

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
220 E Market St
Meeker, CO 81641

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

The Vannoy Ranch, LLC Water Projects DOI-BLM-CO-N05-2015-0029-EA

Background

The Vannoy Ranch, LLC, a livestock grazing permittee on the Goff Camp Gulch Allotment, proposes several projects over the next several years some are located wholly on private lands and others are located on public lands. The first phase of project work is proposed to be constructed either the last week in April or the first week in May 2015.

The proposed water developments projects occur within the Goff Camp Gulch drainage as well as the unnamed drainage to the east and include cleaning out and relining ponds, redeveloping springs, and placing or replacing water lines and tanks (Map 1). The proposed projects are planned to be constructed between the last week of April to mid-May. If the projects are not completed during this timeframe due to funding availability or other constraints, project work would not occur from May 15 to July 15 to minimize impacts to migratory birds and woodland raptors. All work on public lands is expected to be completed in approximately 7 days of the start date.

Ponds

There are 4 ponds on public land within the allotment that will be cleaned out and re-lined. Cleaning out ponds involves using a bulldozer and remove silt from the ponds. Material removed from the ponds will be used to reinforce the dam. After the ponds are cleaned out, they will be lined with Hydrosourc[®] PAM (Sodium Acrylate Acrylamide Copolymer) to enable them to hold water.

Springs

Two existing spring developments would be reconstructed and the buck and pole fencing around both spring sources would be replaced.

For Spring #1 (Stone Spring), approximately 100 feet of the channel immediately below the spring would also be fenced with a buck and pole fence design. An existing buried water line would be replaced to the existing water tank that would also be upgraded with a large rubber tire tank.

For Spring #2 (Strawberry Spring #3), an existing water line would be extended south for 200 feet to a tank where a new rubber tire tank would be placed. The overflow from this tank would be placed into a new buried water pipeline on the uphill side of the existing two track road for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the next tank. One or two new rubber tire stock tanks may be placed at

this location. The overflow from these new rubber tanks would then flow into the existing adjacent pond.

Minor road repairs, including water bars to move water off of the road way, would be needed prior to installation of the new water pipeline in order to allow equipment and vehicles into the area.

Historic Well

The historic well that has been non-functional for decades, now recorded as cultural site #5RB8554, would be plugged and left in place.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity, as defined at 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects as described in the White River Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (1996). Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described below.

Context

The project is a site-specific action directly involving BLM administered public lands that do not in and of itself have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

Both of the spring reconstructions and one of the water pipelines will take place within the disturbance footprint of existing, non-functional water developments. The proposed new water pipeline, coming from Spring #2, will be placed in the existing two track road and the associated water tanks placed adjacent to an existing pond.

Intensity

The following discussion is organized around the 10 Significance Criteria described at 40 CFR 1508.27. The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this Proposed Action:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

Beneficial and adverse effects of the Proposed Action are identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA). Design features to reduce potential short-term impacts to soils; invasive, non native species; and wetland/riparian zone have been identified. Benefits of the Proposed Action would be improved livestock distribution across the allotment, as well as utilization of the water sources by wildlife.

2. The degree to which the Proposed Action affects public health or safety.

Based on past construction of range improvement type projects including water system type projects similar to the Proposed Action there will not be any public health and safety issues because the public can not access the area. The construction will take be completed by the

permittee and a water systems contractor, and possibly another contractor involved in the project (i.e., fence contractor).

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are no park lands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas that are in the project area. A small wetland/riparian zone is included in one of the proposed project areas but once construction is completed a fence will be constructed to protect the area from livestock.

For the historic and cultural resources, on 11/6/2014 the WRFO archaeologist surveyed the area of the Proposed Action for cultural resources. The results of the cultural resource inventory yielded one new historic site (5RB 8554) and one prehistoric isolated occurrence (5RB 8555). Both of the newly recorded isolated occurrences are recommended as not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Based on the results of the cultural resource inventory, and absence of significant cultural resources in the vicinity of the Proposed Action's area of potential effect (APE), the BLM determines that the Proposed Action would not affect any known historic properties.

4. Degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

Water developments are not anticipated to be controversial as they are present across the WRFO.

5. Degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk.

The Proposed Action would use Hydrosourc[®] PAM (Sodium Acrylate Acrylamide Copolymer), which contains Acrylamide. This chemical is listed as hazardous under Resource Conservation and Recovery Act for their toxic characteristics. However, Hydrosourc[®] PAM contains only trace amounts of acrylamide chemicals and based on the manufacturer's Material Safety Data Sheet, Hydrosourc[®] PAM is not a hazardous waste and does not have a reportable quantity based on the requirements under 40 CFR Part 302. Acrylamide has been shown to be toxic to minnows at concentrations of greater than 1,000 mg/l, however, the product contains less than .0003 percent which is far below toxic concentrations to aquatic organisms. Therefore, no listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project.

6. Degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The Proposed Action neither establishes a precedent for future BLM actions with significant effects nor represents a decision in principle about a future consideration. Further, the 1997 White River Resource Management Plan identified the need for range improvements to enhance rangeland productivity and management.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. The Proposed Action is the first phase of projects proposed

by the permittee with the additional phases yet to be identified. Overall, this project along with other proposed range improvement type projects would not be considered significant impacts to any resource or the human environment.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

A cultural resources inventory conducted on November 6, 2014, yielded one new historic site (5RB8554) and one prehistoric isolated occurrence (5RB8555) that are not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Conditions of Approval have been incorporated to address potential impacts to undiscovered cultural resources.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973.

There are no candidate or listed species in the project area, therefore, no consultation was necessary with Fish and Wildlife Services and no additional design features or mitigation are necessary to address potential impacts.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Neither the Proposed Action nor impacts associated with it violate any laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Signature of Authorized Official



For Kent, E. Walter, Field Manager

April 15, 2015

Date

Map 1. Project Overview Map

DOI-BLM-CO-N05-2015-0029-EA Overview Map



