

Decision Memo

Bureau of Reclamation Communication Site Special Use Permit Re-Issuance

USDA Forest Service
Heber Ranger District, Uinta National Forest
Wasatch County, Utah
T.6S., R.6E., Sec. 19 Uintah Special Meridian

Background

This permit was originally issued on August 3, 1982 and was subsequently issued on May 5, 1993. The permit covers approximately 0.014 acres in T.6 S., R.6 E, Section 19, Uintah Special Meridian and is issued for the purpose of operating and maintaining a 110 watt V.H.F. microrepeater station used to extend radio net coverage to Jordanelle Damsite, Strawberry Reservoir, Diamond Fork, Soldier Creek, Currant Creek, and Uintah Basin areas.

Decision

I have decided to issue a new 20 year lease to the USDI Bureau of Reclamation to operate a communication site. This decision is based upon the following factors:

- No ground disturbing activities would be associated with the issuance of this permit.
- There would be no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of the previously authorized activities.
- No effects to threatened or endangered species would occur.
- No effects to cultural resources or historic sites would occur
- There are no floodplains or wetlands within the project area. The proposed action would not impact water quality and is consistent with the Clean Water Act.
- The project would not generate pollutants and is in compliance with the Clean Air Act.

This action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment because it meets the criteria identified in FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30, Section 31.2 – Categories of Actions for which a Project or Case File and Decision Memo are Required, Item 15:

Issuance of a new special use authorization for a new term to replace an existing or expired special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization.

The categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect. Extraordinary circumstances are those instances that could result in significant environmental

effect to one or more of the following resource conditions, as described in FSH 1909.15-30.3, 2a-g.

FSH 1909.15, Section 30.3 lists the following as ‘extraordinary circumstances’:

- Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species. – The Forest Service has determined that the proposed action will not adversely affect any species or critical habitat listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act, or any species classified as Sensitive by the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service. Forest Service Sensitive species evaluated were those listed for the Uinta National Forest in the most recent list of *Intermountain Region Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Species* (documentation contained in project file).
- Floodplains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds – The Forest Service has determined that the proposed action will not adversely affect floodplains, wetlands or municipal watersheds (documentation contained in project file).
- Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas – The project area does not occur in, and the proposed action would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreational areas.
- Inventoried roadless areas (IRAs) – The project area does not occur in, and the proposed action would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any inventoried roadless areas. (IRAs are mapped in Appendix C to the FEIS for the 2003 Forest Plan.)
- Research natural areas – The project area does not occur in, and the proposed action would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any research natural areas.
- American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites – The proposed action would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any American Indian religious or cultural sites.
- Archeological sites, or historic properties or areas - The project would not have any direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any archeological sites or historic properties or areas (documentation contained in project file).

Public Involvement

A proposal to issue a new special use authorization was listed in the January 2006 Schedule of Proposed Actions. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment during scoping from April 27, 2006 to May 31, 2006. Additionally, the agency placed a legal notice in the Provo Daily Herald on April 22, 2005.

One comment letter was received from Wasatch County encouraging the re-issuance of the special use permit. No other letters or electronic comments were received.

Two site visits were conducted to determine specialist input. Additionally, one site visit was conducted with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Utah Communication Agency Network (UCAN) to collect accurate data about the site.

Findings Required by Other Laws

This decision is consistent with the 2003 Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as required by the National Forest Management Act. The proposal is in conformance with forest plan standards and incorporates appropriate Forest Plan guidelines for the Deer Creek Management Area (Forest Plan, pages 5-37 to 5-47). The management prescription for this area is 5.1 – Forested Ecosystem – Limited Development (Forest Plan, page 5-45). The proposed action is consistent with the 2003 Forest Plan.

- Forest Wide Goal (FW-Goal-3) – Suitable commodity uses are provided in an environmentally sustainable and acceptable manner to contribute to the social and economic sustainability and diversity of local communities.
 - Sub-goal-3-7 (G-3-7) – The telecommunications system adequately supports forest resource management. Commercial uses are provided within the ecosystem’s capability where essential to meet a demonstrated public.
- Management Prescription (MP-8.2-1) – Guideline: Non-recreation developments are allowed.
- Management Emphasis 8.2 - Utility Corridor/Communication Sites: Features in these areas may include various non-recreation special uses such as utility corridors or communication sites allocated for long-term site investment. Vegetation management activities are generally limited to activities consistent with the installation and maintenance of the utility line or communication site and mitigation against potential erosion and visual quality impacts. Though not considered suitable for grazing, these sites are often unfenced and some grazing may occur. Recreation use is limited to incidental dispersed use, such as trail crossing through the area.

Implementation Date

This project will be implemented after September 1, 2006.

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

Pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12 (f) this decision is not subject to administrative appeal.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact:

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/s/ Brian Ferebee

10-05-06

BRIAN FEREBEE

Date

Uinta National Forest Supervisor

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