

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

Environmental Assessment

**American Gilsonite Lease Modification-Bonanza Vein
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010-EA**

PREPARING OFFICE

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Bureau of Land Management
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Environmental Assessment
American Gilsonite Lease Modification-Bonanza
Vein
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010-EA

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

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Finding of No Significant Impact

DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts (per Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010-EA), I have determined that the proposed action with the mitigation measures described below will not have any significant impacts on the environment and an environmental impact statement is not required.

Signatures:

Approved by:

/s/ Jerry Kenczka
Jerry Kenczka
Assistant Field Manager,
Lands and Minerals

1/12/2015
Date

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DECISION RECORD

Decision

It is my decision to approve and authorize *American Gilsonite Company's proposal to modify Federal lease UTU-0126940, and expand its surface area 20 acres to fully develop its Federal Gilsonite lease*, and to proceed as set out in the Proposed Action of the Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010-EA) subject to the applicant committed measures, stipulations, compliance and monitoring as described in the Plan of Development. 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.

Compliance, Monitoring, Stipulations

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

Plan Conformance and Consistency

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM Land Use Plan and the associated decision(s):

The selected alternative has been reviewed, and found to be in conformance with the Known Gilsonite Leasing Area (KGLA) and 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. 99).

It has been determined that the proposed action and alternative(s) would not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

The selected alternative is also consistent with the Uintah County General Use Plan 2011, as amended.

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 / Public Involvement

The decision to authorize expand the surface area by 20 acres 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 American Gilsonite Company's desire to add 20 acres of surface area to fully develop its Federal Gilsonite lease.

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

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

Alternatives Considered

Alternative A: Proposed Action

American Gilsonite Company proposes to modify its Federal lease UTU-0126940 to expand its surface area 20 acres to fully develop its Federal Gilsonite lease.

Alternative B: No Action

Under the No Action alternative, BLM would not approve American Gilsonite Company's proposal to expand its surface area 20 acres. The no action alternative effectively constitutes denial of the Proposed Action. This alternative was not selected because it would not respond to the applicant's need for the expansion of surface area by 20 acres.

The authority for this decision is pursuant to Section 21 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended (30 U.S.C. 195)

The proposed action was posted to the public BLM E-Planning website with its assigned NEPA number on 10/31/2014. 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.

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.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

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.

Authorizing Official:

/s/ Jerry Kenczka
Jerry Kenczka
Assistant Field Manager, Lands and Minerals

1/12/2015
Date

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Chapter 1. Introduction

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1.1. Introduction:

The Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared by the Bureau of Land Management Vernal Field Office to analyze American Gilsonite Company (AGC) lease modification. AGC is mining gilsonite on Federal lease UTU-0126940. AGC has developed several mine shafts and access roads along the vein on the lease to facilitate its mining operation. A segment of gilsonite vein is outside the boundary of the Federal lease. An “authorization to mine” was granted to AGC for the gilsonite segment off-lease. AGC constructed an access road and sunk a mine shaft on or near the segment thinking it was on the lease. A lease modification will make it so the vein segment, road and shaft will be on lease.

AGC needs to expand its surface area 20 acres with a lease modification to fully develop its Federal Gilsonite lease. The attached location map (Figure 1) illustrates a segment of gilsonite vein (T9S, R24E, sec. 17, N½ SE¼ NW¼) not contained in the boundary of Federal lease UTU-0126940. The BLM gave AGC prior “authorization to mine” the vein in the segment off-lease but did not give AGC the right to use the surface for mining facilities. AGC mistakenly used the surface for a mine access road and has sunk a mine shaft that is partially in this unleased segment.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is a site-specific analysis of potential impacts that could result from the implementation of a proposed action or alternatives to the proposed action. The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any significant impacts could result from the analyzed actions. *Significance* is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27. An EA provides evidence for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a statement of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). A FONSI statement documents the reasons why implementation of the selected alternative would not result in significant environmental impacts (effects) beyond those already addressed in the Vernal Field Office Resource Management Plan (VFO RMP; BLM, 2008). If the decision maker determines that this project has significant impacts following the analysis in the EA, then an EIS would be prepared for the project. If not, a Decision Record (DR) may be signed for the EA approving the selected alternative, whether the proposed action or another alternative.

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

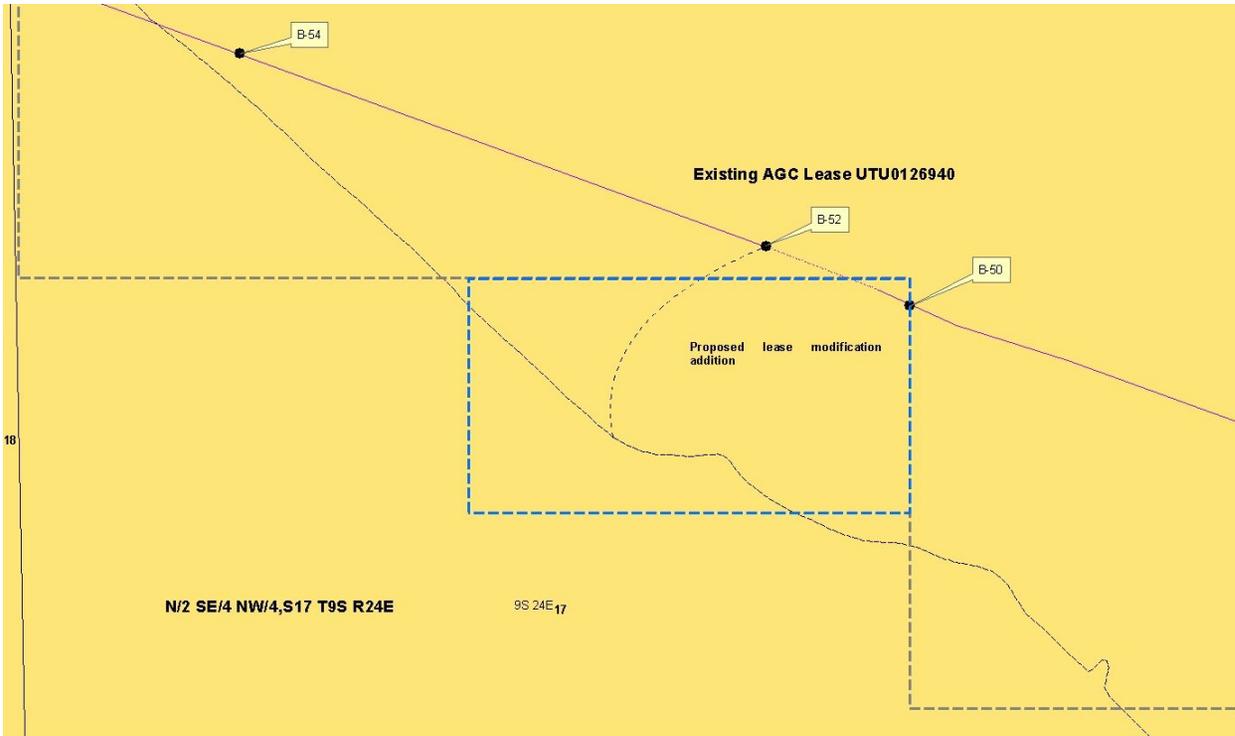
Title: American Gilsonite Lease Modification-Bonanza Vein

NEPA #: DOI—BLM—UT—G010—2015—0010—EA

Project Type: Environmental Assessment

1.1.2. Location of Proposed Action:

The proposed project area is located in N½ SE¼ NW¼ section 17, T. 9 S., R. 24 E., Uintah County, Utah. See Figure 1.1.



Map showing AGC existing lease boundary (dashed gray line), proposed addition to existing lease (dashed blue line), and existing gilsonite vein (purple solid/dashed line) along with existing county road and access road to mine shaft B-52.

Figure 1.1. Proposed Lease Boundary Addition

1.1.3. Name and Location of Preparing Office:

Vernal Field Office

170 South 500 East

Vernal, UT 84078

(435) 781-4400

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

Lease Number: UTU-0126940

1.1.5. Applicant Name:

American Gilsonite Company

1.2. Purpose and Need for Action:

BLM's need is to respond to AGC's request to expand the boundaries of their lease to include adjacent unleased mineral. BLM's purpose is to resolve a trespass action, allow development of minerals that would otherwise be economically unfeasible to be recovered in accordance with the RMP, and minimize or eliminate impacts to other resources in accordance with Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as Amended (FLPMA).

1.3. Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues:

During preparation of the EA, public involvement consisted of posting the proposal on the Eplanning NEPA Register on 10/31/2014. *No public comment or inquiries were received.* The proposed action was reviewed by an interdisciplinary team of BLM resource specialists. For a list of all resources considered, refer to Appendix A.

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Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives

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2.1. Description of the Proposed Action:

The applicant is American Gilsonite Company (AGC) with operations headquartered in Bonanza, Utah. AGC employs approximately 130 miners and generate millions of dollars in royalties annually. The applicant has adequate bonding on Federal lease UTU-0126940 with the BLM. The Proposed Action has no effect on disturbed acreage and therefore has no effect on the bond. The location of the proposed 20 acre lease modification is: T9S, R24E, Sec. 17, N½SE¼ NW¼ in Uintah County, Utah. The lease modification is needed immediately to solve trespass and non-compliance issues. No surface disturbance, excluding reclamation activities, is anticipated with the Proposed Action. The proposed action is to add 20 acres of land to the Federal lease. The added land will allow an existing mine access road and mine shaft to be on the lease. A segment of gilsonite vein not currently on the Federal lease would be part of the Federal lease with this lease modification. The existing mine access road consists of approximately 0.3 acres of disturbance. The approved mine plan access road consisted of 1.5 acres of disturbance. The existing road configuration was actually less of an environmental disturbance than that previously approved in the mine plan. The existing lease terms, conditions and stipulations on Federal lease UTU-0126940 will apply to the lease modification.

2.2. Description of Alternatives Analyzed in Detail:

This EA focuses on the Proposed Action and No Action alternatives. No other alternatives were identified because no potential impacts have been identified. There are no issues to resolve through additional mitigation or other action alternatives. The No Action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed action.

The No Action Alternative would be to deny the Lease Modification as proposed. With this alternative BLM would not approve adding 20 acres to the existing Federal gilsonite lease UTU-0126940. AGC has permission to mine the gilsonite vein segment that is not on the lease through an “Authorization to Mine” issued March 10, 1982. The existing mine access road is in trespass and the mine shaft is in non-compliance. AGC would have to obtain a ROW for the mine access road and the mine shaft. BLM would immediately start enforcement action.

2.3. Conformance

Private exploration, production and surface use from federal solid mineral leases are an integral part of BLM’s leasable minerals program. Gilsonite exploration and development is recognized as an appropriate use of public lands in the Known Gilsonite Leasing Area (KGLA) and the Vernal Field Office Resource Management Plan (VFO RMP) that provides management direction for the leased area. If approved, no additional surface disturbance is anticipated and the existing road and partial shaft will legally be on the Federal lease.

The EA is in conformance with the KGLA and VFO RMP which was approved on October, 2008. Although the VFO RMP did not specifically provide for the Proposed Action, the Record of Decision of the VFO RMP allows leasing of gilsonite in the project area (p. 99). Assumptions in the Environmental Consequences section of the VFO RMP/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) allows for development of gilsonite mining facilities (sec. 4.9).

BLM’s solid minerals leasing program is authorized by the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (as amended by the Federal Lands Policy Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), the Federal Onshore

Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987 and the Energy Policy Act of 2005). The BLM strives to develop mineral resources while complying with FLPMA by preventing undue and unnecessary degradation of Federal Lands.

Uintah County's *Public Lands Implementation Plan, 2011 as amended* states: "Uintah County's economy is based on extractive mineral industries and agriculture and will continue to be in the foreseeable future. The County supports multiple-use but because of its importance, the minerals and agricultural industry should be given the highest priority possible. By utilizing proper management practices it has been demonstrated that minerals development is compatible with the use and development of other resources and renewable resources can thrive at the same time. However, unwarranted overprotection of renewable resources at the expense of the agricultural and minerals industry is contrary to the best interest of its residents, Uintah County and the nation."

Chapter 3. Affected Environment:

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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 found in Appendix A. This chapter provides the baseline for comparison of impacts/consequences described in Chapter 4.

3.1. Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health

The proposed project is within the Coyote Wash grazing allotment which is a winter sheep allotment permitted for 7762 Animal Unit Months (AUMs) from November 1 to May 20. The permitted operator's livestock numbers, in recent years, have been reduced by the BLM due to drought and decrease in available forage. Under the proposed action, 20 acres have been taken out of forage production. This results in a loss of 1.25 AUMs. This may seem a small portion but the Coyote Wash allotment is being heavily impacted by minerals, oil and gas production as a whole.

Construction and rerouting of existing roads, leased extraction areas and new road construction to the proposed sites have reduced and affects livestock grazing and distribution of animals on this allotment. The removal of topsoil on the extraction areas and road right-of-way may decrease native forage production over an extended period of time, and increases noxious weeds and invasive forage species production. The Coyote Wash Allotment has been impacted by extensive energy developments and dry conditions. The minerals development has caused large amounts of fragmentation, disturbance and forage loss throughout the allotment and has led to multiple years of moderate to minimal use by the current grazing permittee.

Rangeland Health sites were established and surveys were conducted in Coyote Wash allotment in 2002. All of the sites had some level of departure from the ecological site description due to increases in cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*) and rabbit brush species (*Chrysothamnus spp.*) and decreases in desired native plants fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*) and Indian rice grass (*Oryzopsis hymenoides a*) perennial grass is also noted. Reclamation success has been marginal in the area and the time it takes for recovery will affect overall rangeland health in the area. The proposed action may cause additional decreases in meeting future Rangeland Health Standards due to an increase in undesirable species.

Throughout the last few years energy development has continued to boom in the area. There has been a large increase in the level of disturbance as a result of this oil and gas development.

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Chapter 4. Environmental Effects:

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4.1. Direct and Indirect Impacts

The potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts from Alternative A (the Proposed Action) and Alternative B (the No Action Alternative) are discussed in the following sections of Chapter 4. Livestock grazing and rangeland health in the following analyses are described as short-term and long-term impacts. In areas where interim reclamation is implemented, ground cover by herbaceous and woody species could be re-established to approximately 75 percent of initial basal cover within five years following seeding of native plants species and diligent weed control efforts. These reclaimed areas are categorized as short-term disturbances.

4.1.1. Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health

Impacts to livestock grazing under the proposed action may occur with the continued mining operations. The allotment may continue to be used below authorized levels. The continued disturbance and development causes an increase in fragmentation of the landscape, which continues to hinder livestock operations. Possible increase in livestock mortality could occur due to an increase in vehicle traffic.

There has been a large increase in the level of disturbance as a result of oil and gas development in the area. Impacts from large amounts of disturbance and fragmentation contribute to factors (weeds, bare ground, shifts in ecological community structure, erosion, etc.) that may lead to areas not meeting rangeland health.

4.2. Proposed Action

4.2.1. Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health

Under the Proposed Action with continued mining operations would contribute to soil loss, weed invasion, and continued fragmentation of grazing allotments, affecting livestock movement patterns and forage availability.

Although, much of the disturbed landscape is slated for reclamation; those efforts have not proven to be successful within this semi-arid shrub steppe environment area for rangeland forage. Therefore, it is assumed that ecological impacts are continuing to occur and have the potential to directly and indirectly affect the areas ability to meet Rangeland Health Standards.

4.3. No Action Alternative

4.3.1. Rangeland Health and Livsetock Grazing

Under the No Action Alternative no additional contribution to existing surface disturbance and fragmentation would occur. Therefore no increase in impacts to the grazing allotment, livestock AUMs, or the allotment's compliance with Rangeland Health Standards may occur due to the current oil and gas operations and continued development in the area.

4.4. Reasonably Foreseeable Development and Cumulative Impacts Analyses

4.4.1. Cumulative Impacts

4.4.1.1. Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health

Cumulative effects would result in an increase in energy production in the area which may decrease the availability of usable forage for livestock grazing. AUMs for this allotment may also decrease due to the loss of acreage caused by the increase in mining and oil/gas pad developments and declining rangeland health conditions. A socio-economic impact may be felt by the grazing allotment permittee due to the continued downsizing of livestock numbers to match the decrease in usable AUMs on the allotment. Compensation for loss of forage to the permitted livestock owners may need to occur.

Cumulative effects on Rangeland Health may continue to show a declining trend in native plant communities, with an increasing production of noxious weeds and annual species. Until reclamation of the disturbed sites can reach some acceptable level Ecological Site Descriptions (similar to pre-construction condition) and be fully implemented, this negative trend may continue.

The No Action alternative would not result in an increase in disturbed lands but declining rangeland health may continue with the amount of forage production and increased invasive plant species.

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

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[Describe consultation efforts here.]

Table 5.1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

| Name | Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination | Findings & Conclusions |
|--------|---|--|
| SHPO | Consulted on as required by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 1531) | 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. Bureau of Land Management-Vernal Field Office conducted a Class III 100% pedestrian inventory over 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 November 18, 2014 recommending a "no historic properties effected" determination. We received their concurrence to our determination on November 26, 2014. |
| Tribal | Consulted on as required by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) (16 U.S.C. 470) | Tribal consultation was conducted under the West Bonanza Field Development EA in 2006. No Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are identified within APEs. The |

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Chapter 6. List of Preparers

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[Enter the Preparers List here.]

Table 6.1. List of Preparers

| Name | Title | Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Rick Goshen | Geologist | Team Lead |
| Craig Newman | Range Management Specialist | Livestock Grazing and Rangeland Health |

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Chapter 7. References

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REFERENCES

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 2008. Resource Management Plan, BLM Vernal Field Office, Vernal, Utah.

Moffitt, Jackson W.. 1982. Authorization to Mine. Department of Interior, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Uintah County. 2010. Public Lands Implementation Plan, Public Lands, Uintah County, Utah.

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Chapter 8. Acronyms

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AGC American Gilsonite Company

AO Authorized Officer

APE Area of Potential Effect

AUM Animal unit Month

BCRA Book Cliffs Resource Area

BLM Bureau of Land Management

DR Decision Record

EA Environmental Assessment

EIS Environmental Impact Statement

ENBB Environmental Notification Bulletin Board

FLPMA Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 as Amended

FONSI Finding of No Significant Impact

ID Interdisciplinary

KGLA Known Gilsonite Leasing Area

NEPA National Environmental Policy Act

RFA Reasonably Foreseeable Action

RMP Resource Management Plan

ROD Record of Decision

SHPO State Historical Preservation Office

TCP Traditional Cultural Properties

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Appendix A. Interdisciplinary Team Checklist

Project Title:**NEPA Log Number:** DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0010EA #**File/Serial Number:****Project Leader:** Richard Goshen

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. | Rick Goshen | 12/3/2014 |
| NP | BLM Natural Areas | This project is not in a BLM Natural Area as per RMP/GIS review. | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |

| 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. Bureau of Land Management-Vernal Field Office conducted a Class III 100% pedestrian inventory over 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 November 18, 2014 recommending a "no historic properties effected" determination. We received their concurrence to our determination on November 26, 2014. | Erin Goslin | 12/2/2014 |
| NP | Cultural: Native American Religious Concerns | Tribal consultation was conducted under the West Bonanza Field Development EA in 2006. No Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) are identified within the APEs. The proposed projects will not hinder access to or use of Native American religious sites. | Erin Goslin | 12/2/2014 |
| NP | Designated Areas: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern | There are no current ACECs within the project area as per the RMP/GIS review. | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |
| NP | Designated Areas: Wild and Scenic Rivers | None present as per RMP/GIS review | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |
| NP | Designated Areas: Wilderness Study Areas | None present as per RMP/GIS review | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |
| NI | Environmental Justice | No minority or economically disadvantaged communities or populations would be disproportionately adversely affected by the proposed action or alternatives because none are present in or adjacent to the project area. | Rick Goshen | 12/3/2014 |
| 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. | Rick Goshen | 12/3/2014 |

| 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 <i>Bromus tectorum</i> . Applying the Green River District Reclamation Guidelines to any surface disturbing areas should prevent additional hazardous fuels. | Blaine Tarbell | 12/4/2014 |
| NI | Geology/Minerals/ Energy Production | No new surface disturbance is proposed; therefore the Proposed Action should not cause any further impact on geology, minerals or energy production. | Rick Goshen | 11/20/2014 |
| IP/NW: NI S&V: NI | Invasive Plants/ Noxious Weeds, Soils & Vegetation | IP/NW: No new surface disturbance is proposed; therefore, the Proposed Action should not contribute to the introduction or spread of noxious weeds/invasive weeds in the Project Area. Lease activities in the Project Area may contribute to the introduction or spread of weed infestations; however, the applicant would be responsible for control and treatment of invasive plants/noxious weeds through implementation of a site-specific weed control plan. S&V: No new surface disturbance is proposed; therefore, no direct or indirect impacts to soils and vegetation are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action. Reclamation activities may occur in the Project Area; however, the scope of reclamation activities and degree of reclamation success is not known at this time and cannot be analyzed as part of the Proposed Action. | Christine Cimiluca | 11/10/2014 |
| NI | Lands/Access | Current land uses, within the area identified in the proposed action, consist of oil and gas development (Pipeline and Road), 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. Master Title Plats have been checked for conflicts with Public Water Reserves. There are no PWR's in the project area. Access to the proposed action site is via Uintah County Class D road #080805. | Margo Roberts | 11/5/2014 |
| NP | Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) | None present as per RMP/GIS review | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |

| Determination | Resource/Issue | Rationale for Determination | Signature | Date |
|---------------|---|---|--------------------|------------|
| PI | Livestock Grazing & Rangeland Health Standards | The proposed project may continue to disturb and fragment a portion of the grazing allotment, which may impact live stock operations as well as the fundamentals of rangeland health. | Craig Newman | 11/6/2014 |
| NI | Paleontology | No new disturbance will be caused by this project. No fossil resources will be affected. No localities were present on the GIS layer. | Betty Gamber | 11/6/2014 |
| NP | Plants: BLM Sensitive | No UT BLM Sensitive plant species have been documented in the Project Area or adjacent areas per VFO BLM data review. The potential for UT BLM Sensitive plant species to occur in the Project Area is low, per analysis of Project Area soils. No UT BLM Sensitive plant species are expected to be impacted directly or indirectly as a result of the Proposed Action. | Christine Cimiluca | 11/10/2014 |
| NI | Plants: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate | The following Federally listed, proposed, or candidate plant species is present or expected in the same or an adjacent subwatershed as the proposed project: Pariette cactus (<i>Sclerocactus brevispinus</i>) and Uinta Basin hookless cactus (<i>Sclerocactus wetlandicus</i>). The Project Area is located outside the USFWS 2013 potential habitat polygon for <i>Sclerocactus wetlandicus</i> and <i>S. brevispinus</i> per GIS data review. Suitable habitat for <i>Sclerocactus wetlandicus</i> is present in the Project Area; the nearest documented individual or population of the species is located approximately 4.4 mi from the Project Area. Because new disturbance is not proposed (surface disturbance was previously done in trespass), the Project Area is located outside of designated potential habitat for <i>Sclerocactus ssp.</i> , and because no documented cactuses are located within 300 feet of the Project Area, there should be no direct or indirect impacts to cactus as a result of the Proposed Action. | Christine Cimiluca | 11/10/2014 |
| NP | Plants: Wetland/Riparian | No mapped or unmapped riparian areas/wetlands are present in the Project Area, per VFO BLM data and aerial photography review. Therefore, no direct or indirect impacts to wetland/riparian plants are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action. | Christine Cimiluca | 11/10/2014 |
| NI | Recreation | There is little OHV use and hunting associated within this project area and therefore recreation is not known to be an issue. | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |

| Determina- tion | 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. | Rick Goshen | 12/3/2014 |
| NI | Visual Resources | This project falls within VRM Class Objective IV. This class allows for mining and other activities as per the RMP. | Bill Civish | 11/13/2014 |
| NI | 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. | Rick Goshen | 12/3/2014 |
| NP | Water: Floodplains | There are no mapped 100 year floodplains within the project area according to GIS analysis, on the ground observations, and the Vernal BLM RMP. | James Hereford II | 11/19/2014 |
| NI | Water: Groundwater Quality | No new disturbance will take place for this project. ??? | Betty Gamber | 11/6/2014 |
| NI | Water: Hydrologic Conditions (stormwater) | The area is mostly dry ephemeral washes that drain into Coyote Wash and later into the White River. The current proposed action will not alter the current hydrologic conditions in the area to a degree that would require detailed analysis, because the modification of the existing lease will not alter any of the current drainage patterns. | James Hereford II | 11/19/2014 |
| NP | Water: Surface Water Quality | There are no perennial surface waters on the current proposed project area according to GIS analysis, on the ground observations, and the Vernal BLM RMP. | James Hereford II | 11/19/2014 |
| NP | Water: Waters of the U.S. | There are no waters of U.S. present on the current proposed action area as per GIS analysis, on the ground observations, and according to the Vernal BLM RMP. | James Hereford II | 11/19/2014 |
| NP | Wild Horses | Although horses are often seen throughout the area, these horses are not protected Wild Horses under BLM jurisdiction. these animals in the area are considered stray or tribal owned horses that immigrate and emmigrate between tribal and BLM surface managed lands. | Dusty Carpenter | 11/25/2014 |

| Determination | Resource/Issue | Rationale for Determination | Signature | Date |
|----------------------|---|--|------------------|-------------|
| NI | Wildlife: Migratory Birds (including raptors) | Migratory birds may be present near the area; however, the surrounding area is highly disturbed with existing infrastructure. In addition, there is a historic raptor nest within 1/2 mile but has not been active for many years likely due to the existing infrastructure. There are active raptor nests further south but are over the 1/2 mile buffer and are not in line-of-site. | Brandon McDonald | 11/05/14 |
| NI | Wildlife: Non-USFWS Designated | In review of district files and a field visit there is no crucial habitat for big game species. General wildlife (i.e. rabbit, coyote, antelope, etc.) may be observed near the area; however, the surrounding area is highly disturbed with existing infrastructure. | Brandon McDonald | 11/05/14 |
| NI | Wildlife: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate | The BLM has identified greater sage-grouse PPH within the project area; however, grouse have not been observed there for many years and is not good habitat given the loss of sage brush and forbs in the area. Coordination with the UDWR has taken place through emails (see project file) and both agencies are in agreement that no impacts would not occur from project activities. | Brandon McDonald | 11/17/14 |
| NP | Woodlands/ Forestry | No forest or woodland resources in the proposed lease area per review of GIS | David Palmer | 12/5/2014 |

FINAL REVIEW:

| Reviewer Title | Signature | Date | Comments |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Environmental Coordinator | /s/ Jessica Taylor | 12/22/2014 | |
| Authorized Officer | /s/ Jerry Kenzcka | 1/12/2015 | |