

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

**Categorical Exclusion
Cottonwood Canyon Seep and Meadow Exclosures**

PREPARING OFFICE

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Categorical Exclusion

Cottonwood Canyon Seep and Meadow Exclosures

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

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Chapter 1. Categorical Exclusion Worksheet

Cottonwood Canyon Seep and Meadow Exclosures

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A. Background

NEPA ID No: DOI-BLM-NV-E030-2015-0019-CX

BLM Office: NV – Wells Field Office – LLNVE02000

Prepared by: Daniel Zvirzdin

Type of Action (Subject Code): 4120

Lease/Serial/Case File Number: 018542

Location of Proposed Action: Currie Allotment; MDM, T. 28 N, R. 63E Sec. 32

Description of Proposed Action: The BLM proposes in this Categorical Exclusion (CX) to construct two new livestock enclosures in the Cottonwood Canyon pasture of the Currie Allotment. The enclosures would include approximately one linear mile of fence, and would encompass approximately 9 acres of seeps and springs and their associated riparian and upland habitats (see Map 1). All fences would be built to BLM standards to be compatible with wildlife and would be constructed using a mix of wood and steel posts and steel pipe. The project area has been surveyed for cultural resources; areas that would potentially involve ground disturbance during project installation are lacking cultural resources. The Currie Allotment is located approximately 60 miles southeast of Elko, Nevada, and is within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Wells Field Office. The Cottonwood Canyon pasture encompasses 16,958 acres, 16,500 of which are administered by the BLM. The pasture is comprised of an isolated mid-elevation plateau and its associated drainage's in the Cherry Creek Range, a few miles northwest of Currie, NV in Elko County.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions(s)::

Wells RMP, approved 7/16/1985

Livestock Grazing Management: 6. Initiate cost effective rangeland improvements that will help improve the condition of the lands for livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, wild horses and watershed protection.

Wells RMP Elk Amendment, approved 2/14/1993

Management Objective: Manage public lands in the WRA on a sustained yield basis to support elk populations at a level consistent with other resource needs, while minimizing impacts to adjacent private and public land resources.

Management Determinations: 12. Structural and non-structural rangeland improvement projects to improve distribution and forage quality and quantity for both mule deer and livestock will have priority over elk management objectives.

C. Compliance with NEPA:

This proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the NEPA in accordance with the Departmental NEPA Manual (516 DM). The applicable CX is 516 DM 11.5, J (9), which allows for the following: “Construction of small protective enclosures, including those to protect reservoirs and springs and those to protect small study areas.”

This categorical exclusion is appropriate as none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM were found to apply in a review of the Proposed Action.

D. Conclusion and Signature

Based upon this review of the Cottonwood Canyon Seep and Meadow Exlosures CX, 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/ 08/28/2015

Melanie A. Peterson
Field Manager, Wells 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

Cottonwood Canyon Seep and Meadow Exclosures

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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	Bryan Mulligan	No concerns	GWA for BM	8/27/15
AFM- Renewables	Melanie Mirati	No concerns	MM	8/14/15
Air/Hydrology/Soils	Beth Wood	No concerns	BW	8/12/15
Archaeology	Lucinda Langston	Inventory complete — no adverse effects	LL	8/12/15
Cultural Resources	Lucinda Langston	Inventory complete — no adverse effects	LL	8/12/15
Fisheries	Beth Wood	No concerns	BW	8/12/15
Geologist/Hazmat	Harley Gordon	No concerns	HG	8/7/15
Native American Concerns	Rich Adkins	No concerns	RA	8/14/15
NEPA	Terri Dobis	No concerns	TD	8/14/15
Range Management/ Grazing	Daniel Zvirzdin	No concerns	DZ	8/7/15
Lands/Realty	Virginia Morales	No concerns	VM	8/7/15
Recreation	Kristine Dedolph	No concerns	KD	8/7/15
Weeds	Sam Cisney	Ensure all vehicles/equip. are free of noxious/invasive weed/seed parts before entering public land	SC	8/10/15
Wild Horses & Burros	Bruce Thompson	No concerns	BT	8/10/15
Wildlife	Cam Collins	Install flight diverters on any wire fence	CC	8/10/15