BLM

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

Environmental Assessment

DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0148-EA
QEP Field Services (QEP FS)
Red Wash Section 16 (16–inch or smaller) buried NGL Pipeline

PREPARING OFFICE

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Bureau of Land Management
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Chapter 1. Introduction

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1.1. Identifying Information:

1.1.1. Title, EA number, and type of project:

Red Wash Section 16 (16–inch or smaller) buried NGL Pipeline

DOI-BLM-G010–2014–0148–EA

Buried 16–inch or smaller Natural Gas Pipeline

1.1.2. Location of Proposed Action:

Red Wash Area: Uintah County, Utah

T. 7 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 21, E½E½. Sec. 22, SW¼SW¼. Sec. 23, NW¼NW¼.

1.1.3. Name and Location of Preparing Office:

Lead Office - Vernal Field Office

170 S. 500 E.,

Vernal Utah 84078

435–781–4400

1.1.4. Identify the subject function code, lease, serial, or case file number:

Case file number: Right-of-Way UTU-90488

1.1.5. Applicant Name:

QEP Field Services (QEP FS)

1.2. Purpose and Need for Action:

Install a buried, low pressure, 16 inch or smaller main trunk line, to transport natural gas from all current and future producing gas wells in the Red Wash area.

QEP Energy Company recently started a program to drill and complete wells in the Lower Mesa Verde formation in the Redwash field. The development will include multi-well pads throughout their acreage that will significantly increase the volume of natural gas needing to be transported

form the field. The gas will flow from north to south.

The length of the pipeline is approximately 6,639 feet with a 50–foot permanent width. A temporary construction width of 50– feet (25 each side of the permanent width) is requested for 14 weeks.

The pipeline will be cathodically protected but the location has not been identified yet. All permanent, above ground facilities, valves and metering will be painted a flat non-contrasting color. Above ground facilities include (risers, valves, pig receivers and launchers, (2) mainline block valves).

Permanent barrier guards will be placed around equipment (6-inch diameter pipe, cement filled and anchored). Lateral tie-ins will be installed, but actual locations have not been determined.

1.3. Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues:

The proposed action was posted to the public BLM E-Planning website with its assigned NEPA number on May 6, 2014. To date, no questions or comments have been received. A public comment period was not offered due to the proposed action being similar in nature to other projects in the immediate area.

Issues identified by BLM Specialists are documented in Appendix A Interdisciplinary Team Checklist

Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1. Description of the Proposed Action:

Red Wash Section 16 (16–inch or smaller) Main Trunk Line

This pipeline will transport natural gas from all current and future producing gas wells in the Redwash area. Projected throughput will be approximately 30 MMSCFD. This pipeline will be buried and will be a maximum of 16" in size. The pipeline will be located on BLM surface lands in Sections 21, 22 and 27 of Township 7 South, Range 23 East.

The pipeline will be a low pressure, cathodically protected, buried, up to 16" O.D. pipeline, (wall thickness as required per Code, grade X42/X52 pipeline) 6,639' in length and all located on BLM surface lands. The pipeline footage total on BLM surface land is 6,639 feet. The MAOP for the line is 1000 psig.

QEP FS is proposing a 50' permanent ROW comprised of approximately 7.62 acres. A temporary construction widthof 50 feet(15' spoil - 35' working side) is requested for a total of 100 feet for construction comprising approximately 15.24 acres. The pipeline will operate year round and the right-of-way is requested for a term of 30 years with options to renew for as long as needed.

Upon receipt of all necessary approvals, pipeline construction will commence in the early months of 2015.

All permanent, above-ground facilities, valves and metering, not subject to safety requirements, will be painted a flat non-contrasting color which is harmonious with the surrounding landscape as specified by the BLM.

II. Facility Purpose and Need

QEP Energy Company (QEP Energy) recently started a program to drill and complete wells in the Lower Mesa Verde formation in the Redwash field. The development will include multi-well pads throughout their acreage that will significantly increase the volume of natural gas needing to be transported from the field. The gas will flow from north to south.

The proposed pipeline will serve as the main trunk line for section 16 and is required to transport gas from the pads to field compression and dehydration.

III. Ancillary Right-Of-Way and Permits

Access into the proposed pipeline project will be from existing highways and roads. All construction and vehicular traffic will be confined to the right-of-way corridor or designated county and/or BLM roads unless otherwise authorized and approved by the regulating agency or landowner. No new access roads will be required for the construction of the project. Approvals will be obtained from the BLM for the use of existing roads during construction. Authorized roads will be rehabilitated to preconstruction conditions after construction activities are complete, unless otherwise specified by regulating agency or landowner.

QEP FS will submit to Uintah County a Right-of-Way Encroachment Application along with the pipeline crossing plan and profile for every county road crossing and will pay the appropriate permit fee for each. The pipeline will follow or cross the following Uintah County Roads:

Class B: Redwash Camp Road

Class D: 004548B, 004546, 004548A, 004548, Dead Man Bench, 4551D, 4551E, and 161811

Any associated building, zoning, and utility crossing permits will be secured from the appropriate regulatory agency prior to pipeline construction.

IV. Engineering Surveys

All alignment maps, site specific details, and design drawings associated with the above mentioned project are available for review at QEPFS' Redwash office located at 418 East Main Street, Vernal Utah upon request.

QEPFS will protect all survey monuments, witness comers, reference monuments, and bearing trees within the right-of-way against disturbance during construction, operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation. If any monument, corner or accessory is destroyed, obliterated, or damaged during construction, operation, or maintenance, QEPFS will have a registered surveyor restore the disturbed monument, comer or accessory using surveying procedures found in the "Manual of Surveying Instruction for the Survey of Public Lands of the United Sates" 1973 edition. QEPFS will record such survey in the appropriate county and send a copy to the appropriate BLM office.

V. Design

A. Design and Engineering:

The design and engineering will be completed by QEPFS personnel or Engineering

Contractor supervised by QEPFS engineering staff.

B. Inspection:

QEP FS will be employing experienced and qualified pipeline inspectors to monitor and ensure the quality of the pipeline installation. Status reports will be available upon request by the authorized officer. QEP FS will also be using a pipeline contractor with experienced personnel and specialized equipment making this project as cost effective and as non-intrusive as possible.

C. Pipeline Specifications:

1. A 100' wide construction phase right-of-way will be necessary

2. Design Codes

a. Pipeline is designed in accordance with ASME B31.8

b. Pipe purchased will be PSL2 pipe manufactured in accordance to API 5L- "Specification for Line Pipe"

3. Mainline Pipe Specifications (depending on location):

a. 16"0.D., wall thickness as required per Code, Grade X42/X52

4. Road crossing pipe (unimproved public roads and/or roads, highways, or public streets with hard surfaces):

a. NON-cased crossings

b. 16" O.D., wall thickness as required per Code, Grade X52

5. Pipe will have a minimum of 14-16 mils Fusion Bond Epoxy (FBE) coating

6. Buried Depths:

a. Mainline pipe will have a minimum of 16" of cover

b. River/Road/Railroad crossings will have a minimum of 48" of cover under the ditch and 72" of cover under the road/river/railroad

7. Above-ground facilities (risers, valves, pig receivers and launchers, etc)

a. (1) *16" Launcher (1) *16" Receiver will be constructed and placed on the line. (*16" or appropriately sized equipment if smaller O.D. pipe is used)

b. A minimum of Two (2) mainline block valves will also be installed actual locations have not yet been determined

c. Lateral tie-ins will be installed - actual locations have not yet been determined

d. Any above ground facilities near any established right-of-way will have permanent barricade guards placed around, especially equipment around or near roads, to prevent any damage from vehicle accidents. The guards will be structurally sound, with a minimum 6-inch diameter pipe, cement filled and anchored. Above ground facilities will not be placed or built under any existing power line utilities.

D. Flood Plain Specifications:

The proposed pipeline encroaches on one unnamed tributaries to Red Wash. The proposed pipeline does not cross any major washes.

E. Archaeological Specifications:

An independent archaeological study has been completed by Aros Archaeology LLC. The recommendations and determinations can be found in their final attached MOAC Report No. RW H1-14-16B dated March 13, 2014.

F. Paleontological Specifications:

An independent paleontological reconnaissance survey was completed by Outlaw Engineering. The recommendations and determinations can be found in their final attached report, dated March 20, 2014. QEP FS will comply with all recommendations.

G. Wildlife Specifications:

A biology (T&E) survey was completed by OUTLAW Engineering Inc. The recommendations and determinations dated March 14, 2014 can be found in their final attached report. QEP FS will comply with all recommendations.

H. Road Specifications:

Not applicable

I. Power Line Specifications:

Not applicable

J. Communication Site Specifications: (pertain to non-linear sites)

Not applicable

J. Fencing

The integrity of existing fences will be maintained at all times. Any existing fence to be crossed by the pipeline will be braced and tied off before cutting the wire. At any temporary fence crossing, a wire gate will be placed at the opening during the construction phase. At any permanent fence crossings, a cattle-guard will be installed on concrete bases and a 16-foot steel powder-river type gate will be placed next to the fence brace post adjacent to the cattle-guard. The fencing, braces, gate, cattle-guard and bases will be installed in accordance with instructions from the BLM.

VI. Construction of the ROW Facility:

A. Flagging and Staking the ROW:

Centerline and exterior staking will be used along the pipeline route as stated in 43 CFR.

B. Clearing/Grading of ROW and Construction Procedures:

Any clearing or grading will be done as follows.

a) Utilizing industry available mechanical equipment, contractor shall build a suitable ROW necessary for safe pipeline construction activities. Contractor will use all reasonable means to limit the amount of disturbed acreage from the grading activities. The area of spoil pile storage from trenching including the trench area and pipeline stringing paths, will be graded to provide for a safe working platform/environment throughout the length of the pipeline. Areas beyond that stated above will be graded as needed when a safe working platform/environment needs to be established. Excess grading for the purpose of vehicle and equipment travel along easily navigable terrain will be prohibited.

b) 6" of topsoil will be removed and stockpiled on edge of ROW where required to complete the work safely.

c) Subsoil will be removed and stockpiled next to topsoil to accommodate any leveling needed.

d) Trenching of 6' deep and 48" wide will commence utilizing industry available mechanical equipment for excavation/backfilling operations. Should contractor and company representative determine explosives are needed to excavate rock ditch areas; contractor will take every precaution to protect the public, wildlife and its personnel from any injury or harm which might arise from the use of such explosives.

Contractor shall exercise extreme care and shall use methods satisfactory to Company Representative and the authorized officer that will not cause damage to persons or property. Blasting mats or other effective means will be used to prevent rock from being scattered over the ROW and adjacent property. The handling, transporting, storage and use of explosives will comply with all applicable laws, regulations and order of proper authorities.

e) A track hoe with a sucker attachment will be used for pipe stringing on the working side.

f) Once the pipe has been strung and lined up, the welding operation will commence.

g) All welding will be conducted in compliance with the American Petroleum Institute (API) Standards 1104, "Welding of Pipelines and Related Facilities."

h) Following welding operations, the pre-coated or wrapped pipe will be lowered into the ditch.

i) After lowering the pipe into the trench, a shaker bucket will be used for padding the pipeline and backfilling. No material/borrow sites are anticipated for the construction of the pipeline.

j) Subsoil and topsoil will be replaced back to original contour.

k) The pipeline will be hydrostatically tested per code at 400 psig for 8 hours, or as required per final engineering design.

l) Reseeding and any erosion barriers needed will be installed after pipeline is tested.

m) Equipment proposed on the pipeline project is as follows:

10 each Pickup Trucks

6 each Welding Trucks

4 each Tractor Trailer

6 each Two-Ton Trucks

1 each Seed Driller and Tractor

4 each Backhoes and/or Track hoes

4 each Side Boom

2 each Maintainer (Blade)

1 each Water Truck

1 each 5 ton skid truck

2 each Dozer Caterpillar

C. Earthwork:

Not applicable

D. Structure Installation:

Not applicable

E. Stabilization, Rehabilitation, and Vegetation:

QEP FS reclamation plan attached.

VII. Operation and Maintenance of the Facility:

Some operational opening and closing of valves and blowing down of laterals will be required. Annual leak surveys, valve greasing and inspections will be performed in the spring/summer/fall months.

QEP FS will work with the BLM to remediate any problems that might arise from the construction of this new pipeline.

VIII. Termination and Abandonment:

QEP FS does not foresee any reason to terminate or abandon this pipeline before its term would expire. QEP FS has proven its ability to terminate and successfully reclaim its pipelines and ROWs in the past and continues to be able do so.

IX. Miscellaneous Information Needs: A. Waste Disposal

1. Garbage and other refuse materials will be placed in a trash cage, the contents of which will be disposed of in the nearest legal landfill.

2. Portable toilets will be furnished by contractors and all waste will be hauled to and disposed of in an approved treatment facility.

B. Traffic Control Plan:

Not applicable in this remote area

C. Safety Plan for Employees, Contractors, and General Public:

QEPFS' Employee Safety Plan will be adhered to by all associated with this project

(Available upon request).

D. Fire Prevention Plan:

QEPFS' Fire Prevention Plans will be adhered to by all associated with this project. (Available upon request)

If construction would take place during fire season QEP FS would utilize precautionary measures if necessary to eliminate any fires.

E. Spill Prevention Plan:

QEP FS' Spill Prevention Plans will be adhered to by all associated with this project. (Available upon request)

F. Temporary Use Permit: (TUP)

Additional temporary construction width of 50' feet the entire length of the permanent right-of-way will be required for construction for approximately 14 weeks.

Bonding: A surety bond will be required for the proposed pipeline. The bond amount determined by QEP FS for the reclamation and termination of the pipeline is $50,000.00. The bond would be reviewed periodically to ensure it is adequate. If it is inadequate, the holder will be required to provide a new bond in the required amount. The holder will not be allowed to conduct any surface disturbing activities until the surety bond is accepted and approved by BLM.

2.2. Alternatives Considered but not Analyzed in Detail

There were no other alternatives identified aside form the Proposed Action and No Action alternatives that would meet the purpose and need of this project.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under this action, BLM would not approve the right-of-way application for the 16–inch or less buried main trunk line. QEP FS would not be allowed to install the pipeline on federal land.

2.3. Conformance

The proposal would be in conformance with the Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (October 31, 2008). The RMP/ROD decision allows for processing applications, permits, operating plans, mineral exchanges, leases on public lands in accordance with policy and guidance and allows for management of public lands to support goals and objectives of other resources programs, respond to public requests for land use authorizations, and acquire administrative and public access where necessary (RMP/ROD p. 86). It has been determined that the proposed action and alternative(s) would not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

Chapter 3. Affected Environment:

This chapter presents the potentially affected existing environment (i.e. the physical, biological, social, and economic values and resources) of the impact area as identified in the Interdisciplinary Team Checklist. This chapter provides the baseline for comparison of impacts/consequences described in Chapter 4.

3.1. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils, and Vegetation

The invasive species, cheat grass *(Bromus tectorum)* is present at these locations.

The soils are a sandy clay loam. Soils in the Project Area tend to be shallow and well drained.

The vegetation in the Project Area consists of fairly short shrubs, grasses and some forbs. Species include Little Utah juniper *(Juniperus osteosperma)*, Indian ricegrass *(Achnatherum hymenoides)*, Wyoming big sagebrush *(Artemisia tridenta ssp. wyomingensis)*, shadscale (*Atriplex confertifolia*), mat saltbush *(Atriplex corrugata)*, Gardner saltbush *(Atriplex gardneri)*, rubber rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), squirreltail *(Elymus elymoides)*, needle and thread grass *(Hesperostipa comata)*, prickly pear cactus sp. (*Opuntia sp.*), galleta grass *(Pleuraphis jamesii)*, black greasewood *(Sarcobatus vermiculatus)*, Mormon tea *(Ephedra viridis)*, Slender wheatgrass *(Elymus trachycaulus)*, Scarlet globemallow *(Sphaeralcea coccinea)*.

3.2. Wildlife: Migratory Birds (Including Raptors)

All migratory birds and their nests are protected from take or disturbance under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (16 U.S.C., 703 et seq.). These protection laws were implemented for the protection of avian species. Unless permitted by regulations, it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, kill, capture, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any species covered under these Acts. In addition, Executive Order 13186 sets forth the responsibilities of federal agencies to further implement the provisions of these Acts by integrating bird conservation principles and practices into agency activities and by ensuring that federal actions evaluate the effects of actions and agency plans on protected avian species.

The BLM has reviewed district files and completed a field visit for raptor nesting and migratory bird habitat within all lands up to ½ mile of the proposed project. There are two documented ferruginous hawk nests located within ½ mile of the proposed project area. The following addresses migratory birds that may utilize the project area for nesting or foraging activities, including those species classified as Priority Species by Utah Partners-in-Flight. Utah Partners-in-Flight is a cooperative partnership among federal, state, and local government agencies as well as public organizations and individuals organized to emphasize the conservation of birds not covered by existing conservation initiatives.

Desert/Shrub Areas: American robin, American white pelican, bald eagle, blue-gray gnatcatcher, black-billed magpie, black-capped chickadee, black-chinned hummingbird, black-throated sparrow, Brewer's blackbird, Brewer's sparrow, broad-tailed hummingbird, common raven, ferruginous hawk, mountain bluebird, sage sparrow, sage thrasher, short-eared owl, song sparrow, western burrowing owl, and western kingbird.

Chapter 4. Environmental Effects:

This chapter describes the direct and indirect impacts that would be expected to occur upon the implementation of the considered alternative. It also discloses the expected cumulative impacts, which are those impacts resulting from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions.

4.1. Proposed Action

4.1.1. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils, and Vegetation

In addition to the applicant committed measures outlined within QEP FS reclamation plan, the Plan of Development for this project, the below mitigation measures would reduce the risk of establishment or spread of non-native invasive plant species.

The Proposed Action would disturb approximately 15.24 acre of soils and vegetation. The portions of the disturbed area that would not be utilized for maintenance would be subject to interim reclamation. If interim reclamation is successful, direct long-term impacts to vegetation would not occur. If interim reclamation is not successful, the entire area could remain disturbed for the long term. Long-term impacts to vegetation are expected for the life of the project.

Additional direct impacts to vegetation are primarily associated with clearing of vegetation during construction. Indirect impacts to vegetation resources include the invasion and establishment of introduced, undesired plant species. The severity of these invasions would depend on the success of reclamation and revegetation, and the degree and success of noxious weed control efforts.

The area's poor soil reclamation potential, has made successful reclamation efforts challenging. BLM field inspections indicate that short-term impacts may be more accurately portrayed as long-term impacts. However, most of these issues should be addressed in the BLM approved Questar Exploration and Production Company Uinta Basin Division Reclamation Plan. A copy of this plan is on file at the BLM Vernal Field Office.

Impacts to soils and vegetation would be partially mitigated by reclamation of disturbed areas with native vegetation and control of noxious and invasive weeds by mechanical and chemical treatment.

4.1.1.1. Mitigation

- All vehicles and equipment shall be cleaned either through power-washing, or other approved method, if the vehicles or equipment were brought in from areas outside the Uinta Basin, to prevent weed seed introduction.

4.1.2. Wildlife: Migratory Birds (Including Raptors)

As identified in Chapter 3, the project area is located within 0.5 miles and is in line-of-site of two ferruginous hawk nests. Potential effects of the Proposed Action Alternative on avian species include 1) direct loss or degradation of potential nesting and foraging habitats, 2) indirect disturbance from human activity (including harassment, displacement, and noise), and 3) increased direct impacts (including poaching and collisions with vehicles). By following the mitigation measures outlined below these impacts would be minimized or completely negated.

Project activities are anticipated to disturb approximately 15 acres of migratory bird foraging and nesting habitat. Given the abundance of foraging habitat in the surrounding area, habitat losses are not expected to reduce raptor prey bases to levels where "take" would occur. Impacts to migratory birds within the proposed project area would also be dependent upon the time when project activities would occur. If these activities occur in the late fall, most of the species would have left the area during winter migration. If construction activities were to occur during the spring or summer months it could cause birds to move into other adjacent habitats or into habitats where interspecific and intraspecific competition between species may increase. Surface and noise disturbance associated with project activities would be considered temporary and is anticipated to occur during typical working hours; however, by following the mitigation measures for ferruginous hawk outlined below impacts to migratory birds would be minimized or completely negated.

Mitigation Measures:

Project activities are not allowed from March 1 – August 31 to minimize impacts during ferruginous hawk nesting season.

4.2. No Action

Under the No Action alternative, QEP FS would not be able to install the 16–inch buried pipeline and the resources would remain as they currently exist.

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no direct or indirect effects to migratory birds, including raptors. Current land use trends in the area would continue of which would mainly include increased oil and gas development activities.

4.3. Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those impacts resulting from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions.

4.3.1. Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils, and Vegetation

The CIAA for soils and vegetation is the boundary of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Greater Deadman Bench Oil and Gas Producing Region. The Greater Deadman Bench Oil and Gas Producing Region project area is located 20 miles south of Vernal, Utah.

The project area encompasses approximately 15.24 acres of land within Uintah County. The project area is located in Sections 21, 22 and 27 of Township 7 South, Range 23 East. The town of Vernal is approximately 26 miles north of the project boundary. The foreseeable activity for the QEP FEIS is the drilling of up to 1,239 new wells. Future total area of disturbance due to oil and gas activity for the FEIS project area is approximately 98,785 acres.

Soil erosion would be increased due to the disturbance associated with oil and gas activities in the area. Each acre of disturbance adds to a cumulative effect by increasing erosion and destroying native vegetation, and through the invasion of undesired plant species. In general, soils in the

Uinta Basin are very thin, slow to develop, and difficult to reclaim because of the arid climate and lack of organic material.

Direct surface disturbances to vegetation indicated by past, present, and reasonably foreseeable developments are primarily attributable to oil and gas development and vegetation management by various federal agencies. Oil and gas development, however, would continue to degrade local habitat by direct disturbance and slow reclamation of disturbed areas. Surface disturbance within the CIAA would be approximately 98,785 acres The Proposed Action would add approximately 15.24 acre of surface disturbance. The No Action alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

4.3.2. Wildlife: Migratory Birds (Including Raptors)

The cumulative impact analysis area for migratory birds is defined as the Walker Hollow-Green River Hydrologic Unit Boundary consisting of approximately 125,069 acres. This hydrologic unit boundary was chosen for cumulative impact analysis as this best represents a soil and vegetation habitat type avian species found within the project area would utilize in whole. Future actions of the Proposed Action could increase human presence in the area continuing to fragment and manipulate the surrounding habitats by increasing the presence of non-native invasive plant species. Further introduction of non-native invasive plant species could have significant adverse impacts on migratory birds that are dependent upon prevalent species for their survival. In general such an environmental shift would probably have negative impacts on wildlife species and would favor non-native and readily adaptive species.

Impacts to migratory birds in the cumulative impact analysis area would be dependent upon the season of project activities. Any activities completed in the late fall would less likely have a direct impact to avian species because many of the species would have left for winter grounds. Mitigation measures outlined in Chapter 4 will further limit disturbance to avian species within the area. In addition to displacement caused by project activities the Proposed Action Alternative would also result in the temporary removal of up to approximately 15 acres of potential nesting and foraging habitat for migratory birds. However, successful reclamation efforts would return disturbed habitats to pre-disturbance levels and loss of vegetation would be a temporary impact to migratory bird habitat. The No Action Alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.

Chapter 5. Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted:

Notification letters of the proposed project were mailed to existing right-of-way holders on April 18, 2014. No issues or concerns on the proposed pipeline have been received to date.

Chapter 6. References

BLM. 2008. Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Greater Deadman Bench Oil and Gas Producing Region Project, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Vernal District Office.

Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (October 31, 2008)

Appendix A. Interdisciplinary Checklist

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

Project Title: QEP FIELD SERVICES: Section 16 Trunk Line (Buried NGL 16-inch or smaller) pipeline

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0148-EA

File/Serial Number: UTU-90488

Project Leader: Margo Roberts

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: (Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED (INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES APPENDIX 1 H-1790-1)				
NI	Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Emissions will occur from vehicles in the project area, but those impacts will be short term & transitory so they will not be detectable by monitors or models. No standards have been set by EPA or other regulatory agencies for greenhouse gases. In addition, the assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change is still in its earliest stages of formulation. Global scientific models are inconsistent, and regional or local scientific models are lacking so that it is not technically feasible to determine the net impacts to climate due to greenhouse gas emissions. It is anticipated that greenhouse gas emissions associated with this action and its alternative(s) would be negligible.	Margo Roberts	05/05/2014
NP	BLM Natural Areas	The proposed project is not in a BLM Natural Area, per the Green River District, Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NP	Cultural: Archaeological Resources	Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.16(y) this project is considered to be an undertaking. The area of potential effect (APE) is defined as the polygon presented in the right-of-way application. MOAC conducted a 100% pedestrian inventory of the project area. No cultural material was identified within the project area. A consultation letter was sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on July 18, 2012 recommending a "no historic properties effected" determination. We received their concurrence to our determination on July 31, 2012.	Erin Goslin	5/16/2014
NP	Cultural: Native American Religious Concerns	Tribal consultation was conducted under the Greater Deadman Bench EIS in 2008. No Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are identified within the APE. The proposed project will not hinder access to or use of Native American religious sites.	Erin Goslin	5/16/2014
NP	Designated Areas: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	The proposed project is/is not in an ACEC per the Green River District, Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NP	Designated Areas: Wild and Scenic Rivers	The proposed project is not in an Wild and Scenic Rivers area per the Green River District, Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NP	Designated Areas: Wilderness Study Areas	The proposed project is not in an Wilderness/WSA area per the Green River District, Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database. The proposed project lays within NLCS other related lands polygons and identified as No Wilderness Characteristics, Excluded – Size Limitations.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NI	Environmental Justice	No minority or economically disadvantaged communities or populations would be disproportionately adversely affected by the proposed action or alternatives.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NI	Farmlands (prime/unique)	All prime farmlands in **Uintah County** are irrigated. All unique farmlands in Uintah County are orchards. No irrigated lands or orchards are located in the project area; therefore this resource will not be carried forward for analysis.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Fuels/Fire Management	The proposed activities may have an impact due to the increased chance of promoting invasive species; primarily Bromus tectorum. Bromus tectorum may become established through soil disturbance and may increase fire frequency in those areas. Applying the Green River District Reclamation Guidelines to any surface disturbing areas should prevent additional hazardous fuels.	Blaine Tarbell	5/6/14
NI	Geology/Minerals/ Energy Production	No adverse impacts are expected from this project	Elizabeth Gamber	5/8/2014
PI	Invasive Plants/Noxious Weeds, Soils & Vegetation	IP/NW: Proposed disturbance would provide suitable habitat for the establishment and spread of non-native plant species. Operator would control invasive species in all disturbed areas as discussed in the QEPFS approved reclamation plan. Soils: 15.24 acres of soil disturbance would occur during construction until reclamation is successful. Soils would be recontoured and reseeded during reclamation. The routes would be reclaimed and monitored in accordance with the Questar Exploration and Production Company Uintah Basin Division Reclamation Plan on file with the Vernal Field Office of the BLM. Locations would be seeded with the seed mix approved by the BLM Authorized Officer. Veg: 15.24 acres of initial vegetation disturbance/removal. Upon construction completion, the disturbed area would be reseeded and re-contoured to the approximate natural contours. This would reduce the effects of the disturbance when the seeding becomes established. The routes would be reclaimed and monitored in accordance with the Questar Exploration and Production Company Uintah Basin Division Reclamation Plan on file with the Vernal Field Office of the BLM. Routes would be seeded with the seed mix approved by the BLM Authorized Officer.	Kevin Sadlier	6/2/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NP	Lands/Access	The proposed area is located within the Vernal Field Office Resource Management Plan area, which allows for oil and gas development with associated road and pipeline right-of-ways. Current land uses, within the area identified in the proposed action and adjacent lands, consist of existing oil and gas development, wildlife habitat, recreational use, and sheep and cattle ranching. No existing land uses would be changed or modified by the implementation of the proposed action. The existing right-of-way holders in the project area have been notified of the project. Master Title Plats have been checked for conflicts with Public Water Reserves, County Transportation Map, Class B, D. Applicant Committed Measures: Permits from the counties will be obtained.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NP	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)	The proposed project is not located within an area with Lands and Wilderness Characteristics per the Green River District, Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NI	Livestock Grazing & Rangeland Health Standards	Livestock Grazing: The proposed project is located within the Antelope Draw sheep allotment. The allotment is seasonally permitted from October 1 to May 10 with up to 3679 AUMs. This area has many existing well sites and the proposed project will have very little effect on the livestock grazing as the area is bisected by numerous roads and other oil and gas projects. The proposal is consistent with multiple use of public lands and other oil & gas activities in the area. It is not anticipated that this proposal would negatively impact grazing operations. There are no known range improvements on the proposed sites on this allotment that would be impacted by this proposal. Rangeland health Standards: This proposal is within the Antelope Draw. This proposal is may temporarily affect rangeland health due to the disturbance but is expected to recover with adequate reclamation.	Craig Newman	5/15/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NP	Paleontology	No scientifically important fossils were found (Outlaw Eng. March 20, 2014)	Elizabeth Gamber	5/8/2014
NP	Plants: BLM Sensitive	There are no known BLM Sensitive plants in the proposed action, and no known Green River shale outcrops using most recent VFO GIS data layers. The potential for *Yucca sterilis* to reside on sandy inclusions throughout the field office exists, however, no known populations are mapped from this area. *Astragalus equisolensis* habitat is known from within one-tenth mile of the proposed action. The area was surveyed for BLM Sensitive plant species on March 8, 2014 and no plants or habitats were located, therefore direct or indirect effects to BLM sensitive plant species would not be expected to be present using current data sets and were confirmed with field survey by the proponent.	Maggie Marston	5/11/2014
NP	Plants: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate	There are no Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate federally listed upland or riparian plant species or habitats known within this region of the Vernal Field Office as confirmed by VFO GIS and UNHP data layers. The USFWS polygon for *Sclerocactus ssp.* occurs approximately 2.8 miles east. The area was surveyed and habitat was assessed for all TEPC plants on March 8, 2014, therefore no direct or indirect effects to federally listed plant species would not be expected to be present using current data sets and confirmed with habitat assessment and field surveys.	Maggie Marston	6/11/2014
NP	Plants: Wetland/Riparian	The project is not located within a wetlands/riparian zone per the Vernal Field Office GIS data layers. In addition, field survey by the proponent on March 8, 2014 revealed upland desert shrub vegetation throughout the length of the proposed action.	Maggie Marston	6/11/2014
NI	Recreation	Open Riding area (Red Wash) identified. Impacts are short term in nature, and will be negligible in the long term. Buried pipeline will affect open riding opportunities during construction phase. Large production field currently. Riders frequently see development in the riding area and have become accustomed to it.	Jason West	5/20/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
NI	Socio-Economics	No impact to the social or economic status of the county or nearby communities would occur from this project due to its small size in relation to ongoing development throughout the basin.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NI	Visual Resources	Proposed project is located within VRM Class IV per VFO GIS data base, the action would be allowed under class IV objectives	Jason West	5/20/2014
NP	Wastes (hazardous/solid)	No chemicals subject to reporting under SARA Title III in amounts greater than 10,000 pounds would be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of annually in association with the project. Trash and other waste materials would be cleaned up and removed immediately after completion of operations.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NP	Water: Floodplains	No flood plain mapping per VFO GIS Data Base. The proposed project is not located within Floodplain(s) area as per Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and Vernal GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014
NI	Water: Groundwater Quality	Groundwater would not likely be impacted by this project.	Betty Gamber	5/8/2014
NI	Water: Hydrologic Conditions (stormwater)	This project takes place within the Lower Green, Lower White hydrologic unit boundaries. Hydrologic conditions in the area will not be affected to a degree that detailed analysis will need to take place. The operator is expected to follow Green River reclamation guidelines on this temporary disturbance and land will be restored back to current conditions.	James Hereford II	5/29/2014
NI	Water: Surface Water Quality	No perennial waters exist on the proposed project area. The area is in a low precipitation zone and many ephemeral washes exist that transport water during water events. Waters quality will not be affected by the small amount of surface disturbance proposed.	James Hereford II	5/29/2014
NI	Water: Waters of the U.S.	No waters of the U.S. will be affected by the current proposed action.	James Hereford II	5/29/2014
NI	Wild Horses	No heard areas or herd management areas are present per VFO GIS data Base. However, feral and/or tribal horses may be present in the area due to some animals occupying the historic Bonanza HA. These animals immigrate and emigrate across lands in the Red Wash area	Dusty Carpenter	5/20/2014

Determination	Resource/Issue	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
PI	Wildlife: Migratory Birds (including raptors)	Migratory birds nesting and foraging areas are located within and surrounding the project areas. There are two documented ferruginous hawk nests located within 0.5 miles and are in line of site.	Brandon McDonald	5/27/2014
NI	Wildlife: Non-USFWS Designated	General wildlife may occur within the surrounding area. There are no special status species known to occur within the proposed project site.	Brandon McDonald	5/27/2014
NP	Wildlife: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate	In review of a field visit and district files there are no threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate animals, including their associated habitats.	Brandon McDonald	5/27/2014
NP	Woodlands/Forestry	The proposed project is not in an Woodland/Forestry area per Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (2008) and the GIS layers database.	Margo Roberts	5/5/2014

FINAL REVIEW:			
Reviewer Title	**Signature**	**Date**	**Comments**
Environmental Coordinator	Kelly Buchner	06-26-2014	
Authorized Officer		7-1-2014	

DECISION RECORD

Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0148-EA

QEP Field Services
Red Wash Section 16 (16-inch or Smaller buried NGL Pipeline

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Chapter 1.

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It is my decision to approve and authorize QEP Field Services (Right-of-Way UTU-90488) proposal to install a 16–inch (or smaller) buried natural gas pipeline, ancillary facilities and cathodic protection, to support QEP Energy's current and future producing gas wells in the Red Wash area, and to proceed as set out in the Proposed Action of the Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-UT-G010–2014–0148–EA) subject to the Applicant Committed Environmental Protection Measures Stipulations, Compliance and Monitoring. This alternative is hereafter called the Selected Alternative. This decision applies to BLM-administered lands only.

I have determined that authorizing this selected alternative is in the public interest, and will minimize impacts so that no undue disturbance will occur.

The pipeline will be constructed on Public Lands within the following legal description:

SLM, UT, T. 7 S., R. 23 E., Sec. 21, E½E½. Sec. 22, SW¼SW¼. Sec. 23, NW¼NW¼.

The selected alternative includes a 16–inch or less buried pipeline to serve as the main trunk line for section 16 and is required to transport gas from the pads to field compression and dehydration. The projected throughput will be approximately 30 MMSCFD. The pipeline is a low pressure line, and will be cathodically protected, but the location has not been identified yet.

The pipeline is approximately 6,639 feet in length with a 50 foot permanent width, approximately 7.62 acres. An additional temporary construction area of 50 feet wide (15' spoil — 35' working side) the full length of the pipeline is requested for approximately 14 weeks. The total acres for the proposed project is approximately 15.24 acres (7.62 acres permanent and 7.62 acres temporary for construction). Upon receipt of all necessary approvals, pipeline construction is planned for the early months of 2015.

All permanent, above ground facilities (risers, valves, pig receivers, launchers) and (2) mainline block valves and metering will be painted Covert Green.

Permanent safety barrier guards will be placed around equipment (6–inch diameter pipe, cement filled and anchored). Lateral tie-ins will be installed, but actual locations have not been determined.

Access to the proposed pipeline project will be from existing highways and roads. All construction and vehicular traffic will e confined to the right-of-way corridor or designated county and /or BLM roads unless otherwise authorized and approved by the regulating agency or landowner. No new access roads will be required for the construction of the project. Approvals will be obtained from the BLM for the use of existing roads during construction. Authorized roads will be rehabilitated to pre-construction conditions after construction activities are complete, unless otherwise specified by regulating agency or landowner.

QEP FS will submit to Uintah County a right-of-way Encroachment Application along with the pipeline crossing plan and profile for every county road crossing and will pay the appropriate permit fee for each. the pipeline will follow or cross the following Uintah County Roads: Class B Redwash Camp Road and Class D roads: 004548B, 004546, 004548A, 004548, Dead Man Bench, 4551D, 4551E, and 161811.

Any associated building zoning, and utility crossing permits will be secured from the appropriate regulatory agency prior to pipeline construction.

This Decision assumes that the details of construction and reclamation provided in the Plan of Development (Exhibit B dated April 7, 2014), and the applicant committed measures are the procedures that will be followed by QEP FS.

The decision to authorize the 16–inch or less buried pipeline, ancillary facilities and cathodic protection has been made in consideration of the environmental impacts of the proposed action. This decision has been made after considering impacts to resources within the Vernal Field Office while accommodating QEP FS desire to construct the buried pipeline.

1.1. Compliance, Monitoring, Mitigation

Compliance and monitoring checks will be conducted in accordance with BLM regulations.

Mitigation Measures: Project activities are not allowed from March 1 – August 31 to minimize impacts during ferruginous hawk nesting season.

If it is anticipated that project activities will occur during the given timing restrictions, a BLM or qualified biologist will be notified so surveys can be conducted. Depending upon the results of the surveys, permission to proceed from the Authorized Officer may or may not be recommended or granted

Project activities are anticipated to disturb approximately 15 acres of migratory bird foraging and nesting habitat. Given the abundance of foraging habitat in the surrounding area, habitat losses are not expected to reduce raptor prey bases to levels where "take" would occur. Impacts to migratory birds within the proposed project area will also be dependent upon the time when project activities occur. If these activities occur in the late fall, most of the species will have left the area during winter migration. If construction activities are to occur during the spring or summer months it could cause birds to move into other adjacent habitats or into habitats where interspecific and intraspecific competition between species may increase. Surface and noise disturbance associated with project activities will be considered temporary and is anticipated to occur during typical working hours; however, by following the mitigation measures for ferruginous hawk outlined below impacts to migratory birds will be minimized or completely negated.

All vehicles and equipment shall be cleaned either through power-washing, or other approved method, if the vehicles or equipment are brought in from areas outside the Uinta Basin, to prevent weed seed introduction.

BONDING: As discussed in the EA, concerns are sometimes raised as to BLM's ability to ensure that terms and conditions of the grant are satisfactorily completed. A performance bond will be required for this grant in the amount of $50,000.00 in a form acceptable to BLM. This amount was determined by QEP FS by estimating the costs to BLM to carry out the terms and conditions in the event that the holder, for whatever reason, did not. The documentation used to estimate the bond amount is contained in the case file.

The bond will be reviewed periodically to ensure it is adequate. If it is inadequate, the holder will be required to provide a new bond in the required amount. The holder will not be allowed to conduct any surface disturbing actions until the performance bond is accepted and approved by BLM.

1.2. Plan Conformance and Consistency

The selected alternative has been reviewed, and found to be in conformance with decisions in the Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (October 31, 2008). The RMP/ROD decision allows for processing applications, permits, operating plans, mineral exchanges, leases on public lands in accordance with policy and guidance and allows for management of public lands to support goals and objectives of other resources programs, respond to public requests for land use authorizations, and acquire administrative and public access where necessary (RMP/ROD p. 86). It has been determined that the proposed action and alternative(s) would not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

The proposed action is also consistent with the "Uintah County General Plan (Uintah County 2011-as amended)". The Uintah County General Plan contains specific policy statements addressing public and multiple-use resource use and development, access, and wildlife management. In general, the Plan indicates support for development proposals through its emphasis on multiple-use public land management practices and responsible use and optimum utilization of public land resources. The County, through the Plan, supports the development of natural resources as they become available as new technology allows.

Alternative B — No Action

Alternative B-No Action: This alternative was not selected because it would not respond to the applicant's need to transport natural gas. No other alternatives were considered .

1.3. Compliance with NEPA

This EA was prepared by the BLM in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and in compliance with all applicable regulations and laws passed subsequently, including the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations, and the U.S. Department of Interior requirements and guidelines listed in the BLM Manual Handbook H-1790-1. This EA assesses the environmental effects of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

RATIONALE

AUTHORITIES:

The authority for this decision is contained in Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended (30 U.S.C. 185).

The decision to authorize the 16–inch (or smaller) buried natural gas pipeline, ancillary facilities and cathodic protection, has been made in consideration of the environmental impacts of the proposed action. This decision has been made after considering impacts to resources within the Vernal Field Office while accommodating QEP FS desire to construct the buried pipeline.

Identification of issue(s) for this assessment was accomplished by considering any resources that could be affected by implementation of one of the alternatives

Alternatives Considered

Alternative A — Proposed Action

QEP FS proposed pipeline and ancillary facilities will allow for the transportation of natural gas through the Red Wash Field from current and future gas wells.

Alternative B- No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, QEP FS will not construct/install the 16–inch or less buried natural gas pipeline. The No action Alternative effectively constitutes denial of the Proposed Action.

Issues identified by BLM Specialists are documented in Appendix A Interdisciplinary Team Checklist

1.4. Public Involvement:

The proposed action was posted to the public BLM E-Planning website with its assigned NEPA number on May 6, 2014. To date, no questions or comments have been received. A public comment period was not offered due to the proposed action being similar in nature to other projects in the immediate area.

Existing right-of-way holders in the area of the proposed pipeline were notified by letter April 18, 2014. No issues or concerns have been received to date.

1.5. Appeal or Protest Opportunities:

Protest/Appeal Language: This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office (at the above address) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition (request) pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 2801.10 or 43 CFR 2881.10 for a stay (suspension) of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below.

Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

<u>Standards for Obtaining a Stay</u>

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

(1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,

(2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,

(3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and

(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

1.6. Authorizing Official:

JUL 0 1 2014

Jerry Kenczka
Assistant Field Manager, Lands and Minerals

Date

Finding of No Significant Impact

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Chapter 1.

DOI-BLM-UT-G010–2014– 0148–EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

1.1. Mitigation Measures:

1. No construction activities from March 1 — 31 August
2. All above ground ancillary facilities will be painted Covert Green
3. Project activities are not allowed from March 1 – August 31 to minimize impacts during ferruginous hawk nesting season.
4. All vehicles and equipment shall be cleaned either through power-washing, or other approved method, if the vehicles or equipment were brought in from areas outside the Uinta Basin, to prevent weed seed introduction.

1.2. Signatures:

Approved by: JUL 01 2014

Jerry Kenczka
Assistant Field Manager,
Lands and Minerals

Date