United States Department of the Interior

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Upper Big Hole East Landscape Restoration Project
EA#: DOI-BLM-MT-B070-2011-0055)

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

I have reviewed the Upper Big Hole East Landscape Restoration Project Environmental Assessment including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts, and reviewed and thoroughly considered all public comments regarding the EA. I have reviewed the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27, which define *significance* as used in NEPA, and have found that the actions analyzed in the Upper Big Hole East Landscape Restoration Project EA (EA # DOI-BLM-MT-B070-2011-0055) would not constitute a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared.

I base my finding on the following:

Implementing regulations for NEPA (40 CFR 1508.27) provide criteria for determining the significance of effects. Significance, as used in NEPA, requires consideration of both context and intensity. The disclosure of effects in the environmental assessment found the action is limited in context. Effects are local in nature and are not likely to significantly affect regional or national resources.

(1) *Impacts that may be both beneficial and/or adverse.*
The analysis documented in EA # DOI-BLM-MT-B070-2011-0055 did not identify any individually significant short- or long-term impacts.

(2) *The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.*
The environmental analysis documented no major effects on public health and safety.

(3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*
The environmental analysis documented no major effects on unique geographic features of the area, cultural or historic resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

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

The environmental analysis did not identify any controversy concerning effects on the quality of the human environment. The effects have been analyzed and documented in the analysis.

(5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*
The environmental analysis did not identify any effects on the human environment which are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. Grazing has occurred in this area prior to the Taylor Grazing Act, 1934, and is a compatible land use.

(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 proposed action does not set precedent or represent a decision in principle about a future management consideration.

(7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*
The environmental analysis documents the connected and cumulative impacts with the scope of the analysis area. The cumulative effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions are considered and disclosed in the impacts section of the analysis. The cumulative effects are not significant.

(8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed, 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 proposed action has been considered to not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed action is also not considered to cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

(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.*
This project has been reviewed and evaluated for potential effects to terrestrial wildlife species and fish species, or their habitat, listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The project would have no effect to the Canada lynx or Grizzly bears.

(10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*
The environmental analysis documents that the proposed action is consistent with Federal, State, and local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

I have also considered, as required in Executive Order 13212, whether any adverse impacts to the production of energy will result from this Decision, and have determined no adverse impacts will occur.

Scott Haugen Date 8/31/12
Butte Field Manager