

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

**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
Pancake Herd Management Area Wild Horse Water
Developments**

July, 2012

DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2012-0022-DNA

PREPARING OFFICE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Egan Field Office
HC 33 Box 33500
Ely, NV 89301 United States
775-289-1800



Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) Worksheet

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

OFFICE: BLM Egan Field Office, LL00NVL01000

TRACKING NUMBER: DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2012-0022-DNA

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Pancake Herd Management Area Wild Horse Water Development

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Pancake Herd Management Area, Big Sand Springs Valley, Nevada.

The Area is located in the following legal land descriptions (Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian):

Guzzler #1 T12N., R55E, Section 32 and Guzzler #2 T12N., R55E., Section 19 (Pancake HMA)

APPLICANT (if any):

A. Description of Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures

It is proposed to construct two water developments within the Pancake Herd Management Area (HMA), Nye County (Appendix I). BLM proposes to construct these water developments to more evenly distribute wild horses and relieve pressure from heavily utilized water sources. The Ely District received funding associated with the Directors Challenge. The "Directors Challenge" is aimed at improving western rangeland conditions where wild horses and burros roam. Under the Director's Challenge the Ely District's objective is to construct and install guzzlers (water tanks that collect precipitation) within the Pancake HMA, where water sources are limited and being degraded by overuse.

The Pancake HMA proposed water developments have been moved due to input from NDOW regarding developing water sources near the western edge of the HMA boundary. Within the Pancake HMA, these water developments would help distribute wild horses within the Big Sand Springs Valley and relieve pressure at Martiletti Spring and Portuguese Spring. These water developments would also help relieve pressure at a current water haul site located within Big Sand Springs Valley. The water haul site only provides water during periods of livestock use within the allotment. Also, due to concerns with sage grouse both sites were moved outside sage grouse habitat. Initially one of the water developments was proposed for the Triple B HMA, but was moved to the Pancake HMA. Water developments were determined to be a higher priority in this HMA due to limited water availability.

These sites were selected based on areas where wild horses are traveling through to access other water sources. Each water development would provide an additional source of water during water stressed years; relieve pressure from heavily utilized water sources; and provide an alternative source besides private property water sources. The water storage tank capacity for each water development would provide a temporary source of water when water is available. The duration of available water is dependent on the number of wild horses using the water development and the amount of precipitation received at that site. Wild horse occurrence and use would be more evenly distributed across the landscape and reduce concentration at current water resources.

Water Resources

Objectives: To protect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters as need to maintain healthy ecological systems and provide values that support multiple uses. Acquire and perfect sufficient water rights to meet public land management needs.

WR-4 Maintain or improve watershed conditions by controlling or restricting land uses and utilizing tools, where appropriate, to promote desired vegetation conditions.

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

Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Developments Environmental Assessment;
December 2009

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?

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes. The Proposed Action is a feature of and substantially similar to the actions analyzed within the existing NEPA document listed above. The Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Development EA specifically analyzed the installation of big game water developments within White Pine and Nye Counties. The proposed action includes the installation of water developments. While the big game water developments were not analyzed within the Pancake HMA for wild horses; the methods and disturbances associated with the water developments are similar to the big game guzzlers that were analyzed. Proposed locations are on upland slopes with similar geographic and resource conditions to the EA. Issues and concerns with the proposed action would be similar to those identified within the Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Development Environmental Assessment.

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?

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes. The range of alternatives analyzed within the existing NEPA documents is appropriate given the current conditions. There have been no unresolved conflicts regarding alternative uses of available resources on federal lands that would indicate the need for additional alternatives. The EA analyzed alternatives developed in response to issues identified through internal and external scoping of the projects. During internal scoping NDOW proposed not installing the water developments for wild horses. NDOW raised concerns with BLM wild horse policy, not new impacts to resource values. The no action alternative was considered in the EA. No other issues were raised that would suggest the need for additional alternatives. There is no information or circumstances that would indicate the need for additional alternatives above those previously analyzed.

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?

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes. There is no new information or circumstances that would alter the analysis of the impacts associated with the proposed action.

Wild horse gathers have been conducted within the Pancake Herd Management Area. The appropriate management level (AML) for the Pancake HMA is 240–493 wild horses. This population range was established at a level that would maintain healthy wild horses and rangelands over the long-term based on monitoring data collected over time as well as an in-depth analysis of habitat suitability. The AML range was established through prior decision-making processes and re-affirmed through the Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Ely District Resource Management Plan (August 2008). The proposed action would help distribute wild horses and relieve pressure from heavily utilized water sources in Big Sand Springs Valley and relieve pressure from Martiletti Spring and Portuguese Spring within the Pancake HMA. These additional sources of water would help relieve pressure from heavily utilized water sources and provide water during water stress years.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently concluded that the greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is warranted for listing under the Endangered Species Act, however precluded at this time by higher priority species. Neither sites is located in sage grouse habitat.

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?

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes. The direct, indirect and cumulative effects would be similar to those analyzed within the Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Developments EA. The impacts associated with the installation of the water developments would be similar to that analyzed within the Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Developments EA. Ground disturbing activities have been analyzed within the EA.

A Class III inventory was completed under report number 8111 NV-04-12-2003. There were no eligible sites to the National Register of Historic Places identified in either location.

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

Documentation of answer and explanation:

No. Although the Giroux Wash and Horse Range Wildlife Water Developments EA (DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2009-0018-EA) conducted public and interagency review relative to the proposal; it has been determined that additional public involvement is necessary for the Wild Horse Water Development Project Determination of NEPA Adequacy DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2012-0022-DNA. The EA included both internal and external scoping of issues. External scoping included letters notifying the interested public and tribes of the Giroux

Wash portion of the Proposed Action were sent May 21, 2009. No issues were expressed during the public scoping period. Letters notifying the interested public and Tribes of the Horse Range portion of the proposed action were sent November 4, 2009. No comments were received.

Because of the public interest specific to wild horses, it has been determined that additional public involvement is necessary for the Wild Horse Water Development Project Determination of NEPA Adequacy DOI-BLM-NV-L010-2012-0022-DNA. A public notification was mailed to interested public and posted in the NEPA Register on July 18, 2012

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted

Table 1. List of Preparers

Name	Title	Responsible for the following Section(s) of this Document
Ruth Thompson	Wild Horse Specialist	Project Lead/Wild Horse Specialist
Marian Lichtler	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife, Migratory Birds, Special Status Species
Melanie Peterson	Environmental Protection Specialist	Human Health and Safety, Hazardous Wastes
Emily Simpson	Wilderness Planner	Wilderness
, Mark Lowrie	Rangeland Management Specialist	Livestock Grazing, Vegetation
Lisa Gilbert	Archaeologist Technician	Cultural Resources
Elvis Wall	Native American Coordinator	Native American Religious Concerns
Mark D'Aversa	Hydrologist	Soils, Water, Wetlands and Riparian/Flood Plans
Erin Rajala	Outdoor Recreation Planner	VRM
Mindy Seal	Natural Resource Specialist	Environmental Justice, Environmental Coordinator/LUP
Alan Jenne and Brad Hardenbrook	Nevada Dept. of Wildlife	State Wildlife

Note

Refer to the EA/EIS 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.



 Signature of Project Lead



 Signature of NEPA Coordinator

Davis A. Metcalf *Acting Field Mgr.* *July 18, 2012*
Signature of the Responsible Official Date

Note:

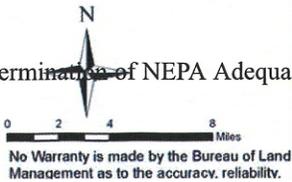
The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or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

Appendix 1:

Pancake HMA Proposed Water Developments



Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)



Legend

Egan Field Office