

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Shoshone Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, ID 83352

Finding of No Significant Impact

**Greenhorn Amendment
NEPA # ID-230-2009-EA-3683
IDI-17799**

INTRODUCTION:

The Bureau of Land Management, Shoshone Field Office (BLM) has conducted an environmental assessment (EA, No. ID 230 2009 EA 3683) to analyze the environmental effects and document the findings of an application submitted to the BLM by the Greenhorn Homeowners Association (Greenhorn) to amend their existing right-of-way (IDI-17799) for a water storage facility pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and the BLM regulations at 43 CFR 2800. The Greenhorn Subdivision operates its water system, Public Water System ID#: 5070020, pursuant to the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems (IDAPA 58.01.08) administered by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ).

The existing water system is currently out of compliance with current IDEQ regulations regarding pressure requirements, as well as not providing for adequate fire flows as required by the Ketchum Rural Fire District. The amendment would replace the existing storage facilities (a 25,000 gallon and a 30,000 gallon tanks) with a single 150,000 gallon partially buried concrete storage tank located approximately 200 feet southwest and 40 feet higher in elevation relative to the existing tanks. The new storage tank will help in providing adequate storage for fire flow; flow equalization, and emergency storage purposes.

The underlying need for the proposed action is for BLM to work with Greenhorn regarding their application to amend their existing right-of-way to improve the water system, as it will allow for Greenhorn to meet system requirements and continue providing necessary water services to the subdivision.

An EA (ID 230 2009 EA 3683) was prepared describing a proposed action and alternatives. This EA is available at the following website: <http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/info/nepa.html> or at the Shoshone Field Office, and is incorporated by reference for this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY:

The Proposed Action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the approved Sun Valley Management Framework Plan (1981), as amended. They conform to the Big Wood Analysis Unit Lands Decision #2 (p. SV-2) which states:

Decision #2: Allow rights-of-way for utility and transportation purposes (both public and private), provided the uses comply with all requirements of this plan. Rights-of-way applications will be examined on a case-by-case basis to determine routes, impacts, and mitigating measures.

Rational for the above decision states that fast growing population increases the need for utility and transportation rights-of-way.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT DETERMINATION:

I have reviewed the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed activities documented in the Greenhorn Amendment EA (ID 230 2009 EA 3863). I have also reviewed the project record for this analysis and the impacts of the proposed action and alternatives as disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Impacts sections of the EA. Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Because there would not be any significant impact, an environmental impact statement is not required.

I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the approved Sun Valley MFP (1981) as amended and is consistent with the plans and policies of neighboring local, county, state, tribal and federal agencies and governments. This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA.

A) Context: This requirement means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant (40 CFR 1508.27):

The disclosure of effects in the EA found the actions limited in context. The planning area is limited in size and the activities limited in potential. Effects are local in nature and are not likely to significantly affect regional or national resources.

B) Intensity. This requirement refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following are considered in evaluating intensity (40 CFR 1508.27).

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

Impacts associated with the proposed action are discussed in the Environmental Impacts section of the EA.

The proposed action is anticipated to have beneficial impacts to the local economy with the Greenhorn Subdivision's water system meeting current IDEQ requirements with improved water service and storage capacity that will allow for increased fire protection. Minor beneficial and adverse impacts to recreation would occur with the implementation of Alternative 1. Adverse effects would be short-term and mostly limited to the inconveniences directly associated with construction activities. Visual impacts from the removal of vegetation and the construction of structures would be mitigated through use of natural vegetation or through the use of materials or coloration that reduces visual impacts. Natural resources would experience negligible to minor impacts. Removal of vegetation and soils during construction and alteration of the topography would occur on a small scale. Some disturbance would be temporary, such as that for the removal of the existing buried steel tank and installation of the buried water pipeline extension. Permanent improvements would be constructed that would create long-term disturbance to soils and vegetation. Wildlife would experience minor adverse impacts from localized short-term displacement during construction activities in addition to some loss of non-critical habitat.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The proposed activities will not significantly affect public health or safety. The purpose of the proposed action is to allow for an existing water storage facility and associated access road, buried water pipeline and buried system communications line to be upgraded, operated and maintained on public land. The proposed action will also allow for the Greenhorn Subdivision's water system to meet current IDEQ requirements with improved water service and storage capacity that will allow for increased fire protection. Similar actions have not significantly affected public health or safety.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are no unique historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, Wilderness Study Areas, or Areas of Critical Environmental Concern within the project area.

4. *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

Throughout the environmental process the proposal to upgrade, operate, and maintain a water storage facility and associated access road, buried water pipeline and buried system communications line on public lands was not highly controversial, nor are the effects expected to generate future controversy. The initial scoping period for the project did not generate controversy.

5. *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

The effects of constructing, operating, and maintaining a water storage facility and associated access road, buried water pipeline and buried system communications line on public lands are fairly straightforward and do not pose uncertainties. The environmental process has not identified any effects that may involve highly unique or unknown risks.

6. *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

Neither the Proposed Action, nor any of the alternatives are expected to set a precedent for future actions with significant effects, nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration because all future actions involving the project area will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Because there are rights-of-way projects throughout the BLM, action for this project will not set any BLM precedent. The proposed action is consistent with actions permitted elsewhere.

7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

The EA analyzes all connected and cumulative actions within the scope of the analysis. The cumulative effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions are considered and disclosed in the EA, Environmental Impacts section. The cumulative effects are not significant.

8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.*

The proposed action will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It also will not cause loss or destruction of significant, cultural, or historical resources. A cultural resource inventory was conducted in May 2009, which revealed no eligible properties listed, or eligible for listing within the project area.

9. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*

There are no federally listed plants, animals, or their habitat within the project area.

10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

This action violates no federal, state, or local environmental protection laws. The preferred alternative will be implemented in accordance with all federal, state, and local environmental protection laws.

Based upon the review of the context and intensity factors and the environmental analyses conducted, I have determined that the actions analyzed in the Greenhorn Amendment EA No. ID 230 2009 EA 3863 is not a major federal action and that its implementation will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared for this project.

For more information you can contact Tara Hagen, Realty Specialist, at (208) 732-7205 or via email at id_shoshone_fo@blm.gov.

/s/ Jesse German, Acting for
Ruth A. Miller
Field Manager
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11/16/09
Date