

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Six-Mile Unit of the Southwest Manti Wildlife Management Area Land Disposal, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Sanpete County, Utah

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Federal Assistance Project (W-11-L)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared this document in accordance with the procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act as it applies to the Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration Acts (64 Stat. 430; 16 U.S.C. Sec. 777 et. seq. and 50 State 916; 16 U.S.C. Sec. 669 et. seq.).

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (Division) and the Service prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) entitled *Six-Mile Unit of the Southwest Manti Wildlife Management Area Land Disposal, Sanpete County, Utah*. In the EA, the Service analyzed the potential impact of a proposal by the Division to dispose of a total of 12 acres of the Six-Mile Unit of the Southwest Manti Wildlife Management Area (WMA) land. The proposed exchange requires the Service to approve an amendment to the original grant for purchase of WMA lands under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937.

In 1985, the Division purchased 88 acres of the WMA for the purpose of providing habitat for big game during the winter months. The WMA contains over 7,000 acres of winter range habitat for mule deer. The acquisition was partially funded by the Wildlife Restoration Act program under grant W-11-L, "12 Mile Canyon Deer Winter Range." In 2006, the Sanpete County Commission (County) approached the Division about purchasing a 12-acre parcel within the WMA for the purpose of constructing a County office complex and jail. The County explored several construction sites but found none to meet their needs as well as the Division parcel.

The preferred alternative in the EA addresses disposing of the 12-acre parcel because it provides minimal habitat for big game winter range. It is isolated between roads and frequently receives disturbance from human activities. Wildlife use and wildlife benefits to the public from the 12-acre parcel are both considered low (Ashley Green, Division Habitat Manager, pers. comm., May 2007), and the Division has determined that the 12-acre parcel is no longer serving the purpose for which it was acquired. The Division has determined that the 12-acre parcel is surplus land which can be sold without detriment to existing wildlife values. The Division has determined that it would be willing to sell the parcel to the County. Furthermore, Wildlife Restoration Act grant funds would be compensated for the sale of the property because the money from the sale would be used by the Division for land acquisition or other projects to benefit wildlife in Utah.

Under the "no-action" alternative, the Division would not sell the 12-acre tract and the property would remain in its current state.

No federally-endangered, threatened, or candidate plants or animals, and no state-listed sensitive species, occur within or near the 12-acre parcel, with the exception of the bald eagle migrating through the area (Utah Natural Heritage Program data current for January 29, 2007).

Based on a ground survey conducted by TRC Mariah Associates Inc., no “eligible” historic or cultural resources occur on the sale parcel. The Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the TRC Mariah Associates Inc. conclusion that no eligible historic properties were likely to be impacted by the proposed action.

We solicited public comment on the EA for 15 days through a public notice in the *Sanpete Messenger* and on the Service’s website for Region 6. We did not receive any comments on the EA. The final EA is on file at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, 134 Union Boulevard, Lakewood, Colorado, 80228, and is available for public review upon request.

Based on review of the final EA, I have determined that the proposed action is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102 (2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Consequently, we will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

APPROVAL

Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6

Date