

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
Salmon Field Office
1206 South Challis Street
Salmon, Idaho 83467

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
Salmon Field Office Trailing EA
Environmental Assessment No. DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2012-0028-EA

I have reviewed the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (CEQ) for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) and have determined the actions analyzed in Environmental Assessment (EA) No. DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2012-0028-EA will not have any significant impact, individually or cumulatively, on the quality of the human environment. Because the actions analyzed in the EA will not have any significant impact, an environmental impact statement is not required.

Implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40CFR 1508.27) provide criteria for determining the significance of effects. ‘Significant’, as used in NEPA, requires consideration of both context and intensity. The bold and italicized text are repeated from 40CFR 1508.27 for completeness and an explanation follows for relevance to the decision.

(a) Context. This requirement means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant (40 CFR 1508.27)

This project does not have international, national, region-wide, or statewide importance. The analysis has shown that the project significance is local in nature and that the crossing authorizations will have no significant impact on existing resource values.

My finding was made after considering both the context and intensity of the effects, as described in the above EA. I considered the following factors in determining intensity:

1. *The activities described in the proposed action do not include any significant beneficial or adverse impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(1)).* The EA includes a description of the expected environmental consequences of livestock crossing. The analysis documented in DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2012-0028-EA did not identify any individually significant short- or long-term impacts. The *Affected Environment And Environmental Consequences* section of the EA (pages 10-30) describes the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action and alternative. BLM analyzed two alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) and considered three additional alternatives that were not

analyzed in detail (see *Alternatives and Affected Environment And Environmental Consequences* sections of EA No. DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2012-0001-EA). Alternative 1 included the proposed trailing activities as submitted in the crossing permit applications. Alternative 2 was the no action alternative and would have denied all applications for crossing permits. The *Cumulative Impacts Of Alternatives* section (pages 30-39) describes the impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area. No significant beneficial or adverse impacts were identified.

2. *The activities included in the proposed action would not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).* Much of the livestock trailing would occur along and adjacent to existing roads and trails. The public may occasionally encounter livestock along roads during trailing activities; however, this effect would not significantly affect public health and safety because the number of encounters is expected to be low and the duration of the encounters would be limited in time.

3. *The proposed activities would not significantly affect any unique characteristics (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)) of the geographic area such as prime and unique farmlands, caves, wild and scenic rivers, designated wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, or areas of critical concern.*

No prime and unique farmlands, caves, wild and scenic rivers, designated wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, or areas of critical concern are found within the trailing routes. No significant impacts to prime and unique farmlands, caves, wild and scenic rivers, designated wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, or areas of critical concern were identified from livestock trailing.

4. *The activities described in the proposed action do not involve effects on the human environment that are likely to be highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).* Livestock trailing is a routine activity and the effects of livestock trailing are well understood as described in the EA. Public input was requested from affected permittees and interested publics. A scoping information package was posted on the Salmon BLM website on 12/12/2011. No scoping issues or comments were received from the public.

5. *Livestock trailing does not involve any effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).* Livestock trailing has occurred throughout this area for several decades and the effects are well understood. The EA includes a description of the expected environmental consequences of livestock trailing. The analysis documented in EA No. DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2012-0028-EA did not identify highly uncertain or unique or unknown risks. The *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences* section of the EA (p. 10-30) describes the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action and alternative. The *Cumulative Impacts Of Alternatives* section (p. 30-39) describes the impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area. No highly uncertain or unique or unknown risks were identified.

6. *My decision to authorize livestock trailing does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).* No significant cumulative impacts were identified within EA No. DOI-BLM-

ID-I040-2012-0028-EA. Implementation of this decision would not trigger other actions, nor will it represent a decision in principle about future considerations.

7. *The effects of livestock trailing would not be significant, individually or cumulatively, when considered with the effects of other actions (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).* The EA discloses that there are no other connected or cumulative actions that would cause significant cumulative impacts. The *Cumulative Impacts Of Alternatives* section (pages 30-39) describes the impacts associated with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have occurred, or are likely to occur, in the area. The cumulative effects analysis in the EA does not reveal any known significant cumulative effects. Any adverse impacts identified as a result of livestock trailing, when added to any adverse impacts of other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions will result in negligible to minor impacts to natural and cultural resources.

8. *I have determined that the activities described in the proposed action will not adversely affect or cause loss or destruction of scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).* The EA (p. 29-30) discloses that trailing activities would result in no impact to cultural resources. No recorded cultural resources are present within the areas of potential effect of the proposed trailing routes. Each route would be monitored as a component of Section 106 compliance Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office.

9. *The proposed activities are not likely to adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).* As disclosed in the EA (p. 25-26, p. 33-36, p. 38), trailing will not affect any threatened or endangered species because 1) The crossing will not occur within lynx habitat and will not affect lynx or their habitat, 2) The SFO does not have any records of wolverines within two miles of the crossing routes. The USFWS and Wildlife Conservation Society have mapped wolverine habitat based on persistence of late spring snow, primary wolverine habitat and female dispersal areas. The crossing will not occur within modeled habitat for wolverine. Wolverines are unlikely to be in the area of the crossing given the sage steppe habitat type. There will be no effects to wolverine from the crossings.

The EA determined that there would be no impacts to Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Fish from the proposed action or alternatives since there are no fish-bearing streams or impacts to TES fish or habitat along any of the proposed crossing routes. As disclosed in the EA (p. 25-26, p. 33-36, p. 38), trailing will not affect any threatened or endangered species or their critical habitats.

10. *The proposed trailing activities will not threaten any violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).* The *Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plan* section (page 2) and *Relevant Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans* section (p. 2) of the EA describe how trailing activities conform to relevant laws, regulations, policies, and any relevant local permitting requirements.

I find that implementing Alternative 1 does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment in either context or intensity. I have made this determination after considering both positive and negative effects, as well as the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of this action and reasonably foreseeable future actions. I have found that the context of the environmental impacts of this decision is limited to the local area and I have also determined that the severity of these impacts is not significant. This document is adequate and in conformance with the Lemhi Resource Management Plan, as amended and as required by 43 CFR 4100.0-8

/s/ Linda R. Price _____ 09/16/2013 _____
Date

Linda R. Price
Field Manager
Salmon Field Office