From:	Bogard, Lauren
To:	Schneider, Janice
Cc:	Kristen (Kris) Sarri; Kimberly Thorsen; Douglas, James; Michael Bean; Noreen Walsh; Sarah Greenberger; James Lyons; Steven Ellis; Ronald Dunton; Dan Ashe; Kornze, Neil; Suzette Kimball; Anne Kinsinger; Kevin Washburn; Jennifer Gimbel; Hilary Tompkins; Jonathan Jarvis; Kevin Haugrud; Fay Iudicello; Hazel Wilson; Michael Connor; Elizabeth Klein; Tommy Beaudreau; John Blair; Blake Androff; Kurt Wiedenmann
Subject:	Re: Draft SO re rangeland fire
Date:	Thursday, December 11, 2014 7:43:40 AM
Attachments:	SO Rangeland Fire 12-9-14 - CLEAN.doc

Good morning,

A reminder to please share your final edits for the attached S.O. by 12pm today.

Thank you,

Lauren Bogard
Advisor
Office of the Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Phone: (202) 208-5954

On Tue, Dec 9, 2014 at 5:21 PM, Bogard, Lauren <lauren_bogard@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

> Good afternoon,
>
> Attached is a revised version of the Rangeland Fire S.O. reflecting edits and comments received from FWS, NPS, OSEC, ASLM, BLM, and others.
>
> At Janice's request we are circulating this draft for final review and comment before sending it forward for final SOL review prior to briefing the Secretary.
>
> As you know, the Secretary made reference to this effort in her remarks at WGA. In addition, the WGA and several of the governors and their staffs from the Great Basin region expressed strong support for and interest in participating in the development of the report and recommendations called for in the SO. We look forward to building on the momentum from the WGA last weekend and continuing to work with them in this effort.
>
> In order to begin the work necessary to meet the deadlines identified in the document, we are hoping to get this before the Secretary before she leaves for the holidays early next week.
>
> For that reason, we ask for your final red-line edits/comments to the attached revised draft - no new versions, please - by **Noon this Thursday, Dec. 11th** so that we can incorporate these in the final draft before moving the document forward for the Secretary's office for her review and signature.
>
> Thank you in advance for all of your input and support. We look forward to working with you on implementation.
>
> Lauren Bogard

Advisor
Office of the Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Phone: (202) 208-5954

On Mon, Dec 8, 2014 at 11:21 AM, Bogard, Lauren <lauren_bogard@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

A reminder to please send your redline edits to the attached draft S.O. on rangeland fire by 3pm today.

Thank you,

Lauren Bogard
Advisor
Office of the Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Phone: (202) 208-5954

On Fri, Dec 5, 2014 at 12:30 PM, Bogard, Lauren <lauren_bogard@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon,

Attached for your review and comment is a revised draft of the proposed S.O. on rangeland fire. We've tried to shorten the document and use as much space for substance as possible (rather than process).

Please review the draft S.O. and send comments in redline ON THIS VERSION (Please do not create new versions) by **3 pm on Monday, Dec. 8.**

Thank you for the comments you have shared to date. We look forward to continuing to work with all of you on this. Please continue to keep this close hold.

Thanks, everyone. Have a great weekend!

Lauren Bogard
Advisor
Office of the Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
Phone: (202) 208-5954

On Sun, Nov 30, 2014 at 2:33 PM, Schneider, Janice <janice_schneider@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Attached for your review and comment is a first draft of a proposed rangeland fire Secretarial Order. This concept is under consideration for potential announcement at next Saturday's WGA meeting, and we will be having additional internal discussion this coming week. I look forward to

working with you on this and getting your input. Please keep this close hold. Thx, Janice

--
Janice M. Schneider
Assistant Secretary
Land and Minerals Management
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-6734

ORDER NO.

Subject: Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management and Restoration

Sec. 1 **Purpose**. This Order sets forth enhanced policies and strategies for preventing and suppressing rangeland fire and for restoring sagebrush landscapes impacted by fire across the West. These actions are essential for conserving habitat for the Greater sage-grouse as well as other wildlife species and economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, associated with the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin region. This effort will build upon the experience and success of addressing rangeland fire, and broader wildland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efforts to date, including the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, and ensure improved coordination with local, state, tribal, and regional efforts to address the threat of rangeland fire at a landscape level.

Sec. 2 **Background**. The Department of the Interior is entrusted with overseeing the management of Federal public lands for the benefit of current and future generations, as well as the protection and recovery of imperiled species of flora and fauna and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Rangeland fires in the Great Basin of the Western United States have increased in size and intensity in recent years. The accelerated invasion of non-native annual grasses, in particular cheatgrass and medusahead rye, and the spread of pinyon-juniper across the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, along with drought and the effects of climate change, have created conditions that have led to the increased threat of rangeland fires to the sagebrush landscape and the more than 350 species of plants and animals, such as mule deer and pronghorn antelope, that rely on this critically important ecosystem. As a result, the increasing frequency and intensity of rangeland fire also poses a significant threat to ranchers, livestock managers, sportsmen and outdoor recreation enthusiasts who use the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, and puts at risk their associated economic contributions across this landscape that support and maintain the American way of life in the West.

In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) found that the invasion of annual grasses and the loss of habitat from fire in the Great Basin is a significant threat to the Greater sage-grouse in that portion of its remaining range. The USFWS is now considering whether protections under the Endangered Species Act are warranted. In response to this finding, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service are currently analyzing amendments to existing land use plans to incorporate appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore Greater sage-grouse habitat by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing threats to that habitat. More targeted actions to reduce the likelihood and severity of fire, to stem the spread of invasive species, and to restore the health and resilience of the landscape are necessary to preserve, protect, and restore Greater sage-grouse habitat in the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, and address important public safety, economic, cultural and social concerns.

Sec. 3 **Authorities**. This Order is issued under the authority of Section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950 (64 Stat.1262), as amended. Other statutory authorities related to this Order include and are not limited to the following:

a. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*

b. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

c. The Migratory Bird Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 715 *et seq.*

d. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, 16 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*

e. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*

f. The Federal Land and Policy Management Act (FLPMA), 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*

g. The Federal Land Assistance Management and Enhancement Act of 2009, Title V of Division A of P.L. 111-88

Sec. 4 **Policy.** Protecting, conserving, and restoring Greater sage-grouse habitat, as an indicator for the health of and the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, while maintaining safe and efficient operations, is a critical fire management priority for the Department. Allocation of fire management resources and assets before, during, and after wildland fire incidents will reflect this priority.

Sec. 5 **Developing an Enhanced Fire Prevention, Suppression, and Restoration Strategy.** To accomplish protection, conservation, and restoration of Greater sage-grouse habitat the Department, through the Rangeland Fire Task Force established in accordance with Section 6, will:

a. Work cooperatively and collaboratively at all levels with other federal agencies, states, tribes, local entities, and non-governmental organizations on fire management and habitat restoration activities, including: (i) Enhancing the capability and capacity of state, tribal, and local government, as well as non-governmental, fire management organizations, including rangeland fire protection associations and volunteer fire departments, through improved and expanded education and training, and; (ii) Improving coordination among all partners involved in rangeland fire management to further improve safety and effectiveness.

b. Utilize risk-based, landscape-scale approaches to identify and facilitate investments in fuels treatments, fire suppression capabilities, and post-fire stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration in the Great Basin.

c. Seek to reduce the likelihood, size, and severity of rangeland fires by addressing the spread of cheatgrass and other invasive, non-native species.

d. Commit wildland fire management resources and assets to prepare for and respond to rangeland fires.

e. Advance the development and utilization of technologies for identifying areas of

high ecological and habitat value in sagebrush-steppe ecosystems to enhance fire prevention and sage-grouse habitat protection efforts.

f. Apply science and research to improve the identification and protection of resistant and resilient sagebrush-steppe landscapes and the development of biocontrols and other tools for cheatgrass control to improve capability for long-term restoration of sagebrush-steppe ecosystems.

g. To the extent practicable, utilize locally-adapted seeds and native plant materials appropriate to the location, conditions, and management objectives for vegetation management and restoration activities, including strategic sourcing for acquiring, storing, and utilizing genetically-appropriate seeds and other plant materials native to the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem.

h. Encourage efforts to expedite processes, streamline procedures, and promote innovations that can improve overall rangeland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efficiency and effectiveness.

i. Explore opportunities to pilot new strategies to reduce the threat of invasive, non-native grasses and rangeland fire to sagebrush-steppe ecosystems and Greater sage-grouse conservation, including enhanced use of veteran fire crews and youth conservation teams, and efforts to further public-private partnerships to expand capacity for improved fire management.

j. Establish protocols for monitoring the effectiveness of land treatments for fire prevention and restoration, and a strategy for adaptive management to modify management practices or improve land treatments when necessary.

Sec. 6 **Rangeland Fire Task Force**. A Rangeland Fire Task Force (Task Force) is hereby established and is chaired by the Deputy Secretary. Members of the Task Force shall include the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. The Task Force will do the following:

a. Develop a science-based strategy to reduce the threat of large-scale rangeland fire to habitat for the Greater sage-grouse and the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem through effective rangeland management (including the appropriate use of livestock), fire prevention, fire suppression, and post-fire restoration efforts at a landscape scale.

b. Conduct a comprehensive review of the existing programs, policies, and practices associated with current efforts to prevent, suppress, and restore rangeland fire-impacted sagebrush-steppe including the outcomes of the recent rangeland fire conference *The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Fire in the Great Basin*, and utilize the collective experience of the conference participants and the expertise of the practitioners and senior policy groups in this effort.

c. Seek input from the individual Bureau Fire Directors, the US Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Department of Agriculture, and the various state wildland fire agencies and programs; the offices of the governors in the states most threatened by

rangeland fire, including California, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, and Idaho as well as the Western Governors' Association; affected American Indian tribes; scientists; and local, community-based fire organizations such as the rangeland fire protection associations, weed collaboratives, native seed production organizations, soil and water conservation districts, and various stakeholder groups with interest and expertise in rangeland fire prevention, suppression, and rangeland restoration.

Sec. 7 **Implementation Plan, Deliverables and Report**.

a. Within 45 days of the effective date of this Order, the Task Force will provide a detailed plan, including timelines, for implementing this Order.

b. The Task Force will also provide to the Secretary two reports that outline actions that can be accomplished prior to the onset of the 2015 Western fire season, actions that can be accomplished prior to the onset of the 2016 Western fire season, and actions that will require a longer period for implementation. At a minimum, these actions are to include: (i) Design and implement comprehensive, integrated fire response plans for the Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool evaluation areas in the Great Basin subject to fire and invasive species; (ii) Provide clear direction on the prioritization and allocation of fire management resources and assets; (iii) Expand the focus on fuels reduction opportunities and implementation; (iv) Fully integrate the emerging science of ecological resilience into design of habitat management, fuels management, and restoration projects; (v) Review and update emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation policies and programs to integrate with long-term restoration activities; (vi) Commit to multi-year investments for the restoration of sagebrush-steppe ecosystems, including consistent long-term monitoring protocols and adaptive management for restored areas; (vii) Implement large-scale experimental activities to remove cheatgrass and other invasive annual grasses through various tools; (viii) Commit to multi-year investments in science and research; and (ix) Develop a comprehensive strategy for acquisition, storage, and distribution of seeds and other plant materials.

c. No later than March 1, 2015, the Task Force will present its initial report on actions that will be implemented prior to the 2015 Western fire season. Individual bureaus are also encouraged to take immediate action to implement improvements within their respective areas of responsibility before the initial report is issued.

d. No later than May 1, 2015, the Task Force will present its final report on activities that will be implemented prior to the 2016 Western fire season, and longer term actions to implement the policy and strategy set forth in this Secretarial Order, including to ensure continued implementation of approved actions associated with the strategy.

Sec. 8 **Implementation**. The Deputy Secretary is responsible for implementing all aspects of this Order. This responsibility may be delegated as appropriate. This Order does not alter or affect any existing duty or authority of individual Assistant Secretaries or bureaus.

Sec. 9 **Effect of the Order.** This Order is intended to improve the internal management of the Department. This Order and any resulting report or recommendations are not intended to, and do not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or

employees, or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

Sec. 10 **Expiration Date**. This Order is effective immediately and will remain in effect until it is amended, superseded, or revoked, whichever occurs first.

Comment [BLE1]: SOL, 12.8.14: Other orders have a different format—there is a reference to the Departmental Manual.

JMS: if SOL has a preferred format they need to state what it is precisely.