



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Challis Field Office
721 East Main Avenue, Suite 8
(Mailing address: P.O. Box 817)
Challis, Idaho 83226



In Reply Refer To:
(IDI030)

Dre Arman
North American Headquarters
725 West Alder, Suite 11
Missoula, Montana 59802

Dear Ms. Arman:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Challis Field Office (CFO) understands the concerns raised with the Elkhorn Riparian Project's status, including partners that contributed substantial funding toward completing this project. We also understand the importance of this area, as it is designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern for winter range and calving habitat for elk. We know the areas identified for this project are a small but vital part of the landscape for numerous species such as mule deer, elk, pronghorn, greater sage-grouse, and many other non-game species, some of which are designated Special Status Species under BLM Policy.

However, federal agencies are also held to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, which requires us to assess the environmental impacts of proposed actions and alternatives. We do this through an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) process consisting of a specialist team looking at a wide range of resources that a proposed action may impact. In the case of the Elkhorn Riparian Project, the CFO identified significant cultural resources following this process in the vicinity of the proposed action. The CFO IDT is currently working through possible alternatives that would address avoidance of any impacts on those cultural resources or allow us to proceed with a similar project that would meet the same objectives.

We understand that the Elkhorn project has taken an unusual amount of time to work through the IDT process. As a new Field Manager to CFO, I have provided the direction to prioritize completing these projects. I am committed to seeing this project through or finding an alternative project that meets similar objectives. The CFO is committed to working with our partners to further our mission to preserve, protect, and enhance our natural resources. We would be happy to inform you of this work's progress as we continue to develop suitable alternatives that alleviate all resource concerns.

Please let me know if you want to meet in person or set up a virtual meeting to discuss further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joshua M. Travers", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Joshua Travers
Field Manager