

## Categorical Exclusion Documentation

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District  
Border Field Office  
1103 North Fancher Road  
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

### A. Background

*BLM Office:* Border Field Office

*Lease/Serial/Case File No.:* OR-135-15-010

*NEPA Log Number:* DOI-BLM-OR-135-2015-0011-CX

*Proposed Action Title:* Spokane Dog Training Club Special Recreation Permit (SRP)

*Location of Proposed Action:* Fishtrap / Lincoln County, Spokane County, WA. Parts of T21N, R39E, Sec. 1,2,7,8,9,10,11,16,17,18; and T22N, R39E, Sec. 24,25,35,36; and T22N, R40E, Sec. 19,30, Willamette Meridian (see attached map)

*Proposed Action:*

BLM is proposing to issue a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) to the Spokane Dog Training Club. The Club submitted an application to BLM requesting to renew an authorization to conduct dog trials on BLM managed land in the Fishtrap Lake Recreation Area. BLM would issue a 5-year Special Recreation Permit (FY2016 - FY2020) authorization to the Spokane Dog Training Club for a walking dog trial that would be held twice annually (spring and fall). The trial would be for any breed, to attempt to qualify dogs for American Kennel Club (AKC) qualification of "Tracking Dog" or "Tracking Dog Excellent", utilizing courses marked within the same general use area (although slightly expanded via this application), and in the same manner as they have done for more than the last 15 years. The fall event usually would be held the last weekend in October, and the spring event usually would be held the first or second weekend in May. The first year's events would occur on October 24-25, 2015 and April 30 - May 1, 2016; the dates include time for set up activities, the event, a potluck meal, and clean-up activities. The events usually would include 5 to 12 participants (exhibitors) with their dog, approximately 12 club member volunteers, 2 judges, and perhaps 10 additional spectators. The staging area for the event would not exceed 3 acres.

- During the event, dogs individually follow a flagged track that has small objects along the track. To qualify, the dogs must indicate each item along the way.
- The specific location used for the trial, selected from within the broad scale mapped allowed use area (event boundaries), may vary from year to year depending on various considerations including vegetation conditions, presence of livestock, and/or proximity of other user activities (permitted or otherwise). The two main alternative locations would be the Airport Pasture (preferred), or in the vicinity of Folsom Farm.



- No one will be tent camping overnight for the event, although one or two motor homes and their owners sleeping in them stay over Saturday night after laying out the tracks.
- Ten to fifteen people will come the first day to plot and lay out (flag and stake) tracks, with small articles left along the track to be found by the dog that is running the track. A separate track approximately 1/2 mile long will be plotted for each dog. Any course marking would be done via a walk through rather than by vehicle. On the second day, the day of the event, typically only judges, the track layer, and the dog and handler will walk their designated track. Spectators generally observe from a secondary road.
- A potluck lunch would be held after the event in the vicinity of the parking area (south end of Airport Pasture, or Folsom Farm), with one or two motor homes present.
- Dogs are kept on a leash at all times, even when following the flagged course for the event, and would be restrained by their handler from harassing wildlife and any grazing livestock in the area.
- Water and bowls will be brought to the site to water the dogs.
- If the event is staged at the Airport Pasture, one or two motor homes would provide the needed sanitary facilities. If Folsom Farm area is used, they would use the BLM vault outhouse.
- After the event, organizers will pick up and remove garbage, and clean up the courses and parking area.
- Vehicles will be parked along the edge of secondary roads, in pull-off areas, or in BLM parking lots, and will be parked in a manner to ensure that roads and trails will be left open for use by other members of the public, and with little impact to roadside vegetation. Otherwise, vehicles may be driven only on BLM roads.
- A first aid kit will be on site, as well as cell phones to call for help in the case of an emergency.
- Any year within the permit period, areas may be subject to closure to avoid impacts to sensitive species of plants or animals, or to protect cultural or archeological resources. Any subsequent course alterations would be made via consultation with Spokane BLM.
- Any gates opened must be immediately closed if grazing livestock are present, and livestock must not be allowed to escape through the gate. If no livestock are present, opened gates must be closed at the end of the event.
- Vehicle access through any BLM locked gate is by advance permission prior to each of the two events annually. After passing through any locked gate, it must be re-locked immediately. BLM will provide any lock combination(s) to the permit authorized representative, but requests that he/she does NOT share that combination with anyone else within or outside his/her club. If the permit authorized representative desires to share a lock combination with his/her club members for use during the permit authorization period, he/she must pick up from the BLM office a spare, color-identified combination lock, which would use a non-standard combination, and which must be returned following each event.
- Because BLM SRP policy is designed to facilitate only those activities directly related to set-up for the event, the event, and the following clean-up, BLM is unable to authorize routine vehicle access for club members through the locked gate to the Airport Pasture other than for the stated purposes and timeframe.

- If cultural resources are discovered on the route or in parking/staging areas, participants will reroute the trail and/or avoid the area and a BLM archaeologist will be notified immediately.
- If Threatened, Endangered, or Sensitive plant species are discovered during project implementation site specific measures would be taken to maintain population viability.

**B. Land Use Plan Conformance**

*Land Use Plan Name:* Spokane Resource Management Plan

*Date Approved/Amended:* Approved 1987/Amended 1992

The proposed action is in conformance with the Spokane RMP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): Chapter 2; General Management Objectives: 7. Manage public lands to keep access routes open for a variety of recreational opportunities/experiences, including both motorized and nonmotorized recreation activities.

**C. Compliance with NEPA**

The proposed action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The proposed action is a kind of action that has been determined to fit within a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have significant effect on the human environment. The proposed action falls within category 516 DM 11.9H (1) Issuance of Special Recreation Permits for day use or overnight use up to 14 consecutive nights; that impacts no more than 3 staging area acres; and/or for recreational travel along roads, trails, or in areas authorized in a land use plan. This CX cannot be used for commercial boating permits along Wild and Scenic Rivers. This CX cannot be used for the establishment or issuance of Special Recreation Permits for “Special Area” management (43 CFR 2932.5).

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 43 CFR 46.215 apply, as shown in the following table:

**Categorical Exclusions - Extraordinary Circumstances Documentation**

THE PROPOSED CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ACTION WILL:	YES	NO
<b>2.1</b> Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The dog trial staging area, courses, and event area, within the Fishtrap Management Area, are located in a remote rural area, and the proposed action would not have an impact on public health or safety because its activities are non-threatening to any nearby populations, or concurrent or future visitors.		
<b>2.2</b> Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> None of the aforementioned resources are proximate nor would be at risk due to the activities at the Fishtrap Management Area, with the exception of Folsom Farm historic site which would potentially be proximate to a potluck lunch that poses no risks to that resource. Consequently, none of these resources would be affected.		

2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The issuance of this SRP would not have any highly controversial environmental effects. A proposal is highly controversial when there is a substantial dispute about the size, nature, or effect of the Federal action rather than the existence of opposition to a use. Based on interdisciplinary review, the effects of the proposed activities are well understood. Other similar SRPs have been in place for more than 10 years and issuance of this permit does not involve any unresolved conflicts concerning alternative resource uses.		
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The effects of issuing similar permits have not been demonstrated to have highly uncertain or potentially significant effects, or involve unique or unknown risks, and none are expected with this proposal. Based on interdisciplinary review, proposed activities would not have uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects or involve unknown risks.		
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> No precedence is being established by issuing a SRP to allow the proposed activities. Issuing SRPs is a customary and routine procedure, and as noted above, similar permits in this area have been issued in excess of 10 years. All future requests would be independently reviewed and evaluated, and would be authorized under separate decisions that would consider the site-specific circumstances.		
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The issuance of this permit is not tied to any other actions, and as such, is not related to other actions with cumulatively significant environmental effects.		
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The BLM has met its Section 106 responsibilities by conducting tribal and SHPO consultation, and has determined that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed action. If any objects of cultural value (e.g. historic or prehistoric ruins, graves, fossils, or artifacts) are found during the implementation of the proposed action, operations would be suspended until the site has been evaluated to determine the appropriate mitigation action.		
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, as an Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The project area has occurrences of Spaulding's Catchfly ( <i>Silene spaldingii</i> ) and suitable habitat is present within the project area; however, the timing of the event would cause negligible impacts to the habitat and would not affect Spaulding's Catchfly. In the project area Spaulding's Catchfly typically starts to bolt mid to late May and goes to seed from mid-July through September. The airport pasture does not have known occurrences or habitat for Spaulding's Catchfly. The project does not have habitat for water howellia ( <i>Howellia aquatillis</i> ) and none is suspected; therefore no effects to water howellii are expected. Due to the limited impact on the ground and the timing, the project would have no effect on Endangered or Threatened Plant Species. Based on habitat and range, no threatened or endangered wildlife species have the potential to occur in the project area.		
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
<b>Rationale:</b> The proposed action does not threaten to violate Federal, State, local, or Tribal laws or other requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. The proposed activities would occur within the Fishtrap Lake Recreation Area and would utilize existing roads and trails.		
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 2898).		X
<b>Rationale:</b> Implementing the proposed action would not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on low income or minority populations. Other uses of the area would continue during the dog trial events.		

<b>2.11</b> 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).		X
<b>Rationale:</b> There are no identified sacred, ceremonial or religious Indian sites in the analysis area. Therefore, there would be no effects.		
<b>2.12</b> Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X
<b>Rationale:</b> Vehicles will remain restricted to roads; no other activities pose a threat of introduction or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species.		

#### D. Signature

/s/ Lindsey Babcock

10/7/2015

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Lindsey Babcock  
Field Manager  
Border Field Office

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Date

#### E. Contact Person & Reviewers

For additional information concerning this Categorical Review, contact:

Steve A. Smith,  
Spokane District Office, Bureau of Land Management  
1103 North Fancher Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99212

Reviewers	Resource	Initials	Date
Jason Lowe	Wildlife and Fisheries	JL	9/4/15
Kim Frymire	Botany	KF	9/9/2015
Anne Boyd	Archaeology	AB	9/4/2015
Steve Smith	Recreation /Team Leader	SAS	8/4/15
Katherine Farrell	NEPA Planner	KF	8/13/2015