



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Burley Field Office
15 East 200 South
Burley, ID 83318
(208) 677-6600



In Reply Refer To:
3600 (IDT020) P
DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2013-0028-EA

July 5, 2013

Dear Interested Parties:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Twin Falls District, Burley Field Office, is soliciting comments, concerns, or issues specific to the application for a free use permit (FUP) for the quarrying and crushing of stone from the Goat Springs Quarry. The FUP would be issued for the use of construction and maintenance of roads by the Twin Falls Highway District. Pursuant to the BLM regulations and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), the BLM is soliciting your comments regarding this application.

The Goat Springs Quarry is located approximately five miles southeast of Hollister, ID, in Boise Meridian, T13S, R17E, Section 18. Material is blasted from an outcrop of limestone and processed to produce chips, aggregate and crushed stone. The Goat Springs Quarry has been in operation for 18 years.

An Environmental Assessment is currently being prepared to determine and disclose any environmental impacts of issuing this permit, as well as to develop any needed stipulations for the protection of the environment. The permit, if issued, will have a primary term of 10 years, conditionally extendable for one year.

The Scoping/Information package for this project can be found at the following website: <http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/info/nepa.html>. Your comments, concerns, and issues regarding the re-issuance of the permit are requested. Comments made on this proposal would be most helpful if they are received on or before August 5, 2013, and are directly relevant to the proposal and project area. Feedback may be accepted beyond this date, however, such comments may be considered secondary to comments received in a timely manner.

If you have difficulties obtaining this document from the internet, to request a hardcopy, or for questions and concerns, please contact Steve Lubinski, Geologist, Burley Field Office, at (208) 677-6667, or via email at Slubinski@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/Jim Tharp for
Michael C. Courtney
Field Manager

cc:

Twin Falls Highway District

W.T. Williams Inc.

Jones Corporation

Idaho Conservation League

Idaho Department of Lands

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Jake Vawser

Idaho Power Co

Tri-C

Evard LLC

Northwest Farm Services

Scoping/Information Package
Dry Gulch Quarry
Free Use Permit
NEPA # DOI-BLM-ID-T020-2013-0028-EA

Introduction

The information in this package summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Burley Field Office action in response to a free use permit (FUP) application, in accordance with the Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (MFP 1980). The Twin Falls MFP does not identify lands as open or closed to minerals development. However, Objective M-4 under the salable minerals section of the MFP is to:

“Provide for local needs of sand and gravel, borrow, and other varieties of salable minerals to meet the requirements of the building construction industry, for road construction and maintenance, and for other private non-commercial use.”

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to analyze and disclose any environmental impacts of issuing this permit, as well as to develop any needed stipulations or mitigation measures needed.

The Goat Springs Quarry is located approximately five miles southeast of Hollister, ID, in Boise Meridian, T13S, R17E, Section 18 and is shown in Figure 1, the Project Location Map. The surface and mineral estates are public land administered by the BLM, Burley Field Office.

Background

The area proposed for the FUP is an existing 15 acre quarry, with a proposed two acres of additional disturbance over the next ten years. The Goat Springs Quarry was first authorized in 1995, and has been in regular operation by private operators since that time. Material is blasted from an outcrop of limestone and processed to produce chips, aggregate and gravel. The material produced from the quarry is stockpiled on site until needed for specific projects.

Free use permits are typically issued to local highway departments or other non-profit or government organizations for the purpose of resurfacing and maintaining local roads. This FUP is important to the local economy in the Twin Falls Area as it provides free material to the Twin Falls Highway District, which reduces cost to taxpayers. Free use permits also provide a local source of material which reduces hauling distances and increases efficiency. This quarry has been chosen for the quality of material, as well as strategic location to provide the shortest hauling distances.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

In May 2013 the Burley Field Office received an application from the Twin Falls Highway District for a FUP to operate out of the Goat Springs Quarry. In accordance with 43 CFR 3600,

BLM has an obligation to process this permit application. If issued, the permit would allow the Twin Falls Highway District to blast and crush up to 400,000 cubic yards (CY) of material over the ten year life of the permit. The Twin Falls Highway Department meets the qualifications for a FUP applicant, and has a need for crushed stone and gravel to build, resurface, and maintain roads.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to issue a FUP, and through this EA, to determine any resource concerns or issues and develop any needed permit conditions and restrictions for management and protection of the environment. This action is consistent with Federal Environmental Laws and Regulations, Executive Orders, and with state laws and local and county ordinances. Guidance for the issuance and administration of FUP's is provided for in 43 CFR 3604.

Preliminary Issues

Issues are generated through the public scoping process, a review of the RMP, and/or generated from a need for compliance with laws or regulations. Preliminary issues that have been identified include:

- Mule Deer Winter Range – The Goat Springs Quarry sits on the west side of the South Hills Area, which is mule deer winter range.
- Sage Grouse – The region is classified as preliminary priority sage grouse habitat (PPH), there is one lek 1.2 miles from the site, and two leks within four miles.
- Access – Access should not be restricted to any of the user groups to the areas adjacent to and beyond the quarry, except when public safety warrants a restriction.

Public Input Needed

Your comments are specifically requested for this project. Comments would be most helpful if they are received by Aug 5, 2013, and are directly relevant to the area. The BLM may accept public feedback outside of established public involvement timeframes. However, such comments may be considered secondary to comments received in a timely manner and may only be assessed to determine if they identify concerns that would substantially alter the assumptions or analyses that will be presented in the subsequent EA.

Written comments must be submitted to the BLM, Burley Field Office, 15 East 200 South, Burley, ID 83318. The office business hours for submitting hand-delivered comments are 7:45 am through 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc), or portable document format (.pdf) to id_burley_fo@blm.gov. E-mails submitted to e-mail addresses other than the one listed, in other formats than those listed, or containing viruses will be rejected. To be most helpful, comments sent electronically should include the title of this project in the subject line. Please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues that are outside the scope of this EA will not be addressed at this planning level.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made public, available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The primary contact for questions and comments for these lease applications is Steve Lubinski, Geologist, Burley Field Office, (208) 677-6667, or email at Slubinski@blm.gov.

2 Enclosures:

1 - Figure 1 - Project Location Map (1 p)

2 - Figure 2 – Project Map (1 p)

Goat Springs Quarry - Project Location Map

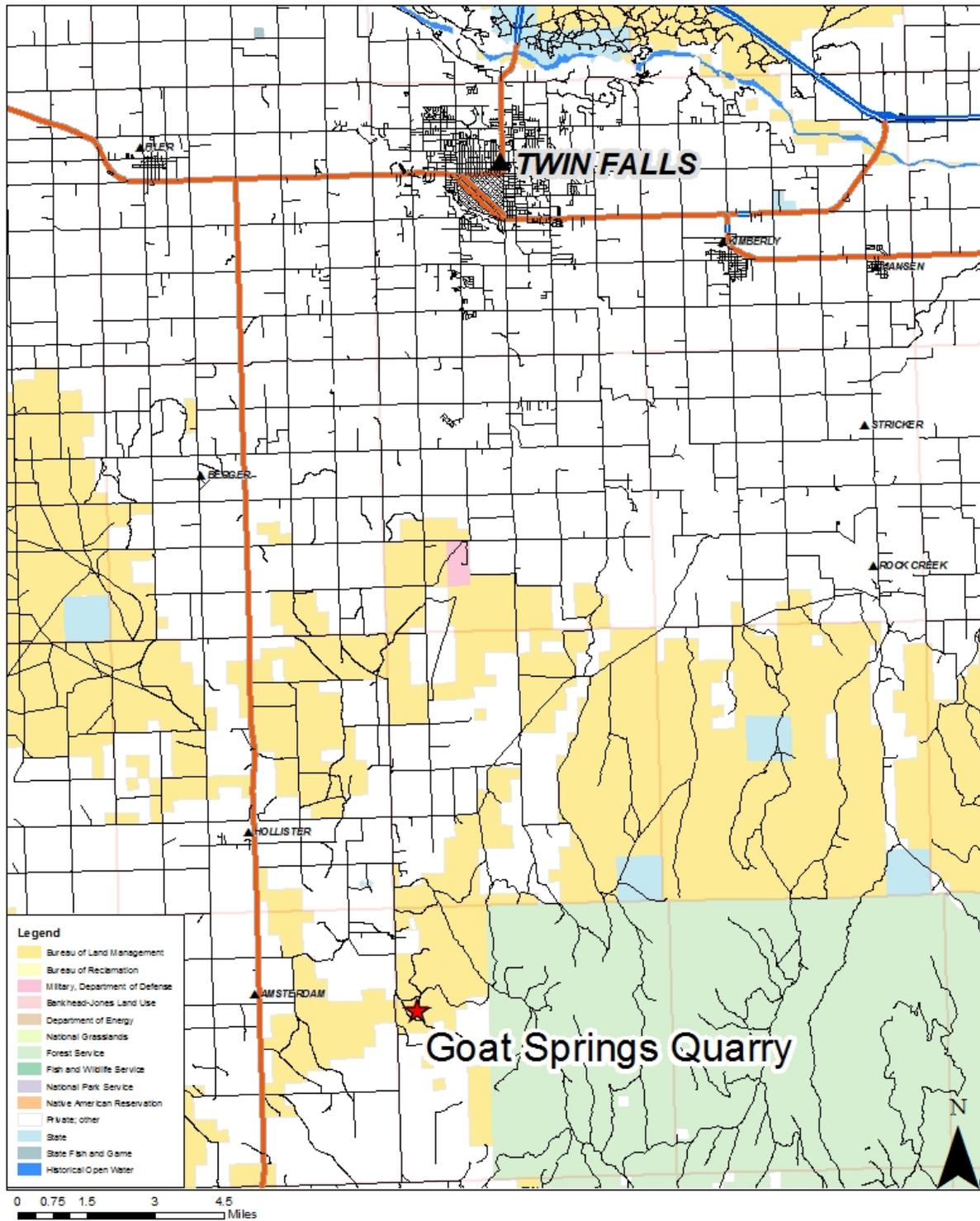


Figure 1: Project Location Map

Goat Springs Quarry - Project Map

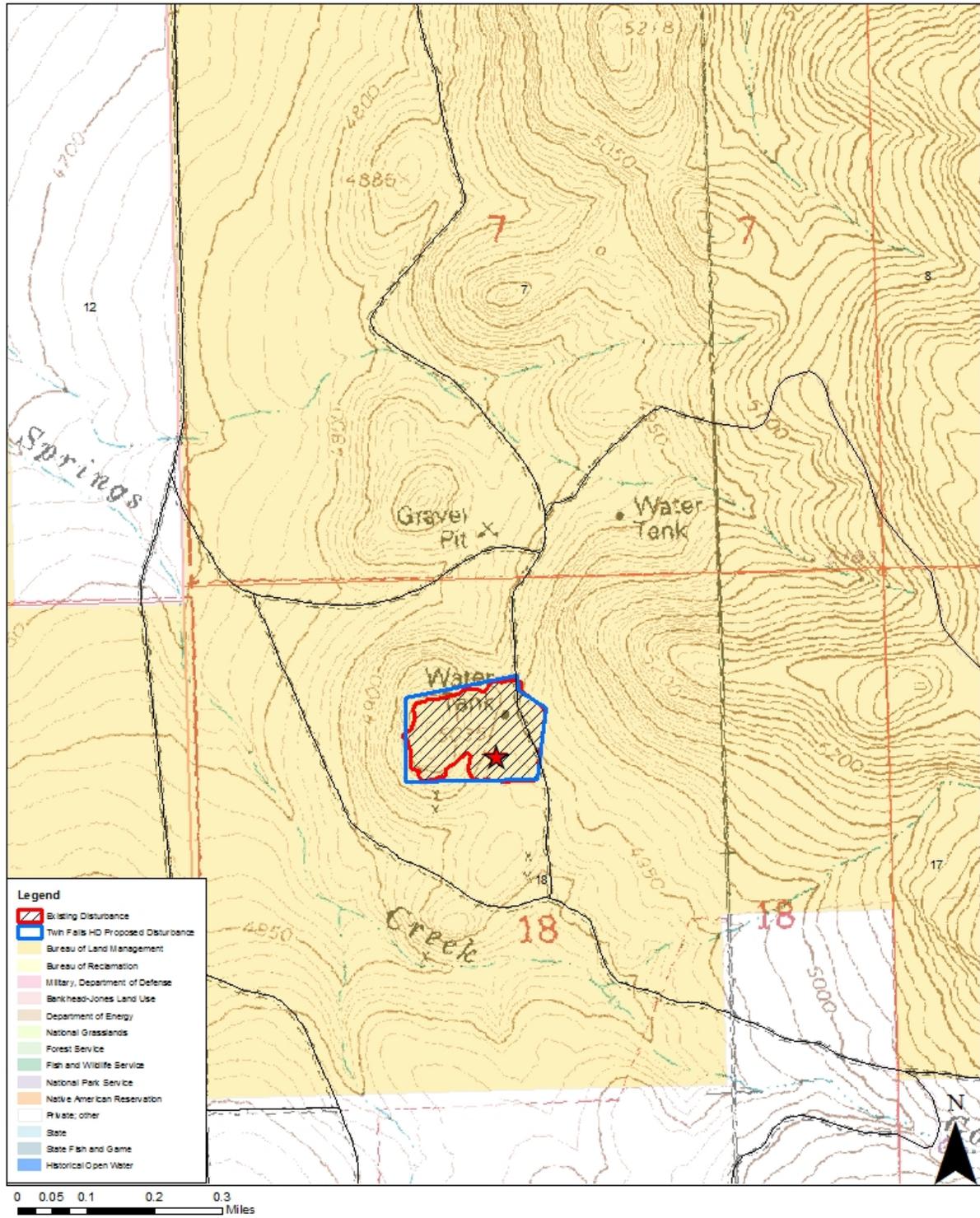


Figure 2: Project Map