

Categorical Exclusion

Coal Mine Canyon Exclosure Modifications

Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Elko District, Tuscarora Field Office

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Chapter 1. Categorical Exclusion Worksheet

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A. Background

NEPA ID No: DOI-BLM-NV-E020-2015-0018-CX

BLM Office: Tuscarora Field Office

LLNVE02000

Prepared by: Carol Evans

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: JDR#017965

Type of Action (Subject Code): 1040

Location of Proposed Action: The project is located in the North Fork Group Allotment, north and west of Ryndon, Nevada and within the Coal Mine Basin and The Buttes topographic quads (1:24,000 scale). Legal descriptions for existing enclosures are as follows: Coal Mine Enclosure #1 (T38N, R56E, Sec. 29) Coal Mine Enclosure #2 (T38N, R56E, Sec 33, NW1/4), Coal Mine Enclosure #3 (T38N, R56E, Sec. 33), Coal Mine Enclosure #4 (T38N, R56, Sec. 33), Coal Mine #5 (T38N, R56, Sec. 33), Coal Mine Enclosure #6 (T37N, R56E, Sec. 3).

Applicant: None

Description of Proposed Action: The Elko District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to modify portions of six enclosures located in Coal Mine Canyon within the North Fork Group Allotment and located north of Ryndon, Nevada (See Map). The enclosures were initially built in 1986 to improve stream and riparian habitat conditions along Coal Mine Canyon Creek. However, poor project design including fence construction across wet areas and at the base of steep slopes combined with concentrated livestock use in the Coal Mine Canyon area has caused the enclosures to be almost completely ineffective at excluding cattle. Consequently, riparian habitat conditions along Coal Mine Canyon Creek are highly degraded and in many cases, fences pose a barrier to wildlife.

BLM is proposing to modify portions of Enclosures #1-4 (see Map) where existing fencing is either too close to a wet area, the road or a steep slope. Modifications would include relocating these fence segments to nearby locations where the ground is drier or where the topography is less steep. Enclosures # 5 and 6 would be expanded for the purposes of relocating fencing away from problem areas and for incorporating additional areas of priority riparian habitat. New fencing would consist of a combination of post and pole fence in high pressure areas (along the roadside) and conventional four-wire fencing for areas away from the drainage bottom. Specifications for post and pole fence include alternating steel and wood rails with spacing ranging from 12-24-32-44" to 16-28-36-44". For conventional fence, specifications include a 40 inch total height with four wires (bottom smooth) spaced as follows: 16-6-6-12". In all cases, specifications are designed to facilitate wildlife passage in and out of enclosures.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: Elko Resource Management Plan

Date Approved/Amended: 3/11/1987

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):Elko RMP Record of Decision Wildlife Objective: Conserve and enhance terrestrial, riparian and aquatic wildlife habitat (pg. 29).

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) :

C. Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with BLM Categorical Exclusion pursuant to 516 DM 11.9.

A. Fish and Wildlife:

1. Modification of existing fences to provide improved wildlife ingress and egress.

H. Other

9. Construction of small protective exclosures including those to protect reservoirs and springs and those to protect small study areas.

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 516 DM 2 apply.

D. Conclusion and Signature

Based upon this review, I have determined that the Proposed Action, as described, is in conformance with the land use plan and meets the criteria for the selected CX. There is no potential for significant impacts. Therefore, the action is excluded from further environmental analysis and documentation.

/s/ Richard E. Adams 2-2-15

Richard E. Adams
Field Manager, Tuscarora Field Office

Date

Contact Information

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:

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* NOTE A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

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Chapter 2. Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances

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Each of the following questions must be answered negatively, with concurrence from all resource specialists participating on the interdisciplinary team (IDT), before this CX may be approved (516 DM).

Table 2.1. Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances

Resource Concerns	Yes	No
1. Will this project have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?		X
2. Will this project adversely affect such unique geographic characteristics as: (a) historic or cultural resources; (b) park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers; (c) sole or principal drinking water aquifers; (d) prime farmlands, wetlands, flood plains, or (e) ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department of the Interior's National Register of Natural Landmarks?		(a) X (b) X (c) X (d) X (e) X
3. Will this project have highly controversial environmental effects?		X
4. Will this project have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?		X
5. Will this project establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?		X
6. Will this project be related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?		X
7. Will this project have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?		X
8. Will this project have adverse effects on species listed or proposed for listing on the Threatened or Endangered Species List, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species?		X
9. Will this project require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?		X
10. Will this project threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?		X
11. Will this project 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— Sacred Sites)		X
12. Will this project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species?		X

Table 2.2. Reviewer Comments and Concurrence

Resource	Specialist Name	Comments	Initials	Date
AFM- Non-Renewables				
AFM- Renewables	Melanie Mirati	No concerns	/s/ MR	2-2-15
Air/Hydrology/Soils	John Daniel	Positive effects	/s/ JD	1-24-15
Cultural Resources	Lucinda Langston	Positive effects	/s/ LL	1-29-15
Environmental Justice	Terri Dobis	No concerns	/s/ TD	1-30-15
Fisheries	Carol Evans	Positive effects	/s/ CE	1-29-15
Health and Safety	Terri Dobis	No concerns	/s/ TKD	1-30-15
Native American Concerns	Richard Adkins	Positive effects	/s/ RA	1-30-15
NEPA	Terri Dobis	No concerns	/s/ TKD	1-30-15

Range Management/ Grazing	Lea Garcia	No concerns	/s/ LG	1-30-15
Recreation	Zach Pratt	LWC polygon 166 and 604	/s/ ZP	1-29-15
Weeds	Samantha Cisney	Clean equipment prior to on-site arrival and work	/s/ SC	1-29-15
Wild Horses & Burros	NA			
Wildlife	Ken Wilkinson	No concerns	/s/ KW	1-29-15