UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Farmington District
Farmington Field Office
6251 N College Blvd., Ste. A
Farmington, NM 87402

Finding of No Significant Impact

City of Farmington Electric Utility System's COF-756 Powerline Extension Project

NEPA No. DOI-BLM-NM-FO10-2014-0152-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have determined that the proposed action, as described in Environmental Assessment (EA) NM-FO10-2014-0152 will not have any significant impact, individually or cumulatively, on the quality of the human environment. Because there would not be any significant impact, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

In making this determination, I considered the following factors:

Context

The Farmington Field Office (FFO) is located in northwestern New Mexico. The field office boundaries include approximately 7,800,000 acres; 1.4 million surface acres and an additional 1 million acres of mineral estate are managed by the BLM. The distribution of BLM-managed lands is fairly well consolidated in the north and becomes increasingly mingled with Tribal lands to the south. BLM-managed lands abut the Navajo Reservation to the west and south, Jicarilla Apache Nation Reservation to the east, and the Ute Mountain Reservation and Southern Ute Indian Reservation to the north. Aztec Ruins National Monument and Chaco Culture National Historical Park, managed by the National Park Service, lie within the field office boundaries. The BLM manages approximately 18% of lands within a 10 mile radius of Chaco Culture National Historical Park.

The FFO encompasses the New Mexico portion of the San Juan Basin. The San Juan Basin and surrounding areas have been occupied by varied cultures since the Paleo Indian period (circa 10,000 BC). The San Juan Basin and Four Comers area have one of the most extensive prehistoric and protohistoric occupations in the United States. The most commonly known archaeological resources are the Anasazi structures at Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Mesa Verde National Park, and other National Park Service sites. Scattered across BLM-managed lands are similar, but smaller structures, which were probably related to these larger sites. Twenty-three Chacoan outliers are known to exist within the FFO. Each contains at least one Chacoan structure and most have associated communities, prehistoric roads, and great kivas along with features such as herraduras and special use areas. The FFO contains an extensive system of finely engineered roads radiating out form Chaco Canyon and extending a considerable distance to outlying sites through the San Juan Basin and beyond. These roads are remarkably straight and carefully constructed. The most notable is the Great North Road, which starts at Chaco Canyon and run north to the Aztec Ruins.

Located within the boundary of the FFO is much of Dinétah, the ancestral homeland to the Navajo. Here the Navajo constructed forked-stick hogans, shades, sweat lodges, and other structures over a several hundred year span. During a short period between 1680 and the mid-1700s, pueblitos were constructed, often associated with other structures. Although not firmly dated, extensive Navajo pictograph and petroglyph sites were painted, etched, pecked, or ground onto the sandstone cliffs of the canyons of

Dinétah. Most are believed to be ceremonial art which is no longer traditionally executed in a permanent form.

Native American Traditional and Sacred Areas are known to exist across the FFO. Many are associated with narrative accounts of origin or other traditional stories. Most of the identified sacred areas are associated with the Navajo culture. These places are still important in Navajo ceremonies and daily activities.

Historic Hispanic or Spanish and Anglo sites within the San Juan Basin primarily date from the late 1800s to the present. Although there are some early Spanish land grants in the southern portion of the FFO, most historic sites located on public lands are either Hispanic or Anglo homesteads with associated structures from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Associated with many clusters of homesteads were a school house and often a church which was visited every few months by a priest.

Cultural resource inventories have been conducted throughout the FFO for project undertakings, management studies, and scientific inquiries. As of April 2014, approximately 760,000 acres of the 7,800,000 acres in the FFO boundaries have been inventoried. Over 46,000 sites have been identified ranging from small artifacts to the 800-room structures in Chaco Canyon. Many of these sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Chaco Culture National Historical Park along with several of the Chacoan sites which have been placed on the World Heritage List. The FFO manages 79 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) for relevant and important cultural values, including five World Heritage Sites.

The San Juan Basin is an important area for mammalian and reptilian fossils. A variety of paleontological resources exist in the FFO including animal fossils, fossil leaves, palynomorphs, petrified wood, and trace fossils occurring in the Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous, and Tertiary rocks. Dinosaur and other fossils have made significant contribution to the scientific record have been found and excavated in the FFO. Paleontolgical resources are present in the Bisti De-Na-Zin Wilderness Area, Ah-Shi-Sle-Pa Wilderness Study Area, Fossil Forrest Research Natural Area, and seven fossil areas identified in the 2003 Farmington Resource Management Plan.

The San Juan Basin is one of the largest natural gas fields in the nation and has been under development for more than 60 years. Oil was discovered by accident in the Seven Lakes area of McKinley County in 1911. Natural gas was discovered near Aztec, New Mexico, in 1920-1921 with oil of commercial quantity discovered near the Hogback in 1922 (Barnes 1951). Several small pipelines were built to carry the oil and gas from these discoveries to Aztec and Farmington, respectively. Development began in earnest in the late 1940s and early 1950s as the demand for natural gas increased. The FFO manages 2,765 active oil and gas leases in the San Juan Basin consisting of 2.1 million acres. Leasing began in the mid-1930s and accelerated in the late 1940s. By 1950, over 1 million acres were under lease.

In 1951, El Paso Natural Gas completed the first interstate pipeline out of the San Juan Basin to California. That same year, oil was discovered in the Mancos Shale in Dogie Canyon (Barnes 1951). Since that time, over 30,000 oil and gas wells have been drilled in the San Juan Basin with approximately 16,000 associated rights-of-way. Approximately 23,000 wells are currently producing. Since Stanolind Oil introduced hydraulic fracturing in 1949, nearly every well in the San Juan Basin has been fracture stimulated.

Intensity

1. The activities described in the proposed action do not include any significant beneficial or adverse impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(1)). Per 40 CFR 1500.1(b), the EA concentrated on issues that are truly significant to the action in question, rather than amassing needless detail. Issues have a cause and effect relationship with the proposed action or alternatives; are within the scope of the analysis; have not been decided by law, regulation, or previous decision; and are amendable to scientific analysis rather than conjecture (BLM 2008, page 40). The primary objective of the proposed powerline extension would be to directly connect an existing powerline to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station to provide electrical

service for lighting and heat trace to the compressor station. The following issues were identified related to the proposed action:

- How would dust and equipment emissions associated with the proposed project impact air resources?
- How would vegetation-clearing, proposed project activities, and final reclamation associated with the proposed project impact upland vegetation?
- Would vegetation-clearing, proposed project activities, and final reclamation associated with the proposed project result in an increase in noxious weeds and invasive species in the area?
- How would surface-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project impact cultural resources?
- How would the proposed action effect public health and safety?

The EA includes a description of the expected environmental consequences of the proposed activities for those issues in Chapter 3.

2. The activities included in the proposed action to directly connect an existing powerline to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station to provide electrical service for lighting and heat trace to the compressor station would not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)). The following design features have been included in the proposed action to address any impacts to public health and safety:

Public health and safety concerns are related to vehicle travel on area access roads. Worker safety is also of concern because the proposed powerline extension would connect the existing COF 756 powerline to the existing Enterprise McDermott Compressor Station. The potential for worker electrocution is therefore an identified health and safety concern. Additional worker safety concerns include working near loud equipment, heavy equipment and moving parts, and flammable and/or explosive material.

The proposed project would affect local transportation. All roadway speed limits would be observed to reduce potential for traffic accidents. Additionally, hauling of materials or equipment would follow New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) regulations. Following construction, existing roads would be rehabilitated, if needed

The proposed action would be completed in a manner consistent with all applicable OSHA regulations and appropriate industry standards to minimize risk of accidents. Impacts to the public would be minimized by controlling access to all work and operation areas.

3. The proposed activities would not significantly affect any 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 (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)). Unique characteristics are generally limited to those that have been identified through the land use planning process or other legislative, regulatory or planning processes (BLM 2008, page 71). The FFO does not contain any prime and unique farmlands, suitable or designated wild and scenic rivers, or designated caves. Table 1 discloses the distance of the proposed activities to identified wetlands. Table 2 discloses the distance of the proposed activities to National Park Service units and Congressionally designated areas. The proposed action and alternatives are not located within an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Impacts to historic or cultural resources are described in the Cultural Resources section of the EA and discussed further under item 8.

Table 1. Distance of the Proposed Activities from Identified Wetlands

Identified Wetlands	Distance from Proposed Activities
Bancos	42.49 miles
Blanco	21.81 miles
Bloomfield	18.27 miles

Cutter Canyon	30.08 miles
Carrizo Oxbow	32.11 miles
Desert Hills	16.53 miles
Valdez	19.46 miles

Table 2. Distance of the Proposed Activities from Park Lands and Ecologically Critical Areas

Park Land or Ecologically Critical Area	Distance from Proposed Activities
Ah-Shi-Sle-Pah Wilderness Study Area	52.55 miles
Aztec Ruins National Monument	10.42 miles
Bisti De-Na-Zin Wilderness Area	39.83 miles
Chaco Culture National Historical Park	58.27 miles
Fossil Forest Research Natural Area	47.91 miles

4. The activities described in the proposed action do not involve effects on the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)). Controversy in this context means disagreement about the nature of the effects, not expressions of opposition to the proposed action or preference among the alternatives (BLM 2008, page 71). Oil and gas development has occurred in the San Juan Basin for more than 60 years. While there may be controversy over the appropriateness of oil and gas development, there is not a high level of controversy or substantial scientific dispute over the impacts of that activity. The impacts of the proposed activities are described in Chapter 3 of the EA.

5. The activities described in the proposed action do not involve effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)). As described under Context, oil and gas development has occurred in the San Juan Basin since the late 1940s and early 1950s. The field office has permitted over 30,000 wells and 16,000 rights-of-way. Hydraulic fracturing has occurred on nearly every well in the San Juan Basin since the 1950s. As such, the FFO has decades of experience and is knowledgeable about the impacts and risks associated with the proposed activities.

6. My decision to implement these activities does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)). Approval of these activities in no way assures approval of any future activities.

7. The effects of the proposed activities would not be significant, individually or cumulatively, when considered with the effects of other actions (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)). Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts are described in Chapter 3 of the EA.

8. I have determined that the activities described in the proposed action will not adversely affect or cause loss or destruction of scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)). The proposed activities are not located in an ACEC containing relevant and important cultural values. Inventory for cultural resources is not required. Inventory at the Class III level of intensity has previously been performed and records adequately documenting the location, methods, and results of the inventory are available in multiple overlapping cultural surveys, NM-210-2015-11.

9. The proposed activities are not likely to adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)). This project does not contain any known populations or designated critical habitat, see page 4 of the EA.

10. The proposed activities will not threaten any violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)). Sections 1.4 and 1.5 of the EA describe the relationship of the proposed activities to relevant laws, policies, regulations, and plans.

REFERENCES

Barnes, Frank C., 1951. History of development and production of oil and gas in the San Juan Basin. In *The south and west sides of the San Juan Basin, New Mexico and Arizona*, Smith, C.T.; Silver, C. ed(s), New Mexico Geological Society, Guidebook, 2nd Field Conference, pp. 155-160.

BLM. 2008. *National Environmental Policy Handbook. H-1790-1.* Bureau of Land Management. National Environmental Policy Act Program.

APPROVED:

Timothy Wakefield
Field Manager (Acting)
BLM Farmington Field Office

8-18-15
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Farmington District
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DECISION RECORD
for the
City of Farmington Electric Utility System's COF-756 Powerline Extension Project
NEPA No. DOI-BLM-NM-FO-*2014-0152-EA*

I. Decision

I have decided to select the proposed action for implementation as described in the August 2015, COF 756, Environmental Assessment (EA). Based on my review of the EA and project record, I have concluded that the proposed action was analyzed in sufficient detail to allow me to make an informed decision. I have selected the proposed action to provide the City of Farmington with access to BLM land to construct and operate a powerline extension to provide electrical service for lighting and heat trace to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station.

II. Conformance and Compliance

The proposed action is in conformance with the 2003 BLM-FFO Resource Management Plan (RMP). Pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.28 and 1502.21, this site-specific EA tiers into and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the BLM-FFO Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS; BLM 2003a). The RMP was approved by the September 29, 2003, Record of Decision (ROD; BLM 2003b), and updated in December 2003.

Development of energy-related ROWs, including powerline extensions, is one of the primary activities of the BLM-FFO lands program. Such ROWs receive environmental review on a case-by-case basis (BLM 2003b, 2-11).

As required by NEPA, this EA addresses site-specific resources and effects of the proposed action that were not specifically covered within the PRMP/FEIS.

FEUS would comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Necessary permits and approvals for the proposed project would be obtained prior to project implementation.

Many requirements regulating specific environmental elements are found in the appropriate elements sections of this EA (Chapter 3). Several permits, licenses, consultations, or other requirements are discussed below.

Clean Water Act

The proposed action is in conformance with the Clean Water Act, as amended (CWA; 33 USC 1251 et seq.).

Section 401

Under Section 401 of the CWA, an applicant for a Federal license or permit to conduct an activity that may result in a discharge into a water of the U.S. must provide the Federal agency with a Section 401 certification declaring that the discharge would comply with the CWA. The certification would be granted by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). It is not anticipated that any such discharge would result from the proposed project.

Section 402

Under Section 402 of the CWA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates storm water discharges from industrial and construction activities under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System program. Permits are required if discharge results in a reportable quantity for which notification is required (pursuant to 40 CFR 117.21, 40 CFR 302.6, or 40 CFR 110.6) or if the discharge contributes to a violation of a water quality standard. It is not anticipated that any such discharge would result from the proposed project.

Section 404

Under Section 404 of the CWA, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. The Section 404 program is administered by the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Under the CWA, the USACE has jurisdiction over waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. are considered jurisdictional because they have a "significant nexus" to traditional navigable waters. The BLM-FFO and USACE - Durango Regulatory Office have determined that jurisdictional waters (i.e, waters of the U.S.) may include U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) watercourses (i.e., "blue lines" on USGS 1:24,000 topographic maps) and potentially tributaries to these USGS watercourses.

The proposed COF-756 powerline extension project does not cross any watercourses. Therefore, a Section 404 permit would not be utilized for the proposed project.

National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA; 16 USC 470) requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on historic properties, and allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. Compliance with the requirements of the NHPA is met by following the 2014 Protocol Agreement between the New Mexico BLM and New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer, which is authorized by the Programmatic Agreement among the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (2012).

Clean Air Act

The Clean Air Act of 1972, as amended (CAA; 42 USC 7401 et seq.), establishes national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) to control air pollution. In New Mexico, the NMED has adopted most of the CAA into the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC). The NMED issues construction and operating permits for air quality and enforces air quality regulations and permit conditions.

III. Finding of No Significant Impact

I have reviewed the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed activities documented in the EA for the COF-756 Powerline Extension Project and temporary use area. I have also reviewed the project record for this analysis. The effects of the proposed action and alternative are disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Consequences sections of the EA. I have determined that constructing a powerline extension will allow Farmington Electric Utility System to construct a powerline extension on BLM-managed land. The need for the proposed action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of

1976 (FLPMA, 43 United States Code [USC] 1701 et seq.) to respond to a request for a ROW Grant on BLM surface. The FLPMA authorizes the BLM to grant, issue, or renew ROW Grants over public lands for multiple uses as described in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary.

IV. Other Alternatives Considered

The route of the proposed powerline extension on page 11 of the EA was chosen based on the location of the McDermott Compressor Station, the location of existing powerlines, existing disturbance (such as roads) in the area, vegetation, and topography. No alternative route was identified that would create less disturbance than the proposed route while fulfilling the purpose and need of the proposed action.

V. Rationale for the Decision

I have determined that the activities described in the proposed action will not adversely affect or cause loss or destruction of scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)). The proposed activities are not located in an ACEC containing relevant and important cultural values. Inventory for cultural resources is not required. Inventory at the Class III level of intensity has previously been performed and records adequately documenting the location, methods, and results of the inventory are available in multiple overlapping cultural surveys, NM-210-2015-11.

The proposed activities are not likely to adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)). This project does not contain any known populations or designated critical habitat.

VI. Public Involvement

The BLM-FFO publishes a NEPA log for public inspection. This log contains a list of proposed and approved actions within the BLM-FFO. The log is located on the BLM's New Mexico website (http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/planning/nepa_logs.html).

An on-site meeting was held at the proposed project area on April 22, 2014. FEUS, BLM-FFO representatives, and an environmental consultant (Nelson Consulting Inc. [NCI]) attended the meeting. No representatives from the Navajo Nation attended the meeting. No private citizens or groups attended the meetings. A BLM-FFO Interdisciplinary Team meeting was held on April 21, 2014 to discuss the proposed action. At the aforementioned meetings, potential issues of concern were identified by the BLM-FFO and NCI.

Based on the size and scale, routine nature, and potential impacts associated with the proposed action, no additional external scoping was conducted. No public comments were received for the proposed action.

VII. Administrative Review and Appeal

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of this decision. Any notice of appeal must be filed Timothy Wakefield, Acting Field Manager, Farmington Field Office, 6251 College Boulevard, Suite A, Farmington, NM 87402. The appellant shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs on each adverse party named in the decision, not later than 15 days after filing such document (see 43 CFR 4.413(a)). Failure to serve within the time required will subject the appeal to summary dismissal (see 43 CFR 4.413(b)). If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the IBLA, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U. S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203

within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with Timothy Wakefield, Farmington Field Office Manager (Acting).

Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. This decision can be implemented immediately and remains in effect pending appeal according to 43 CFR 288.1.10(b). If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal.

A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

(1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
(2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
(3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In the event a request for stay or an appeal is filed, the person/party requesting the stay or filing the appeal must serve a copy of the appeal on the Office of the Field Solicitor: United States Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Southwest Regional Office, 505 Marquette Avenue NW, Suite 1800, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Timothy Wakefield
Farmington Field Office, (Acting)

8-18-15
Date

REFERENCES

Barnes, Frank C., 1951. History of development and production of oil and gas in the San Juan Basin. In *The south and west sides of the San Juan Basin, New Mexico and Arizona*, Smith, C.T.; Silver, C. ed(s), New Mexico Geological Society, Guidebook, 2nd Field Conference, pp. 155-160.

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This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of this decision. Any notice of appeal must be filed Timothy Wakefield, Acting Field Manager, Farmington Field Office, 6251 College Boulevard, Suite A, Farmington, NM 87402. The appellant shall serve a copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs on each adverse party named in the decision, not later than 15 days after filing such document (see 43 CFR 4.413(a)). Failure to serve within the time required will subject the appeal to summary dismissal (see 43 CFR 4.413(b)). If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the IBLA, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U. S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203

within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with Timothy Wakefield, Farmington Field Office Manager (Acting).

Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a)(1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. This decision can be implemented immediately and remains in effect pending appeal according to 43 CFR 288.1.10(b). If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal.

A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

(1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied;
(2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits;
(3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted; and
(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

In the event a request for stay or an appeal is filed, the person/party requesting the stay or filing the appeal must serve a copy of the appeal on the Office of the Field Solicitor: United States Dept. of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Southwest Regional Office, 505 Marquette Avenue NW, Suite 1800, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Timothy Wakefield
Farmington Field Office, (Acting)

8-18-15
Date

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NM-F010-2014-152

City of Farmington Electric Utility System's COF-756 Powerline Extension Project

August 2015

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Farmington District
Farmington Field Office
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BLM

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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1. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1. Background

The City of Farmington Electric Utility System (FEUS) has submitted two Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant applications to the Bureau of Land Management – Farmington Field Office (BLM-FFO) for the proposed COF-756, a powerline extension with 13.8 / 7.98-kilovolt (kV) primary voltage and 120 / 240-volt (v) secondary voltage. The proposed action is the issuance of the ROW Grants by the BLM-FFO, located in Farmington, New Mexico.

The proposed project would include activities, equipment, and facilities necessary for the construction, usage, and abandonment of the proposed COF-756 powerline extension. The proposed powerline extension would bring electrical service for lighting and heat trace to Enterprise Products Partners' (Enterprise's) McDermott Compressor Station. The origin of the proposed project is an existing powerline used for distribution purposes located west of Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station. The proposed powerline extension would directly connect this existing powerline to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station.

The proposed project area is located on BLM-FFO-managed and Private surface. The proposed ROW Grants would authorize only the portions of the proposed project areas that are on BLM-FFO-managed surface. However, as the Private portions of the proposed project are connected actions, this Environmental Assessment (EA) will also address these non-Federal portions of the proposed project. The portions of the proposed project located on Private surface would be permitted by a Surface Owner Agreement (SOA) between FEUS and the Private landowner.

The proposed ROW would total 666.04 feet in length (178.38 feet on BLM-FFO-managed surface and 487.66 feet on Private surface). Width of the ROW would be 25 feet on BLM-FFO-managed surface and 15 feet on Private surface. The proposed project area, including ROW and construction temporary use area (TUA) on BLM-FFO-managed surface would encompass 0.37 acre (0.20 acre on BLM-FFO-managed surface and 0.17 acre on Private surface).

The proposed project area is located within the San Juan Basin in San Juan County, New Mexico. The proposed project area is located approximately 13.5 miles north-northeast of the city of Farmington, 2.1 miles east of the town of La Plata, New Mexico, and is approximately 5 miles south of the Colorado state line (See Figure A.1, Appendix A).

1.2. Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to allow FEUS reasonable access to BLM-FFO-managed lands to construct and operate a powerline extension to provide electrical service for lighting and heat trace to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station.

The need for the proposed action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA, 43 United States Code [USC] 1701 et seq.) to respond to a request for a ROW Grant on BLM surface. The FLPMA authorizes the BLM to grant, issue, or renew ROW Grants over public lands for multiple uses.

1.3. Decision to be Made

The BLM-FFO will decide whether or not to issue the ROW Grants associated with the proposed COF-756 project, and, if so, under what terms and conditions. Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; Public Law 91-90, 42 USC 4321 et seq.), the BLM-FFO must determine if there are any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action warranting further analysis in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The BLM-FFO Field Manager is the responsible officer who will decide one of the following:

- To approve the ROW Grants with design features as submitted
- To approve the ROW Grants with additional mitigation added
- To analyze the effects of the proposed action in an EIS
- To deny the ROW Grants

1.4. Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plan

The proposed action is in conformance with the 2003 BLM-FFO Resource Management Plan (RMP). Pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.28 and 1502.21, this site-specific EA tiers into and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the BLM-FFO Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS; BLM 2003a). The RMP was approved by the September 29, 2003, Record of Decision (ROD; BLM 2003b), and updated in December 2003.

Development of energy-related ROWs, including powerline extensions, is one of the primary activities of the BLM-FFO lands program. Such ROWs receive environmental review on a case-by-case basis (BLM 2003b, 2-11).

As required by NEPA, this EA addresses site-specific resources and effects of the proposed action that were not specifically covered within the PRMP/FEIS.

1.5. Relationship to Statutes, Regulations or Other Plans

FEUS would comply with applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Necessary permits and approvals for the proposed project would be obtained prior to project implementation.

Many requirements regulating specific environmental elements are found in the appropriate elements sections of this EA (Chapter 3). Several permits, licenses, consultations, or other requirements are discussed below.

1.5.1. Clean Water Act

The proposed action is in conformance with the Clean Water Act, as amended (CWA; 33 USC 1251 et seq.).

Section 401

Under Section 401 of the CWA, an applicant for a Federal license or permit to conduct an activity that may result in a discharge into a water of the U.S. must provide the Federal agency with a Section 401 certification declaring that the discharge would comply with the CWA. The certification would be granted by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). It is not anticipated that any such discharge would result from the proposed project.

Section 402

Under Section 402 of the CWA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates storm water discharges from industrial and construction activities under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System program. Permits are required if discharge results in a reportable quantity for which notification is required (pursuant to 40 CFR 117.21, 40 CFR 302.6, or 40 CFR 110.6) or if the discharge contributes to a violation of a water quality standard. It is not anticipated that any such discharge would result from the proposed project.

Section 404

Under Section 404 of the CWA, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. The Section 404 program is administered by the EPA and U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers (USACE). Under the CWA, the USACE has jurisdiction over waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. are considered jurisdictional because they have a "significant nexus" to traditional navigable waters. The BLM-FFO and USACE - Durango Regulatory Office have determined that jurisdictional waters (i.e, waters of the U.S.) may include U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) watercourses (i.e., "blue lines" on USGS 1:24,000 topographic maps) and potentially tributaries to these USGS watercourses.

The proposed COF-756 powerline extension project does not cross any watercourses. Therefore, a Section 404 permit would not be utilized for the proposed project.

1.5.2. National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA; 16 USC 470) requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on historic properties, and allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. Compliance with the requirements of the NHPA is met by following the 2014 Protocol Agreement between the New Mexico BLM and New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer, which is authorized by the Programmatic Agreement among the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (2012).

1.5.3. Clean Air Act

The Clean Air Act of 1972, as amended (CAA; 42 USC 7401 et seq.), establishes national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) to control air pollution. In New Mexico, the NMED has adopted most of the CAA into the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC). The NMED issues construction and operating permits for air quality and enforces air quality regulations and permit conditions.

1.6. Scoping, Public Involvement, and Issues

1.6.1. Scoping and Public Involvement

The BLM-FFO publishes a NEPA log for public inspection. This log contains a list of proposed and approved actions within the BLM-FFO. The log is located on the BLM's New Mexico website (http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/planning/nepa_logs.html).

An on-site meeting was held at the proposed project area on April 22, 2014. FEUS, BLM-FFO representatives, and an environmental consultant (Nelson Consulting Inc. [NCI]) attended the meeting. No representatives from the Navajo Nation attended the meeting. No private citizens or groups attended the meetings. A BLM-FFO Interdisciplinary Team meeting was held on April 21, 2014 to discuss the proposed action. At the aforementioned meetings, potential issues of concern were identified by the BLM-FFO and NCI.

Based on the size and scale, routine nature, and potential impacts associated with the proposed action, no additional external scoping was conducted. No public comments were received for the proposed action.

1.6.2. Issues

Issues Analyzed

The following issues were identified during scoping as potential issues of concern for the proposed action. These issues will be addressed in this EA.

- How would dust and equipment emissions associated with the proposed project impact air resources?
- How would vegetation-clearing, proposed project activities, and final reclamation associated with the proposed project impact upland vegetation?

- Would vegetation-clearing, proposed project activities, and final reclamation associated with the proposed project result in an increase in noxious weeds and invasive species in the area?
- How would surface-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project impact cultural resources?
- How would the proposed action effect public health and safety?

Issues Considered but not Analyzed

The following issues were identified during scoping as issues of concern that would not be impacted by the proposed action or that have been covered by prior environmental review. These issues will not be analyzed in this EA.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-Listed Species

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 16 USC 1531-1544), all federal agencies are required to consult with the USFWS or National Marine Fisheries Service if they are proposing an action that may affect listed species or designated habitat. Consultation with the USFWS was conducted as part of the PRMP/FEIS to address the cumulative effects of RMP implementation (Consultation No. 2-22-01-1-389, Appendix M of the PRMP/FEIS; BLM 2003a). Based on a review of species currently listed by the USFWS as occurring in San Juan County (USFWS 2014), as well as the location of the proposed project area and habitat within the proposed project area, the potential does not exist for USFWS-listed species to occur within the proposed project area. Additionally, no depletions of waters within waterbodies that provide habitat for USFWS-listed species would occur as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, there is no need for additional Section 7 consultation.

Native American Religious Concerns

For the proposed action, identification efforts for Native American Religious Concerns were limited to a review of existing published and unpublished literature (e.g., Van Valkenburgh 1941, 1974; Brugge 1993; Kelly et al. 2006) and a review by the BLM's cultural resources program regarding the presence of Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) identified through ongoing BLM tribal consultation efforts. The proposed project area is within an area that has been previously surveyed for cultural resources (New Mexico Historic Preservation Division 1994 to 2005). A BLM-FFO In-House Archaeological Survey Determination Form was completed for the proposed project area; this form documents the BLM's determination that existing cultural surveys encompass the entirety of the proposed project area. There are currently no known remains that fall within the purview of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA; 25 USC 3001) or the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA; 16 USC 470) within the proposed project area. The proposed action would not impact any known TCPs, prevent access to sacred sites, prevent the possession of sacred objects, or interfere with or hinder the performance of traditional ceremonies and rituals pursuant to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA; 42 USC 1996) or Executive Order (EO) 13007.

2. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE(S)

2.1. Proposed Action

The proposed action is the BLM-FFO approval of two ROW Grants associated with FEUS's proposed COF-756 project. The proposed project would include the installation, use, and removal of powerline extension structures (poles), anchors, guy line, and overhead line. The ROW Grants would authorize the use of one ROW corridor and one construction TUA that is located on both sides of the ROW on BLM-FFO-managed surface.

The primary objective of the proposed powerline extension would be to directly connect an existing powerline to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station to provide electrical service for lighting and heat trace to the compressor station.

Commencement of the proposed COF-756 project is proposed for 2015 or 2016.

A construction plat and photographs associated with the proposed project area provided in Appendices B and C, respectively.

2.1.1. Location of Proposed Project Area

Maps of the proposed project area are provided in Appendix A. The proposed project area is plotted on the La Plata, New Mexico, 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle map (Figure A.2, Appendix A) and the 2011 San Juan County National Agriculture Imagery Program aerial photograph (Figure A.3 Appendix A).

The proposed project area is located within the San Juan Basin. The proposed project area is on Private surface and surface managed by the BLM-FFO in San Juan County, New Mexico. The proposed project area is located approximately 13.5 miles northeast of the city of Farmington and is approximately 5 miles south of the Colorado state line. The town of La Plata, New Mexico is located approximately 2.1 miles west of the proposed project area and is approximately 300 to 400 feet north of New Mexico State Highway 574.

The proposed project area is located at the following latitude & longitude (Universal Transverse Mercator, North American Datum of 1983 [NAD83]):

- Northwestern Terminus (Beginning of Line [B.O.L.]): 36.92867° North and 108.15184° West
- Southeastern Terminus (End of Line [E.O.L.]): 36.92832° North and 108.15003° West

The legal land description of the proposed project area, from west to east, is provided in the table below

Table 1. Legal Location of Proposed Project Area (New Mexico Principal Meridian)

Land Manager	Quarter-Quarter(s)*	Section	Township & Range
Private	SW ¼ NE ¼ NW ¼ SE ¼	1	Township 31 North, Range 13 West
BLM	NE ¼ SE ¼		

The proposed project area travels through a sagebrush shrubland vegetation community and is located approximately 0.5 mile east of McDermott Arroyo. The elevation within the proposed project area ranges from approximately 5,790 to 5,800 feet above mean sea level (AMSL), and the proposed project area slopes gently to the west.

Oil and gas development (existing well pads, access roads, and pipeline corridors), powerlines, Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station, private residences, and livestock grazing disturbances are present throughout the general region. The nearest private residence is located approximately 0.2 mile southwest of the proposed project area.

2.1.2. Description of Proposed Project

It is anticipated that the proposed powerline extension would be utilized for the life of the McDermott Compressor Station to which it would supply electrical service. The life of natural gas wells and compressor stations could be over 50 years.

Barring unexpected occurrences (such as wind in excess of 90 miles per hour, an earthquake, vandalism, or a vehicular accident), it is expected that the facilities associated with the proposed powerline extension would last a minimum of 40 years before any equipment would require replacement.

For a detailed description of design features and construction practices associated with the proposed project, refer to the ROW Grant Applications on file at the BLM-FFO. The plat (Appendix B) provides additional details.

Design Features and Best Management Practices

FEUS would adhere to the stipulations attached to the ROW Grants as well as North American Electric Reliability Corporation Western Electricity Coordinating Council standards and regulations. Additional stipulations could also be specified in the Private land SOA. The following general design features and best management practices (BMPs) would occur.

Control of Waste

Liquid and solid wastes would be disposed of at an appropriate waste-disposal site. The proposed project area would be maintained in a sanitary condition. Hazardous substances would be handled and disposed of according to Federal law.

Protection of Paleontological Resources

All paleontological resource stipulations would be followed as indicated in the stipulations attached to the ROW Grants. If a paleontological site is discovered, the BLM would be notified and the site would be avoided by personnel, personal vehicles, and company equipment. Workers would be informed that it is illegal to collect, damage, or disturb such resources, and that such activities are punishable by criminal and/or administrative penalties.

Protection of Cultural Resources

All cultural resource stipulations would be followed as indicated in the Cultural Resource Records of Review attached to the ROW Grants. These stipulations could include, but would not be limited to, temporary or permanent fencing or other physical barriers, monitoring of earth-disturbing construction, reduction of the proposed project area and/or establishment of specific construction avoidance zones, and employee education.

Employees, contractors, and sub-contractors associated with the proposed project would be informed by FEUS that cultural sites are to be avoided by personnel, personal vehicles, and company equipment. These individuals would be informed that it is illegal to collect, damage, or disturb cultural resources, and that such activities are punishable by criminal and/or administrative penalties under the provisions of ARPA.

In the event of a cultural discovery during construction, FEUS would immediately stop all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery and immediately notify the archaeological monitor, if present, or the BLM. The BLM would then evaluate or cause the site to be evaluated. Should a discovery be evaluated as significant (e.g., eligible for the National Register of Historic Places [NRHP] or protected

under NAGPRA or ARPA), it would be protected in place until mitigating measures could be developed and implemented according to guidelines set by the BLM.

Protection of Flora and Fauna, including SSS and Livestock

Because less than 4.0 acres of vegetation is anticipated to be cleared, a pre-construction migratory bird nest survey would not be necessary within the BLM-FFO portion of the proposed project area; moreover, a pre-construction nest survey would not be required for the Private portion of the proposed project. If, however, active nests are located within the proposed project area, the BLM-FFO biologist would be notified and project activities should not occur until fledging has occurred. If postponement is not an option, the operator should contact the USFWS's Migratory Bird Permit Office regarding permitting.

The proposed powerline extension would be constructed in accordance with *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006* (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006).

Should any active raptor nests be observed within one-third mile of the proposed project areas or should any additional SSS (listed by the USFWS or BLM) be observed within the proposed project areas prior to or during proposed project implementation, construction would cease and the BLM-FFO would be immediately contacted. The BLM-FFO would then ensure evaluation of the resource. Should a discovery be evaluated as significant (protected under the ESA, etc.), it would be protected in place until mitigation could be developed and implemented according to guidelines set by the BLM.

Wildlife and livestock hazards associated with the proposed project would be fenced, covered, and/or contained in storage tanks, as necessary. Open, unattended holes would be barricaded.

FEUS would notify the USFWS upon discovery of a dead or injured migratory bird, bald or golden eagle, or USFWS-listed species within or adjacent to the proposed project areas. If the BLM becomes aware of such mortality or injury, the BLM would inform FEUS. If FEUS fails to notify the USFWS of the mortality or injury, the BLM would notify the USFWS. The BLM and the USFWS would then attempt to determine the cause of mortality and evaluate and identify appropriate mitigation measures to avoid future occurrences.

The clearing of vegetation and movement of vehicles and equipment over the ground could result in minor soil erosion in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project area. Vehicles would be restricted to the proposed project areas (including the ROW and construction TUA) and existing areas of surface disturbance, such as access roads and Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station. FEUS would use Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station to access the proposed project's ROW and construction TUA, rather than driving within vegetated portions adjacent to the proposed project area for project access.

Livestock grazing operators in the vicinity of the proposed project area would be contacted by FEUS at least 10 days prior to construction. FEUS would not cease or delay construction unless directed by the authorized BLM-FFO officer. No holes would be left open overnight. Open holes would be barricaded to ensure the safety of livestock and wildlife. Any range improvements (such as fences, gates, cattleguards, or waterlines) that could be impacted by the proposed project would be identified and impacts would be mitigated prior to construction. If any fences are damaged during project activities, they would immediately be repaired to their former state or better.

Protection of the Public

The hauling of equipment and materials for the proposed project on public roads would comply with New Mexico Department of Transportation regulations. FEUS would control access to all work and operation areas and would notify the public of potential hazards by posting signage, as necessary.

Prevention and Control of Weeds

It would be FEUS's responsibility to monitor, control, and eradicate all invasive, non-native plant species within the proposed project area throughout the life of the proposed project. FEUS's weed-control contractor would contact the BLM-FFO regarding acceptable weed-control methods. If the contractor does not hold a current Pesticide Use Permit, a Pesticide Use Permit would be submitted prior to

pesticide application. Only pesticides authorized for use on BLM lands would be used. The use of pesticides would comply with federal and state laws. Pesticides would be used only in accordance with their registered use and limitations. FEUS's weed-control contractor would contact the BLM-FFO prior to using these chemicals.

FEUS would treat an existing population of Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*; a non-native, invasive species) located on the western edge of Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station with herbicide prior to project disturbance activities begin. The approximately 50-foot-wide and 60-foot-long population of Russian knapweed straddles both Private and BLM-FFO-managed surface and is located approximately 90 feet north of the proposed COF-756 powerline extension. FEUS would use the McDermott Compressor Station for project access, and any disturbances to Russian knapweed, such as driving, may promote additional vegetative growth as well as propagule spread via vehicles (BLM 2014b). FEUS would treat the entire Russian knapweed population (on both Private and BLM-FFO-managed surface) prior to project disturbance to decrease the potential of Russian knapweed spread throughout the proposed project area and immediately adjacent lands.

Additional Design Features and BMPs

Throughout the life of the proposed powerline extension, activities would be restricted to the proposed project area and areas of existing surface disturbance, such as access roads. FEUS would use unvegetated areas of existing disturbance to access facilities wherever possible, rather than driving within vegetated portions of the proposed project area. Vehicles would not drive within particularly steep or rugged portions of the proposed project area.

During all phases of the proposed project, non-emergency activities would be conducted during daylight hours only.

No construction or routine maintenance activities would be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support construction equipment. If equipment would create ruts deeper than 6 inches, the soil would be deemed too wet for construction or maintenance.

Proposed Project Phases

During all phases of the proposed project, vehicles would be restricted to existing developed roads and highways in the region, Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station, and the proposed project's associated ROW and construction TUA.

Construction of Powerline Extension

One to three days of construction would be required to construct the proposed COF-756 powerline extension. Construction activities would occur during daytime hours only.

A maximum of three trucks could be used: one pickup truck, one line truck, and one bucket truck. During construction, equipment could be stored on Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station or on Private surface.

Wastes associated with the construction process could include solid wastes (trash and sewage) and liquid wastes (hydraulic fluid and vehicle fluids such as gasoline and oil); refer to the Design Features and Best Management Practices section above for more information on proposed mitigation measures.

FEUS would drive cross-country within the proposed project's ROW so that vehicles could traverse from pole structure to pole structure. This access route would be less than 12 feet wide and would be cleared of vegetation, as necessary, to allow for vehicle passage. No off-ROW access routes are currently expected. If off-ROW access routes are required, they would be permitted separately.

Proposed pole and anchor installation sites would be located adjacent to existing roads or other disturbance when available. Two pole locations located on Private land within the proposed COF-756 project area would not be located immediately adjacent to existing disturbance; these proposed

installation sites would be accessed by vehicles traveling cross-country within the proposed project's ROW and potentially within the proposed construction TUA during project construction. The pole and anchor located on BLM-FFO-managed surface would be accessed from Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station.

Pole and anchor holes would be dug, and poles and anchors would be set by the line and/or bucket trucks. Soil displaced during pole and anchor installation would be redistributed around facility sites. A wire trailer would be placed at each end of the proposed ROW. Stringing would be accomplished with the pickup truck (travelling cross-country within the proposed ROW and construction TUA) and/or by hand.

Three new 40-foot tall single-pole structures would be used to support overhead line. Cross-arms will not be used on single-pole structures. Approximately 6 feet of each pole would be below ground surface. Single-pole structures would be used at the B.O.L., E.O.L., and between the B.O.L. and E.O.L. Anchors and anchor guys would be used to support structures. A wire, or "anchor guy", would be strung tautly from the structure to the anchor.

Operation

Once construction is completed, FEUS personnel would rarely perform routine or emergency maintenance on the proposed powerline extension throughout its lifetime. Vehicles would access proposed pole and anchor locations for routine maintenance via the proposed ROW and Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station during routine or emergency maintenance.

During the operation phase of the proposed project, the proposed project's ROW would be maintained as necessary to allow for vehicular access to pole structures. Maintenance would consist primarily of repairing washouts and cutting large shrubs that become established within the two-track route within the ROW.

FEUS would repair washouts in the ROW due to unnatural soil disturbance caused by FEUS construction as per BLM recommendations. Natural washouts that threaten personal safety or the integrity of structure or equipment would be repaired per BLM recommendations. The type of equipment used for repair depends on the amount of damage and the location. Potential equipment used to repair washouts could include shovels, front loader, or erosion control equipment.

Final Abandonment

When the proposed powerline extension would no longer be necessary and would not be expected to be utilized in the foreseeable future, it would be abandoned. Abandonment would be carried out under current BLM regulations. All facilities would be removed. Vehicles would access proposed pole and anchor locations via the proposed ROW and areas of existing surface disturbance, such as roads and Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station.

Per guidelines established in the BLM-FFO *Bare Soil Reclamation Procedures* (2013), because surface disturbance to bare soil would be less than 0.1 acre, manual reseeding would not be required as disturbed areas around power poles and anchors would be expected to reseed naturally.

Proposed Facilities

Facilities associated with the proposed project would include three new single-pole structures, two new anchors, and 666.04 feet of line (556.04 total feet of overhead line and 110.00 feet of anchor line/span guy line). Of the above-listed facilities, one power pole, one anchor, and 178.38 feet of line (103.38 total feet of overhead line and 75.00 feet of anchor line) would be located on BLM-managed surface. The remaining two power poles, anchor, and 487.66 feet of line (452.66 total feet of overhead line and 35.00 feet of anchor line) to would be located on Private surface.

Proposed Surface Disturbance

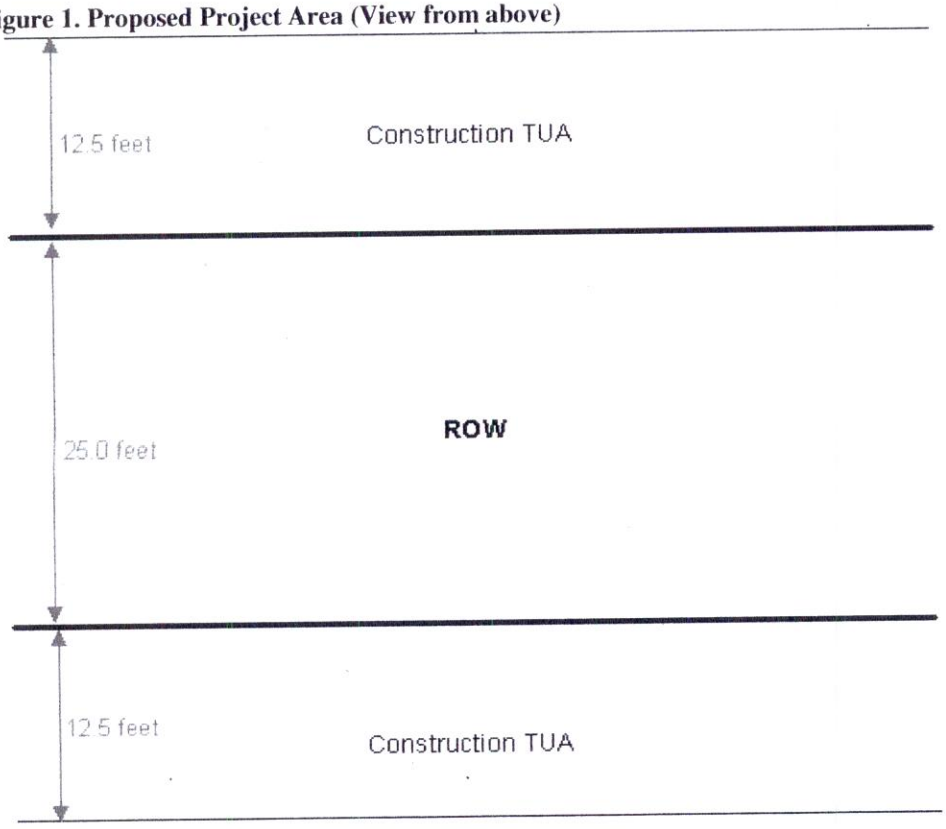
The installation of poles and anchor discussed in the previous section would result in direct surface disturbance. Each pole and anchor would require a 9-square-foot area of direct surface disturbance;

within this 9-square-foot footprint, all vegetation would likely be removed. Less than 0.01 acre of direct disturbance would result from the installation of all 5 facilities.

Within the remainder of the proposed project areas (ROW and construction TUA), indirect surface disturbance could result from cross-country vehicle travel. Vehicles could potentially travel along the ROW throughout the lifetime of the proposed project. Vehicles could potentially travel within the construction TUA during the construction phase.

All poles, anchors, and line would be placed along the center of the 25.00-foot-wide ROW. The construction TUA, which would be used as extra work area during construction, would run along each side of the ROW for the entire length of the ROW. The construction TUA would be 12.50 feet wide on each side of the ROW. No Access TUAs would be used to reach portions of the ROW for the proposed project. The below figure shows the layout of the proposed project area.

Figure 1. Proposed Project Area (View from above)



The proposed project area would encompass 0.37 acre (0.20 acre on BLM-FFO-managed surface and 0.17 acre on Private surface). This would include 0.27 acre of ROW and 0.10 acre of construction TUA. Please refer to the below table for the acreage and landowner/manager associated with the proposed project.

Table 2. Acreage Associated with Proposed Project

Land Manager	Length of Line (feet)	ROW (acres)	TUAs (acres)	Total Area (acres)
BLM-FFO	178.38	0.10	0.10	**0.20**
Private	487.66	0.17	0.00	**0.17**
Totals	**666.04**	**0.27**	**0.10**	**0.37**

2.2. No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the COF-756 ROW Grants would not be issued. The proposed powerline extension would not be constructed. Current land and resource uses would continue to occur in the proposed project area.

2.3. Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study

The route of the proposed powerline extension was chosen based on the location of the McDermott Compressor Station, the location of existing powerlines, existing disturbance (such as roads) in the area, vegetation, and topography. No alternative route was identified that would create less disturbance than the proposed route while fulfilling the purpose and need of the proposed action.

3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Under the No Action alternative, current land and resource issues within the proposed project area would continue; there would be no new impacts from powerline extension development. The No Action alternative will serve as the baseline for comparing the environmental impacts of the analyzed alternatives, and will not be further evaluated in this EA (BLM 2008).

3.1. Air Resources

3.1.1. Affected Environment

The proposed wells are located in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico. Additional general information on air quality in the area is contained in Chapter 3 of the BLM-FFO PRMP/FEIS (BLM 2003a, 3-48 – 3-53). In addition, new information about greenhouse gases (GHGs), and their effects on national and global climate conditions has emerged since this document was prepared. On-going scientific research has identified the potential impacts of GHG emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO_2) methane (CH_4); nitrous oxide (N_2O); water vapor; and several trace gases on global climate. Through complex interactions on a global scale, GHG emissions may cause a net warming effect of the atmosphere, primarily by decreasing the amount of heat energy radiated by the earth back into space. Although GHG levels have varied for millennia (along with corresponding variations in climatic conditions), industrialization and burning of fossil carbon sources have caused GHG concentrations to increase measurably, and may contribute to overall climatic changes, typically referred to as global warming.

Much of the information referenced in this section is incorporated from the Air Resources Technical Report for BLM Oil and Gas Development in New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas (herein referred to as Air Resources Technical Report; BLM 2014c). This document summarizes the technical information related to air resources and climate change associated with oil and gas development and the methodology and assumptions used for analysis.

The EPA has the primary responsibility for regulating air quality, including six nationally regulated ambient air pollutants (criteria pollutants). These criteria pollutants include carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), sulfur dioxide (SO_2) and lead (Pb). EPA has established NAAQS for criteria air pollutants. The NAAQS are protective of human health and the environment. EPA has approved New Mexico's State Implementation Plan and the state enforces state and federal air quality regulations on all public and private lands within the state, except for tribal lands and within Bernalillo County. Air quality is determined by atmospheric pollutants and chemistry, dispersion meteorology and terrain, and includes applications of noise, smoke management, and visibility. Climate is the composite of generally prevailing weather conditions of a particular region throughout the year, averaged over a series of years. EPA has proposed or completed actions recently to implement CAA requirements for GHG emissions. Climate has the potential to influence renewable and non-renewable resource management.

Air Quality

Criteria Air Pollutants

The Air Resources Technical Report describes the types of data used for description of the existing conditions of criteria pollutants, how the criteria pollutants are related to the activities involved in oil and gas development, and provides a table of current National and state standards. EPA's Green Book web page (EPA 2013b) reports that all counties in the Farmington Field Office area are in attainment of all NAAQS as defined by the CAA. The area is also in attainment of all New Mexico Ambient Air Quality Standards (NMAAQS). The status of criteria pollutant levels in the BLM-FFO are described below.

"Design Values" are the concentrations of air pollution at a specific monitoring site that can be compared to the NAAQS. The 2012 design values for criteria pollutants are listed in Table 3. 2012 Criteria Pollutant Monitored Values in San Juan County. There is no monitoring for CO and lead in San Juan County, but because the county is relatively rural, it is likely that these pollutants are not elevated. PM10 design concentrations are not available for San Juan County.

Table 3. 2012 Criteria Pollutant Monitored Values in San Juan County

Pollutant	2012 Design Concentration	Averaging Time	NAAQS	NMAAQS
O_3	0.071 ppm	8-hour	0.075 ppm[1]	
NO_2	13 ppb	Annual	53 ppb[2]	50 ppb
NO_2	38 ppb	1-hour	100 ppb[3]	
$PM_{2.5}$	4.7 µg/m^3	Annual	12 µg/m^3[3,4]	60 µg/m^3[3,6]
$PM_{2.5}$	14 µg/m^3	24 hour	35 µg/m^3[3,5]	150 µg/m^3[3,6]
SO_2	19 ppb	1-hour	75 ppb[5]	

Source: EPA 2014
[1] Annual fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour concentration, averaged over 3 years
[2] Not to be exceeded during the year
[3] 98th percentile, averaged over 3 years
[4] Annual mean, averaged over 3 years
[5] 99th percentile of 1-hour daily maximum concentrations, averaged over 3 years
[6] The NMAAQS is for Total Suspended Particulate (TSP)

In 2005, the EPA estimates that there was less than 0.01 ton per square mile of lead emitted in FFO counties, which is less than 2 tons total (EPA 2012). Lead emissions are not an issue in this area, and will not be discussed further.

Air quality in a given region can be measured by its Air Quality Index value. The air quality index (AQI) is reported according to a 500-point scale for each of the major criteria air pollutants, with the worst denominator determining the ranking. For example, if an area has a CO value of 132 on a given day and all other pollutants are below 50, the AQI for that day would be 132. The AQI scale breaks down into six categories: good (AQI<50), moderate (50-100), unhealthy for sensitive groups (100-150), unhealthy (>150), very unhealthy and hazardous. The AQI is a national index, the air quality rating and the associated level of health concern is the same everywhere in the country. The AQI is an important indicator for populations sensitive to air quality changes.

Mean AQI values for San Juan County were generally in the good range (AQI<50) in 2013 with 80% of the days in that range. The median AQI in 2013 was 42, which indicates "good" air quality. The maximum AQI in 2013 was 156, which is "unhealthy".

Although the AQI in the region has reached the level considered unhealthy for sensitive groups on several days almost every year in the last decade, there are no patterns or trends to the occurrences as seen in the table below. On 8 days in the past decade, air quality has reached the level of "unhealthy" and on two days, air quality reached the level of "very unhealthy". In 2009 and 2012, there were no days that were "unhealthy for sensitive groups" or worse in air quality. In 2005 and 2013, there was one day that was "unhealthy" during each year. In 2010, there were five "unhealthy" days and two "very unhealthy days".

Table 4. Number of Days classified as "unhealthy for sensitive groups" (AQI 101-150) or worse

ear	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Days	3	6	9	18	1	0	12	9	0	1

Source: EPA 2013a

Hazardous Air Pollutants

The Air Resources Technical Report discusses the relevance of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) to oil and gas development and the particular HAPs that are regulated in relation to these activities (BLM 2014c). The EPA conducts a periodic National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) that quantifies HAP

emissions by county in the U.S. The purpose of the NATA is to identify areas where HAP emissions result in high health risks and further emissions reduction strategies are necessary. A review of the results of the 2005 NATA shows that cancer, neurological and respiratory risks in San Juan County are generally lower than statewide and national levels as well as those for Bernalillo County where urban sources are concentrated in the Albuquerque area (EPA 2012).

Climate

The analysis area is located in a semiarid climate regime typified by dry windy conditions and limited rainfall. Summer maximum temperatures are generally in the range of 80 or 90 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), and winter minimum temperatures are generally in the teens to 20s. Temperatures occasionally reach above 100°F in June and July and have dipped below zero in December and January. Precipitation is divided between summer thunderstorms associated with the southwest monsoon and winter snowfall as Pacific weather systems drop south into New Mexico. The table below shows climate normals for the 30-year period from 1981 to 2010 for the Farmington, New Mexico, area.

Table 5. Climate Normals for the Farmington Area, 1981-2010

Month	Average Temperature (^{O}F)	Average Maximum Temperature (^{O}F)	Average Minimum Temperature (^{O}F)	Average Precipitation (inches)
January	30.5	40.8	20.3	0.53
February	35.8	46.8	24.8	0.59
March	43.2	56.1	30.3	0.78
April	50.4	64.7	36.2	0.65
May	60.4	74.8	46.1	0.54
June	69.8	85.1	54.5	0.21
July	75.4	89.6	61.2	0.90
August	73.2	86.5	59.8	1.26
September	65.4	79.1	51.7	1.04
October	53.3	66.4	40.1	0.91
November	40.5	52.2	28.8	0.68
December	31.0	41.2	20.7	0.50
Source: data collected at New Mexico State Agricultural Science Center - Farmington				

Very recently, pioneering research using space-borne (satellite and aircraft) determination of methane concentrations have indicated anomalously large methane concentrations may occur in the Four Corners region (Kort et al. 2014). A subsequent study by Schneising et al. (2014) indicated larger anomalies over other oil and gas basins in the U.S. Methane is 34 times more potent at trapping GHG emissions than CO2 when considering a time horizon of 100 years (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2013). While space-borne studies can determine the pollutant concentration in a column of air, these studies cannot pinpoint the specific sources of air pollution. Further study is required to determine the sources responsible for methane concentrations in the Four Corners region; however, it is known that a significant amount of methane is emitted during oil and gas well completion (Howarth et al. 2011). Methane is also emitted from process equipment, such as pneumatic controllers and liquids unloading, at oil and gas production sites. Ground-based, direct source monitoring of pneumatic controllers conducted by the Center for Energy and Environmental Resources show that methane emissions from controllers exhibit a wide range of emissions and a small subset of pneumatic controllers emitted more methane than most (Allen et al. 2014a). Emissions measured in the study varied significantly by region of the U.S., the application of the controller and whether the controller was continuous or intermittently venting. The Center for Energy and Environmental Resources had similar findings of variability of methane emissions from liquid unloading (Allen et al. 2014b). In October 2012, EPA promulgated air quality regulations controlling volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions at gas wells. These rules require air pollution mitigation measures that reduce the emissions of VOCs. These same mitigation measures have a co-benefit of reducing methane emissions. Future ground-based and space-borne studies planned in the

Four Corners region with emerging pollutant measurement technology may help to pinpoint significant, specific sources of methane emissions in the region.

The Air Resources Technical Report (BLM 2014c) summarizes information about GHG greenhouse gas emissions from oil and gas development and their effects on national and global climate conditions. While it is difficult to determine the spatial and temporal variability and change of climatic conditions, increasing concentrations of GHGs are likely to accelerate the rate of climate change.

3.1.2. Direct and Indirect Impacts

Air quality would temporary be directly impacted with pollution from exhaust emissions and dust. Air pollution from the motorized equipment and dust dissemination would discontinue at the completion of the project. Other factors that currently affect air quality in the area include dust from livestock herding activities, dust from recreational use, dust from use of roads for vehicular traffic, and emissions from oil and gas production activities. Impacts to air quality attributable to this project would be temporary and minor.

Cumulative Impacts

The primary activities that contribute to levels of air pollutant and GHG emissions in the Four Corners area are electricity generation stations, fossil fuel industries, and vehicle travel. The Air Quality Technical Report includes a description of the varied sources of national and regional emissions that are incorporated here to represent the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable impacts to air resources (BLM 2014c). It includes a summary of emissions on the national and regional scale by industry source. Sources that are considered to have notable contributions to air quality impacts and GHG emissions include electrical generating units, fossil fuel production (nationally and regionally), and transportation.

The proposed project could result in a very small direct and indirect increase in several criteria pollutants, HAPs, and GHGs as a result the short term construction activity. The very small increase in emissions from short term construction activity would not be expected to result in exceeding the NAAQS for any criteria pollutants in the analysis area.

The very small increase in GHG emissions that could result from implementing the proposed alternative would not produce climate change impacts that differ from the No Action Alternative. This is because climate change is a global process that is impacted by the sum total of GHGs in the Earth's atmosphere. The incremental contribution to global GHGs from the action alternatives cannot be translated into effects on climate change globally or in the area of this site-specific action. It is currently not feasible to predict with certainty the net impacts from the action alternatives on global or regional climate.

The Air Resources Technical Report (BLM 2014c) discusses the relationship of past, present, and future predicted emissions to climate change and the limitations in predicting local and regional impacts related to emissions. It is currently not feasible to know with certainty the net impacts from particular emissions associated with activities on public lands.

3.2. Upland Vegetation

3.2.1. Affected Environment

The proposed project area is located within the Arizona/New Mexico Plateau ecological region. This ecological region occurs primarily in Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico; a small portion of the region is located within Nevada. This region encompasses approximately 45,870,500 acres (185,632 square kilometers), and the elevation ranges from 2,165 to 11,949 feet (660 to 3,642 meters) AMSL. The ecological region's landscapes include low mountains, hills, mesas, foothills, irregular plains, alkaline basins, wetlands, and some sand dunes. The Arizona/New Mexico Plateau ecological region is a large transitional area located between the semiarid grasslands to the east; the drier shrublands and woodlands to the north; and the lower, hotter, less-vegetated areas to the west and south. Vegetation communities within this region include shrublands of big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), rabbitbrush

(*Ericameria* spp.), winterfat (*Krascheninnikovia lanata*), shadscale saltbush (*Atriplex confertifolia*), and greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*); and grasslands of blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), green needlegrass (*Nassella viridula*), and needle-and-thread grass (*Hesperostipa comata*). Higher elevations within the Arizona/New Mexico Plateau ecological region may support piñon pine (*Pinus edulis*) and juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) woodlands. This ecological region includes the urban areas of Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Important land uses within the region include irrigated farming, recreation, rangeland, wildlife habitat, and some natural gas production (Griffith, et al. 2006).

The general region surrounding the proposed project area is characterized by broad flat valleys with low rolling hills and mesas in the distance. The proposed project area and surrounding areas are characterized by flat and gently sloping sagebrush shrublands. Ground cover (including litter) ranges from 50 to 60 percent. Dominant vegetation includes big sagebrush, James' galleta (*Pleuraphis jamesii*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*; a non-native, invasive species). Other vegetative species found within the proposed project area include broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), pricklypear (*Opuntia polyacantha*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha* sp.), flixweed (*Descurainia sophia*), primrose (*Oenothera* sp.), redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*; a non-native, invasive species), rose heath (*Chaetopappa ericoides*), Russian knapweed, scarlet globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*), annual fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), and sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*).

3.2.2. Impacts from the Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts

During construction, vegetation would be directly removed from within 5 pole- and anchor-installation sites, each of which would measure 9 square feet. One pole and one anchor would be located on BLM-FFO-managed surface while two poles and one anchor would be located on Private surface. Total direct vegetation removal would be less than 0.01 acre.

Vegetation could be briefly crushed as vehicles travel cross-country within the ROW and construction TUA. Although the ROW and construction TUA encompass 0.37 acre, the proposed pole and anchor located on BLM-FFO-managed surface are located immediately adjacent to Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station. The remaining poles and anchor would be accessed using the proposed project's ROW. Therefore, FEUS would not need to drive cross-country outside of the ROW and construction TUA to access the proposed project's facilities. Because construction, operation, and abandonment activities are anticipated to be brief and infrequent in nature, vegetation impacts are expected to be minor.

Because disturbance to bare soil would be less than 0.1 acre, manual reseeding would not be required by FEUS. Disturbed areas around power poles and anchors would be expected to reseed naturally (BLM 2013).

Within the construction TUA and remainder of the proposed ROW, indirect surface disturbance could result from brief activities such as driving equipment over vegetation and vehicles/personnel stringing line.

The deposition of fugitive dust generated during vegetation-clearing and grading activities and/or during the construction and use of the proposed project, or deposition that could result from wind erosion of exposed soils, could reduce photosynthesis and productivity of the surrounding vegetation (Thompson, et al. 1984; Hirano, et al. 1995), increase water loss in plants near the proposed project area (Eveling and Bataille 1984), and result in injury to leaves of surrounding vegetation.

Cumulative Impacts

The spatial analysis area is the proposed project area and immediately adjacent lands.

Existing disturbances within the spatial analysis area include the following:

- Access roads, county roads, and state highways (adjacent to proposed project area)

- Oil and gas development (existing pipeline corridors, well pads, and Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station)
- Existing powerlines and transmission lines (adjacent to proposed project area)
- Active livestock grazing; the spatial analysis area is within the Farmington Glade grazing allotment (No.5016), which is permitted annually for 140 head of cattle from November 1 through May 31 and is 97 percent public
- Private residential development

Aside from the proposed project, no reasonably foreseeable disturbances are anticipated within the spatial analysis area.

Indirectly, fugitive dust or deposition associated with existing roads and oil and gas infrastructure in the immediate area could impact the vegetation within the analysis area, and could continue to do so throughout the life of the proposed project.

The proposed project would contribute to direct and indirect vegetation disturbance and fugitive dust and/or deposition within the spatial analysis area.

3.3. Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species

3.3.1. Affected Environment

Management of invasive and non-native plant species is mandated under several pieces of legislation, including the Lacey Act, as amended (16 USC 3371-3378); the federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, as amended (7 USC 2801 et seq.); the New Mexico Noxious Weed Management Act of 1998; and EO 13112 regarding Invasive Species. Under EO 13112, federal agencies are ordered not to authorize or carry out actions that would cause or promote the introduction of invasive species.

In the San Juan Basin, invasive plants are frequently found in areas that have been disturbed by surface activities. A mission of the BLM-FFO is to detect new invasive plant species populations, prevent the spread of these new populations, manage existing populations, and eradicate invasive populations. This is to be accomplished in a timely manner, using the safest environmental methods available. For all actions on BLM-FFO lands that involve surface disturbance or reclamation, reasonable steps are required to prevent the introduction or spread of invasive plants (BLM 2003a, 3-34 – 3-35).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated certain plants as federally listed noxious weeds (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2010). The New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) has designated certain plants as state-listed noxious weeds (NMDA 2009). A total of 212 invasive and poisonous weed species have been identified on BLM-FFO lands. The PRMP/FEIS lists the invasive, non-native plant species of concern in the BLM-FFO area (BLM 2003a, 3-34 – 3-35).

No federally listed noxious weeds (NRCS 2010) were identified within the proposed project area during the proposed project's onsite and biological survey.

A population of Russian knapweed, a NMDA Class B and BLM-FFO Class C species, was found north of the proposed project area near the western edge of the McDermott Compressor Station straddling Private and BLM-FFO-managed surface. NMDA Class B species are limited to portions of New Mexico while BLM-FFO Class C species are widespread throughout the BLM-FFO area.

Russian thistle and redstem filaree, both non-native plant species, are found throughout the proposed project area. Although these species are not included on the USDA, state, or BLM-FFO noxious weed lists, they are known to outcompete desirable, native vegetation (Colorado Department of Agriculture 2008; Whitson et al. 1992).

3.3.2. *Impacts from the Proposed Action*

Direct and Indirect Impacts

Noxious weeds and invasive species are generally tolerant of disturbed conditions, and the disturbed soils within the proposed project area may provide an opportunity for the introduction and establishment of non-native, invasive species. Seeds or other propagules of invasive species may be transported to the proposed project area from infested areas by heavy equipment or other vehicles associated with the proposed project.

Invasive species may also spread from established populations near the proposed project area and colonize soils disturbed by proposed project activities. The longer time periods required for the re-establishment of plant communities in arid regions may create an increased potential for the establishment and spread of invasive species. Invasive plant species typically develop high population densities and tend to exclude most other plant species, thereby reducing species diversity and potentially resulting in long-term effects. The establishment of invasive species within or adjacent to the proposed project area may greatly reduce the success of native plant community restoration efforts and create a source of future colonization and degradation of adjacent undisturbed areas.

The establishment of invasive species, particularly annual grasses such as cheatgrass, which produce large amounts of easily ignitable fuel over large contiguous areas, may also alter fire regimes. This situation may result in an increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires, and in some areas, such as in some desert-scrub communities, a fire regime may be created where none was present before. In plant communities that are not adapted to frequent or intense fires, native species, particularly shrubs and trees, may be adversely affected, and their populations may be greatly reduced, creating opportunities for greater increases in invasive species populations (Brooks and Pyke 2001). Increases in fire frequency or severity may thus result in a reduction of biodiversity and may promote the conversion of some habitats (such as forest, shrubland, or shrub-steppe) to other types, prolonging or preventing the development of mature native habitats (BLM and U.S. Department of Energy 2010).

Cumulative Impacts

The spatial analysis area is the proposed project area and immediately adjacent lands. Existing disturbance within this spatial analysis area is listed in Section 3.2.2 (Upland Vegetation – Impacts from Proposed Action – Cumulative Impacts). These disturbances and activities, such as traffic along the existing roads within the area, have resulted in the establishment of Russian knapweed, Russian thistle, and redstem filaree within the spatial analysis area.

The proposed project would contribute to surface disturbance and ongoing activity in the spatial analysis area, and thus contribute to the increased potential for the establishment and spread of noxious weeds and invasive species within the spatial analysis area.

3.4. Cultural Resources

3.4.1. *Affected Environment*

The proposed project area is located within the archaeologically rich San Juan Basin of northwestern New Mexico. In general, the history of the San Juan Basin can be divided into five major periods: PaleoIndian (circa [ca.] 10,000 B.C. to 5,500 B.C.); Archaic (ca. 5,500 B.C. to A.D. 400); Basketmaker II-III and Pueblo I-IV (aka Anasazi; A.D. 1-1,540); and historic (A.D. 1,540 to present), which includes Native American as well as later Hispanic and Euro-American settlers. Detailed descriptions of these various periods are provided in the BLM-FFO PRMP/FEIS (BLM 2003a, 3-65 – 3-84) and will not be reiterated here. Additional information can also be found in an associated documented, the Cultural Resources Technical Report (Science Applications International Corporation 2002).

Cultural sites vary considerably, and can include but are not limited to simple artifact scatters, domiciles of various types with a myriad of associated features, rock art and inscriptions, ceremonial/religious features, and roads and trails.

BLM Farmington Field Office compliance with Section 106 is adhered to by following the State Protocol Agreement between New Mexico BLM and New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (2014), which is authorized by the National Programmatic Agreement among the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (2012), and other applicable BLM handbooks. Pursuant to the Protocol BLM cultural staff determined that the proposed project area had previously been inspected for cultural resources by multiple overlapping Class III surveys. A BLM-FFO In-House Archaeological Survey Determination was completed for the proposed project area; NM-210-2015-11 documents the BLM's determination that existing cultural surveys encompass the entirety of the proposed project area.

No cultural sites have been identified within the proposed project area.

3.4.2. Impacts from the Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Impacts

There are no known historic properties within the APE. The Proposed Action would have no direct or indirect impacts on historic properties (no historic properties affected).

Cumulative Impacts

There would be no negative cumulative impact on cultural resources as no cultural sites are located within the proposed project area.

3.5. Public Health and Safety

3.5.1. Affected Environment

Public health and safety concerns are related to vehicle travel on area access roads. Worker safety is also of concern because the proposed powerline extension would connect the existing COF 756 powerline to the existing Enterprise McDermott Compressor Station. The potential for worker electrocution is therefore an identified health and safety concern. Additional worker safety concerns include working near loud equipment, heavy equipment and moving parts, and flammable and/or explosive material.

Direct and Indirect Impacts

The proposed project would affect local transportation. All roadway speed limits would be observed to reduce potential for traffic accidents. Additionally, hauling of materials or equipment would follow New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) regulations. Following construction, existing roads would be rehabilitated, if needed

The proposed action would be completed in a manner consistent with all applicable OSHA regulations and appropriate industry standards to minimize risk of accidents. Impacts to the public would be minimized by controlling access to all work and operation areas.

Disposal of any liquid and sold waste generated during construction, operation, and maintenance activities would be done at permitted facilities. FEUS would implement measures for safe handling and storage of materials. In the event of a hazardous material spill, releases would be contained and disposed in accordance with Federal regulations. The proposed powerline would be constructed and operated to meet all industry standards and applicable State and Federal requirements.

Cumulative Impacts

Other reasonably foreseeable activities in the proposed project area that could affect public and worker health and safety include construction and operation of pipelines, natural gas and oil wells, and associated facilities; mining; prescribed fire; and vehicular travel on unimproved dirt roads. The construction and operation of the proposed powerline would contribute negligibly to public and worker health and safety concerns when considered with past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions within the BLM-FFO planning area.

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1. Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted

The following tribes, individuals, organizations, and/or agencies were consulted during the development of this EA:

4.2. List of Preparers

This EA was prepared by NCI in conformance with the standards of and under the direction of the BLM-FFO. The following individuals assisted in the preparation of this EA:

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- Barney Wegener, Natural Resources Specialist, BLM-FFO
- Jim Copeland, Archaeologist, BLM-FFO
- Jillian Aragon, Land Law Manager, BLM-FFO
- Marcella Romero, Realty Specialist, BLM-FFO
- Stanley Dykes, Noxious Weed Coordinator, BLM-FFO (Retired)
- Sheila Williams, District Botanist, BLM-FFO
- Dale Smith, FEUS
- Douglas Dykeman, DCA

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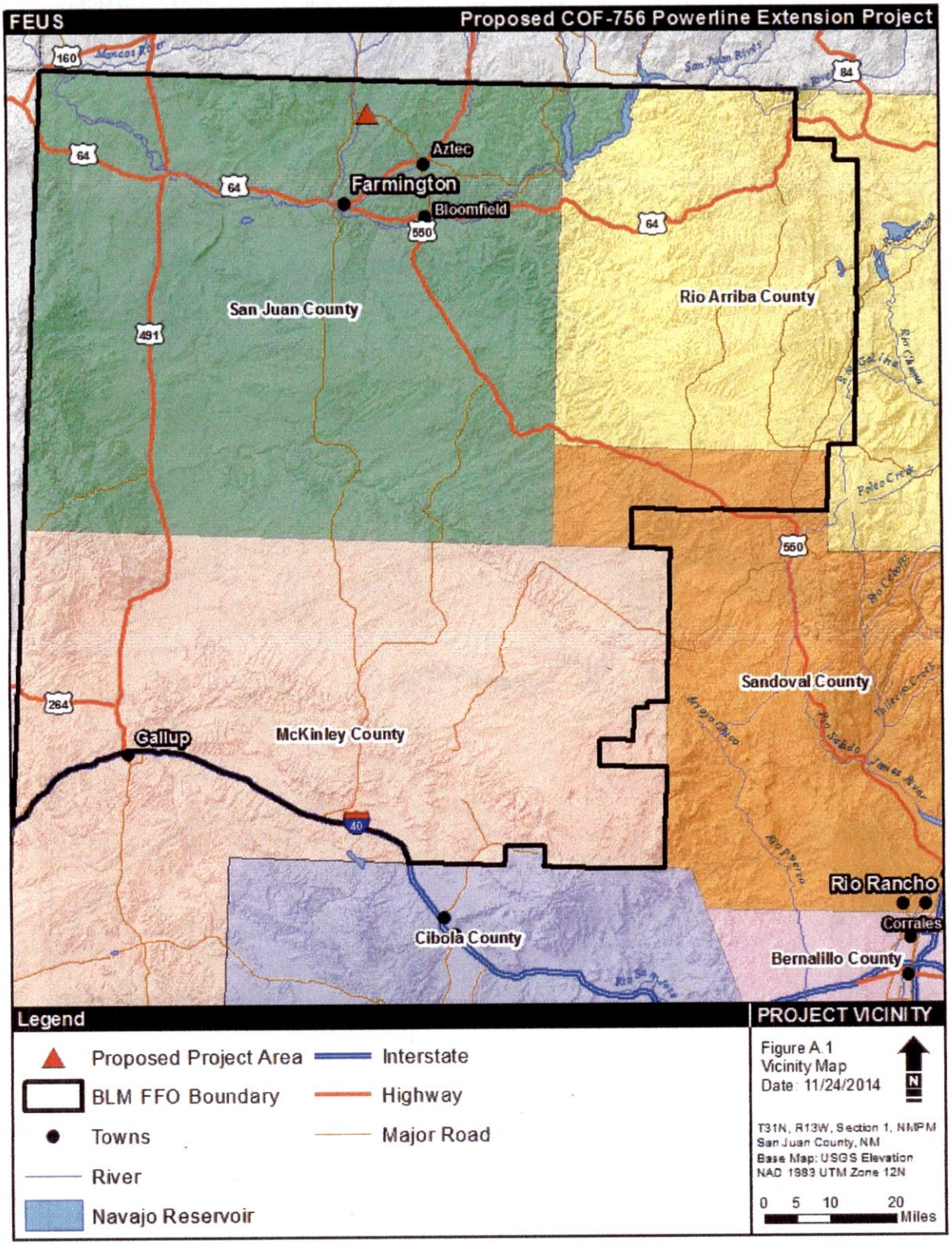
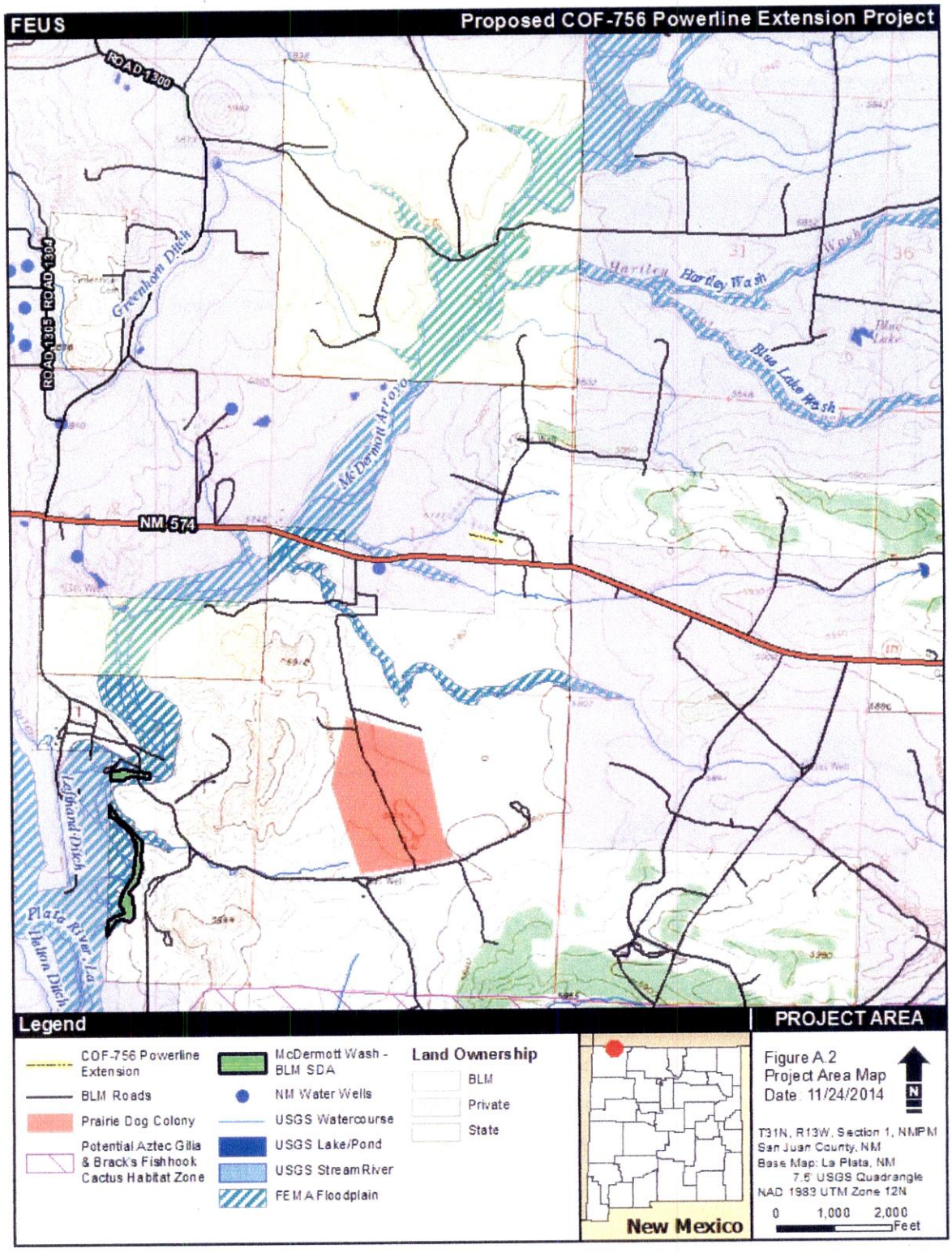
APPENDIX A. MAPS

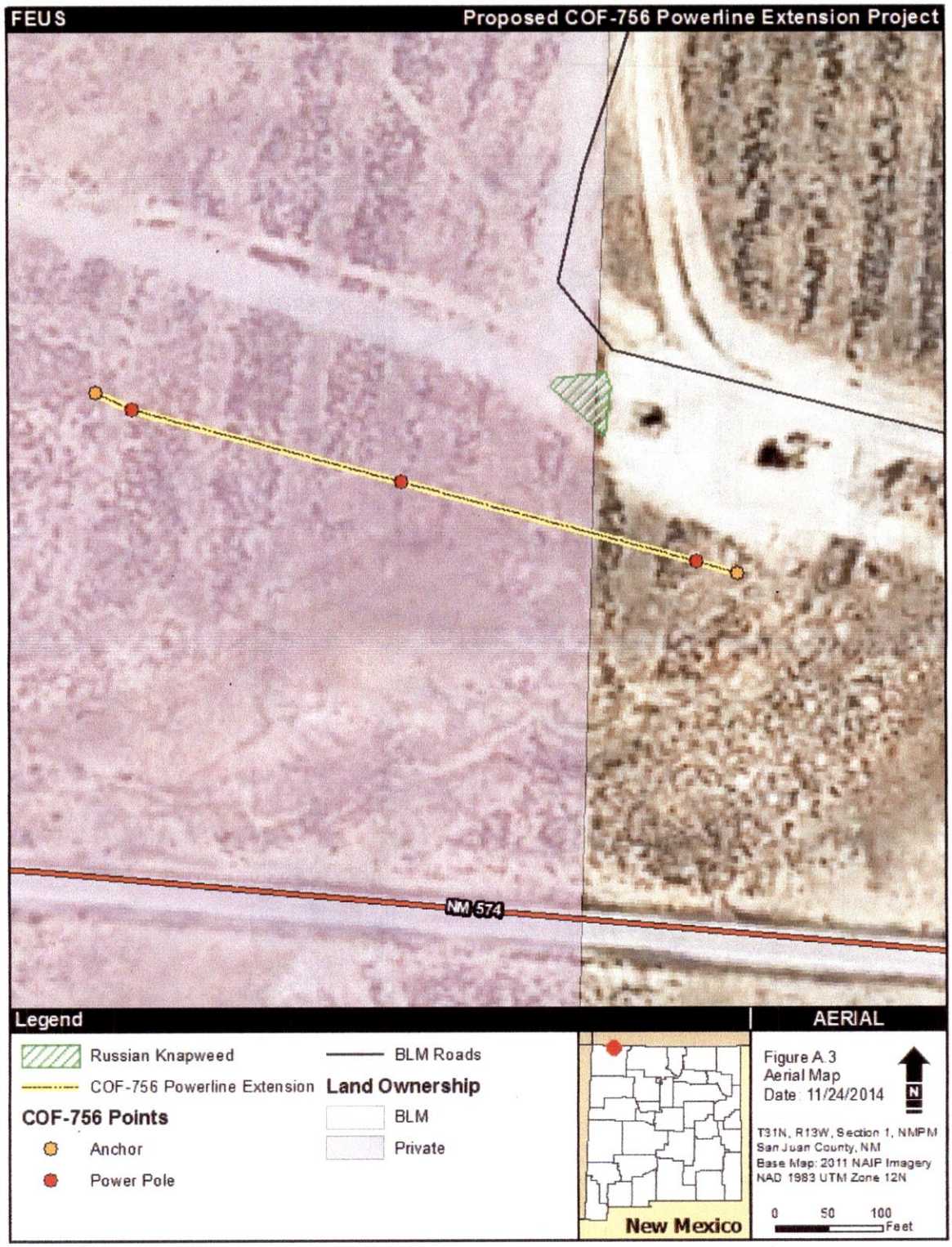
A.1. Vicinity Map



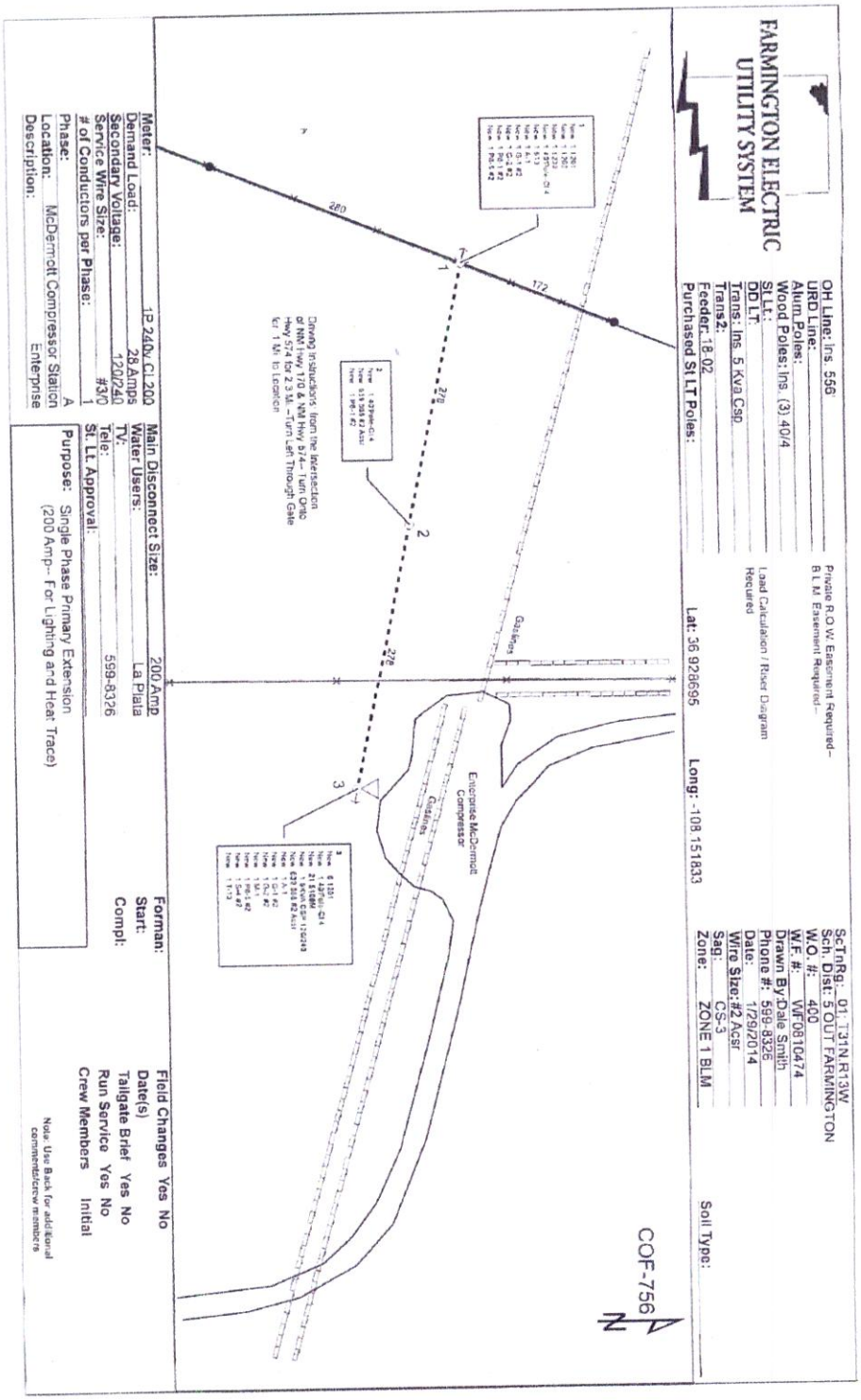
A.2. Project Area Map



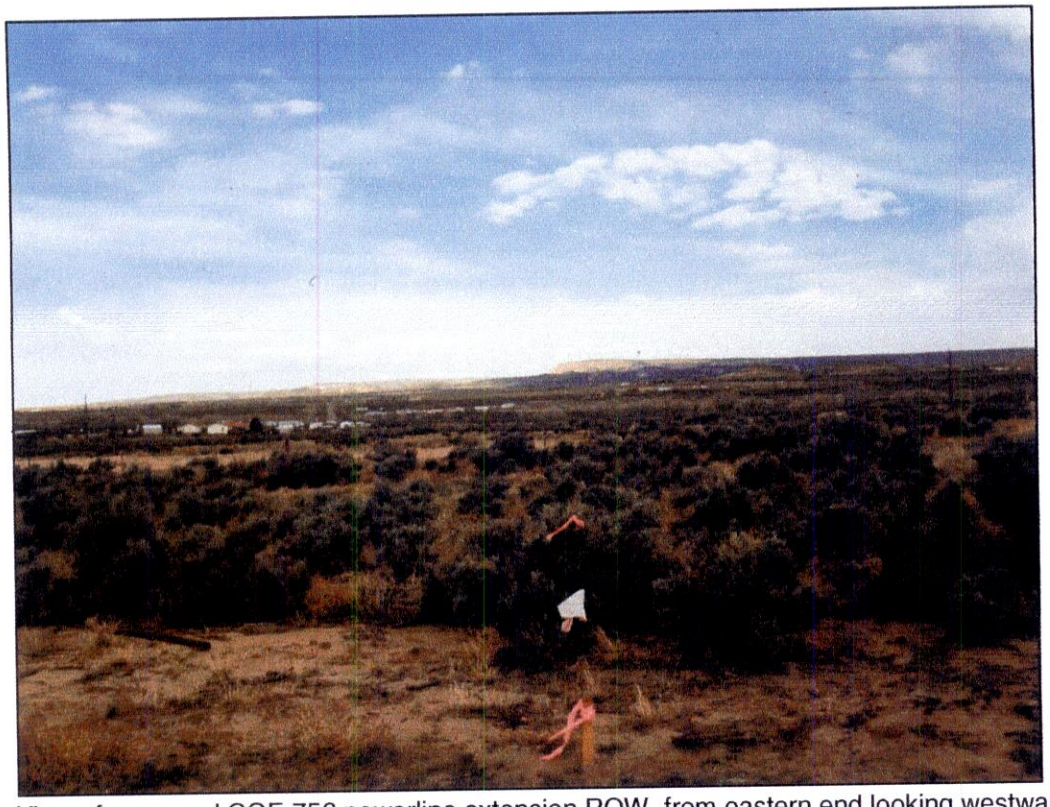
A.3. Aerial Map



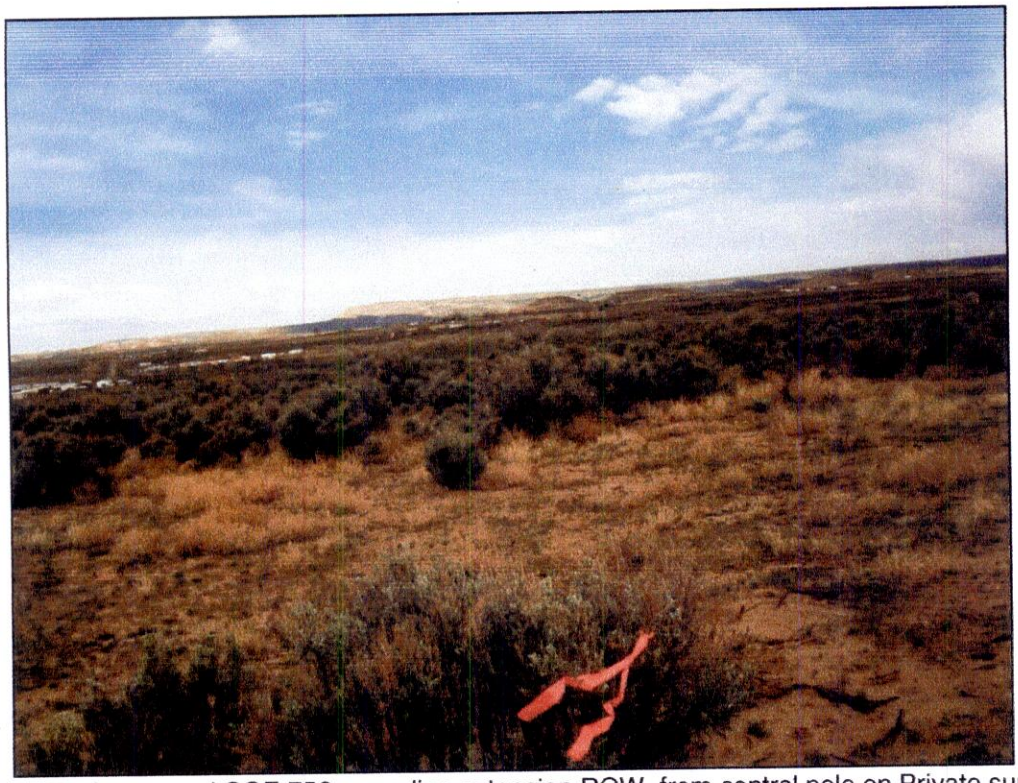
APPENDIX B. PLAT



APPENDIX C. PHOTOS



View of proposed COF-756 powerline extension ROW, from eastern end looking westward



View of proposed COF-756 powerline extension ROW, from central pole on Private surface looking westward

View of proposed COF-756 powerline extension ROW, from central pole on private surface looking eastward towards start and Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station

View of proposed COF-756 powerline extension ROW, from western end looking eastward

Russian knapweed rosettes located on Enterprise's McDermott Compressor Station