

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

Categorical Exclusion

**DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0069-CX
QEP Red Wash Temporary Water Lines**

PREPARING OFFICE

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



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Chapter Chapter 1. Categorical Exclusion

Temporary Water Lines

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A. Background

BLM Office: Vernal Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: UTU-0823

Proposed Action Title/Type: Temporary Water Lines

Location of Proposed Action: The project area is approximately 21 miles south of Vernal, Utah; in Sections 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, T7S R23E.

Description of Proposed Action:

QEP Energy Company (QEP) proposes to install a temporary 8 inch or smaller frac lay flat pipe line from existing valve sets in the Red Wash Unit to recomplete 9 wells (RW 31–20B, RW 21–22B, RW 34–22B, RW 42–21B, RW 14–29B, RW 12A2–28B, RW 43–22B, RW 42–23B, and RW 14–23B). The lines would be installed along the existing roads or in the bar ditches. Each line would be installed for 2–3 days. After the wells are fracked the lines would be removed. No new surface disturbance would be required for this action and there are no known resource concerns in this part of the field that have not been cleared with the APD. Figure Chapter 1.1, “Pipe Line Proposed Route” (p. 1) shows proposed pipeline routes highlighted in green.

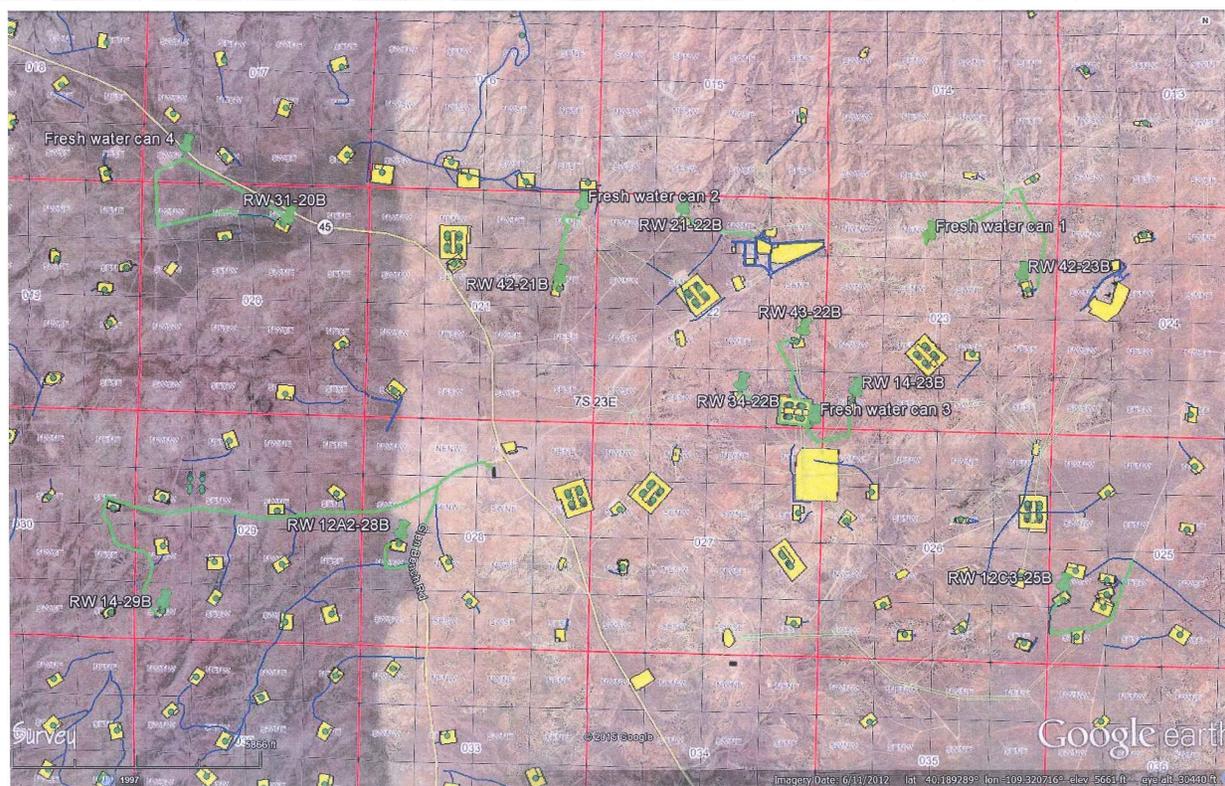


Figure Chapter 1.1. Pipe Line Proposed Route

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Vernal Field Office Resource Management Plan

Date Approved/Amended: ROD approved in 2008

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions) : The RMP/ROD decision allows leasing of oil and gas while protecting or mitigating other resource values (RMP/ROD p. 97-99). The Minerals and Energy Resources Management Objectives encourage the drilling of oil and gas wells by private industry (RMP/ROD, p. 97). The RMP/ROD decision also 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. 86). It has been determined that the proposed action and alternative(s) would not conflict with other decisions throughout the plan.

C. Compliance with NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, Number E-(18) Temporary placement of a pipeline above ground. None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR Part 46.215 apply.

I considered the proposed action to install 8 inch or smaller frac lay flat pipe line from existing valve sets in the Red Wash Unit to recomplete 9 wells (RW 31–20B, RW 21–22B, RW 34–22B, RW 42–21B, RW 14–29B, RW 12A2–28B, RW 43–22B, RW 42–23B, and RW 14–23B), with the stipulations and conditions of approval (COA) identified in Attachment 1. The stipulations and COAs are required by this decision, and variance from these stipulations and COAs during project implementation may require further NEPA review. In addition, I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed activity is in conformance with the applicable land use plan(s).

I considered the extraordinary circumstances as documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Worksheet (Appendix A, *Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation* (p. 3)).

D. Approval and Contact Information

/s/ Jerry Kenczka

Jerry Kenczka,
Assistant Field Manager

2/2/2015

Date

Appendix A. Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation

Categorical Exclusion Rationale

CX Number:	DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2015-0069-CX
Date:	1/27/2015
Lease/Case File/ Serial Number:	UTU-0823
Regulatory Authority (CFR or Law):	516 DM 11.9 E.18

Section 1.1 Impacts on Public Health and Safety

1. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on public health and safety?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	David Baird, Natural Resource Specialist

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

Section 1.2 Impacts on Natural Resources or Unique Geographic Characteristics

2. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness or wilderness study areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	David Baird, Natural Resource Specialist

Rationale: There are no unique geographic characteristics; historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; or other ecologically significant or critical areas within the proposed project area per cultural reports, BLM GIS database layers, and onsite observations. No lands designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wilderness Study Areas, Monuments, or other areas of special designation are located within the proposed project area, and the proposed project would not impact any specially designated lands. Migratory birds are present in the project area; however, the proposed project is not expected to significantly impact migratory bird habitat, forage, or nesting areas because it is wholly within an existing disturbed area. No fossil localities are present in the project area as per Paleo GIS Layer.

Section 1.3 Level of Controversy

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

Rationale: Similar projects to the proposed action have occurred in adjacent areas with similar resources present; the impacts of these projects are well-known and demonstrated in other projects that have been implemented and monitored. Impacts are not significant..

Section 1.4 Highly Uncertain or Unique or Unknown Environmental Risks

4. Does the proposed action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	David Baird, Natural Resource Specialist

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

Section 1.5 Precedent Setting

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

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

Section 1.6 Cumulatively Significant Effects

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

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

Section 1.7 Impacts on Cultural Properties

7. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or office?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Erin Goslin, Archaeologist

Rationale: A Class III cultural survey (U-02–MQ-0144) has been completed for the proposed project area; no significant cultural resources were found in the project area.

Section 1.8 Impacts on Federally Listed Species or Critical Habitat

8. Does the proposed action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Dixie Sadlier, Wildlife Biologist
	X	Christine Cimiluca, Natural Resource Specialist/Acting Botanist

Rationale: Wildlife: No formal Section 7 consultation/concurrence with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was required or requested. No water sources will be used for construction of the pipeline. Threatened and Endangered Species review has occurred through the onsite as well as BLM GIS data. All appropriate mitigation measures have been applied through the Conditions of Approval for this project. No coordination with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources was required or requested.

Plants: Potential habitat for Threatened, Endangered, Candidate, or Proposed plant species is not present in the Project Area; designated Critical Habitat is also not present. Project activities would be temporary and would occur entirely within existing surface disturbance. Therefore, the project should not result in direct or indirect impacts to TECP plant species or designated Critical Habitat.

Section 1.9 Compliance With Laws

9. Does the proposed action violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	David Baird, Natural Resource Specialist

Rationale: The proposed action would not violate any county or state statutes. Formal Section 7 consultation with USFWS for Threatened and Endangered species is not required or requested for this project; No water sources would be used for construction of the pipeline: the proposed project would not violate the Endangered Species Act. Onsite observations, BLM GIS, and air quality studies/modeling data have shown that the proposed project will not violate the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, or Migratory Bird Act.

Section 1.10 Environmental Justice

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

Rationale: Low income or minority populations are not present in the project area. Low income or minority populations would not receive disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects from the proposed action. Health and environmental statutes would not be compromised by the proposed action.

Section 1.11 Indian Sacred Sites

11. Does the proposed action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners, or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	Erin Goslin, Archaeologist

Rationale: Tribal consultation was conducted under the Greater Deadman Bench EIS in 2008. No Traditional Cultural Properties are identified with the APE. The proposed project would not hinder access to or use of Native American religious sites.

Section 1.12 Noxious and Non-Native Invasive Species

12. Does the proposed action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area, or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112)?		
YES	NO	REVIEWER/TITLE
	X	David Baird, Natural Resource Specialist

Rationale: Mitigation for the introduction and spread of noxious and non-native species is already in place at these sites. QEP would continue to take measures to reduce the spread of such species throughout the project. In addition, to prevent noxious weed seed establishment, equipment and vehicles used to lay the pipeline would be power washed prior to entering the project area.

Preparer Information

David Baird
Natural Resource Specialist

Date

/s/ Jerry Kenczka

Jerry Kenczka,
Assistant Field Manager

2/2/2015

Date