

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
BLACK ROCK REPEATER  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
DOI-BLM-NV-W030-2012-0013-EA**

Base on the Environmental Assessment (EA) DOI-BLM-NV-W030-2012-0013-EA, dated July 2012, I have determined that the approval of the Proposed Action, including proposed environmental protection measures, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and; therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be required as per section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act.

I have determined that the approval of the communication site right-of-way in order to install the Black Rock radio repeater facility (project) is in conformance with the approved Sonoma-Gerlach Management Framework Plan (MFP) and is "...consistent with other Federal Agency, state, and local plans to the maximum extent consistent with Federal law and Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) provisions" (BLM Land Use Planning handbook H-1601-1). This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), with regard to both context and intensity factors.

As a result of the analysis presented in the EA, no additional mitigation measures were identified by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) beyond those environmental protection measures specified in the Proposed Action (**section 2.1.3 Environmental Protection Measures**).

## **Context**

The project is the addition of small radio repeater shelter with an attached unguyed 20' monopole tower, radio antenna and two solar panels with project area access by an existing road. The project would encompass approximately 2.52 acres of public lands managed by the BLM. The project is located near Gerlach, Nevada, Township 33 North, Range 24 East, section 5 and Township 33½ North, Range 24 East, section 32, MDB&M. The repeater facility is to be authorized to the BLM for a term of 20 years.

The proposed action includes:

- A 6'x8'x8' pre-fabricated shelter with an attached unguyed 20' monopole tower
- A four foot antenna
- Two solar panels
- Project area access by an existing access road

## **Intensity**

### *1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*

The EA has considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of issuing an authorization for the radio repeater facility. Concerns related to natural resources including migratory birds, raptors and big horn sheep were analyzed. Environmental protection measures are included as part of the Proposed Action in order to avoid or reduce impacts to cultural and wildlife resources. Any

adverse impacts would be classified as short-term, since they would either end or be wholly or partially mitigated prior to and/or during installation and during any required maintenance activities.

This radio repeater will provide more reliable year-round communication support for law enforcement, staff working in this area, as well as fire/aviation. In turn this site will also assist radio communications from this landscape back to Black Rock Station which has a base station for Central Nevada Interagency Dispatch Center (CNIDC).

There are no long-term impacts to the area anticipated from the proposed action.

**2) *The degree to which the Proposed Action affects public health or safety.***

The Proposed Action is not expected to adversely affect public health or safety. The radio repeater is expected to provide more reliable year-round communication support for law enforcement, staff working in this area, as well as fire/aviation. In turn this site will also assist radio communications from this landscape back to Black Rock Station which has a base station for CNIDC.

**3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.***

The project is approximately a half mile from the boundary of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA) which protects portions of the historic Nobles Trail, located approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east of the project area. There are no park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers and/or ecologically critical areas in the location of the proposed action.

**4) *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.***

No controversy with this project was identified during the public review of the Preliminary EA. Four comment letters were received during the public review period from July 16, 2012 to July 30, 2012. One comment letter supported the proposed action. The remaining three letters raised issues concerning night skies, visual compatibility, water pollution control, and encroachment permits. These issues are addressed in Section 1.4 “Scoping, Public Involvement, and Issues” of the EA.

Native American Consultation has been continuous through the evaluation of this project.

**5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.***

The Proposed Action is not unique and does not involve unknown risks on the human environment.

**6) *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.***

The Proposed Action will not establish a precedent for future actions. The authorization is limited to the size of the repeater facility shelter and the existing access road. Based on the repeater facility and the footprint of the action (2.5 ac.) any additional proposed authorizations would be limited.

**7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.***

Based on the analysis provided in the EA, no significant cumulative impacts are expected.

**8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.***

A cultural resource inventory of the proposed repeater station was conducted by BLM staff on June 26, 2012. No cultural resources were identified at the proposed location. The centerline of the route of the historic Nobles Trail passes at a distance of  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile east and at a lower elevation from the proposed repeater location. The trail is located within the Black Rock Desert/High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA); the western NCA boundary is very close to the proposed location. The Nobles Trail is part of the National Historic Trail known as The California National Historic Trail. All segments of the Nobles Trail within the NCA are considered to be high potential segments. There are no other known cultural resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places within one mile of the proposed project area.

**9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the ESA of 1973.***

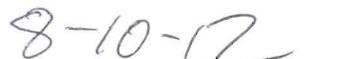
There are no known threatened or endangered (T&E) species nor is the habitat conducive for T&E species to be present in the proposed facility area. In 2010 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service designated the Greater sage-grouse as a candidate species. The project location is not within or directly adjacent to Greater sage-grouse habitat.

**10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.***

The Proposed Action does not violate or threaten any known Federal, State, or local laws or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.



Gerald Dixon  
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Date