United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2020-0024-EA

May 13, 2020

Shurtz Canyon Campground

Location: Shurtz Canyon, Iron County, Utah

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Cedar City Field Office 176 D.L. Sargent Dr. Cedar City, UT 84721 Phone: 435-865-3000 Fax: 435-865-3058

CHAPTER 1. PURPOSE & NEED

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to disclose and analyze the environmental consequences of constructing the Shurtz Canyon Campground (see map, Appendix 1). The Shurtz Canyon site is currently being used for dispersed camping and receives illegal dumping on a regular basis that requires regular cleaning. There is a hiking and mountain biking trailhead in Shurtz Canyon which is seeing increased use.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose for the proposed action is to improve recreational facilities in the Shurtz Canyon area. The proposed action is needed to accommodate and manage increasing recreation use in the area.

Conformance with BLM Land Use Plan(s)

The proposed action is in conformance with the Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony Resource Management Plan (CBGA RMP). The plan states in the objectives, "Provide recreation opportunities under the Bureau's basic stewardship responsibilities for unstructured, extensive types of recreation uses, maximizing the visitor's freedom of choice. Continue to maintain important recreational values in Federal ownership to insure this continued diversity of recreation opportunities." This proposed campground is also identified in the Cedar City BLM Recreation Business Plan and has been approved by the BLM Resource Advisory Council.

Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

The proposed action is also consistent with the following laws, regulations and other plans:

- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918
- UDWR Mule Deer Management Plan Beaver #22 (2015)
- UDWR Elk Management Plan Beaver #22 (2016)
- Iron County RMP (2017)
- Cedar City Field Office Recreation Business Plan

Identification of Issues

Resource which might be impacted were identified by a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) interdisciplinary team as shown in Appendix 2. Local residents submitted letters expressing concerns about how the campground could affect their private property and quality of life in response to materials mailed to them on March 10, 2020 by the Cedar City Field Office. The main concerns were keeping the gravel roads maintained at current levels with increased traffic, increased trash, fire containment and possible increased trespassing on private property. Iron County submitted a letter in support of the project. These letters are available for review in the case file in the Cedar City BLM office. Issues which need to be analyzed in order to make a reasoned choice between alternatives or a determination of significance include recreation and socio-economics and are analyzed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2. DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

This EA focuses on the proposed and no action alternatives. The No Action Alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the other alternatives.

PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM proposes to construct a new campground about five miles south of Cedar City at the mouth of Shurtz Canyon (see map, Appendix 1). Construction would occur in two phases with Phase 1 incorporating 15 acres, and Phase 2 adding an additional 10 acres. Phase 2 would only be developed if the Phase 1 facilities were being used at maximum capacity on a regular basis. All of the 25 acres would be fenced and considered as part of the campground facility but not all of this area would be disturbed This location has been approved in the Cedar City Recreation Site Business Plan and would begin collecting a \$5.00-10.00 use fee as soon as it is developed. If the access road is proposed to be improved (chip sealed) in the future, additional NEPA analysis would be completed.

Phase 1- Approximately13 individual campsites would be constructed to accommodate tents and RVs. The campground would include vault toilets, kiosks, fire rings, grills, picnic tables, trash receptacles, walking paths to the restrooms, perimeter post and pole or wire fences and drinking water and a stand pipe for fire suppression and road maintenance (if conveyance is obtained from the Cedar City water system or other water is obtained in the future).

- Tent pads would be installed at each site with cement barriers if needed.
- Portions of the old roadways would be rehabilitated within the site boundary.
- Two roads leading out of the campground would be closed to public transportation but would remain open for administrative use.
- Gates would be installed on the roads leaving the campground.
- A cattle guard would be installed at the entrance of the site and where the Turnpike Trail exits the fence surrounding the campground.
- The campground would be cleared and maintained with a grader.
- The road would be surfaced with road base type material or paved.
- Culverts would be installed as needed under the roadway to address drainage issues.
- The current trailhead would be slightly modified in size.
- The current vault toilet would be moved to the northesat side of the trailhead.

Shirts Canyon Road (the canyon is spelled Shurtz, but the road is spelled Shirts) and Tipple Road may be chip sealed or paved if traffic volume surpasses the ability to maintain road conditions at their current level. Both roads are county Class "B" roads and have a 66 foot right of way. Paving or chip sealing the roads would be analyzed through a separate NEPA document in the future.

Phase 2- This site would be constructed in the same manner as Phase 1 and would include approximately an additional 14 individual sites.

Design Features

Design features to reduce impacts would include the following:

- Avoid project disturbance activities during migratory bird nesting season January 1 August 31 (non-raptor species April 1 – July 31; raptor species January 1 – August 31). If unavoidable, then nesting surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist at most 7 to 10 days prior to disturbance activities. Any active nests found will have appropriate buffers and seasonal timing restrictions added. Biologists may determine when actives become inactive when fledglings leave the nest and then allow disturbance activities to occur within the buffer
- Construction will be avoided between December 1 through April 15 to protect wintering deer.
- Only the minimum amount of vegetation and soil required for construction will be disturbed.
- All disturbed areas which are not needed for the facilities will be graded to blend with the adjacent area and reseeded with a seed mix approved by the authorized officer.
- Erosion control measures will be implemented such as hardening drainages and installing culverts to move water through the site in a less erosive manner.
- Road maintenance on Shirts Canyon and Tipple Road will be coordinated with Iron County to ensure that road surfaces are passable by all vehicle types.
- Signs will be installed along Shirts Canyon Road indicating that the public is crossing through private land.
- A 25 mile per hour speed limit sign will be installed on Shirts Canyon Road.
- An inspection for noxious weeds will be completed. Any noxious weeds will be mapped and hand or chemically treated. Soils disturbance near any noxious weeds should be avoided.
- The livestock grazing permittee will be notified prior to project implementation. Construction will occur outside of the grazing season if possible. The permittee will be coordinated with regarding fence construction.
- All range improvements that are damaged will be replaced (cattleguards, fences, etc.) as soon as possible or before the next grazing use.
- Campground pads, trails, and other facilities will not be constructed within 330 ft of the riparian area.
- Campfires allowed only within provided fire rings and grills.

NO ACTION

The proposed facilities would not be constructed, and no reclamation of existing disturbed areas would occur. Dispersed recreation would continue.

CHAPTER 3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Resources which might be affected were identified by an interdisciplinary team and as shown in Appendix 2. Additional concerns were raised by the public. Issues which need to be analyzed in order to make a reasoned choice between alternatives or a determination of significance are describe below.

Issue 1. How will the development of the campground affect recreation use?

As recreation has increased in Southwest Utah over the past 10 years, demand for recreation facilities and amenities has also grown. The development of this campsite is in response to increased camping on public land in this location. The site is close to town and provides a place that can be used in early spring and late fall when many higher elevation sites are not available. The Shurtz Canyon site is currently being used for dispersed camping during spring and fall with a higher volume of use throughout the summer months. The site receives illegal dumping on a regular basis and requires regular cleaning.

The Proposed Action Alternative would improve recreation use in the area by providing needed facilities which would decrease the proliferation of dispersed campsites and parking disturbance. Trash would likely decrease, and sanitation conditions improve.

The No Action Alternative would result in new parking areas, dispersed campsite disturbance, trash accumulation and sanitation issues. Recreation use is not expected to decrease under this alternative.

Cumulative Impacts would include private land development and increase recreation use in the Cedar City area in general. Recreation use has already increased in the area due to the Shurtz Canyon Trailhead and trail system. Private land development and recreation use are expected to continue into the reasonably foreseeable future. Impacts would be similar to those described for the proposed action but would increase.

Issue 2. How will development of the campground affect the community and local landowners?

Shirts Canyon and Tipple road currently receive large volumes of traffic as visitors and locals travel to the Shurtz Canyon Trailhead, private homes and other destinations along both roads, creating dust, noise and wear to the county-maintained roads. Increased use of the area is expected to continue with or without the proposed facilities.

The Proposed Action Alternative would likely further increase traffic on both the Shirts Canyon and Tipple roads. The additional recreation and road use would likely affect private landowners by increases in dust, noise, and wear to the county-maintained roads. Irresponsible drivers might leave the county-maintained road and cause degradation of private land. Increases in vehicle and livestock collision may occur. The private property values may be impacted due to the new campground, though the area immediately surrounding the campground is zoned Agriculture 20. The campground is within a half mile of the Cedar City limits with land that is zoned (Master Planned Development).

Iron County and Cedar City would benefit from having more developed outdoor recreational opportunities close to the community. It would allow businesses to generate income from recreation opportunities. In addition, those businesses that provide food and outdoor gear to visitors would also benefit if more hikers, bikers and campers were staying close to the community.

The No Action Alternative is not expected to change impacts substantially from the Proposed Action Alternative. Recreation use in the area is continuing to increase and is expected to do so into the reasonably foreseeable future. Not constructing the campground might slow the use in

the short-term, but long-term increases in use is still anticipated. Consequently, the No Action Alternative could result in degradation of public land by not constructed the facilities to reduce erosion, garbage and sanitary conditions.

Cumulative Impacts would be the same as those described for Issue 1.

CHAPTER 4. PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

During preparation of the EA, local residents residing near the Shurtz Canyon Campsite were notified by mail or E-mail. Several letters were received expressing concerns with impacts to their private land and quality of life. These potential impacts are addressed in Chapter 3. The project was posted on the BLM's ePlanning website on April 3, 2020. A 30 day public comment period will be offered beginning May 13, 2020.

Ast of Tersons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted				
Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions		
Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Consultation for undertakings, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 470)	Class III surveys have been completed Consultation with SHPO is on-going.		
Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah	Consultation as required by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1531) and NHPA (16 USC 1531)	Class III surveys have been completed Consultation with the Tribe is on-going.		

List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

List of Preparers

See Appendix A.

Appendices

- 1. Map
- 2. Interdisciplinary Team NEPA Checklist
- 3. Phase 1 Campground Design
- 4. Notified Landowners
- 5. Conceptual Campground Design (Phase 1 and 2)



Appendix 1. Map

Appendix 2

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM NEPA CHECKLIST

Project Title: Shurtz Canyon Campground **NEPA Log Number**: DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2020-0024-EA **Project Leader**: Dave Jacobson

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

Determi- nation	Resource	Resource Rationale for Determination		Date
NI	Air Quality	Quality The proposal is within an area that has attained state and federal ambient air quality standards or is unclassified. Nothing in the project proposal is anticipated to alter the current situation. Some dust fines are expected during construction, but fugitive dust, PM2.5 or PM 10 is not anticipated to be an issue. Increased road traffic would be anticipated on Shirts Canyon Road once the project is completed but is not expected to be near a level of significance. Fugitive dust and exhaust emissions would quickly settle or disperse.		03/26/2020
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	There are no ACEC within the CCFO	Dave Jacobson	2-14-2020
PI/NI	Cultural Resources	A Class III inventory of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) will need to take place prior to authorization. If historic properties are identified during this inventory, stipulations will be added to the plan of development to avoid or minimize any potential adverse effects. If no historic properties are identified or no adverse effects to historic properties are identified than this determination will be changed to a NI.		4/10/2020
NI	Environmental Justice	There would be no low income or minority populations disproportionately impacted by the proposed action.	Dave Jacobson	4-20-2020
NI	Farmlands (Prime or Unique)	Potential for prime, unique or important farmlands does not exist due to steep slopes, lack of topsoil and lack of irrigation water.	E. Shotwell	03/26/2020
NI	Floodplains	There are no Iron County FEMA mapped floodplains within the project area.	E. Shotwell	05/05/2020
NI	Fuels/Fire Management There would be no impacts to fire and fuels management as a result of the proposed action. Right of ways should be re-vegetated using fire resistant species.		J. Cox	3/9/2020
NI	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production	The only known mineral resources on the lands occupying the proposed campground are common variety deposits of sand and gravel. The lands are prospectively valuable for oil and gas resources based on underlying thick sedimentary sequences. There are no previously authorized nor pending mineral authorizations on the Shurtz Canyon site. The use of these lands as a campground would not be compatible with the extraction of the known mineral resource and so this resource would be unavailable for development while the campground is in existence. However, given the minor value of the resource for the lands involved and/or the unlikelihood of it being developed for this resource even	E. Ginouves	2-13-20

RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED:

Determi- nation	Resource Rationale for Determination		Signature	Date
		without a competing land-use, the impact to mineral resources is viewed as negligible.		
NI	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	There would be emissions of GHG's associated with exhaust of heavy equipment, pickup trucks, etc. associated with project implementation and with the possibility of increased traffic on the Shurtz Canyon Road. However, these emissions would be expected to be minimal, even on a local scale.		03/26/2020
NI	Hydrologic Conditions	Hydrologic conditions are relatively good in relation to site potentials. The project is expected to some soils that would be susceptible to increased erosion in the short-term. See Rangeland Health Standards, Vegetation, Soils and Water Resources for further detail.	E. Shotwell	05/05/2020
PI/NI	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds	With any disturbance, the possibility exists for the establishment of invasive and non-native species. Standard measures for rehabilitation such as reseeding, washing vehicles to prevent the spread of weed seed, avoidance of noxious weed areas and control efforts following seeding. Noxious weed infestations are spread in part by the movement of vehicles, humans, animals, including livestock, by the transport of seed through physical contact and/or ingestion. The small, isolated noxious weed infestations should eventually be reduced in the future with the continuation of the noxious weed program which was implemented by the Cedar City Field Office. The Cedar City Field Office currently has an aggressive noxious weeds throughout BLM administered lands in both Iron and Beaver counties. The BLM coordinates with County, State and Federal agencies in order to locate, treat and monitor noxious weed infestations are adhered to. There are known noxious weeds within the area. If an inspection is done for noxious weeds prior to the project by the project lead and if any noxious weeds that are observed would be gps'd in collector and would be hand or chemically treated and/or avoiding any noxious weeds within the working area of the project	J. Bulloch	3/10/2020
NI	Lands/Access	There are no proposed or authorized rights-of-way (ROW) or land tenure actions in or adjacent to the proposed action. Access to the proposed action would be via the Iron County class B road- Shurtz Canyon Road. Should the BLM or the county want to further develop this road or have legal access to the proposed action, a ROW will need to be applied for.	B.Cox	2-25-2020
NP	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	The proposed campgrounds is not within any areas that were identified as having wilderness characteristics in the 2011 or updated 2014 inventory.	Dave Jacobson	2-14-2020
PI/NI	Livestock Grazing	The Shurtz Canyon Campground would be within the Shurtz Canyon pasture of the Hamilton Fort allotment. The permit allows for either Sheep grazing or Cattle grazing in a year. Sheep grazing occurs within 01/01 - 02/19. The permittee may apply for cattle use for the same AUMs (45) after June 15 th if Sheep use was not applied for. Developing and fencing the campground (25 acres) would reduce some forage for livestock, although it is anticipated to not result in a reduction of AUMs due to the current pinyon and juniper encroachment within the project boundary. NI If - Permittee's will be notified prior to project implementation and construction is outside of the grazing season. Permittee will be coordinated with regarding fence construction. All range improvements that are damaged would be replaced (cattleguards, fences, etc.) as soon as possible or before the next grazing use.	E. Shotwell	05/05/20

Determi- nation	Resource	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
PI/NI	Native American Religious Concerns	Consultation will take place between the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah (PITU) and the BLM-Cedar City Office (CCFO) after the Class III inventory is complete. Consultation is currently on-going.	R. Plank	4/10/2020
NI	Paleontology	Shurtz Canyon Campground: the surficial geology of the proposed campground area is Quaternary-age (Holocene and Pleistocene) landside deposits. Using the Bureau Potential Fossil Yield Classification System, the formation falls within Class 2, low potential for vertebrate or scientifically significant invertebrate fossils. There are no known scientifically-significant fossil localities on, or adjacent to, either proposed campground site and the potential for fossil resources on either location is low. The proposed use of either site as a campground would not require any pre-utilization fossil resource surveys and no fossil mitigation measures are necessary.	E. Ginouves	2-13-20
PI/NI	Rangeland Health Standards	Standards and Guidelines for Healthy Rangelands were not being fully met within the Hamilton Fort (Shurtz Canyon pasture) Allotment. The upper elevations of the Shurtz Canyon Pasture are dominated by pinyon and juniper while the lower elevations of the pasture are dominated by Wyoming Big Sagebrush. NI If: Construction and reclamation standards need to be identified for the campground and reclaim staging sights. Mitigation measures including carrying fire extinguishers, shovels, etc should be incorporated. A thorough reclamation plan needs to be identified through the process.		03/26/20
PI	Recreation	As recreation has increased in Southwest Utah over the past 10 years demand for recreation facilities and amenities has also grown. The development of this campsite is in response to increased camping on public land in this location. The site is close to town and provides a location that can be used in early spring and late fall when many high elevation sites are not available.	Dave Jacobson	4-1-2020
Ы	Socio-Economics	Iron County and Cedar City would benefit from having more developed outdoor recreational opportunities close to the community. It would allow businesses to generate income from recreation opportunities. In addition, those businesses that provide food and outdoor gear to visitors would also benefit if more hikers, bikers and campers were staying close to the community. However, this impact would not substantially change the socioeconomic conditions to the community. The private property values may be impacted due to the new campground, though the area immediately surrounding the campground is zoned Agriculture 20. The campground is within a half mile of the Cedar City Limits with land that is zoned (Master Planned Development).	Dave Jacobson	4-20-2020
PI/NI	Soils	This project has the potential to impact soils in the project area by increasing potential for wind and water erosion. Vegetation removal and disturbance of topsoil increase the probability of soil erosion. These impacts could be mitigated by implementing a reclamation plan that includes re-contouring, reseeding disturbed areas and including other sediment control measures as needed. NI if design features include a reclamation plan that contains seed mix, re-contouring, and erosion and sediment control measures.	L. Kitchen	5/4/2020
NI	Special Status Plants	No Special Status Plants occur in or adjacent to the proposed project area. The proposed project has low potential for any SS Plants to be present based on locale for plants known to occur within the CCFO.		4-14-2020

Determi- nation	Resource	Resource Rationale for Determination		Date
PI/NI	Vegetation	Removal of vegetation would occur under the proposed action. Due to the clearing that would occur, a reclamation plan would be required for staging areas. A seed mix based on ecological site, soils, elevation, precipitation, etc would need to be identified as part of reclamation procedures following the construction of the project. Seed mixes should be identified prior to construction to the greatest extent possible. Timing of seeding will be crucial to ensure that the planted seed has the best chance of survival. Seed mixes and timing of seeding should be identified within the Field Office and should be disclosed in the EA. In addition, reclamation procedures including re-contouring in conjunction with re- vegetation would need to be identified to ensure that soil erosion is minimized following implementation of the project. NI if: design features include a reclamation plan that contains seed mix, re-contouring, and erosion and sediment control measures.	E. Shotwell	03/26/20
NI	Visual Resources	The proposed campground is in VRM Class IV. A visual contrast rating was conducted, and it was determined that the project will meet the objectives of VRM class IV.	Dave Jacobson	05/07/2020
	Wastes (hazardous or solid)	There are no known waste issues currently associated with the proposed project area. Use of construction equipment introduces a threat only if an unforeseen incident or malfunction occurs with the equipment. However, this threat is unlikely due to the probability and minimal quantities of product utilized. State and federal regulation governs the use, storage and disposal of any wastes. In addition, should an unforeseen incident occur, reporting and mitigation is required	T. Carlson	05/05/2020
PI/NI	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/gro und)	See Wetlands and Riparian.	E. Shotwell	05/05/2020
PI/NI	Wetlands/Riparian Zones			2-14-2020
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers	There are no proposed wild or scenic rivers within the CCFO.	Dave Jacobson	2-14-2020
NP	Wilderness/WSA	The proposed campground is not within or near a WSA or wilderness area.	Dave Jacobson	3/17/2020
NP	Wild Horses	The proposed projects are not within or adjacent to a Wild Horses Herd Area (HA) or Herd Management Area (HMA).	C. Hunter	4/13/2020
PI/NI	Wildlife & Fish	The project area is within crucial mule deer winter range and should avoid construction and potentially camping opportunities Dec 1 through Apr 15. The Shurtz Canyon Campground area is a high-density area for wintering mule deer. The campground is also within elk winter habitat and mapped wild turkey habitat.	D. Schaible	4-20-2020
NI	Wildlife - Greater Sage-Grouse	The project is not within greater sage grouse habitat.	Dave Jacobson	3/25/2020
PI/NI	Wildlife – Migratory Birds	Various migratory bird species utilize the habitat in and around the proposed project area. Migratory birds may be temporary displaced during project disturbance activities. Avoid project disturbance activities during migratory bird nesting season January $1 - August 31$ (non-raptor species April $1 - July 31$; raptor species January $1 - August 31$). If unavoidable, then nesting surveys must be conducted by a qualified biologist at most $7 - 10$ days prior to disturbance activities and active nests found will have appropriate buffers and seasonal timing restrictions added. Biologists may determine when actives become	Derek Christensen	4/13/2020

Determi- nation	Resource	Rationale for Determination	Signature	Date
		inactive when fledglings leave the nest and then allow disturbance activities to occur within the buffer. NI if restrictions are included in the design features.		
PI/NI	Wildlife-Special Status (not TEC)	BLM sensitive species that may occur in the project area include but are not limited to bald eagle, burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, fringed myotis, Lewis' woodpecker, pygmy rabbit, and Townsends big-eared bat. If pygmy rabbit habitat is to be disturbed, surveys should be conducted to apply appropriate BMP's.	D. Schaible	4/13/2020
PI/NI	Wildlife T&E and Candidate	No critical habitat for California condor, Mexican spotted owl, western yellow-billed cuckoo, and southwestern willow flycatcher is located within or reasonably near the proposed project area (NI). California condors may use the area for foraging. The nearest California condor nest is located about 12 miles south of the proposed project area. The nearest critical habitat for Mexican spotted owl is located about 2.5 miles southwest of the proposed project area (NI).		03/26/2020
NI	Woodland / Forestry	and / Forestry Areas proposed contain pinyon-juniper woodlands. However, only minimal amounts of trees on a few acres will be removed.		2-14-2020

Final Review:

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator			
Authorized Officer			



Appendix 3. Phase 1 Campground Design



Appendix 4. Notified Landowners

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Appendix 5. Conceptual Campground Design (Phase 1 and 2)