure for each impact mentioned. The mitigations in the NEPA documents, which also include the FONSI and Decision Record, will become the stipulations in the permit, R/W, lease, etc. The mitigations justify the stipulations.

Then check the correct boxes in the Critical Element table for your resources. If you check “yes”, then there should be impacts and mitigations in the NEPA text to support checking the “yes” box.

If the impacts or mitigations are not correct in the document, then resolve the issues with the NEPA writer. If they cannot be resolved between the two of you, then bring the issue to me or Gary.

When you are satisfied that the document correctly addresses your resource, and the NEPA document is OK with you, then sign the Preparer’s Signature Page, initial next to your name below, and pass the document to the next reviewer. After all of you have seen the document, please return it to me.

Don’t let it sit on your desk. If you can’t review it in the next day or so, pass it on to a reviewer who can, or return it to me or the project lead for further routing.

Thanks, Dave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Walt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Tobey (Pesticides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pardee</td>
<td>Gregg (Cache Creek)</td>
<td>Jim D</td>
<td>Rich E. (Energy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonna</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>