

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Finding of No Significant Impact  
Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-CO-SO10-2012-0022**

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**March 2012**

**The Conservation Fund- Retherford/Alexander (COC# 075281  
COC # 075280) and Zwicker (COC# 075282) Acquisitions**

**Location:** The proposed action is to acquire 1,423.8 acres of private property identified as:

Retherford/Alexander Parcels:

Montezuma County, Colorado; New Mexico Principal Meridian

PARCEL 1 (Yellow Jacket): 800 acres:

Township 37 N, Range 18 W

Section 25, NE1/4 and S1/2 NW 1/4 240 acres;

Section 26, S1/2, N1/2 and N1/2 SW 1/4 240 acres;

Section 27, S 1/2 N1/2 and N1/2 S1/2 320 acres.

PARCEL 2 (Burro Point): 182.2 acres:

Township 36N, Range 18 W

Section 1, S1/2NE1/4, S1/2NW1/4, Lot4

Zwicker Parcel:

Montezuma County, Colorado; New Mexico Principal Meridian

PARCEL 3 (Lower Yellow Jacket): 441.6 acres:

Township 36 N, Range 19 W

Section 20, SW1/4 SE1/4 and SE1/4 SW1/4 and W1/2 SW1/4 160 acres;

Section 29, NW1/4 NW1/4 40 acres

Section 30, N1/2 NE 1/4 and SW1/4 NE1/4 and SE1/4 NW 1/4 and NE1/4 SW 1/4 and Lot 3 241.6 ;

**Applicant/Address: Bureau of Land Management**

**Canyons of the Ancients National Monument  
Tres Rios Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
27501 Hwy 184  
Dolores, CO 81323**



# **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

## **Environmental Assessment**

**DOI-BLM-CO-SO10-2012-0022**

***The Conservation Fund- Retherford/Alexander (COC# 075281 & COC # 075280) and Zwicker (COC# 075282) Acquisitions***

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis DOI-BLM-CO-SO10-2012-0022 analyzing the opportunity to acquire three parcels of property in Montezuma County, Colorado. The EA analyzed no action, partial acquisition, and proposed action alternatives regarding the potential acquisition of 1,423.8 acres of private property from the Conservation Fund preferably in the spring/summer of 2012. The Proposed Action as analyzed in the EA is the selected alternative. This alternative proposed that the BLM purchase all three parcels of privately held land at the earliest possible date. This newly acquired land would become part of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. The underlying need for the proposal would be met while accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Improve resource management & protection through a larger connected landscape
2. Preserve the cultural and natural resources, particularly unique riparian values, in the project vicinity
3. Increased protection of property through Federal historic preservation laws

EA # DOI-BLM-CO-SO10-2012-0022, available at the Tres Rios Field Office, is incorporated by reference for this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

### **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:**

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. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Resource Management Plan. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

**Context:** The project is an acquisition action directly involving approximately 1423.8 acres of private land within and adjacent to the boundaries of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (Monument) that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance (*See Maps*). The lands are identified to include Retherford/Alexander Parcel 1 for 800 acres, Retherford/Alexander Parcel 2 for 182.2 acres and the Zwicker Parcel for 441.6 acres.

**Intensity:** The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into resources and issues considered (includes supplemental

authorities Appendix 1 H-1790-1) and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders.

The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

1. **Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.** No adverse impacts were identified through the analysis.
2. **The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.** No negative impacts are anticipated on public health or safety as a result of this project.
3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.** Acquiring lands to be managed as part of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument will not impact unique characteristics currently in the Monument and may help to protect additional ones.
4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.** The effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial, because there is no known scientific controversy over the impacts of the project. The public scoping and comment period did not reveal any controversial effects.
5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve in unique or unknown risks.** Implementation of this decision has been occurring nationwide for many years and does not involve unique or unknown risks. The effects analysis shows the effects are not uncertain.
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.** The action will not establish a precedent for future actions that may have significant effect on the environment. It does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.** Cumulative effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects have been considered and evaluated in addition to the impacts of this project. No significant cumulative impacts were identified, in fact, no negative impacts were identified. Beneficial cumulative effects through habitat connectivity were identified.
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 action will have no significant adverse effects on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The action will also not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. The proposed project will benefit these resources by protecting them across a larger landscape.
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.** The BLM parcels in the landscape do contain habitat for federally listed species such as the Colorado Pikeminnow, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, and the Mexican Spotted

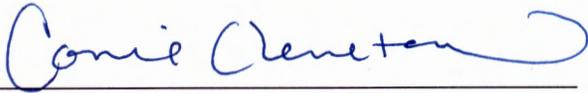
Owl. However, acquisition of the proposed parcels will benefit these species by protecting their habitat according to BLM standards.

- 10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.** [43 FR 56003, Nov. 29, 1978; 44 FR 874, Jan. 3, 1979]. The action complies with Federal, State, and local laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

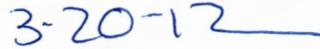
**DETERMINATION**

This Finding of No Significant Impact is based on the information contained in the EA and my consideration of criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27). It is my determination that:

- 1) Implementation of the proposed action will not have significant environmental impacts
- 2) The Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.



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Connie Clementson  
Tres Rios Field Office Manager  
Bureau of Land Management



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Date