

FINAL DRAFT

Nevada Pinyon-Juniper Partnership

Special Resource Restoration District Proposal and Implementation Plan

December 3, 2010

This Proposal and Implementation Plan is an initial response to the question that has been posed to the Partnership: *What are the needs that must be addressed in order to accomplish the goals of the Nevada Pinyon-Juniper Partnership and what actions would be most effective in responding to those needs?* The statements contained in this proposal should not be construed as requests by federal or state agency partners for legislative action or appropriations from their respective branches of government; rather, the intent is to enable discussion on ways to establish a demonstration project for the purpose of testing models and approaches for landscape-level restoration. It is further recognized that each of the partners have responsibilities of equal importance in other areas of the state and the suggestions contained in this document should not be construed as intending to preclude addressing other agency priorities.

Organizing Group	Sponsors	Boundary	Kick Off Date	Accountability Measures
<i>Nevada Pinyon Juniper Resource Improvement/ Biomass Utilization Group (short title Pinyon Juniper Partnership)</i>	<i>USDA, US Dept of Interior, Nevada Agencies representing Agriculture, Energy, Forestry, Environmental Quality, and Economic Development</i>	To be defined	<i>December 2010</i>	<i>Biennial Report to Nevada Legislature and United States Congress documenting scientifically measured ecosystem effects and tangible economic benefits</i>

Need / Requirement	Action	Background, Timelines and Deliverables
1) Creation of a legislatively designated, landscape scale demonstration area within which the	Support the enactment of complementary federal and state legislation to obtain formal designation of a defined area of Pinyon-Juniper woodlands in eastern Nevada as a Special Resource Restoration District that focuses on natural resource health with biomass utilization potentially providing an opportunity for additional assistance	The purpose of the Demonstration Area is to identify a designated location where funding, agency operations, and professional expertise can restore the proper ecosystem functions of the Pinyon-Juniper woodland and sagebrush steppe. The Demonstration Area should exhibit the following characteristics: 1. The Area is in need of landscape-level restoration of pinyon and juniper to achieve

<p>effectiveness of various restoration treatments can be assessed, accompanied by beneficial uses of the resulting biomass.</p>	<p>in accomplishing resource restoration. Within this District, known as the Demonstration Area, federal and state agencies, NGOs, local government and private enterprise will have the ability to obtain and deploy resources, authorities, expertise, and incentives necessary to achieve landscape scale restoration. This restoration activity will be designed to produce a healthy functioning ecosystem with multiple desirable benefits. The impact of treatment practices will be scientifically quantified to determine the efficacy of various best management practices in restoring these ecosystems. Where feasible treatments will be optimized to incorporate biomass utilization as a way to offset treatment costs. The measurement and monitoring will enable adaptation of treatment and removal practices if needed and determination of to what extent the resource protection values were achieved.</p>	<p>existing resource goals. 2. The Area has displayed the potential to maximize current authorities, resources, and expertise held by interested stakeholders that exist at the local, state, regional, and national levels. 3. The Area has also displayed cost recovery opportunity through its potential to provide significant, reliable supplies of biomass for utilization, by considering such factors as slope and accessibility.</p> <p>Through consultation with Partnership members, achieve recognition of Demonstration Area by land management agencies by 2/1/11. Achieve formal recognition of the Special Resource Restoration District from the Nevada State Legislature by 6/30/11 and from the U.S. Congress by 12/31/11.</p>
<p>2) Authority to utilize innovative administrative tools and procedures.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities to streamline processes and reduce associated costs by giving authorities to state and local leaders of land management agencies (federal and state); e.g. ability to combine budget line items within agency, ability to utilize standard procedures of partner agency in circumstances where it is likely to be more effective and /or efficient. In addition, pursue specialized authorities through the legislation designating the demonstration area that enables the testing of tools needed, e.g. twenty year Stewardship contracts.</p>	<p>A working group of participating agencies and partners should be established to identify innovative approaches and refine the needed tools and administrative processes required to achieve project goals and accountability.</p> <p>Using the existing P/J Partnership Steering Committee as a core advisory group by 1/30/11 create a framework of administrative authorities, partnership structure and funding needs including those that must be obtained through the authorizing legislation, forwarded to senior management of relevant agencies and NGOs by 4/30/11.</p>

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<p>3) Develop a broad base of funding from multiple sources.</p>	<p>Identify, obtain, and utilize all potential sources of funding support to start up and carry forward the restoration work envisioned. Assess the potential for biomass utilization to reduce the costs associated with restoration.</p>	<p>Many sources of funding exist at the federal, state, and NGO levels that are directed to fire or infestation mitigation or restoration, wildlife habitat improvement, watershed health, biomass utilization and/or bioenergy development. Using foresight and administrative authorities, these funding sources should be synchronized such that they create the depth and extent of commitment necessary to fund the baseline, planning, environmental assessment, treatment, monitoring, anticipated for the Demonstration Area without impeding the other duties of the land management agencies. Where allowed by the entities which comprise the Partnership, the Partnership's commitment includes seeking and providing funding support from all potential sources. Initial and immediate funding to support the period between the end of this summit and implementation of formal administrative processes must be made.</p>
<p>4) Formalize an operational structure for the Partnership and provide staff support.</p>	<p>To ensure the desired results of environmentally acceptable landscape level restoration and economically sustainable associated biomass utilization, it is necessary to systematically develop expertise and resources relative to environmental planning and assessment, cultural resource protection, restoration approaches and technology, markets and financing for potential forms of utilization, and public information, as well as to keep receiving the participation and value of the multi-disciplinary team that currently forms the Partnership Steering Committee. The Partnership needs to work within an operational structure and to secure funding for qualified staff. An annual budget of \$500,000 for two years will provide operating funds and salary for</p>	<p>A range of models exist for creating partnerships that can act in focused, sustainable, and accountable ways to achieve multiple complex natural resource objectives. Certain local organizations and statewide Memorandums of Understanding already exist in Nevada that may provide building blocks for the necessary structure and framework.</p> <p>\$500,000 is suggested to be a minimum level of support necessary from a combination of federal, state, local, NGO, and private sources in order to continue the work of the Partnership in a sustainable form. In addition to providing subject matter expertise regarding restoration and utilization, this level of support can coordinate the activities of a broader working group to develop recommendations and pursue action items needed to achieve project</p>

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	a project manager, as well as restoration and utilization staff expertise.	goals. Two year commitment of funding for project management will be in place by 6/30/11. During the first two-year period, an annual report of outcomes will be produced; if results are sufficient, a subsequent two years of funding will be sought. In subsequent years, the project manager will also be responsible for preparing the required biennial report of outcomes.
5) Compliance with Federal, State, and local statute, regulations, and requirements	Ensure that adequate funding and personnel assignments are committed to efficiently establish completion of all necessary tasks associated with statutory and regulatory requirements such as those of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Resource and Forest Management Plans, and archaeological clearance, understanding that landscape scale units of the Demonstration Area will be sequentially treated over several years.	It is critically important that all project activities be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations to ensure intended positive outcomes for the landscape and to generate and maintain the public trust. To accomplish a project of this magnitude, there is a need to adequately support and promote the completion of ground level work to fully meet legal and regulatory requirements in an efficient and timely manner. Building upon the Resource and Forest Management Plans and their associated EIS and EA documents already in place, and assuming the project is deemed successful after its first two years, in each of the next 18 years, BLM and FS will allocate enough funding and personnel resources to bring into the NEPA process at minimum 10,000 acres of PJ woodland within the demonstration area.
6) Treatments adequate to produce significant positive results for resource values, ecosystem good and services, and resulting biomass utilization	Ensure that adequate funding and personnel assignments are committed to efficiently establish sequential treatments of high priority areas that have completed environmental review requirements.	Given the large size of treatment areas, and given the cooperation and expertise of resource partners, it will be possible to achieve benefit to multiple resource values within each annual treatment location; removal of the biomass as an integral part of the treatment prescription will enable the planning and financing of utilization approaches to go forward.

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		<p>Building upon the acreage already designated for treatment, and assuming the project is deemed successful after its first two years, in each of the next 18 years, each of BLM and FS will be allocated enough funding and personnel resources to treat at minimum 10,000 - 15,000 each of PJ woodland within the demonstration area, recognizing within the treatment budget the need to implement tools such as stewardship contracts, and the contribution of biomass purchases by utilization enterprises.</p> <p>In addition, develop a replicated landscape-scale scientific platform to collect baseline data and post harvest data, in order to quantify treatment effects. Baseline assessment will be incorporated into the process used to select harvested areas using existing agency monitoring data where available.</p>
<p>7) Integration of the beneficial utilization of biomass into the total restoration treatment regime.</p>	<p>Develop private-public partnerships that provide risk sharing opportunities and incentives to encourage the investment necessary for one or more viable biomass utilizing enterprises.</p>	<p>Utilization of Pinyon and Juniper has yet to be conducted on a large commercial scale, yet the BTU values, chemical properties, and other attributes of the PJ biomass indicate potential for its use as a feedstock. Advancements in harvesting technology show promise for reduction of negative impacts from biomass removal treatments. Scientific assessment of removal impacts will lead to appropriate management and restoration prescriptions. As such, there exists a need to provide:</p> <p>1) pre-development support in the form of research, development, and benchtesting of different forms of higher value utilizations, 2) a set of incentives to encourage the initial investment and long term commitment required to support sustainable utilization approaches, and 3) financing support,</p>

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		<p>such as grants, loans, and loan guarantees. Federal and state normalization of definitions of biomass must also be achieved, and the definition must not preclude biomass from public lands when the removal was part of a treatment prescription.</p> <p>Results of research and development work associated with pinyon-juniper utilization, amount of financial support obtained, commercial success realized, and the amount of money put back into the restoration cycle as a result of cost offsets or payment from utilization will be included in the biennial report.</p>
<p>8) Application of the principles of adaptive management to ensure that restoration objectives are being met and unintended, negative consequences are foreseen and minimized.</p>	<p>Create and implement pre-treatment baseline data collection and long term assessment and monitoring protocols to provide timely analysis and information that may result in adjustments in prescriptions and treatment methodologies.</p>	<p>A scientific framework is needed to ensure that long-term applied research can be continuously in place, thus creating an adaptive management process within the Demonstration Area. This knowledge of the effects of treatments on ecosystem goods and services is applicable to similar landscapes and resource needs outside of the Demonstration Area and provides the opportunity for technology transfer to partners and the interested publics across the western United States.</p> <p>In each of the next 10 years the Agricultural Research Service and associated partners from the University of Nevada System and the Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative will appropriate resources to establish and maintain a comprehensive program that measures and monitors the effects on rangeland ecology and hydrology within the Demonstration Area.</p> <p>Similarly, among the Partnership's project management capability and partner agencies, a</p>

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		<p>vigorous public information and stakeholder involvement process will be put into place.</p> <p>Treatment results as measured by the monitoring program will be a part of the biennial report of accomplishments and outcomes.</p>
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<p>Partners - Current and Sought</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs, including wildlife, conservation and environmental • Public and private utilities • Local Governments/Districts • Universities • Interested biomass developers • Agriculture and forest products Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Agencies • Federal Agencies • Tribal Governments • The Governor's Office • The Legislature • Citizens
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Success Indicators

- Risk of catastrophic fire and/or insect infestation has measurably declined within Demonstration Area
- Measureable habitat, riparian area, and watershed improvements are documented
- Averted costs calculated by independent economists are equal to a substantial portion of the investment made by federal, state, and local governments.
- Jobs have been created associated with restoration, harvesting, and utilization
- Private capital investment has occurred associated with restoration, harvesting, and utilization
- Renewable energy and/or other bioenergy products have been created in significant quantities
- The public understands and supports the Demonstration Area's objectives in terms of addressing resource restoration needs
- The public understands and accepts the benefits of renewable biomass utilization
- The Partnership competes successfully on an ongoing basis for federal, state, and non-governmental grants that promote restoration and new uses of biomass

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