

Worksheet
Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Office: Three Rivers, Burns District Office

Tracking Number (DNA #): DOI-BLM-OR-B050-2015-0033-DNA

Case File/Project Number: Records Improvement Permit (RIP) #018325

Proposed Action Title: Alkali Forage Reserve Well

Location/Legal Description: Alkali Allotment #5300, W.M., T. 27 S., R. 32 E., sec. 7, 8, 9, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30. See attached map.

Applicant: Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

The Proposed Action is for BLM to drill and case a new water well (Alkali Forage Reserve Well) within the Alkali Allotment #5300. There are three potential well site locations; placement would be dependent on archeological clearances (See Alkali Forage Reserve Well Project Map). The proposed well development would take place over a period of 1–2 months. This allotment is a crested seeding that was established in 1982 and is used as a forage reserve for displaced permittees during rest periods for sagebrush steppe habitat restoration projects and/or wildfire emergency stabilization and restoration (ES&R) projects.

The well would be connected to 15 miles of existing pipeline and provide water to 14 existing troughs. It would include a power supply (generator or solar) in a fenced area. There would need to be an additional 1,320 feet of pipeline added to connect the new well with the existing pipeline system. The project would not result in an increase in permitted Animal Unit Months (AUM), nor would it alter grazing management specified in the 2002 Alkali Allotment Management Plan (AMP). This well will ensure that the existing pipeline within the allotment has a continuous and reliable source of water.

Heavy equipment (e.g. drill rigs, trenchers, etc.) and manual labor (2–4 BLM employees) would be used during drilling of the well over a two-week period of time. The well would be drilled with a drilling rig requiring a level well pad. If the well site does not have a level pad, an area no larger than 50 feet by 50 feet would be leveled to accommodate the equipment. Any needed materials (rocks or soil) for maintenance or construction activities would be hauled in with a dump truck and would be free of noxious weeds. The entire disturbed area would be seeded with a non-native seed mix to increase the rate of recovery. Following seeding and rehabilitation of the disturbed site, the permanent footprint would be no more than 20 feet by 20 feet.

The well would be cased and sealed to prevent cave-ins and contamination, all State of Oregon water well drilling regulations would be adhered to, and a safety device would be installed on any new power source(s) to prevent electrocution of raptors. Solar power, fuel-type generators, or any combination of these would be used to power the pump for the well in order to ensure the well can continue to operate under differing conditions. Specific design and size of the power

source would be dependent upon the depth of the well, as would pump size. Panels for solar energy would be installed using a tractor with an auger. Poles would be 8 inches in diameter and would be concreted in the ground; solar panels would be mounted upon the poles. Pole height would be as low as possible while still clearing vegetation and functioning properly. Solar panels vary in size from 16 to 40 inches in length by 40 to 70 inches in width. Reduced glare solar panels would reduce visibility. Solar panels would only be utilized if the well has adequate water production. Fuel-powered generators would be 5,000 kilowatts or smaller. Generators would be placed near the well head, possibly on a trailer in order to allow the generator to be removed from the site when not in use. Generators would be expected to run 4 to 16 hours a day depending on water consumption, and might be audible for up to one-quarter mile under some conditions. Technology is now available to use satellites to start, stop, and notify when problems arise with the generators; timers are also available to control times when generators operate. To limit the amount of time the generator operates, level switches could be installed in the storage tank. These would only turn the generator on when the storage tank went below one-half full and would turn it off when full.

The well head and power source would be fenced, following BLM standards for a four-strand barbed wire fence, to protect it from damage caused by livestock, wild horses, and large wildlife species. The fence would be no more than 250 feet in total length. The fence enclosure would be the minimum needed to provide adequate protection.

All disturbed areas would be reseeded after construction, using a nonnative mix. In some areas, it might not be possible to trench in the pipeline due to a rock layer. In these areas, a portion of the black plastic pipe might lie directly on the ground or just beneath the ground's surface. Valve covers and vents would be placed as needed, but would not be more than 1-inch above ground level and would consist of a vertical piece of culvert with a lid.

Following initial construction of the well, pipeline, and fence, maintenance on the new and existing range improvements would occur in order to ensure the system functions and continues to function as designed. This would include replacing troughs and sections of pipeline as needed.

Maintenance of the infrastructure would continue to be administered by the Burns District BLM and would be completed to address each partner's responsibilities for labor, construction, maintenance, operation, and/or supplies.

Project Design Elements

Project Design Elements (PDE) were developed to aid in meeting project goals and objectives. These features are nonexclusive and are subject to change based on site-specific terrain characteristics (topography and vegetation). Changes, additions, or deletions would be made through coordination with appropriate BLM specialists and approved by the Authorized Officer. The Industrial Fire Precaution Levels (IFPL) will be followed during construction, where appropriate. These PDEs are a combination of those used in the Keg Springs Well EA, DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2013-0023-EA, pages 7–8; and the Adrian Well EA, DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2012-0050-EA, pages 8–9.

- Proposed rangeland improvement sites would be surveyed for cultural values. If cultural sites are found, their condition and *National Register* eligibility would be evaluated. If sites are determined to be *National Register* eligible and under threat of damage, mitigation measures to protect cultural materials would be determined. Mitigation plans would be developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Burns Paiute Tribe. Mitigation measures can include protective fencing, surface collection and mapping of artifacts, subsurface testing, and complete data recovery (full-scale excavation).
- Proposed rangeland improvement sites would be surveyed for Special Status plant species prior to implementation. Special Status plant sites would be avoided.
- New livestock facilities (livestock troughs, fences, and pipeline) would be constructed at least 1 km (0.6 mile) from leks, in order to avoid concentration of livestock near leks, reduce collision hazards to flying birds, and eliminate avian predator perches.
- All proposed wire fences constructed within 1.25 miles of a lek or known seasonal use area (i.e. spring enclosure), would include plastic reflective clips on the wires to reduce mortality from sage-grouse hitting the fence.
- No project construction or maintenance would occur April 1 through June 15 during sage-grouse nesting. (*This PDE will not be implemented since there are no occupied leks within 15 miles and no unoccupied pending leks within 10 miles of the forage reserve, and the area is not designated as sage-grouse Preliminary Priority or Preliminary General Habitat (PPH and PGH).*)
- Proposed range improvement sites would be surveyed for noxious weed populations prior to implementation. Weed populations identified in or adjacent to the proposed projects would be treated using the most appropriate methods, in accordance with the 1998 Burns District Noxious Weed Management Program Environmental Assessment (EA)/Decision Record (DR) OR-020-98-05 or subsequent decision.
- The risk of noxious weed introduction would be minimized by ensuring all equipment (including all heavy equipment, 4-wheelers, and vehicles) is cleaned prior to entry to the sites, minimizing disturbance activities, and completing follow-up monitoring to ensure no new noxious weed establishment occurs. Should noxious weeds be found, appropriate control treatments would be performed in conformance with the 1998 Burns District Noxious Weed Program Management EA/DR OR-020-98-05 or subsequent decision.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name

- Three Rivers Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Record of Decision (ROD)
Date Approved/Amended: September 1992.

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

- Grazing Management: Page 2-33, GM 1.3: Utilize rangeland improvements, as needed, to support achievement of multiple-use management objectives for each allotment as shown

in Appendix 9 and Map RM-3. Range improvements will be constrained by the Standard Procedures and Design Elements shown in Appendix 12.

C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

- Keg Springs Well EA, (DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2013-0023-EA), September 17, 2013.
- Adrian Well EA , DOI-BLM-OR-B060-2012-0050-EA, June 20, 2013.

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g. biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

- Alkali Allotment Management Plan, 2002.
- BLM National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy, January 25, 2001.
- Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon, February 1, 2012.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

This DNA proposed action is specifically provided for in the proposed actions of the Adrian Well EA and the Keg Springs Well EA. Each EA analyzed a proposed action to drill and case a new water well (for the Adrian Well (Ch. II, sec. B, p. 7) and Keg Springs Well (Ch. II, sec. C, p. 9), respectively) and included a power supply (generator or solar) in a fenced area. Neither EA resulted in an increase in permitted AUMs, nor did either alter grazing management specified in the AMPs; the proposed action for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well would likewise not alter the Alkali Allotment AMP and permitted AUMs. In addition, all the project design features identified in the Adrian Well EA and Keg Springs EA would also be required for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well except those designed to mitigate for sage-grouse habitat, which does not exist on the allotment either as leks or PPH or PGH.

The Alkali Forage Reserve Well is not in the same analysis area; however the geographic and resource conditions are similar. The analysis areas for the Adrian Well EA and the proposed project area are both located in ecological sites described as Loamy 8-10 precipitation zone and 10-12 precipitation zone, and in Wyoming big sagebrush shrub grassland habitat. One difference is that the both the Adrian Well and Keg Springs Well EAs fully analyzed potential impact to

sage-grouse habitat in Chapter 3, however, in the proposed project area for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well there is no existing sage-grouse habitat.

As analyzed in the Adrian Well EA, the proposed action will connect to an existing pipeline network with existing troughs, which does differ from the Keg Springs EA that analyzed adding two new 30-foot bottomless troughs.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

Yes, the proposed actions in the Adrian Wells EA (beginning on page 7) and the Keg Springs Well EA (beginning on page 9) are still appropriate with respect to the new proposed action given current environmental concerns, interests, and on site resource values. The same equipment, staff, timelines, and project design features would be required for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well DNA as those analyzed in the two existing EAs. The Adrian Well and Keg Springs Well EAs each analyze a no action alternative and a proposed action alternative for or including the work being identified in this DNA's proposed action (alternatives analyzed can be found on pages 6–10 and pages 8–10). Both Well EAs also analyzed water hauling, which involved the use of water tankers to haul water to a 33,000 gallon tank for an estimated total of 281 water hauling trips and to fill two troughs twice a week for a total of 1,464 water hauling trips. No issues were identified in the existing EAs (Adrian Well EA and Keg Springs Well EA) that would generate additional alternatives and none were identified for this proposed action for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well after internal interdisciplinary discussions.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

Yes, the analyses of the proposed actions in the Adrian Well and Keg Springs EAs remain valid and sufficient in light of any new information or circumstances. No new threatened/endangered (T&E) or special status species (SSS) or environmental concerns have been identified in the proposed DNA project area since the 2013 EAs' DRs.

Furthermore, the Alkali Forage Reserve has no existing sage-grouse habitat and the nearest occupied or unoccupied pending lek is more than ten miles away from the proposed well sites, and there are no other existing resources in the Alkali Forage Reserve such as fish and riparian, wild horses, proposed or established wilderness study areas (WSA), or special designated lands such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or Research Natural Areas (RNA).

The only new information needed for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well would be botanical and cultural surveys and waivers. The surveys and project waivers would be conducted in the spring of 2015, prior to project activities occurring. If any concerns are identified, avoidance of the areas of concern will be required.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

All three potential site locations for the Alkali Forage Reserve Well are similar to the locations in the Adrian Well EA and the Keg Springs Well EA in regards to elevation (4,000 to 4,500 feet), vegetation types (Wyoming big sage, desert salt shrub), and disturbance regime. The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the current proposed action are unchanged from those identified in the Adrian Well (p. 35–36) and Keg Springs Well (p. 37–38) EAs. The EAs sufficiently document the site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action. There are no reasonably foreseeable future actions planned in the proposed project area.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

Yes, public involvement is adequate: the Adrian Well and Keg Springs Well EAs included public notices both in the newspaper and posted on the BLM website. There were no public comments received on either EA.

Interested publics, local, State and Federal agencies are essentially the same as participated in the Adrian Well and Keg Springs Well EAs (other than this is a forage reserve used for Burns District permittees displaced by sagebrush habitat restoration or wild fire) and there have been no issues identified by neighboring landowners or permittees temporarily using the allotment as documented in the project file or administrative record.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Identify those team members conducting or participating in the NEPA analysis and preparation of this worksheet.

Specialist Signature and Date: Lesley Richman 5/7/2015
Lesley Richman, District Weed Coordinator

Specialist Signature and Date: Scott Thomas 5/5/15
Scott Thomas, District Archaeologist

Specialist Signature and Date: Lindsay Davies 5/5/2015
Lindsay Davies, Fisheries/Riparian Specialist

Specialist Signature and Date: Ch Caryn Burri 5-5-15
Caryn Burri, Botanist

Specialist Signature and Date: Eric Haakenson 5-5-15
Eric Haakenson, Recreation

Specialist Signature and Date: Bill Dragt 5/5/2015
Bill Dragt, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist

Note: Refer to the EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original EA or planning documents.

F. Others Consulted: Identify other individuals, agencies, or entities that were consulted with as part of completing the NEPA analysis.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the grazing permittee were consulted about this project.

Conclusion: Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable LUP and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

Travis Miller, Wildlife Biologist
Title and Signature of Project Lead: Travis J Miller
Date: 5/07/2015

Holly Orr, Planning and Environmental Coordinator
Title and Signature of NEPA Coordinator: Holly Orr
Date: 05/12/2015

Richard Roy, Three Rivers Field Manager
Title and Signature of the Responsible Official: Richard Roy
Date: 5/18/15

Decision: It is my Proposed Decision to implement the Proposed Action with PDEs as described above.

Protest and Appeal Procedures:

Any applicant, permittee, lessee, or other interested public may protest a Proposed Decision under Section 43 CFR 4160.1 and 4160.2, in person or in writing to Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, within 15 days after receipt of such Decision. The protest, if filed, should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) as to why the Proposed Decision is in error.

In the absence of a protest, the Proposed Decision will become the Final Decision of the Authorized Officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the Proposed Decision. Any protest received will be carefully considered and then a Final Decision will be issued.

Any applicant, permittee, lessee, or other person whose interest is adversely affected by the Final Decision may file an appeal in accordance with 43 CFR 4.470 and 43 CFR 4160.4. The appeal must be filed within 30 days following receipt of the Final Decision. The appeal may be accompanied by a petition for a stay of the Decision in accordance with 43 CFR 4.471, pending final determination on appeal. The appeal and petition for a stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer, Richard Roy, Three Rivers Resource Area Field Manager, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738.

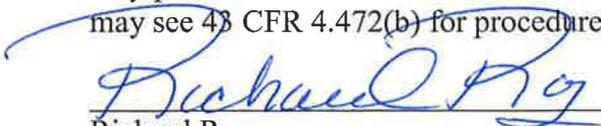
The appeal shall state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why the appellant thinks the Final Decision is in error and shall otherwise comply with the provisions of 43 CFR 4.470. The appellant must serve a copy of the appeal by certified mail on the Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 805 SW Broadway, Suite 600, Portland, Oregon 97205, and on any person(s) named (43 CFR 4.421(h)) in the Copies sent to: section of this Decision.

Should you wish to file a petition for a stay, see 43 CFR 4.471(a) and (b). In accordance with 43 CFR 4.471(c), a petition for a stay must show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

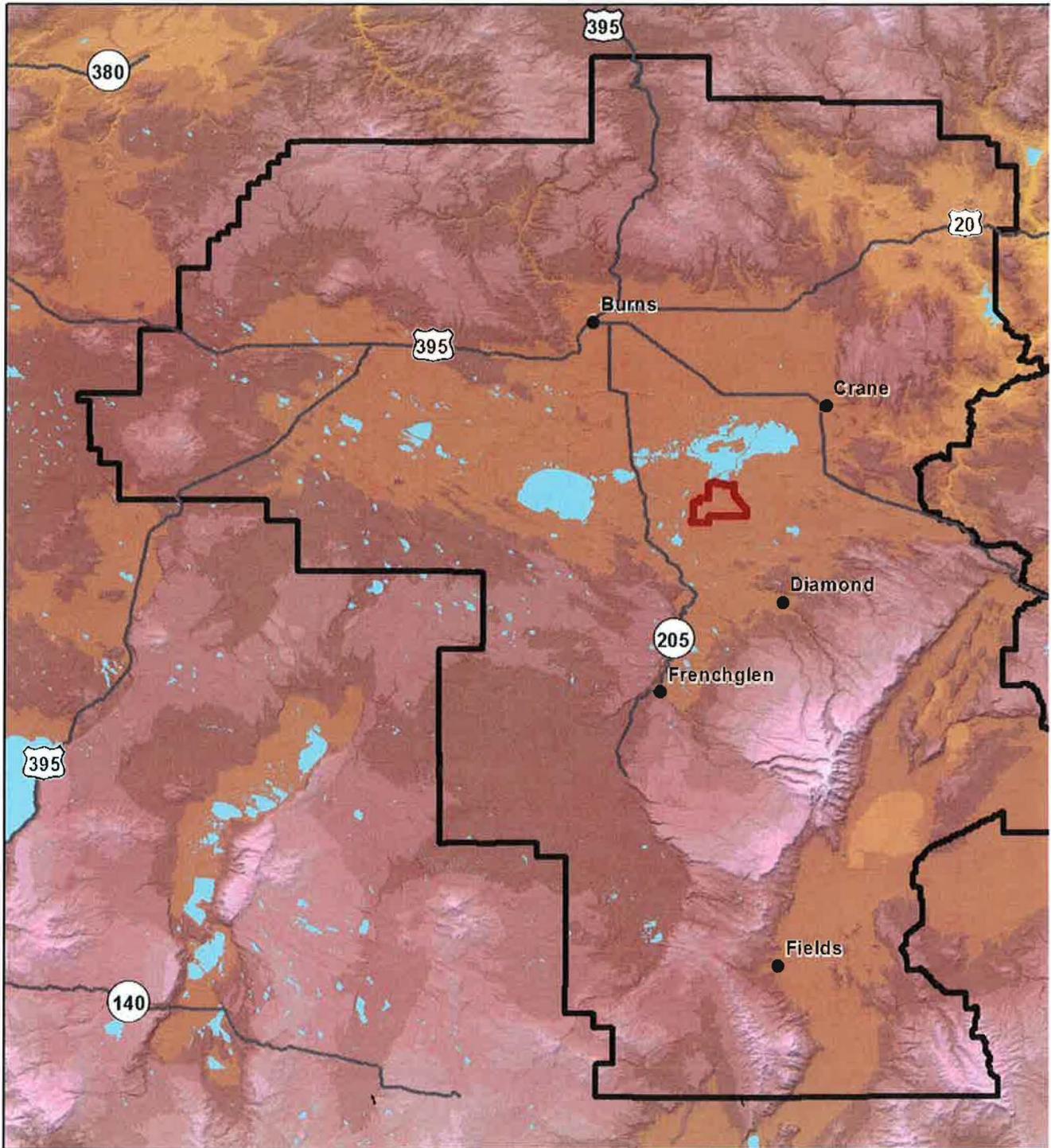
The appellant requesting a stay bears the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Any person named in the Decision that receives a copy of a petition for a stay and/or an appeal may see 43 CFR 4.472(b) for procedures to follow if he or she wishes to respond.


Richard Roy,
Three Rivers Resource Area Field Manager

5/18/15
Date

Vicinity Map OWEB Alkali Forage Reserve Restoration Project

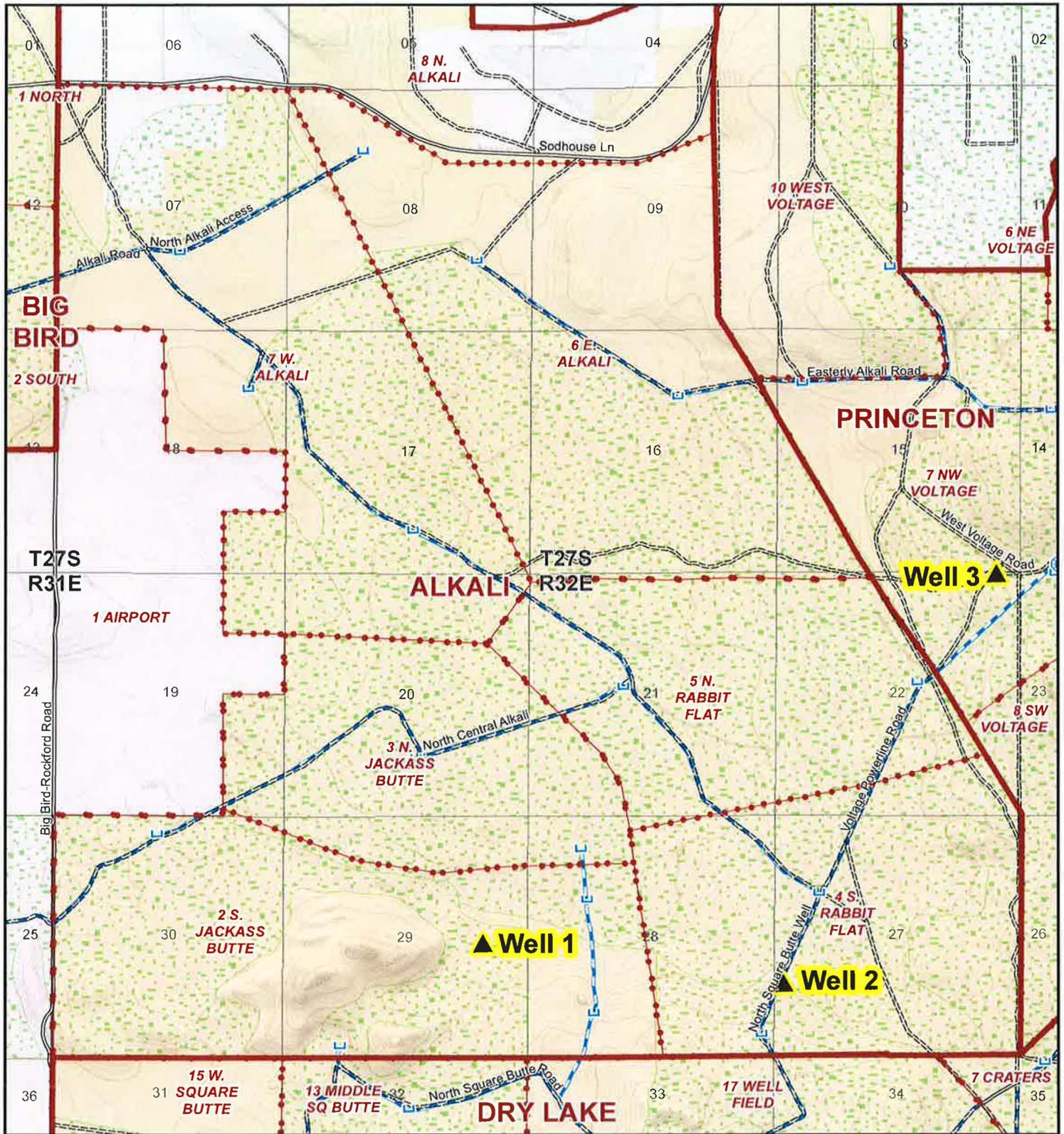


 Project Area
 Burns District Boundary



Note: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness for individual or aggregate use with other data compiled from various sources and may be updated.

Alkali Forage Reserve Restoration Project - Well Locations



- Proposed Well Locations
- Crested Wheatgrass Seedings
- Existing Well
- Existing Trough
- Existing Pipeline
- Pasture Boundary
- Alkali Allotment
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private/Unknown
- Non-Paved Improved Road
- Primitive Surface



Note: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data was compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

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Bureau of Land Management
Burns District, Oregon
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