

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Cottonwood Field Office
1 Butte Drive
Cottonwood, ID, 83522

DECISION RECORD

Buffalo Gulch Road and Stream Crossing Stabilization Project
DOI-BLM-ID-C020-2013-0014-CX

1. Background

The road and stream crossing (culvert) that will be stabilized occurs at stream mile 0.8 in Buffalo Gulch. The purpose of the stream crossing stabilization project is to stabilize the road fill, prevent road sloughing and road closure, and prevent additional erosion and sediment delivery to Buffalo Gulch Creek. The toe of the fill slope is failing and the road is at risk for eroding away from spring high flow events. The need for the project is to continue to provide safe access to the public on the Buffalo Gulch road and prevent adverse erosion and sediment delivery to aquatic habitats. The project is located on a road which is open to motorized travel year round and is approximately 1.7 air miles west of the community of Elk City, Idaho.

2. Decision

It is my decision to authorize the stabilization of a road and stream crossing in Buffalo Gulch Creek, located at stream mile 0.8 (T. 29 N., R. 8 E., Sec. 28: SW1/4NE1/4 – see attached map). The project would include the stabilization of approximately 30 feet of the toe slope of a stream crossing with the selective placement of large boulders (e.g., 2-3 feet diameter). The work area would be isolated from the stream with selective placement of sandbags and visquine. As needed, erosion control measures would include mulching, sediment fences, sediment traps (e.g., straw bales), and seeding of desired vegetation. It is expected that during project implementation the road may be temporarily closed for one or two days during fall, 2013, or late spring/early summer 2014.

3. Authority

Decision authority for this project is a general public land decision in accordance with The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as amended.

4. Rationale

The proposed action is in conformance with the Cottonwood RMP and is a type of action that the BLM has determined does not have a significant effect on the quality of the

human environment. The action is needed to prevent additional damage to a public road and road closure, and reduce adverse erosion and sediment delivery to Buffalo Gulch.

5. Coordination and Consultation

This project was coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, National Marine Fisheries Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Prior to project implementation, as needed all required authorizations, Federal and State permits would be obtained. A scoping notice was sent to the Nez Perce Tribe notifying them about the proposed project. The Nez Perce Tribe had no comments and did not identify any issues regarding the proposed project.

6. Protest and Appeal

This decision constitutes my final decision. Any party that is adversely affected by it may appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4. A notice of appeal must be filed in the Cottonwood Field Office (address in letterhead) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The Notice of appeal must be sent certified mail. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision is in error in a statement of reasons. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA), Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300-QC, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days of filing the notice of appeal with the authorized officer. Any request for stay of this decision, in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, must be filed with your notice of appeal.

Regulations do not authorize acceptance of protests in any form other than a signed, paper document that is delivered to the physical address of the BLM office. Therefore, the BLM will not accept protests delivered by e-mail, verbal, or facsimile means.

7. Signature

/s/ _____
Will Runnoe
Field Manager

9/25/13 _____
Date

Attachments:

- (1) Categorical Exclusion Documentation
- (2) Project Area Map

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
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1 Butte Dr. Cottonwood ID 83522

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

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1. Description of the Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing to stabilize an elevated road crossing (culvert) on Buffalo Gulch Creek. High spring flows are eroding the toeslope of the road fill and will continue to do so unless stabilized. The road crossing occurs approximately at stream mile 0.8 in Buffalo Gulch. The project is located on a road which is open to motorized travel year round and is approximately 1.7 air miles west of the community of Elk City, Idaho.

The purpose of the stream crossing stabilization project is to stabilize the toe of the road fill, prevent road sloughing and road closure, and minimize the associated erosion and sediment delivery to Buffalo Gulch Creek. High flow events, particularly in the spring of 2013, have undercut the toeslope; consequently, the fill slope and road are at risk for additional slumping and erosion. Slumping has started encroaching on the road prism and will continue unabated without stabilization of the road fill and toeslope. The project is needed to ensure safe access to the public on the Buffalo Gulch road and to mitigate a substantial, chronic sediment source directly impacting aquatic habitats. The toe of the road fill slope would be stabilized with selective placement of large boulders and riparian seeding and plantings. After construction activity is completed (placement of boulders), noxious weed free seed will be applied to bare soils to increase stability and provide vegetative cover. Weed seed free mulch may also be applied to the bare soils. As needed, other erosion control measures would include sediment traps and sediment fences during construction. It is expected that during project implementation the road may be temporarily closed for one or two days during fall, 2013; or during late spring/early summer 2014. Road closures would not occur over night and public motorized access would periodically be allowed during construction.

Location

Idaho County, Idaho. Boise Meridian T. 29 N., R. 8 E., Sec. 28: SW1/4NE1/4

2. Land Use Plan Conformance

In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), this proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with the Cottonwood Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved December 21, 2009. It is consistent with the following decisions from the RMP: Objective AF-1.3-Manage aquatic, riparian, and wetland habitats to provide diverse and healthy conditions for aquatic species. Action AF-1.3.1-Activities within RCAs (riparian conservation areas) will be designed to minimize or avoid adverse impacts on the riparian and aquatic habitats through implementation of specific standards and guides in the Aquatic and Riparian Management Strategy (Appendix D, Aquatic and Riparian Management Strategy).

3. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under NEPA in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 .I.(1). “Planned actions in response to wildfires, floods, weather events, earthquakes, or landslips that threaten public health or safety, property, and/or natural and cultural resources, and that are necessary to repair or improve lands unlikely to recover to a management-approved condition as a result of the event. Such activities shall be limited to: repair and installation of essential erosion control structures; replacement or repair of existing culverts, roads, trails, fences, and minor facilities; construction of protection fences; planting, seeding, and mulching; and removal of hazard trees, rocks, soil, and other mobile debris from, on, or along roads, trails, campgrounds, and watercourses.” Application of this categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2, Appendix C, exist.

/s/ _____

Will Runnoe
Field Manager

9/25/13 _____

Date

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this Categorical Exclusion review, contact Craig Johnson, Biologist, at (208) 962-3688 or cajohnson@blm.gov

Buffalo Gulch Road and Stream Crossing Stabilization Project

R 8 E

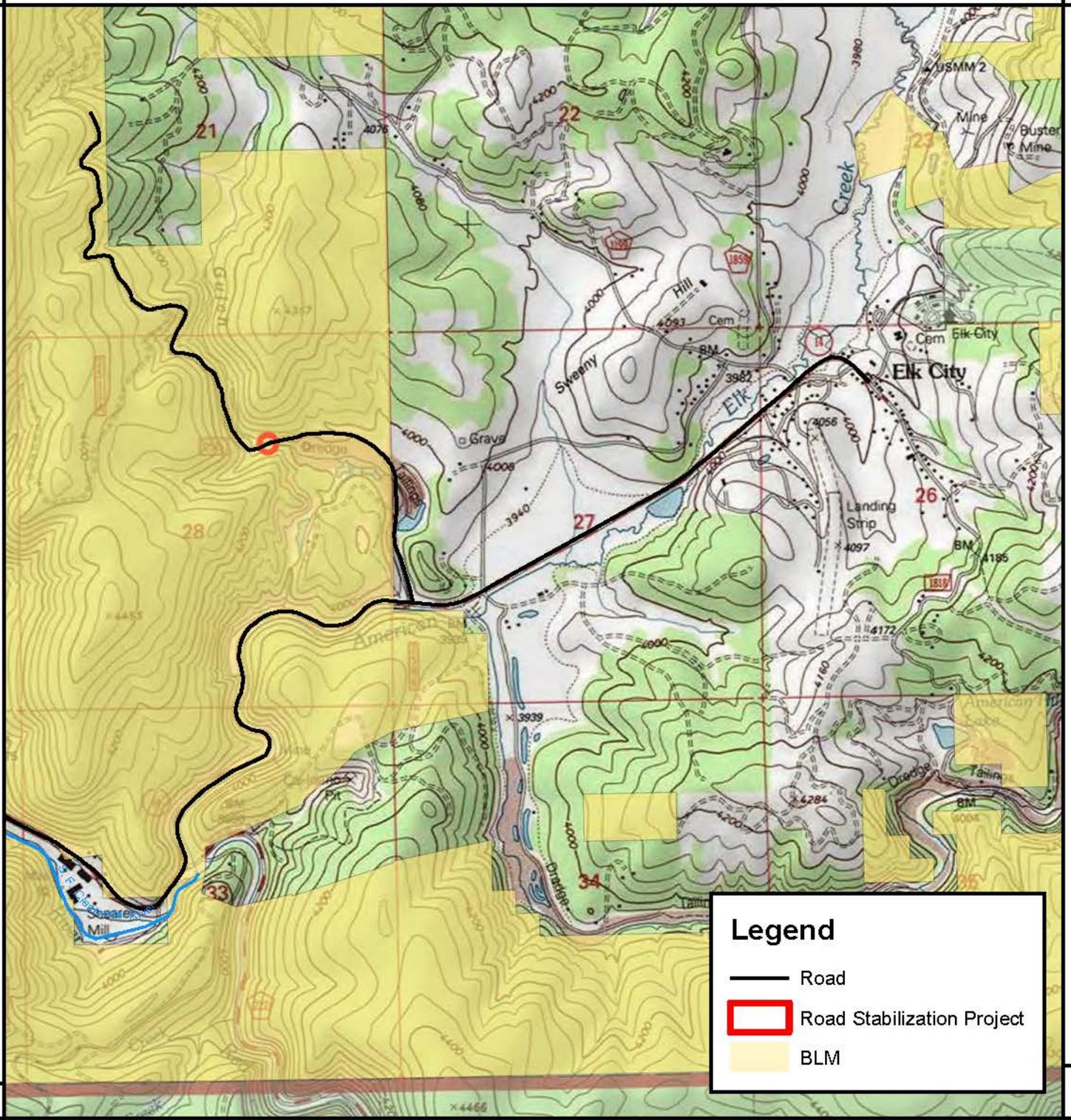
T 29 N

T 29 N

T 28 N

T 28 N

R 8 E



Legend

-  Road
-  Road Stabilization Project
-  BLM



The surface management status ("land ownership") should be used as a general guide only. Official land records, located at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other offices, should be checked for up-to-date information concerning any specific tract of land.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. The following cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with its data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.

Map Created: 9/3/2013

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Data displayed in UTM Zone 11N, NAD83

