U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-MT-L070-2013-0010-EA
September 23, 2013

Birdtail Road Relocation

Location: Blaine County, Montana
T. 26 N., R. 21 E.,
Section 28: SW¼SE¼

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Bureau of Land Management
Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument
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BLAINE COUNTY
BIRDTAIL ROAD – MTM-106773
BLAINE COUNTY, MONTANA

BACKGROUND

Birdtail Road in Blaine County recently experienced a severe washout. As is the road is currently a safety hazard. The cattleguard has washed out to the bottom of Cow Creek and the road is impassable. Repairs in the current location could be subject to repeated washouts. Blaine County has therefore applied to relocate the road 200' to the east. There is approximately 100' of this road which is on privately owned land; however BLM does have an exclusive easement (MTM-77581) on this segment which would allow for this repair to be completed.

INTRODUCTION/DESCRIPTION

Blaine County has subsequently applied to relocate the subject road 200' to the east. The requested right-of-way (ROW) is 70' wide and 369.37' in length for a total of approximately .59 acre. They have requested a 50 year term. If approved, construction would be completed within the spring of 2014.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of this action is to allow for relocation of an existing road to improve public health and safety by providing members of the public a safe route for access. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) make public lands available for this type of use under Section 501.

DECISION TO BE MADE

This environmental assessment (EA) discloses the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed action or alternatives to that action. BLM's field manager (FM) for the UMRBNM will be the deciding official. Based on the information provided in this EA, the manager must decide whether to grant the right-of-way (ROW) application with appropriate mitigation measures, or to reject it.

AUTHORITYAND LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

Section 501 of FLPMA (Public Law 94-579) authorizes the granting of such rights-of-way. This action is in conformance with the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Resource Management Plan (UMRBNM RMP December, 2008), which allows for rights–of-way on public land which are in corridors and/or not in avoidance or excluded areas (page 56).

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. **Alternative A (Proposed Action):** Approve Blaine County's application for a ROW to relocate an existing road by 200' to the east in order to address needed repairs and the safety hazard on the existing road. The BLM parcels affected by this application are in Blaine County, Montana and further described as:

T. 26 N., R. 21 E.,
Section 28: SW¼SE¼

The requested route would be immediately adjacent to the county road (see map for specific routing and location). There is a currently an existing road which has washed out immediately adjacent to Cow Creek. The road receives year round use by members of the public and BLM. It sees increased traffic during the hunting season. The county is requesting a 70' wide ROW approximately 679.6 in length, of which 369.37 feet is on BLM administered land. The county road building standards are that the road would be 24 feet wide with a 3 to 1 grade slope on the edges.

B. **Alternative B (No Action):** Deny the requested relocation of the road. In its current condition it is a public safety hazard. Use would increase as the hunting season approaches and the road would continue to fail and cause further danger for members of the public.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED

The County considered rebuilding the road in its current location, but it is not feasible, as the creek would continue to wash out the road and continue to be a public safety hazard.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Only those aspects of the affected environment that are potentially impacted by this project are described in detail. The following aspects of the existing environment were determined to be not present or not potentially impacted by this project: Forestry, Water, and Fisheries.

Cultural Resources: Aaberg Cultural Resources Consulting, Inc., completed a cultural resource inventory of the public land in the analysis area as part of the Raintrap Prescribed Burn project in 2010. No National Register of Historic Places eligible properties have been identified on public land within the area of potential effect.

The Nez Perce National Historic Trail, an object of the Monument, follows Cow Creek north through the analysis area. This portion of the trail is considered a "High Potential Route Segment." The Missouri River Breaks high potential route segment begins east of Winifred and ends at the northern edge of the Monument. Characteristics of this segment include exceptional scenery, presence of significant historic sites, opportunities for historic interpretation, and numerous recreation opportunities. The "Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail

Comprehensive Plan (1990) states "The wagon road along Cow Creek affords exceptional opportunities for primitive recreation based on historic interpretation and scenic viewing" (1990:18). No historic sites have been identified in the area of potential effects associated with this project.

Paleontological Resources: The existing road and proposed relocation are within the area of the Judith River Formation. According to Hanna (2009), the Judith River Formation is a Class 5 geologic unit under the BLM's Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) system for being highly fossiliferous. Since the subject area is located in the floodplain of Cow Creek, there are thick layers of alluvial deposit that overlay the late Cretaceous units.

Soils: Soils were identified from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) dataset and the Web Soil Survey (WSS) website (http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app//). Soil surveys were performed by the NRCS according to National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) standards. Pertinent information for review and analysis is from the WSS and the National Soils Information System (NASIS) database for the area.

The primary soil map unit the proposed action would occur on is: Map Unit: 132 - Vanda clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes.

Map Unit: 132—Vanda clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes
The Vanda component makes up 90 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 0 to 2 percent. This component is on fans, terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. This component is in the R058AC053MT Dense Clay (dc) Rru 58a-c 11-14" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 7s. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 3 percent. The soil has a moderately saline horizon within 30 inches of the soil surface. The soil has a moderately sodic horizon within 30 inches of the soil surface.

Vegetative Resources: The project area is within a Dense Clay ecological site in the 10-14 inch precipitation zone. This ecological site consists of a very sparse grassland and shrubland typically dominated by cool season grasses and shrubs. Approximately 80–85% of the annual production is from grasses and sedges, 1–5% from forbs, and 5–10% is from shrubs and half-shrubs. The canopy cover of shrubs is 5-10%.

Dominant grass species include western wheatgrass, green needlegrass, Nuttall alkaligrass, blue grama, and Sandberg bluegrass. Grasses such as prairie junegrass, inland saltgrass, and foxtail barley may increase on the site with increases in grazing pressure. Forbs commonly include prairie thermopsis, western yarrow, scarlet globemallow, and Hood's phlox. Shrubs typically include Nuttall's saltbush,Wyoming big sagebrush, winterfat greasewood, and rabbitbrush.

Rangeland Resources: Livestock grazing is compatible with this ecological site as there is potential to produce high quality forage. However, forage production may be limited by soil properties depending on location. Hay Coulee #06182 is the only BLM grazing allotment within the proposed project area. The Hay Coulee Allotment became a "reserve common allotment" after the grazing permit was cancelled in 2004. Currently, applications are accepted for the allotment on an annual basis. The approved Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Resource Management Plan (2008) recognizes 1,267 animal unit months (AUMs) of forage available livestock within the Hay Coulee Allotment. Applications are only accepted for three (3) of the five (5) pastures within the allotment for management reasons and because the vast majority of the land in the Suction Creek pasture is private. There are 973 AUMs of forage available for livestock in the three pastures available for grazing. Pastures available for annual application are the Winter pasture, Raintrap Pasture, and Hay Coulee pasture. Season of use is allowed to vary based on management objectives and resource issues or concerns.

Noxious Weeds: The BLM conducted a survey for the presence/absence of noxious and invasive plants along open and seasonally open roads in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in 2009. There are no documented infestations along the adjacent road segment identified in the proposed action. Most likely, infestations of several noxious plants occur on the private land on the river bottom.

Wildlife and Special Status Species: The project area includes habitat for many species common to the Missouri River breaks and sagebrush grasslands adjacent to the breaks. The proposed project crosses habitat for mule and white-tail deer, elk, and big horn sheep, sharp-tailed grouse, various rodents and furbearers, various hawks, owls, bald and golden eagles, various migratory birds, common reptiles and amphibians. For a complete list of species, see UMRBNM Resource Management Plan (RMP) 2008.

No known Threatened and Endangered species or species proposed for listing, occur at or near the site of the proposed action. No designated critical habitat or forage species for any T&E species have been identified within the project area. The greater short-horned lizard (BLM Designated Sensitive Species) occupies open sagebrush and grassland habitat and is likely present within the project area. Most BLM Designated Sensitive Species (IM No. MT-2004-82) have no suitable habitat within the project area or if adjacent to the project area will not be impacted from any of the alternatives. These species are not considered to be part of the affected environment. The project area contains no habitat for Greater Sage Grouse, and none of the alternatives with have any impact on this species. The remaining Sensitive Species within the project area are covered under Migratory Birds.

Migratory Birds: Bald eagles could be transient during seasonal migrations, but no crucial habitat, forage species or nesting sites occur within the project area. These areas are used by numerous raptors, including Swainson's hawk, and golden eagles, BLM sensitive species. No raptor nests have been documented within the analysis area that would be affected by any of the proposed alternatives. Other migratory bird species present in this area are locally abundant and the habitat is not considered crucial to any species.

Visual Resources: The proposed action is located in VRM Class II. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be observed temporarily but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Recreation Resources: Recreational activities enjoyed by the public on BLM lands within the project area include hunting, hiking, camping, photography, and wildlife viewing. However, the primary recreation activity in this area is big game rifle and bow hunting. Benefits and experiences enjoyed by recreational users include opportunities for solitude, spending time with families, enhancing leisure time, improving sports skills, enjoying nature and enjoying physical exercise.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVE A: (Proposed Action-Grant ROW)

Direct/Indirect

Cultural Resources: A cultural resources inventory was conducted for the proposed project. No historic properties have been identified on public land within the area of potential effects.

The Nez Perce National Historic Trail follows Cow Creek north through the project area. This portion of the trail is a High Potential Route Segment and identified as an object of the Monument. No historic sites associated with the trail are present in the project area, and therefore cannot be affected by granting this ROW. This location is classified as a high potential route segment for its scenic values and recreation opportunities. Granting the ROW maintains the recreational opportunities by allowing continued north-south travel along the Birdtail Road and the route of the Nez Perce Trail.

Paleontological Resources: By authorizing the proposed action, the construction of the road relocation would have direct impacts to the Judith River Formation geologic unit. Because this unit is classified as 5 under the PFYC system, there is a relatively higher potential for damaging vertebrate or scientifically significant paleontological resources during ground disturbing activities. But, due to thick layers of soil and alluvium of the Cow Creek floodplain and less than one acre of disturbance associated with construction, there would be very little direct impact to the Judith River Formation unit; therefore, a low potential of damaging fossils under this alternative.

Soils: There would be approximately 0.6 of acre of new surface disturbance to construct the road. Soil productivity would be eliminated within the traveled-way for the life of the road. Soils within the barrow ditch and on the fill slopes would be susceptible to erosion until re-vegetation occurs. Erosion potential would be the greatest on the fill slope within the drainage crossing. Re-vegetation would be slowed by the high concentrations of salts and sodium present in the soils.

Vegetative Resources: Impacts from the proposed action would be the loss of approximately 0.59 acres of the native upland vegetation. Some impacts to vegetation from the relocation of the road would be temporary (road ditches, culvert installation areas), although permanent impacts vegetation losses would occur. Vegetation would be permanently removed from areas where the new roadbed is located.

Rangeland Resources: Because the amount of vegetation removed is so minimal, there would be no effect on grazing operations within the project area.

Noxious Weeds: The proposed action could contribute to the spread of noxious and invasive plants. This risk is attributed to disturbance caused during construction and maintenance of the utility line and the potential that vehicles used in these activities may possibly be contaminated with seed or other propagative plant parts. Mitigation measures proposed in this document would minimize this risk to the extent possible and there would be little to no effect from this alternative.

Wildlife and Special Status Species: Initial construction may cause direct mortality to a few individuals not mobile enough to leave the construction zone. There could be a temporary displacement of wildlife during construction operations. A loss of vegetation and habitat would occur within the area of surface disturbance. Removal of vegetation important to wildlife could impact wildlife if disturbance sites are not adequately reclaimed. This same loss of vegetation and habitat could occur if noxious weeds or invasive non-native species move into disturbed areas. This impact would be greater and long term. If reclamation is adequate and invasive species and noxious weeds do not take over disturbed areas, long term impacts would be due to repair and maintenance.

The project area is not within or adjacent to Greater Sage Grouse habitat, and this species will not be affected by this action. Additional traffic and construction into badlands habitat may result in an increased mortality for resident reptiles (including short-horned lizard, a BLM Sensitive Species). All species present are locally abundant and potential impacts would not affect the populations of any species locally or regionally.

Migratory Birds: Impacts to migratory birds could occur if construction activities disturbed nesting birds, destroyed nests, or caused vehicle strikes. There would be potential for reduced breeding and nesting success, and increased juvenile mortality of migratory birds in the immediate area of construction activities. Temporary displacement of birds would occur during construction operations. All species present are locally abundant and potential impacts would not affect the populations of any species locally or regionally.

Visual Resources: The proposed project would be constructed in an area with a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II rating. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. Relocating the segment of the existing county road would create a linear feature disturbance, however, since the project is adjacent to the existing road with an already existing linear disturbance, temporary visual impairment may be apparent, but the level of change should be low and may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer.

Recreation Resources: The road corridor is used for access by recreationists. The rehabilitation portion of the proposed action would be a temporary deterrent for users, but would eventually improve access and safety for all recreationists.

ALTERNATIVE B (No Action)

Direct/Indirect

Cultural Resources: Selecting this alternative would have no effect on cultural resources within the area of potential effect.

Selecting this alternative would restrict north-south travel along the Birdtail Road, which follows the route of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail. Since this is a high potential route segment for its primitive recreation opportunities associated with scenic values, limiting access along this route would negatively affect the intent of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail route designation.

Paleontological Resources: Because repair of the road would be within the preexisting footprint of ground disturbance, there would be no impacts to paleontological resources under this alternative.

Soils: If the road does not get relocated, it is likely that vehicle travel would continue to occur around the existing washed out road. Soils would become rutted and further compacted.

Vegetative Resources: Impacts from the activities of Alternative B would not result in any loss of vegetation.

Rangeland Resources: There would be no effect on grazing operations within the project area.

Noxious Weeds: The proposed action could contribute to the spread of noxious and invasive plants. This risk is attributed to disturbance caused during construction and maintenance of the utility line and the potential that vehicles used in these activities may possibly be contaminated with seed or other propagative plant parts. Mitigation measures proposed in this document would minimize this risk to the extent possible and there would be little to no effect from this alternative.

Wildlife and Special Status Species: There would be no additional impacts to wildlife and BLM Designated Sensitive Species from this alternative. Impacts from maintenance of the road would continue, with traffic and construction related disturbance of wildlife and habitat. Continued disturbance from maintenance would increase likelihood of non-native invasive plants and noxious weeds becoming established and reducing quality of wildlife habitat. There would be no impact to Greater Sage Grouse from this alternative.

Migratory Birds: There would be no additional impacts to migratory birds from this alternative. Impacts from maintenance of the underground line would continue, with traffic and construction related disturbance of wildlife and habitat. Continued disturbance from

maintenance would increase likelihood of non-native invasive plants and noxious weeds becoming established and reducing quality of wildlife habitat.

Noxious Weeds: The proposed action could contribute to the spread of noxious and invasive plants. This risk is attributed to disturbance caused during construction and maintenance of the utility line and the potential that vehicles used in these activities may possibly be contaminated with seed or other propagative plant parts. Mitigation measures proposed in this document would minimize this risk to the extent possible and there would be little to no effect from this alternative.

Visual Resources: No impacts to the visual resource would occur under this alternative.

Recreation Resources: This alternative would negatively impact recreationist's safety and restrict unimpeded access to this area.

Cumulative Impacts

General:

The life of this project will require periodic maintenance or repairs, which will cause continuing disturbance to the soil, vegetation and surrounding wildlife. The construction and maintenance disturbance and ROW contributes to an overall trend within the area, the state and the country, of habitat loss to construction, roads, oil & gas development, agricultural, and habitat conversion to tame grass species.

Mitigation Measures

The holder would be responsible for weed control on disturbed areas within the limits of the right-of-way. The holder is responsible for consultation with the authorized officer and/or local authorities for acceptable weed control methods.

Timing restrictions for construction in big game winter range will be followed for initial construction, as listed in the RMP.

The roadway shall be designed so that:

1. There is minimal soil erosion, no rutting greater than 3 inches, or water ponded within the roadways;
2. Erosion within and adjacent to the roadway does not occur as a result of the road;
3. Soils at the inlets, outlets, and downstream of drainage features, such as culverts, ditches, waterbars, rolling dips, etc., are protected from erosion;
4. Disturbances are kept as small as possible and vegetation re-establishment efforts are initiated promptly; and,
5. Existing vegetation is retained wherever possible.

Suitable topsoil shall be salvaged or conserved during excavation and reused as cover on disturbed areas to facilitate re-growth of vegetation and reclamation. Topsoil shall be stripped and stockpiled separately from subsoil. In no instance will subsoil be allowed to be mixed or placed over topsoil. The order of soil replacement shall be the reverse of removal, e.g. first off, last on. The ditches and fill slopes shall be covered with topsoil and re-vegetated to reduce soil erosion and return soil productivity.

Appropriate erosion control and sediment containment products/devices (Straw wattles, Erosion Control Blankets, Silt Fence, etc.) shall be installed and maintained, by the proponent, for their intended function until the disturbed areas are stabilized. Erosion control and sediment containment products and devices shall be certified weed free and installed according to manufactures specifications.

Activities shall not be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support equipment/vehicles. If equipment create ruts in excess of 3 inches deep, operations must cease as the soil will be deemed too wet to adequately support equipment.

If safety, disrepair, erosion, or rutting problems are discovered along the roadway, the proponent will be responsible to repair, improve and/or maintain the roadways to assure safety, stability and to minimize soil erosion and rutting.

If significant paleontological resources are discovered during construction, work would immediately cease and the BLM Field Office will be notified. Work would not proceed until the area has been formally cleared.

LIST OF PREPARERS

Debbie Tucek, Realty Specialist
Jody Peters, Wildlife Biologist
Zane Fulbright, Archaeologist
Josh Sorlie, Soil Scientist
Bruce Reid, Forester
Chris Rye, Geologist
Kenneth Keever, Natural Resource Specialist
Ben Hileman, Rangeland Management Specialist
Mark Schaefer, Outdoor Recreation Planner

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

REFERENCES

BLM. 2008. Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Resource Management Plan (December).

Hanna, Rebecca 2009. *Class I Overview of the BLM Lewistown Resource Management Plan Area: Including portions of Blaine, Cascade, Chouteau, Fergus, Judith Basin, Lewis & Clark, Meagher, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, and Teton Counties, Montana. Volume II: Paleontological Resources, Parts I and II.* Terra Paleo Research, Choteau, Montana.

USDA Forest Service. Northern Region. Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail Comprehensive Plan. October 1990.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY
UPPER MISSOURI RIVER BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT (UMRBNM)
DOI-BLM-MT-L070-2013-0010-EA

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR §1508.27, we find that the Alternative A will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

This finding is based on the following reasons. There would be no effect on grazing operations or recreational activities within the project area. There are no Historic Properties affected by the proposed action. The proposed project is in an area with a Class II VRM rating. Relocating the road segment 200' adjacent to current road will continue an already existing linear disturbance. There may be some visual impairment, but it will be temporary in nature and the level of change low. The project area is classified as 5 under the Potential Fossil Yield classification (PFYC) system, but due to thick layers of soil and alluvium of the Cow Creek floodplain and less than one acre of disturbance associated with construction there would be very little impact to the unit and therefore low potential of damaging fossils under this alternative. There have been no documented raptor nests within the analysis area. After reclamation and/or mitigation measures, there would be minimal or no residual effects to soils or vegetation resources. Mitigation measures would minimize the spread of noxious weeds to the extent possible, so that there would be little or no effect. Proper mitigation for vegetation and noxious weeds will reduce vegetation/habitat loss for wildlife. All species present are locally abundant and potential impacts would not affect any species locally or regionally. The following aspects of the existing environment were determined to be not present or not potentially impacted by this project: Forestry, Water and Fisheries.

The new road segment provides reasonable access and would address increasing public health & safety concern.

The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument was presidentially proclaimed such to protect an array of biological, geological, and historical objects as well as the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail, Nez Perce National Historic Trail & Cow Island ACEC. These objects include (but are not limited to) the White Cliffs geologic feature, overall geologic landscape, elk, big horn sheep, prairie dogs, cliff dwelling raptors, and fish species. These objects are afforded further protection with mitigation as identified for Alternative A if any impact was identified.

Michael Ferris — 5/4/2014

Monument Manager — **Date**

DECISION RECORD

ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY
UPPER MISSOURI RIVER BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT (UMRBNM)
DOI-BLM-MT-L070-2013-0010-EA

Decision: It is my decision to grant a right-of-way to Blaine County, pursuant to the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLMPA) (43 U.S.C. 1761) to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate a road on the public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, as noted in Alternative A. The right of way will be located in Blaine County, Montana and is further described as: T. 26 N., R. 21 E., Section 28: SW¼SE¼. The right-of-way will be authorized for a length of 369.37' feet and width of 70 feet, totaling .59 acres more or less. The right-of-way will be authorized for a 50 year term and will follow the route depicted on the map labeled as Exhibit A. The right-of-way will be subject to terms, conditions, and stipulations as identified in 43 CFR 2800 and is in conformance with the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument (UMRBNM) which allow for rights-of-way on public land with appropriate stipulations.

Mitigation Identified in the EA and Formulated into Stipulations:

The grant will be issued with the following mitigation.

1) The roadway shall be designed so that:
   a) There is minimal soil erosion, no rutting greater than 3 inches, or water ponded within the roadways;
   b) Erosion within and adjacent to the roadway does not occur as a result of the road;
   c) Soils at the inlets, outlets, and downstream of drainage features, such as culverts, ditches, water bars, rolling dips, etc., are protected from erosion;
   d) Disturbances are kept as small as possible and vegetation re-establishment efforts are initiated promptly; and,
   e) Existing vegetation is retained wherever possible.

2) The holder would be responsible for weed control on disturbed areas within the limits of the right-of-way. The holder is responsible for consultation with the authorized officer and/or local authorities for acceptable weed control methods. Further, Blaine County will be required to pressure wash or otherwise thoroughly clean all construction equipment and vehicles at an approved wash station prior to entering or leaving BLM land in the ROW corridor as a preventative weed control measure.

3) Activities shall not be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support equipment/vehicles. If equipment creates ruts in excess of 3 inches deep, operations must cease as the soil will be deemed too wet to adequately support equipment or vehicles.

4) If safety, disrepair, erosion, or rutting problems are discovered along the roadway, the proponent will be responsible to repair, improve and/or maintain the roadways to assure safety, stability and to minimize soil erosion and rutting.

5) Suitable topsoil shall be salvaged or conserved during excavation and reused as cover on disturbed areas to facilitate re-growth of vegetation and reclamation. Topsoil shall be stripped and stockpiled separately from subsoil. In no instance will subsoil be allowed to be mixed or placed over topsoil. The order of soil replacement shall be the reverse of removal, e.g. first off, last on. The ditches and fill slopes shall be covered with topsoil and re-vegetated to reduce soil erosion and return soil productivity.

6) Timing restrictions for construction in big game winter range will be followed for initial construction, as listed in the RMP.

7) Surface disturbance or disruptive activities related to construction will be prohibited from December 1 to March 31.

8) The holder shall be responsible for erosion control, sediment containment and revegetation. Appropriate erosion control and sediment containment products/devices (Straw wattles, Erosion Control Blankets, etc.) shall be installed by the holder and the holder shall be responsible for maintaining those devices for their intended function and until the disturbed area is successfully reclaimed/revegetated. The holder shall inspect them on a regular schedule and within 24 hours of a rainfall event of 0.5 inches or greater. Erosion control and sediment containment products/devices shall be certified weed free and installed according to manufacturer's specifications.

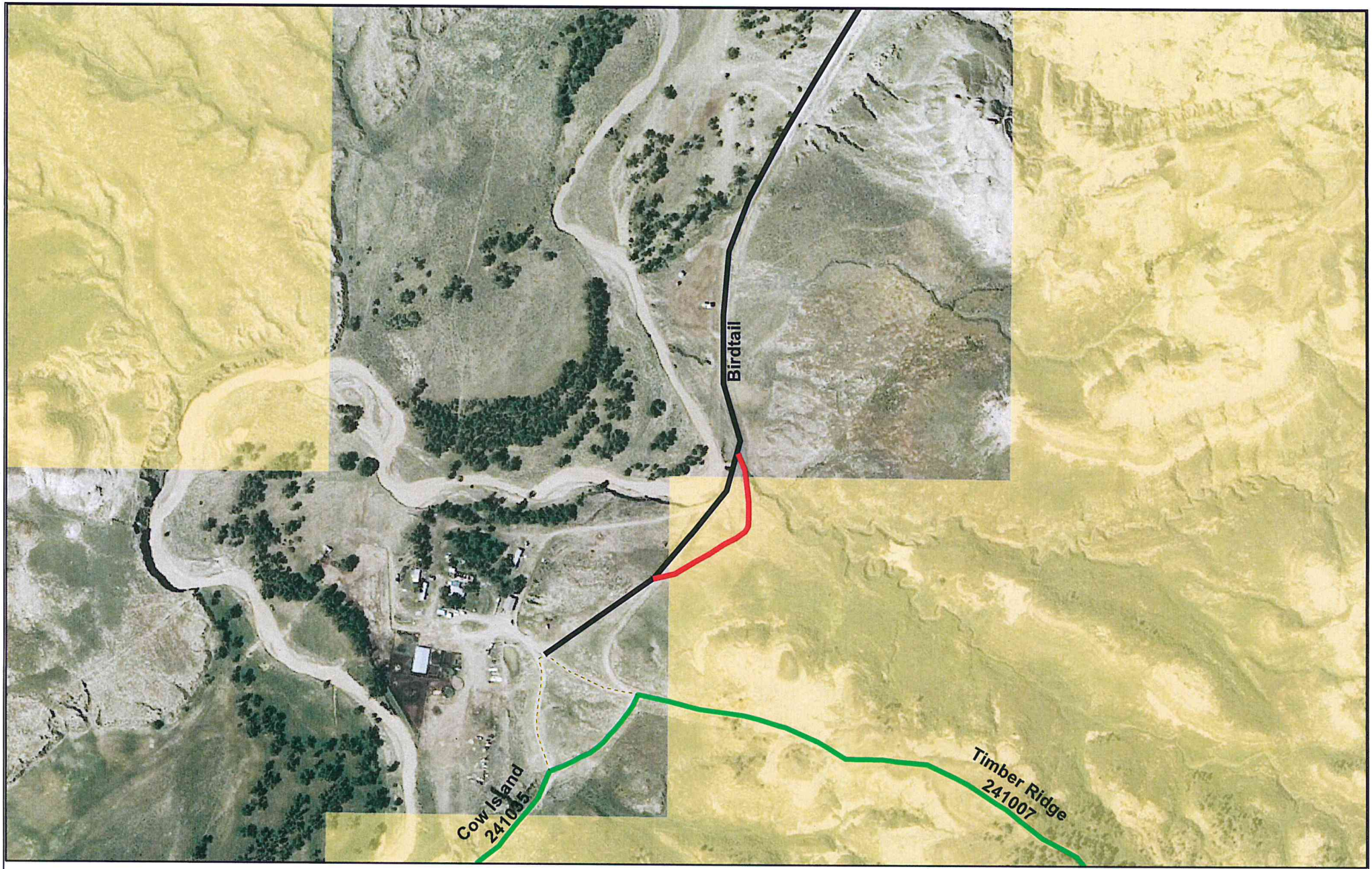
9) If significant paleontological resources are discovered during construction, work will immediately cease and the BLM Field Office will be notified. Work will not proceed until the area has been formally cleared.

Decision: It is my decision to road as described in Alternative A in the EA numbered DOI-BLM-MT-L070-2013-0010.

Rationale for Decision: This action does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation and is in conformance with the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Resource Management Plan (December, 2008).

Michael P. Mariana — 5/4/2014

Monument Manager **Date**



November 2013
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Birdtail Road Location

Map 2 of 2

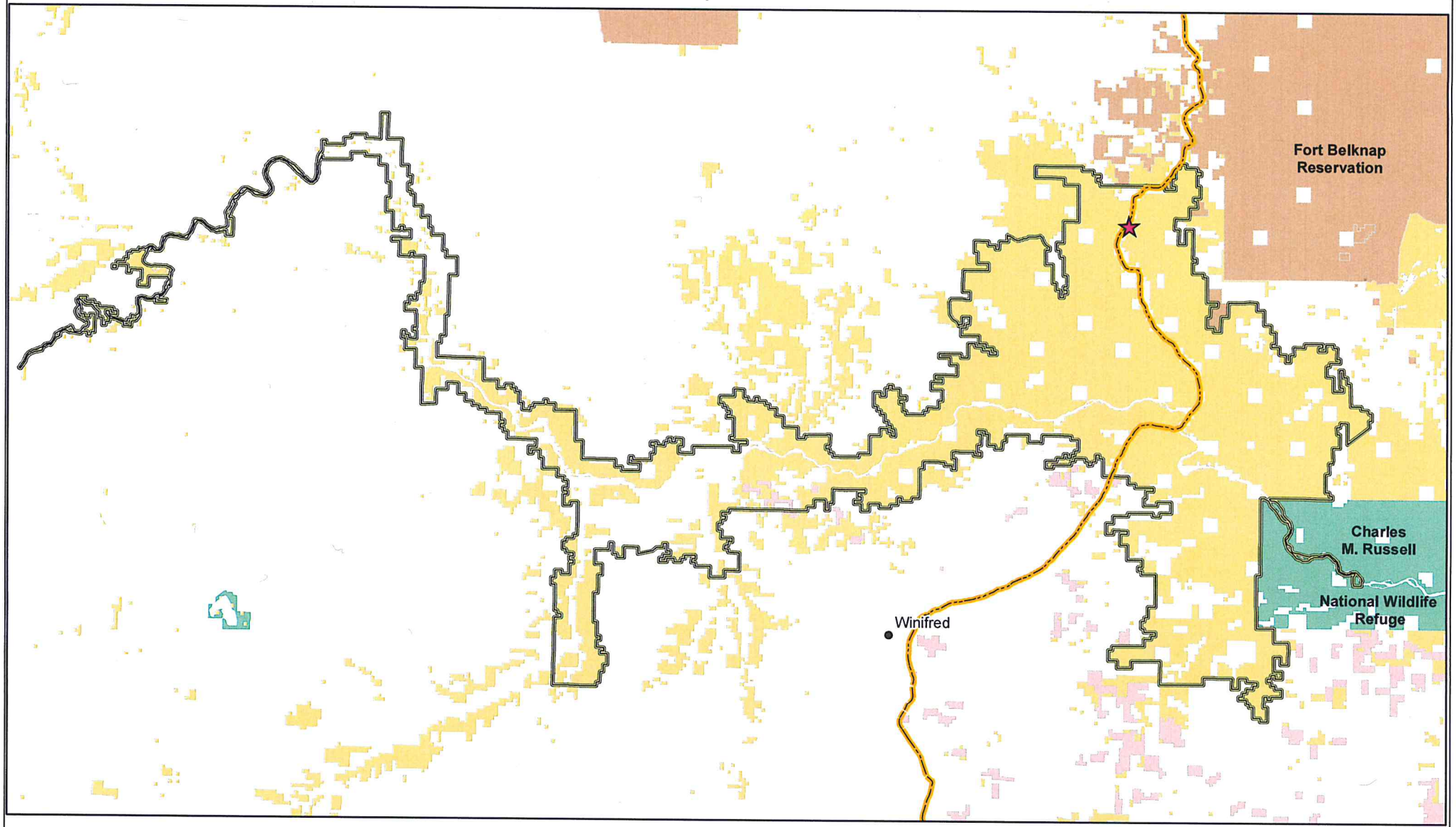
0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Miles

- Birdtail Road Modification
- Open BLM Road within the Monument
- Landowner Permission Required
- County Roads, Highways, and CMR National Wilflife Refuge Road
- Wild and Scenic River Corridor
- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument
- BLM - Public Domain

N W E S

Birdtail Road Location

Map 1 of 2



Montana

November 2013
Scale = 1:600,000

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5 0 5 10 15 Miles

- Road Location
- Wild and Scenic River Corridor
- Nez Perce NHT
- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument
- BIA - Undetermined
- BLM - Land Utilization
- BLM - Public Domain
- Dept. of Defense
- Private
- Division of State Lands
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- WATER

N W E S