

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

**Finding of No Significant Impact
DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0032-EA
December 2013**

**TEMPORARY CLOSURE TO ASH SPRINGS RECREATION SITE
Lincoln County, NV**

**Applicant:
Bureau of Land Management**

Caliente Field Office
Caliente, Nevada
Phone: 775 726-8100
Fax: 775-726-8111



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment (EA) Notice of Temporary Closure to Ash Springs Recreation Site DOI-BLM-NV-L030-2011-0032-EA, dated August 2013. After consideration of the environmental effects as described in the EA, and incorporated herein, I have determined that the proposed action with the project design specifications, including minimization or mitigation measures identified in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required to be prepared.

This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA.

Context:

The Ash Springs Recreation Site is located in the community of Ash Springs along US Highway 93 in Lincoln County, Nevada, approximately nine miles north of the town of Alamo and about 100 miles north of Las Vegas. The recreation site is a high-use hot springs recreation area, and one of the most visited recreation sites in Lincoln County. It is primarily visited by Clark County residents, local residents from Lincoln County, and motorists traveling along Highway 93 with most use occurring from March through November.

Intensity:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The environmental assessment considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of the closure of the Ash Springs Recreation site. The closure will result in overall temporary habitat improvement for the endangered White River springfish (*Crenichthys baileyi baileyi*) and BLM sensitive species including the Pahranaagat naucorid bug (*Pelocoris shoshone shoshone*), Grated tyronia (*Tyronia clathrata*), and Pahranaagat pebblesnail (*Pyrgulopsis merriami*). In addition, BLM expects increased native plant biomass and vigor and reduced bank trampling and erosion due to recreation impacts.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action will temporarily improve public health and safety by reducing the risk of injury from the crumbling retaining wall. The proposed action does not present unusual or significant risk to public health or safety.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The general area supports riparian habitat due to the presence of the spring sources. Cultural resources are located in the general vicinity but are located outside the recreation site and away from the area of potential effects (APE) and are not affected by the proposed action. None of the other unique characteristics occur in the vicinity.

4. *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

The viewpoints of recreationists and local residents vary on the proper use of the site.

5. *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

There are no known effects of the proposed action identified in the EA which are considered uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6. *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

The Proposed Action does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. All future similar events would be subject to the same assessment standards and independent decision making.

7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

No significant impacts will occur due to the Proposed Action. The subsequent land use would be regulated by local, state, and federal regulations as applicable; therefore, no significantly cumulative impacts are anticipated. No other actions with potential cumulative impacts have been identified in or near the action area.

8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.*

The Proposed Action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources. A Cultural Resources Inventory Needs Assessment was completed for this project to determine the threat the Proposed Action would pose to cultural and historical resources and no threat was found.

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 White River springfish (*Crenichthys baileyi baileyi*) are present within the closure area. The EA has identified that no significant or adverse impacts would result to this species from implementing the proposed action. The proposed action has undergone consultation and coordination with the USFWS and has been determined the closure will be temporary beneficial to the species and not likely adversely affect the species or their critical habitat.

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

The proposed action will not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

/s/ Victoria Barr

Victoria Barr
Caliente Field Manager
Caliente Field Office

12/24/2013

Date