

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

2009 Prestangen Ranch  
Coal Outcrop Fire Reclamation Project  
McKenzie County, North Dakota

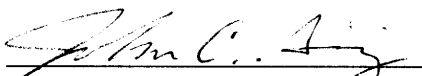
OSM has thoroughly reviewed the environmental assessment and associated documents for the above referenced project, which was prepared by the North Dakota Public Service Commission, Abandoned Mine Lands Division. The Casper Field Office has determined that this documentation adequately discusses the environmental issues and impacts for OSM funded reclamation construction activities authorization purposes.

Based on the analysis of this documentation, I find that reclamation of this project will not have significant effects on the quality of the human environment. I therefore conclude that no detailed statement (EIS) is necessary.

My specific reasons are as follows:

The Prestangen Ranch Coal Outcrop Fire Project is located within the SW1/4 of Section 28, T149N, R98W in McKenzie County, North Dakota. The fire was ignited as a result of the 1999 Halloween Gap wildfire. The proposed project area is privately owned and the property owner has requested assistance to have the fire suppressed. The area that would be affected by suppression activities is expected to be less than one-half acre and is located on pastureland used for livestock grazing. The preferred approach is to excavate all burning coal and combustible materials, mix the materials with inert overburden, and enclose in a burial trench.

Cultural resources and threatened or endangered species clearances have been properly obtained. The North Dakota State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with a "No Historic Properties Affected" determination. No significant effect is expected on surface water quality or quantity. No activities are planned on or near wetlands within the defined project area. The project is not within any identified floodplain. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that "no endangered or threatened species or critical habitats are known to occupy the project area. There have been no prime or unique farmland or recreational resources identified in the project area. There are no wilderness areas, parks, or areas of critical ecological or aesthetic concern, wild and scenic rivers, or other recreational resources of critical environmental concern that will be impacted. The proposed project area is not in or near a Class I air quality region. The project area is 100% privately owned and fire suppression activities have been requested by the landowner. Impacts to noise pollution are not anticipated, however, should problems arise, the North Dakota Department of Health will be consulted for remedial action. Any short term impacts of the reclamation activities will be far outweighed by the long-term safety, health and environmental benefits for post reclamation use of the site.

  
OSM Environmental Reviewer

3-27-2009  
Date

  
OSM Field Office Director  
Casper Field Office

3-27-9  
Date