

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Klamath Falls Resource Area**

DRAFT

**Finding of No Significant Impact for the
Gerber Well Drilling and Reservoir Reconfiguration
Environmental Assessment (EA)
DOI-BLM-OR-L040-2009-0014-EA**

BACKGROUND

The Interdisciplinary Team for the Klamath Falls Resource Area, Lakeview District, Bureau of Land Management has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze a proposal to drill a well adjacent to an existing reservoir and reconfigure the reservoir in the southern portion of the area called the Gerber Block.

The purpose of the proposed action is to fulfill the need for a more reliable and accessible source of water for multiple uses, including road maintenance, dust abatement, fire suppression, and range operations.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

The three alternatives analyzed are described below:

Proposed Action Alternative

Treatments included in the Proposed Action Alternative, described in detail in the EA, include:

- Drilling a well up to 500 feet deep adjacent to the Timber Hill Reservoir, including a well house and buried power cable from the well to the existing power line to accommodate an electric pump
- Reconfiguration of the reservoir to create a pool deep enough to accommodate the use of a helicopter bucket to dip water
- Construction of a pipeline from the well to the reservoir with the intent to pump as necessary to maintain 2 acre feet in the reconfigured reservoir
- Construction of approximately 50 feet of road from the well to the reservoir with a gradual slope to allow access by water trucks
- Re positioning a portion of the allotment boundary fence that currently goes through one corner of the reservoir and along the inside of the dam and replacing the gate on the road with a cattleguard

No Action Alternative

Although the actions listed above would not be implemented, periodic maintenance of the reservoir (dredging a small portion with a backhoe) would likely continue.

Partial Implementation Alternative (Well Drilling Only)

Implementation of this alternative would consist of drilling the well and construction of the road, buried power cable, and well structures. Reconfiguration of the reservoir, construction of the pipeline and access ramp, removal of trees from the dam, fence relocation, and cattleguard installation would not be implemented.

ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The proposed action, and no action alternatives were analyzed for significant effects as per the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations - 40 CFR § 1508.27. The following criteria listed under 40 CFR § 1508.27(b) were considered and found to be not applicable to this action: significant beneficial or adverse effects; significant effects on public health or safety; effects on the quality of the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial; anticipated cumulatively significant impacts; highly uncertain or unknown risks; and precedents for future actions with significant effects.

The following unique characteristics (Critical Elements of the Human Environment), listed in 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(3), are not present and will not be affected: prime or unique farmlands; wilderness; solid or hazardous waste; Wild and Scenic Rivers; and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

In regard to 40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(8), no adverse impacts are expected to cultural, scientific, or historical resources. The proposed area has been surveyed for cultural resources using BLM Class III survey methods. Surveys for cultural resources were conducted and no known sites are located within the proposed project area.

There will be no significant impacts to any special status species or habitat that has been proposed or designated critical under the Endangered Species Act [40 CFR § 1508.27 (b)(9)]. As per 40 CFR § 1508.27(b)(10), this action conforms with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

The action is consistent with Executive Order 12898 which addresses Environmental Justice. No potential impacts to low-income or minority populations have been identified internally by the BLM or externally through public notification and involvement. Consultation with local tribal governments has not identified any unique or special resources providing religious, employment, subsistence or recreation opportunities. Employment would involve local contractors who engage in similar types of work throughout Klamath County and the state of Oregon.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13212, the BLM must consider effects of this decision on National Energy Policy. There will be no known adverse effect on National Energy Policy. Within the project area there are no known energy resources with commercial potential and energy producing or processing facilities.

PLAN CONFORMANCE

On July 16, 2009 the U.S. Department of the Interior, withdrew the Records of Decision (2008 ROD) for the Western Oregon Plan Revision and directed the BLM to implement actions in conformance with the resource management plans for western Oregon that were in place prior to December 30, 2008.

Although project planning and preparation of National Environmental Policy Act documentation for this project began after the effective date of the 2008 ROD, this project was designed to comply with the land use allocations, management direction, and objectives of the KFRA Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan and Rangeland Program Summary (ROD/RMP), June 1995.

DETERMINATION

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the environmental assessment, it is my determination that none of the alternatives analyzed constitutes a significant impact affecting the quality of the human environment greater than those addressed in the Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/FEIS, September 1994)

I have determined that this action will not have any significant impact on the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and an environmental impact statement is not required. I have further determined that the proposed action conforms to management direction from the Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement, or a supplement to the existing RMP or Environmental Impact Statement, is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Donald J. Holmstrom
Field Manager, Klamath Falls Resource Area

Date