

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

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**DOI-BLM-MT-M020-2016-0001-EA  
NORTH VALLEY ACCESS ROAD EA**

**BACKGROUND**

Providing access to public lands is an important mission of the BLM. Establishing trails to provide access to public lands that avoid privately owned property is sometimes necessary and is in keeping with the BLM's mission. The method of establishing new trail outlined in the EA has minimal ground disturbance and resource impact and would fulfill the requirements of minimal impacts outlined in VRM Class II descriptions.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

On the basis of the information contained in the EA (DOI-BLM-MT-M020-2016-0001-EA), and all other information available to me, it is my determination that:

- (1) The implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives with the applied stipulations will not have significant environmental impacts.
- (2) The Proposed Action is in conformance with the Record of Decision for the HiLine District Resource Management Plan.
- (3) The Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment.
- (4) The Proposed Action will have a significant benefit for public land users.

Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

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

**Context**

The proposed action would occur in northern Valley County. The HiLine District RMP anticipated that access issues would occur. The proposed action is in accordance with the HiLine District RMP. The proposed action is a site-specific action directly involving less than the 3% anthropogenic disturbance cap limit of land which lies within Priority Sage Grouse Habitat, which by itself does not have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

The proposed action is to establish a total of approximately 4 miles of new two-track trail for public motorized vehicle access in North Valley County, MT, if historic public access through

private lands is denied. The trail is needed to bypass private property, where trails could potentially be closed, and ensure public access to approximately 50 sections of public land.

## **Intensity**

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the implementation of the proposed action relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

**1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.** The EA considered both potential beneficial and adverse effects. None of the effects are beyond the range of effects analyzed in the HiLine District RMP.

**2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.** The proposed action would have a positive effect on public health and safety.

**3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.** There are no known historic or cultural resource sites that would be affected by the proposed action. A pre-project cultural resource survey was conducted and did not result in the discovery of significant cultural properties within the footprint of the proposed projects. There are no parks, prime farmlands, WSAs, ACECs, or wild and scenic rivers in the planning area

**4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.** The effects of the actions planned under the proposed action are similar to other projects implemented within the scope of the HiLine District RMP. "Highly controversial" in the context of 40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(4), refers to substantial disagreement within the scientific community about the environmental effects of a proposed action. No unique or appreciable scientific controversy has been identified regarding the effects of the proposed action.

**5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.** The analysis has not shown that there would not be any unique or unknown risks to the human environment.

**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 project neither establishes a precedent nor represents a decision in principle about future actions. The proposed action is consistent with actions appropriate for the area as designated by the HiLine District RMP.

**7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.** The environmental analysis did not reveal any cumulative effects beyond those already analyzed in the EISs which accompanied the HiLine District RMP.

**8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.** The proposed action

will not adversely affect any district, site, highway, structure, or object listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

**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 Endangered Species Act of 1973.*** There are no threatened or endangered species or habitat in the area of the proposed action. There are no threatened or endangered plant species or habitat in the area.

**10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*** The proposed action does not threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law.

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Date