

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX)

PROJECT NAME: Eagle Ridge Ranch Special Recreation Permit (SRP)

APPLICANT: Eagle Ridge Ranch

PROJECT LEAD: Shannon Bassista

NEPA (CX) NUMBER: DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2014-0038-CX

BACKGROUND:

Eagle Ridge Ranch has secured permission from private landowners to access Sheridan Reservoir for ice fishing in the winter. The only access to this private property at Sheridan Reservoir is to cross BLM-managed lands by groomed snowmobile route.

PROPOSED ACTION:

Eagle Ridge Ranch would be issued a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for three years (2014-2017) to traverse BLM-managed lands for approximately 3 miles on groomed snowmobile trail during the winter months. All clients must stay on groomed snowmobile routes.

CONSULTATION and COORDINATION:

A description of the proposed action was posted to the online NEPA register. This is available to members of the public through the Upper Snake Field Office (USFO) webpage. No comments were received and no issues/conflicts were identified for this project. The proposed action was also presented to the USFO Interdisciplinary Team and none of the Extraordinary Circumstances pertain to this project.

FINDING or RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed action is categorically excluded as outlined in 516 DM 11.5 Categorical Exclusions, H (1) and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2 apply. I recommend that a SRP be issued to Eagle Ridge Ranch for traversing BLM-managed lands by snowmobile on groomed routes only.

DECISION and RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION:

Eagle Ridge Ranch would be issued a SRP for three years (2014-2017) for traversing BLM-managed lands for approximately 3 miles in the Shotgun Valley on a groomed snowmobile route. The SRP complies with the BLM Categorical Exclusions for Recreation which states “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).”

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE STATEMENT:

The proposed action is in conformance with the Medicine Lodge Resource Management Plan (1985).

APPEALS INFORMATION:

43 CFR 4.21 (58 FR 4939, January 19, 1993) or 43 CFR 2801.10

Preparer: Shannon Bassista /s/ Shannon Bassista

Date: 08/01/2014

Nepa Reviewer: Marissa Guenther /s/ Marissa Guenther

Date: 08/01/2014

Upper Snake Field Manager: Jeremy Casterson /s/ Jeremy Casterson

Date: 08/01/2014

Extraordinary Circumstances Requiring Preparation of an EA or EIS

(516 DM 2, Appendix 2)

The action described in categorical exclusion (CX) # DOI-BLM-ID-I010-2014-0038-CX has been reviewed to determine that none of the extraordinary circumstances listed below pertain to the proposed action.

DM Number and Extraordinary Circumstance

- 2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety
The proposed action will have no significant impacts on health or safety of the public.
- 2.2 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 or critical areas.
There is no wilderness, wilderness study areas and wild and scenic rivers present near the project area. The SRP would not impede opportunities for recreation. This project is not located within a riparian-wetland area, Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) or Research Natural Area (RNA), therefore, no impacts would occur. This project occurs along a developed snow-covered road and it would not have any significant impacts to migratory birds. This action is exempted from a Class III inventory for cultural resources as part of the 2014 State Protocol between the BLM and the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office.
- 2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].
The proposed project would not have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.
- 2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
There are no known highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or unique or unknown environmental risks are anticipated as a result of issuing a SRP.
- 2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.
The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future actions.
- 2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.
The proposed action would not have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. No

- cumulatively significant effects are anticipated.*
- 2.7 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.
There are no known historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the NRHP located near the proposed permit location and the proposed action would have no significant impacts.
- 2.8 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.
There are no T&E or Proposed species, or critical habitat present within the project area, no significant impacts to these species would be expected.
- 2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.
The proposed action does not violate any federal law or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. No cumulatively significant effects anticipated.
- 2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).
The proposed action would have no adverse effects on low income or minority populations.
- 2.11 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).
There are no known sacred sites in the project area. The project will not limit access, and would have no known effects on traditional resource use of the area.
- 2.12 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).
The proposed action is not anticipated to contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.