

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Carson City N-S Water Main Right-of-Way

NVN 088364

DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2011-0003-EA

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District
Sierra Front Field Office
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701
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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.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE & NEED

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Carson City has applied for a right-of-way (ROW) authorization from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to install a new water transmission main on public lands as part of an improved potable water supply system for the north and west sides of the city. Ultimately the improved system will connect water supply systems of Douglas and Lyon County with Carson City. While designing the water transmission main, the City identified the need to formalize existing road alignments for Valley View Drive and Sinbad Street which already exist on public lands and to authorize future installation of buried utilities along these city streets. In addition, the City identified an opportunity to include construction of a multi-use path consistent with the City's Unified Pathways Master Plan along the east side of Fairview Drive during installation of the water transmission main and has requested that the ROW include authorization for the multi-use path.

PURPOSE & NEED

The BLM needs to respond to Carson City's application for a ROW submitted to the BLM's Sierra Front Field Office. The ROW would authorize the construction, operation, and maintenance of a water transmission main, two existing roads and other buried utilities along these roads, and a multi-use path on public land administered by the BLM. The BLM must assure that the proposed ROW avoids undue or unnecessary degradation of public land and has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) as part of the decision-making process in consideration of the requested ROW grant. Based on this EA, the BLM has also determined that there would be no significant impacts, therefore a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be signed and no environmental impact statement (EIS) is required for the project. Through this decision process, BLM would meet obligations under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, and other laws and regulations.

The purpose of the project is to: (1) improve the potable water supply system for Carson City, (2) authorize constructed portions of Valley View Drive and Sinbad Street and allow future improvements to these City streets, including installation of buried utilities in or adjacent to the streets and (3) accommodate non-motorized transportation along the busy thoroughfare of Fairview Drive and connect existing paths and sidewalks. The locations of the proposed facilities are related to existing water storage (Prison Hill water tank) and existing city streets and paths. Carson City already holds ROWs that authorize water transmission main installation along Fairview Drive and a water transmission main connection to the Prison Hill Water Tank.

RELATIONSHIP TO PLANNING AND CONFORMANCE WITH PLANS

The public lands involved in the Proposed Action are managed in accordance with the Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) (BLM 2001). The Proposed Action and alternative described below are in conformance with the CRMP. Objectives from the CRMP follow national policy for Rights of Way (43 CFR 2800.0-2 -Rights-of-Way – Objectives). Applicable provisions are as follows:

It is the objective of the Secretary of the Interior to grant rights-of-way and temporary use permits, covered by the regulations in this part, to any qualified individual, business entity, or governmental entity and regulate, control and direct the use of said rights-of way on public lands

so as to:

- *Protect the natural resources associated with the public lands and adjacent private property or other lands administered by a government agency.*
- *Prevent unnecessary or undue environmental damage to the lands and resources.*
- *Promote the utilization of rights-of-way in common with respect to engineering and technological compatibility, national security and land use plans.*
- *Coordinate to the fullest extent possible, all actions taken pursuant to this part with state and local governments, interested individuals, and appropriate quasi-public entities.*

The recently enacted Omnibus Public Land Management Act (OPLMA) affects much of the federal lands within the boundaries of Carson City. Portions of the act provide for:

- conveyance of approximately 3,604 acres of BLM land identified as the Silver Saddle Ranch and Carson River Area to the City to be managed by the City to protect and enhance the Carson River, the floodplain and surround upland, and important wildlife habitat and to be used for undeveloped open space, passive recreation, customary agricultural practices, and wildlife protection; subject to a conservation easement to protect, preserve and enhance the conservation values of the land, and
- permanent withdrawal of 19,747 acres of public land within the urban interface of Carson City from all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land and mineral laws for the purpose of removing the lands from future mineral development and other types of applications or claims that could result in non-discretionary development or conveyance of federal land into private ownership.

The proposed ROW in the vicinity of Fairview Drive lies within both the area for conveyance to Carson City and the withdrawal area.

The proposed ROW in the vicinity of Valley View Drive and Sinbad Street is located on a 40-acre area of public land within the withdrawal area but otherwise not affected by the recent legislation. The legislation does not affect the BLM resource management plan designation for this 40-acre area of land which continues to reflect recreation and public purposes uses for state and local government.

The proposed ROW is consistent with the OPLMA.

2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

PROPOSED ACTION

Carson City has requested a ROW to construct a new 24" (diameter) water transmission main (buried pipeline) across public lands to supply water to the north and west sides of town. The new main would cross both public and private lands and would extend north on Bigelow Drive to Snyder Avenue, east to Conte Drive, then north on Conte Drive to connect with the water main improvements currently being constructed at Fifth Street and Fairview (Figures 1 and 2). Carson City has applied for a right-of-way (ROW) 50' wide and 1,200' in length between portions of Conte Drive for the proposed water main and access along the water main (Figure 3). Water main construction would include clearing and grading the major portions of the ROW, excavating a trench 5-6' in width and 6.5' in depth with a track hoe or similar heavy equipment, stockpiling excavated material, installing the 24" water line on padding

material, then backfilling and compacting the trench utilizing the stockpiled material, grading slopes to their original contour and reseeding disturbed areas. Typical work zone, including project access, and trench diagrams are included on Figure 3.

In addition, Carson City has applied for ROW 60' in width and 1,900' in length along the existing alignments of Valley View Drive and Sinbad Street for access and buried public utilities. This ROW would authorize existing improvements along these city streets and allow for future upgrades to the roadways, including widening, surfacing, and drainage improvements and installation of additional buried utility lines typical of residential streets throughout the area. No specific improvements are proposed in association with the water main project.

Carson City also proposes to construct a public multi-use path along portions of Fairview Drive in conjunction with the water main project. BLM previously issued a ROW on public lands for portions of Fairview Drive (formerly Edmonds) which included authorization for public utilities (NVN 035560). Although the existing ROW is adequate for the water main installation, Carson City is requesting additional ROW on public lands 30' in width and 195' in length and 40' in width and 526' in length along the east side of Fairview Drive for a 12' wide, paved, multi-use path (Figures 4 and 5). The path is proposed to accommodate non-motorized transportation along the busy thoroughfare of Fairview Drive and would connect with existing paths and sidewalks to the north and south. The path follows an alignment identified on the City's Unified pathways master Plan, adopted April 6, 2006.

Carson City Engineering Department would utilize a licensed Professional Engineer for the project design and construction oversight. Construction activities would incorporate measures to minimize impacts to vegetation and soils and include land reclamation. The City proposes to begin construction of the water main and multi-use path upon issuance of the ROW. The City anticipates construction on public lands to occur over a 3-4 week during the first half of 2011.

A 30-year, renewable ROW is proposed on the following described public lands:

Mt. Diablo Meridian

T. 15 N., R. 20 E.,

sec. 15, lot 1,

sec. 21, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$,

sec. 28, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$. (containing 4.61 acres)

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative Carson City would not construct the water main, other buried utilities or the multi-use path on public lands. The City would likely redesign the project to locate the water transmission line on private lands along a less direct and cost-effective route. The multi-use path along the east side of Fairview Drive would be delayed until the public land is conveyed to Carson City under the OPLMA or eliminated. No future utilities would be located along this portion of Valley View Drive or Sinbad Street.

Under the No Action Alternative, no activities would be authorized on the public lands. The project would likely proceed on private and State lands. If resource values were present on an alternative alignment (outside the scope of this document), the potential for impacts to those resource values may exist, however consideration of those impacts would be reviewed during a separate approval process through Carson City. Under the No Action Alternative, no changes to the environmental settings of the

public lands would occur, as a result the No Action Alternative is not carried forward for further analysis.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter identifies and describes the existing conditions and trend of elements or resources in the human environment which may be affected by the Proposed Action.

SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Internal scoping was completed by a team of BLM resource specialists between July and November of 2010. The following Supplemental Authorities and Other Resources tables reflect resource specialists input.

General Setting

The project area is on the west side of Prison Hill between Fifth Street and Valley View Drive in Carson City, Nevada. The terrain is rolling hills to valley bottom. The elevation is approximately 4,750 feet. Slopes along the ROW are relatively flat to gentle. The Prison Hill Recreation Area is located east and adjacent to or within the proposed project area. Southern portions of the project area are in the immediately vicinity of future US Hwy 395 (Carson City Bypass), and the Prison Hill water storage replacement tank. Both of these projects are currently under construction. Private lands near the project area are mainly developed for residential uses. State lands in the vicinity house the Nevada National Guard and State Prison facilities.

SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES

Appendix 1 of BLM’s NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) identifies Supplemental Authorities that are subject to requirements specified by statute or executive order and must be considered in all BLM environmental documents. The table below lists the Supplemental Authorities and their status in the project area. Supplemental Authorities that may be affected by the Proposed Action and are further described in this EA.

Table 3-1 Supplemental Authorities.

Supplemental Authority*	Not Present **	Present/Not Affected **	Present/May Be Affected***	Rationale
Air Quality		√		The project area is not in a non-attainment area. Although during construction there would be a negligible increase in particulates and emissions, the overall air quality of the project area will not be affected.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	√			BLM has determined that there are no ACEC’s present in the sale area.
Cultural Resources	√			Previous cultural inventories of lands in the area potentially affected by the ROW are all negative for cultural properties.
Environmental Justice	√			Health or environmental effects would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income groups.
Farm Lands (prime or unique)	√			Resource is not present.
Floodplains	√			Resource is not present.
Invasive, Nonnative and Noxious Species		√		Large portions of the public lands have been previously disturbed and noxious plants are most likely already present. The ROW Project would not directly change the presence of these species. The ROW grant would stipulate the City control noxious weeds within the ROW area.
Migratory Birds		√		This is a short term project in a highly urban setting. If any nesting birds occur in the vicinity of the project, they are already accustomed to vehicle traffic and

				other activities. The project would not add new affects to migratory birds.
Native American Religious Concerns	√			No concerns have been identified. The Washoe Tribe has been notified of the project. If information is received prior to the Decision Record, concerns will be incorporated into decision process and maintained as confidential.
Threatened and/or Endangered Species	√			The BLM wildlife biologist reviewed the USFWS website for Nevada's Protected Species at: (http://www.fws.gov/nevada/protected_species/species_by_county.html) and determined that there are no federally-listed species in the project area (Appendix A). BLM specialists reviewed existing information associated with threatened and/or endangered plant species and determined that there are no federally-listed species known to exist in the project area.
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	√			The City has stated in its application, (item 19) that no hazardous materials will be used, produced, transported, stored or used in the construction , operation, maintenance or termination of the right-of-way or any of its facilities and no hazardous materials were observed to be present on the public lands.
Water Quality (Surface/Ground)	√			Resource is not present
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	√			Resource is not present.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	√			Resource is not present.
Wilderness	√			Resource is not present.

See H-1790-1 (January 2008) Appendix 1 Supplemental Authorities to be Considered.

****Supplemental Authorities determined to be Not Present or Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.**

*****Supplemental Authorities determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document.**

RESOURCES OR USES OTHER THAN SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The following resources or uses, which are not Supplemental Authorities as defined by BLM's Handbook H-1790-1, are present in the area. BLM specialists have evaluated the potential impact of the Proposed Action on these resources and documented their findings in the table below. Resources or uses that may be affected by the Proposed Action are further described in this EA.

Table 3-2 Other Resources

Resource or Issue	Present/Not Affected#	Present/May Be Affected##	Rationale
General Wildlife and Fisheries	√		The project is located in an urban area adjacent to major roads and on lands that receive substantial surface disturbance and vehicle traffic. No impacts to wildlife are anticipated since any wildlife present would be accustomed to human activities similar to those associated with this project. In addition the construction period is short (3-4 weeks) and revegetation of disturbed areas is part of the project. There are no fisheries in the project area.
Land Use Authorizations	√		There are several existing transportation and utility ROWs in the project area. The City has designed the project to avoid impacts to existing facilities and the ROW grant will stipulate coordination with existing ROW holders to ensure protection of existing authorized facilities so land use authorizations would not be affected.
Recreation/Access	√		There are multiple access points to the Prison Hill Recreation Area. Due to the short construction phase (3-4 weeks) and various access points available, temporary access restrictions along the ROW during construction would have no impact affect on recreation access. No other public access routes are located on the ROW. The proposed multi-use pathway is consistent with BLM's <i>Recreation Management and Site Plan</i> and would complement the existing Prison Hill Recreation Area trail system.

Soils	√		Minor soil disturbance would occur during construction activities however, the City has designed the project to minimize disturbance, and would utilize best management practices to maintain soil stability. The proposal includes revegetation of disturbed areas.
Vegetation	√		Minor disturbance and removal of vegetation would occur during construction activities however, the City has designed the project to minimize disturbance and the proposal includes revegetation of disturbed areas.

#Resources or uses determined to be Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.

##Resources or uses determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document.

RESOURCES PRESENT AND BROUGHT FORWARD FOR ANALYSIS (All Resources)

No resources have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the Proposed Action or alternative.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The Proposed Action is located in a developed urban area on lands that have received substantial disturbance in the past. Best management practices would be implemented during construction activities to minimize any potential effects, and the project is of a short duration in a highly urbanized area. No resources or land uses have been identified with the potential to be adversely affected by the Proposed Action and no environmental consequences are anticipated.

5.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There would be no cumulative effects from implementation of the Proposed Action. The construction activities would occur over a 3-4 week duration and occur in a highly disturbed urban setting. Minor affects from this project would occur during construction and would not contribute to cumulative effects on any resources.

6.0 PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

LIST OF PREPARERS

Bureau of Land Management

NAME	TITLE	PROJECT EXPERTISE
Jo Ann Hufnagle	Lead Realty Specialist	Project Lead – Land Use Authorizations/Access
Brian Buttazoni	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	NEPA, Air Quality, Environmental Justice, Socioeconomics
Pilar Ziegler	Wildlife Biologist	T&E and Sensitive Species (animals), Migratory Birds, General Wildlife
Rachel Crews/Steve Christy	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
Dean Tonenna	Botanist	T&E and Sensitive Species (plants), Invasive, non-native and

		noxious species
Dan Erbes	Geologist	Hazardous Materials
Jim Schroeder	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Wetlands/Riparian, Soils
Katrina Leavitt	Rangeland Management Specialist	Vegetation

PERSONS, GROUPS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

NAME	AGENCY	PROJECT EXPERTISE
Mark Brethauer, Dave Rosenkoetter and Robb Fellowes	Carson City Public Works	Engineering and Design for Carson City
Deann McKay	Nevada Division of State Lands	Management of State Lands
	Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns

APPENDIX A

SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN CARSON CITY COUNTY

Species By County



Nevada Fish & Wildlife Office

Pacific Southwest Region

- Home
- About Us
- Contact Us
- Desert Tortoise
- Ecological Services
 - Candidate Program
 - Consultation
 - Environmental Quality
 - Federal Activities
 - Listing
 - Permitting
 - Recovery
- Environmental Documents
- Fisheries
 - Lahontan Fish Hatchery
 - Desert Fish Recovery
- Let's Go Outside!
- News Room
 - News Letters
 - News Releases
- Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program
- Photo Gallery
- Site Map
- Species
 - Protected Species
 - Recent Species Actions
 - Urban Wildlife
- Species Conservation
 - Habitats
 - Habitat Conservation Plans

[Protected Species Home](#) | [Nevada's Species List](#) | [Species By County](#)
[Amphibians](#) | [Birds](#) | [Fish](#) | [Invertebrates](#) | [Mammals](#) | [Plants](#) | [Reptiles](#)

Nevada's Protected Species by County

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
NEVADA FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICE

NEVADA'S ENDANGERED, THREATENED, PROPOSED AND
CANDIDATE SPECIES BY COUNTY
(Updated March 5, 2010)

CARSON CITY RURAL AREA

Amphibian

C Mountain yellow-legged frog *Rana muscosa*
(Sierra Nevada Distinct
Population Segment)

Bird

C Greater sage-grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus*

Fish

T Lahontan cutthroat trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii
henshawi*

Invertebrate

E Carson wandering skipper *Pseudocopaeodes eunus
obscurus*

Plant

C Tahoe yellow cress *Rorippa subumbellata*

CHURCHILL COUNTY

APPENDIX B

FIGURES