

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

**Finding of No Significant Impact
NDOW Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project**

PREPARING OFFICE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Wells Field Office
3900 E. Idaho St.
Elko, NV 89801
(775) 753-0200



Finding of No Significant Impact

NDOW Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project

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

This page intentionally
left blank

Table of Contents

1. Finding of No Significant Impact	1
1.1. NDOW Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project	1
1.2. Context:	1
1.3. Intensity:	1
1.4. Signed:	3

This page intentionally
left blank

Chapter 1. Finding of No Significant Impact

This page intentionally
left blank

1.1. NDOW Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project

DOI-BLM-NV-E030-2013-0014-EA

Based on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project (DOI-BLM-NV-E030-2013-0014-EA), I have determined that the actions to be implemented, as described and analyzed in the EA, will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required prior to my issuance of a decision to implement the selected actions. The proposed action is in conformance with the approved Wells Resource Management Plan, as amended, and is consistent with applicable plans and policies of county, state, tribal and Federal agencies

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts, as discussed in the EA and summarized below

1.2. Context:

The selected action provides a reliable source of water for wildlife, including big game species such as mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), Rocky Mountain elk (*Cervus canadensis*), pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*), and other wildlife species by maintaining previously developed spring sources and enhancing water access. The need for action arises from inventories completed which showed negative impacts from excess wild horses on seeps and springs in the Goshute and Toano ranges. These impacts have resulted in water being a limiting factor for wildlife habitat. Maintenance of old developments and installation of reliable water sources would aid in the distribution of wildlife across the Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), thereby improving wildlife habitat within the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). The actions will allow springs and riparian areas to recover from over use by excess wild horses in the Toano and Goshute Ranges. The area is located approximately 15 miles southwest of Wendover, Nevada.

1.3. Intensity:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The analysis identifies both beneficial and adverse impacts including impacts to uplands, riparian zones, wild horses, wildlife, and wildlife habitats of concern that may arise through implementation of the selected actions. Measures are incorporated to avoid or reduce adverse impacts.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

There should be little to no effect on public health or safety from implementation of the selected actions.

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.

The selected actions incorporate procedures for the protection of historic and cultural resources in the project area. No park lands, special recreation management areas, prime or unique farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas exist in the affected area. The selected action does include portions of the Bluebell and Goshute Mountain WSAs

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be controversial.

The effects of the selected actions are well known and not highly controversial. As part of ongoing maintenance BLM has maintained troughs and spring developments in the Bluebell and Goshute WSAs. BLM/NDOW would expound on maintenance to other springs within the WSAs.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The selected actions would have effects that are predictable and well known. The selected actions are subject to applicable procedures to prevent undue environmental harm and risk.

6. The 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.

This action does not make any commitments for BLM approval or set a precedent for any future actions. Future project proposals would continue to be subject to further consideration in accordance with BLM grazing and NEPA regulations and policies.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

All resources are evaluated for cumulative impacts in the EA, and no significant impacts are identified. As a standard procedure, cumulative impacts would continue to be subject to further review as projects are proposed, and on a site-specific basis.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

The selected actions incorporate standard operating procedures to identify and protect significant cultural resources from adverse effects.

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 ESA of 1973.

No listed species are known to occur within the project area, and no critical habitats for any species have been designated in the area.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) is in conformance with considerations shown in the December 2011 BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043 regarding the “Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management and Procedures” and the 2015 Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment.

The NDOW Bluebell and Goshute Peak Water Project does not fall within the East Valley Sage-Grouse Population Management Unit (PMU) in Northeastern Nevada considered under

the 2001 Governor's Nevada Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy and 2004 Elko County Sagebrush Ecosystem Conservation Strategy by the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group Inc. (NNSG).

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

The selected actions have been developed and reviewed in coordination with applicable agencies to ensure its consistency with plans and requirements of other Federal, State and local agencies.

1.4. Signed:

/s/ Jill C. Silvey 3/2/2016

Jill C. Silvey
Elko District Manager

[Date]