

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
SALMON FIELD OFFICE**

**Decision Record**

**For the**

**RATTLESNAKE BRIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2015-0002-EA**

**IDI-37837**

## **Introduction and Background**

In 2015, the BLM completed the Rattlesnake Bridge EA (DOI-BLM-ID-I040-2015-0002-EA), which analyzed and disclosed environmental impacts of implementing two management alternatives on the BLM administered public lands in the Salmon Field Office. Lemhi County Road and Bridge staff developed the Proposed Action in consultation with the BLM, Lemhi County Commissioners, other state and federal agencies, and public scoping.

The existing Rattlesnake Bridge has been in service since 1956. The bridge provides access from U.S. Highway 93 to public lands on the west side of the Salmon River, including the Bureau of Land Management Salmon Field Office (SFO) Dugout Dick recreation site, active mine claims, and two private properties, one of which includes the Salmon River Properties' Twin Peaks guest ranch. In 2013, Idaho Transportation Department inspected the bridge and gave it a sufficiency rating of 21.2 out of a possible 100 points. Based on this rating, the bridge was deemed structurally deficient due to substandard load carrying capacity. Two alternatives were analyzed in the Rattlesnake Bridge EA, one of which will result in the replacement of the bridge.

This document incorporates by reference the Rattlesnake Bridge EA. Additional information is available in the EA which is available on the BLM's ePlanning website at:

<https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage&currentPageId=64975>

## **Public Comments and Issues Identified:**

### **COMMENTS**

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes did not have any issues with the site of the Proposed Action (email from C. Smith, TDOE-HeTO Cultural Resources Coordinator dated July 28, 2015).

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) staff was notified of all meetings and all planning documents were forwarded to USFWS staff. No written comments were received from USFWS.

One of the outfitters permitted to use this section of the river for fishing and boating called James Townley, SFO Recreation Planner to request that the river be open to launch boats within 300-yards below the construction site. This outfitter also asked permission to use of the IDFG Waddington Creek site to take-out their boats just upstream of the new bridge site during construction. The river closure is for public safety and the responsibility of the Lemhi County

Sheriff. The Sheriff is not allowing exceptions to the closure because of potential liability issues for the County.

IDFG asked if the County contractor could build a road from the new bridge south across the BLM to the IDFG Waddington Creek boat launch. The existing road to the site is steep, rough, and rocky. A new road in this location would have a number of cultural and natural resource issues, and was not part of the Proposed Action.

IDFG also asked if boats could cross the river from bank-to-bank within the section temporarily closed during construction of the new bridge. The river closure is for public safety and the responsibility of the Lemhi County Sheriff. The Sheriff is not allowing exceptions to the closure because of potential liability issues for the County.

### **ISSUES**

The public raised the issue of cost for the bridge replacement at the County Commissioners' meetings.

One of the outfitters permitted to use this section of the river for fishing and boating sent an email to the County Sheriff re: the proposed temporary river closure. The outfitter noted, "Steelhead fishing won't be the big problem; that section is not very good. The issue will be a few trout fishermen and scenic floaters".

The BLM interdisciplinary team in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers identified the following issues:

- Sediment and Turbidity Generated by Bank Excavation and Pile Drilling: Protection of the ESA listed sockeye salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout, other resident fishes, river bank, migratory and overwintering habitat, and water quality
- Pile Drilling Noise and Vibration: Protection of ESA listed fishes and resident fishes
- Equipment River Crossings: Protection of the ESA listed sockeye salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout, other resident fishes, migratory and overwintering habitat, river banks, and water quality
- Temporary Piers and Workbridge: Boater safety and protection of aquatic habitat
- Construction Traffic: Highway vehicle safety
- East Side Staging Area: Protection of cultural resources and the Salmon River bank
- Vegetation Protection: Retention of the Ponderosa pine on both banks of the river
- Post-Project Site Reclamation: Reclamation of the staging area and other disturbed sites, Salmon River bank reconstruction, noxious and invasive weeds management

Comments and issues were considered in the development of the Proposed Action schedule of instream work, best management practices, conservation measures, design criteria, monitoring criteria, and post-construction site restoration.

### **Decision**

It is my decision is to authorize or implement Alternative B. Alternative B, the Proposed Action, will grant the County a: (1) a 30-year term renewable, assignable ROW on BLM lands to the County for the installation, use, and maintenance of the bridge infrastructure, as well as the

temporary construction areas, (2) a one-time use of an existing, closed pit located on federal land on the west side of the river for up to 700 cubic yards (CY) for the Deer Creek Road base, and (3) the restoration of the construction sites associated with the ROW.

The specifics of the Proposed Action are described below:

### **BLM RIGHT-OF-WAY**

The BLM will authorize a ROW to Lemhi County for the Rattlesnake Bridge approaches and abutments located above the Ordinary High Water (OHW) mark on the east and west sides of the Salmon River. The east side portion of the ROW will be 70-feet wide by 45-feet long. The west side portion will be 85-feet wide by 40-feet long and 400-feet long by 20-feet wide for the Deer Creek Road approach (BLM road #306). The total ROW encumbrance for the permanent infrastructure will be approximately 0.33 acre.

This ROW will include an authorization for the temporary construction disturbance area of about 3.6 acres, including: (1) an approximately 2.7 acre staging area between the highway and the river, (2) a 16-foot wide approach on either side of river north of the existing bridge for equipment crossing, and (3) a 400 by 20-foot wide section of Deer Creek Road on the west bank (Appendix A). The Proposed Action will include maintenance of the bridge structures as needed.

### **TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION**

#### ***In-water Work Window***

In-water work will be completed during the Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program Technical Team in-water work window for the main Salmon River - Horse Creek to the Pahsimeroi River Reach: July 15 through March 15 of the following year (USBWP Technical Team 2005).

#### ***Highway Safety***

The general contractor, RSCI will be responsible for the Maintenance of Traffic Plan. The plan has been reviewed and accepted by ITD and conforms to the requirements of Lemhi County.

RSCI will supply highway signage and flaggers as needed during construction.

#### ***Staging Areas***

The BLM will permit an approximately 2.7 acre construction staging area on the terrace between the highway and the east-side river terrace (Figure 2). This staging area was burned in the 3.4 acre Dugout Fire during the summer of 2014 (Figure 3). The southern end of the staging area will be delineated by a solitary boulder with highway survey bench mark (elevation 4,316') (Figure 3).

Prior to construction, the project area will be delineated with orange construction fence and signed in coordination with a SFO representative to identify the following: (1) the southern boundary of the staging area, (2) the equipment crossing site downstream of the existing bridge, (3) OHW line, (4) equipment entry and exit points, (5) designated vehicle parking and staging areas, (6) designated refueling areas, and (7) all other staging, storage, and stockpile areas.

The staging area will be kept to the minimum size necessary to allow for a maximum buffer between the staging areas and the slope break above the river. A silt fence will be trenched in and backfilled around the perimeter of the staging area to prevent sediment from entering the river.

Soil disturbance and compaction will be minimized during construction of temporary access points to the highway from the staging area. Clean, washed gravel will be placed over geotextile fabric at these sites to delineate the existing soil surface. All fill will be contained by the silt fence.

All surplus excavated material will be removed from the site and stockpiled in a designated upland site(s) away from any watercourses, rendering them unavailable to enter waterways as a result of storm runoff or a high water event.

All fill materials for temporary road construction / access to the staging will be removed to the level of the geotextile fabric and all access points to the staging area will be restored to grade with the stockpiled material when construction is completed. Orange construction fencing and other barriers will be installed between the highway and the construction staging area as necessary to protect the site rehabilitation / revegetation. Fencing will be removed when revegetation objectives are met. The contractor will coordinate the fence removal with SFO staff.

All construction material and equipment will be off-loaded and stored in the designated staging area or on previously disturbed surfaces such as highway pull-outs and existing roadways where they will not deliver fuel, oil, and other contaminants to the river.

### ***Cultural Resource Protection***

Vehicles and equipment will not be allowed south of the east side staging area boundary for cultural resource protection. Orange construction fence will be posted north of the recorded site boundaries to provide a 165 foot buffer to the north of the recorded site boundaries.

Any cultural and/or paleontological resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered on public or Federal land during construction shall be immediately reported to the authorized officer. Holder shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer. An evaluation of the discovery will be made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values.

### ***Dust Abatement and Water Drafting***

Water will be used for dust abatement to maintain air quality and safe highway visibility. Any water used on site for drilling, dust abatement, etc. shall be procured from existing public or private water sources.

If water drafting from the river is required, the operator shall complete an application for "Temporary Approval Water Appropriation" through IDWR. Any water drafting equipment shall be appropriately screened to NMFS 2008 pump screening standards and criteria (Appendix B).

Drafting equipment will need to be cleaned and dried prior to arriving at the site and when leaving the site to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. The County weed cleaning station “hotsie” can be used for this purpose with prior notification to the County Weed Superintendent.

### ***Equipment Stream Crossings***

All equipment and vehicles shall be washed to prevent the spread of noxious and invasive weeds. The County Inspector will inspect all equipment and vehicles upon arrival at the construction site and prior to each river crossing. The contractor is required to schedule inspections with the County Inspector.

Machinery will be operated from the top of the stream bank on adjacent upland and developed areas at each site to the maximum extent practicable. Equipment will not be driven or operated in the Salmon River with the exception of river crossings to deliver materials and equipment to the west bank and construction of the work pads.

Access to the west bank will be allowed at the in-water crossings location designated and flagged by the BLM downstream (north) of the existing Rattlesnake Bridge. Six round-trip equipment crossings by a track-based excavator with a drill mount (one round-trip) and a track-based front end loader (five round-trips) will be permitted. These crossings will be monitored and reported as per NMFS requirements and the Corps permit. All other equipment and materials will be moved back and forth to and from the west bank over the old bridge by all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or across the new bridge when it is completed.

The banks at the designated equipment crossing site are moderately sloped and were previously used by BLM equipment to cross the river for mine reclamation in 2007 (Figures 4 and 5). The west side is used by boaters as an undesignated launch site. Woody riparian vegetation at the proposed crossings includes coyote and booth willow, and chokecherry. If needed, the woody plants will be cut back and the soil surface will be covered with erosion control mats to protect both of the river banks and decrease the likelihood of sediment entering the river during the crossings. If the crossings result in bank damage or woody species do not naturally regenerate, the BLM will specify restoration requirements.

Bank grading is not expected to be necessary however, if grading is needed below the OHW mark of the Salmon River to facilitate the equipment crossing, it will be subject to approval by the IDWR and the Corps. Any excavated material will be stockpiled at a designated site away from any watercourses, rendering it unavailable to enter the stream channel as a result of storm runoff or a high water event. The stockpiled material will be used to reconstruct the bank to the original slope.

### ***Work Platform***

A temporary work platform approximately 30-feet wide will extend over the river 120 feet from the east bank. Deck height of the platform will be approximately 4 feet above OHW. The platform will be supported by up to ten temporary piers of 6 to 8-foot diameter corrugated metal pipe (CMP). The temporary CMP piers will be installed and removed within the in-water work window. The temporary piers will be installed in October to avoid peak periods of fish migration. The Corps 404 permit requires removal of the piers by December 31, 2015.

The piers will be filled with washed rock from a local source screened to 3-inch diameter minimum to remove the smaller fines. The piers will be constructed and partially filled on the bank, then lifted into place by crane or excavator. The bottom of the steel CMP will be fitted with a wire screen that will contain the fill material so that it can effectively be removed. The machine placing and removing the piers will not be in the river at any time.

The piers will be placed on the river bottom with minimal disturbance. The temporary fill below the OHW mark of the river must be the minimum footprint and shall not raise river levels upstream of the river by more than 0.5 foot above the OHW mark. The County proposes to alter the riverbed to set each pier. Boulders will be moved to provide a level, stable surface for the piers. Boulders will be selectively picked up with a clamshell excavator bucket and placed back in the river. The County will restore the riverbed after pier removal. Temporarily relocated boulders could remain in the river adjacent each pier site.

When the piers are removed, the CMP rock fill will be disposed of in an approved location such as the County landfill or another acceptable containment site where it will not enter drainages as a result of storm runoff or a high water event.

### ***Crane Pad***

A 75-foot long by 30-foot wide (2,259 ft<sup>2</sup>) section of the east bank, above the OHW mark of the river will be excavated to provide a level staging area for a crane to reach the temporary work platform (Appendix C). The amount of material excavated for the crane pad will be approximately 750 to 850 cubic yards (CY).

A 40-foot long access ramp will be excavated between the staging area and the crane pad at a slope of approximately 1:4 with a 10-foot drop to the crane pad level. The amount of material excavated for this ramp will be approximately 150 CY. All work will be above the ordinary high water mark of the river.

The excavated material (~1,000 CY) will likely exceed the volume that could be stored on site in the staging area. The excess material will be hauled and stored at a clean and divided area at an approved site such as the County landfill or another acceptable containment site where it will not enter drainages as a result of storm runoff or a high water event.

Environmental and restoration requirements for long-term stabilization of the river bank include returning the bank to its natural contours with the excavated, stored material. This material will be used to rebuild the river bank with compacted 12-inch vertical lifts following construction.

### ***Safety and River Closure***

The principal public safety official in Lemhi County is the County Sheriff's Office. The general contractor shall coordinate with the County Sheriff's Office and with whomever the Sheriff's Office determine appropriate to ensure recreational boater safety. Boater Safety is critical during the construction. The County and its contractors are solely responsible for the safety of workers.

The County Sheriff will close a 3.5-mile long stretch of the river to boating when the temporary bridge is in place (Figure 2). Boats will be required to take-out of the river 3.5 miles upstream of the project site at the Elk Bend boat ramp. The Elk Bend Emergency Fire Department and IDFG cooperatively manage and maintain this ramp, primarily for search and rescue operations. The

IDFG and the County Sheriff confirmed the ramp will be available September 22-November 30 when the temporary work platform is in place, and that closure of this river segment will not adversely impact steelhead fishermen or search and rescue operations (Sheriff L. Bowerman and W. Davis, IDFG pers. comm. July 17, 2015).

Boaters will be able to launch their crafts at any legally accessible site 100-yards or more downstream of the old Rattlesnake bridge. The BLM undeveloped Camp Creek boat launch 4 miles downstream of the closed section, and the BLM developed Elevenmile boat launch 4.5 miles downstream of Camp Creek will be available to the public (Figure 2). Both of these sites are managed by the SFO.

The IDFG Waddington Creek river access site will not be available. This site is within the closure area because of close proximity to the project site (Figure 2).

Lemhi County and the general contractor shall advertise and alert boaters to the construction in particular to the temporary fills below the OHW mark of the river. Upstream and downstream signage at boat ramps must be installed and maintained for the duration of the project. Nighttime lighting of the temporary fill must be installed and maintained to ensure visibility of the structures to boaters. At no time shall upstream or downstream navigation be blocked without prior notification of and coordination with the Sheriff's Office.

## **PERMANENT CONSTRUCTION**

### ***Highway Approach***

The Idaho Transportation Department design for the permanent highway approach to the new bridge is in Appendix D.

### ***Bridge Pilings***

The Proposed Action includes placement of the 220 long x 16 feet wide bridge main span, two approach spans, and road work as shown on the bridge design drawings and construction specifications in Appendix C. These drawings were developed by Deere & Ault and issued by the County. They serve as the concept for the selected design-build contractor to complete the design and construct the project. The work required by the County's contractor, RSCI includes the standards and requirement that will be enforced by the County or the County's consulting engineer. As the final emergency bridge designs are completed, this information will be immediately given to the SFO and Corps staff to allow for coordination with NMFS and USFWS in developing any necessary additional BMPs and conservation measures.

Work at the site includes geotechnical exploration and utility location. One subsurface exploration was conducted in November of 2014 and consisted of a 23-foot deep boring on the east bank and a 15-foot deep pit on the west bank. In May 2015 five borings were made to depths between 20 and 30 feet below ground level. The investigation reports are available in the project file.

The permanent abutments and approach spans will consist of steel piles and painted steel framing. The casings will be installed using track mounted equipment. The reach of the drill rig will allow for a minimal temporary platform footprint. Fill material used for the temporary

platforms will be placed over a geotextile type barrier according to the BMPs to allow removal with minimal disturbance to the existing bank material.

A permanent row of four pipe piles will be placed at each bank within the 100 year high water mark, but above of the OHW mark. A second row of two pipe piles will be 15-feet away, above the 100 year high water mark. The framing erected on these piles will be entirely above the 100 year high water as shown in the drawings (Appendix C). Except for the concrete filled pipe piles, no permanent structures will remain below the 100 year water line.

Directly behind this second row of pipe piles will be a retaining wall that consists of six H-piles. In between the H-piles, solid precast concrete lagging panels will be placed to hold back the earth fill. The retaining structures will be 50-feet long and will support the necessary road fill that joins the bridge abutments to the highway and Deer Creek Road.

The pipe piles will consist of circular casings installed by use of down-hole hammer method using an under reaming bit. The 40-foot long casings will be installed with approximately 8 to 10 feet extending above the surface. The 62-foot long steel wide flange piles will be centered and driven 20 feet beyond the casing depth. The casing annulus will be filled with structural concrete. Minimal welding over the bank will be required to complete the supporting structure.

Material including rock cuttings, soil and water ejected from the pipe piles during drilling will be deflected immediately above the piles and collected on the ground. The deflector is a special fitting that has been used successfully by Inland Crane for this exact operation in protected environments. A fabricated rubber basin with fully attached sides will be placed on the ground directly below the deflector to collect all water and debris as it is produced. An earthen berm will provide secondary containment around the basin to catch any loss of material. Material in the basin will be continually directed to a 12 x 8 x 4 foot deep detention pond by gravity or by pumping when gravity flow is not possible (Appendix C). A suitable membrane lined channel will contain material flowing into the detention pond. The detention pond will be monitored to prevent overflowing or release. The drilling operation will stop any time that the collection basin appears to be near capacity or if adjustment is necessary. If water, sediment, or drilling fluids cannot be contained during drilling operations, resulting in discharges to the Salmon River, operator shall cease operations until a suitable remedy can be determined. All of the solids from the drilling operation will be collected and placed in an approved site such as the County landfill, or could be buried in the basin during the reconstruction of the river bank as long as no drilling fluids or other contaminants are in the rock and water drilling waste.

In consultation with NMFS, BLM, and the Corps the County has proposed noise attenuation mitigation measures to reduce the acoustic impacts to fish. The permanent pile installation noise attenuation mitigation measures include: (1) The use of vibratory hammers for all sheet pile installation, temporary pile installation, and the start of permanent pile installation, (2) impact hammers will not be used within the wetted channel, (3) cessation of impact hammer pile driving activities will occur for at least 12 hours within each 24-hour period, and (4) to help attenuate sound pressure levels (SPLs), each pile will be fitted with a nylon cushion block prior to being struck with the impact hammer – reducing sound pressure levels by 4 to 5 decibels (dB) per strike. Further, while cofferdams are not proposed for this project, if conditions change and cofferdams are proposed and approved noise attenuation mitigation measures will include: (5) impact pile driving in the river will only occur within a cofferdam area and not in free-flowing

water, and (6) within the cofferdam all water will be pumped out so pile driving will take place “in the dry”.

### ***Bridge Structure***

The main bridge span comprises steel girders and guard rails which are weathering steel and do not require coatings. The decking will be galvanized corrugated steel and will be welded to the girders in place over the river. The gravel for the bridge decking shall consist of material not smaller than 3.5 US Standard mesh (5.6 mm diameter); less than 5.6 mm has been shown to adversely affect salmonid redds.

Each end of the bridge connects to a road running parallel to the river; the highway on the east side and Deer Creek Road on the west side. Retaining walls are required to connect these roads to the bridge abutments. The retaining walls have been designed to eliminate permanently altering the river bank below the 100 year high water. Each retaining structure will consist of a row of H-piles and pre-cast concrete lagging segments. The piles will require pre-drilling to meet acceptable tolerances. Placement methods will be either to fill pre-drilled holes with pea gravel and drive piles conventionally or to set the piles in pre-drilled holes and placed with concrete.

### ***Deer Creek Road***

About 400 feet of the Deer Creek Road (BLM Road #306) will be raised a maximum of three feet (tapered at either end to existing roadbed surface) and regraded to meet the new bridge elevation. Road work may require minimal over-excavation in order to reach suitable support material. Backfilling, compaction, finish grading, buried utility conduit, and guardrail will be surficial.

The road work will require about 500 cubic yards (CY) of road base and road surface material that meets the County road standards and will be from an acceptable source. The SFO will permit a one-time use of an existing pit located on federal land on the west side of the river for up to 700 CY for the road base for this project (Figure 2). The road surface material will come from a local, private source.

## **VEGETATION, SOIL, AND REHABILITATION MEASURES**

The bridge will be placed in a stand of Ponderosa pine on the far side of the river (Figure 6). One Ponderosa pine on the east-side terrace that was killed in the 2014 Dugout Fire was cut down in the spring of 2015 before the late-April to mid-July migratory bird nesting season to allow the crane to operate during the bridge construction. The limbs were stockpiled at the south end of the staging area to use for site restoration following construction. The rest of the wood was given to the County for the firewood program. The smaller fork of a live Ponderosa pine was also cut down on the west bank to provide room for the bridge. All of this tree will be used for site restoration. No additional trees will be removed without BLM approval.

Heavy equipment will be selected and operated in a manner that minimizes adverse effects to the environment such as minimally-sized, low pressure tires, minimal hard turn paths for tracked vehicles, and temporary mats or plates within wet areas or sensitive soils.

Vegetation may be grubbed only from areas where permanent ground alteration will occur. Vegetation is to be cut at ground level and rootwads retained where temporary clearing occurs.

Earthwork including drilling, excavation, dredging, filling, and compacting will be completed as quickly as possible and site restoration will occur immediately following use. Restoration will be accomplished to restore ecosystem processes.

During excavation, native topsoil (if any) will be stockpiled above OHW where it cannot reenter the river, for later use during site rehabilitation.

All construction materials must come from outside of the construction site, and cannot be procured from BLM administered lands, unless approval is given by the BLM authorized officer. The exceptions to this requirement are mineral materials (riprap, fill, gravel) that were procured with a valid BLM permit and woody material identified by BLM for use in site restoration.

The County Weed Department will hydroseed the disturbed areas with a BLM approved seed mix to achieve establishment and erosion control objectives prior to or at the beginning of the first growing season following construction.

The County weed department will also treat noxious and invasive weeds within the project area for three consecutive years after project completion, or as needed.

Orange construction fencing and other barriers will be installed between the highway and the construction staging area as necessary to protect the rehabilitation / revegetation sites. Fencing will be removed when revegetation objectives are met. Contractor will coordinate the fence removal with the BLM.

Fertilizer will not be applied within 50 feet of any stream channel, waterbody, or wetland.

Construction will be done so as to keep streambank, soil, grass, shrub, and woody vegetation disturbance to a minimum.

Construction activities will be sequenced to minimize riparian and upland disturbance to the greatest extent possible.

#### **ADDITIONAL BMPs AND CONSERVATION MEASURES**

##### ***Erosion Control Measures***

Temporary erosion controls, such as silt fences, certified weed-free straw matting/bales, or fiber wattles will be installed before any significant alteration of the project area, and will be appropriately installed down slope of project activity to provide a riparian buffer area until site rehabilitation is complete. *The Catalog of Stormwater BMP, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, for Idaho Cities and Counties (IDEQ 2005)* will be cited for construction direction.

Short-term stabilization measures may include the use of certified weed-free straw, jute matting, and other similar techniques. Such barriers will be maintained throughout the related construction and removed only when construction is complete and erosion control is assured.

Sediment will be removed from erosion controls once the sediment has reached one-third of the exposed height of the control. If inspections show that the pollution controls are ineffective, crews will be immediately mobilized to repair, replace, or reinforce the controls as necessary. Such barriers will be maintained throughout the related construction and removed only when construction is complete and erosion control is assured. Once the site is stabilized, temporary erosion control measures must be removed.

Adequate materials for emergency erosion control will be maintained on site at all times, including an adequate supply of sediment control materials such as silt fence, straw wattles, and certified weed-free straw bales.

Earth disturbing activities will cease during heavy precipitation events greater than 1.6-inches in 24 hours (i.e. 5-year, 24-hour storm event) in order to minimize resource damage.

Ground-disturbing activities will not occur during wet conditions during or immediately following rain events. Additionally, project work will not occur until ground is sufficiently dry that wheeled equipment does not leave ruts with depth greater than 2-inches.

Sequence or schedule work to reduce exposed bare soil to wind erosion. Water may be used to control dust.

### *Water Quality Monitoring*

The CWA requires States to set water quality standards sufficient to protect designated and existing beneficial uses. Determinations of impairment shall be based on water quality monitoring and surveillance and the information utilized as described in Section 350 (Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA) (58.01.02.350). In Idaho State Water Quality Standards for Aquatic Life (Section 250), the Act states "Turbidity, below any applicable mixing zone set by the Department, shall not exceed background turbidity by more than 50 nephelometric turbidity units (NTUs) instantaneously (at any point in time)" (IDAPA Idaho Code 58.01.02.250.01.e). An appropriate and regularly calibrated turbidity meter, measuring NTUs is required. A sample must be taken prior to anticipated turbidity pulses at a relatively undisturbed area approximately 100 feet upstream from in-water disturbance to establish background turbidity levels. A sample must then be taken every hour at a site approximately 600 feet downstream from the point of discharge, or most appropriate downstream site during in-water construction activities (i.e., installation and removal of work platforms, installation of the piers, and removal of the existing bridge) that generate sediment pulses and be compared against the background measurement. This turbidity monitoring requirement does not apply during equipment crossings.

If maximum turbidity levels in excess of State standards (50 NTUs over background) at the measurement point approximately 600 feet downstream of the discharge point are exceeded during construction, work will be stopped until turbidity levels dissipate, and if necessary additional mitigation measures will be implemented to prevent reoccurrence of exceeding these levels.

### ***Pollution Control Measures***

Project actions will follow all provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and provisions for maintenance of water quality standards as described by Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), and will be in compliance with all applicable state and Federal laws and processes (*e.g.*, Section 402 and 404 CWA permits).

No uncured “green” concrete will be allowed to enter the river. The concrete will be poured through a tube directly into the pilings. The contractor will avoid mixing excess amounts of fresh concrete, grout, or cement mortar on-site. Storage of dry and wet materials associated with concrete will be located a minimum 150-foot upslope of any live water, water feature (including irrigation amenities or domestic water sources), or areas susceptible to stormwater or surface water movement.

### ***Minimization of Equipment Fluid Leaks***

All equipment will be inspected for leaks by the Contracting Officer's Representative before unloading at site.

Equipment will be inspected daily to minimize the possibility of machine lubricants entering the river.

Equipment and vehicles will be stored in the designated staging area or on previously disturbed surfaces such as highway pull-outs and existing roadways where they will not deliver fuel, oil, and other contaminants to the river.

Oil-absorbing floating booms, and other equipment such as petroleum diapers or “pig” mats, pads and absorbent "peanuts" appropriate for the size of the stream will be available on-site during all phases of construction. More pads and certified weed-free straw bales to anchor booms may be necessary. Booms will be placed in a location that facilitates an immediate response to potential petroleum leakage.

### ***Spill Prevention, Containment, and Reporting***

Construction spill prevention and control will be in accordance with *The Catalog of Stormwater BMP, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, for Idaho Cities and Counties* (IDEQ 2005) BMP 8: *Spill prevention and control*.

Refueling tanks must be kept at least 50 feet from the river and will be limited to 75 gallons or less. All vehicle and heavy equipment refueling that takes place within 150 feet of the river will have appropriate spill containment structures and/or absorbent pads in place. If spills occur, contaminated soil will be removed and disposed of at an appropriate facility off-site.

All pumps and generators used within 150 feet of the river will have appropriate spill containment structures and/or absorbent pads in place during use. If spills occur, contaminated soil will be removed and disposed of at an appropriate facility off-site.

All vehicles carrying fuel will have specific equipment and materials needed to contain or clean up any incidental spills at the project site. Equipment and materials will be specific to each project site, and can include spill kits appropriately sized for specific quantities of fuel, shovels,

absorbent pads and material, certified weed-free straw bales, containment structures and liners, and/or booms.

Adequate materials for the emergency control chemical spills will be maintained on site at all times, including an oil-absorbing floating boom and absorbent pads whenever surface water is present.

Federal and Idaho state regulations regarding spills will be followed: Any spills resulting in a detectable sheen on water shall be reported to the EPA National Response Center (1-800-424-8802). Any spills over 25 gallons will be reported to the IDEQ (1-800-632-800), and cleanup will be initiated within 24 hours of the spill.

### ***Materials Disposal***

A port-a-potty will be on site during all phases of construction.

Inert and organic material generated during the excavation and pile drilling operation will be placed in the County landfill or at another approved disposal site.

Any waste liquids generated at the staging areas will be temporarily stored under cover on an impervious surface such as tarpaulins until such time they can be properly transported to and treated at an approved facility.

The contractor shall never dispose of concrete, grout or cement mortar washout into live water, water feature, or area susceptible to storm water or surface water movement. Washout of concrete transit mixers will only occur in designated washout areas where water will flow into temporary pit in gravel area(s) or into stockpiles or aggregate base or sand. The contractor may dig a pit large enough to hold all washout waste. All hardened concrete, grout, or cement mortar waste will be collected and transported to an approved licensed solid waste disposal/processing/recycling site by the contractor.

### **SITE SUPERVISION**

The lead contractor will provide a site supervisor during all construction, restoration, and monitoring activities. The site supervisor will be responsible for compliance with the BMPs and conservation measures, and reporting any occurrences of non-compliance to the appropriate agency.

Deere & Ault will work with the County to provide oversight by personnel with authority to direct operations during critical activities. Critical activities include but are not limited to:

- signing and delineation of the project area, staging areas, etc. with orange construction fence prior to construction,
- construction of the crane pad and access to the pad,
- equipment river crossings,
- placement and removal of temporary piers and work bridge,
- reconstruction of the river bank at the crane pad site,
- restoration of the disturbed sites (with the exception of the County hydroseeding and weed treatment activities,
- and storm events that might result in sediment if operations continue.

The contractors will comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and will comply with all permits and safety provisions as documented for this project.

The contractors will communicate and coordinate with SFO staff throughout the project.

## Rationale

Implementation of the Proposed Action will provide vehicle access across the Salmon River to two private residences and to public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. The Idaho Transportation Department inspected the existing Rattlesnake Bridge in 2013 and gave it a sufficiency rating of 21.2 out of a possible 100 points. Based on this rating, the bridge was deemed structurally deficient due to substandard load carrying capacity. In July 2014, the bridge was barricaded and closed to all vehicles, including emergency response vehicles, propane delivery vehicles and other service vehicles, with the exception of ATVs, motorcycles, and snowmobiles. Lemhi County applied for a BLM right-of-way for a new bridge; the 1976 Federal Land Policy Management Act direction requires federal land management agencies to respond to ROW requests and to grant ROW to qualified applicants.

The No Action alternative would have maintained the current condition, which is adversely impacting the residents and the public wishing to access the west side of the river and would have prevented emergency vehicles, service vehicles and so forth, from accessing the west side of the river. Public lands managed by the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service, including the Dugout Dick recreation site, would also remain difficult to access in this section of the river corridor. Additionally, selection of the No Action alternative would not be responsive to the Applicant.

I have reviewed the EA including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts, and reviewed and thoroughly considered public comments regarding the EA. I have also reviewed the ten Intensity Factors for significance listed in 40 CFR 1508.27 and have determined that the Proposed Action (Alternative B), along with the best management practices, conservation measures, design criteria, implementation monitoring criteria, and post-construction site restoration actions described, does not constitute a major federal action affecting the quality of the human environment or causing unnecessary or undue degradation of the natural environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement has not been prepared.

Implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40CFR 1508.27) provide criteria for determining the significance of effects. ‘Significant’, as used in NEPA, requires consideration of both context and intensity. The bold and italicized text are repeated from 40CFR 1508.27 for completeness and an explanation follows for relevance to the decision.

I have determined that the Proposed Action is in conformance with the existing Lemhi Resource Management Plan dated April 8, 1987, as amended. The Proposed Action is in conformance with the 1987 Lemhi Resource Management Plan (LRMP) objectives to:

- 1) consult with Idaho Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to implementing projects that may affect habitat for threatened and endangered species (pg. 5)<sup>1</sup>;
- 2) restrict some non-recreational uses in SMRAs (pg. 13);
- 3) implement restrictive visual management practices in SMRAs (pg. 13);
- 4) manage the Salmon River as a “recreational” wild and scenic river (pg. 14);
- 5) protect and preserve documented prehistoric and historic sites (pg. 16);
- 6) implement the weed control program on public land to minimize infestations of noxious weeds in cooperation with the County (pg. 5); and
- 7) consider any valid use, occupancy, or development including ROWs, leases, and permits subject to environmental review and possible limitations or stipulations to protect and preserve natural resources (pg. 27).

Additionally, this Decision is in compliance with the following Statutes, Regulations or Other Plans:

- American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978
- Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Bureau of Land Management 6840 Manual on Special Status Species Management 2008
- Clean Air Act of 1970 (amended 1990)
- Clean Water Act of 1972
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR); Title 40; Part 1500 – Council on Environmental Quality 2009
- Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation in Idaho
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, Section 7, as amended
- Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization 2014
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended
- Idaho Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy 2005
- Lemhi Resource Management Plan 1987, as amended
- Interim Strategies for Managing Anadromous Fish-producing Watersheds in Eastern Oregon and Washington, Idaho, and Portions of California (PACFISH) 1995
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA)
- Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation in Idaho
- BLM 6840 Manual on Special Status Species Management 2008
- BLM National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy 2010
- Idaho Sage-grouse Conservation Strategy 2006
- Greater Sage-grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures (IM-2012-043)
- Challis Sage-grouse Local Working Group Plan 2007
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR); Title 40; Part 1500 – Council on Environmental Quality 2009
- Lemhi County Cooperative Weed Management Area Strategic Plan, last updated in 2014

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<sup>1</sup> Coordination and development of conservation measures was initiated with IDFG, USFWS, and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prior to project implementation. Emergency consultation with USFWS and NMFS would be completed after project implementation.

The 1868 Fort Bridger Treaty, between the United States and the Shoshone and Bannock tribes, reserves the Tribes right to hunt, fish, gather, and exercise other traditional uses and practices on unoccupied federal lands. In addition to these rights, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (the Tribes) have the right to graze tribal livestock and cut timber for tribal use on those lands of the original Fort Hall Reservation that were ceded to the federal government under the Agreement of February 5, 1898, ratified by the Act of June 6, 1900. Under this treaty and those agreements, the federal government has a unique trust relationship with the Tribes. BLM has a responsibility and obligation to consider and consult on potential effects to natural resources related to the Tribes treaty rights or cultural use.

### **Appeals Information:**

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 Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office (1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID 83467) within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The Appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed 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.

Please refer to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 4 for appeals information.

If you have any questions regarding this Decision, please contact Lucy Littlejohn (208) 756-5423 or myself at (208) 756-5403.

/s/ Vincent L. Guyer

Acting Salmon Field Office Manager

September 14, 2015

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