

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Little Snake Field Office
455 Emerson Street
Craig, CO 81625**

DOCUMENTATION OF LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE AND NEPA ADEQUACY

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2012-0071-DNA

PROJECT NAME: AGO Priority Initiative: Cross Mountain Land Acquisition

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

T.6N., R. 97W., Sec 5 lots 13, 17-19
West 660 feet of lots 10,11,20
Sec. 6 lots 16, 17, 19, 20, 23-25
Sec. 7; lots 9-11, 13, 15-20, 23-31, 33
Sec. 18; lots 10,12,13

APPLICANT: BLM

A. Describe the Proposed Action

Background

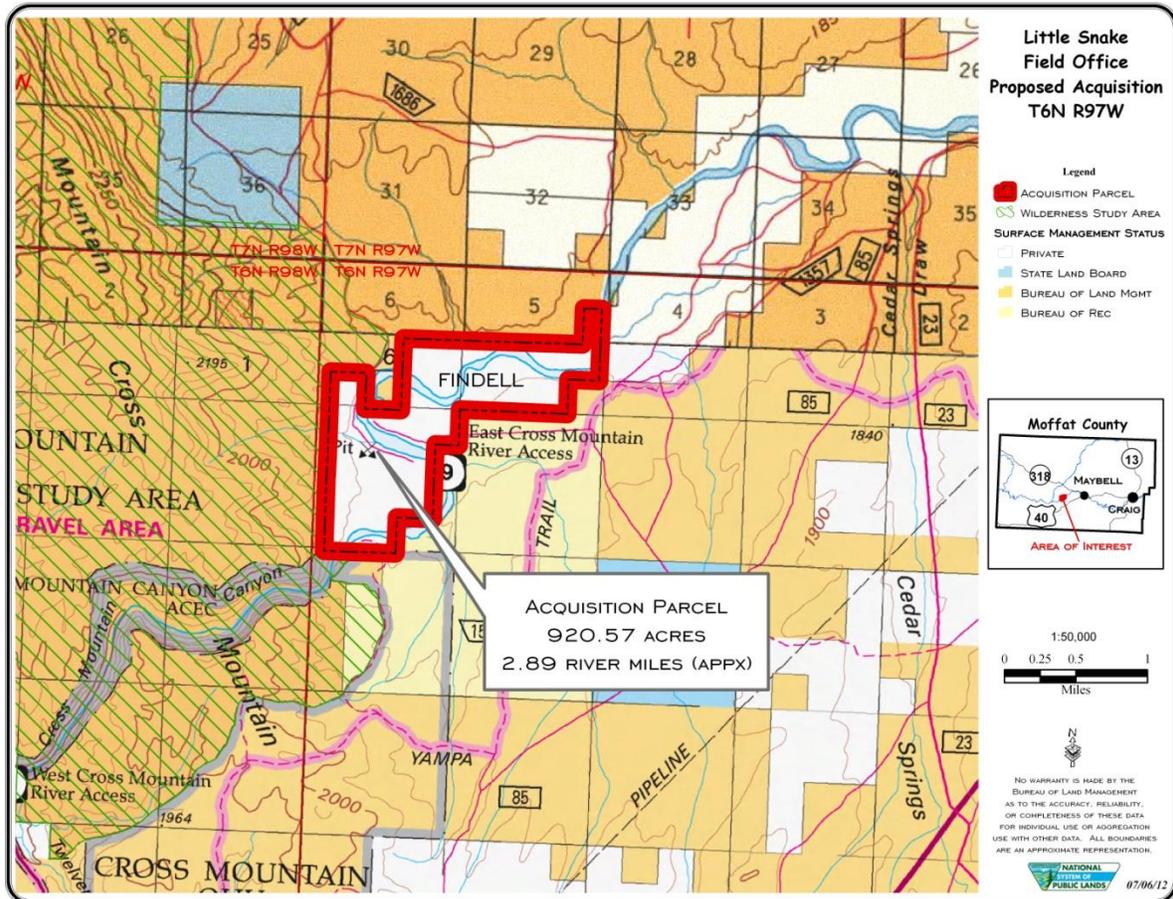
President Obama launched the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative on April 16, 2010, to foster a 21st-century approach to conservation that is designed by and accomplished in partnership with the American people. He charged the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality with leading this initiative.

The AGO report identified 10 major goals and 75 action items to advance this initiative, from expanding youth programs to increasing public awareness about conservation to better managing our public lands. Among these were three major place-based goals to focus the collective conservation and recreation efforts of the federal government; create and enhance urban parks and greenspaces, renew and restore rivers, and conserve large, rural landscapes.

At the local level, the AGO Initiative has identified the Yampa River Basin as an area that could benefit from conservation and restoration. The Yampa River is located in Northwest Colorado, extending from the headwaters of the Yampa River to the Dinosaur National Monument (approximately 165 river miles), encompassing the communities of Steamboat Springs, Hayden, Craig, Maybell, and Dinosaur, Colorado and situated in Routt and Moffat Counties.

Proposed Action

The BLM, in partnership with Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC), would acquire a 920 acre parcel, which includes 2.89 miles of Yampa River frontage. The parcel adjoins Cross Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and would provide access to excellent elk and deer hunting. The parcel is upstream from Cross Mountain Canyon which offers angler recreation access to fishing and world class rafting and kayaking.



Should this parcel be acquired by the BLM, an assessment of land health would be conducted to determine if:

- Watersheds are properly functioning;
- Ecological processes are in order;
- Water quality complies with State Standards; and
- Habitats of protected species are in order.

Future management direction for this parcel, contingent on its acquisition, would be determined in conjunction with planning efforts on adjacent or similar BLM-administered lands.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name: Little Snake Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Date Approved: October, 2011

Final RMP/EIS, August, 2010

Draft RMP/EIS, January, 2007

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

The Proposed Action implements Lands and Realty Goals and Objectives on page RMP-51 of the RMP to Consolidate BLM's landownership patterns in Routt County and in Moffat County. Objectives for achieving this goal include: Identify all the lands for exchange, sale or disposal within the LSFO by zone; through exchange or sale, look for opportunities for consolidation of BLM lands and/or for acquiring additional lands.

The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM MS 1601.03). The Proposed Action of the acquisition of 920 acres is in conformance with the Little Snake Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan.

C. Consistency with Other Authorities

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as Amended (43 USC 1752), Section 205

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of January 2, 1971 as amended (P.L. 91-646), (42 U.S.C. Sec 4601, et seq.)

Annual Appropriations Acts

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 as amended (P.L. 88-578), (16 U.S.C. Sec 460, et seq.)

Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act of July 25, 2000 (P.L. 106-248).(114 Stat. 613)

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

Little Snake Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (October 2011).

April 16, 2010 Presidential Memorandum -- America's Great Outdoors

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the current proposed action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current proposed action located at a site specifically analyzed in an existing document? Yes. The Little Snake Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan states that additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the benefit of public use. Acquisition land tenure adjustment actions would be allowed on lands that meet the following criteria:

Lands that would help consolidate existing BLM Land;

Lands near communities which provide open spaces and which preserve agriculture, protect wildlife, protect the environment, enhance recreational opportunities, and generally serve the public good;

Lands that would provide public access to public land or other public assets such as, but not limited to, river access.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values? Yes. In developing alternatives the LSFO RMP, the BLM undertook a highly collaborative, community-based planning process. The BLM complied with the letter and spirit of NEPA requirements in developing alternatives for the EIS, including seeking public input and analyzing an adequate range of reasonable alternatives that included a No Action Alternative. All alternatives met the management goals and objectives for RMP as well as for each BLM resource and resource use program.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances?

Yes. The Proposed Action would have no disproportionate impacts on minority populations or low income communities per Executive Order (EO) 12898 and would not adversely impact migratory birds per EO 13186.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action? Yes. The methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA documents continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action. Impacts to all resources were analyzed.

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action?

Yes. Direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action are unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA documents. As part of the interdisciplinary review, an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) will be prepared to ensure that all impacts are identified prior to acquisition. Upon acquisition of the property, a site-specific resource management plan would be prepared. This plan would further identify a range of reasonable combinations of resource uses and management practices.

6. Can you conclude without additional analysis or information that the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

Yes. The cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed action would remain unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA documents.

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

Yes. Public outreach through scoping and involvement of the public and other agencies occurred in the development of the RMP/EIS.

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

Title	Resource	Date
Ecologist	Air Quality, Floodplains Prime/Unique Farmlands, Water Quality – Surface, Wetlands/Riparian Zones	07/31/12
Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Concerns	08/06/12
Realty Specialist	Environmental Justice	07/31/12
Environmental Coord. NEPA	Hazardous Materials	08/06/12
Rangeland Management Spec.	Invasive Non-native Species	08/06/12
Rangeland Management Spec.	Sensitive Plants, T&E Plant	08/02/12
Wildlife Biologist	T&E Animal	08/06/12
Geologist	Water Quality – Ground	08/03/12
Recreation Specialist	WSAs, W&S Rivers, LWCs, ACECs	08/07/12
Wildlife Biologist	Animal Communities	08/06/12
Wildlife Biologist	Special Status, T&E Animal	08/06/12
Rangeland Management Spec	Plant Communities	08/02/12
Rangeland Management Spec	Special Status, T&E Plant	08/02/12
Ecologist	Riparian Systems	07/31/12
Ecologist	Water Quality	07/31/12
Ecologist	Upland Soils	07/31/12

Cultural Resources

The Cross Mountain Canyon Ranch Land Acquisition Parcel has undergone four cultural resource studies:

Arthur, Christopher S. And Susan M. Collins

1982 *The 1981 Archaeological Survey Of The Juniper-Cross Mountain Maximum Reservoir Pool Areas, Moffat County, Colorado.* BLM-LSFO#3-00-81. OAHP#MF.WC.R2. Laboratory of Public Archaeology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado.

Chase, James E. and Calvin H. Jennings

1981 *The 1980 Archaeological Survey Of The Juniper-Cross Mountain Maximum Reservoir Pool Areas, Moffat County, Colorado.* BLM-LSFO# 3-00-81. OAHP# MF.WC.R1. Laboratory of Public Archaeology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado

Sullian, John P.

1985 *Archaeological Survey Of Seis Pros Services Peck Mesa Program, Moffat County, Colorado.* BLM-LSFO#20-00-85. OAHP#MF.LM.R9. Grand River Consultants, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Sullian, John P. and John D. Hartley

1984 *Archaeological Survey Of Petty-Ray Geophysical's Kodiak Lines 1 And 2.* BLM-LSFO #20-00-84. OAHP#MF.LM.R59. Grand River Consultants, Grand Junction, Colorado.

These studies inventoried approximately 714 acres of the 920 acre parcel primarily related to a proposed reservoir which was never completed. These studies identified ten cultural resources within the parcel. These cultural resources consist of prehistoric, historic, and multicomponent sites. Prehistoric sites and components consist of open lithic scatters (5MF.987, 5MF.988, 5MF.990), open campsites (5MF.991, 5MF.1216, 5MF.1431, 5MF.1444), quarry (5MF.4308), and an isolated find (5MF.1151). The historic sites and components consist of a line shack (5MF.991), rubble mound (5MF.1216), habitation (5MF.1431), and foundation (5MF.1434). Three of these cultural resources (5MF.1216, 5MF.144, 5MF.4308) have been recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and one requires additional data (5MF.1431) before it can be evaluated. In addition to the previously recorded sites four potential undocumented historic resources are depicted on Government Land Office (GLO) plat maps. These include two "cabins" depicted on the 1882 GLO plat and a historic fenceline and the "Lily Park to Maybell" road depicted on the 1907 GLO plat.

The quality and comprehensiveness of the previously conducted cultural resource is not up to modern standards. It is highly likely that there are several undocumented cultural resources within the previously inventoried areas. In addition, all of the previously recorded sites should be revisited and reevaluated. This may be difficult as it is indicated on the site records that they were collected during their initial recording.

If the parcel is acquired all proposed undertakings within the parcel will require a Class III cultural resource inventory.

Native American Religious Concerns

Consultation for the proposed land acquisition has not been consulted on with the Tribes. If the parcel is acquired consultation should be initiated with the Tribes regarding any concerns. It is likely that the Tribes will come out in support of the acquisition as it will allow access to an area which was previously denied.

Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM’s compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

Signature of Lead Specialist_____ Date_____

Signature of NEPA Coordinator_____ Date_____

Signature of the Authorizing Official_____ Date_____

Note: The signed Conclusion on this document is part of an interim step in the BLM’s internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision.