

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

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**MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND  
DECISION RECORD**

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DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

March, 2024

Location:  
Salt Lake Meridian, Utah  
T5S, R21E, Section 20

Vernal Field Office  
170 South 500 East  
Vernal, Utah 84078  
435-781-4400  
435-781-4499 (Fax)

BLM



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# MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND

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DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

## 1.0 DECISION

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It is my decision to approve the proposed action: the McCoy Flats Campground and day use area which will meet the BLM's purpose to improve visitor experience and provide interpretive information as well as accommodate the increasing visitation at the McCoy Flats trail system.

The proposed action will result in less than 5 acres of new surface disturbance due to being in a previously disturbed area.

## 1.1 DESIGN FEATURES

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### PLANTS:

The BLM will implement all best management practices (BMPs) for construction, including those outlined in the Vernal Planning Area Invasive Weed Management Plan (DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2016-011-EA) and reclamation guidelines.

### VISUAL RESOURCES:

Interpretive sign locations will be selected to minimize the impact to adjacent visual resources. Facilities will be of a color that blends with the surrounding environment to reduce their visual intrusion on the landscape.

### WILDLIFE:

All wildlife timing and spatial requirements specified in the Vernal RMP will be adhered to during construction.

Implementation of the proposed action will not occur from April 1 through July 15 to protect migratory bird species. An exception to this requirement will be made if a BLM biologist surveys the area 7 to 10 days before the project start date and determines no nesting birds are in or near the project area. Any documented active nests sites will be avoided by a 100-foot buffer.

To the extent possible, construction will not occur from December 1 through April 30 to protect pronghorn in crucial yearlong habitat. However, if construction must occur during that timeframe a site-specific survey for pronghorn will be performed. If pronghorn are not present, or if it is determined through analysis and coordination with UDWR that impacts could be mitigated

(considering factors such as snow depth, temperature, snow crusting, location of disturbance, forage quantity and quality, and animal condition), construction may proceed.

#### **PALEONTOLOGY:**

Pit toilet excavations and bedrock disturbing excavation activities will require paleontological spot-check monitoring by a qualified paleontologist for the duration of excavation activities. The monitor shall inspect no less than 50% of all bedrock disturbing excavation faces and spoils piles. The monitor will assess any finds, collect loose paleontological resources, and take appropriate steps to prevent damage to paleontological resources. Any collected paleontological resources will be reported in writing to the Authorized Officer. The report will identify the collection, describe its physical traits, the location of its discovery (including a map), the geologic layer/formation/unit where it was discovered, the name of the collector, the date it was collected, photographs of the collection (with scale), and any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the report author or the Authorized Officer. All collections will be deposited in an approved repository.

If paleontological resources are discovered during construction without the presence of a monitor, all work will stop, and the Authorized Officer will be contacted for mitigation measures to implement.

#### **1.2 Compliance and Monitoring**

Monitoring by BLM representatives will commence at the onset of construction and continue until the project is complete. Monitoring will ensure the project remains inside the boundaries set forth in the EA. Post-completion monitoring of the project area will occur during routine operation and maintenance.

## 2.0 DECISION RATIONALE

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The decision to authorize the proposed action (hereafter called the selected alternative) has been made in consideration of the environmental impacts of the alternatives analyzed in DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA. This decision was made after considering impacts to resources under Vernal Field Office management while accommodating visitor use and public safety.

### 2.1 AUTHORITIES

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The selected alternative will meet the BLM's need to respond to increasing visitation at the McCoy Flats Trail System as well as provide for public safety and provide diverse recreational opportunities to the public in compliance with the objectives stated in the 2008 VFO Resource Management Plan (RMP).

### 2.2 PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY

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The proposed action and alternatives described in this EA would be in conformance with the VFO Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved 2008 as amended, specifically:

P. 106-REC-1 "Continue to implement public education and environmental awareness programs such as Tread Lightly and the Leave No Trace."

P. 107-REC-12 "Maintain or expand infrastructure of all recreational sites, including, but not limited to, cabins, restrooms, campsites, and trail head development and ensure their safety for public use."

### 2.3 PURPOSE AND NEED

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The need for BLM action is to accommodate the increasing visitation at the McCoy Flats Trail System. The purposes for BLM action are to improve visitor experience and provide interpretive and regulatory information.

### 2.4 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

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The EA analyzed the Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives. Onsite visits were conducted by Vernal Field Office personnel. The Proposed Action was selected because it will best meet the purpose and need as stated in the preceding section.

### 2.4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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The public was notified of this project by its being posted on the BLM's NEPA Register January 31, 2023. No comments or public inquiries were received. BLM also conducted visitor surveys in 2018 at the McCoy Flats trailhead, an expressed desire for a campground was the second largest comment received.

## 2.5 CONSULTATION

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Authorities for Consultation or Coordination</b>	<b>Findings &amp; Conclusions</b>
Utah State Historic Preservation Office	National Historic Preservation Act Section 106	The BLM consulted Utah State Historic Preservation Office on a determination of "No Adverse Effect" for this project on 10/28/2020. The Utah SHPO concurred with this determination on 11/3/2020.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act Section 7	Consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is not required for candidate species such as the monarch butterfly. No other threatened or endangered species populations or critical habitat are in the project area.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404	Consultation with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is not required. The proposed action would not result in any discharge of dredge or fill materials to waters of the U.S.
Tribes	Government to Government Consultation Policy	There are no identified Native American Religious concerns for this project. Consultation for impacts related to this project were initiated with Native American Tribes for the Class III survey U20BL0892 by letter mailed 1/4/2021. No Native American sites were identified within the project area.

## 3.0 PROTEST AND APPEAL

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in the authorizing office within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error. If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulation 43 CFR 4.21 for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice or appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals

and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.



#### Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay

If you appeal this decision, please provide this office with a copy of your Statement of Reasons.

#### DR Table Authorized Officer Signature and Dates

Signatures	
	
Authorized Officer	Date

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

---

DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

March, 2024

Location:  
Salt Lake Meridian, Utah  
T5S, R21E, Section 20

Vernal Field Office  
170 South 500 East  
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BLM





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# MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND

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DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) completed an environmental review DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA for McCoy Flats Campground in Uintah County, Utah. The proposed action, as described in the attached Environmental Assessment, includes the construction of campground and day use area. The total project boundary is 20 acres of which less than 5 acres will incur ground disturbing impacts.

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## 2.0 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

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Based on my review of the attached Environmental Assessment and supporting documents, I have determined that the preferred alternative is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. No environmental effects will meet the definition of significance as defined in 40 CFR 1501.3(b) and will not exceed those effects described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Vernal RMP (2008). Therefore, an EIS is not needed.

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## 3.0 RATIONALE

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The following have been considered in my evaluation:

i. Short- and long-term effects:

The duration of the effects from the proposed action will include both short-term and long-term effects. Increased noise disturbance from the equipment used to construct the campground and day use area will be a short-term effect because, it would only apply to the time of construction. The previously disturbed area within the footprint of the project area will be a long-term effect on wildlife habitat along with the new disturbance resulting from the construction of the campground and day use area; however, this will not be a significant impact to wildlife habitat because the project area was previously disturbed and is proportionately insignificant in comparison to total available habitat, and because the frequent use by visitors to the site has habituated the local wildlife species to human recreational activity.

ii. Beneficial and adverse effects:

The proposed action would directly benefit recreational visitors by providing designated sites with facilities for overnight use and additional space to park for recreational use other than mountain biking.

iii. Effects on public health and safety:

The preferred alternative will increase public safety for all visitors by providing a defined and developed day use area and designated sites for overnight use and campfire safety.



iv. Effects that would violate Federal, State, Tribal, or local laws protecting the environment:

No Federal, State, local or Tribal laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment would be violated as a result of the proposed action. A Class III intensive pedestrian survey of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the proposed project was conducted under project U20BL0892. A determination was made of "No Historic Properties" for this project. The Utah State Historic Preservation Office was consulted on this determination on 10/28/2020. The SHPO concurred with this determination on 11/3/2020. Pursuant to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1531) and NHPA (16 USC 131) consultation was initiated with Native American Tribes for the Class III survey U20BL0892 by letter mailed 1/4/2021. Responses were received from Hopi, Santa Clara, and the Southern Ute. There were no identified Native American sites or issues within the project area.

## 4.0 APPROVAL

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**FONSI Table 1. Authorized Officer Signature and Date**

Signatures	
	
Authorized Officer	Date

**UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

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**MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

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DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

March, 2024

Location:  
Salt Lake Meridian, Utah  
T5S, R21E, Section 20

Vernal Field Office  
170 South 500 East  
Vernal, Utah 84078  
435-781-4400  
435-781-4499 (Fax)

BLM



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## MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND

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DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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McCoy Flats Trail System is a BLM trail system near Vernal, Utah, that was officially designated as a national mountain biking trail system by Congress in the 2018 John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. This designation has resulted in an increase in recreational use by 50% as monitored by visitor tracking devices located at the developed trail head. There are currently few facilities and no developed camping areas for visitors or kiosks to educate them on recreation opportunities in the McCoy Flats vicinity. The BLM proposes to construct a campground and day use area in the vicinity of McCoy Flats Road, northwest of the existing trailhead.

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#### 1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED

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The need for the BLM action is to accommodate the increasing visitation at the McCoy Flats Trail System. The purposes for the BLM action are to improve visitor experience and provide interpretive and regulatory information.

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#### 1.2 DECISION TO BE MADE

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The decision to be made is whether the BLM should construct a campground and day use area near the McCoy Flats trail system.

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#### 1.3 CONFORMANCE WITH BLM LAND USE PLAN(S)

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The Proposed Action and alternatives described in this EA would be in conformance with the VFO Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved 2008 as amended, specifically:

P. 106-REC-1 “Continue to implement public education and environmental awareness programs such as Tread Lightly and the Leave No Trace.”

P. 107-REC-12 “Maintain or expand infrastructure of all recreational sites, including, but not limited to, cabins, restrooms, campsites, and trail head development and ensure their safety for public use.

The Proposed Action would comply with the objectives of Visual Resource Management Class III (Vernal RMP, page 106-107, and Appendix I). See section 3.2.3.

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## 1.4 RELATIONSHIP TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS, OR OTHER PLANS

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The alternatives would comply with the following laws and/or agency regulations and other plans and are consistent with Federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and plans to the extent possible.

- **Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)** The Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandates multiple use of Public Lands, including recreation use. An objective of BLM's recreation policy is to satisfy recreation demand within allowable use levels in an equitable, safe, and enjoyable manner, while minimizing adverse resource impacts and user conflicts.
- **Uintah County General Plan of 2017.** The county plan's recreation objectives and policies require leverage of "federal and state recreation areas, parks, and sites as county-based scenic and recreation economic assets".
- **Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land must be authorized under the Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (UPDES).** Owners and general contractors are required to obtain a Storm Water Permit.

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## 1.5 IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

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Issues were identified by the BLM Interdisciplinary Team as documented in the IDT Checklist (Appendix A). This checklist provides the rationale for all issues considered, including those not analyzed further.

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### 1.5.1 RECREATION

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How would the proposed campground affect recreation, especially in the McCoy Flats Trail System?

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### 1.5.2 VISUAL RESOURCES

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How would the proposed campground, facilities, and surface disturbance affect visual resources?

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### 1.5.3 WILDLIFE: NON-USFWS DESIGNATED

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How would the proposed campground, surface disturbance, and noise affect Greater sage-grouse?



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## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

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### 2.1 ALTERNATIVE A – NO ACTION

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Under the No Action alternative, the campground and day use area would not be constructed. Visitors to the area would continue dispersed camping in unimproved locations adjacent to the existing trailhead and use the parking currently available.

### 2.2 ALTERNATIVE B – PROPOSED ACTION

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Under the Proposed Action alternative, the BLM would construct a campground with up to 15 individual sites, 9 long vehicle sites, and 2 group sites (less than 2 acres of disturbance). Most of these sites would be established on locations previously disturbed by the existing dispersed camping.

Proposed facilities would include shade structures and campfire rings at each site, no less than two single-vault toilets, multiple interpretive kiosks with maps and other information, and a fee tube. All buildings may be equipped with anti-perch devices to reduce the creation of perch locations for birds. The BLM would construct a fence around the campground to keep livestock out of the campground and parking barricades to delineate site parking boundaries and prevent unauthorized site expansion.

The existing road entering the proposed campground location would be improved and expanded. New roads would also be constructed to provide access to the proposed campsites. An overflow parking lot/day use area with 10 to 12 parking stalls that would accommodate trailers would be constructed (approximately 0.2 acres of disturbance).

The proposed locations of these actions are shown on the maps in Appendix B. Vegetation within the campsites and around all proposed facilities would be cleared or treated as needed to maintain the sites. The Proposed Action would be completed within 10 years of approval, as funds are available.

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#### 2.2.1 ROADS

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The BLM would improve 0.75 mile of existing native soil road (approximately 2 acres of disturbance) to provide suitable campsite access. The upgraded roads would be established as bidirectional or unidirectional roads, whichever would best meet visitor access needs. The BLM would also construct 0.25 mile of road (approximately 0.6 acre of disturbance); all new road constructed would be unidirectional.

Unidirectional roads would have a maximum disturbance width of 20 feet including any drainage features. Bidirectional roads would have a maximum disturbance width of 30 feet including any drainage features. Roads would be bladed, and graded to provide for appropriate drainage, road

base would be used to create a suitable and sustainable driving surface. Culverts may be placed to prevent road washout where determined necessary by the engineering design.

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### 2.2.2 DESIGN FEATURES

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The following design features would apply to the construction of the campground, day use area, and kiosks.

#### 2.2.2.1 WEED CONTROL

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- The BLM would implement all best management practices (BMPs) for construction, including those outlined in the Vernal Planning Area Invasive Weed Management Plan (DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2016-011-EA) and reclamation guidelines.

#### 2.2.2.2 VISUAL RESOURCES

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- Interpretive sign locations would be selected to minimize the impact to adjacent visual resources. Facilities would be of a color that blends with the surrounding environment to reduce their visual intrusion on the landscape.

#### 2.2.2.3 WILDLIFE

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- All wildlife timing and spatial requirements specified in the Vernal RMP would be adhered to during construction.
- To protect migratory birds, construction that must occur from April 1 through July 15 would be subject to a site-specific survey for nesting birds performed by a qualified biologist no more than 7-10 days prior to construction to confirm that no nests are present, or all young have fledged. If nesting birds are found during the survey, 100-foot buffers would be observed around the nest until the birds have fledged.
- To protect big game species (Pronghorn) in crucial yearlong habitat, if construction must occur from December 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>, a site-specific survey for pronghorn would be performed. If pronghorn are present, construction activities would not take place until pronghorn have vacated the project area. If pronghorn are not present, or if it is determined through analysis and coordination with UDWR that impacts could be mitigated (considering factors such as snow depth, temperature, snow crusting, location of disturbance, forage quantity and quality, and animal condition), construction may proceed.
- A BLM biologist would perform clearance surveys for BLM sensitive species 7-10 days prior to construction. If species are found present specific timing and spatial requirements would apply.

#### 2.2.2.4 PALEONTOLOGY

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- Pit toilet excavations and bedrock disturbing excavation activities would require paleontological spot-check monitoring by a qualified paleontologist for the duration of excavation activities. The monitor shall inspect no less than 50% of all bedrock disturbing excavation faces and spoils piles. The monitor would assess any finds, collect loose paleontological resources, and take appropriate steps to prevent damage to paleontological resources. Any collected paleontological resources would be reported in writing to the Authorized Officer. The report would identify the collection, describe its physical traits, the location of its discovery (including a map), the geologic layer/formation/unit where it was discovered, the name of the collector, the date it was collected, photographs of the collection (with scale), and any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the report author or the Authorized Officer. All collections would be deposited in an approved repository.
- If paleontological resources are discovered during construction without the presence of a monitor, all work would stop, and the Authorized Officer would be contacted for mitigation measures to implement.

## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

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### 3.1 HOW WOULD THE PROPOSED CAMPGROUND AFFECT RECREATION ESPECIALLY IN THE MCCOY FLATS TRAIL SYSTEM?

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#### 3.1.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The McCoy Flats recreation area is located 7 miles southwest of Vernal, Utah. This recreation area is popular for mountain biking, off highway vehicle (OHV) use, equestrian use, and running. The analysis area for recreation is from Hwy 40 to the end of the paved McCoy Flats Road about 1.6 miles southeast of the main trailhead. This area was picked because it is the area currently associated with recreation. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable impacts include the construction of the campground, expansion of the mountain bike trail system, and a land use plan amendment required by the 2018 John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. Each of these actions would enhance the recreation experience and the ability of the BLM to provide for a spectrum of recreation opportunities.

#### 3.1.2 ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Under the No Action alternative, because the proposed campground and day use area would not be constructed and no developed infrastructure would be available for overnight use, visitors would continue to camp and recreate at the McCoy Flats Trail System and the surrounding areas in a dispersed manner, resulting in a continuation of resource damage and conflicts between recreational users at the shared trailhead and parking areas. Without the proposed regulatory and interpretive signage, damage to trails from unauthorized use types would continue.

#### 3.1.3 ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Construction of the proposed campground and day use area would consolidate visitor parking and camping in designated campsites and day-use areas, reducing damage to vegetation from off-route driving and allowing regrowth of vegetation for a more desirable experience. The campground would also provide no less than three sites designed specifically to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act. These sites would ensure there are opportunities for people with disabilities to use the campground with minimal barriers to access. The proposed shade shelters, tables, and fire rings would accommodate overnight use and improve campfire safety of visitors and protection from the sun. Visitor travel could begin at individual designated sites, alleviating crowding and reducing potential user conflicts in the shared trailhead and parking areas. The proposed regulatory and interpretive signage would guide users to the appropriate activity-specific areas and should prevent or reduce damage to trails from unauthorized use types. This consolidation in use, and education of visitors of appropriate activity-specific areas, would likely

result in a more desirable visitor experience by those recreating in and around the McCoy Flats Trail System.

### 3.2 HOW WOULD THE PROPOSED CAMPGROUND, FACILITIES, AND SURFACE DISTURBANCE AFFECT VISUAL RESOURCES?

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#### 3.2.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

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The area around the Proposed Action is managed as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III. Within this class, surface-disturbing activities must partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape can be moderate. Management activities may attract the attention of the casual observer. Any change to the landscape should repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

#### 3.2.2 ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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Under the No Action alternative, visitors would continue to disperse camp throughout the area creating visual intrusions from their vehicles along the main route to the trailheads over the entirety of the route.

#### 3.2.3 ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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Construction of the proposed campground and day use area would primarily be a planar disturbance. The shade shelters in each site would be the tallest and most prominent disturbance to the visual landscape but would be built in sites within pinyon and juniper trees which would partly obscure these structures, and which would wholly obscure individual site parking barriers. Additionally, the linear disturbance from construction of the proposed road would be broken up by the vegetation barriers as well. Visitors using the campground and adjacent recreation areas would be considered the primary observers of the project. Visual intrusions to those recreating in the area would be limited, as there are topographical barriers that would block the visual disturbances as visitors travel away from the proposed campground location. Because of the natural barriers, the campground would result in little or no visual impact to the users of the McCoy Flats Mountain Biking Trail System. Additionally, the proposed campground and day use area would benefit recreationists who come primarily to use the adjacent trails and recreation areas.

#### 3.2.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

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This analysis describes and evaluates campground impacts to visual resources within 3 miles of the project location. This spatial scale was established because it corresponds to a threshold

between the BLM's VRM foreground/middleground (F/M) distance zone (0–3 miles) (BLM 1986a) where proposed management activities could be seen in detail. The past, present, and reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions which impact visual resources are recreation site and trail development projects, guided by strict visual management parameters and designed to protect the viewshed and scenery from deterioration. Recreation facilities would continue to be improved to accommodate the increasing number of visitors and be constructed in colors that would complement and blend with the surrounding environment. Trails would continue to be developed in and around the trail system for both motorized and non-motorized users, creating linear disturbances, but their impacts to the viewshed would be minimized by existing vegetation which would conceal these disturbances from the casual viewer. Therefore, no cumulatively adverse effect on the visual resources would occur.

### 3.3 HOW WOULD THE PROPOSED CAMPGROUND, SURFACE DISTURBANCE, AND NOISE AFFECT GREATER SAGE-GROUSE?

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#### 3.3.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

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The Greater sage-grouse is an important game bird, which currently inhabits about 50% of their historic range in Utah (Beck et al. 2003). Greater sage-grouse occupy sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant within quality habitat. Factors involved in the decline in both the distribution and abundance of Greater sage-grouse include permanent loss, degradation, and fragmentation of sagebrush-steppe habitat throughout the western states, including Utah (Heath et al. 1997, Braun 1998, and Connelly et al. 2004). Documented severe populations declines throughout their range (approximately 80%) occurred from the mid-1960s to mid-1980s. On March 5, 2010, the US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) designated Greater sage-grouse a candidate species for protection under the Endangered Species Act; however, in September of 2015, the USFWS withdrew the species from the candidate species list. Research and conservation efforts over the last 20 years have help stabilize and recover many populations. Populations appear to have taken a slight positive turn in recent years (WAFWA 2015).

The Uintah population of Greater sage-grouse inhabits the northeastern corner of Utah and borders Wyoming to the north and Colorado to the east. This population is part of the WAFWA MZ II management zone called the Wyoming Basin (Stiver et al. 2006). The Utah portion of this area encompasses approximately 59,000 acres, ranging from the Green River Valley (5,000 feet elevation) up to the high-elevation Yampa and Blue Mountain Plateaus (8,000 feet elevation). This population is in a largely undisturbed area with minimal threats relative to other populations in the region. Based on 10 years of lek counts (2008 – 2017), the Uintah population of Greater sage-grouse have been on an upward trend. In 2017-2019, the population began to decline but this may also reflect their natural 10-year cyclic population pattern, and overall, the trend for Greater sage-grouse is steady and consistent with expected levels of male attendance at leks.

The project location is in a BLM-designated General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)-designated winter and brood-rearing habitat. However, there has been no Greater sage-grouse activity observed in this habitat for the past 10 years (B. Maxfield, pers. comm.). Per UDWR, if Greater sage-grouse still use the area, they would do so in the winter, and very few would use the proposed campground area. This area is disturbed and altered already due to existing recreation use (i.e., camping, biking, etc.) and grazing, which have resulted in extensive cheatgrass growth throughout the area, which has outcompeted the sagebrush in many areas near and in the project area.

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### 3.3.2 ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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Under the No Action alternative, there would be no additional surface disturbance, and therefore no impact to Greater sage-grouse outside of impacts from existing dispersed camping in the area.

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### 3.3.3 ALTERNATIVE B (PROPOSED ACTION) ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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19.4 acres of brood-rearing and wintering habitat would be disturbed by the proposed construction, causing loss of these habitats.

The proposed project falls within a BLM designated General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) and UDWR designated winter and brood-rearing habitat. Although the UDWR identifies brood-rearing and wintering habitat within the project area, there has been no Greater sage-grouse activity observed for 10 years, (B. Maxfield, pers. comm.). Per UDWR if GRSG are still using the area, it would be in the winter with very few Greater sage-grouse would use the project area (if at all), per UDWR, the proposed construction would not adversely impact the current population in the area. Additionally, the proposed facilities would mainly be in existing disturbance areas, so there would not be an increase in disturbance to GRSG habitat. (B. Maxfield, pers. comm.). The BLM would adhere to the 2015 Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA) and any applicable aspects of MA-SSS-5 to minimize any adverse impacts to Greater sage-grouse and perpetuate beneficial impacts.

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### 3.3.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

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The analysis area for Greater sage-grouse is the 457,575 acres of UDWR designated brood-rearing and wintering habitat, which encompasses the entire project area and surrounding habitat. This area was selected due to the Greater sage-grouse being a highly mobile species and being able to travel across large areas. Cumulative effects on the species result from loss of any of this mapped habitat. Reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions in this area may include oil and gas development, grazing, urbanization and increased recreation. The Proposed Action would contribute 19.4 acres to the cumulative loss of brood-rearing and wintering habitat, habitat fragmentation, and disruption or alteration of seasonal use and migration routes. The existing trails and area experience their highest levels of recreation during the spring, summer and fall. Bicyclists and campers could harass and displace Greater sage-

grouse to other adjacent habitats; however, this is unlikely to occur given that Greater sage-grouse have not been observed in the area for over 10 years. Development and recreation will likely continue to contribute to a sustained reduction in the overall quality and quantity of brood-rearing and winter habitat. The Bureau of Land Management consulted with the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources on the potential impacts to sage grouse and concurred that the development of a campground would reduce the overall impact to sage grouse by consolidating dispersed camping in the area. This concurrence may be seen in Appendix C of this document.

The proposed campground and facilities would contribute to a cumulative effort to concentrate recreation to existing disturbed areas and divert recreationists away from critical areas to reduce additional fragmentation of habitat via recreational use by the public. The No Action alternative would not result in an accumulation of impacts.



## 4.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

### 4.1 PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

Table 4-1 lists the persons, groups, and agencies that were coordinated with or consulted during the preparation of this project. The table also summarizes the conclusions of those processes.

**Table 4-1. Coordination and Consultation**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Authorities for Consultation or Coordination</b>	<b>Findings &amp; Conclusions</b>
Uintah County Roads Department	Access to campground stems from, UTU-81261-88	The BLM met with Uintah County Roads Department 1/11/2024 and informed them of the intent to construct the McCoy Flats Campground, additionally a notice letter about the project was sent on 1/22/2024.
Utah State Historic Preservation Office	National Historic Preservation Action Section 106	The BLM consulted Utah State Historic Preservation Office on a determination of "No Historic Properties" for this project on 10/28/2020. The Utah SHPO concurred with this determination on 11/3/2020.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act Section 7	Consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is not required for candidate species such as the monarch butterfly. No other threatened or endangered species populations or critical habitat are in the project area.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404	Consultation with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is not required because the proposed construction would not result in any discharge of dredge or fill materials to waters of the U.S.
Tribes	Government to Government Consultation Policy	There are no identified Native American Religious concerns for this project. Consultation for impacts related to this project were initiated with Native American Tribes for the Class III survey U20BL0892 by letter mailed 1/4/2021. No Native American sites were identified within the project area.

#### 4.2 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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The public was notified of this project by posting it online to the BLM's public-access National NEPA Register on January 31, 2023. No comments or public inquiries were received. The BLM also conducted visitor surveys in 2018 at the McCoy Flats trailhead, and desire for a campground was the second-most comment received.

#### 4.3 LIST OF PREPARERS

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The specialists listed in the following table(s) assisted in the preparation of this EA.

**Table 4-2. BLM Preparers**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document</b>
Jessica Farmer	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Project Lead, Recreation, Visual Resources
Jordan McMahon	Wildlife Biologist	Greater sage-grouse
Joel Ward	NEPA Coordinator	Quality Assurance

## 5.0 REFERENCES, GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

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### 5.1 REFERENCES CITED

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List references. If there are more references that are not mentioned in the air quality references page, please include them here as well.

Beck, J. L., D. L. Mitchell, and B. D. Maxfield. 2003. Changes in the distribution and status of sage-grouse in Utah. *Western North American Naturalist* 63:203–214.

BLM. (2008, October 31) as amended. Bureau of Land Management Vernal Field Office, Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan. Vernal, Utah, USA: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Vernal Field Office.

BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 2015. Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Utah State Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.

BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 1986a. *Visual Resource Inventory*. Manual H-8410-1. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. Available at: [https://blmwyomingvisual.anl.gov/docs/BLM\\_VRI\\_H-8410.pdf](https://blmwyomingvisual.anl.gov/docs/BLM_VRI_H-8410.pdf). Accessed October 12, 2022.

Braun, C. E. 1998. Sage grouse declines in western North America: what are the problems? *Proceedings of the Western Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies* 78: 139-156.

Connelly J.W., S.T. Knick, M.A. Schroeder, and S.J. Stiver. 2004. Conservation assessment of greater sage-grouse and sagebrush habitats. Cheyenne, Wyoming: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Heath, B. J., R. Straw, S. H. Anderson, and J. Lawson. 1997. Sage grouse productivity, survival, and seasonal habitat use near Farson, Wyoming. Project Completion Report, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Laramie, Wyoming, USA. Parrish, J.R., F.P. Howe, and R.E. Norvell. 2002. *Utah Partners in Flight Avian Conservation*

Public Law No: 116-9 (2019, March 12). John D. Dingell. Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act

Stiver, S.J., A.D. Apa, J.R. Bohne, S.D. Bunnell, P.A. Deibert, S.C. Gardner, M.A. Hilliard, C.W. McCarthy, and M.A. Schroeder. 2006. Greater Sage-Grouse comprehensive conservation strategy. Unpublished report. Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Cheyenne, WY.

### 5.3 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**AUTHORIZED OFFICER:** The decision maker who has the delegated authority to for that decision.

**BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:** A suite of techniques that guide, or may be applied to, management actions to aid in achieving desired outcomes.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:** Conditions or requirements under which a decision is made.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:** A concise public document that analyzes the environmental impacts of a Proposed Action and provides enough evidence to determine the level of significance of the impacts.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT:** A detailed written statement of environmental effects of a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

**IMPACT:** A modification of the existing environment caused by an action (such as construction or operation of facilities).

**INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM:** Representatives of various disciplines designated as members of a team which was created to prepare an environmental document.

**INVASIVE PLANTS:** Plants that are not part of (if exotic), or are a minor component of (if native), the original plant community or communities that have the potential to become a dominant or co-dominant species on the site if their future establishment and growth is not actively controlled by management interventions.

**MINIMIZE:** To reduce the adverse impact of an operation to the lowest practical level.

**MITIGATION:** Steps taken to 1) avoid an impact; 2) minimize an impact; 3) rectify an impact; 4) reduce or eliminate an impact over time; or, 5) compensate for an impact.

**MONITORING:** The process of collecting and assessing data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of a decision or its conditions of approval.

**MULTIPLE USE:** The management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people.

**NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE:** The most likely condition to exist in the future if current management direction were to continue unchanged.

**NOXIOUS WEEDS:** A plant species designated by Federal or State law as generally possessing one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage; parasitic; a carrier or host of serious insects or disease; or nonnative, new, or not common to the United States.

**OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE:** Any motorized vehicle capable of or designed for travel on or immediately over land.

**PROJECT AREA:** The area of land potentially affected by a proposed project.

**REVEGETATION:** Re-establishing desirable plants on areas where desirable plants are absent or of inadequate density, by management alone (natural revegetation) or by seeding or transplanting (artificial revegetation).

**SCOPING:** The process of identifying the issues, management concerns, preliminary alternatives, and other components of an environmental document.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** A determination of the degree or magnitude of importance of an effect, whether beneficial or adverse.

**TIMING RESTRICTION:** A constraint that prohibits specified activities during specified time periods to protect identified resource values.

**Table 6-1. Acronyms**

Acronym	Meaning
ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AO	Authorized Officer
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BCC	Birds of Conservation Concern
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CEQ	Council of Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
IAA	Impact Area of Analysis
CO	Carbon Monoxide
COA	Condition of Approval
CWA	Clean Water Act
DAQ	Division of Air Quality
DR	Decision Record
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency

Acronym	Meaning
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FO	Field Office
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
GIS	Geographic Information System
HAP	Hazardous Air Pollutants
IAA	Impact Analysis Area
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
NAAQS	National and Utah Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NI	Not Impacted
NP	Not Present
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OHV	Off-highway Vehicle
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Act
PIF	Partners in Flight
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976
RFD	Reasonably Foreseeable Development
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right-of-way
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SMA	Surface Management Agency
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
UDWaR	Utah Division of Water Rights
UDWR	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDI	U.S. Department of the Interior
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

Acronym	Meaning
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WSA	Wilderness Study Area

## APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

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Interdisciplinary Team Checklist

Resources and Issues Considered (Includes Supplemental Authorities Appendix I H-1790-1)

Project Title: McCoy Flats Campground

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

Project Leader: Jessica Farmer

Determination of Staff \*: *(Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)*

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

**Table Appendix A-1. Interdisciplinary Team Checklist**

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Air Quality	<p>The Proposed Action would not be anticipated to have an adverse impact on air quality. The Proposed Action would result in criteria air pollutant and fugitive dust emissions from vehicle transportation to and from the site and construction equipment usage onsite. Emissions would be short-term in duration (during construction only), and air quality would not be affected to a degree that a detailed analysis is required. Emissions would be dispersed over the project area and would be indistinguishable from background emissions as measured by monitors or predicted by models. Application of dust control measures required by Utah Administrative Code R307-205-5 would minimize impacts from fugitive dust.</p> <p>The project location is in the Uinta Basin Ozone Nonattainment Area (Marginal). 40 CFR 93.153 defines the de minimis thresholds for nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in a marginal ozone nonattainment area as 100 tons per year (tpy). Potential emissions from this project over an annual basis are calculated to be below de minimis levels. The emissions inventory for the project total 0.12 tons of NOx and 0.02 tons of VOCs. A general conformity determination is filed in the project record.</p>	Adam Deppe Tyler Elgiar	01/23/23 01/11/24

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<p>The Proposed Action would not be anticipated to have an adverse impact on greenhouse gases and climate change. The Proposed Action would result in greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle transportation to and from the site and construction equipment usage onsite. Emissions would be short-term in duration (during construction only), and not affected to a degree that a detailed analysis is required. Emissions would be dispersed over the project area and would be indistinguishable from background emissions as measured by monitors or predicted by models.</p> <p>Cumulative GHG emissions contribute to climate change, but net-emissions determine the impact on climate. The closer net-emissions are to zero, then the climate impact is also closer to zero. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) GHG permitting programs only apply to major stationary sources emitting over 100,000 tons carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) per year (e.g., power plant, landfill, etc.) or modifications of major sources with emission increases greater than 75,000 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per year. Additionally, the EPA requires annual reporting for facilities with stationary sources that emit 25,000 metric tons (mt) CO<sub>2</sub>e per year to provide a basis for future policy decisions and regulatory initiatives regarding GHG's. This Proposed Action's emissions (32.21 mt CO<sub>2</sub>e) do not trigger EPA rules, permitting, or reporting requirements. Since emissions would be below the EPA rules, they would be close to net-zero.</p>	Adam Deppe Tyler Elgiar	01/23/23 01/11/24
NP	BLM Natural Areas	No Natural Areas are present in the project area per GIS data and the Vernal RMP.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Cultural: Archaeological Resources	A Class III intensive pedestrian survey U20BL0892 of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) was conducted. A determination was made of "No Historic Properties". The Utah State Historic Preservation Office was consulted on this determination on 10/28/2020 and concurred with this determination on 11/03/2020.	William Reitze	1/10/24
NI	Cultural: Native American Religious Concerns	Pursuant to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1531) and NHPA (16 USC 131) consultation was initiated with Native American Tribes for the Class III survey U20BL0892 by letter mailed 1/4/2021. Responses were received from Hopi, Santa Clara, and the Southern Ute. There were no identified Native American sites or issues within the project area.	William Reitze	1/10/24
PI	John Wesley Powell (JWP) NCA & McCoy Flats Mountain Biking Area	The proposed campground would enhance visitor experiences and provide additional opportunities and interpretive resources within and adjacent to McCoy Flats Trail System. The project location is not in the JWP NCA, per GIS review. This resource is analyzed with recreation in section 3.1 of the EA.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NP	Designated Areas: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	No areas of critical environmental concern are present in the project area per GIS data and the Vernal RMP.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NP	Designated Areas: Wild and Scenic Rivers	No wild and scenic rivers are present in the project area per GIS data and the Vernal RMP.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NP	Designated Areas: Wilderness Study Areas	No wilderness study areas are present in the project area per GIS data and the Vernal RMP.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24

* NP	Resource/Issue Environmental Justice	Rationale No minority or low-income communities or populations would incur disproportionately high or adverse health or environmental effects from the Proposed Action or alternatives because none are present in or adjacent to the project area per review using Headwaters economics tool.	Signature Jessica Farmer	Date 01/06/24
NP	Farmlands (prime/unique)	There are no prime or unique Farmlands as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service in the project area. Therefore, no prime farmlands would be affected, and detailed analysis is not required.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NP	Fuels/Fire Management	The project location is not in any previously treated areas. Surface disturbance may impact Fire Management due to the increased potential of promoting invasive species; primarily <i>Bromus tectorum</i> (cheatgrass), which may increase fire frequency. However, the designed weed control (see section 2.2.2.1) would help prevent creation of additional hazardous fuels. It is also recommended that the applicant use fire-tolerant plant species (bunch grasses) if any reclamation efforts are needed to control weeds.	Dixie Sadlier Chris Perkins	01/12/22 1/17/2024
NI	Geology / Minerals / Energy Production	The project area is not within any identified active fluid or solid mineral resource leases or boundaries. Per review of Legacy Rehost 2000 (LR2000), Mineral & Land Records System (MLRS), and BLM GIS data, no active mining claims are in the area. The proposed construction would not contact or affect any identifiable mineral resources. This resource will not be analyzed further.	Vincent Cunningham	01/10/24

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Lands/Access	<p>Master Title Plats have been reviewed for conflicts with existing rights-of-way. Uintah County holds a right-of-way for McCoy flats road, UTU-81261-88, which is the main access to the proposed campground. There are no alterations to the main road in the proposed action. A notice letter about the project was sent on 1/22/2024. If upgrades to the main road are needed coordination with the County would occur.</p> <p>The project area is in lands withdrawn for Oil Shale and Public Land Order 7725, and Public Land Order 4522.</p> <p>No existing land uses would be changed or modified by the proposed campground. Therefore, there would be no adverse effect and no detailed analysis is required.</p>	Cherei Miller Patrick Ahrensbrak	2/2/23 1/22/24
NP	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	No Lands with Wilderness Characteristics are present in the project area per GIS data and the Vernal RMP.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NI	Livestock Grazing & Rangeland Health Standards	The proposed project location is in the McCoy Flat Allotment. The proposed campground would remove some areas for grazing but would not be expected to affect AUMs on the allotment because the size of the campground compared to the total size of the allotment. The proposed project is not expected to have a significant impact on rangeland health standards and guidelines because the area is already disturbed from existing dispersed camping. The campground would be fenced off (see section 2.2) to prevent livestock conflicts with recreationists using the campground.	Travis Decker	1/17/2024

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Paleontology	<p>The project area is within a Paleontological Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) Zone 5, which indicates the highest likelihood of encountering paleontological resources. However, per guidance from United States Department of Interior Instruction Memorandum 2009-011, actions that would only impact the surface - like the proposed mechanical brush clearing, erecting shade structures, installing fire rings, and maintaining roads - would not be subject to mitigation measures. This guidance is applicable because the surface cover at much of the project area is loose sand, gravel, and cobbles that were transported from another location. On September 13 and 14, 2023 a BLM paleontologist surveyed the site and concluded there are no significant paleontological resources at the surface, but they could be encountered during bedrock excavations. Impacts from project activities that could otherwise impact paleontological resources - like excavating pit toilets or disturbing in-place bedrock- would be minimized by the design features (see section 2.2.2.4).</p>	Vincent Cunningham	01/10/24
NI	Plants: Invasive and Noxious Weeds	<p>Noxious weeds were identified in the area, per BLM GIS data review. Invasive species: cheatgrass (<i>Bromus tectorum</i>), and salt cedar (<i>Tamarix ramosissima</i>) were identified near the project area. The designed weed control (see section 2.2.2.1) would address any infestations of noxious and invasive plants introduced or spread in the project area by construction. Invasive plants and noxious weeds were therefore eliminated from further analysis in this EA.</p>	Travis Decker	1/17/2024

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Plants: Native Communities	The proposed construction would disturb up to 5 acres of native vegetation from plant communities within the project area. According to the Ecological Site Description for the area, the site is showing that it is in State 2: Current Potential State, meaning This state has lower resistance to disturbances and resilience after disturbance than the reference state due to the occurrence of invasive species and increased bare ground. Ecological function has not changed but the resiliency of the state has been reduced by the presence of invasive weeds and continued drought. The designed weed control (see section 2.2.2.1) would keep the community at its current potential ecological state.	Travis Decker	1/17/2024
NP	Plants: BLM Sensitive	No BLM Sensitive plant species are present in or near the project area, per BLM GIS data review and field visit in July 2020.	Sandra Robins	1/23/24
NP	Plants: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate	No Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, or Candidate plant species are present in or near the project area, per BLM GIS data review and field visit in July 2020.	Sandra Robins	1/23/24
PI	Recreation	The proposed campground would be adjacent to the McCoy Flats Mountain Biking Trail System within the proposed boundary for the McCoy Flats recreation area. Because it would be within that boundary and should increase recreationist opportunities while visiting the area it will be analyzed in further detail within the document.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24



*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Socioeconomics	11 percent of Uintah County employment and wages come from the leisure and hospitality industry which would include recreation. This project would neither create new jobs or increase demand on the current leisure and hospitality industry as it is responding to increased visitor use. As such no impact to the social or economic status of the county or nearby communities would occur from this Proposed Action per review using Headwaters economics tool. Uintah County emphasizes recreation development in their county plan.	Jessica Farmer	01/22/24
NI	Soils: Physical / Biological	Soil in the project area include Yarts fine sandy loam with 4 to 9 percent slopes and Gerst-Rock outcrop complex with 4 to 40 percent slopes. Yarts fine sandy loam soils are well drained with moderate to high permeability and low run off. These soils would be resistant to erosion. Gerst-Rock outcrop complex is a shallow loam with moderate permeability and high runoff. Removal of vegetation during construction could increase erosion in these areas. However, areas where vegetation is removed would be covered with road base to help to prevent erosion. The designed culverts, gravel and road base (see section 2.2.1) should help offset any impacts to soil resources.	Lisa Boyd	01/10/24
PI	Visual Resources	The project area is in VRM Class III. The objective of class III is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract the attention of the casual observer but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24

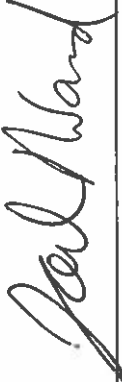

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NP	Wastes (hazardous/solid)	Hazardous Waste: No chemicals subject to reporting under Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act Title III in an amount equal to or greater than 10,000 pounds would be used, produced, stored, transported, or disposed of annually in association with the project.	Jessica Farmer	01/06/24
NI	Water: Groundwater Quality	Groundwater resources under the project site would not come into contact with project activities. Construction should not disturb the ground to groundwater depth level, nor use fluids in amounts that may infiltrate the overburden into groundwater. Similar projects with known outcomes did not impact groundwater quality. This resource will not be analyzed further.	Vincent Cunningham	01/10/24
NI	Water: Hydrologic Conditions (stormwater)	Camping is already occurring in the project area, therefore the action would not result in new permanent changes to surface hydrology. Further, construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land must be authorized under the Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (UPDES). Owners and general contractors are required to obtain a Storm Water Permit. Due to the mitigation measures within the stormwater permit and the area already being used as a campground, detailed analysis is not required.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NI	Water: Municipal Watershed / Drinking Water Source Protection	No municipal watershed / drinking water source protection zones are present in the project area per GIS review.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NP	Water: Streams, Riparian, Wetlands, Floodplains	No streams, riparian areas, wetlands, or floodplains are present in the project area per GIS review of BLM databases.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Water: Surface Water Quality	Surface water is only present in the project area during precipitation events due to there not being any ponds or streams present. Because the proposed drainage features (see section 2.2.1) would prevent alteration of surface water flow or hydrology, no detailed analysis is required.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NP	Water: Water Rights	No water rights are in the project area per review of the water rights database. BLM owns various nearby water rights; however, they would not be affected by the Proposed Action because no water developments will be a part of the Proposed Action. Therefore, detailed analysis is not required.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NP	Water: Waters of the U.S.	No streams or wetlands are in or near the project area per GIS review and on-site.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NP	Wild Horses	Per GIS review, and district files there are no federally recognized wild horse herds or management areas in or near the project area.	William Reitze	1/10/24
NI	Wildlife: Migratory Birds (including raptors)	<p><b>Migratory birds:</b> Numerous migratory bird species may migrate through or nest within the project area. The project will result in the degradation of approximately 19.4 acres of migratory bird habitat. Due to the design feature regarding migratory birds (see section 2.2.2.3), impacts to migratory birds would be minimized by avoiding sensitive nesting timeframes and conducting pre-construction surveys. Therefore, impacts are not analyzed in detail.</p> <p><b>Raptors:</b> Raptor habitat exists in the project area, but no known raptor nests exist within the project area, per GIS review of BLM databases. The designed construction timing restriction (see section 2.2.2.3) would further reduce impacts to raptors below a level that would require detailed analysis.</p>	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024

*	<b>Resource/Issue</b> Wildlife: Fish (designated or non-designated)	<b>Rationale</b> Per GIS review of BLM files, no fish species or their habitat are present in the project area.	<b>Signature</b> Jordan McMahon	<b>Date</b> 01/10/2024
PI	Wildlife: Non-USFWS Designated	<p><b>Pronghorn:</b> (NI)- The project area is in Utah Division of Wildlife Resources designated pronghorn year-long crucial habitat. However, the proposed disturbance would only be 19.4 acres of total mapped habitat (385,657 acres) in the greater proximity. and the designed construction timing restriction (see section 2.2.2.3), impacts of construction and noise to pronghorn and associated year-long crucial habitat would be minimized.</p> <p><b>Greater Sage Grouse:</b> (PI)- The project location is in a BLM-designated General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) and UDWR-designated winter and brood-rearing habitat. Thus, per the BLM 2015 Utah Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA), applicable aspects of MA-SSS-5 would apply to mitigate any potential impacts from the proposed campground, surface disturbance, and noise to GRSG.</p>	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024
NP	Wildlife: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed or Candidate	No known listed species exist in the project area. No designated critical habitat for listed species exists in the project area. Therefore, detailed analysis is not required. Milkweed surveys will be done by BLM biologists prior to construction.	Jordan McMahon	01/10/2024

*	Resource/Issue	Rationale	Signature	Date
NI	Woodlands/Forestry	There are scattered individual juniper trees present in the project location where existing dispersed camping and day use are free to collect incidental amounts of firewood and burn it under current management. This project should have no impact on woodland and forest resources per review of project description and personal knowledge of the site.	David Palmer	1/10/2024

**Table Appendix A-2. Final Review**

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator		3/14/24	
Authorized Officer		3/14/24	Approved

## APPENDIX B: MAPS

FIGURE 1: MCCOY FLATS PROPOSED CAMPGROUND

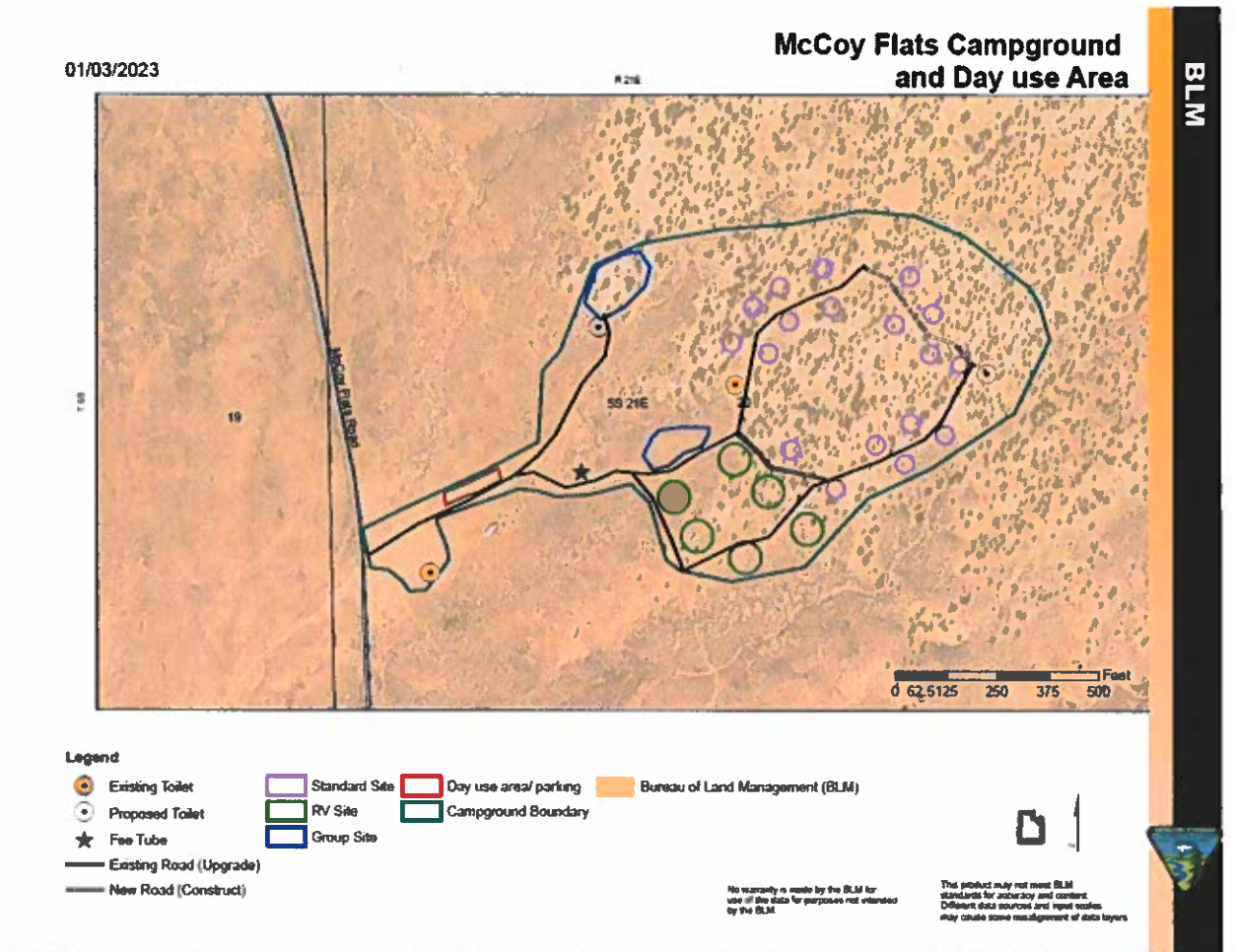
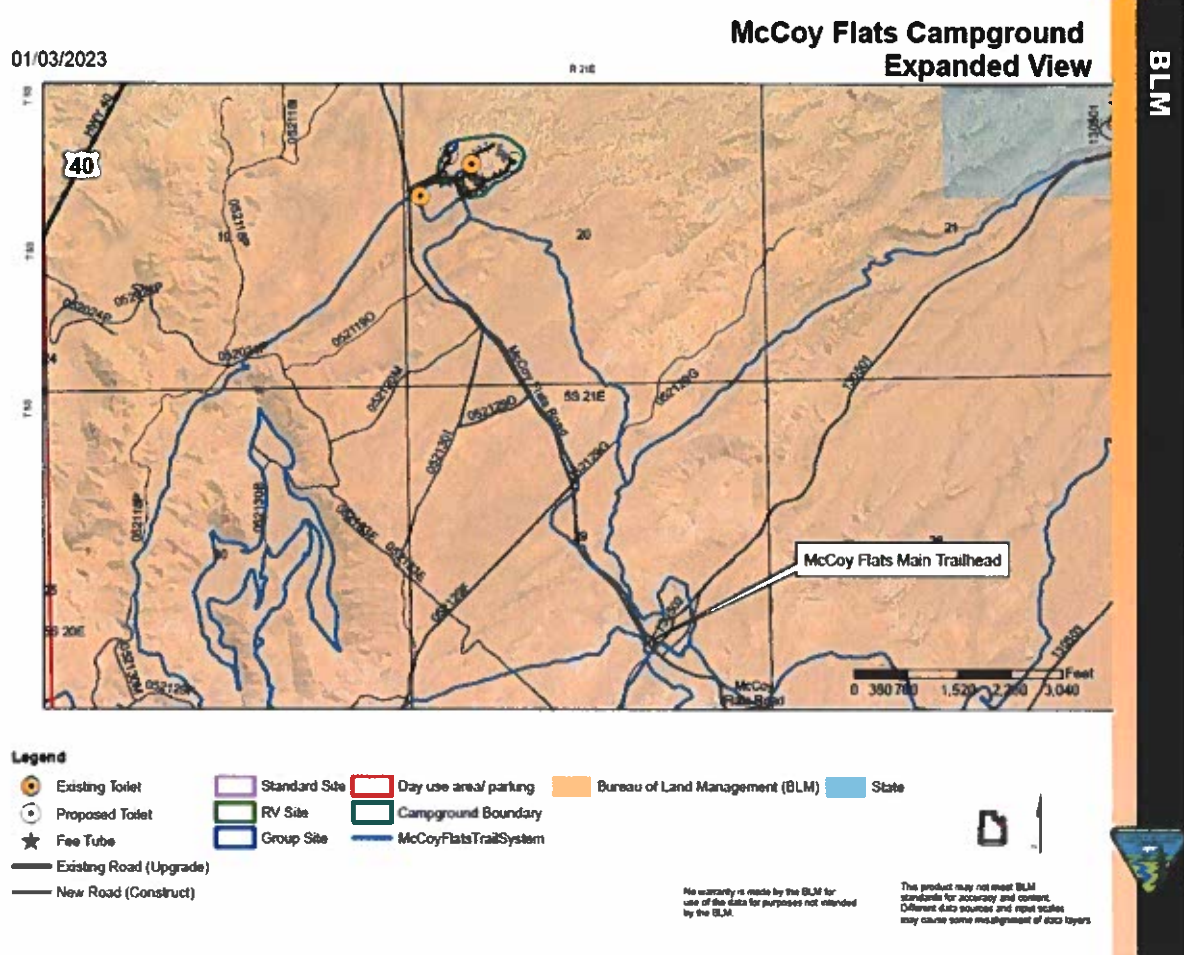


FIGURE 2: MCCOY FLATS CAMPGROUND EXPANDED VIEW



## APPENDIX C: CAMPGROUND MITIGATION COMPLIANCE FOR GREATER SAGE-GROUSE

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State of Utah

SPENCER J. COX  
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON  
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Natural Resources

JOEL FERRY  
Executive Director

Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office

REDGE B. JOHNSON  
Director

February 15, 2023

Submitted via electronic mail: [rbankert@blm.gov](mailto:rbankert@blm.gov)

Roger Bankert  
Field Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
Green River District Office  
170 South 500 East  
Vernal, Utah 84078

Subject: McCoy Flats Campground Mitigation Compliance for Greater Sage-grouse  
DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2023-0045-EA

Dear Mr. Bankert:

The state of Utah (State) through Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO) has reviewed the proposed McCoy Flats Campground Project to determine if the existing mitigation applied for the greater sage-grouse (GRSG) is sufficient or if additional mitigation, including compensatory mitigation, is required or recommended under State regulations, policies, or programs related to the conservation of the greater sage-grouse. PLPCO, in collaboration with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), submits the following mitigation compliance comments for your consideration.

The BLM is proposing a campground within the McCoy Flats recreation area. This project is located in General Habit Management Area (GHMA) and would result in approximately 19.4 acres of development. The campground is proposed to be located where people have already been dispersed camping, and should serve to consolidate the impacts of recreation within this section of GHMA resulting in an overall reduction in the amount of disturbance in the area.

The project area is located within GHMA, brood, and winter habitat. The project area is not located within 3.1-mile proximity of known active leks; the closest active lek is 4.6 miles to the west.

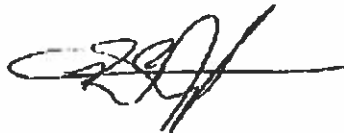
The BLM Vernal Field Office will adhere to MA-SSS-5 for GHMA as described in the 2015 Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (ARMPA).

DWR is familiar with the area and the current level of impacts in the project area. Construction of the campground in the area will consolidate the impacts into the area. Although located with GHMA, the project area is located primarily with pinyon-juniper vegetation type that will not be used by GRS. The nearest lek is now historic and no birds have been seen in that specific area for a few years. The proposed project will not negatively impact the GRS population in that area. If you have further questions, please contact Brian Maxfield, DWR Wildlife Conservation Biologist, at 435-790-5355 or [brianmaxfield@utah.gov](mailto:brianmaxfield@utah.gov).

Based on what is known about the sage-grouse in the area and what DWR has observed in the project area, the State, through PLPCO, finds the proposed mitigation suitable to maintain the habitat in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the mitigation for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Redge B. Johnson', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Redge B. Johnson  
Director

cc: Jordan D. McMahon  
[jmcmahon@blm.gov](mailto:jmcmahon@blm.gov)