

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

**Categorical Exclusion
Welches Spring Exclosure**

PREPARING OFFICE

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Bureau of Land Management
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Categorical Exclusion

Welches Spring Exclosure

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-E020-2015-0044-CX

BLM Office: NV - Tuscarora FO

LLNVE02000

Prepared by: Carol Evans

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: RIPS# 018449

Type of Action (Subject Code): 4120

Location of Proposed Action: The project site is located in Boulder Valley at the base of the Tuscarora Mountains in T34N, R50E, Section 4, NW. Interstate 80 is approximately 14 miles to the south.

Applicant: Dan Gralian, Ranch Manager, Elko Land and Livestock

Description of Proposed Action: The BLM Tuscarora Field Office is proposing to construct an enclosure around a highly disturbed spring source located within the West Welches Pasture of the T Lazy S Allotment. The spring was previously developed and includes a pond, historic trenching and dredging, one or more collection boxes and an old trough and pipeline system. In addition, a two-track road parallels the southern portion of the riparian area. In most years, the spring complex and associated riparian habitat is heavily utilized by livestock since few alternate sources of water are present in the area. Protection of the spring source as well as associated wetlands in the downstream drainage would improve riparian habitat conditions for Sage-Grouse as well as other species of wildlife. The existing trough would remain outside the enclosure in its current location, ensuring water availability for livestock. Fencing would be constructed from pipe rail jack fence which sits on the surface to minimize disturbance. The fencing would include three rails spaced at approximately 18–12–12 inches for a total height of 42 inches. Spacing is consistent with specifications for jack fence developed by the Elko District in 2009 for wildlife friendly fencing. Spacing exceeds minimum BLM specifications for conventional three and four wire fence. The fence perimeter would be 1,284 feet, while approximately 1.7 acres would be included within the enclosure. All fence construction activities would be confined to existing disturbance. Existing water rights held by Elko Land and Livestock would not be impacted by the project. The livestock permittee for the T Lazy S Allotment, Elko Land and Livestock, is supportive of the project.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Name: NV - Elko RMP

Date Approved/Amended: 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); Short and Long-term Management Actions: 2) Construct

20 guzzlers, 40 spring protection facilities, 40 water developments, and 189 miles of fencing to improve habitat and management for wildlife (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) :

N/A

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.

H. Other 9. Construction of small protective enclosures 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.

I considered the possible occurrence of cultural resources on the site and the historic trenching and dredging of the area when reviewing the proposed project design and concept. Pipe rail jack fence which rests on the surface is being proposed to minimize ground disturbance; the footprint of the proposed project would be limited to the existing disturbance as well.

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 7/30/2015

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	Deb McFarlane	No Issue	/s/ EP	7/30/2015
AFM- Renewables	Shawn Servoss	No Issue	/s/ SRS	7/29/2015
Air/Hydrology/Soils	John Daniel	No Issues	/s/ JD	7/29/2015
Archaeology	Lucinda Langston	No Inventory Needed	/s/ LL	7/29/2015
Cultural Resources	Richard Adkins		/s/ RA	7/30/2015
Environmental Justice	Terri Dobis	No Issues	/s/ TKD	7/30/2015
Fisheries	Carol Evans	Positive for Riparian	/s/ CE	7/27/2015
Health and Safety	Deb McFarlane			
Native American Concerns	Richard Adkins	Liberty fencing makes access to spring easier for Tribal concerns.	/s/ RA	7/30/2015
NEPA	Terri Dobis	No Issues	/s/ TKD	7/30/2015
Range Management/ Grazing	John Mitchell	No Issues	/s/ JM	
Recreation	Jason Dobis	No Issues	/s/ JJD	7/29/2015
Weeds	Sam Cisney	See comments below.	/s/ SC	7/30/2015
Wild Horses & Burros	Bruce Thompson	No Issues	/s/ BWCT	7/30/2015
Wildlife	Ken Wilkinson	No Issues	/s/ KW	7/29/2015

Weed Specialist Comments:

- clean all equipment & vehicles (including trailers) of plant parts & weed seeds prior to on-site arrival.