

# Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) Worksheet

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

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OFFICE: Schell Field Office, LL0200

NEPA NUMBER: DOI-BLM-NV-L020-2012-0002-DNA

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Administrative Access Authorization for Cold Spring Allotment

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Cold Spring Allotment (#00909)

## A. Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

The proposed action would change the designation of four routes (routes 2103, 2126, 2139, and 2157, as shown in *Map of Routes Under Consideration* (p. 5)) from “closed” to “limited” for Administrative Access Only. Administrative Access is defined in Section 2.2.4 of the South Steptoe Travel Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA), which states:

“Routes may be designated for Administrative Access Only where heavy usage by motorized vehicles could be potentially detrimental to the surrounding resources. This designation would still allow access for BLM staff and holders of existing permits to perform maintenance and other duties required for permit compliance, public safety, or other infrequent administrative functions.”

Under this designation, the current permittee would be allowed to travel these specific routes with motorized vehicles necessary for maintenance of range improvements and compliance with the existing grazing permit, including water hauling and other activities supporting sheep movement. These routes were selected based on the spacing between access points on this portion of the allotment and connective loop opportunities that avoid potential damage caused by large vehicles turning around where other open routes terminate.

Flexible fiberglass composite sign posts indicating the limited designation of “Administrative Access Only” would be placed beside each entrance to the routes to notify the traveling public. If gates or other barriers are installed at some point in the future to prevent resource damage from unauthorized users, the current permittee would be provided with keys or other means to maintain access to these routes.

Additionally, as a correction to the original plan, Route #2126 would be shown on the map as intersecting with route #2116 as it already does on the ground.

## B. Land Use Plan Conformance

LUP Name	<u>Ely District Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan</u>	Date Approved:	<u>August 2008</u>
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**The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):**

Goals — Travel Management

Provide and maintain suitable access to public lands. Manage off-highway vehicle use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide off-highway vehicle opportunities where appropriate, and minimize conflict.

**C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.**

**List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.**

South Steptoe Travel Management Plan Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-NV-L020-2011-0015-EA)

**D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

The specific routes under consideration were analyzed in the EA. In Alternatives B and F they were designated as “closed.” In Alternatives C and D three of the routes (#2103, 2126, and 2157) were designated as “open” and all four of them were designated as “open” in Alternative A. Providing administrative access under a “limited” designation would be considered within this range of alternatives.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource value?**

The proposed action falls within the range of alternatives considered in the EA and no conditions within the project area have changed since the EA was completed on February 8, 2012.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessments, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

The existing analysis is valid with respect to recent and continuing changes to the management of sage grouse habitat. The EA was reviewed by the BLM Nevada State Office and found to be in concurrence with current policy regarding sage grouse. Additional coordination has been conducted with the Nevada Department of Wildlife in conjunction with this proposal to ensure consistency with current recommendations.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

The amount of travel on these specific routes would be limited to supporting the existing grazing permit, which currently authorizes a 5-month season of use for the Cold Spring Allotment (May 1 — September 30). Additionally, use would be limited to those vehicles needed by the permittee to haul water and facilitate livestock movement and by the BLM to ensure compliance with

existing authorizations. Therefore, the impacts would be consistent with or less than the “open” designation analyzed in Alternative A.

**5. Are there public involvement and interagency reviews associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

The development of the travel management plan underwent an extensive public process that included approximately 30 bi-monthly public meetings by a committee of County-appointed citizens to develop three of the alternatives included in the EA. Further, a 60-day public comment period with four public meetings was later held between May 1 and June 30, 2011. The alternatives developed by the county-appointed committee designated all four of the routes as “closed” in Alternative B and three of them (#2103, 2126, and 2157) as “open” in Alternatives C and D. These alternatives were presented to the public directly following the bi-monthly meetings and again during the 60-day comment period on the preliminary EA, which included all four routes being shown as “open” in Alternative A. Coordination has also been conducted with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to ensure compliance with current recommendations regarding sage grouse habitat.

Additionally, following the issuance of the original decision, the BLM met with the permittee and conducted a field visit on March 16, 2012 on the Cold Spring Allotment to discuss the permittee’s need for access on specific routes to haul water and perform other maintenance activities in support of its existing grazing permit. The BLM confirmed that the four routes included in this DNA are necessary to provide access for water hauling and other administrative functions in conjunction with the permittee’s sheep grazing activities on the Cold Spring Allotment. The BLM subsequently coordinated with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

**E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted**

**Table 1. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Discipline/Agency</b>
Gloria Tibbetts	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	NEPA Compliance
Nancy Williams	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife, Special Status Species
Jake Ferguson	Rangeland Management Specialist	Rangeland Resources, Noxious and Invasive Non-native Species
Gus Malon	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation Management
Ken Humphrey	Archaeologist	Cultural and Historic Resources
Mark D’Aversa	Hydrologist	Air Quality, Water Quality, Wetlands and Riparian Areas
Matthew Rajala	Fire Management Specialist (Fire Planner)	Fuels and Fire Management
Alan Jenne	Eastern Region Supervising Habitat Biologist	Nevada Department of Wildlife

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

**Conclusion**

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirement of NEPA.

*Jim Tibbitts*

Signature of Project Lead

*Jim Tibbitts*

Signature of NEPA Coordinator

*Paul J. Brown*

Signature of the Responsible Official

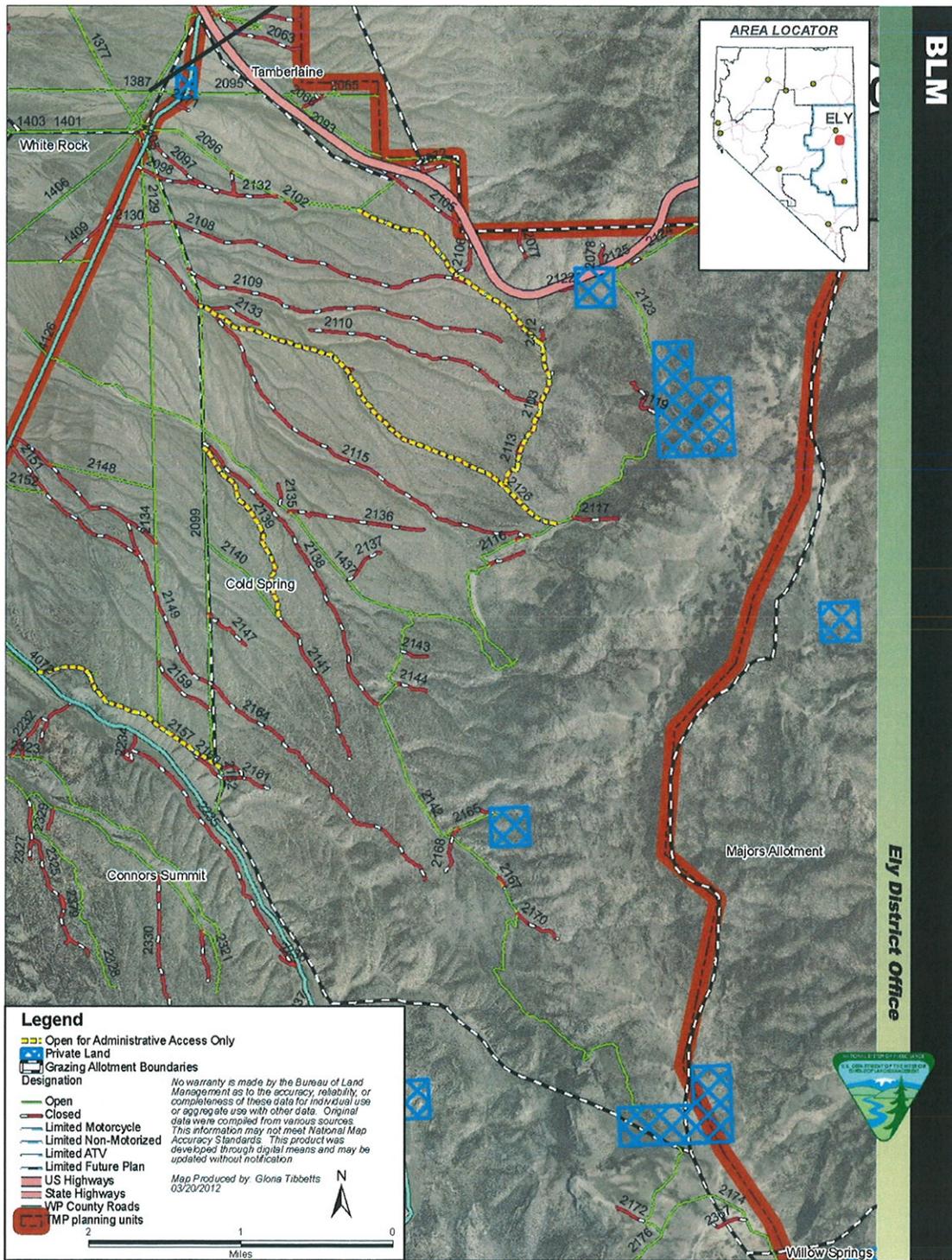
*3/22/2012*

Date

**Note:**

The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the decision issued based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.

# Map of Routes Under Consideration



**Map 1. Map of Routes Under Consideration**

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