

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Utah Department of Wildlife Resources Proposed Disposal on the Round Valley Wildlife Management Area, Morgan County, Utah

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 (NEPA) of 1969¹, as amended, and as it applies to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, 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 approval to dispose of a 104.333-acre parcel in the Round Valley Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Acquisition of the WMA was funded in part using federal grant funds (PR grant # W-32-L). Therefore, that Service's approval of this land disposal constitutes a Federal action subject to NEPA, including the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential effects of the proposed action on the human environment.

UDWR prepared a draft EA, which the Service reviewed and released for a 30-day public comment period ending March 7, 2026. One public comment was received related to a new public access point and was addressed in the EA as Appendix G. Accordingly, a Final EA titled UDWR Round Valley WMA Land Disposal, Morgan County, Utah (March 13, 2026), including appendices, has been prepared to comply with NEPA requirements and inform the Service's determination of whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary.

A Preferred Alternative and a No Action Alternative were analyzed in the EA. The Proposed Action is to dispose of a 104.333-acre parcel at the southwestern edge of the WMA. Due to its proximity to an active mining operation and Highway 84, UDWR has determined the parcel's wildlife habitat value has diminished and no longer meets the authorized purpose of the original Federal award. Based on the analysis in the EA, the proposed disposal would not result in significant impacts on wildlife resources or public interests. The parcel represents a small portion of the available habitat within the 3,717-acre WMA, and UDWR will acquire 49.981 acres of comparable sagebrush-pinyon-juniper habitat adjacent to the WMA. UDWR will also obtain a public access easement and parking area, providing the first legal public access to the WMA, which has previously been landlocked by private property. This action will therefore enhance both public use and have conservation management benefits.

Under the No Action alternative, UDWR would retain the 104.333-acre parcel, and the WMA would remain landlocked with no access for public use or habitat management. UDWR would also not acquire the 49.981-acre Geneva Parcel including mineral rights and would lose the opportunity to secure public access and the associated habitat and public benefits.

¹ Executive Order 14154, Unleashing American Energy (Jan. 20, 2025), and a Presidential Memorandum, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity (Jan. 21, 2025), 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). Because 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. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has also voluntarily considered the Council on Environmental Quality's rescinded regulations implementing NEPA, previously found at 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500–1508, as guidance to the extent appropriate and consistent with the requirements of NEPA and Executive Order 14154.

Based on the Final EA, the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that 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 the project complies with the intent of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order 11988 "Floodplain Management", and Executive Order 11990 "Protection of Wetlands". Related to NHPA, a letter was received on January 27, 2026, from a Tribal Historic Preservation Office, concurring with the *No Historic Properties Affected* determination. In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the Canada lynx, North American wolverine, Monarch butterfly, and Suckley's cuckoo bumble, and will not affect other listed species or critical habitats.

Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Final EA is available 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 online at: <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/office-conservation-investment-nepa-documents>.

APPROVAL:

ANNA MUNOZ

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

Date

References:

Final Environmental Assessment, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Round Valley WMA Land Disposal. March 13, 2026. UDWR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.