

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

# **FIFTEEN MILE ROAD SPEED LIMIT**

***DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA***

Worland Field Office, Wind River/Bighorn Basin District, Wyoming

January 2012



The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

**Publication Number BLM/WY/PL-11/037+1630**

**DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA**

**Project Title: Fifteen Mile Road Speed Limit  
(DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA)**

**Location:** First four miles of the Fifteen Mile Road. This encompasses the portion of the road which falls within Township 47 North, Range 93 West, Sections 16,17,21, 22, 23, and 26.

**Applicant/Address:** *Bureau of Land Management  
101 South 23<sup>rd</sup> St  
Worland WY 82401*

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

During the previous five years, private developments, accessed via the Fifteen Mile Road, have increased vehicle use on this route. The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) states that agencies should conduct a traffic engineering study when significant changes in traffic volumes occur. An engineering study was conducted during the summer of 2010. The characteristics of the Fifteen Mile Road pose a potential risk to those operating vehicles on a segment beginning at the intersection with the Landfill Access road and ends four miles west of the intersection. (Figure 1). Accidents and assistance provided to motorists is tracked by the Washakie County Sheriff's Office since they provide a primary response to vehicle accidents and medical aid. This segment of road is maintained by the Worland Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and is managed under the custody and control of the BLM.



Figure 1

## **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

The need for the action arises from the findings of the 2010 engineering study finding a risk to motor vehicle operation on the identified segment of road.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide for the safety of the visiting public on this segment of the Fifteen Mile Road and BLM's obligation under 43 CFR 8340.0-2 which states, "The objective of these regulations are to protect the resources of the public lands, to promote the safety of all users of those lands, and to minimize conflicts among the various uses of those lands." 43 CFR 8341.1 (d) addresses compliance with state law. The state law that is applicable in this case is the maximum speed limit statute found under Wyoming Statute 31-5-301 (b) (iv).

The criteria for determining the effectiveness of this action is through the reduction in documented accidents and medical assists on this segment of road.

## **DECISION TO BE MADE**

The BLM will decide whether or not to install five speed limit signs on the Fifteen Mile Road.

## **CONFORMANCE WITH BLM LAND USE PLAN(S)**

Grass Creek Resource Management Plan – 1998

This plan has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms to the land use plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. The Grass Creek RMP provides that those areas not designated as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) would be managed as an Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). This area is currently managed under the

ERMA goals and objectives; which allow for management actions to address visitor health and safety concerns. The Grass Creek RMP also provides that access to specific areas may be closed or restricted to protect public health and safety. (Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan for the Grass Creek Planning Area, pgs. 12 & 16)

## **RELATIONSHIPS TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PLANS**

- This Environmental Assessment (EA) is prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) and complies with applicable regulations and laws passed subsequent to the Act. In addition, this EA is prepared utilizing the stipulations and format outlined in the BLM NEPA Handbook H-1790-1 (BLM 1988). The Proposed Action and alternatives will comply with relevant federal, state, and local regulations, plans, and policies.
- As mandated by FLPMA, Section 201, the BLM is required to maintain an inventory of BLM-administered public lands to determine whether they possess wilderness characteristics. Recent inventories in 2009 and 2010 have found the immediate project area and surrounding areas absent of wilderness characteristics.
- The broad outline of this proposal was brought before the Washakie County Transportation Committee in 2010. They recommended moving forward with a more specific proposal and a MUTCD compliant engineering study. This segment is solely managed the BLM and currently is not subject to a County Right of Way agreement. Three perpetual exclusive easements encompass portions of this road segment.

## **Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues**

During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the proposed action by posting on the Wyoming BLM Environmental Notification Bulletin Board on March 16, 2011. A public comment period was offered because interest in the proposal had been expressed. This comment period began on September 6, 2011 and ended on October 5, 2011. An article was posted in the Northern Wyoming Daily News announcing the comment period. On September 6, 2011, BLM attended Washakie County Commissioners meeting to inform them of comment period. Three comments were received by the BLM in response to the notice.

- Issues identified through internal review and public scoping and further analyzed in this document include: Public Health and Safety; Recreation

Issues identified through public scoping and not analyzed:

### **Jurisdiction**

Procedural issues identified during public scoping were related to the jurisdiction of the BLM to implement this action. This segment of road is managed under the custody and control of the Bureau of Land Management. The type of jurisdiction for the BLM lands in this area is proprietary. This means that both BLM and Washakie County Sheriff's Office have the ability to enforce the speed limit.

The jurisdictional boundaries of implementing this action have no effect on the purpose and need of this environmental analysis and will not be further addressed in this document.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This Environmental Assessment focuses on the Proposed and No Action Alternatives.

#### **PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed action is to post a speed limit on the first four miles of the Fifteen Mile Road. This action would involve posting approximately five signs along this route. 35 Mile Per Hour Speed limit signs would be posted at the intersection of the Landfill Access Road and the Fifteen Mile Road, two miles west of this intersection, and at the western end of the four mile segment.

#### **NO ACTION**

The No Action alternative is to not post a speed limit on this route. If BLM were to not implement a speed limit the public would be allowed by Wyoming Maximum Speed Limits Statute to travel up to 55 miles per hour on this segment of road. The No Action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed action.

#### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS**

Actions that were considered but eliminated include:

- rebuilding the route to improve road characteristics was eliminated due to the need for long term planning.
- establishment of a temporary speed limit only during events. This was eliminated because the conditions that exist which contribute to reduced visitor safety exist throughout the year and not just during special events.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

Resources and features not present, and not discussed in this EA, include: Environmental Justice, Prime or Unique Farmlands, Flood Plains, Cultural and Paleontological resources, Native American Religious Concerns, riparian areas, Class I visual management areas, Class I Airsheds, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wetlands, Grazing; Wild horses, Vegetation (including T&E species), Soils, Water Quality, VRM, Paleontology, Wildlife (including T&E Species), Socioeconomics, Wilderness Values or Inventoried Lands with Wilderness Characteristics.

#### **Health and Safety:**

The Fifteen Mile Road is a crowned and ditched gravel road approximately 24 feet wide. The road has no shoulder. The grade of the road is negligible. There are no current existing Right of Way Agreements or Easements which provide for a management mechanism to resolve issues related to a speed limit.

The alignment of Fifteen Mile Road is West Northwest. There are no relevant intersections along the section of Fifteen Mile Road which will be posted; therefore intersection sight distance is unnecessary for this road.

Given a design speed of 35 mph for Fifteen Mile Road the recommended stopping sight distance is 250 feet which is exceeded by existing conditions of the road. The surface of the road is sometimes wash boarded and vehicles must be driven slower due to this condition. Also, during the winter, the borrow ditches are filled with snow. When the road is dry, dust presents a visual obstruction. In the afternoon, westbound traffic drives towards the setting sun. This presents safety concerns with oncoming traffic.

A traffic study was conducted by the BLM on this stretch of road in 2010. The findings of this study determined that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of vehicle speed was 40 miles per hour.

There have been three incidents in the past twelve month period as recorded by the Washakie County Sheriff's Office. One was a single vehicle roll over motor vehicle accident. The other two were motorist assists in which the vehicles had gone off of the road and became stuck.

#### **Recreation:**

The project area is located within the extensive recreation management area (ERMA), where recreation use is custodial and addresses resource protection, use and user conflicts, and public health and safety. The recreation settings character conditions are identified as middle country and rural. Recreation opportunities exist within and surrounding the area, which mostly consists of shooting/target practice, 4-wheel and ATV use, and driving for pleasure. Travel and Transportation management limits motorized use to existing roads and trails.

Fifteen Mile Road (BLM Road 1429) acts as a portal to the Badlands Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), as well as access to Bobcat Draw Badlands, Red Butte, and Sheep

Mountain Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). There is abundant BLM-administered public lands located within proximity to Worland, Wyoming, which Fifteen Mile Road is the primary route to access these public lands. Two motocross tracks have been recently constructed on private lands located south of Fifteen Mile Road, which has increased the volume of traffic. This increase is not only observed during motocross events, but has been observed throughout the year.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

#### **DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS**

#### **PROPOSED ACTION**

##### **Public Health and Safety:**

Vehicles traveling at 35 miles per hour have a shorter stopping distance than vehicles traveling at higher speeds. This allows for a higher safety margin. This has the potential to reduce the numbers of emergency calls that are received by Washakie County and the BLM. The implementation of a reduced speed limit should not reduce the number of vehicles traveling on this stretch of road. The proposed action will regulate and enforce a slower speed limit, which will minimize these public health and safety issues. The proposed action will minimize public health and safety issues by regulating travel speeds to a safe and controllable level. Public risk from negligent driving behaviors are increasing due to the increasing amount of users on Fifteen Mile Road, due in part from the popular motocross tracks found along the road.

##### **Recreation:**

The proposed action will address and minimize public health and safety issues by decreasing the speed limit within the delineated segment of Fifteen Mile Road (BLM Road 1429). The proposed action will not eliminate or decrease the desired opportunities, experiences, or beneficial outcomes of those who wish to recreate within this area. The physical and social natural resource recreation settings will not be altered from the proposed action. The proposed action will alter the operational settings to a stronger urban setting with the presence of additional regulation signing and presence. The proposed action will interfere with desired goals of the users who are accustomed to and enjoy driving quickly on Fifteen Mile Road, but this will only be observed within the first four miles of Fifteen Mile Road.

#### **NO ACTION**

##### **Public Health and Safety:**

Vehicles traveling at speeds higher than 35 miles per hour have a longer stopping distance than vehicles traveling at lower speeds. This has the potential to decrease the margin of safety. A decrease in the margin of safety has the potential to increase the number of emergency calls that are received by Washakie County and the BLM. The no action alternative will neglect to address public health and safety issues on Fifteen Mile Road and will maintain or increase public safety incidents.

Vehicles traveling at a higher speed will increase the amount of airborne dust that is generated by passing vehicles, contributing to poor visibility.

##### **Recreation:**

The no action alternative will not address, regulate, or enforce speeding and public safety issues along Fifteen Mile Road. The potential for user conflicts and public health and safety incidents would be greater than those in the proposed alternative. ERMA management is to address public health and safety issues.

## **CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

### **Geographic Scope of the Cumulative Effects Analysis**

Within the Worland Field Office there are 404 miles of crowned and ditched roadways managed on public lands. This four mile segment is the only roadway where a speed limit is posted by the BLM.

### **Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions**

There **are** no reasonably foreseeable future actions which will affect this area. Routine and emergency maintenance of the Fifteen Mile Road will continue. It is expected that there will continue to be a slight increase in use on the Fifteen Mile Road partially related to the use of the two motocross tracks. Within the next three years there is no anticipated upgrades to the Fifteen Mile Road within the section of road that was analyzed in this document.

## CHAPTER 5 PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

**Table 5.1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Authorities for Consultation or Coordination</b>	<b>Findings &amp; Conclusions</b>
Washakie County Transportation Committee	Integrated coordination of transportation systems within Washakie County.	Conduct an MUTCD compliant engineering study and complete a detailed proposal.
Washakie County Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement Interagency Coordination	Proprietary Jurisdiction, Speed Limit is compatible with State and Local Laws.
Washakie County Commissioners	FLPMA – Coordination with Local Governments	Commissioners were receptive to the plan.

### List of Preparers

The following Worland Field Office personnel have reviewed or have been contacted with regard to this EA.

**Table 5.2. List of Preparers**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>Paul Rau</b>	<b>Outdoor Recreation Planner</b>
<b>Wade Wittkop</b>	<b>Engineering Technician</b>
<b>Aaron Kania</b>	<b>Law Enforcement Ranger</b>
<b>Mike Bies</b>	<b>Archeologist</b>
<b>Tim Stephens</b>	<b>Wildlife Biologist</b>
<b>Eve Warren</b>	<b>Ecologist</b>
<b>C J Grimes</b>	<b>Invasive Species Coordinator</b>
<b>Jared Dalebout</b>	<b>Hydrologist</b>
<b>Carol Sheaff</b>	<b>Lands</b>
<b>Steve Kiracofe</b>	<b>Natural Resource Specialist</b>

<b>John Elliott</b>	<b>Range Management Specialist</b>
<b>Jim Gates</b>	<b>Forester</b>
<b>Marilyn Wegseiser</b>	<b>Geologist</b>

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: MUTCD Engineering Study

Fifteen Mile Road Engineering Study  
January 10, 2011  
Completed by Wade Wittkop,

### Introduction:

This document serves as the engineering study which establishes a 35 mile per hour speed limit for the first four miles of the Fifteen Mile Road (BLM Road 1429). This segment of road is maintained by the Bureau of Land Management. Due to the proximity to Worland Wyoming and current uses, this segment of road receives a moderate amount of traffic.<sup>1</sup> Based on the characteristics of the road, public safety concerns may be reduced through the establishment and implementation of this speed limit.

### Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Guidance:

#### Section 2B.13 Speed Limit Sign Standards:

**01 Speed zones:** (other than statutory speed limits) shall only be established on the basis of an engineering study that has been performed in accordance with traffic engineering practices. The engineering study shall include an analysis of the current speed distribution of free-flowing vehicles.

*A speed study of free flowing traffic was conducted on three occasions. The first was between 9:30 pm and 10:30 pm on June 12, 2010, the second was between 8:30 pm and 10:00 pm on July 10, 2010, the third was between 12:00 pm and 2:30 pm on July 11, 2010. This study utilized radar to track speeds. The road condition was dry and had recently been graded. The weather was clear with no moisture. There were 100 vehicles observed.*

**02 The Speed Limit Sign:** shall display the limit established by law, ordinance, regulation, or as adopted by the authorized agency based on the engineering study. The speed limits displayed shall be in multiples of 5 mph.

*Based on criteria determined by the MUTCD and information gathered related to the speed distribution of free flowing vehicles, it is the opinion of the engineer that a speed limit of 35 miles per hour is appropriate for this road segment.*

**03 Speed Limit Signs,** indicating speed limits for which posting is required by law, shall be located at the points of change from one speed limit to another.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the traffic counter located on the 15 Mile Road, approximately 15 miles from the intersection with Highway 433, there is a high of 330 trips per month and a low of 105 trips per month. It is assumed that the segment under review has a 3 times higher use than the location where the traffic counter is located. This equals a high of 990 trips per month and a low of 315 trips per month. ( The average daily high would be about 30 trips per day and the average daily low would be 11 trips per day).

*The first point of change will be from the intersection with the "Dump Road" where BLM Road 1429 begins. The second point of change will be for east bound traffic entering the 35 mile per hour zone four miles west of start of the Fifteen Mile Road.*

**04** At the downstream end of the section to which a speed limit applies, a Speed Limit sign showing the next speed limit shall be installed. Additional Speed Limit signs shall be installed beyond major intersections and at other locations where it is necessary to remind road users of the speed limit that is applicable.

*Four miles west of the intersection with the "Dump Road" is the downstream end of the 35 mile per hour speed limit. The speed then reverts to 55 Miles Per Hour maximum speed for west bound traffic per Wyoming Statute 31-5-301 (b)(iv). A speed limit sign should be placed midway between the start of the 15 Mile Road and the end point of the 35 mile per hour speed zone.*

**06** In general, the maximum speed limits applicable to rural and urban roads are established:

- A. Statutorily – a maximum speed limit applicable to a particular class of road, such as freeways or city streets, that is established by State law; or
- B. As altered speed zones – based on engineering studies.

*The speed limit on the Fifteen Mile Road is not established by state law. This speed limit would be based on an engineering study.*

10 States and local agencies should conduct engineering studies to reevaluate non-statutory speed limits on segments of their roadways that have undergone significant changes since the last review, such as the addition or elimination of parking or driveways, changes in the number of travel lanes, changes in the configuration of bicycle lanes, changes in traffic control signal coordination, or significant changes in traffic volumes.

*There has been a significant change in traffic volumes over recent years due to the creation and use of two motocross tracks. This volume is particularly noticeable during motocross events.*

12 When a speed limit within a speed zone is posted, it should be within 5 mph of the 85th-percentile speed of free-flowing traffic.

*The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile was determined to be 40 miles per hour.*

16 Other factors that may be considered when establishing or reevaluating speed limits are the following:

A. Road characteristics, shoulder condition, grade, alignment, and sight distance;

*Fifteen Mile Road is a crowned and ditched gravel road approximately 24 feet wide. The road has no shoulder outside said width. The grade of the road is negligible. The*

*alignment of Fifteen Mile Road is West Northwest. There are no relevant intersections along the section of Fifteen Mile Road which will be posted; therefore intersection sight distance is unnecessary for this road. Given a design speed of 35 mph for Fifteen Mile Road the recommended stopping sight distance is 250 feet which is exceeded by existing conditions of the road. The surface of the road is sometimes washboarded and vehicle must drive slower due to this condition. Also, during the winter, the borrow ditches are filled with snow. When the road is dry, dust presents a visual obstruction. In the afternoon, westbound traffic drives towards the setting sun. This presents safety concerns with oncoming traffic.*

**B. The pace;**

*The free flowing traffic pace on Fifteen Mile Road ranges from 18 to 58 mph.*

**C. Roadside development and environment;**

*There are approximately four roadside developments along the Fifteen Mile Road including a practice fire suppression structure, two motocross tracks and residence/storage area. The area is also available for livestock grazing and livestock are occasionally present. The area features rough broken terrain with patches of sagebrush/bunchgrass within larger communities of saline uplands and/or cactus/blue gramma. The project area receives approximately 5 to 9 inches of precipitation annually, and is considered to be high desert.*

**D. Parking practices and pedestrian activity; and**

*There are no developed parking areas immediately adjacent to the Fifteen Mile Road. Two motocross tracks are located approximately three miles out on Fifteen Mile Road which causes a moderately high traffic flow during motocross events.*

**E. Reported crash experience for at least a 12-month period.**

*There have been three incidents in the past twelve month period as recorded by the Washakie County Sheriff's Office. One was a roll over motor vehicle accident. The other two were motorist assists in which the vehicles had gone off of the road and became stuck.*

## APPENDIX 2: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

**Project Title:** Fifteen Mile Road Speed Limit

**NEPA Log Number:** DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA

**File/Serial Number:**

**Project Leader:** Aaron Kania

**DETERMINATION OF STAFF:** *(Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)*

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
NI	Air Quality/Climate Change	Reduced speed limit may reduce airborne dust to a limited extent.
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	There are no ACECs located within the project area
NP	BLM Natural Areas	There are no BLM Natural Areas located within the project area
NP	Cultural Resources	If discovered refer to stipulations provided in Section 106 review
NI	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	
NP	Environmental Justice	
NP	Farmlands (Prime or Unique)	
NI	Fish and Wildlife Excluding USFW Designated Species	Reduced speed limit may prevent wildlife (antelope) / vehicle collisions.
NP	Floodplains	
NP	Fuels/Fire Management	Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) of the area is 1. (Potential for wildfire along roadways is negligible because of low fire – fuel load.
NP	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production	
NP	Hydrologic Conditions	
NI	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds	
NI	Lands/Access	Three perpetual exclusive easements exist which provide for access to public lands

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
NI	Livestock Grazing	Will Not affect
NI	Migratory Birds	Slower speeds may reduce bird/vehicle collisions
NP	Native American Religious Concerns	If discovered refer to stipulations in Section 106 review
NP	Paleontology	If discovered refer to stipulations in Section 106 review
NI	Rangeland Health Standards	Will not affect
PI	Recreation	Fifteen Mile is a popular gateway to access the "badlands" from Worland. The proposed action will not impede or preclude recreation activities and opportunities.
NP	Socio-Economics	
NI	Soils	
NP	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Plant Species	
NP	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Animal Species	
NI	Wastes (hazardous or solid)	
NI	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/ground)	
NI	Wetlands/Riparian Zones	
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers	There are no Wild and Scenic Rivers within the project area
NP	Wilderness/WSA	There are no WSAs within the project area
NP	Woodland / Forestry	
NI	Vegetation Excluding USFW Designated Species	Slower speeds would equate to fewer incidents of rock/gravel/dust thrown on vegetation along and adjacent to roads
NI	Visual Resources	The project area is managed as VRM Class III. The proposed action will not impact visual resources in any way.
NP	Wild Horses and Burros	
NP	Areas with Wilderness Characteristics	There are no Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) within the project area.

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*
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**FINAL REVIEW:**

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator	<i>Holly Elliott</i>	1/23/12	
Authorized Officer	<i>Karla Bond</i>	1/23/2012	

**DECISION RECORD**  
**Environmental Assessment**  
**DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA**  
***Fifteen Mile Road Speed Limit***

It is my decision to implement a 35 mile per hour speed limit on the first four miles of the Fifteen Mile Road. This action would involve posting approximately five signs along this route. 35 Mile Per Hour Speed limit signs would be posted at the intersection of the Landfill Access Road and the Fifteen Mile Road, two miles west of this intersection, and at the western end of the four mile segment.

**Authorities:** The authority for this decision is contained in 43 CFR 8340.0-2.

**Compliance and Monitoring:** Compliance will begin when the speed limit signs are in place. Compliance will include routine patrol by Washakie County Deputies and BLM Rangers as time and other priorities allow. A press release will be issued to inform the public of the new speed limit. Through compliance and monitoring efforts, it is expected that the number of accidents and requests for assistance will be reduced. If the number of accidents increases, additional enforcement will be necessary. Accidents will continue to be documented and investigated by Washakie County. BLM will utilize the "Incident Management and Reporting System (IMARS)" to document incidents.

**Terms / Conditions / Stipulations:** Speed limit signs will be installed on the four mile segment of road. At the downstream end of the speed limit, a sign indicating the change will also be installed. Signs will also be maintained

**PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY:**

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM Land Use Plans and the associated decision(s):

- Grass Creek Resource Management Plan -- 1998
- This plan has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms to the land use plan as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. The Grass Creek RMP provides that those areas not designated as Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) would be managed as an Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA). This area is currently managed under the ERMA goals and objectives; which allow for management actions to address visitor health and safety concerns. The Grass Creek RMP also provides that access to specific areas may be closed or restricted to protect public health and safety. (Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan for the Grass Creek Planning Area, pgs. 12 & 16)

**Alternatives Considered:**

In addition to the Proposed Action, the other alternative analyzed in detail was the "No Action Alternative". This alternative did not meet the purpose and need for the action because it does not provide for the health and safety of the public. Other alternatives were considered but were not analyzed in detail.

**Public Involvement:**

During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the proposed action by posting on the Wyoming BLM Environmental Notification Bulletin Board on March 16, 2011. A public comment period was offered because interest in the proposal had been expressed. This comment period began on September 6, 2011 and ended on October 5, 2011. An article was posted in the Northern Wyoming Daily News announcing the comment period. On September 6, 2011, BLM attended Washakie County Commissioners meeting to inform them of comment period. Three comments were received by the BLM in response to the notice. The comments were generally related to the jurisdiction of the BLM and the desire to have the Washakie County Sheriff's Office enforce state laws. These comments have been addressed in the Environmental Assessment.

**Rationale for Decision:** The "No Action Alternative" was not selected because it does not address the purpose and need of improving public safety. The traffic control study identified several issues that contribute to public safety concerns. These issues can be adequately addressed by reducing the speed limit from the current 55 miles per hour to 35 miles per hour. The proposed alternative accomplishes the purpose and need for the action.

**Protest/Appeal Language:**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in the Worland BLM Field Office, 101 S. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Worland, Wyoming 82401 within 30 days of the date that notice of this decision is published in the Northern Wyoming Daily News. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) or 43 CFR 2804.1 or 43 CFR 2884.1 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 standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413); Rocky Mountain Region; 755 Parfet Street, Suite 151; Lakewood, Colorado 80215; at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

## **Environmental Assessment**

***DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2011-0037-EA***

### ***Fifteen Mile Road Speed Limit***

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

Karla Bird  
Authorized Officer

January 23, 2012  
Date