

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION

CX No. DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2014-0002-CX

### A. BACKGROUND

**BLM Office:** Four Rivers Field Office

**Lease/Serial/Case File No.:**

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Little Freezeout Cattleguards

**Location of Proposed Action:** Cattleguard 1: T.06N R03 W Sec 25 and cattleguard 2: T.06N R.02W Sec30. Project(s) location is approximately 11 miles southwest of Emmett, Gem County ID (Map 1).

**Description of Proposed Action:** Two cattleguards on concrete bases would be placed on existing roads in allotment/pasture fences along Little Freezeout Road. The cattleguards would reduce vehicle livestock collisions and near-miss incidents due to gates being left open by the public along the highway. No construction activity would occur during the long-billed curlew breeding-season: March 15th-July15th.

### B. LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE

**Land Use Plan Name:** Cascade Resource Management Plan (CRMP)

**Date Approved or Amended:** July 1, 1988

**The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):** The Proposed Action would provide for public safety and ensure livestock safety and control.

### C: COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA:

**The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 Category Description:** G(Transportation)(2) Installation of routine signs, markers, culverts, ditches, waterbars, gates, or cattleguards on/or adjacent to roads and trails identified in any land use or transportation plan, or eligible for incorporation in such plan. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances that would introduce potential effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM6 apply.

**The following list of Extraordinary Circumstances (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) was considered:**

**1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.**

*Comments/Explanation:* The proposed action would provide for additional livestock control measures, making the public areas along the highway safer for the livestock and the commuting public, similar to but more consistently than the gates already in place. No significant changes to public health and safety would be expected.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Fspil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

- 2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; or ecologically significant or critical areas, or is not in compliance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.**

*Comments/Explanation:* The proposed cattleguards would be in the Long-billed Curlew Habitat Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Public lands located within T. 6 N, R. 3 W and T. 6 N R. 2W, contain habitat for slickspot peppergrass which is proposed for listing as endangered. There are no other unique resources. This administrative action would not affect the ACEC.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Joseph Weldon*, 1/8/2014

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Mark Steiger*, 1/8/2014

- 3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].**

*Comments/Explanation:* Alternative uses of available resources are set forth in the CRMP. There would be no known unresolved conflicts as a result of the transfer of the grazing preference. The proposed action would not involve any controversial effects and there are no unresolved conflicts regarding alternative uses of the available resources. The area is already used for recreation, long-billed curlew habitat, and livestock grazing. No new projects are proposed in the area.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Fspil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

- 4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.**

*Comments/Explanation:* Risks and impacts for the Proposed Action are well known and documented as it is a routine and often necessary upgrade of existing facilities, as funding and resources allow.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Fspil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

- 5. Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.**

*Comments/Explanation:* The Proposed Action is the result of a specific need for safety and to reduce the conflict between multiple resources (recreation and livestock grazing). The precedent for future actions would not be set as any potential similar action would need to be assessed, cleared and approved on the merits of the individual and site-specific needs associated with it. The Proposed Action is provided for in the CRMP.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Fspil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

**6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.**

*Comments/Explanation:* The Proposed Action is a commonplace project, resulting in known impacts and a known product. All expected associated impacts are currently occurring through public use. Therefore, cumulative impacts to the area would remain unchanged.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Espil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

**7. Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.**

*Comments/Explanation:* A records review and a Class III Cultural Resource Survey did not locate any historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The installation of the two cattleguards would have no effect on cultural resources.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Dean C. Shaw*, Archaeologist 12/10/2013

**8. Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or on designated Critical Habitat for these species.**

*Comments/Explanation:* The proposed action would occur in previously disturbed areas in roadbeds or a borrow ditch. As long as the project remains within the currently existing gate and road access areas, there would be no impacts to slickspot peppergrass.

Plants Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Mark Steiger*, Botanist 12/10/2013

*Comments/Explanation:* Long-billed curlew are a Type 5 species; however, the CRMP and ACEC designation provides for special management considerations. The area supports potential habitat for sagebrush steppe/grassland associated special status wildlife species. Construction outside the nesting period would minimize impacts to sensitive wildlife species.

Wildlife Specialist Signature/Date: *Joseph Weldon*, 1/8/2014

*Comments/Explanation:* No federally listed, candidate, or BLM special status aquatic species occur in the allotment.

Aquatics Specialist Signature/Date: *James A. Jartex* 12/10/2013

**9. Violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.**

*Comments/Explanation:* Installation of the two cattleguards would not violate any Federal, State, local or tribal law imposed for the protection of the environment.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Dean C. Shaw*, Archaeologist 12/10/2013

**10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).**

*Comments/Explanation:* There would be no impact or effect on low income or minority populations from the Proposed Action. Use of the area would be able to continue at current levels and frequency. The relative safety to the public would be increased as a direct benefit.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Martin Espil*, Rangeland Management Specialist 12/03/2013

**11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).**

*Comments/Explanation:* The installation of the two cattleguards would not limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the integrity of such sacred sites.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ Dean C. Shaw, Archaeologist 12/10/2013

**12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).**

*Comments/Explanation:* The proposed project would not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of species. The area is currently heavily used by members of the public as an open access area to Public Lands, the Proposed Action would continue to provide access similar to current levels.

Specialist Signature/Date: /s/ *Jonnie Hutet*, Weed Management Specialist 12/19/13

**D: SIGNATURE**

I certify that none of the Departmental exceptions (Extraordinary Circumstances) listed in the above Part II (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action; therefore, this categorical exclusion is appropriate for this situation.

Authorizing Official:

/s/ *Matthew McCoy*

1/15/2014

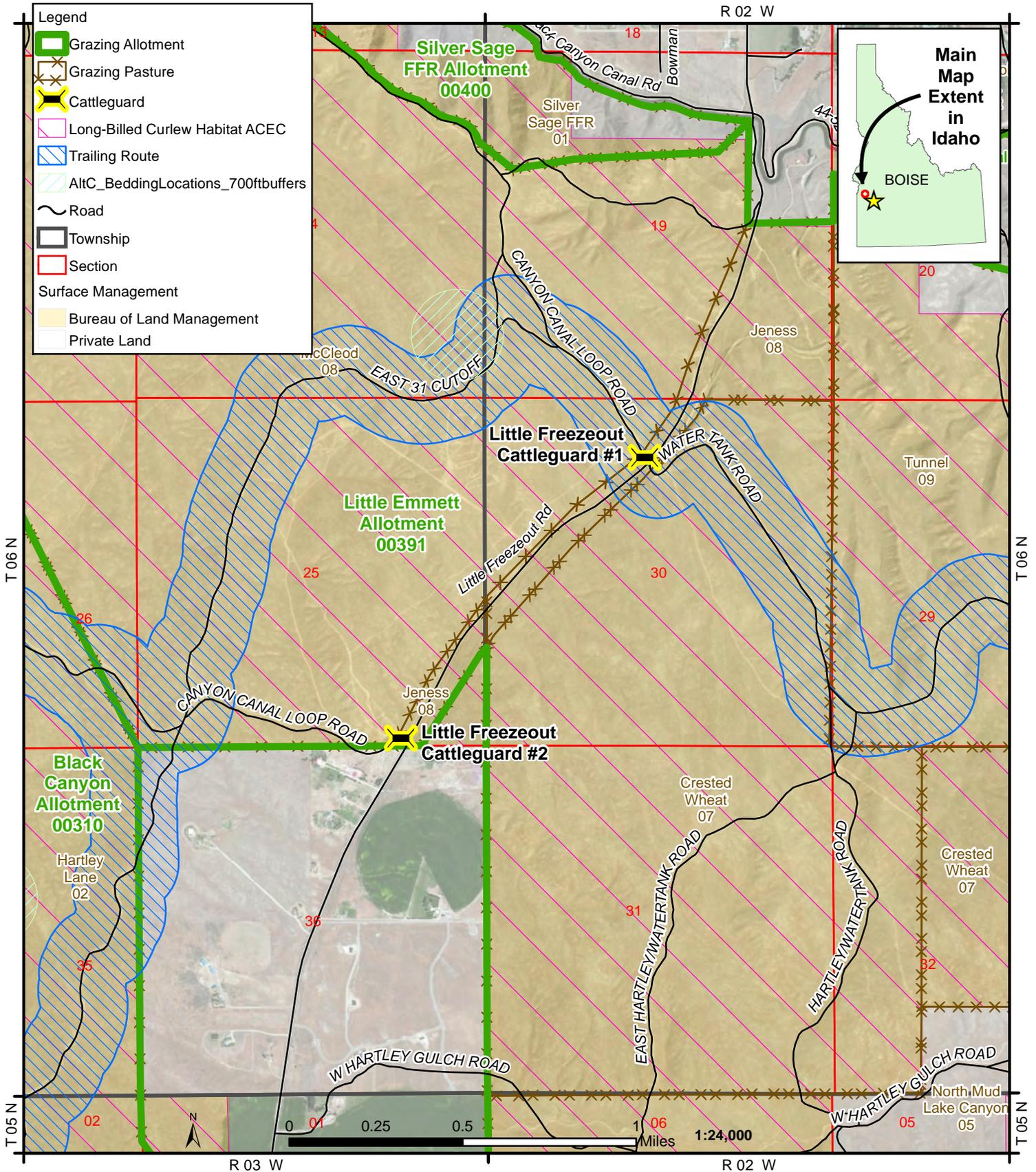
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Name

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Date

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**Prepared By/Contact Person:** Martin Espil (208)384-3224

# Little Freezeout Cattleguards 1 and 2



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management, Idaho  
Boise District, Four Rivers Field Office  
Map date: November 18, 2013



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