U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Humboldt River Field Office

April 2023

Washburn Wells

Preliminary Environmental Assessment

DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2022-0024-EA

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

BLM/NV/WN/EA/22-1+1792

DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2022-0024-EA

1.0 Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Identifying Information

1.1.1 Title and EA Number

Washburn Wells
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1.1.2 Location of Proposed Action

The proposed project would be in Township 47 North, Range 36 East, section 11 and Township 47 North, Range 35 section 22, Denio and Quinn River Valley, Humboldt County, Nevada.

1.1.3 Name and Location of Preparing Office:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Humboldt River Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard
Winnemucca, NV 89445

1.1.4 Subject function code, lease, serial or case file number

4130 Rangeland Management

1.1.5 Applicant Name

Steve and Amorita Maher

1.2 Implementing Regulations

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been developed in accordance with the revised Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations effective September 14, 2020.

1.2.1 Regulatory Authorities

The Proposed Action is consistent with the following Federal, State, and local plans to the maximum extent possible.

- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
- Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. §§ 1531-1544)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 703-712)
- National Historic Preservation Act 54 U.S.C. 300101

1.3 Background

The Washburn grazing allotment is located in the Montana Mountains west of the town of McDermitt, Humboldt County, Nevada. It is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Winnemucca District, Humboldt River Field Office. The allotment is 33,990 acres in a landscape characterized by sagebrush-covered mountain slopes. It is managed for 1,465 Animal

Unit Months (AUMs) grazing eight pastures in a 3-year rest rotation from January to the end of August.

There are currently two reliable, year-round water sources on the allotment: McDermitt Creek and Mud Spring. There are also seasonal water sources: Rock Spring, Washburn Creek, Little Washburn Creek, Riser Creek, and several unnamed springs and seeps. These water sources are dependent on rain and snowfall and cannot be reliably used by cattle, especially in late summer when they tend to dry up. As a result, the distribution of cattle on the allotment becomes concentrated at the few reliable water sources, which has degraded the rangeland and riparian conditions in these areas. The lack of reliable water sources has also made it difficult to distribute cattle elsewhere in the allotment.

1.4 Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of this action is to improve the rangeland and riparian conditions within the Washburn Allotment by providing additional water sources for livestock. The BLM's purpose in considering approval of the application is to manage livestock grazing on public lands to meet standards of multiple use, sustained yield, watershed function and health, and rangeland health.

The need for the project is to improve livestock distribution to an optimum level over the entire allotment and fulfill BLM's responsibility under FLPMA to allow for legitimate uses of public lands while preventing unnecessary degradation.

1.5 Decision to be Made

This EA analyzes the Proposed Action Alternative to install wells, storage tank, pipelines, exclosure fences, and water troughs within the Washburn Allotment and a No Action Alternative. The BLM authorized officer would decide whether to deny or authorize the Proposed Action and under what conditions.

1.6 Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues

A BLM interdisciplinary team (IDT) was assigned for this project in November 2021 by the Winnemucca District NEPA Committee. Resource specialists in the fields of cultural resources, paleontology, lands and realty, recreation, rangeland management, minerals, invasive species, vegetation, hydrology, soils, wildlife (including Threatened and Endangered species and special status species), fisheries, environmental justice, and socio-economics were assigned to review the project

In July 2022, the BLM determined that baseline studies had been completed and that an environmental assessment (EA) was required to disclose the environmental effects of the project.

1.6.1 Issues

The CEQ regulations under 40 CFR 1500 and the BLM NEPA Handbook require that the BLM identify significant issues for analysis and focus only on those issues. For this project, the issues identified by the IDT and carried forward for analysis include those elements of Alternative A that would cause or have the potential to cause significant environmental effects.
Two issues were identified for the project:

- How would the proposed range improvements affect streams and springs?
- How would the proposed action affect the range conditions within the allotment?

See Chapter 3 for the analysis of these issues.

2.0 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 Alternative A: Proposed Action

The proposed action would be located approximately 15 miles west of McDermitt and 100 miles north of Winnemucca within Township 47 North, Range 36 East, section 11 and Township 47 North, Range 35 section 22, Humboldt County, Nevada.

The Washburn Allotment permittees, Steve and Amorita Maher, propose to construct livestock wells, one within the Riser Creek Pasture and one within the Washburn Seeding Pasture. The wells would supply water to seven 600-gallon troughs at separate times of the year and one 5,000-gallon storage tank via buried pipeline. In addition, a riparian exclosure would be constructed at Mud Springs to allow for recovery of riparian vegetation. The exclosure would protect the spring, which has been over utilized in past years by livestock.

The total amount of temporary disturbance from the Proposed Action would be approximately 42.6 acres (including pipeline and troughs installation). Of that, the total amount of permanent disturbance would be approximately 6.75 acres.

Wells and Pipelines

The wells would be drilled with a mud rotatory drill rig, which would access the well pads using existing roads. The drill pads would each be 70 feet by 70 feet to allow for the drill to maneuver into position. The wells would be completed in compliance with the Nevada Department of Water Resources (NDWR) underground water and well drilling requirements (Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 534 et seq). Construction of the wells would require up to two weeks at each location and would occur outside of migratory bird nesting season (March 1 to August 31).

Two wells would be drilled near Rock Springs ("Upper Rock Springs Well" and "Lower Rock Springs Well") in order to determine the location of groundwater. Depending on the results of drilling, one of the two wells would be selected for placement of a pipeline, 5,000-gallon storage tank, and six 600-gallon water troughs. The well that is not selected would be abandoned following State of Nevada requirements for well abandonment.

The Upper Rock Springs Well would be located along the road close to the pasture fence between Rock Springs and Riser Creek. This well would be drilled first as it is the preferred location due to the shorter distances between the well, the storage tank, and the troughs. This location would also result in less ground disturbance because the pipeline would run along the road to the storage tank. If drilling at the Upper Rock Spring Well is unsuccessful, the Lower Rock Spring Well would be drilled and the Upper Rock Spring Well would be abandoned following the requirements for well abandonment per state law. If drilling at the Upper Rock Spring Well is successful, the Lower Rock Spring Well would not be drilled. The Lower Rock Springs Well would be located

approximately 0.75 miles from Rock Springs in an old branding corral located on the west side of the allotment.

Water from the selected well at Rock Springs, would be piped to the storage tank and then to the troughs through 1.5-inch PVC pipe laid approximately 12 to 24 inches below the ground surface. A maximum of 3 miles (depending on well selection) of 1.5-inch PVC pipe would connect the wells to the troughs. The pipe would be installed adjacent to existing roads and would be installed with a bulldozer with a ripper shank and spool attachment. A D3 bulldozer with the trench attachment would dig the trench for the pipeline and lay pipeline at the same time.

The West Mentaberry Well would be located on the east side of the allotment where the West Mentaberry, Washburn Seeding, and East Mentaberry pastures meet. A corral would be constructed at this location to control access to the trough. The corral would be 0.25 acres and would be constructed of BLM-approved 4-strand barbed wire and include three gates, one for each pasture. Per the 2010 Final Multiple Use Decision (BLM FMUD 2010) the grazing rotation allows the permittee to graze from one of the three pastures at a time; the gates would allow the permittee to control access to the trough depending on which pasture is in use. The West Mentaberry well would feed one 600-gallon trough, which would be located within the proposed corral.

Troughs

A total of seven 600-gallon troughs would be installed – three in the Rock Spring Pasture one in Long Ridge Pasture, two in Riser Creek Pasture and one in the Mud Spring Pasture. Installation of the troughs would require surface preparation (blading) to create a level surface. Troughs would be plumbed with float valves to conserve water and also prevent overflow and erosion. Valves would be installed at each branch of the pipeline as well as at each trough. Wildlife escape ramps would be installed at each trough. Construction of the pipelines and troughs would occur outside of migratory bird nesting season (March 1 to August 31).

Riparian Exclosures

A riparian exclosure would be constructed at Mud Spring to prevent access by livestock and allow the riparian area to recover. The exclosure would be constructed according to BLM Handbook 1741-1 and installed to BLM standards. The total exclosure area would be approximately 2.3 acres. It would run 0.35 miles down the north side and south of the riparian area from the allotment boundary fence and be 50 feet wide.

At Rock Springs, there are existing corrals that enclose the springs. The corrals would be wired closed to restrict livestock access and allow the spring and riparian area to recover.

Water Rights

The permittee would file for two livestock well permits with the Nevada Division of Water Resources, one permit for each proposed well. Water rights for construction activities may also need to be included with the well permits (e.g., dust abatement, fire suppression, water to operate the drills). Final project approval would be determined by acquisition of the necessary water rights.

Operation and Maintenance
The pipeline and troughs would be maintained by the permittee and be monitored by the HRFO to ensure the system is in a condition adequate for the distribution and maintenance of livestock. Maintenance of the troughs and pipeline may include but is not limited to cleaning vegetation or other matter out the trough, repairing leaks/breaks/clogs, ensuring wildlife escape ramps are in working order, and backfilling if any erosion occurred. The pipeline would be accessed in the same fashion as described in the installation of the pipeline for the occasional maintenance activities.

Operation of the troughs would be managed for the distribution of livestock for rangeland health and would be operated from March to September when water is scarce on the allotment. Water would be turned on/off at the troughs, as necessary, to distribute livestock and avoid degradation of nearby vegetation and soil. It is anticipated that one to three troughs may be used simultaneously, and trough use by livestock rotated, based on the objectives above and current conditions. Utilization rates will comply with the grazing permit.

Table 1. Summary of Project Features

Project Feature	Pasture	UTM	Disturbance Area (acres)
Trough	Rock Springs	4643795N 410879E	3.0
Trough	Rock Springs	4643692N 410886E	
Trough	Rock Springs	4644258N 412285E	
Trough	Riser Creek	4644358N 412303E	
Trough	Riser Creek	4644762N 412623E	
Trough	Long Ridge	4645553N 413512E	
Storage tank	Riser Creek	4644386N 412768E	0.25
Lower Rock Springs Livestock well	Riser Creek	4644130N 412756E	0.25
Upper Rock Springs Livestock well	Riser Creek	4644369N 412734E	0.25
Well and Trough	Washburn Seeding	4645942N 424564E	3.0
Buried water pipeline	Riser Creek, Rock Springs and Long Ridge	Multiple	20.5
Exclosure Fence	Mud Spring	Multiple	1.5
Total Disturbance			44.1

Hazardous Materials

Solid and hazardous materials utilized within the Project Area would include diesel fuel, gasoline, and lubricating grease. Approximately 400 gallons of diesel fuel and gasoline would be stored in fuel delivery systems on vehicles and drill rigs. Approximately 100 pounds of lubricating grease would be stored on the drill rigs or transported by drill trucks. All containers of hazardous substances would be labeled and handled in accordance with Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) In the event hazardous or regulated materials were spilled, measures would be taken to control the spill, and the BLM and Nevada Department of Environmental Protection would be notified as required. Any hazardous substance spills would be immediately cleaned-up and any resulting waste (e.g., oil, noxious fluids, chemicals, or contaminated materials) transferred off site in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Contract drill crews would maintain spill kits on site for use in case of a spill.

2.1.1 Environmental Protection Measures

The following section provides a description of the environmental protection measures that have been incorporated into the proposed project to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts from construction and operation of the facility.

- Pre-construction wildlife clearance surveys would be performed for any ground disturbing activities between March 1 and August 31 in coordination with the BLM.
- Storage and disposal of hazardous materials would comply with State law.
- Drill sites and troughs would not be constructed within 500 feet of any spring or riparian scrub community. Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be followed for sediment control and would be utilized during construction, operation, and reclamation to avoid negative impacts to springs or riparian scrub communities resulting from surface disturbance activities. BMPs would include the use of one or all of the following: sediment traps or sumps; straw bales (certified weed-free); silt fences; the distribution of clarified water from sediment traps through perforated pipes in order to minimize erosion from channeling; and the use of common, centrally located sediment sumps. If needed, the use of a sand separation system would be used in conjunction with the sediment sumps/traps so that the recirculating of drilling fluids can be maximized
- The proponent, contractors, and employees would be instructed that all cultural resources are protected and if any are identified during construction, the resource should be left in place, work would cease, and the HRFO would be notified, by telephone, with written confirmation to follow, immediately upon such discovery.
- Fire suppression equipment, including extinguishers and shovels, would be available on-site during construction activities.
- Each trough will have a wildlife escape ramp installed to mitigate any negative effects to wildlife that will use the trough as a water source.
- The Proposed Action area would be kept free from any accumulation of litter including but not limited to trash, garbage, refuse, ashes and equipment during construction and left in a clean and safe condition. This in turn would reduce potential negative effects to wildlife and their habitat and the human environment. Litter would be placed in storage containers on-site and properly disposed of at an authorized off-site disposal location.

- No construction activity would occur at the Proposed Action area during critical migratory bird nesting periods (March 1 – August 31) unless a biological survey is conducted to determine if migratory bird breeding or nesting is occurring. These surveys would be conducted by a BLM-approved biologist, no more than seven days prior to site disturbance. Authorization for construction during this breeding period would be contingent on the findings of the survey and guidance from the BLM.
- Seasonal restrictions would be applied during the period specified below to manage discretionary surface-disturbing activities and uses on public lands to prevent disturbing GRSG during seasonal life cycle periods, as follows:
  1. In breeding habitat within 4 miles of active and pending GRSG leks from March 1 through June 30
     a. Lek—March 1 to May 15
     b. Lek hourly restrictions—6 p.m. to 9 a.m.
     c. Nesting—April 1 to June 30
  2. Brood-rearing habitat from May 15 to September 15
     a. Early—May 15 to June 15
     b. Late—June 15 to September 15
  3. Winter habitat from November 1 to February 28

  The seasonal dates may be modified due to documented local variations (e.g., higher/lower elevations) or annual climatic fluctuations (e.g., early/late spring, long/heavy winter), in coordination with NDOW and CDFW, in order to better protect GRSG and its habitat.
- Authorizations and permits will limit noise from discretionary activities (during construction, operation, and maintenance) to not exceed 10 decibels above ambient sound levels at least 0.25 mile from active and pending leks, from 2 hours before to 2 hours after sunrise and sunset during the breeding season. See Appendix M, Greater Sage-Grouse Noise Protocol.
- All equipment would be washed to remove seeds and parts of invasive species before being transported to the project site. Ground disturbance would be minimized to the extent necessary to install range improvement features.
- During construction activities, efforts would be made to minimize the potential for creating excessive soil ruts including selection of a construction timing to avoid the seasonally wettest period(s) and use of weight-dispersing materials to limit excessive tracking, as needed.
- The boundaries of the Proposed Action area would be designated, and no ground disturbance would occur outside of this boundary. Existing vegetation within the Proposed Action area would remain in place except where underground access is needed to preserve the native seed bank and above and below ground vegetative mass, and to reduce potential erosion. Blading may be necessary in limited areas where an obstacle (e.g., large rock or shrub) prevents safe passage of construction equipment along the pipeline alignment. If blading is necessary, all bladed areas along the pipeline alignment would be seeded to the extent practicable with a BLM-approved seed mix at a BLM-approved rate (species seeded would be based on the ecological site description for the area as well as seed availability, but may include species such as Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, low sage, black sage and/or desert globemallow). Installation of the troughs would require blading in order to install the troughs on a level surface. Seeding would also occur at these sites.

2.2 Alternative B: No Action Alternative

Under the no action alternative, the construction of the wells, stock tank, pipeline, exclosure and troughs systems would not occur, and additional water sources would not be constructed. The seasonal water sources described above would continue to be used. The number of water sources for livestock would not increase and the current grazing distribution would not change in the Washburn Allotment.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Not Analyzed in Detail

In addition to the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, the BLM considered, but did not analyze in detail, the following alternatives:

Alternative: Piping Water from Private Property

The HRFO evaluated if water could be piped directly from private property to a storage tank on a hill in the West Mentaberry pasture then gravity feed water troughs from the storage tank (BLM 2019). However, after land survey data was collected along the proposed alignment, the elevation change was found to be too great from the property to the storage tank on the hill. With the rise in elevation from the creek to the top of the hill, four storage tanks and solar pumps would be needed to pump the water to the top of the hill.

Alternative: Water Haul

A water haul was considered but determined to be impractical due to the steep grade of the mountains and the poor quality two-track roads. The water truck would not have been able to navigate the drainages where the temporary troughs would be placed.

Alternative: Larger Exclosure at Mud Spring

A larger exclosure at Mud Spring was considered. It would have measured approximately 2.3 acres with a linear fencing length of 2,300 ft. A larger exclosure would have protected more riparian habitat but would have prevented livestock from accessing trails leading to the Rock Springs pasture. Furthermore, blocking access to the water source at Mud Spring would not meet the purpose of ensuring livestock distribution through the allotment.

2.4 Plan Conformance

The Proposed Action and other alternatives analyzed in detail are in conformance with the Winnemucca District Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement, May 2015 (BLM 2015) in the following Actions:

Livestock Grazing

LG 1.2: Use adaptive management principles and practices, including season and duration of use, use restrictions, herding, installation of structural improvements, and adjustment in livestock numbers to achieve resource objectives and standards for rangeland health.

LG 1.6.1: Authorize new range improvements based on individual permitees' past maintenance performance.

LG 5.2: New range improvements may be developed when consistent with achieving land health standards and provide for multiple uses. They may be allowed in big game habitat if they improve grazing distribution or utilization patterns and reduce conflicts in other areas.

LG 5.3: Protect newly developed spring sources and wetland-riparian areas by fencing to exclude livestock and WHB. Place troughs away from the spring sources and associated wetland-riparian areas. Fencing will meet wildlife and WHB exclosure fence specifications.

LG 5.4.1: Maintain the integrity and avoid adverse impacts to spring resources and associated wetland-riparian areas, by ensuring proper installation of water developments (see FW 11.1). When possible:
1. Downstream of the source and adjacent to the spring so that flows are maintained;
2. Downstream of the source within the spring brook at a location that maximizes the spring flow duration and minimize thermal load; and
3. Other techniques (see FW 11.1).

Water Resources

WR 3: Manage priority watersheds and wellhead areas to provide for long-term sustainable water for local communities and improve or maintain hydrologic functions and processes.

WR 4: Acquire or provide sufficient quantity and quality of water on public lands for multiple uses and land management activities consistent with state water law.

WR 4.4: In accordance with state water law, develop water sources or wells on public lands that can be used for multiple uses, including fire suppression activities.

Vegetation – Riparian and Wetlands

VRW1.1.1: Develop, adjust, and implement management strategies to address known or suspected factors or improve existing conditions. If causal factor for not attaining PFC or declining trend is livestock, implement management objectives or strategies (e.g. stubble height, utilization levels, bank trampling, season-of-use, adjustment to terms and conditions of permit and range improvements) to improve conditions.

3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

The purpose of this section is to describe the existing conditions of the Project Area and environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and Alternatives. Supplemental Authorities that are subject to requirements specified by statute or Executive Order must be considered in all BLM environmental documents. The elements associated with the supplemental authorities listed in the NEPA Handbook (BLM 2008, Appendix 1) and in the Nevada Instruction Memorandum 2009-030, Change 1, are listed in Table 2. The following elements have been determined as Not Present in the Project Area, Present/Not Affected, or Present/May Be Affected subsequent to an internal IDT meeting, and the following table provides the rationale for those determinations, or the section of the EA where the resource is discussed. The elimination of non relevant elements complies with CEQ policy.

Table 2. Supplemental Authorities

Supplemental Authorities	Effect	Rationale/Comments
Air Quality	Present/Not Affected	Dust would be generated temporarily during construction of the pipeline and wells. Water would be used as needed to suppress dust during construction activities.
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)	Not Present	
Cultural Resources	Present/Not Affected	The project area was surveyed to BLM Class III standards, and only isolated artifacts were found. The inventory report was sent to the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office on 3/1/2022 and was accepted 3/2/2022. Isolated artifacts are categorically ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places. There are no historic properties in the project area and the BLM has made a determination of no effect.
Environmental Justice and Socioeconomics	Present/Not Affected	Though low-income, minority, and Native American environmental justice communities are present in the study area, an aggregate effects analysis of all actions and alternatives, cumulative impacts, and public comments does not yield disproportionate and adverse impacts. Outreach and consultation will continue with the Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone and Burns Paiute tribes. This determination may change as further information and public comment becomes available. An analysis of socioeconomic impacts yields small beneficial non-market ecosystem services values due to better stock distribution. Construction of project elements would result in a small, temporary economic benefit. It is determined that these impacts are negligible and will not be analyzed further in this EA.
Floodplains	Not Present	
Historic Trails	Not Present	
Invasive, Nonnative Species	Present/Not Affected	Implementation of EPMs would result in no long-term changes to invasive, nonnative species populations.
Migratory Birds	Present/Not Affected	Construction of the wells and pipelines would occur in existing disturbance areas to minimize the impact to migratory bird habitat and nests. In addition, the project will take place following migratory bird

		clearance surveys and procedures will be in place to minimize the impact to this resource.
Native American Religious Concerns	Present/Not Affected	Consultation letters were sent to the Burns Paiute Tribe and Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe on November 3, 2022. Those tribes were contacted due to their proximity to the project and referencing an aboriginal territory map given to the WDO. A consultation meeting between the Fort-McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe and the WDO occurred January 24, 2023, where the project was discussed. The Tribe said they are interested in reviewing the project further when the draft EA is published, as water is a high concern for the area, but had no specific comments at the time. No comments have been made by the Burns Paiute Tribe. Tribal consultation is currently ongoing.
Prime or Unique Farmlands	Not Present	
Threatened & Endangered Species	Present/Not Affected	See Section 3.2 (Fisheries)
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	Present/Not Affected	See Section 2.1.1, Environmental Protection Measures. BMPs and applicable state laws would be followed.
Water Quality (Surface and Ground)	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.2
Wetlands and Riparian Zones	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.2
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Not Present	
Wilderness	Not Present	

Table 3. Additional Affected Resources

Additional Affected Resources	**Effect**	**Rationale/Comments**
Fisheries	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.2
Fuel Management and Fire	Not Present	
General Wildlife	Present/ Affected	Construction of the wells and pipelines would occur in existing disturbance areas to minimize the impact to wildlife. The water developments for the project would be outfitted with wildlife escape ramps to reduce the chances of mortality at these developments.

		Following these and other guidelines for construction the impact to wildlife is expected to be minimal.
Geology and Minerals	Present/Not Affected	There would be no changes in minerals rights or mineral potential as part of the proposed action.
Lands and Realty	Present/ Affected	There are no rights of way or mining claims within the project area.
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	Not Present	The project area occurs in Lands with Wilderness Characteristic (LWC) Units NV-020-800 and NV-020-800A. These units were originally assessed in 1980 and re-assessed in March of 2012. In 2012, it was determined that these unites do not meet the criteria for LWC because they are lacking in wilderness characteristics due to existing disturbance, lack of natural appearance, and lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.
Noise	Present/Not Affected	Noise would be temporarily generated during drilling. Drilling activities would occur outside of the migratory bird breeding and nesting season.
Paleontology	Not Present	The project area is located in Class 1 (very low) and Class 2 (low) potential areas as defined under the Potential Fossil Yield Classification system. There are no known fossil localities within 10 miles of the project area.
Public Health and Safety	Present/Not Affected	Drill sites and troughs would not be constructed within 500 feet of any water source. Best management Practices would be followed during construction, operation, and reclamation to avoid negative impacts to springs or riparian scrub communities resulting from surface disturbance activities.
Rangeland Management	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.3
Recreation and Access	Present/Not Affected	Roadways would be temporarily closed during construction of the pipelines. Additional fencing and gates would be constructed in the Washburn Seeding Pasture to control access to the trough but gates would not be locked.
Soils	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.3
Special Status Species	Present/ Affected	The Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*) is a candidate species being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as of December 2020 and was listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List as Endangered in July 2022. Monarch butterfly survival is dependent on their obligate milkweed host plant

		(primarily *Asclepias spp*.). No milkweed plants were found within the proposed project area and are expected to only occur within suitable areas along drainages with seasonal run-off. See Section 3.3 for Greater Sage grouse
Vegetation	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.3
Visual Resource Management	Present/Not Affected	The proposed range improvements would be located in Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II. This classification allows for changes on the landscape as long as it does not attract undue attention. The wells would be located in previously disturbed areas and permanent ground disturbance would be approximately 6 acres. The most visible element of the project would be the 5,000 gallon storage tank, which would be located near Rock Springs. The tank would be painted in colors using the BLM visual resource palette in order to blend into the surrounding environment.
Water Quantity	Present/ Affected	See Section 3.2
Wild Horse and Burro	Not Present	

3.1 Identified Issues

3.2 Issue: How would the range improvements affect streams and springs?

3.2.1 Affected Environment

Water Resources

The State of Nevada created hydrographic basins, similar to US Geological Survey (USGS) hydrologic unit code (HUC)-10s, prior to the USGS designations. The HUC-10 is the fifth level watershed order, as defined by the USGS and identified with a 10-digit number. Generally, a Nevada hydrographic basin is defined by the topographic divide, or ridgeline, that separates adjacent basins. In some cases, the boundary between basins may be arbitrarily defined at low divides covered by alluvial sediments or at county lines. These hydrographic basins are generally used in Nevada instead of the USGS HUC-10s and the boundaries generally correlate well with the HUC-10s.

In this project area the hydrographic basin does not correlate well with the USGS watersheds. The project area is located in the Quinn River Valley (NV033B) hydrographic basin which includes the McDermitt subarea. The Quinn River Valley Nevada hydrographic basin is cut off at the Oregon border and includes all or portions of the following USGS watersheds: Oregon Canyon Creek (1604020101), McDermitt Creek (1604020102), East Fork of the Quinn River

(1604020103), and Headwaters Quinn River (1604020104). Therefore, the USGS watersheds will be referenced in this document.

Anticipated effects to water resources from this project would be associated with the construction and use of two seasonally operated range improvement wells and associated troughs and pipelines. Based on this, the final hydrologic study area can be reduced to the Washburn Range Allotment. Most of the Washburn Range Allotment is located within the USGS "Headwaters Quinn River" watershed, with a small portion of the west and northwest corner of the project area occurring in the "McDermitt Creek" watershed.

Surface Water

There is approximately 510,984 feet (96.8 miles) of perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral streams present within the project area. According to the USGS National Hydrography Dataset, three perennial streams are located in the project area. These streams are two portions of Riser Creek near the western boundary, McDermitt Creek near the northern boundary, and Washburn Creek near the southeastern boundary of the project area.

The streams within the western half of the Headwaters Quinn River watershed generally flow eastward or northeastward through the project area to flow into Washburn Creek via numerous tributaries.

Drainages in the western project area within the McDermitt Creek watershed generally flow west or northwest into Riser Creek. Riser Creek is one of the northward trending drainages that connect to the east-southeastward draining McDermitt Creek. Drainages in the eastern portion flow directly northward into McDermitt Creek.

There are 10 springs or seeps within the allotment. Rock Spring, Old Corral Spring, and Washburn Creek Spring (headwaters of perennial stretch of Washburn Creek in T47N, R36E, Sec 23) are considered perennial. The other seven identified springs are ephemeral. Mud Spring is hummocked and trampled from excessive livestock use. Water from Mud Spring can be accessed within the Washburn allotment but the spring source is located to the south on the Jordan Meadows allotment.

There are no floodplains mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the Project Area. Small non-FEMA floodplains may be present associated with ephemeral surface water drainages in the Project Area. Exploration activities that may occur within these drainages must be reclaimed, with the characteristics of the drainages restored to its pre-disturbance features.

There are 15 water-related range improvements (stock ponds) within the project area that are currently non-functional. Some of these are located near the known springs and are natural depressions in the surface that impound surface water temporarily.

Groundwater
There are five existing wells within the allotment as tabulated below:

Table 4. Current Wells within the Study Area

Well Owner	Well Log No.	Location (Township, Range, section)	Date Drilled	Use	Total Depth (feet bgs*)	First Water/ Static Water (feet bgs)
Placer Development Company	14544	T47N, R37E, sec 22 NWNW	9/1974	Industrial/ Agriculture	600	Not listed/55
Placer Development Company	14545	T47N, R37E, sec 21 NWSE	10/1974	Industrial/ Agriculture	745	Not listed/45
Ross	13126	T47N, R36E, sec 4 NENW	May 1973	Domestic	102	40/40
Armknecht	12127	T47N, R36E, sec 4 NENW	April 1973	Domestic	109	42/10
McDermitt Mine	21058	T47N, R37E, sec 16 NWSE	February 1980	Industrial/ Mining	840	740/68

**bgs - below ground surface*

The two domestic wells encountered groundwater adjacent to McDermitt Creek. The other three wells are located in the far eastern section of the allotment.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones
There are approximately 232 acres of wetlands associated with the perennial springs and creeks in the Washburn Range Allotment.

Riser Creek is to the west of the project areas and flows within the following summer pastures: Rock Spring Pasture, Riser Creek Pasture and Long Ridge Pasture. Riser Creek was fenced off in the 1990s with an exclosure to control livestock access to the creek. Water gaps were created so cattle could access water when they are grazing those pastures. Two of the three pastures are scheduled to be grazed each year while one pasture is rested each year. Therefore, on a three-year rotation, each pasture is grazed two years and rested one year.

McDermitt Creek is on the north side of the project areas within the West Mentaberry Pasture. Once every 3 years, cattle are allowed for 25 days to graze/water within the West Mentaberry Pasture that includes McDermitt Creek, a Lahonton cutthroat trout (LCT) stream. The fish are a threatened species specific to the Great Basin. In an effort to sustain and expand LCT populations, the stream is monitored every year to check suitability for the species. The banks of the stream are mostly soft mud and cattle drinking at the creek contributes to erosion and degradation of water quality.

Washburn Creek is to the south of the project areas and flows within the Washburn Seeding Pasture and the East Mentaberry Pasture. Most of Washburn Creek flows through private land with a few areas on BLM managed land. Washburn Seeding is grazed once every three years for 85 days, and East Mentaberry Pasture is grazed once every three years for 25 days.

Fisheries
The closest fisheries to the Project Areas are within McDermitt Creek, Riser Creek and Washburn Creek. Past NDOW stream surveys indicate that the following fish species can be found in these streams: Lahontan cutthroat trout (Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi), rainbow trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss), brown trout (Salmo trutta); and non-game species of Lahontan speckled dace (Rhinichthys osculus), Lahontan redside shiner (Richardsonius egregious), Lahontan mountain sucker (Catostomus platyrhyncus), and Tahoe sucker (Catostomus tahoensis).

Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT) was initially listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969 based on evidence indicating they were endangered due to destruction, drastic modification or severe curtailment of their habitat; hybridization with introduced trout species was also a factor in their listing. LCT were reclassified as threatened in 1975 (Federal Register 1975, Vol. 40, p. 29863) due to the ability to culture them and to successful reintroductions into a few areas where they had been extirpated. Critical habitat has not been designated for LCT. LCT, along with the other fisheries, require high quality stream and associated riparian conditions.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: Proposed Action

Water Resources
Daily water requirements during construction of the two wells would depend on the type of drill and the number of drills active at any time. Core and RC drills require approximately 5,000 gallons per 12-hour shift. RC rigs normally only work one shift per day (unless difficult drilling conditions require continuous operation) whereas the core rig runs two shifts. In addition, depending on conditions, water may be required to control dust on the roads. This could be as much as 6,000 gallons per day depending on the location of the drills. Therefore, daily requirements are estimated to range between 11,000 gallons per day (assuming one active RC rig operating at one 12-hour shift per day) and 26,000 gallons per day (assuming two active core rigs operating two 12-hour shifts per day). Water for drilling activities at the Project would be derived from multiple permitted sources including unused stock water from a local ranch. This construction activity would generally last less than two weeks in length based on the type of rock being drilled and the total depths of the wells.

Upon completion of the wells, the water would be used to fill up to seven 600-gallon water troughs and one 5,000-gallon storage tank (maximum 9,200 gallons). The actual daily use would depend on the time of use by the operator, weather conditions, and the amount of water consumed by the cattle. Water use is anticipated to be low based on the assumptions that cows consume approximately 1 gallon of water per 100 pounds of body weight and the water wells would only be active seasonally (June to September) when cows are present. For example, as described above, 246 cattle are allowed to graze/water within the West Mentaberry Pasture every 3 years for 25 days. Assuming the average cow weighs 1200 pounds, water usage would be 1200/100 * 246 = 2952 gpd x 25days = 73,835 gallons per year. Since the example allows 2 of the 3 pastures to be utilized each year the total water usage would be 147,670 gallons per year (about 0.45acre-feet per

year). For comparison, domestic drinking wells are authorized to use 2 acre-feet per year in Nevada.

Installation of the wells is not anticipated to affect the total groundwater withdrawal in the basin. And may result in less surface water being used by the cattle. While in operation, the water troughs may also provide additional water sources for wildlife. The exclosure at Mud Spring would prevent livestock from accessing the spring and allow it to naturally recover.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones

Short-term monitoring data, using Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) of Stream Channels and Streamside Vegetation (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2011), has been collected over the past ten years on Washburn and McDermitt creeks. The short-term monitoring data is collected to determine the annual impacts of livestock on the stream systems. Streambank alteration is the trampling of streambanks by livestock, that can degrade the integrity of the stream systems by increasing the stream width, making the stream channel shallower, increasing the water temperature, causing streambank erosion and reducing riparian stabilizing vegetation.

The data collected has shown that streambank alteration on McDermitt Creek, within the West Mentaberry Pasture, was observed to not meet the streambank objectives for three of the last ten years. The data for Washburn Creek, within the Washburn Seeding Pasture, showed that the streambank alteration did not meet the streambank objectives for two of the last ten years.

The proposed two wells and associated troughs could reduce pressure on the streambanks within the riparian zones by providing the opportunity for the livestock to not rely solely on the existing watering areas within the pastures, but by providing water away from the riparian zones.

Excessive trampling has been noted at Mud Spring and overuse of the Rock Spring area has resulted in loss of riparian vegetation. The construction of a 1.5 acre exclosure at Mud Spring and wiring closed the existing gates around Rock Springs would allow the riparian resources at these locations to recover and revegetate.

Fisheries

The three creeks closest to the project area, McDermitt Creek, Riser Creek, and Washburn Creek, are located at a distance of between 1.6 and 6.4 miles from the project area. McDermitt Creek is to the north of the project areas and is approximately 3.7 miles from the Lower Rock Springs Well, 4.4 miles from the Upper Rock Springs Well and 1.6 miles from the West Mentaberry Well. Riser Creek is to the west of the project areas and is approximately 3.0 miles from the Lower Rock Springs Well, 1.6 miles from the Upper Rock Springs Well and 6.4 miles from the West Mentaberry Well. Washburn Creek is to the south of the project areas and is approximately 3.9 miles from the Lower Rock Spring Well, 4.1 miles from the Upper Rock Springs Well and 2.0 miles from the West Mentaberry Well.

The pumping of a well within a water table aquifer has the potential to lower the water table near the well. In general, studies have shown that wells within a ¼ mile of a stream could have a potential effect on stream flow (Oregon Water Resources Department). In determining if a stream could have a hydraulic connection with a well, the Oregon Water Resources Department follows

their rule (690-009-0040) which explains, that all wells located a horizontal distance of less than one-fourth of a mile from a surface water source shall be assumed to be hydraulically connected to the surface water source, unless other satisfactory information or demonstration to the contrary. Therefore, with taking the Oregon Water Resources Department's rule in consideration and because the three creeks are far greater than ¼ of a mile from the proposed wells (closest stream is 1.6 miles), there is no anticipated hydrologic connection between the wells and the streams. With no hydraulic connection anticipated, the fish species in those creeks are not expected to be impacted by a loss stream flow from the drilling and pumping by the two wells of the Proposed Action. However, the two wells and the associated troughs have the possibility to reduce some pressure of watering/grazing on the three streams by providing the opportunity for the livestock not to rely solely on the current watering areas within the pastures.

3.2.3 Alternative B: No Action

Water Resources

Under the No Action Alternative, the two new wells with pipelines, storage tank, exclosure and troughs would not be created, and groundwater usage would not occur. Cattle would continue to use and concentrate in the few existing surface water resources.

Wetlands and Riparian Zones

Under the No Action Alternative, the two new wells with pipelines, storage tank and troughs would not be created. Cattle would continue to use and concentrate in the few existing surface water resources and to affect the wetlands and riparian areas.

Fisheries

Under the No Action Alternative, the two new wells with pipelines, storage tank and troughs would not be created. The livestock would have the same grazing distribution and water sources, with usage expected to remain the same. Livestock would continue to put pressure on and affect the LCT streams.

3.3 Issue: How would the proposed action affect the range conditions within the allotment?

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Rangeland Management

The Proposed Action would occur within the Washburn grazing allotment in the Montana Mountains in northwest Nevada. The range is situated in the northern Great Basin, one of the largest deserts in the world, characterized by flat, arid basins and valleys and north-south trending mountain ranges. The Sierra Nevada prevents the Great Basin from receiving the westerly flow of moisture that is generated from the Pacific Ocean. Precipitation normally ranges from approximately 5 to 7 inches in the valley bottoms to 16 to 18 inches at the mountain peaks. Most of this precipitation comes during the winter and spring months in the form of snow, while the summers are characterized by dry and hot weather. Temperatures range from greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer months to 15 degrees or colder at higher elevations in the winter.

The Washburn grazing allotment is on a three-year rest-rotation permit. The permit allows for 1465 AUMs to graze seven pastures from March 20th to August 31st. Out of those the Winter Use Area allows for 33 AUMs of cattle to graze from January 1st to March 19th. This type of grazing method, termed rest-rotation, ensures that different pastures are scheduled to be used in specific sequences, rotating every three years, except the winter pasture. The winter pasture is available for use at that time every year when perennial grasses are dormant and there is a low probability for negative effects to rangeland health.

Three creeks border the Washburn allotment - McDermitt Creek, Washburn Creek, and Riser Creek. All three provide habitat to Lahontan cutthroat trout, a Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species. McDermitt Creek on the north side of the allotment and flows year-round. At the southern extent of the allotment, Washburn Creek borders Mud Spring and Washburn Seeding pastures and is dry most years with limited access due to private land status along the creek. Little Washburn Creek, a tributary of Washburn Creek, is also dry most years. One spring that produces water for the tributary is Mud Spring and is also only reliable water source in the Mud Springs pasture. It is also the only permanent water source on the west side of the Washburn grazing allotment. Accordingly, grazing activity is high surrounding Mud Spring. Riser Creek is on the west side of the allotment and is fenced off by exclosures. There are seven locations in the exclosure that allow for livestock to access water along Riser Creek, Long Ridge, and Rock Springs pastures.

There are 15 known existing range improvements on the allotment. These include stock ponds water troughs and pipelines. The stock ponds are depressions in the ground (either natural or manmade) that collect rain and snow melt but are non-functional. The troughs are not being actively used because of the lack of supply of water within the pastures.

Short term Multiple Indicator Monitoring (MIM) indicates that while cattle are in the West Mentaberry Pasture, there are more stream bank alterations (trampling along stream banks) when there is no water available at the top of the pasture. Recent observations have confirmed that when cattle trail down the steep terrain to McDermitt Creek, they rarely return to the top of the pasture.

Soils and Vegetation

The Proposed Action would be constructed on existing disturbed areas and follow existing roads and fence lines. Most of the 3 mile pipeline would be constructed in these areas, however there would be an approximately 0.5 mile stretch that would not follow existing roads or fence lines. This 0.5 mile area was the focus of a Special Status Plant Species (SSPS) survey conducted on June 30, 2022. BLM staff conducted SSPS surveys in the Project Area following the complete survey method described in the BLM's Survey Protocols Required for NEPA/ESA Compliance for BLM Special Status Plant Species.

During the SSPS survey, all plant species were recorded along four transect lines spaced 30 ft. from the centerline and between each surveyor and spanned the entire 0.5 mile area. Overall vegetation height was low and sparse allowing surveyors increased visibility of the ground cover. The site was dominated by sparse Lahontan sagebrush (Artemisia arbuscula ssp. longicaulis), mountain big sagebrush (Artemisia tridentata ssp. vaseyana), non-native grasses including cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum), crested wheatgrass (Agropyron cristatum), bulbous bluegrass (Poa bulbosa), as well as a mix of native grass species such as basin wildrye (Leymus cinereus) and

Thurber's needlegrass (Achnatherum thurberianum). The SSPS survey was conducted to identify if sensitive plant species such as windloving buckwheat (Eriogonum anemophilum) were present. During the survey, other Buckwheat species (Eriogonum ssp.) were identified but are not listed on the sensitive species lists. No special status plant species were found during the SSPS survey.

Soils on the site of proposed facilities installations belong to three major associations: Zymans-Burrita-Devada, Zymans-Genaw, and Dewar associations. These soils are generally classified as cobbly to gravelly to silty loam. These soils have low risk of both wind and water erosion and support sagebrush and native bunchgrasses in reference condition. Soils within the allotment are in generally good condition, with degradation in the form of streambank alteration and erosion centered on portions of McDermitt Creek, Riser Creek, and Little Washburn Creek which are heavily utilized by cattle for drinking and foraging.

Greater Sage Grouse
Due to the recent change in policy, the BLM has returned to the 2015 Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (2015 ARMPA), including a change in habitat mapping (2021 GRSG Maps - Referencing the 2015 ARMPA). For the purposes of this document, impacts to GRSG habitat will be evaluated under the 2015 ARMPA. Under the 2015 ARMPA, this project is directly associated with and adjacent to Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) (see attached maps - 2021 GRSG maps).

There are 10 GRSG leks within a 3-mile buffer around the proposed project area. The proposed Mentaberry well location on the east side of the Washburn allotment would include one of the proposed wells and fencing for a corral.

The Upper and Lower Rock Springs proposed well and trough locations, on the west side of the Washburn allotment, also have 2 leks within a 2-mile buffer of one trough. These leks are separated from the proposed features by the Little Riser Creek drainage and may see less potential impact due to this creek drainage.

The proposed exclosure at Mud Springs would fence off approximately 1.5 acres of wet riparian vegetation that borders upland sagebrush habitat. This fenced exclosure would be approximately 2 miles from an active lek with hill and valley topography between the proposed fence area. This habitat provides Greater Sage-Grouse with foraging habitat through the brood-rearing stages and summer season of their lifecycle.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

Alternative A: Proposed Action

Rangeland Management
Ground disturbance around the wells would be minimal from the equipment. Small amounts of compaction would be expected around the new troughs. The area where the pipeline, troughs and storage tank would need to be leveled with the use of with heavy equipment. With the initial

installation of the improvements there would some degree of short-term ground disturbance but would be expected to naturally re-establish over time through proper rangeland management.

The distribution of livestock would increase with more available water. The areas that are nearest to current available water would have pressure relieved with the addition of the exclosure fence and the allotment would be managed better. Grazing throughout the allotment would be more uniform with less patchy grazing in high use areas and would better meet the Standards for Rangeland Health. The impact that the livestock have on the LCT streams would be expected to be highly reduced.

Soils and Vegetation
Disturbance associated with drilling and installation of the pipeline would be limited to the time of construction and result in crushing and some removal of vegetation on drill pad and along the pipeline route. Much of the pipeline would be constructed in existing roadbeds, which lack vegetation; thus, vegetation loss would be limited to the 0.5 mile of pipeline that would be constructed outside of the roadbed if Lower Rock Springs well is in production. Some soil will be displaced during drilling and trenching, with most soil being replaced in trenches upon pipeline installation. Areas of bare ground resulting from construction activities will be reseeded using a BLM-approved seed mix and naturally by existing vegetation.

The areas immediately surrounding the new water developments and within the Mud Springs corral would experience permanent loss of vegetation due to repeat trampling by livestock using the facilities. Approximately 0.8 acres of permanent vegetation loss is expected. These areas are on roughly level ground and generally stable soils, therefore little erosion is expected. Greater dispersion of livestock without increasing overall numbers within the allotment would likely result in lower use in other portions of the allotment surrounding water sources, allowing those areas to recover native vegetation and reduce streambank alteration and erosion along McDermitt Creek, Riser Creek, and Little Washburn Creek.

Greater Sage Grouse
Disturbances from the project activities to greater sage-grouse include noise, visual impacts, fence construction and human presence; these would be temporary and localized. The construction would also follow recommended stipulations to further reduce the impact to greater sage-grouse by constructing proposed developments outside of the lekking season and restricting access and construction to existing roads and previously disturbed areas to minimize new disturbance to the extent possible.

The proposed corral within the Washburn Seeding pasture would consist of a standard T-post fence, which would be approximately 4 feet high (~42”) and consist of 3 barbed wire and one smooth wire bottom line for wildlife to cross underneath. This fence addition would be constructed along an existing fence and would be within 1 mile from an active lek. The overall impact to GRSG nesting from predation would be low due to the short height of the fence and the location. However, the fence may allow for avian predators like Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) to perch and thus have an impact on nesting success within proximity to the fence. There are existing fences throughout the area and the addition of new fencing could cumulatively impact GRSG nesting through avian predation.

The improvements would also concentrate livestock at the trough locations which may have some level of disturbance for GRSG, though this impact is expected to be minimal as livestock should be concentrated away from springs and riparian areas.

The proposed wells would require drilling; however, the drilling would take place between September 16th and October 31st or follow appropriate timing restrictions to mitigate noise impacts during the lekking and nesting seasons.

The proposed exclosure at Mud Springs would include the construction of a fence around the 1.5 acre area of riparian/meadow vegetation. The fence would provide a barrier to livestock from accessing this wet riparian/meadow vegetation, thus concentrating activities at the proposed wells. The proposed fence may have a similar impact to GRSG by providing perching locations for avian predators as mentioned previously. However, the proposed exclosure is expected to provide a benefit to GRSG by excluding livestock access and protecting vital brood-rearing foraging habitat that would otherwise see continued use and potential degradation.

3.3.3 Alternative B: No Action Alternative

Rangeland Management

Under the No Action Alternative, the construction of wells, pipelines, storage tank, troughs and exclosure would not occur. The number of water sources for livestock would not increase and the current grazing distribution would not change. Cattle would continue to over utilize the two reliable season long water sources, which would result in continued degradation of these areas. The pressure on the LCT could increase on dry years. The Mud Spring area would not receive rest to naturally recover.

Soils and Vegetation

Under the No Action Alternative, the construction of a pipeline and troughs system would not occur, and additional water sources would not be constructed. Vegetation and soils would remain much the same as they are now, with no new areas of bare ground created in the uplands and no reduction in livestock utilization along riparian areas, resulting in continued moderate to high levels of streambank alteration and erosion along McDermitt Creek, Riser Creek, and Little Washburn Creek.

Great Sage Grouse

Under the No Action Alternative, the construction of the wells, pipeline and troughs systems would not occur, and additional water sources would not be constructed. The use of seasonal water sources would remain the same. Livestock would continue to use existing water sources and degrade the adjacent habitat areas. The riparian areas where milkweed species (Asclepias sp.) are found would continue to be degraded and impact the potential monarch butterfly habitat.

4.0 Cumulative Effects

Water Resources and Fisheries

Currently, there are no proposed or permitted projects within the Headwaters Quinn River hydrographic basin that would add cumulatively to the impact to water resources or fisheries.

Rangeland Management and Natural Resources
Currently there are no proposed or permitted projects within the Washburn grazing allotment that would add cumulatively to the impact to rangeland management or natural resources.

5.0 Coordination and Consultation

5.1 Native American Consultation

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Executive Orders 13007 and 13175, and Secretarial Order 3317, government-to-government communication and consultation with affected Native American tribes is essential. Consultation letters were sent to the Burns Paiute Tribe and Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe on November 3, 2022. Those tribes were contacted due to their proximity to the project and referencing an aboriginal territory map given to the WDO by the Burns Paiute Tribe. A consultation meeting between the Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe and the WDO occurred January 24, 2023, where the project was discussed. The Tribe said they are interested in reviewing the project further when the draft EA is published, as water is a high concern for the area, but had no specific comments at the time. No comments have been made by the Burns Paiute Tribe. Tribal consultation is currently ongoing.

5.2 Coordination and/or Consultation

Table 5. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Humboldt County, Nevada	Cooperating Agency	
Nevada Department of Wildlife	Cooperating Agency	

To be completed following review of the preliminary Environmental Assessment

5.3 Public Outreach/Involvement

This section will be completed following the public comment period and upon finalization of the Environmental Assessment.

6.0 List of Preparers

Table 6. List of Preparers

Name	Title
Shannon Deep	Archaeologist
Kristina Shaarda	LR2000
Mike Kizorek	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Kruze Kinder	Rangeland Management Specialist
Michael McCampbell	Invasive-Non-native species (plants and animals); Vegetation; Soils
Roy Morris	T&E Species (plants and animals), Special Status Species, General Wildlife Habitat
Greg Lynch	Fisheries, T&E Species (fish)
Matt Fockler	Environmental Justice, Social Values, Economics
Kathleen Torrence	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
Zwaantje Rorex	GIS
Heather O'Hanlon	Public Affairs
Robin Michel	Planning and Environmental Coordinator

7.0 References

Bureau of Land Management

2015a Resource Management Plan for the Winnemucca District Planning Area. Copy on file at the BLM Winnemucca District Office, Winnemucca, Nevada.

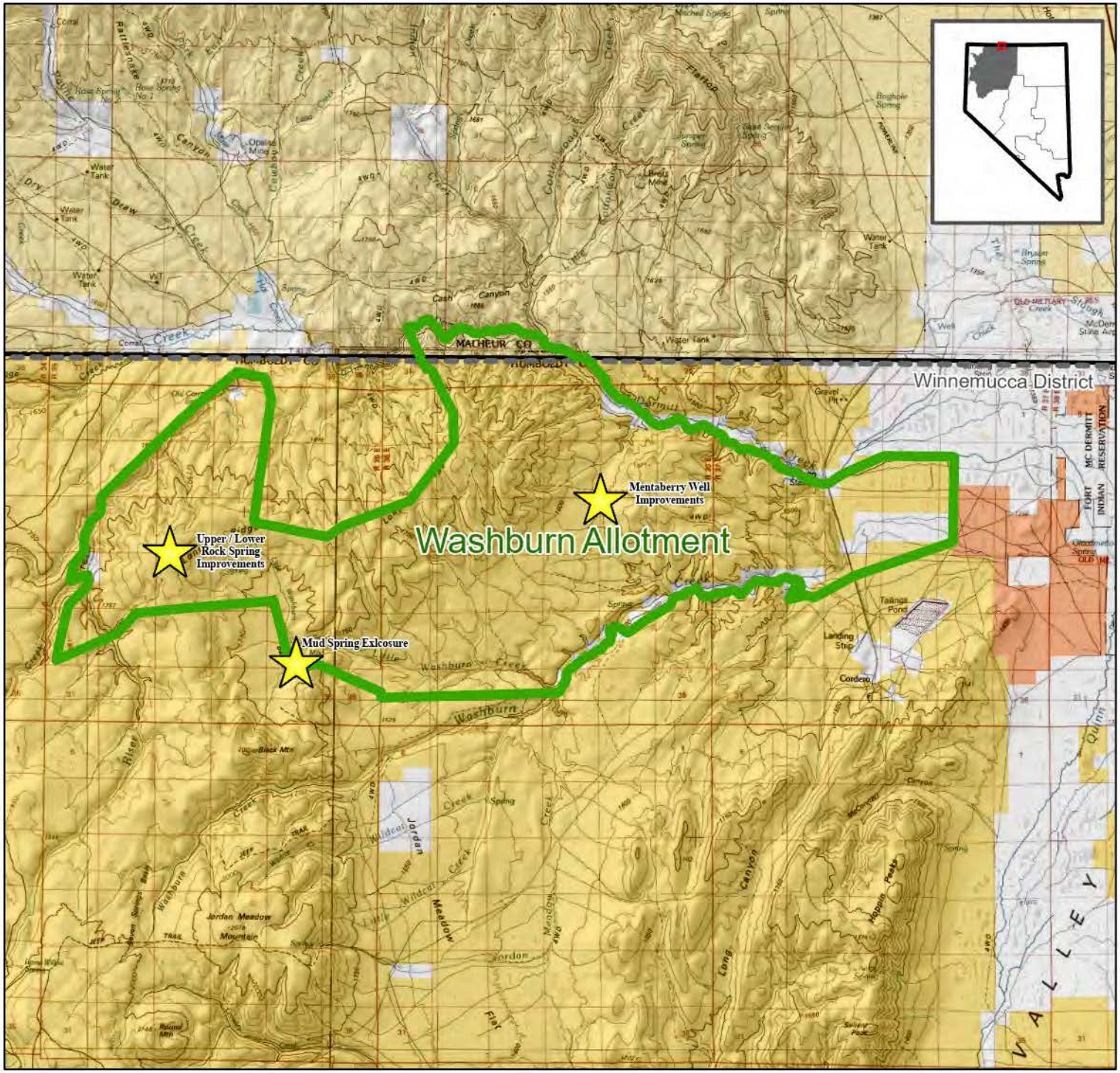
2015b Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendments for the Great Basin Region Including the Greater Sage-Grouse Sub-Regions of Idaho and Southwestern Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California, Oregon, and Utah, September 21, 2015. Copy on file at the BLM Winnemucca District Office, Winnemucca, Nevada.

2019 West Mentaberry Temporary Pipeline and Troughs, Categorical Exclusion. DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2019-022-CX. On file, BLM Winnemucca District Office, Winnemucca, Nevada.

2011 Riparian area management: Multiple indicator monitoring (MIM) of stream channels and streamside vegetation. U.S. Department of the Interior. Technical Reference 1737-23. BLM/OC/ST-10/003+1737. Bureau of Land Management, National Operations Center, Denver, CO. 155 pp.

2010 Regulations for Water Well and Related Drilling Handbook. Nevada Division of Water Resources. http://water.nv.gov/home/pdfs/wd%20regs.pdf

8.0 Maps



Washburn Allotment
Proposed Improvements
Project Location
4/24/2023

Project Locations

Washburn Allotment

Land Status

BIA

BLM

PVT

District Boundary

State Boundary

Basemap: Copyright:© 2013 National Geographic Society, i-cubedInset basemaps: Washburn Basin and Jordan Meadow NW, NV USGS 24k Quadrangles

N

0 1 2

Miles

Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV 89445

Washburn Allotment
Proposed Rock Springs Improvements

Riser Creek Pasture

Long Ridge Pasture

Upper Rock Spring Well

Lower Rock Spring Well

Rock Spring Pasture

Mud Spring Pasture

Mud Spring Exclosure

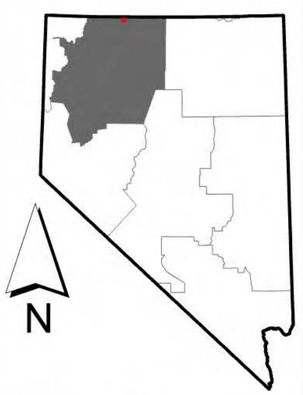
T. 47 N., R. 35 E.

Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV 89445

4/24/2023

Proposed Improvements
- Storage Tank
- Trough
- Well
- Pipeline
- Exclosure
- Existing Fence
- Grazing Pasture Boundary
- Township
- Section

Land Status
- BLM



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Miles

Washburn Allotment Proposed Improvements
Washburn Seeding Pasture

West Mentaberry Pasture

Mentaberry Well

East Mentaberry Pasture

Washburn Seeding Pasture

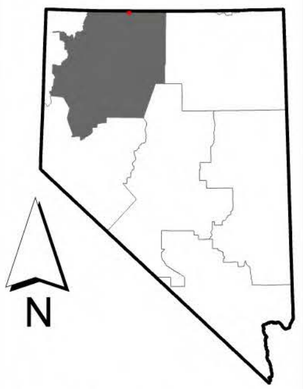
T. 47 N.,
R. 36 E.

Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV 89445

4/24/2023

Proposed Improvements
- Well and Trough
- Fence
- Existing Fence
- Grazing Pasture Boundary
- Township
- Section

Land Status
- BLM
- PVT



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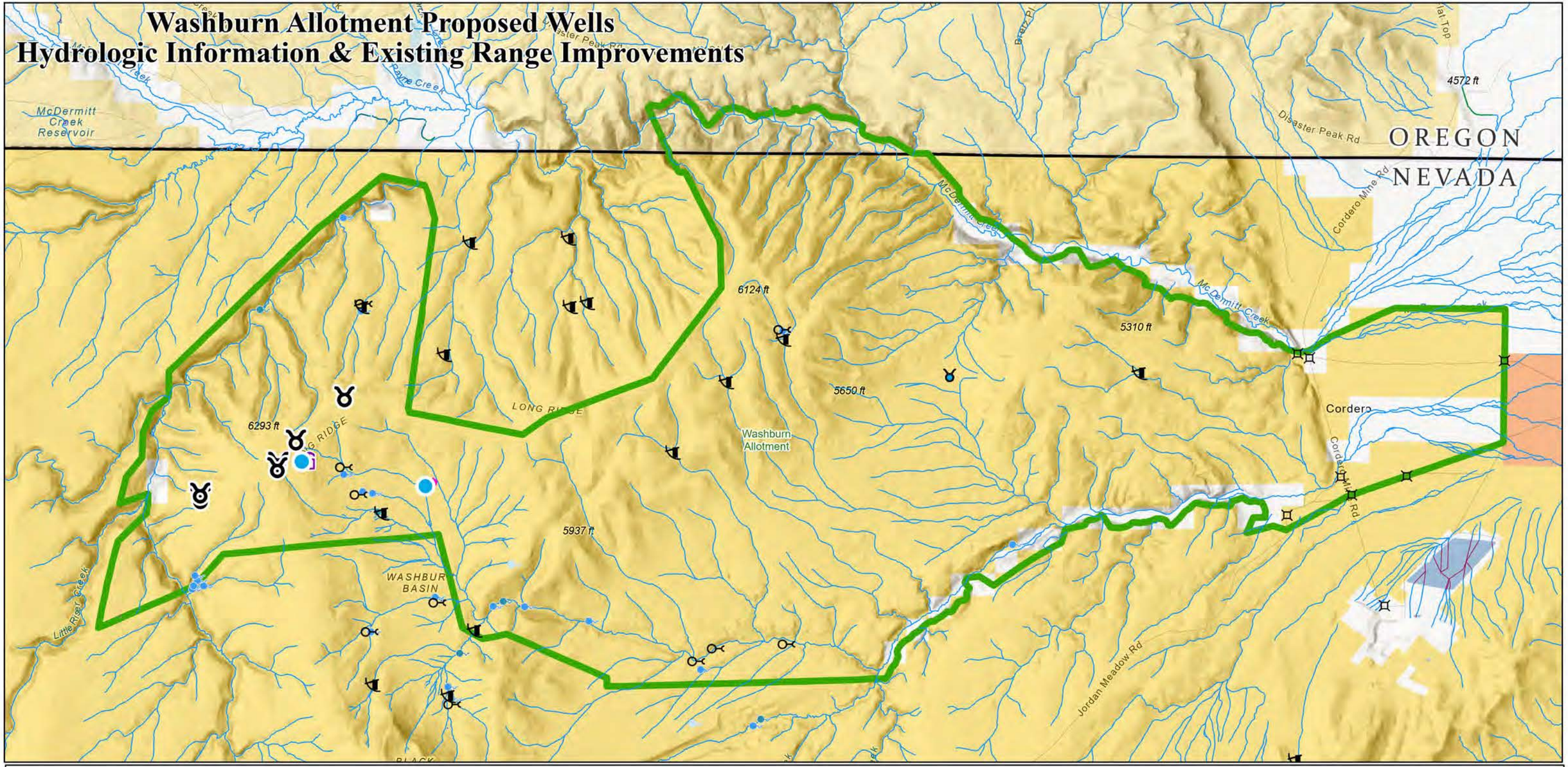
US Feet

Washburn Allotment Proposed Wells
Hydrologic Information & Existing Range Improvements



Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV. 89445

4/22/2023

0 2 4
Miles

Proposed Improvements
- Storage Tank
- Trough
- Well
- Well and Trough

Existing Range Improvements
- Cattleguard
- Miscellaneous
- Reservoir
- Spring

Source_Type
- Spring
- Seep
- Reservoir
- Other

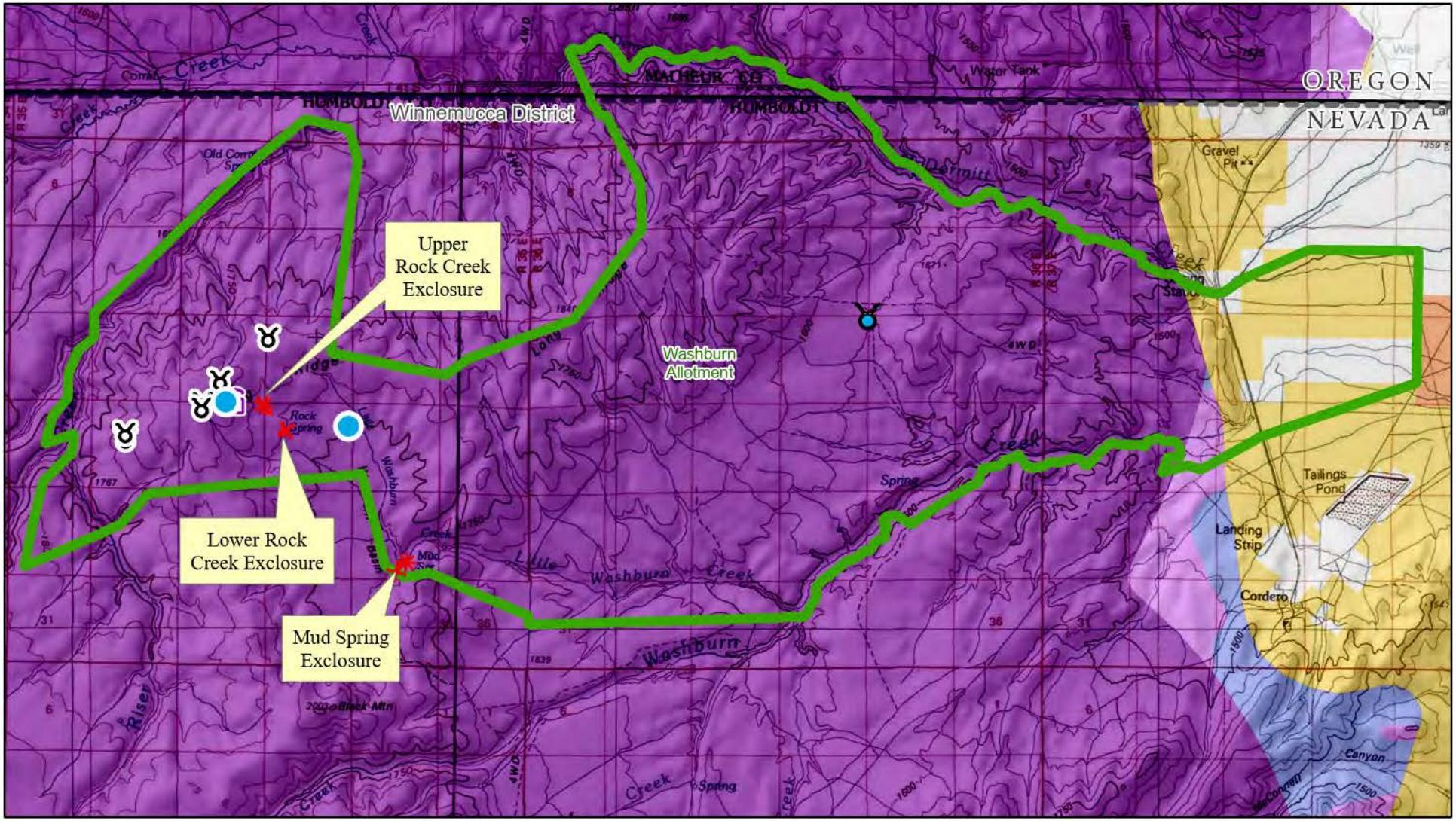
Flowline (NHD)
- Artificial Path
- Canal / Ditch
- Connector
- Pipeline
- Stream

Waterbody (NHD)
- Pond
- Reservoir
- Washburn Allotment
- State Boundary

Land Status
- BIA
- BLM
- PVT

N

Basemap:Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, California State Parks, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USDA



Washburn Allotment Proposed Wells
Sage Grouse Habitat

Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV 89445

4/24/2023

Proposed Improvements
- Storage Tank
- Trough
- Well
- Well and Trough

- Exclosure
- Washburn Allotment
- District Boundary
- State Boundary

2015 ARMPA Sage Grouse Habitat (revised 2021)
- Priority HMA
- General HMA
- Other HMA

Land Status
- BIA
- BLM
- PVT

N

0 1 2
Miles