

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

DOI-BLM-MT-L070-2013-0002-CX

Project Title: Central Montana Bat Monitoring

Location: Judith Mountains (T17N R20E S18), Drag Reservoir (T19N R28E S 22) and confluence of the Marias and Missouri Rivers (T25N R10E S18).

Applicant/Address:

Project Contact:

Name: Matt Comer
Title: Wildlife Biologist
Office: Lewistown Field Office
Telephone No.: (406) 538-1900

Central Montana District Office
920 NE Main Street
Lewistown, MT 59457
Phone: 406-538-1900



CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

A. Background

Lease/Serial/Case File No.:

Description of Proposed Action:

Install temporary bat detectors (1 each in the Judith Mountains, Drag Reservoir and confluence of Marias and Missouri Rivers) to acquire baseline information on bat species presence and use throughout the year. Initial setup could include constructing a small enclosure (< 10' x 10') to protect equipment from wildlife or livestock damage. Subsequent visits would occur 2-3 weeks after installation, then approximately every 2 months to change out memory cards and ensure proper equipment operation. After one year it will be determined if additional data is necessary or the equipment would be moved to another location.

This non-destructive bat data collection would provide baseline information for existing bat use in each of the areas prior to white-nose syndrome (WNS) exposure. This data could aid in future management decisions for bat habitat if WNS is detected in Montana.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance *(select all that apply)*

- Headwaters RMP (approved in July 1984)
- West HiLine RMP (approved in September 1988 and on January 29, 1992 for the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River)
- Judith-Valley-Phillips RMP (approved on September 9, 1994)
- Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Final EIS for Montana and North and South Dakota (approved on August 7, 1997)
- Off-Highway Vehicle EIS and Proposed Plan Amendment for Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota (approved on June 18, 2003)
- Fire/Fuels Management EA/Plan Amendment for Montana and the Dakotas (approved on September 26, 2003)
- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Approved Resource Management Plan (approved on December 4, 2008)
- Other *(specify name/date approved)*

Conformance:

The proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan(s) selected above, which states as follows: *(If more than one plan applies, include the page no. and language from all applicable plans):*

<i>Page No.</i>	<i>Language</i>
P. 15 Approved Judith RA RMP	The BLM will maintain and enhance suitable habitat for all wildlife species. The emphasis for habitat maintenance and development will be on present and potential habitat for sensitive, threatened and/or endangered species, nesting waterfowl, crucial wildlife winter ranges, non-game habitat and fisheries.
P. 35 UMRBNM ROD and Approved RMP	The BLM will maintain and enhance habitat for wildlife.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with (select one):



43 CFR 46.210, *or*



516 DM 11.9

Appropriate CX Number and Text, or Paraphrase of the Text:

- e. Nondestructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities.

The proposed action has been reviewed and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having significant effects on the environment.

Explanation of why there is no potential for significant impacts:

The proposed action would occur on a small footprint (less than 100 square feet) in three separate locations for one year and would have no impact on the uses that currently occur. Less than ten site visits annually to check on equipment at locations with existing infrastructure (roads and or dams) in the immediate vicinity would not alter existing wildlife or other human uses in the area. The data is non-destructive, and bat species identification is established with recorded calls.

D: Signature

I considered this review and determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the proposed action.

Pertinent design features, stipulations or mitigation (if applicable):

Design features: None

Authorizing Official: Zane Fulbright Date: 10/10/12
(Signature)

Name: Zane Fulbright
Title: UMRBNM Manager

D: Signature

I considered this review and determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the proposed action.

Pertinent design features, stipulations or mitigation (if applicable):

Design features: None

Authorizing Official: Geoff Beyersdorf Date: 10/11/12
(Signature)

Name: Geoff Beyersdorf
Title: Lewistown Field Manager