

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WESTSIDE LAND CONVEYANCE PROJECT
BIG HORN AND WASHAKIE COUNTIES, WYOMING
ABSTRACT**

Lead Agencies

USDI Bureau of Land Management
Worland Field Office
Worland, Wyoming

Wyoming Water Development Office
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Cooperating Agencies:

Big Horn County Commission
Basin, Wyoming

Washakie County Commission
Worland, Wyoming

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Abstract:

This Draft Environment Impact Statement (EIS) assesses the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of a Congressionally-mandated transfer of 16,500 acres of public land to the Westside Irrigation District and the actions which could be expected to follow the transfer. If the land is transferred, it is anticipated that it would be re-sold to individuals in 160-acre tracts and placed in agricultural use.

This Draft EIS describes the physical, biological, cultural, historic, and socioeconomic resources in and around the lands proposed for transfer. The alternatives in the Draft EIS consider the impacts of transferring the entire 16,500 acres, transferring only those lands actually suitable for irrigation or needed for infrastructure (approximately 10,000 acres), and No Action, under which the lands would not be transferred. The No Action alternative would not be in compliance with P. L. 106-485, which mandates the transfer, but is included for baselining purposes. The focus for the impact analysis was based upon resource issues and concerns identified during internal scoping and public scoping conducted for the transfer. Potential concerns related to the transfer and subsequent development include impacts to wildlife, water quality and flows in the Bighorn River, and cultural and paleontological resources.