

DECISION RECORD
for Weston Hills Road Maintenance and Trail Addition
Environmental Assessment (EA) # WY-070-12-36

Decision. The BLM approves the Weston Hills Road Maintenance and Trail Addition as described in Alternative B of the EA, WY-070-EA12-36.

Compliance. This decision complies with:

- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 USC 1701).
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 USC 4321).
- DOI Order 3310, Protecting Wilderness Characteristics on Lands Managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Dec 2010; BLM Manuals 6301, 6303 and 6303.
- Powder River Basin Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), and RMP Amendment 2003.
- Buffalo Resource Management Plan 1985, as amended.
- 9113 Manual (Roads) Supplement, Wyoming BLM 1991

The Project.

Features. This DR approves road maintenance and an additional trail.

Details of the approval of Alternative B are summarized below. The project description and site-specific mitigation measures are in the EA and administrative record.

The selected alternative will continue the use of the existing designated routes and an additional 5.2 mile outer loop for vehicles 50” or less. The proposed action would close and reclaim redundant roads on BLM administered surface that do not provide access for necessary administrative purposes. In total, the proposed action will result in approximately 12.6 miles for public recreational use and about 15.4 mi for administrative use. Areas that can safely accommodate challenging or desired features for motorized recreationists, such as hill climbs or scenic vistas, would also be incorporated, consistent with other resource objectives.

All roads and trails will be entered into FAMS and maintained on an as needed basis according to engineering surveys and standards. The main access road (Weston West) will be re-crowned and surfaced with gravel, rather than crushed scoria in conformance with WY BLM Supplement to the 9113 Roads Manual. Additional drainage features would be installed along with a guardrail on ~500 feet of the Weston West road.

The trails will consist of routes that are numbered and assigned for specific types of vehicular traffic (passenger vehicle, 4WD, Vehicles 50” or less, etc.). A corresponding motor vehicle use map will be made available on-site, at the BFO, and on the BFO recreation website.

Signs will be placed at trail junctions. Existing vehicle gates along the route system will be replaced with cattle guards to provide a more seamless recreation experience and to prevent gates

being left open. Additional walk-through gates will provide non-motorized access. Gates may be placed on administrative use routes to prevent unauthorized use.

There will be no seasonal closure on the ATV loop trails (trails would remain open year-round) unless resource conditions warrant temporary closures.

The BLM will cooperate with the TBNG to create a mutually beneficial Memorandum of Understanding related to the management of Weston Hills. Additional written agreements with interested parties such as WGFD or local organizations would be encouraged, dependent on interest.

The selected alternative would provide for improved visitor information at the Weston Hills entrance, including provision of interpretive information as time and funding allow. Law enforcement would continue to make patrols approximately 2 times per month and on an as needed basis.

Limitations.

There are no deferrals or denials.

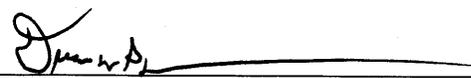
THE FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI). Alternative B in EA, WY-070-EA12-36, and the FONSI found the Weston Hills Road Maintenance and Trail Addition will have no significant impacts on the human environment, thus an EIS is not required.

DECISION RATIONALE. BLM bases the decision authorizing the alternative, summarized above, on:

1. BLM included mitigation measures in Alternative B to reduce environmental impacts while meeting the project's need.
2. The selected alternative will not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation.
3. The project is clearly lacking in wilderness characteristics as there is no federal surface.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW AND APPEAL. This decision is subject to administrative review according to 43 CFR 3165. Request for administrative review of this decision must include information required under 43 CFR 3165.3(b) (State Director Review), including all supporting documentation. Such a request must be filed in writing with the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003, no later than 20 business days after this Decision Record is received or considered to have been received. Any party who is adversely affected by the State Director's decision may appeal that decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as provided in 43 CFR 3165.4.

Field Manager: _____



Duane W. Spencer, Field Manager

Date: August 8, 2012