

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CASPER FIELD OFFICE**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**BLUE GULCH TRAILHEAD
DOI-BLM-WY-P060-2011-52-EA**

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed an environmental analysis (EA WY-P060-2011-52-EA) which analyzes the effects of developing a trailhead and associated recreation facilities, and reclaiming all other disturbed areas on a newly acquired parcel within the Trapper's Route Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). At the completion of the comment period minor changes were made to the environmental assessment in response to public comment, additional information and to clarify written statements.

PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to construct a trailhead and to extend the existing pedestrian trail. Project elements include a parking area, picnic sites, a comfort station and pedestrian trail. The proposed action will incorporate resource monitoring and provide some administrative flexibility within the management guidelines outlined for rural-developed areas. The parcel lies between Grey Reef Campground, managed by the Natrona County Parks Department for the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the Redds Day Use Area, which is administered by the BLM. It is located at T. 30 N., R. 82 W., section 18 SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ and is within the boundary of the North Platte River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) as defined by the Casper Field Office Resource Management Plan (RMP; BLM 2007).

Changes to the proposed action are considered minor and would result in no additional environmental impacts. Therefore, the following changes have been incorporated into the environmental assessment and the associated Decision Record:

- The existing water well would be maintained under the existing right-of-way.
- This well would not be made available for public use.
- A second water well will be repaired the water will be made available for reclamation projects.
- The existing assault will be utilized as a motorized parking area.

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Based on the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in Casper RMP; (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the RMP; and, (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

Rationale for Finding of No Significant Impact

The primary purpose for conducting an environmental assessment is to determine whether or not a proposed action will have a significant impact on the human environment and therefore will require the preparation of an EIS. As defined in 40 CFR 1508.13, the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is a document that briefly presents the reasons why an action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. The regulations further define the term "significantly" in 40 CFR 1508.27 and require that the context and intensity of impacts be considered in analyzing significance. The following provides an analysis of the significance of impacts of the proposed Blue Gulch Trailhead project in terms of context and intensity as defined in the regulations.

Context

The project site is located within the Casper Field Office RMP administrative area. This analysis tiers to the Record of Decision (ROD) and Casper RMP approved on December 7, 2007. These documents are included in the analysis by reference.

Intensity

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the Blue Gulch Trailhead project decision relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The proposed action would beneficially affect resources as described in the EA. Those resources analyzed are: cultural and historic uses; soils; wetlands and riparian zones; floodplains; water quality, prime or sole source water; vegetation and plant

communities; invasive non-native species; wildlife and habitats; special status species; visual resources; and, recreation.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action is designed to have minimum impact or improvement on public health and safety. Transportation of equipment to the project location will be in conformance with state and federal laws.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The project is located within a Special Recreation Management Area and is not in close proximity to a geographical area with unique characteristics such as of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas are not located in close to the project area.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

No anticipated project-specific effects are likely to be considered highly controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

Implementation of the proposed action would not pose highly uncertain, unique or unknown risks to the human environment. Project design features have been built into the proposed action to reduce or avoid any adverse effects to area resources.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The alternatives would neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. Any future actions would undergo the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

No cumulative effects beyond those already analyzed in the Casper RMP were noted. All possible actions in context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions were evaluated. Significant cumulative effects are not expected.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

This proposed project will not result in any adverse effects to any sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

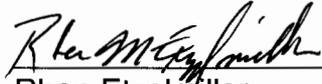
Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to plants, wildlife, and fisheries have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Action. Although listed species may occupy habitat within the project boundary, it has been determined that they will not be affected because timing limitation stipulations will be applied.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. In addition, the project is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs

11. The implementation of either of the action alternatives would not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law, or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The project does not violate federal, state, or local law, or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Authorized Official: 
Rhen Etzel Miller
Assistant Field Manager,
Casper

4/16/2012
Date