

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Site Specific Environmental Assessment Rangeland Grasshopper and Mormon cricket Suppression Program Idaho EA Number ID-2020-23-1

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) that analyzes alternatives for suppressing Grasshopper and Mormon cricket outbreaks on federally managed rangeland in southern Idaho. The EA, incorporated by reference in this document, is available from USDA APHIS PPQ, 9118 W. Blackeagle Drive, Boise, ID 83709 or <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/grasshopper>.

The EA includes an analysis of the potential impacts of three alternatives. These alternatives include (1) No Suppression Program, (2) Insecticide Applications at Conventional Rates, and (3) Reduced Agent Area Treatments (RAATs) with Adaptive Management Strategy (preferred alternative).

Carbaryl spray or bait, Diflubenzuron or Malathion spray would be considered under the preferred alternative at the following application rates:

- 8.0 fluid ounces (0.25 lb. a.i.) of carbaryl ULV spray per acre;
- 10.0 pounds (0.20 lb. a.i.) of 2 percent carbaryl bait per acre;
- 1.0 fluid ounce (0.016 lb. a.i.) of diflubenzuron per acre; or
- 4.0 fluid ounces (0.31 lb. a.i.) of malathion per acre.

Note: Chlorantraniliprole is listed in the EA as an option, however, it will not be used in 2020.

Applications of bait or spray would be made to no more than 50% of the land area within any specific treatment block.

Finding of No Significant Impact

APHIS has determined that the proposed suppression program utilizing the RAATs Alternative, conducted in accordance with the Guidelines for Treatment of Rangeland Grasshoppers and Mormon Crickets (treatment guidelines), which contains the operational procedures, will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment.

The finding of no significant impact for the alternatives was determined based on the following:

- 1. Human health:** Potential exposures to the general public from RAATs application rates are infrequent and of low magnitude. These low exposures to the public pose no risk of direct toxicity, carcinogenicity, neurotoxicity, genotoxicity, reproductive toxicity, or developmental toxicity. APHIS will offer the opportunity for hypersensitive individuals to register a request that treatments not occur near their property. The potential for adverse effects to workers is negligible if proper safety procedures are followed, including wearing the required protective clothing. Therefore, routine safety precautions are expected to provide adequate worker health protection.

2. **Non targets:** No vertebrate animal species would be exposed to toxic levels of insecticides. Reduction in insects as prey species for insectivores would be reduced by the insecticide choices and by the reduction in area coverage. Plants would not be exposed to toxic levels of insecticides and any reduction of pollinators would be minor and temporary due to the insecticide choices and by the reduction in area coverage. Impacts on aquatic arthropods would be avoided or minimized by utilizing buffers around water. Impacts on non-target terrestrial arthropods would be minimized by the insecticide choices and by the reduction in area coverage.
3. **Endangered and Threatened species:** In accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation is conducted with Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) for any action authorized, funded, or affected by a Federal agency that may affect listed endangered or threatened species or their critical habitats. An APHIS state office Biological Assessment (BA) to determine the potential impact from the proposed treatment was prepared and submitted to FWS. Concurrence was granted March 31, 2020 by FWS in Boise, ID. Protection measures that resulted from the national and local consultation processes with US Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented and therefore, the proposed suppression program is not likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or their habitats.
4. **Socioeconomic issues:** Ranchers (livestock owners) are the major social group that is economically impact by rangeland grasshopper infestations. Extensive grasshopper infestations deplete the natural plant resources. Losses occurred from reduced available range forages for livestock and wildlife can be considerable, and thus cause starvation, sickness and mortality among these animals. The general public is the main consumer segment that relies on these animal products and can be economically affected by limited and inconstant supply. The county and state property value base for taxes purposes and supporting revenue for community services also becomes less. Losses caused by Grasshoppers and Mormon crickets would not be as significant under the preferred alternative as under the No Action Alternative.
5. **Cultural resources and events:** No cultural resources or events will be affected negatively by the proposed treatment. A suppression treatment should help reduce the insect annoyance and property damage concerns at some of these events and be considered an actual benefit. Efforts will be coordinated with the land manager to prevent potential impacts.
6. **Executive Orders 12898** (low income and minorities), **13045** (children), and **13186** (migratory birds). The Program actions pose no disproportionate adverse impacts to children or to low-income or minority populations. There would be no significant impact on migratory birds.

The time between receipt of a request for treatment and the start of a suppression program is very short. In order to inform the public and give them time to submit comments on the proposed program, APHIS made this EA available for a 30-day comment period which ended April 17, 2020.

Determination

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the EA, the 2002 and 2019 EIS, and the implementation of the treatment guidelines and the protection measures for endangered and threatened species, it is my determination that conventional or RAATS application of malathion, carbaryl, carbaryl bait, or diflubenzuron does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. I find that the mitigation measures for conventional or RAATs treatments, specified in the EA, and the 2002 and 2019 EIS, will result in a “not affect” or “not likely to adversely affect” determination to threatened, endangered or proposed species, critical habitat, and/or proposed critical habitat and is consistent with Executive order 13186, “Migratory bird Act” and the “Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). I find that the environmental process undertaken for this program is entirely consistent with Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations” and Executive Order No. 13045, “Protection of Children From Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks.”

Brian Marschman
State Plant Health Director, Idaho

Date