

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
BAXTER PASS ROAD OVERHEAD POWER LINE
DOI-BLM-CO-130-2013-0016-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §1508.27, I have determined that the Proposed Action for a 12 mile power line will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is therefore not required.

BACKGROUND

Grand Valley Rural Power (GVP) submitted an application for Rights-of-Ways (ROWs) for transportation and utility systems on federal lands (Standard Forms 299) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO). The ROWs are requested for power to the Enterprise Gas Processing, LLC (Enterprise) Valve Site located on BLM land in Garfield County, Colorado. GVP has requested a right-of-way (ROW) for a single phase overhead distribution power line under 25 kV as well as temporary work areas during the construction of this power line. GVP requests the following:

- A grant for 62,603 feet in length (50 feet wide) of ROW (71.859 acres). The proposed route generally follows the Baxter Pass Road located NW of Mack, Colorado in Mesa and Garfield Counties.
- Four Temporary Work Areas consisting of a total of 8,750 feet or .201 acres, more or less.

GVP submitted a Plan of Development (POD) for the power line to the BLM GJFO, which describes construction, reclamation, operation, maintenance, and abandonment of the Proposed Action.

The BLM GJFO prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that considered the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative, and a Buried Power Line Alternative. In addition, a Facility Expansion Alternative was considered, but not carried forward. Internal Scoping included presentation and discussion of the project at a BLM interdisciplinary meeting (IDT) and a field visit to the proposed alignment on April 2, 2013. The Project has been posted on the GJFO website from November 8, 2013 to the present; the BLM received no public comments.

Intensity

The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria that are listed in 40 CFR §1508.27 and incorporated into BLM's elements of the human environment list, supplemental Instruction Memoranda, and regulations. The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for the Proposed Action:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

Beneficial and adverse effects of the Proposed Action were described in the BLM EA. In addition to project Design Features proposed by GVP, the EA further developed project-specific mitigating measures. Such additional mitigation measures included in the EA by the BLM would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to air quality, soils, hydrology and water quality, Invasive, non-native species, threatened and endangered animal and plant species, BLM-sensitive species, migratory birds, wildlife, cultural resources, paleontological resources, transportation and access, wastes, range management and land tenure, rights-of-way, and other uses.

None of the environmental effects discussed in the EA for the Proposed Action are considered significant.

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

Impacts to public health and safety would be minimal and mitigated through proposed design features.

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

Inventories were completed for area historic and cultural resources. (See also Item 8, below.) The following elements are not affected because they are not present in or near the Project Area: park lands, prime farmlands, and wild and scenic rivers. Ecologically critical areas are discussed below, in Item 9.

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

Continued access to oil and gas related facilities, including resultant effects, are not unique and would occur in an area where such activities have been taking place for many decades. There is no scientific controversy over the nature of the potential impacts of the Proposed Action. Effects upon the quality of the human environment are anticipated to be low in intensity.

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

The Proposed Action is not unique or unusual in the area. There are other electric lines with BLM rights-of-ways in the region, and BLM has rendered similar decisions on similar actions. The BLM has experience implementing and mitigating comparable actions in this and similar areas. Possible effects to the human environment are not predicted to be highly uncertain nor expected to involve 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.

This decision is not precedent-setting. The Proposed Action was considered in the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. This decision is not unusual; no significant

cumulative effects are predicted. This decision does not entail any known issues or elements that would create any precedent for future rights-of-ways. The decision does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. No documentation by an EIS is required.

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

There are no significant cumulative effects on the environment, either when combined with the effects created by past and concurrent projects, or when combined with the effects from natural changes taking place in the environment or from reasonably foreseeable future projects.

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 historic resources.*

There would be no adverse impacts to the above resources. The Proposed Action has been modified to avoid impacts to cultural and historic resources.

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.*

No impacts are expected to endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitats.

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

This decision complies with other Federal, State, or local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the information contained in the DOI-BLM-CO-130-2013-0016-EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: 1) the implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the "Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," (January/2015); (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plan; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR §1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA.



Katie A. Stevens
Field Manager
Grand Junction Field Office



Date