

Cover Sheet

Organization Name: Nevada Department of Wildlife		
Organization Type: 501(c)(3) EIN# <u>State Agency</u> Governmental entity? <input checked="" type="radio"/> N		
Address: 525 Round Mountain Dr. Battle Mountain, NV		
Project Name: Whistler Mountain Pinyon Juniper Hand Thinning Project		
Amount requested: \$100,000.00 (U.S. Dollars)	Website: https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/nepa/27202/85395/102608/3_BARS_FEIS_VOL_2_508_Compliant.pdf	
Project start date (mm/yyyy): October 2021	Project completion date (mm/yyyy): February 2022	
This funding will be used to (complete this sentence with a max of 2 sentences): Conduct restoration activities in the vicinity of Whistler Mountain to improve habitat resilience for sagebrush obligate species.		
Key People:	Director: Tony Wasley	
	Board Chair: Not Applicable- Caleb McAdoo (Supervising Habitat Biologist)	
	Project Contact:	Name: Jeremy Lutz
		Position: Habitat/Game Biologist
		Phone: (775) 635-5070
		Fax: N/A
Email: jlutz@ndow.org		
Organization Mission: To protect, preserve, manage, and restore wildlife and its habitat for its aesthetic, scientific, educational, recreational, and economic benefit to citizens of Nevada		
Project is on (check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private land.		
Are government permits or decision documents needed for the project? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If so, are those permits and decision documents already secured? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If permits and decision documents are needed but not yet secured, in #4 of the Narrative Requirements provide a list of permits and documents needed and a schedule for securing them.		
Has your organization received other grants from the Dream Tags Fund? <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No (use additional to list ALL funded projects)	If yes, Multiple Agency Awards Across Multiple Years	
	Date awarded:	
	Project # & title:	
	Amount of Award:	
	Date awarded:	
	Project # & title:	
Amount of Award:		

Grant Match

Match amount to be provided:	\$ 60,000.00			
Match details:	Please provide the form of your matching funds. If match is made up of both cash and in-kind, fill in both sections.			
	Match is:			
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Cash</td> <td>\$ 60,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In-kind</td> <td>\$</td> </tr> </table>	Cash	\$ 60,000.00	In-kind
Cash	\$ 60,000.00			
In-kind	\$			
For the cash portion of your match, is the funding already being held by the applicant for this project? Yes <u>X</u> No <u> </u>				

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION

Indicate the description that best fits the project you are proposing. Mark no more than three categories:

- X** A. Projects that improve, protect, or restore habitat
 ___ B. Projects that embrace unique opportunities for advancing the mission of wildlife conservation in Nevada
 ___ C. Projects that address emergent needs
 ___ D. Other projects that meet the evaluation criteria

Narrative

1. **Specific project goals and measurable outcomes:** The objectives of the Whistler Mountain Pinyon Juniper Hand Thinning Project are to:

- Reverse the expansion of pinyon-juniper woodlands to provide resilient habitats with an adequate understory which meet ecological site descriptions;
- Improve existing winter habitat for mule deer;
- Prevent catastrophic large-scale wildland fires resulting from the buildup of fuels and the conversion of fuel type based on prediction from historic assessments;
- Improve plant and wildlife species composition and diversity;
- Reverse the decreasing quality of wildlife habitat within the 3 Bars Project Area due to damage from wildfires and pinyon and juniper encroachment; and
- Prevent the establishment and expansion of invasive non-native species.
- Help protect and restore important spring and riparian sources for wildlife.

For many areas, project success will be simply measured by number of acres in which the successional stage of the plant community was set-back to a more productive grass/browse dominated site. It is likely, that the magnitude of the benefits from this action will be so large that they will not, in their entirety, be able to be measured simply through vegetative monitoring and wildlife surveys. The true benefits of ecological resilience are often only fully understood when they are absent from the ecosystem entirely.

2. **Project location:** The Project is Located in the immediate vicinity of Whistler Mountain, Eureka County, Nevada, Approximately 7 miles north west of Eureka, Nevada (Figure 1). Major access roads to the project site extend from Highway 50 and include the Slough Creek Road. More specifically, the Project is Located within all or parts of the following Townships and Ranges: Township 20 North, Ranges 52-53 East; Township 21 North, Ranges 52 East.

3. **Project description:** The proposed project would thin or substantially remove encroaching pinyon pine and juniper trees from as much as 1,500 acres of important wildlife habitat located within the 3-Bars Project Area using a contracted hand thinning crew.

The 3 Bars Project Area encompasses approximately 725,000 acres throughout Eureka County, Nevada. The 3 Bars ecosystem is a shrub steppe ecosystem where land health has declined to state 4 of the United States Department of Agriculture's Ecological Site Characteristics State and Transition Model. Once an ecosystem has degraded to state 4, natural recovery without intervention is considered unlikely.

In an effort to help enhance shrub steppe habitat found within the 3 Bars Project Area, specifically around Whistler Mountain, up to 1,500 acres of pinyon/juniper will be hand thinned. Thinning pinyon/juniper from native sagebrush steppe habitat has shown to have a positive impact for a myriad of sagebrush obligate species including mule deer, pronghorn antelope and the many endemic bird species, including the sage thrasher and sage sparrow, that depend on healthy sage brush plant communities. As pinyon/juniper stands increase in size and density, the grass, forb and brush community start to die off due to the trees ability to out compete these fragile plant communities for water and sunlight. Once this threshold has been crossed it is very hard to bring it back to a productive sagebrush steppe ecosystem again.

Several spring sources including Hash Springs, Railroad Spring, Stinking Spring, and Trap Corral Spring will be targeted for thinning, as well, within the Whistler polygon. Due to pinyon-juniper encroachment around these important areas, spring or riparian health has been compromised. Up to 17 acres will be manually thinned around each spring, specifically targeting Phase 1 and Phase 2 stands.

In 2011, the Battle Mountain BLM along with the Nevada Department of Wildlife initiated an 749,810-acre habitat restoration project titled *3 Bars Ecosystem and Landscape Restoration Project*. The Project has undergone a NEPA analysis and restoration activities have already been initiated in 2020. Because of the large-scale of this project, treatments will be conducted over several years to accomplish treatment objectives.

More specifically, the Proposed Project is to implement vegetation treatments within 1,500 acres of the Whistler Mountain polygon with the specific objectives of:

- Reversing the expansion of pinyon-juniper woodlands;
- Prevent catastrophic large-scale wildland fires resulting from the buildup of fuels and the conversion of fuel type based on prediction from historic assessments;
- Improve species composition and diversity;
- Reverse the decreasing quality of wildlife habitat and forage due to damage from wildfires and pinyon and juniper encroachment; and
- Prevent the establishment and expansion of invasive non-native species.
- Help protect and restore important springs and riparian sources for wildlife.

For a more in depth look at the approved Project subsequent Environmental Assessment, please visit the project website: https://eplanning.blm.gov/public_projects/nepa/27202/85395/102608/3_BARS_FEIS_VOL_2_508_Compliant.pdf

4. **Permitting:** An Environmental Assessment (EIS) was completed for this Project and a record of Decision was issued in 2019. Archaeological clearances may be required in certain treatment polygons at the discretion of the BLM's Field Office.
5. **Future Phases:** Because of the overall project scale (127,000 treatable acres identified in 3 Bars EIS) this and many more projects will be implemented over multiple years. Multi-year Project Rehabilitation Projects are inherently expensive, as such, budget requirements have not been completely matched with funding sources. At a minimum, the following funds have been or will be pursued for this project: funding from BLM, Internal BLM funding, NDOW Habitat Conservation Fee, and the Wildlife Heritage Fund.

6. **Principals involved:** Jeremy Lutz (NDOW) – Mr. Lutz is the managing Habitat Biologist for the Whistler Mountain Area and is Project Lead for the Department of Wildlife.

Kenneth Sheddon (BLM) – Mr. Sheddon is the Fuels and Forestry Specialist with the BLM and is the Primary Point of contact for the Bureau of Land Management.

Caleb McAdoo (NDOW)- Mr. McAdoo is the Eastern Region Habitat Supervisor and will be serving in the prime role of overseeing project and budget management for the Whistler Mountain Project.

7. **Number of staff positions involved:** The Project Managers are comprised entirely of Government Agencies\employees and project implementation will be conducted by numerous contractors and volunteers. No money used from the Dream Tag Fund or other donations, will be used for salaries or administrative costs, but rather, will be used for direct implementation of on-the-ground work through the use of contract services.

8. **Number of volunteers involved:** Opportunities for volunteer participation in the 3 Bars Restoration Project are almost limitless, the treatment or application type will ultimately dictate the amount of volunteers needed.

The Project proponents will endorse and encourage volunteer participation and will utilize NDOW’s Volunteer Program to involve participation from the general public and non-governmental organizations, with current Covid-19 best management practices strictly adhered to.

9. **Time Line of Project.**

Table 2. Approximate timeline and objectives associated with the Whistler Mountain Restoration Project

Date	Objectives/Milestones Verbal Description	Task(s) completed	Objective Treatment Acreages
Winter 2021/2022	Utilize Hand-thinning in the Whistler Mountain Treatment Polygon	To be Completed	1,500

10. Success.

The Project Proponent would not only inform all charitable donors of endeavors towards the completion of the Whistler Mountain Restoration Project, but to also publicly recognize them, as well. As a funding partner in this project, the project proponents would commit to submitting yearly progress reports which would, at a minimum, document: treated acreages, annual budgets, treatment methods, and any available monitoring data. Furthermore, at the request of the Committee, coordinated field tours could be made to show the ongoing progress and responses to treatments.

In addition to alerting the Committee of project completion, the project proponents would eagerly recognize our funding partners in all publications and media releases (website publications, T.V. spots, Facebook and Twitter posts, radio, etc.). At the desire and approval of the committee, the Nevada Dream Tags Fund logo would be used in such social media to give further recognition and advertisement of the benefit of the fund towards worthwhile projects.

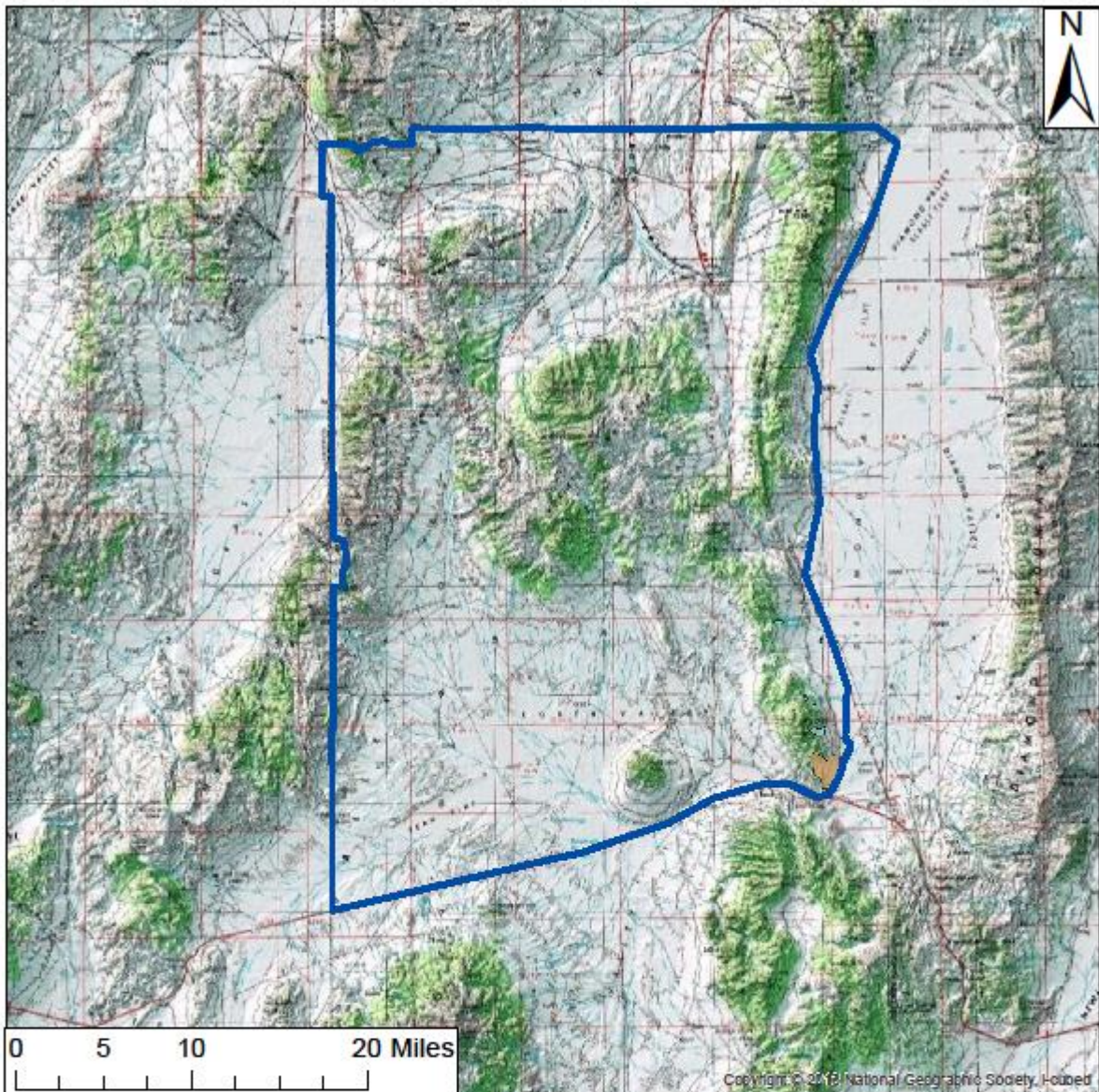
11. Grant match.

Dream Tag funds will be greatly leveraged for advantageous habitat projects in Nevada. Given the nature of NDOWs federal grants, these Dream Tag funds will allow for a federal match at a 3:1 ratio. Direct match for this project is 60-percent with sources from the Wildlife Trust Fund and Habitat Conservation Fee.




12. Project budget:

Table 3 Whistler Mountain Projected Budget Needs and Funding Sources

Budget Item Description*/Implementation Year	Dream Tag Fund	Other Funding Name**	Match \$	Total	Projected Budget Needs***
FY2022					
Implementation- Contracting	\$100,000.00*			\$100,000.00	
Implementation- Contracting		Heritage	\$ 40,000.00*	\$ 40,000.00	
Implementation- Contracting		Habitat Cons.	\$ 20,000.00*	\$ 20,000.00	
FY 2022 Sub Total				\$	\$160,000.00
Totals	\$100,000.00	-----			
<p><i>*Approval pending by authorizing committee</i> <i>**Funding Sources have not been matched to budget needs</i></p>					



Legend

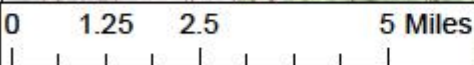
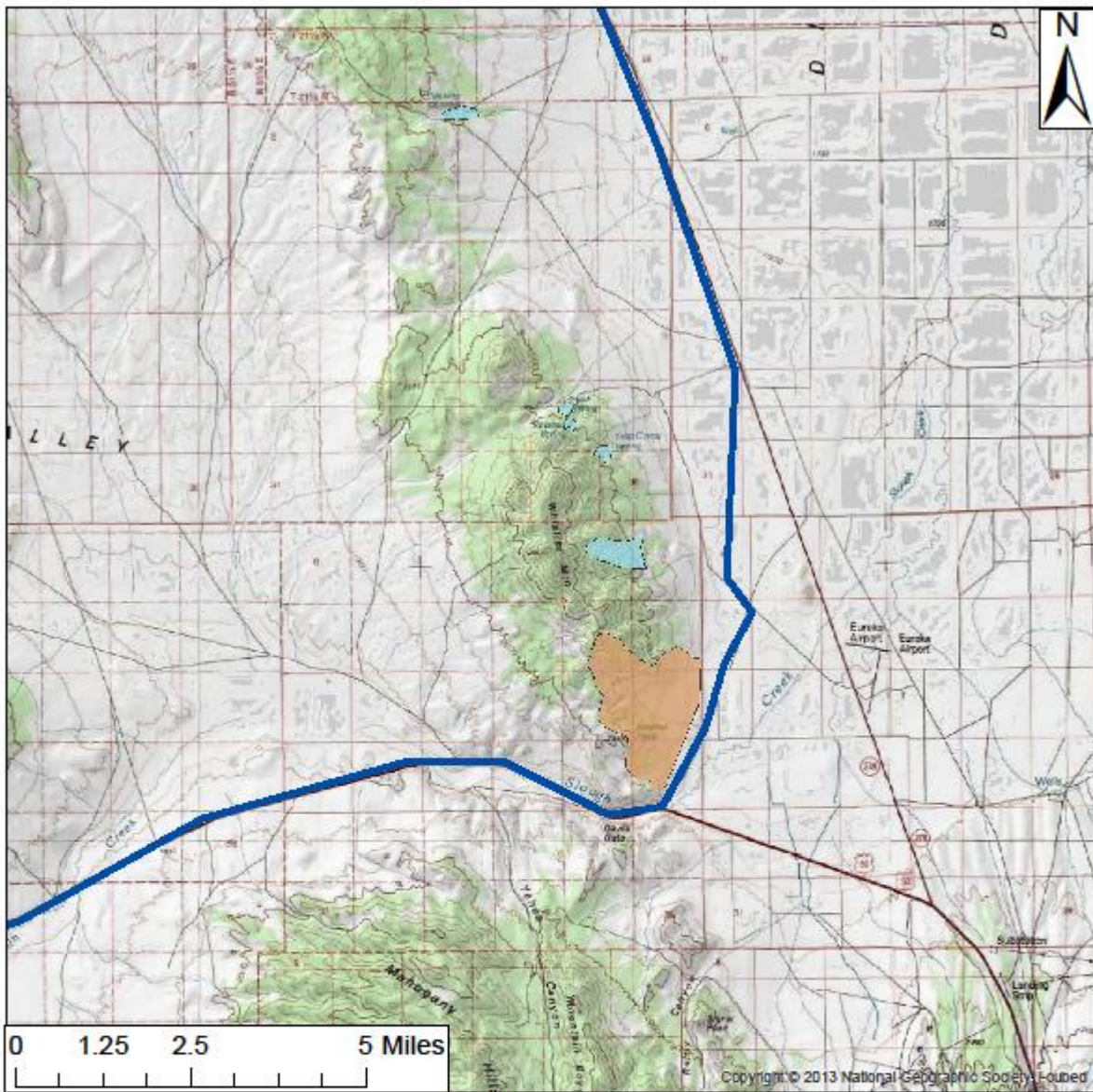
-  3-Bars_Project_Boundary
-  Riparian Treatment Areas
-  Whistler Polygon



Whistler Mountain PJ Thinning Overview






[Date]
 Projection: UTM Zone 11 North, NAD83
 No warranty is made by the Nevada Department of Wildlife as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



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Legend

-  3-Bars_Project_Boundary
-  Riparian Treatment Areas
-  Whistler Polygon



Whistler Mountain PJ Thinning Polygons



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