United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Finding of No Significant Impact
Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2013-0012

September, 2013

Dolores River Canyon Livestock Crossing & Special Recreation Permits

Dolores & San Miguel Counties, CO

Project Proponent:
USDI BLM
Tres Rios Field Office

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Environmental Assessment
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INTRODUCTION:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis (EA) (DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2013-0012-EA) for a proposed action to authorize livestock crossing on public lands along the Dolores River Canyon in Dolores and San Miguel Counties.

The purpose of the proposed action is to respond to an application for a Livestock Crossing Permit and associated Special Recreation Permit through BLM-administered lands within the Tres Rios Field Office. The need for the proposed action is to comply with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Taylor Grazing Act, which requires the BLM to respond to requests for livestock to cross BLM-administered lands. Consistent with the recreation permit regulations at 43 CFR 2390 and the BLM Handbook for Recreation Permit Administration (H-2930-1), if a use authorized by another program – in this instance, livestock administration— has a commercial recreation component, an SRP is required in addition to the program permit.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the proposed action (selected action) as described in the EA 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. 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 a site-specific action directly involving livestock trialing for approximately 23 miles of the Big Canyon road (D.C. Rd. 10) and the Snaggletooth/Dolores River road from the Dove Creek Pump Station to Slick Rock in Dolores and San Miguel Counties. This type of activity has occurred in the area historically.

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**.

   The EA analyzed effects to resources that may be both beneficial and adverse. Measures to reduce impacts to all affected resources were incorporated in the design of the Selected Alternative. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA and associated appendices are considered significant (EA at Chapter 4).

2. **The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety**. The Selected Alternative, including its design features is not expected to significantly impact public health and safety.

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**.

   The following unique characteristics of the geographic area of the Human Environment and Resource Issues are not affected because they are not present in the project area; Historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness or ecologically critical areas. In addition, the following components of the Human Environment and Resource Issues, although present, would not be affected by this proposed action for the reasons described in Chapter 4 of the EA, Wild and Scenic Rivers and lands with wilderness characteristics.

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

   There is no scientific controversy over the nature of the impacts.

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

   The project is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas. The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in the EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or 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.** The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the selected alternative and all other alternatives is described in Chapter 4 of the EA.

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

   The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the project is contained in Chapter 4 of the EA.

8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other 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 project will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. A cultural inventory has been completed for the proposed action.

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.**

   As described in Chapter 4 of EA there is no no effect to any species listed under the Endangered Species Act. No species or potential habitat are present in the analysis area. Initiation of section 7 consultation with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is not necessary.

10. **Whether the action threatens a violation of a Federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment.**

    The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. State, local, and tribal interests were given the opportunity to participate in the environmental analysis process. In addition, the project is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs.

Connie Clementson
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Tres Rios Field Office

9-23-13
Date