

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Utah Department of Wildlife Resources Proposed Northridge-12 FHCA Rebuild Easement on the Timpanogos Wildlife Management Area, Utah County, Utah

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared this document in accordance with Executive Order 14154, Unleashing American Energy (Jan. 20, 2025), and a Presidential Memorandum, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity (Jan. 21, 2025), which require the Department to strictly adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq. Further, such Order and Memorandum repeal Executive Orders 12898 (Feb. 11, 1994) and 14096 (Apr. 21, 2023). Since Executive Orders 12898 and 14096 have been repealed, complying with such Orders is a legal impossibility. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service verifies that it has complied with the requirements of NEPA, including the Department's regulations and procedures implementing NEPA at 43 C.F.R. Part 46 and Part 516 of the Departmental Manual, consistent with the President's January 2025 Order and Memorandum as it applies to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (WR) as amended (50 Stat. 917, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 669 et seq.).

The Utah Department of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) has requested the Service's Office of Conservation Investment concurrence to provide an easement within the Timpanogos Wildlife Management Area (WMA; PR grant # W-10-L). The Service's approval of this easement constitutes a Federal action subject to provisions of NEPA, including the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed action on the human environment.

Described as the Proposed Action in the draft EA, UDWR will grant an easement to Rocky Mountain Power to construct, maintain, and operate an underground power line, to replace an existing overhead line to reduce wildfire risk in the area. Upon evaluating the effects of the proposed easement, UDWR has determined there would not be a significant impact to wildlife resources and existing public interests. Proposed best management practices are expected avoid and/or minimize potential effects to wildlife resulting from construction activities and, the operation and maintenance of the installed infrastructure. The proposed easement and associated infrastructure will not preclude public access or restrict approved recreational activities on the WMA.

Under a No Action Alternative, an easement would not be issued, and the construction and operation of an underground power line would not occur, and the wildfire risk would remain unchanged.

The draft EA was issued for a 30-day public comment period which ended on October 17, 2025. No public comments were received regarding the proposed easement. Therefore, a final EA entitled Final Environmental Assessment, Northridge-12 Fire High Consequence Areas (FHCA) Rebuild in Utah County, Utah, October 24, 2025, and attached Appendices, have been prepared to comply with NEPA requirements and to assist in the Service's decision-making to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

Based on review of the Final EA, the proposed action is not a major Federal action which would significantly impact the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the NEPA 1969. All reasonable alternatives were considered in the evaluation of the proposed project, and this project complies with the intent of the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988 "Floodplain Management", and Executive Order 11990 "Protection of Wetlands". Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the project will have no effect on any listed species or critical habitat. Consequently, I have determined an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Final EA is on file at the Office of Conservation Investment, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver Federal Center, 1 Denver Federal Center, Building 53, Room FW 100, Denver, Colorado, 80228, and is also available online at: <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/office-conservation-investment-nepa-documents>.

APPROVAL:

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

References:

Final Environmental Assessment, Northridge-12 FHCA Rebuild Utah County, Utah. October 24, 2025. UDWR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, & Eocene Environmental Group, Inc.