

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Carson City District Office

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION  
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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**Project Creator:** Erik Pignata

**Field Office:** Stillwater

**Lead Office:** Stillwater

**Case File/Project Number:** NVN 090652

**Applicable Categorical Exclusion**

516 DM 11.5; Appendix 4 – 154, J. Other, #3: “Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Included are siting, construction, and installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.”

**NEPA Number:** DOI-BLM-NV-2012-C010-0025-CX

**Project Name:** Churchill County Dixie Meadows Water Study

**Project Description:**

Churchill County, in cooperation with Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, and Mahannah and Associates, is conducting a water study in and around Dixie Valley, Churchill County, Nevada. They have already installed eight precipitation gages without authorization on the field office, as well as a small meteorological station. The project also includes casual use activities such as small removable stream gages and piezometers.

The proponent applied after installation, so we are basically processing a trespass action into compliance. The precipitation gages are about 7 feet tall, and require an area of no more than 20 feet by 20 feet, with much less disturbance associated with them than that. Likewise, the met. tower requires an area of no more than 20 feet by 20 feet.

The proponent will most likely be removing the gages in 2013 as this is a 5-year study and the installation occurred in 2008. However, the met. tower may remain for a longer period of time. We should process this as a 20-year FLPMA right-of-way authorization to allow enough time to complete the water study. Upon completion of the study, all of the components would be removed from public land, and any disturbance would be reclaimed to natural contours.

**Applicant Name: Churchill County**

**Project Location: Dixie Valley, Churchill County, Nevada**

**See attached tables for locations.**

Overview map attached.

**BLM Acres for the Project Area: Approximately 0.083 acres total**

**Land Use Plan Conformance:**

**LND-7, #6:** “Exchanges and minor non-Bureau initiated realty proposals will be considered where analysis indicates they are beneficial to the public.”

**Name of Plan:** Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001)

**Cultural Needs:**

A CRINA for this project will be submitted to the cultural specialist during the week of January 17, 2012.

**Special Stipulations:**

The following special stipulation will be added to the grant –

- a. The holder shall contact the BLM and obtain approval from the authorized officer before beginning any activity that is a substantial deviation from this grant or that will cause new surface disturbance.

**Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances:** The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria: (Specialist review: initial in appropriate box)

<i>If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.</i>	YES	NO
1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (Range-Jill Devaurs)		JD
2. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (Archeology, Recreation, Wilderness, Wildlife, Range by allotment, Water Quality)		J
3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (PEC)		JWZ
4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (PEC)		JWZ
5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (PEC)		JWZ
6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (PEC)		JWZ
7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (Archeology)		rw
8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (Wildlife)		J
9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (PEC and Archeology)		JWZ
10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? ((PEC)		JWZ
11. Would the Proposed Action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)? (Archeology)		rw
12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112)? (Range-Jill Devaurs)		JD

**SPECIALISTS' REVIEW:**

During ID Team review of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Planning Environmental Coordinator, Steve Kramer: *SK 3/26/2012*  
Public Health and Safety/Grazing/Noxious Weeds, Jill Devaurs: *JD 3-22-12*  
Recreation/Wilderness/VRM/LWC, Dan Westermeyer: *DW 3/22/12*  
Wildlife/T&E (BLM Sensitive Species), John Wilson: *JW 3-23-12*  
Archeology, Jason Wright: *JW 3/20/12*  
Water Quality, vacant:  
Soils, Jill Devaurs/Linda Appel/Chelsy Simerson:

**CONCLUSION:** Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS. A categorical exclusion is not subject to protest or appeal.

Approved by:

*Teresa J. Knutson*  
Teresa J. Knutson  
Field Manager  
Stillwater Field Office

*6/11/2012*  
(date)