Categorical Exclusion:
DOI-BLM-ID-I030-2014-0005-CX
Lost River Rally
Special Recreation Permit ID-330-05-14

Prepared By
US Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
Challis Field Office

A. Background

BLM Office: Challis Field Office, Idaho Falls District, Idaho
Upper Snake Field Office, Idaho Falls District, Idaho

Case File No.: DOI-BLM-ID-I030-2014-0005-CX

Proposed Action Title/Type: To issue a 1-year probationary Special Recreation Permit to BAM Media Productions for an Off Highway Vehicle riding event titled the "Lost River Rally."

Location of Proposed Action: Public lands managed by the Challis and Upper Snake Field Offices of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The rally would take place on U.S. Forest Service (USFS), private, state, and BLM managed roads and trails within a 30 nautical mile radius of Mackay, Idaho. The rally would take place primarily within the upper Big Lost River watershed; however, routes would also take rally patrons into the upper Pahsimeroi River, and upper Little Lost River watersheds. Maps are available for further detail.

This categorical exclusion (CX) has been utilized and documented for analysis of a 1-year probationary Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for an Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) event held within the Challis and Upper Snake Field Offices. The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9 H(1) because the event would be less than 14 days, would not utilize an excess of 3 staging area acres, and would allow for recreational travel along legally open roads and trails. Staging or aid stations would only be authorized in previously disturbed locations, through prior written permission from the BLM.

The purpose of the action is to provide safe and responsible Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreational opportunity while protecting important natural and cultural resources. Other benefits of this event are the showcasing of lands and historical attractions surrounding Mackay, Idaho, and an economic boost that motorized recreationists would bring.

Rally attendees would bring either an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) or a Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) to ride in the event. ATVs are generally under 50" overall width, and can legally be operated on ATV trails, primitive roads, and some maintained roads. UTVs generally exceed 50" in width, and are only legal to operate on primitive roads and certain maintained roads. Some specially designed UTVs (i.e. the Polaris Razor) are under 50" width, and can legally be operated on ATV trails.

The Lost River Rally event would bring an estimated fifty (50) to eighty (80) visitors to the town of Mackay the night of July 17th, 2014. The rally sponsors and visitors would stage at the Mackay Fairgrounds, and most of the festivities would take place outside of BLM managed lands. On Friday, and again on Saturday, rally participants will be able to choose which (of ten) guided trail ride to follow. On Sunday, July 20th, festivities will

conclude and some participants will pack up and return to their homes. Participants will also have the option of riding an unguided tour Sunday morning.

The start, finish, and majority of the race activities will take place on lands not managed by the BLM. No cross-country use would be authorized for any activities. Any activities taking place on BLM would be held on pre-approved, existing, roads and trails that are legally open for the type of vehicle being used. Any proposal(s) for a stopping point or rest area on BLM would only be approved at a previously disturbed area, and restroom facilities would have to be on site, or provided by the permit holder. All event routes would follow defined, plainly marked courses, and would be guided by a person knowledgeable of the route and local regulations. The permittee would mark the entire route a maximum of 14 days in advance and would remove the markers within 14 days after the event. Painting rocks and establishing permanent markers and improvements would not be authorized. When requested, the permittee would place flagging, signs, and barriers appropriate to effectively protect natural and cultural resources as directed by BLM personnel.

For safety purposes, tour guides would have communication capability with local Emergency Medical Services (EMS). A "sweep" (person riding an ATV or UTV designated to ride at the end of the tour to account for all riders in their group) would accompany each of the ten rally tours. There would be a sufficient number of BLM personnel present to ensure compliance with permit stipulations. BLM and Local Law Enforcement authorities would be notified prior to the event.

A Special Recreation Permit (SRP) is required based upon 43 CFR 2932.11 and 12 (see remarks below). The proposed action was designed to be in conformance with BLM standards and to incorporate appropriate stipulations (e.g., restricting motorized vehicle to designated roads and trails) to assure compliance with the Challis RMP, Challis TMP, and 43 CFR 2932.

43 CFR 2932
§ 2932.11 When do I need a Special Recreation Permit?
(a) Except as provided in § 2932.12, you must obtain a Special Recreation Permit for:
    (2) Competitive use.
(b) If BLM determines that it is necessary, based on planning decisions, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, or public health and safety.

§ 2932.26 How will BLM decide whether to issue a Special Recreation Permit?
BLM has discretion over whether to issue a Special Recreation Permit. We will base our decision on the following factors to the extent that they are relevant:
    (a) Conformance with laws and land use plans;
    (b) Public safety,
    (c) Conflicts with other uses,
    (d) Resource protection,
    (e) The public interest served,

(f) Whether in the past you complied with the terms of your permit or other authorization from BLM and other Agencies, and
(g) Such other information that BLM finds appropriate.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Challis Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Date Approved: July 1999

Recreation Opportunities and Visitor Use, Goal 3:
Provide recreation opportunities for the remainder of the Resource Area not included in an SRMA, including areas specifically for unstructured outdoor experiences, trails (*e.g.*, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling), recreational mineral collecting, and OHV use.

Land Use Plan Name: Challis Travel Management Plan (TMP)

Date Approved: June 2008

The proposed action is in full accordance with route designations of the 2008 Challis TMP. Routes utilized by runners, support staff, spectators, or any other individuals involved in the event would only occur where appropriately designated by the TMP.

Land Use Plan Name: Big Lost Management Framework Plan (MFP)

Date Approved: December 1983

Land Use Plan Name: Little Lost/Birch Creek Management Framework Plan (MFP)

Date Approved: August 1985

C. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under National Environmental Policy Act in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 H(1): Recreation Management.

(1) Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan. This CX cannot be used for commercial boating permits along Wild and Scenic Rivers. This CX cannot be used for the establishment or issuance of Special Recreation Permits for “Special Area” management (43 CFR 2932.5).

This document would cover the issuance of a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for a one-

year probationary period, from July 17th through July 20th, 2014. Upon successful operation in the 2014 season, BAM Media Productions may apply for up to a ten-year SRP, which an interdisciplinary team will review. NEPA procedures would be followed for a future SRP. The Lost River Rally would be monitored throughout the duration of the event, and the SRP may be revoked at any time due to non-compliance with the permit and/or associated stipulations.

Interdisciplinary Team Analysis: Conducted by

Ben Roundtree	Outdoor Recreation Planner (Challis Field Office)
Shannon Bassista	Outdoor Recreation Planner (Upper Snake Field Office)
Bart Zwetzig	Wildlife Biologist
Carol Hearne	Archeologist/Supervisory Resource Management Specialist
Peggy Redick	Range/Supervisory Resource Management Specialist
Mike Whitson	Hydrologist
Ryan J. Beatty	Fisheries Biologist (Challis Field Office)
Arn Berglund	Fisheries Biologist (Upper Snake Field Office)

Exceptions Review (Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review):

[The Interdisciplinary Team will] Review the 12 exceptions which apply to individual actions within categorical exclusion. Environmental documents (EA or EIS) must be prepared for any actions involving these exceptions. (The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents MUST BE PREPARED for actions which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.))

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION The proposed categorical exclusion action will:	**YES**	**NO**
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		x
Rationale: Adequate safety precautions would be implemented to ensure public safety. This is a non-competitive, non-speed based event. The course would be signed and flagged, sweep vehicles would follow each guided tour, emergency medical services would be within cell or radio communications, and local authorities would be notified.		
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; and other ecologically significant areas.		x
Rationale: The events would lie outside nationally designated parks, recreation areas, refuges,		

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION The proposed categorical exclusion action will:	**YES**	**NO**
wilderness areas, wild and scenic river corridors, monuments and national landmarks. The rally poses no threat to unique geographic characteristics or floodplains. Inventories for cultural and historic resources have been conducted prior to the event and it has been determined that there are no significant cultural and historic resources that need to be avoided. The events would have no impact on sole or principal drinking water aquifers. The area is not prime farmland. The courses would be permitted only on designated open routes when passing through wetland habitats. Because the event would occur on established trails, migratory birds would not be significantly impacted by the proposed action.		
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].		x
Rationale: This is a non-competitive, non-speed based event that would be contained and controlled to be light on the land and resources, with the entire event being conducted on existing roads and trails. Casual visitors to the area are able to ride these routes at any time, whereas the guided tours would be controlled/supervised.		
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		x
Rationale: The events are reviewed and cleared by resource specialists with knowledge of the area. All activity would take place on existing roads and trails. Staging areas and aid stations would only be permitted at authorized locations. The Bureau has conducted similar types of events - no known anticipated risk associated environmental impacts exist.		
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		x
Rationale: This CX is to cover a one-year probationary permit. The proposed action would not establish a precedent, nor does it compel future actions with potentially significant effects. For similar future actions, applicants would be required to complete a similar application and review process prior to approval.		
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects		x
Rationale: No other known actions of this type are planned by other agencies or individuals within the vicinity. The proposed action would not have cumulatively significant impacts. The Challis Field Office RMP, as well as MFPs within the Upper Snake Field Office management allow for these types of events to occur within each Field Office. Other non-motorized and motorized events, such as mountain bike races and motorcycle races, have occurred in the area as well, none of which have been found to cause significant resource damage.		
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.		x

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION The proposed categorical exclusion action will:	**YES**	**NO**
Rationale: Stipulations (e.g. event is to occur on designated routes only, and no new ground disturbance will be allowed) are in place to prevent impacts to cultural resources or historic properties located within the project area. This project is anticipated to have no effect on properties eligible for, or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.		
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		x
Rationale: These permitted events have been reviewed by the Wildlife Biologist and Botanist/Ecologist and it has been determined that the events would not adversely impact special status animal species or habitat or any special status plants. If impacts are found to occur, the proposed course will be rerouted/adjusted to mitigate these impacts. Rarely are there impacts associated with this type of event, this is due to the fact that the this is a non-competitive, non-speed based event, the start, finish, and staging areas are located off BLM managed lands, patrons remain on existing roads and trails, and stopping points would only occur at authorized locations. Fords on fish bearing streams occupied by ESA listed fish, or designated critical habitat, will be avoided. All routes will utilize bridges or culvert crossings during the rally, as proposed. Therefore, the proposed Action will have no effect on TES fish, designated critical habitat, or essential fish habitat for Chinook salmon, Steelhead, Sockeye salmon, or Bull trout.		
9. Violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		x
Rationale: Implementation of this permit would not be in violation of federal, state, local, or tribal law, or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.		
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		x
Rationale: There are no low income or minority populations living in the area of the proposed competition. Low income or minority visitors to the area would be treated and affected in a similar way to all visitors.		
11. Limit access to ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		x
Rationale: The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes were contacted via letter, and information, including information pertaining to BLM compliance with EO 13007, was requested. To date, the Tribes have provided no information about these permitted activities limiting access to ceremonial use of sacred Indian sites on federal lands or adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		

CX EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES DOCUMENTATION The proposed categorical exclusion action will:	**YES**	**NO**
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).		x
Rationale: The proposed event is not anticipated to promote an elevated level of introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area. Actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of invasive species would be mitigated or banned. A wash station will be available, and participants will be encouraged to maintain clean vehicles – decreasing the probability of transporting invasive species. This event is also an opportunity to educate OHV users on the spread of invasive species. No ground disturbing activities would take place beyond the scope of the 2008 Challis TMP. Travel would be limited to existing roads and trails. Cross country travel would be prohibited.		

This CX is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Challis Field Office BLM Interdisciplinary Team has reviewed the proposed action, and found none of the extraordinary circumstances in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

D. Signature

Authorizing Official: /s/ Todd Kuck Date: 7/8/2018

Todd Kuck
Challis Field Office Manager

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:

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