



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Salmon Field Office



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
LEMHI-HAWLEY CREEK-03 DIVERSION
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2013-0004-EA
IDI-37483 and IDI-37508

Based upon a review of the *LEMHI-HAWLEY CREEK-03 DIVERSION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2013-0004-EA*, I have determined that the Proposed Action would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined under Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1508.27, therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This finding is based on the context and intensity of impacts as identified in the environmental assessment (EA) and referenced below.

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).

These projects are site-specific actions that by themselves do not have international, national, region-wide, or statewide importance. The analysis has shown that the project's significance is local in nature and that the ROWs would have no significant impact on existing resource values.

Intensity

This requirement refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action.

The following is based on significance criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27

(1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and/or adverse:

The analysis documented in EA DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2013-0004-EA did not identify any individually significant short-or long-term impacts. *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences* section of the EA (pages 27-59) describes the direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Action and alternative. The fish screen system, including the instream diversion structures are considered beneficial or no effect on Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed, proposed, and candidate species. The unscreened diversion is a fish passage barrier that entrains fish into the ditch and may dewater the stream during seasonal low flow. The Proposed Action will move the diversion structure upstream, install a fish screen system, and pipe water to the head of the existing irrigation ditch to improve aquatic and riparian habitats for anadromous and resident fishes, and spring/summer Chinook salmon

designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat. Long-term benefits of the Proposed Action include: (1) prevention of fish entrainment into the irrigation ditch, (2) unobstructed fish passage at the diversion, and (3) increased instream flow (up to 5.2 cubic feet per second).

No adverse impacts were identified.

(2) The degree to which the Proposed Action affects health or safety:

The environmental analysis documented no effects on public health and safety from any of the action described in the Proposed Action or alternative.

(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 environmental analysis documented no major effects on unique geographic features of the area. The status of these unique resources is documented in Table 3: *Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis* (EA pages 27-30). There are no prime and unique farmlands, park lands, Wild and Scenic Rivers, designated Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, lands with Wilderness characteristics, Areas of Critical Concern, paleontological resources, or Wild Horse and Burro Management Areas in the project area.

The Proposed Action is expected to increase the wetland/riparian zone/floodplain adjacent to the project site (EA pages 11 and 35). Following removal of the existing diversion structure, the native sedges, willow, and redosier dogwood will naturally colonize the area. To increase the rate of colonization, sedge plugs will be hand-planted in the new floodplain. The benefits of the larger post-construction wetland/riparian zone/floodplain include increased sediment filtering, increased canopy cover to provide stream shade and maintain water temperature, increased bank stability, and decreased scour and velocity during periods of high flow.

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

The public was informed of the Proposed Action and invited to participate in the development of the project alternatives and identify any issues of concern (EA page 11). The public did not identify any issues of concern and the nothing in the EA indicated that the effects on the environment are likely to be highly controversial.

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

The environmental analysis did not identify any effects on the human environment which are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The actions and associated effects identified in the EA are routine in nature in the area of the Proposed Action. The effects on the human environment are not highly uncertain, and do not involve unique, or unknown risks.

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

The Proposed Action does not set precedent or represent a decision in principle about the future management considerations. No significant cumulative impacts were identified in the EA. The Proposed Action is within the scope of current regulations.

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

The *Cumulative Effects Analysis* section of the EA documents the connected and cumulative impacts in the analysis area. The analysis did not identify any known significant cumulative or secondary effects.

(8) The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant, cultural, or historical resources:

The Proposed Action and alternative would not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects in or listed as eligible for listing in the National register of Historic Places. The Proposed Action would not cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources.

(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 Endangered Species Act of 1973:

The implementation of the Proposed Action has been consulted on with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (together, the Services) for ESA listed, proposed, and candidate species, designated critical habitats, and spring/summer Chinook salmon Essential Fish Habitat. Letters of Concurrence with the May Affect/Not Likely to Adversely Affect determinations for Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon, Columbia River bull trout, spring/summer Chinook salmon designated critical habitat and Essential Fish Habitat, and a May Affect/Not Likely to Jeopardize determination for greater sage-grouse were received from the Services.

The effects of the actions on other special status wildlife species are described in the *Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences: Resources Considered in the Impact Analysis* section of the EA (pages 48-57).

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

The environmental analysis documents that the Proposed Action is consistent with federal, state, and local laws or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.

Field Manager /s/ Linda R. Price

Date 06/23/2014