

U.S. launches plan to battle rangeland wildfires

By Keith Ridler, AP

BOISE, Idaho – Federal officials have launched a two-pronged plan to stop a vicious cycle of rangeland wildfires in a wide swath of sagebrush country in the West that supports cattle ranching, recreation and is home to an imperiled bird.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management on Friday said it will create an environmental impact statement concerning fuel breaks and another on fuels reduction and restoration for Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, California, Utah, and Washington.

The agency said the documents when finished will help speed the process for future landscape-scale projects in the Great Basin by providing a blanket approval for similar areas that will likely just need minor additional environmental reviews to proceed.

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