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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RIN 0596-AB99

**National Environmental Policy Act Documentation Needed for Fire
Management Activities; Categorical Exclusions**

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA, and Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of proposed National Environmental Policy Act implementing procedures; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and Department of the Interior give notice of, and request comment on, revisions to their procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. These revisions are being made to Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, and Department of the Interior Manual 516 DM, Chapter 2, Appendix 1, which describe categorical exclusions, i.e., categories of actions that normally do not require either an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. The proposal would add two categorical exclusions to the agencies' NEPA procedures that are applicable to hazardous fuels reduction activities (such as thinning trees and brush) and to activities for rehabilitating and stabilizing lands and infrastructure (such as

reseeding) impacted by wildland fires or fire suppression. The Departments jointly reviewed over 3,000 hazardous fuel reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization projects and concluded that these categories of actions do not individually or cumulatively result in significant effects on the human environment. The intended effect of these two categorical exclusions is to facilitate efficient planning and timely decisions concerning hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization activities. Public comment is invited and will be considered in development of the final procedures.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing by [insert date 30 days from date of publication in the **Federal Register**].

ADDRESSES: Mail written comments to: Healthy Forests Initiative, USDA FS Content Analysis Team, P.O. Box 221150, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

Comments also may be submitted via facsimile to (801) 517-1015 or by e-mail to *healthyforests@fs.fed.us*. If comments are sent via facsimile or e-mail, the public is requested not to send duplicate written comments via regular mail.

All comments, including names and addresses when provided, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection. Persons wishing to inspect the comments need to call (801) 517-1020 to facilitate an appointment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dave Sire, USDA Forest Service, Ecosystem Management Coordination, (202) 205-2935, or Willie Taylor, Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance, (202) 208-3891. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339

between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

Additional information and analysis can be found under the Healthy Forests Initiative at <http://www.fireplan.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

On August 22, 2002, President Bush established the Healthy Forests Initiative, directing the Departments of Agriculture and Interior and the Council on Environmental Quality to improve regulatory processes to ensure more timely decisions, greater efficiency, and better results in reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfires by restoring forest health.

In response to this direction, the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior propose two new categorical exclusions. The first, addressing hazardous fuels reduction, will enable federal land managers to better protect homes, lives, and ecosystems from the risk of high-intensity wildland fire. The second, addressing rehabilitation and stabilization will enable federal land managers to better restore natural resources and infrastructure after a fire. Both proposed categorical exclusions are intended to facilitate more efficient planning and more timely decisions concerning hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization activities.

The agencies are currently encumbered with an often lengthy analysis and documentation process that is both time consuming and resource intensive. Analyses of these categories of actions, absent extraordinary circumstances,

consistently result in a finding of no significant environmental effect. These two proposed categorical exclusions will increase the ability of the agencies to expeditiously reduce hazardous fuels thereby lowering the intensity and rapid spread of wildfires and facilitate the agency's abilities to rapidly rehabilitate and stabilize burned areas to protect watersheds and resources.

Why Do the Departments Need the Proposed Categorical Exclusions?

There are 190 million acres of federally managed lands at risk of severe wildland fires that threaten human safety and ecosystem integrity. Drought conditions coupled with years of fuel buildup combine to make these lands vulnerable to intense, fast-moving fires that are more destructive than those in prior years.

The 2000 fire season, for example, was one of the worst in 50 years. Approximately 123,000 fires burned more than 8.4 million acres. The total acreage burned was more than twice the 10-year national average. At times, nearly 30,000 personnel were on the fire lines, including the military and firefighters from other countries. More than \$2 billion from Federal accounts was spent suppressing wildland fires; this amount does not include State and local firefighting suppression costs, direct and indirect economic losses to communities, loss of property, and damage to ecosystems.

The trend since 2000 has continued. During 2002, catastrophic wildfires continued to make national headlines. Approximately 6.7 million acres were burned and evidence indicates that these fires have burned with greater speed and intensity than ever. For example, the Rodeo Fire in Arizona grew from 800 to

46,000 acres in one day. In addition, Oregon and Colorado experienced unusually large fires, with Colorado's Hayman fire being five times larger than the previous largest recorded fire in that State's history.

Fuels treatment has increasingly become a concern of Congress and the Executive Branch. In August 2000, the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior began an effort designed to reduce fire impacts on communities and ensure effective firefighting capacity in the future. The result was the National Fire Plan, which Congress later supported through appropriations language in the fiscal year (FY) 2001 appropriations act for the Department of the Interior and related agencies. As part of its direction, Congress mandated the creation of a coordinated national 10-year comprehensive strategy. The resulting strategy, A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy, completed in August of 2001, was developed by Federal, State, tribal, and local government and non-governmental representatives. In May of 2002, these same parties completed the Implementation Plan for the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy. The Implementation Plan establishes a performance-based framework for improving the management of wildland fire and hazardous fuels; meeting the need for ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation; implementing protective measures to reduce the risk of wildland fire to communities and environments, and monitoring progress over time.

The 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan has four primary goals: 1) Improve fire prevention and suppression; 2) Reduce hazardous

fuels; 3) Restore fire-adapted ecosystems; and 4) Promote community assistance. For each goal, the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan identifies specific outcomes, performance measures, and implementation tasks that guide agency actions and measure performance. One of the key implementation tasks under Goal Two of the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan (reduce hazardous fuels) requires agencies to assess regulatory processes governing projects and activities done in conformance with the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan and identify measures to improve timely decisions. The proposed categorical exclusions will accomplish a portion of this task and thereby better enable federal agencies to meet goals two and three of the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, consistent with the identified outcomes and performance measures.

The proposed categorical exclusions will also provide the departments with identical management tools that will improve consistency and cooperation among Federal agencies in the implementation of hazardous fuels reduction, stabilization, and rehabilitation projects. This improved cooperation will, in turn, foster more effective collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and interested stakeholders consistent with the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan.

What Is a Categorical Exclusion?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and accompanying Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1500), require that

each agency establish specific criteria for and identification of three categories of actions: (1) those that require preparation of an environmental impact statement; (2) those that require the preparation of an environmental assessment; and (3) those that are categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. Actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant impact on the human environment are categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. Agencies must, however, recognize exceptions to the application of a categorical exclusion required by extraordinary circumstances.

It should be noted that a categorical exclusion is *not* an exemption from the requirements of NEPA. It is an administrative tool to reduce excessive paperwork. CEQ regulations at 40 CFR 1500.4(p) direct agencies to reduce excessive paperwork by using categorical exclusions to define categories of actions, which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which, therefore, do not require the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

Current United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service procedures for complying with and implementing NEPA are set out in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15, Chapter 30, which establishes two types of categorical exclusions. The first, set out at section 31.1, consists of categories of actions that are so routine and limited that a record is not required. The second type, set out at section 31.2, consists of categories of actions that require

documentation in a Decision Memo that explains the rationale for applying a categorical exclusion and not preparing an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. The two proposed categorical exclusions would fall within the Forest Service's second type of categorical exclusion that requires a Decision Memo.

Current Department of the Interior procedures for complying with NEPA are set out in Departmental Manual 516 DM. Department-wide categorical exclusions are established in 516 DM, Chapter 2, Appendix 1. In applying the categorical exclusions, bureaus must make a determination that the exemptions do not apply. No specific form of documentation has previously been required for this determination. While the Department of the Interior has not required formal documentation of its department-wide categorical exclusions, many bureaus of the Department of the Interior prescribe some formal documentation for their bureau-specific categorical exclusions. Due to the desire to have comparable categorical exclusions and consistency in use, the Department of the Interior will issue instructions on the documentation of the rationale for applying either of these two proposed categorical exclusions, consistent with Forest Service procedures.

As directed by the CEQ regulations, at 40 CFR 1508.4, both the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior procedures provide for extraordinary circumstances in which a normally excluded action may have a significant environmental effect. Extraordinary circumstances occur, for example, where proposed actions would have adverse effects on federally listed

threatened and endangered species or their designated critical habitat, wilderness areas, inventoried roadless areas, wetlands, and archeological or historic sites. Where extraordinary circumstances occur, project analyses are documented in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The proposed categorical exclusions would be applied in the absence of extraordinary circumstances in accordance with departmental procedures. The USDA Forest Service provisions for extraordinary circumstance are set out in FSH 1909.15, section 30.3. The Department of the Interior provisions for extraordinary circumstances, called exceptions, are set out in 516 DM, Chapter 2, Appendix 2.

Explanation of Proposed Categorical Exclusions

The USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are proposing two categorical exclusions. These categorical exclusions would apply to National Forest System lands and to lands managed by the Department of the Interior agencies, including lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Reclamation.

The first categorical exclusion proposed by the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior would allow, in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, hazardous fuels reduction without preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. Hazardous fuels consist of combustible vegetation (live or dead), such as grass, leaves, ground litter, plants, shrubs, and trees that contribute to the threat of ignition and

high fire intensity and/or high rate of spread. Hazardous fuels reduction involves manipulation, including combustion or removal of fuels, to reduce the likelihood of ignition and/or to lessen potential damage to the ecosystem from intense wildfire and to create conditions where firefighters can safely and effectively control wildfires. Activities that could be conducted under this proposed categorical exclusion are the thinning of trees and brush and the removal of biomass through mechanical means, grazing, and the use of prescribed fire.

The second proposed category would allow, in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, rehabilitation and stabilization of resources and infrastructure in the aftermath of a fire without preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement. Activities that could be conducted under this proposed categorical exclusion include rehabilitation of habitat, watersheds, and infrastructure impacted by wildfire and/or wildfire suppression. Activities would also include stabilization of historical, archeological, and cultural sites impacted by wildfire and/or wildfire suppression.

When Will the Categorical Exclusions Be Used?

The hazardous fuels reduction categorical exclusion will only be applicable to projects identified in a manner that is consistent with the collaborative framework in the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan.

Activities conducted using the proposed categorical exclusions must be consistent with agency and Departmental procedures, and with applicable land and resource management plans, and must meet all applicable Federal, State, and Tribal laws or other requirements imposed for protection of the environment.

For example, the Clean Air Act requires compliance with State standards for air quality. A categorical exclusion would not be used if air quality standards could not be met. Similarly, the Wilderness Act provides certain protections for areas designated by Congress as wilderness areas. A categorical exclusion would not be used where a proposed activity may have adverse effects on wilderness characteristics.

In addition, agencies can avoid significant environmental effects by following agency procedures related to compliance with other applicable laws. For example, effects on archeological and cultural resources can often be mitigated simply by identifying and avoiding those resources. As another example, the use of fire is coordinated with State regulatory agencies concerned with air quality to ensure that burning is carried out when atmospheric conditions are favorable to smoke dispersal.

In using categorical exclusions, agencies must continue conducting appropriate consultations with Federal and State regulatory agencies, such as those required by the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. Activities categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement must still be evaluated to assess effects on threatened and endangered species, and undergo an appropriate level of consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service. Similarly, categorically excluded activities undergo surveys and evaluation of effects on properties protected by the National Historic Preservation Act, along with appropriate consultation with State

Historic Preservation Officers. Such consultations help ensure that cumulative effects across jurisdictions will not be significant.

Activities carried out under the rehabilitation and stabilization categorical exclusion cannot include the construction of new permanent infrastructure. Infrastructure may be reconstructed, but no new permanent construction may take place under the categorical exclusions.

Rationale for the Proposal

The Departments have extensive experience in hazardous fuels management, as well as in stabilization and rehabilitation of resources following a wildfire. In examining the basis for proposing these two categorical exclusions, the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior reviewed projects that were undertaken for hazardous fuels reduction, and rehabilitation/stabilization. Some projects involved multiple activities of these types. The information review included thirty different data items for each project, including information on project location and size, vegetation cover type, fuels treatment type, predicted environmental effects, actual environmental effects after project completion, and mitigation measures. Environmental effects include ecological, aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health effects as defined in 40 CFR 1508.8.

The agencies reviewed over 3,40 hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization projects completed in FY 1998 through FY 2002; of these, over half were documented with environmental assessments, less than 50 were documented with environmental impact statements, and the remainder

were categorically excluded from either of these types of documentation under existing categorical exclusions. Only 12 of the environmental impact statements contained predictions of significant environmental effects. It should be noted that current USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior NEPA procedures would preclude the application of the proposed categorical exclusions to any of these 12 projects because of extraordinary circumstances. Had the 12 projects been considered for a categorical exclusion they would not have qualified because of adverse effects on threatened and endangered species and uncertainty over the significance of effects on air quality and water quality.

The review indicates that hazardous fuels reduction activities and rehabilitation/stabilization activities, absent extraordinary circumstances, do not individually or cumulatively have significant effects on the human environment. A summary of the review is available at <http://www.fireplan.gov>.

The CEQ regulations state that categorically excluded actions must not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment (40 CFR 1508.4). Based on the previously discussed application of environmental laws, agency procedures, and the aforementioned review of the over 3,000 hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization activities, the agencies conclude that, the proposed categories of actions do not individually or cumulatively have significant effects on the human environment and, therefore, do not require either an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

Monitoring Performance

Under the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, the Secretaries of the Interior and the USDA have committed to a formal review process to monitor and evaluate performance, suggest revisions, and make necessary adaptations to the Strategy in collaboration with Federal, State and local stakeholders. The agencies will conduct monitoring of selected collaboratively developed projects and activities to assess progress and effectiveness of planning and implementation. Projects implemented under these proposed categorical exclusions will be included in this review.

Any revisions to the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan will integrate new information obtained from scientific research and the on-the-ground experiences. As part of this monitoring and evaluation, the effectiveness of hazardous fuels reduction and rehabilitation/stabilization projects and the application of categorical exclusions will be reviewed. Based on monitoring results these categorical exclusions may be augmented or modified. Future modifications to these proposed categorical exclusions, if necessary would be based in part on the results of monitoring and would involve additional public review.

The actual mechanism for monitoring will be the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS).

At the onset of the National Fire Plan, the wildland fire agencies identified the need for tools to assist them in capturing, monitoring and reporting accomplishments. While each agency had some mechanisms in place to meet

accountability requirements, the agencies did not have an overarching system capable of providing sufficient analysis and reporting. Instead, each organization relied on a variety of disparate mechanisms for tracking and reporting hazardous fuels accomplishments.

In order to provide a single, unified inter-agency system, the Department of Interior teamed with the USDA Forest Service to develop the NFPORS. The system will collect data in the areas of restoration and rehabilitation, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and the method of NEPA compliance (categorical exclusion, environmental assessment or environmental impact statement).

Public Involvement in the Use of the Proposed Categories

The 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy provides a collaborative framework for the selection and prioritization of hazardous fuels reduction projects which includes extensive public participation. Use of the proposed hazardous fuels reduction categorical exclusion to meet the goals of the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy will, therefore, include the public as provided in the collaborative framework.

Indeed, local involvement is the primary source of annual hazardous fuels project planning, prioritization, and resource allocation. The amount of collaboration at the local level will be consistent with the complexity of land ownership patterns, resource management issues, and the number of interested stakeholders. The hazardous fuels reduction categorical exclusion will only be applicable to projects identified consistent with this collaborative framework.

Conclusion

Consistent with direction provided by the President under the Healthy Forests Initiative and the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, the agencies propose two new categorical exclusions: one for hazardous fuels reduction and one for stabilization and rehabilitation of resources and infrastructure after a fire. Based upon a review of field data, the agencies conclude that actions identified in the proposed categories would not individually or cumulatively have significant effects on the human environment, and therefore, would not require preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

These proposed categorical exclusions would permit timely response to forest health problems involving hazardous fuels and would provide for timely stabilization and rehabilitation of resources and infrastructure impacted by fire and/or wildfire suppression. Public comment is invited on this proposal and will be considered in adopting final categorical exclusions. The text of the proposed categorical exclusions is set out at the end of this notice.

Regulatory Certifications

Environmental Impact

These proposed categorical exclusions would add direction to guide field employees in the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior regarding requirements for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation for fire management activities. Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, section 31.1b categorically excludes from documentation in an environmental

assessment or environmental impact statement “rules, regulations, or policies to establish Service-wide administrative procedures, program processes, or instructions.” Department of the Interior Manual 516 DM, Chapter 2, Appendix 1 categorically excludes from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement “policies, directives, regulations, and guidelines of an administrative, financial, technical, or procedural nature.” The agencies’ preliminary assessment is that these proposed categorical exclusions fall within these categories of actions and that no extraordinary circumstances exist that would require preparation of an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. A final determination will be made upon adoption of the final categorical exclusions. In addition, pursuant to 40 CFR 1505.1 and 1507.3, the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are consulting with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to ensure full compliance with the purposes and provisions of NEPA and the CEQ implementing regulations.

Regulatory Impact

These proposed categorical exclusions have been reviewed under Departmental procedures and Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review. It has been determined that this is not a significant action. This action to add two categorical exclusions to the agencies’ NEPA procedures will not have an annual effect of \$100 million or more on the economy or adversely affect productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, Tribal, or local governments. This action will not interfere with an action taken or

planned by another agency or raise new legal or policy issues. Finally, this action will not alter the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients of such programs. Accordingly, this action is not subject to Office of Management and Budget review under Executive Order 12866.

Moreover, this action has been considered in light of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), and it is hereby certified that the proposed categorical exclusions will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined by the act because it will not impose record-keeping requirements on them; it will not affect their competitive position in relation to large entities; and it will not affect their cash flow, liquidity, or ability to remain in the market.

Federalism

The agencies have considered these proposed categorical exclusions under the requirements of Executive Order 13132, Federalism, and have concluded that they conform with the federalism principles set out in this Executive Order; will not impose any compliance costs on the States; and will not have substantial direct effects on the States or the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, the agencies have determined that no further assessment of federalism implications is necessary.

Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments

These proposed categorical exclusions do not have tribal implications as defined by Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, and therefore advance consultation with tribes is not required.

No Takings Implications

These proposed categorical exclusions have been analyzed in accordance with the principles and criteria contained in Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights, and it has been determined that the proposed categorical exclusions do not pose the risk of a taking of Constitutionally protected private property.

Civil Justice Reform (E.O. 12988).

In accordance with Executive Order 12988, it has been determined that these categorical exclusions do not unduly burden the judicial system and meet the requirements of sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of the Order.

Unfunded Mandates

Pursuant to Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538), which the President signed into law on March 22, 1995, the agencies have assessed the effects of these proposed categorical exclusions on State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector. These proposed categorical exclusions do not compel the expenditure of \$100 million or more by any State, local, or tribal government or anyone in the private sector. Therefore, a statement under section 202 of the act is not required.

Energy Effects

These proposed categorical exclusions have been reviewed under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use. It has been determined that these proposed categorical exclusions do not constitute a significant energy action as defined in the Executive order.

Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public

These proposed categorical exclusions do not contain any additional record keeping or reporting requirements or other information collection requirements as defined in 5 CFR part 1320 that are not already required by law or not already approved for use, and therefore, impose no additional paperwork burden on the public. Accordingly, the review provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 do not apply.

For the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture:

_____ (Dated)

For the U.S. Department of the Interior:

_____ (Dated)

Proposed Categorical Exclusions

Note: When the proposed categorical exclusions have been finalized, the USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Interior will issue the categorical exclusions in their NEPA procedures. The categorical exclusions would appear in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15, Environmental Policy and Procedures, section 31.2 and Department of the Interior Manual 516 DM, Chapter 2, Appendix 1, Departmental Categorical Exclusions. Reviewers who wish to view the entire chapter 30 of FSH 1909.15 may obtain a copy electronically from the USDA Forest Service directives page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/>. Reviewers who wish to view the Department of the Interior Manual 516 DM may obtain a copy electronically from the Department of the Interior page at <http://elips.doi.gov/table.cfm>.

Following is the text of the two categorical exclusions:

- *Hazardous fuels reduction activities, consistent with those identified in the collaborative framework described in A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan, using fire, grazing, and mechanical methods (such as thinning, cutting, clipping, chipping, crushing, mulching, and mowing) when conducted in accordance with agency and Departmental procedures. Products generated by mechanical methods may be sold or otherwise utilized or disposed of.*
- *Rehabilitation and stabilization of lands and infrastructure following a wildfire when conducted in accordance with agency and Departmental procedures.*

Activities include stabilization and rehabilitation of habitat, watersheds, and infrastructure impacted by wildfire and/or wildfire suppression. Activities also include stabilization of historical, archeological, and cultural sites impacted by wildfire and/or wildfire suppression. Activities do not include the construction of new permanent infrastructure.