

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

Categorical Exclusion

**DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0155-CX
XTO 6-inch Surface Interconnect Natural Gas Pipeline**

PREPARING OFFICE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
170 South 500 East



Categorical Exclusion
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-0155-CX
XTO 6-inch Surface Interconnect Natural Gas
Pipeline

Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal Utah

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Chapter 1. Categorical Exclusion Rationale

A. Background

BLM Office:

Vernal Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: UTU-90465

Proposed Action Title

6-inch surface interconnect natural gas pipeline

Location of Proposed Action:

T. 10 S., R. 19 E., Sec 15, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.

Description of Proposed Action: Install a 6-inch surface interconnect natural gas pipeline from the River Bend Dehy Facility (ROW UTU 87638) to Questar Pipeline Company's "Main Line 40" 24-inch pipeline (ROW# UTU 87870). The purpose of the interconnect line would be to provide a gas sales point from XTO to QPC, and to increase optionality of gas transportation and sales outlets.

XTO has been gathering, processing and selling natural gas from its River Bend Dehy Facility into Three Rivers Pipeline, via QEPM pipeline, located in NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 15, T. 10 S, R. 19 E. SLM, UT.

The pipeline would consist of a 6-inch surface line, 365 foot long and a 30 foot width, approximately 0.251 acres, all within a previously disturbed surface pipeline corridor. The pipeline is located on the following described lands. SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SECTION 15, T. 10 S, R. 19 E. SLM, UT

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Vernal Field Office RMP/ROD (October 31, 2008)

Date Approved/Amended: October 31, 2008

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

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 of applications for rights of way on public lands in accordance with policy and guidance and allows for management of public lands to respond to public requests for land use authorizations (RMP/ROD p. 86). It has been determined that the proposed action and alternative(s) will not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

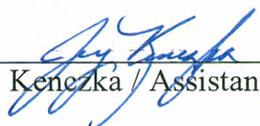
The action described above generally does not require the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS), as it has been found to not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

The applicable Categorical Exclusion, referenced in 516 DM 11.9 E (12). This reference states an EA or EIS may not be required for, "Grants of right-of-way wholly within the boundaries of other compatibly developed rights-of-way."

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

I have reviewed the project described above and field office staff recommendations (attached) and I have determined that the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed.

D. Approval and Contact Information


Jerry Kenczka / Assistant Field Manager

JUL 17 2014

Date

Contact Person

Margo Roberts Realty Specialist

Vernal Field Office

170 S. 500 E.

Vernal Utah 84078
(435) 781-4492

Categorical Exclusion Rationale

CX Number:	DOI-BLM-G010-2014-0155-CX
Date:	May 19, 2014
Lease/Case File/ Serial Number:	UTU-90465
Regulatory Authority (CFR or Law):	Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended. 43 CFR 2880

Section 1.1 Impacts on Public Health and Safety

1. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on public health and safety?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Margo Roberts, Realty Specialist

Rationale:

Public Health and safety would not be affected by this action. The proponent will abide by all safety procedures for proper use of their equipment as required by law.

Section 1.2 Impacts on Natural Resources or Unique Geographic Characteristics

2. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study 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 (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?			
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE	
	X	Nicholas Day, Physical Scientist	6/5/2014
	X	Brandon McDonald, Wildlife Biologist	5/27/2014
	X	Maggie Marston, Botany	6/25/2014
	X	Dan Gilfillan, Jason West, Recreation	5/20/2014
	X	Betty Gamber (Paleontologist)	5/21/2014

Rationale: GIS does not show the proposed area to be a wetland or floodplain (ND).

There are no unique geographic characteristics; 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; or other ecologically significant or critical areas within the proposed project area per BLM GIS database layers, and onsite observations. No lands designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wilderness Study Areas, Monuments, or other areas of special designation are located within the proposed project area, and the proposed project would not impact any specially designated lands. Migratory birds are present in the project area; however, the proposed project is not expected to negatively impact migratory bird habitat, forage, or nesting areas.

Section 1.3 Level of Controversy

3. Does the proposed action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Nicholas Day, Physical Scientist

Rationale: The proposed action is all within a highly developed oil and gas field, where multiple pipelines are in the immediate area and the effects have been highly analyzed.

Section 1.4 Highly Uncertain or Unique or Unknown Environmental Risks

4. Does the proposed action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Nicholas Day, Physical Scientist

Rationale: The proposed action is a standard practice with well known effects. The proposed project is similar to many other proposed projects near the project area. The consequences of the proposed action can generally be predicted based on the consequences of similar actions, and these consequences are well established as insignificant.

Section 1.5 Precedent Setting

5. Does the proposed action establish a precedent for future action, or represent a decision in principle about future actions, with potentially significant environmental effects?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Margo Roberts, Realty Specialist

Rationale: The proposed action is not connected to another action that would require further environmental analysis and would not set a precedent for future actions that would normally require environmental analysis.

Section 1.6 Cumulatively Significant Effects

6. Does the proposed action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant, environmental effects?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Margo Roberts, Realty Specialist

Rationale: The proposed project is not expected to have a direct relationship to other actions that will cumulatively have a significant environmental effect. Other actions in the project area that are directly related to the proposed action also have insignificant environmental impacts, and the combined impact of these projects and the proposed action is not expected to be significant.

Section 1.7 Impacts on Cultural Properties

7. Does the proposed action 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?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Jim McKenzie

Rationale: The proposed action has been covered by multiple archaeological surveys and will not impact any known archaeological sites by design plan. No historic properties affected by undertaking. Tribal consultations completed under the Riverbend Unit Infill EA.

Section 1.8 Impacts on Federally Listed Species or Critical Habitat

8. Does the proposed action 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?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Brandon McDonald, Wildlife Biologist
	X	Maggie Marston, Botanist
		6/25//2014

Rationale: In review of a field visit and district files there are no threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate species including their associated habitats within the project area. The surrounding area is highly disturbed with oil and gas infrastructure. (BM)

TESPC Botany: The project falls within the 2013 USFWS *Sclerocactus ssp.* general polygon. The pipeline was surveyed by SWCA on 6/24/2014 for both suitable and occupied threatened cactus habitat and individuals. A limited quantity of suitable habitat was located on the north end of the buffer for the proposed action, approximately 250' north of the pipeline location, and no *Sclerocactus ssp.* were located within a 300' buffered survey area. Other TESP species are precluded based on VFO GIS data and field-verified habitat assessments.

Section 1.9 Compliance With Laws

9. Does the proposed action violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?			
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE	
	X	Margo Roberts / Realty Specialist	
	X	Maggie Marston, Botanist 06/25/2014	6/25/2014

Rationale:

The proposal is in conformance with appropriate Federal and State Statutes, and county ordinances.

The proposed action would not violate any county or state statutes. Section 7 consultation with USFWS for Threatened and Endangered species was not required. An Habitat Analysis was conducted on 6/24/2014 for both suitable and occupied threatened cactus habitat and individuals and the action would not violate the Endangered Species Act as per TESP Botany cited in #8 above. In addition, the proposed project would not violate the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, or Migratory Bird Act. (MM)

Section 1.10 Environmental Justice

10. Does the proposed action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898)?			
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE	
	X	Margo Roberts, Realty Specialist	

Rationale: The proposed project does not adversely affect any minority or low income population in a disproportionate way.

Section 1.11 Indian Sacred Sites

11. Does the proposed action 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)?			
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE	
	X	Jim McKenzie, Archaeologist	

Rationale: No Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are identified within the APE. The proposed project would not hinder access to or use of Native American Religious sites.

Section 1.12 Noxious and Non-Native Invasive Species

12. Does the proposed action 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)?			
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE	
	X	Nicholas Day, Natural Resource Specialist	

Rationale: XTO would monitor and control noxious and invasive weeds by mechanical and chemical methods. On BLM-administered land, the operator would submit a Pesticide Use Proposal and obtain approval prior to the application of herbicides, other pesticides, or possible hazardous chemicals.

Section 1.2 Preparer Information

Margo Roberts / Realty Specialist
PREPARER/TITLE

06/24/2014
DATE

Stephanie Howard/ Environmental Coordinator
REVIEWER/TITLE

07/14/2014
DATE