

Decision Record - Memorandum

Johnny Behind the Rocks Trail Connectivity

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Chapter 1. Johnny Behind the Rocks Trail Connectivity

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1.1. Compliance

The selected action makes progress towards the objectives detailed in section 1.1 of the environmental assessment entitled: *Environmental Assessment for Johnny Behind the Rocks Trail Connectivity* (the supporting EA). These objectives were originally established by the Lander Resource Management Plan (June, 2014) and therefore it is determined that the selected action and the supporting EA conforms to and supports the direction contained in the Land Use Plan.

The scope of the document and selected action is also in compliance with several additional laws and policies. These regulations are generally detailed and further described in 43 CFR, Subtitle B – Regulations Relating to Public Lands.

Some laws, regulations, or documents require the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to consult with other government agencies or affected Native American Tribes prior to initiating an action.

The BLM consulted with representatives from the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes. Tribal consultation was initiated to gain input on cultural resource issues and concerns as required by laws, regulation, and guidance. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the BLM's programmatic agreement between the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the BLM has also consulted with the SHPO prior to and during the development of the selected action.

The BLM also consulted with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) for their input on wildlife issues and concerns, as well as to determine consistency with Wyoming Executive Order 2011-05, *Greater Sage-grouse Core Area Protection*.

1.2. Selected Action

The selected action is a combination of Alternatives B and C as shown in Map A1 of Appendix A and further detailed in the following text. The action adopts the trail layout proposed in Alternative B for the Red Ridge Terminus and Interior Areas, and adopts Alternative C for the Johnny-On-Top Terminus.

The summary of alternatives section allows the reader to compare and contrast the components of each alternative that was analyzed in the supporting EA and the selected action. The comparison table below breaks these components by the areas of concern discussed in the supporting EA.

Table 1.1. Comparison of Alternatives (Including the Selected Action) by Areas of Concern

Areas of Concern	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Action
Johnny-On-Top Terminus	No trail built or designated. Continued travel on highway and private land. Social travel continues.	New trail with shallow grades utilizes sustainable portions of the existing cowpath. Meets all sustainable trail standards. Upper connector maximizes use of desirable terrain	Very similar to Alternative B. The upper connector stays on existing cowpath for the longest distance then	Same as Alternative C

Areas of Concern	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Action
		but is near areas with resource concerns.	climbs at sustainable but steep grades	
Interior Between the Red Ridge Trail and the Dry Well Road	No trail built or designated. Social travel continues.	New trail built in desirable terrain, utilizes some of the existing social trail that is sustainable.	Stays on existing social trail for the entire length. Flat terrain without features, trail grade is shallow but without a sideslope the trail tread exceeds sustainable trail standards.	Same as Alternative B
Red Ridge Terminus	No trail built or designated. Social travel continues.	Entirely new trail. Built in desirable terrain.	Stays on two-tracks for the longest distance and connects to the drywell road.	Same as Alternative B

Design Features Common to All Action Alternatives Incorporated into the Selected Action:

Standard operating procedures and stipulations required by law or policy are considered to be design features that are common to all action alternatives. The table below identifies these design features of the selected action:

Table 1.2. Design Features Common to All Action Alternatives Incorporated into the Selected Action:

Issue	Design Feature Description
Invasive/Noxious Species	Use integrated pest management including mechanical/chemical treatments to control weeds. Prescribed fire would be used only in areas with more than 12" of annual precipitation. Reseed or replant as necessary to promote vegetative growth in consultation and cooperation with interested parties.
Twin Creek Riparian Resource	Prohibit surface-disturbing activities within 500 feet of surface water, riparian-wetland areas, and playas unless activities are determined to be necessary and when impacts can be mitigated.
Mule Deer and Pronghorn Antelope	Prohibit surface-disturbing and disruptive activities within identified big game crucial winter range from November 15 to April 30 and within identified big game parturition areas from May 1 to June 30 unless the Authorized Officer grants a prior written exception, waiver, or modification.
Special Status Species (Migratory Birds and Sagebrush obligates)	Prohibit surface disturbing and/or disruptive activities that have the potential to cause destruction of reproductive nests, eggs or young of migratory birds will be prohibited during the period of May 1 to July 15. The Authorized officer may grant a prior written exception if a survey (following BLM protocol) reveals that no nesting migratory birds exist in the project area.
Special Status Species (Pygmy Rabbit)	Avoid pygmy rabbit habitat.
Special Status Species (Plants)	Complete a survey for Fremont Bladderpod and Rocky Mountain Twinpod prior to surface disturbance. If localized populations are found in the area proposed for disturbance, then the disturbance will be relocated to avoid the sensitive plants.

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*Design Features Common to All Action Alternatives
Incorporated into the Selected Action:*

Cultural Resources	There is a potential for buried cultural and paleontological resources to be present in the project area. Immediately report any cultural and/or paleontological resource (historic or prehistoric site or object or fossil) discovered by the BLM, or any person working on their behalf, on public or Federal land to the authorized officer. Upon discovery, the BLM will suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until the Authorized Officer evaluates the discovery and provides a written authorization to proceed taking appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values.
	Cultural materials on public lands may not be removed, damaged, disturbed, excavated or transferred without BLM permit. No alternative proposes authorizing such a permit. Therefore users of the public lands and BLM employees and volunteers are not authorized to disturb archeological and historical values, including, but not limited to, petroglyphs, ruins, historic buildings, and artifacts.

Decisions Common to All Action-Alternatives Incorporated into the Selected Action

Sometimes the limitations of the environment such as topography or public land boundaries restrict the potential options for alternatives. In other cases an action or its location may not need variation because there are no unresolved conflicts. In these cases the alternatives including the selected action share common decisions. The common decisions among the alternatives and the selected action are contained in the table below.

Table 1.3. Decisions Common to All Action-Alternatives Incorporated into the Selected Action

Location	Decision Description
Johnny-On-Top Trail	<p>A cliff band separates a large section of the Johnny-On-Top (JOT) Trail from the Johnny Draw Trail. As a result of this topographic limitation, the only possible location for a connector between the two trails is through a very narrow gap or choke point that is utilized by all action alternatives.</p> <p>The action alternatives also have the same “lower” connector between the existing cow path and the Johnnys-Draw Trail. This lower connector is 1,525 feet long with an average trail grade of 10%. This connector will avoid braided, impassable, and unseasonable sections of the cowpath as well as a section of the cowpath that passes close to areas with cultural resource concerns.</p> <p>The action alternatives have different routes between the lower common connector and the choke point. This section is hereby referred to as the ‘Upper Connector’ and varies under each alternative.</p>
Interior Connector	The action alternatives all utilize the same location for a portion of the Interior Connector. Alternatives B and C each utilize a section of existing sustainable social trail that is 1,329 feet long.
Red Ridge Connector	The Red Ridge Connector to Johnny Falls Trail has a 444 foot section of newly constructed trail that is proposed for both alternatives.
Various	Each action alternative proposes to place natural screening objects (junipers, rocks, and brush) in and near cultural resources. The objects will be located in a manner that reduces the likelihood of the cultural resources being discovered by trail users, thus reducing the likelihood of vandalism or damage. The natural screening objects/barriers will be installed, maintained, and paid for by the BLM recreation program in coordination with the BLM cultural program.
Various	Each action alternative proposes to deploy motion activated cameras in and near cultural sites. The motion camera will be paid for by the BLM recreation program and be installed/maintained/monitored by the BLM cultural program.
Various	Trail layouts proposed at the northern terminus of the Red Ridge Trail and along the upper connector of JOT intersect important shrub species. All spoil dirt (created from trail construction activities) will be located in areas targeted for rehab or in disposal locations without shrub species.

Detailed Description of Selected Action:

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Decisions Common to All Action-Alternatives
Incorporated into the Selected Action*

Under the selected action, the BLM will authorize the addition of a total of 1.65 miles of trail to the existing system in the location of the problem areas identified in the supporting EA. The selected action locates the trails in the most desirable locations for user enjoyment, trail sustainability, and protection of resources. The action authorizes 1.17 miles of new trail construction and authorizes maintenance of another 0.48 miles of existing trail.

At each of the areas of concern, the proposed trail layout meets all of the ‘guidelines for a sustainable non-motorized trail’ that are detailed in section 3.6.1 of the supporting EA. As a result, social trailing is expected to be minimal.

The southern terminus of Johnny-On-Top (JOT) Trail would connect with Johnny Draw and the rest of the trail system along a new route called the JOT Connector using 1,074 feet of the existing cowpath and 2,486 feet of newly constructed trail. For discussion purposes the two new sections proposed will be called the ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ connector. The two new sections, plus the 1,074 feet of cowpath, would add 0.67 miles at an average trail grade of 8.5%. As described in Table 1.3, “Decisions Common to All Action-Alternatives Incorporated into the Selected Action” (p. 3), the new lower connector is common to all action alternatives.

The selected action incorporates the Alternative C layout for the upper connector of the JOT trail. This trail will be located and constructed in a manner that requires users to stay on the existing cow path longer. The layout proposed for the upper connector will result in 961 feet of new trail with an average trail grade of 8.7%.

The Interior between the Red Ridge Trail and the Dry Well Road Connector will connect with the rest of the trail system in the manner detailed for Alternative B. The trail would utilize 1,325 feet of existing social trail created by wandering visitors and livestock and build 985 feet of new trail in a sandstone rocky outcrop that contains trail features desirable to users. The total trail distance added to the system would be approximately 0.44 miles with an average grade of 8.7%.

The northern terminus of the Red Ridge Trail will connect to the Johnny Falls Trail, avoiding the existing sandy two-track by building 0.57 miles of new trail with an average grade of 5.7%. The selected alternative in this area is designed to maximize the use of desirable terrain while accommodating the users desire to keep elevation and subsequent desirable overlooks for as long as possible. The trail also makes for an easy and efficient climb for the south bound traveler.

1.2.1. Additional Components of the Selected Alternative to Reduce or Alleviate Issues:

Seeding and rehabilitation of cow path no longer to be used with physical barriers to stop travel. The selected action also authorizes seeding and rehab of 1/3 of a mile of cowpath that is no longer needed within the trail system. This rehab will be done with hand tools. All seed will be broadcast by hand and be a seed mix containing approved grass and shrub species. The BLM recreation program will purchase the seed and rehabilitation efforts will be done in coordination with the BLM fire, soils, weeds, and botanical programs. The selected action authorizes the deployment of natural, physical barriers to deter human and livestock travel near a cultural resource that is directly adjacent to the portion of the cowpath to be rehabilitated.

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*Additional Components of the Selected Alternative to
Reduce or Alleviate Issues:*

1.3. Compliance with NEPA:

The Environmental Assessment (EA) entitled: *Environmental Assessment for Johnny Behind the Rocks Trail Connectivity* analyzed three alternatives for addressing undesirable conditions in the Johnny Behind the Rocks area. All requirements associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), were satisfied through the EA and subsequent Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact. The EA was available for a 15 day comment period in early August, 2014.

1.4. Public Involvement:

The BLM received a total of 22 letters during the formal comment period. The letters were reviewed for substantive issues, comments, or concerns. Substantive issues and/or concerns were then further reviewed by the BLM to assist in determining the next course of action. A summary of the substantive comments and the BLM response is contained in the table below:

Table 1.4. Substantive Public Comment and the BLM's Response

#	Substantive Comment	Response
1	I believe the no action option is not supportive of non-motorized use and Alternative C is less desirable than Alternative B.	The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and other reasons, Alternative A was not selected and several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
2	This plan [Alternative B] will help complete some important loops for cyclists, walkers, runners and horse people and allow a very satisfying (and attractive place for people to come recreate).	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons, several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
3	I find great satisfaction and value in the connection of trails that are sustainable and well designed with mountain biking and trail running in mind.	Comments contained below and previous feedback agree with this sentiment.
4	Option B is the only option which will address the problems with connectivity, erosion, and impact. Option A would leave all types of recreation blazing their own trail and cause higher impact to vegetation and cultural resources. Option C would make a trail that offers a less than ideal line with steeper grades, greater erosion and will be less likely to keep users on the established trail.	The analysis in the EA generally agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons the selected action incorporates the layout proposed under Alternative B in the Red Ridge Terminus and Interior areas. Whereas in the JOT area, the decision incorporates the Alternative C layout. The layout under Alternative C while slightly steeper then desired still meets all the sustainability criteria detailed in the supporting EA.
5	It seems like it [Alternative B] would create the most sustainable option for JBR and reduce off-trail damage by creating a desirable path that all users would abide by.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
6	The diverse terrain and purpose-built trails makes it the most attractive area to introduce new riders to the trails. While for myself, I've never really thought that connectors for JOT and Red Ridge to Dry well and Johnny's Draw were essential, the solutions describe in Alternative B seem to be the safest solutions that will limit off-trail traffic the most. Additionally, the connector to the falls from Red Ridge would be a great idea. I know there are some improvised disturbances in that area that are really unsafe, and any action to discourage their use would help keep users safe and on designated trails.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.

7	As both trail users and an outdoor educators, we believe Alternative B provides the best range of new trail development while still balancing the long-term protection of natural resources in the area. The connector trails to JOT and Red Ridge are long overdue and will prevent further rogue trails and off trail riding which lead to resource degradation. We also think that more beginner cyclists, hikers, and runners are using the JBR trail system, there is a growing need for shorter loop options. Alternative B provides these options.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.
8	As you know, our [Central Wyoming College] mountain bike courses rely heavily on the JBR trail system. Alternative B would allow us even better teaching options for our students who are still learning to ride and have not yet built up their endurance for longer steeper routes. We see it as a common sense move to continue to develop trail systems there at JBR.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.
9	Alternative A does not comply with the objectives of the Land Use Plan for the JBR area and unsatisfied users will surely impact all resources.	The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and other reasons, Alternative A was not selected.
10	Alternative B achieves the most conformation to the Land Use Plan through the greatest distance of new purpose built trail, highest user satisfaction, and trail sustainability.	The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
11	Alternative C would be acceptable for the JOT connector only if Alt. B was implemented between Red Ridge and Dry Well Road/Johnny Falls Trail. In the latter cases Alt C does not provide enough user satisfaction or trail sustainability which would result in further resource damage by future users.	The analysis in the EA generally agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons the selected action incorporates the Alternative B layout in the Red Ridge Terminus and Interior areas, whereas in the JOT area the decision incorporates the Alternative C layout. The Alternative C layout while slightly steeper than desired, still meets all the sustainability criteria detailed in the Environmental Assessment.
12	The other alternatives [Alternatives A and C] are not geared toward users and will result in more off trail use and less sustainable and thus harder to maintain trails.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
13	I feel this plan [Alternative B] allows for safe, recreation by completing some loops that we have worked on and will prevent off trail use as people will take pride in this area as "Lander's trail system".	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
14	It [Alternative B] sounds like the most sustainable option that also opens up more trails for recreation. I'm an avid mountain biker and hiker and think that building more sustainable trails in our country is important. The existing JBR trails are such fun, multi-use trails and all recreators would benefit from more options.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
15	... Alternative B provides for the best user experience, in a structured way that takes into account habitat, and allows for human interaction with the land in a responsible way.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.

16	Alternative A will continue to lead to informal trails and off-trail travel which will ultimately lead to more impact on the land than constructing new logical trails. I think the trails proposed under Alt C will lead to more erosion and maintenance due to steepness.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action. Importantly, the Alternative C option for the JOT connector is also located in a sustainable manner.
17	I have been extremely pleased by the trail-building that has been done over the past few years as it has greatly enhanced my pleasurable riding experience. I have often encountered other users on foot and horseback as well as on bikes. Most comment on the enjoyment they gain from utilizing this area.	Thank you for the comment. We have received similar comments and feedback since we started maintaining the trails in the area.
18	I am firmly in support of Alternative B as it most completely addresses the concerns I have when riding these trails.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
19	In particular the norther terminus of the Red Ridge trail has been very problematic. The last time I rode this section (a few days ago), the cattle had used this trail and the sand was churned up and impossible to ride.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.
20	Connecting Red Ridge to the Falls trail would certainly make for a very enjoyable loop or an extended ride by joining to other options.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.
21	I have not ridden the Johnny on top trail largely because of the difficulty of linking back to the parking lot. Riding the highway is an option, but not one I choose to utilize at this point due to safety concerns over sharing the highway with fast-moving vehicles. Having a new trail linking back to the parking lot would open up a lot more trail miles for recreationalists. I fully support this option.	The selected action is responsive to these issues.
22	I prefer Alternative B as it suggests to build sustainable single track trail for all users. Sustainable trail, while harder to build, is easier to maintain and sustains itself in the long term. It is best to build trail with a long term goal vs. the short term goal achieved by Alternative C or the user created trail system that will result if Alternative A is adopted. Building good, sustainable trail, as mentioned in Alternative B is not only beneficial for all non-motorized users but beneficial for the local communities. Good trail attracts users from far and wide and the local community, in this case Lander, will benefit economically from these traveling users.	The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.
23	The Lander Cycling club, the nonprofit the BLM has worked the majority with to improve trail conditions at JBR, has committed to honoring, protecting and/or moving trail that impedes on resource concerns. Funneling use, by way of a trail, through areas with resource concerns means users will be less likely to impact the resource concerns. When there is a trail, users are more likely stay on it. If there is no trail then people will wander over the entire area and are more likely to impact the resource concerns. Let's funnel the use, and protect resources, by building sustainable, user friendly trail and implementing Alternative B.	The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.

24	<p>I believe alternative A (the no-aciton plan) would be the worst choice. Connections between trails are desired to make the trail system more sustainable and enjoyable.</p> <p>Alternative B is the best option because, while it involves a light amount more trail to be built, these will simply be more enjoyable, which will attract more visiotrs and help achieve the primary objectives outlined in the Land Use plan. It seems to come down to building half a mile of trail to barely meet the objectives or build a mile of trial to satisfy them more fully.</p>	<p>The analysis in the EA agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.</p>
25	<p>Demographics are changing and more people have become interested in hiking, biking, and other outdoor activites. I would encourage the BLM to embrace the trend and help users enjoy the land mindfully by providing trail infrastructure.</p> <p>The EA provides solid plans for caring for the land, including enhancing the health of the land by preventing the spread of noxious weeds, while improving infrastructure.</p>	<p>The selected action is responsive to these issues.</p>
26	<p>It would seem to me that option B would be the best outside of the concern for the cultural areas which may be interfered with. I do not fully understand what these areas are and what exactly the concern is with them. Perhaps I missed that in the report? Option C seems OK but I don think that having sandy or uninteresting terrain meets the intent of the trail system. Also with sandy areas I would think that people will find other non-official ways around so we would be back in the same situation in a few years. With that in mind I really like option B but I would like to understand better what the cultural areas are and how they would be affected.</p>	<p>The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action.</p> <p>The cultural resource section of the EA details the relative value of the affected cultural resource and the potential impact to those resources. General terms and locations were used purposefully to avoid disclosure of the location of the resource. The analysis in the EA provides the basis for determining how various resources and uses are affected by the proposed trail locations of each alternative</p>
27	<p>The text is quite limiting in so far as informing the public as to the BLM's proposed JBR bicycle trails. The lack of maps showing the proposed bicycle trails for Alternative B and Alternative C make it impossible for myself, and I should think, members of the public to make any fair appraisal of what is being proposed by the Bureau of Land Management.</p> <p>I think this oversight by the BLM is quite serious and should lead the BLM to add the needed EA maps; And, for the BLM to resend the EA with maps again to the public with an extended public input period, so meaningful comments can be submitted.</p>	<p>The majority of responses we received from the public indicated a clear understanding amongst the differences in the alternatives. The BLM chose not to include maps of Alternatives B and C so as to avoid disclosing the location of sensitive resources. The analysis in the EA provides the basis for determining how various resources and uses are affected by the proposed trail locations of each alternative. Finally, we have included a map of the selected action.</p>
28	<p>The BLM should analyze an Alternative that considers working with the cycling club and other partners to build a boardwalk across the Twin Creek spring source, which would then allow for the adoption of an existing user path described under Alternative A.</p>	<p>The action proposed in the comment is very similar to Alternative A as detailed in the EA. Based on the analysis in the EA and public comment the BLM chose not to select Alternative A. The efficacy of such a boardwalk would be very questionable as failure would be likely due to damage from congregated livestock. In addition, this option will continue to focus use on private lands, which conflicts with the purpose and need for taking action.</p>

29	<p>It is of concern that there are important issues that has not been addressed in the environmental assessment. The document refers to those that recreate in the area in very broad terms such as “trail based recreation”, “users” and “visitors”. Somewhere early in the document it needs to be revealed that these are people that are hiking, riding bikes, and on horses, often accompanied by dogs. Horseback riders followed by hikers have been using the area historically and will continue to use the area even though mountain bike use has become more popular more recent.</p> <p>There are inherent safety issues that have been documented (see the article that was hand carried to Jared Oakleaf and the email that was sent on August 1 from myself) between the three types of users mentioned above. The document should not be silent regarding those safety issues in the affected environment and environmental consequences section and should be carried through to mitigating measures (information provided at kiosk, signs, and other management actions). There can also be impacts to the developed trails if use occurs during wet conditions which can result in dissatisfaction, primarily to cyclists. These types of environmental impacts can only come out in the document if the different types of trail users are specifically identified in the document.</p> <p>....</p> <p>Granted, there are presently ongoing constructive discussions (July 30th meetings at BLM office) that are occurring between BLM and the different types of trail users and a general agreement by all users that these issues need to be addressed by management actions which are mitigating measures. For that reason, these issues need to be addressed in the document stated above including early in the document in the Relevant Issues section. It is important that the document address all of the types of trail users, related environmental impacts upon the affected environment, including potential safety concerns, and mitigation.</p>	<p>BLM agrees that visitor safety in light of mixed uses is an important issue. However, the need to specify non-motorized use types and analyze visitor safety is not relevant to the decision to enhance connectivity of existing non-motorized trails.</p> <p>Any extension or connecting trails authorized through this decision will be built to accommodate the current uses and skill levels associated with the existing trails that are being extended. These trails will continue to be open to all non-motorized users. As such, these issues will not carry impacts that vary significantly by alternative.</p> <p>One exception is that improved connectivity (as proposed in Alternatives B and C of the EA, as well as the selected action discussed above) will disperse users and reduce out-and-back traffic, which reduces the incidents of encounters with other users. Reduced encounters can increase the feeling of safety for users.</p> <p>We agree that some users have a perceived fear of sharing trails with other users, still others have indicated that they enjoy the shared nature of the trails.</p> <p>Ultimately users choose to participate in activities with mixed trail use. When users choose to utilize JBR they are accepting the known risk associated with mixed trail use. Importantly the magnitude of risk involved with such a choice is directly correlated to a number of factors outside of BLMs control. An example of an important factor associated with risk outside of BLMs control is the physical capabilities and limitations of the user as well as those of their chosen mode of travel (such as a horse).</p> <p>As mentioned in the comment, kiosk information and signs are currently provided and the continued refinement of this message is ongoing. At this time we do not see additional measures associated with visitor information that fall within the scope of this document.</p> <p>Finally, BLM is initiating a comprehensive master planning effort for Johnny Behind the Rocks. The scope of this effort indeed lends itself to explore options to further reduce conflicts among users. Actions to consider in this document could include: single use trails, single direction, and a myriad of techniques to reduce the likelihood or magnitude of conflicts. We encourage all users to be involved in this process.</p>
30	<p>..it [the EA] does not address a key component of the health and safety of visitors as described on page 4 of the EA document. Specifically, there is no mention of the potential on JBR trails of serious and dangerous conflicts between bike riders and horse riders on the same trail.</p>	<p>See the comment response in line 29 of this table.</p>

31	Generally, some of the new JBR trails have not been constructed with cyclist in mind; their blind corners, absence of safe turnaround, and siting increases the potential for horse/bike conflict. While these make for fun cycling trails, they are the opposite of what an experienced horsemen concerned with safety wants, due to the easily startled nature of the horse: open sight lines, escape routes, and easy turnaround without destroying the trail.	Please see the comment response in line 29 of this table. Importantly we would also like to point out that no new trails have been built at Johnny Behind the Rocks. We have retrofitted existing social and livestock trails in order to make them more sustainable and address resource damage. In some areas this has resulted in a re-route, but all re-routes have been designed to the same specifications as the existing trail.
32	With this issue [mixed use and safety] in mind, I have been working with Jared Oakleaf, Backcountry Horsemen, and the Lander cycling to develop educational materials and helpful maps so that horsemen know what kind of trail they will encounter at JBR. Similarly and before my involvement, the local Backcountry Horsemen's group has contributed time, labor, and money to developing the parking lot and hitching racks at the location.	We appreciate all the help alleviating this issue. We support continued refinement of the available information so that users can better match their desired trail experience with what is available on the ground.
33	While I appreciate the importance of multi-use areas for non-motorized travel, the layout of certain JBR trails includes too many blind corners on steep trails, siting on the side of hills, and lack of safe turnaround for horse or biker. I believe the best way to both avoid horse/bike conflicts and preserve the cycling community's substantial efforts in building JBR bike trails is to designate separate bike and horse trails in the JBR area.	The designation of single-use trails (for any one use) is not considered to be within the scope of this document. The BLM encourages you to take time to match your desired trail experience with those trails that currently exist in the system. For example, the Dry well Road, Johnny Falls Trail, and Cedar Draw road comprise 7.5 miles of the 13 miles of available trail. These trails are designed and maintained in a manner that will accommodate the desired riding experience detailed in your comment.
34	I am in favor of additional trails for mountain bike or pedestrian use. I do think that there should be separate trails for horse traffic, the mixed use trails out there are not working well at all, especially with the significant increase in use. Horses are big and the trails at JBR are quite narrow, sometimes with steep drop-offs and vegetation that make passing difficult. Sight lines are sometimes limited and it is easy for a horse to get spooked when they can't see in front or behind. Early last spring a group of thoughtless horseback riders hit all the trails before they dried out and they were practically destroyed for the season. Deep hoof prints made the cycling extremely slow and rough and which lasted through the spring season.	The analysis in the EA and other comments received agrees with this statement. For these and several other reasons several components of Alternative B were incorporated into the selected action. We have received comments that agree with your sentiments about the mixed use (see discussion contained in line 29–31) and those that contrast in lines 2, 3, 14, and 17.

1.5. Rationale:

The implementation of the selected alternative will not have significant environmental effects. In addition the selected alternative will respond to the purpose and need for the project as well as the public comments received. As can be viewed in Table 1.5, “Summary of Objective Achievement” (p. 11), the selected alternative is very similar to Alternative B in the way it responds to the purpose and need for the project. The selected alternative is also responsive to the majority of public comments received and detailed above in Table 1.4, “Substantive Public Comment and the BLM’s Response” (p. 5). Finally, as detailed in Table 1.6, “Summary of Impacts to Relevant Issues from Each Alternative” (p. 11) the selected Alternative reduces impacts to other resources to the lowest possible level.

Table 1.5. Summary of Objective Achievement

Objective Indicator discussed in Section 1.1 of the supporting EA	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Alternative
Miles of new purpose-built trails	0	1.2 Miles	.53 Miles	1.17
Total miles added to the network (sum of the miles of new purpose built trails authorized and existing trails authorized for maintenance)	0	1.68 miles	1.43 Miles	1.65
Projected User Satisfaction	low	High	Moderate	Same as Alternative B
Sustainability of features added to the network	Not Applicable, since new trails are not proposed	High	Moderate	Same as Alternative B
Likelihood of visitor to stay on trail	Low, users will continue to wander and create social trails	High	Moderate	Same as Alternative B
Visitor exposure to safety hazards	Visitor will continue to be exposed to highway traffic	Visitors will not be exposed to highway traffic	Visitors will not be exposed to highway traffic	Same as Alternative B and C
Distance of projected travel on private land	2 miles	0 miles	0 miles	Same as Alternative B and C

Table 1.6. Summary of Impacts to Relevant Issues from Each Alternative

Issue	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Alternative
Projected acres of initial surface disturbance (length times 5' disturbance width. . . 3' construction/ maintenance disturbance + additional indirect disturbance such as a change to water storing capacity etc)	0	1 acre	0.85 acres	Same as Alternative B
Projected acres susceptible to social trailing	Approximately 148 acres will continue to be susceptible to social trails and vegetation trampling, until which time a main social trail is established. Long term braiding will still occur as	Each trail layout under this alternative meets all sustainable trail guidelines. Therefore social trailing is not expected at a level that will cause noticeable damage to vegetation.	It is likely social trailing will occur across an additional 0.57 acres in areas where the proposed trail layout does not meet sustainable trail guidelines.	Same as Alternative B

Issue	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Alternative
	users avoid unsustainable sections of trail.			
Total projected amount of disturbance (Initial disturbance + social trailing disturbance)	> 1.42 acres. Assumes that eventually trails will be established by use, but without design, these trails will be braided from users avoiding unsustainable sections which will result in a larger surface disturbance area than Alternatives B and C..	1 Acres	1.42Acres	Same as Alternative B
Projected amount of disturbance (trampling and initial disturbance) of shrubland vs rockland	Rockland: >0.76 acres Shrublands: > 0.66 acres	Rockland 0.85 acres Shrublands 0.15 acres	Rockland 0.76 acres Shrublands: 0.66 acres	Same as Alternative B
Amount of soil disturbance (assumes an average width of 1.5 feet times 0.5 foot of depth times the distance of new construction only)	> 176 cubic yards.	176 Cubic Yards due to construction activities	77 Cubic Yards due to construction activities. In addition, it is expected that an additional 0.57 acres will be disturbed, compacted, and displaced by visitors avoiding unsustainable trail sections.	Same as Alternative B
Distance of travel through spring source of Twin Creek	100 feet	0	0	Same as Alternatives B and C
Amount of ungulate (mule deer and pronghorn) and sagebrush obligate habitat disturbed due to surface disturbance or trampling.	> 0.66 Acres	0.15 Acres	0.66 Acres	Same as Alternative B

Issue	Alternative A-No Action	Action Alternative B	Action Alternative C	Selected Alternative
cultural resources passed by trail user	3	2	2	Same as Alternatives B and C
Comparative distance from cultural resource	closest	further away than A, but closer than C	farthest from cultural resources	Same as Alternative C

1.6. Appeal Opportunities:

This decision constitutes my final decision. Any person adversely affected by this decision may appeal to the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and Form 1842-1 (form available at the BLM address on the front page of this document). If you file an appeal, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office within 30 days from receipt of this decision for transmittal to the IBLA. Only signed hard copies of a notice of appeal will be accepted; faxed or emailed appeals will not be considered. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed is in error. If your notice of appeal does not include a statement of reasons, one must be filed with the IBLA within thirty (30) days after the notice of appeal was filed.

A copy of your notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs, must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 755 Parfet Street, Suite 151, Lakewood, CO 80215. Service must be accomplished within fifteen (15) days after filing in order to be in compliance with appeal regulations.

As provided by 43 CFR Part 4, you have the right to petition the Office of Hearings and Appeals to stay implementation of the decision. However, you must show standing and present reasons for requesting a stay of the decision that addresses your interests and the manner by which they would be harmed. A petition for stay of a decision pending appeal must 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.
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

1.7. Authorizing Official:

/S/ Richard Vander Voet

Richard Vander Voet
Lander Field Manager

Date

1.8. Contact Person

For additional information concerning this Finding, contact.

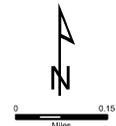
Jared Oakleaf, Outdoor Recreation Planner]
Lander Field Office
1335 Main Street
Lander Wyoming 82520
307-332-8407

Appendix A.



**Map 1: Final Decision
Existing Trail Network
and
Selected Trail Alignments**

- JOT Connector
- Interior Connector
- Red Ridge Connector
- Existing System Trails**
- Single Track Trail
- Two-Track Road



1 inch = 1,368 feet



Date: 10/6/2014
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for use of the data for purposes not intended by BLM.