

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District
Sierra Front Field Office
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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Hungry Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area¹ (Moon Rocks)
Public Health & Safety Improvements

DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2021-0009-EA

Introduction

The Proposed Action (Alternative A) will establish Moon Rocks (~19,050 acres) as a developed recreation site per the standards in 43 CFR 8360. The Project area is located west of State Route 445 and the Winnemucca Ranch Road intersection, approximately 15 miles north of Reno, in unincorporated Washoe County, Nevada. The project area will be defined by public lands in T. 23 N., R. 20 E., Sections 15-22, 27-34; T. 22 N., R. 20 E., Sections 3-10, 15-22; T. 23 N., R. 19 E. Sections 14-15, 23-24, 36; T. 22 N., R. 19 E. and include segments of Bedell Flat and Antelope roads.

Improvements will include public outreach including kiosks and additional signage; barriers for resource protection to limit uncontrolled, user created expansion of camping areas and OHV routes; upgrade roads and provide for route maintenance with traffic control barriers, establish control access points; develop supplemental rules to target specific public health and safety and resource concerns; define camp areas and install restrooms; provide dumpsters for waste disposal; establish speed limits and install signs.

The purpose of this project is to facilitate improvements within the Moon Rocks project area and main access roads to address immediate public health and safety related concerns, and to manage environmental impacts caused by an observed increase in visitation to the area. Trail maintenance is also identified as a need for public safety and protection of natural resources. The Proposed Action will address public health and safety issues, increase regulatory oversight, provide adequate on-site security and safety of government agency personnel and property, and reduce impacts to natural resources.

¹ Also known as Nekedakwae, North Hungry Valley Recreation Area, and North Reno Recreation Area

Focused management is needed to provide for public health and safety and to limit impacts and prevent future degradation of resource values and improved visitor experience. The need for the action is to minimize public health and safety issues associated with sanitation, vehicle speeds and related visibility issues on main roads and camp areas and impacts to vegetation and soils. The action is needed to define the area's physical site boundary and primary public access points, establish additional regulatory compliance, provide adequate public health and safety infrastructure, and provide for the safety and security of support personnel and property.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan 2001 (CRMP), the Final Southern Washoe County Urban Interface Plan Amendment 2001 and the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment 2015 (ARMPA).

Finding of No Significant Impact Determination

Based upon a review of the environmental assessment (incorporated by reference Attachment 1), and the supporting documents, I have determined that the Hungry Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area (Moon Rocks) Public Health & Safety Improvements is not a major federal action and will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance as defined at 40 CFR 1501.3. An environmental impact statement is not needed. This finding is based on potentially affected environment and degree factors of the project, as described below.

Potentially Affected Environment (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(1))

A BLM Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) consisting of National Environmental Policy Act and Resource Specialists, contributed to this EA. The IDT used various sources of information to prepare the EA, including existing data inventories, and data collected during field visits. The potential impacts to the resources reviewed in Table 1 of the EA were evaluated by the IDT to determine if detailed analysis will be necessary. Through this process, the IDT determined there were resources or issues that warranted a detailed analysis in this EA.

Issues carried forward for analysis:

- Recreation
- Threatened or Endangered Species; Proposed and Candidate Species (animals)
- Sensitive Species (animals)
- Migratory Birds
- Threatened or Endangered Species; Proposed and Candidate Species (plants)
- Sensitive Species (plants)
- Noxious Weeds/Invasive, Nonnative Species
- Human Health and Safety
- Soils
- Water Quality (Surface/Ground)

Degree of Effects (40 CFR 1501.3(b)(2))

- Short- and long-term effects of the selected alternative

Short-term effects to air quality, noise, and public safety will occur during construction activities so will be temporary and sporadic, and only last approximately two months. No long-term negative effects are anticipated to occur from the Proposed Action. Long-term positive effects will result from the upgraded toilet, and trash collection facilities, improved safety with signage and speed limits in congested areas.

- Beneficial and adverse effects of the selected alternative

There are no adverse impacts associated with the proposed action. Impacts associated with the installation of facility improvements at the recreation sites are identified and discussed in the Environmental Consequences section of the EA. The proposed action will not have any significant adverse impacts as described in the EA. It is expected that the installations of toilet facilities under Alternative A will have a significant beneficial reduction in human waste around the project areas. Installation of kiosks and signage will decrease user conflicts, conflicts with adjoining landowners, overall improving visitor experience.

- Whether and to what extent the selected alternative will affect public health and safety

The proposed action is to provide for safety for the general public and will not adversely affect and will likely have a beneficial effect on public health and safety. Adherence to applicable federal, state, and local regulations will ensure that no soil, or ground water contamination will occur with any adverse effect to worker health and safety or to surrounding communities. The purpose of the proposed action is to allow for the construction of facility improvements to improve conditions and minimize risk to visitor's health and safety.

- Whether effects of the selected alternative would violate Federal, State, Tribal or local law protecting the environment.

The Project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. Federal, State, and local interests were given the opportunity to participate in the environmental analysis process through a public scoping period conducted from 12/22/2020 to 1/21/2021. A 30-Day Comment Period was conducted from March 9 to April 8, 2021.

Based upon the review of the test for significance and the environmental analyses conducted, I have determined that the actions analyzed in the EA are not major federal actions and that their implementation will not significantly affect the quality of the

human environment. Accordingly, I have determined that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary for this proposal.

Signature

 _____ 04/15/2021 _____

Ken Collum
District Manager
Carson City District

Date

Attachments

- 1) Hungry Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area (Moon Rocks) Public Health & Safety Improvements Final EA