

Decision Notice  
& Finding of No Significant Impact  
**Mill Hollow Water System Reconstruction**

**USDA Forest Service**  
**Heber Ranger District, Uinta National Forest**  
**Wasatch County, Utah**  
Township 4 South, Range 7 East, Section 12

## **Decision and Reasons for the Decision**

### **Background**

An inspection completed by the Intermountain Region Sanitary/Water/Wastewater Engineer in 1997 found several items of concern with the water system. Specifically noted were the presence of decaying tree stumps within the collection area that provide habitat for rodents, a crack in the collection box with the presence of moss indicating a possible source of contamination and the lack of adequate daylighting and screening of all drain lines. In addition, a Sanitary Survey of the water system conducted on July 23, 2002 by the Utah Division of Drinking Water noted several deficiencies in the system, including: inadequate soil cover over the collection lines, spalling concrete on the collection box, no disinfection system, no gasket on the dry well hatch of the storage tank, the storage tank overflow float switch was not working, and the storage tank capacity was inadequate for the size of the campground. To date none of the listed items of concern from the 1997 inspection or the deficiencies noted in the 2002 Sanitary Survey have been corrected. Consequently the system is not in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Utah Public Drinking Water Rules as enforced by the Utah Division of Drinking Water.

Therefore, the purpose of this action is to upgrade the current water system facilities and bring them into compliance with the recommendations of the Intermountain Region Sanitary/Water/Wastewater Engineer and the Utah Public Drinking Water rules. The need for the action is to provide a local source of safe drinking water for the high number of campers and day use recreationists in an area which has no other safe drinking water readily available.

The environmental assessment (EA) documents the analysis of three alternatives considered to meet this need.

### **Decision and Rationale**

Based upon my review of all alternatives, I have decided to authorize the implementation of Alternative 2 which consists of the removal and replacement of the existing Mill Hollow Campground water system structures.

The existing concrete collection box, concrete water storage tank, hypochlorinator structure, distribution lines, hydrants and sump pads will be removed, disposed of and replaced, resulting in ground disturbance to less than two acres.

The existing concrete collection box will be replaced with a new collection box of approximately the same size and dimensions. The existing collection lines will remain in place and be connected to the new collection box. A protective impermeable liner will be placed on the surface of the ground surrounding the new collection box and will cover approximately 4,800 square feet of the collection area adjacent to the collection box. The liner will then be covered with the minimum required depth of two feet of mineral soil capped with top soil and seeded with a Forest Service approved certified weed free native seed mixture. Approximately 0.07 acres of wetland will be lost as a result. A surface drainage cutoff trench will be reconstructed to prevent surface water from flowing across the liner and fill area.

The existing water storage tank will be replaced with a larger storage tank including associated manways, lids, vents, water lines and source overflow. Water overflow from the new storage tank will be discharged into the adjacent wetland.

The existing concrete enclosure for a hypochlorinator unit will be removed and replaced with a new enclosure. A hypochlorinator, used to disinfect the water in the system, and permanent flow meter will be installed along with associated piping and valves.

Approximately 3,500 linear feet of distribution line and related valves will be removed and replaced with new pipe and valves in the existing location and at a minimum depth of about 48 inches.

Nine existing water hydrants will be removed and replaced with new automatic shut off hydrants meeting the guidelines of the American Disabilities Act.

Existing sump pads will be removed and replaced with pads constructed of decay resistant frame boxes filled with hardened crushed aggregate.

During reconstruction, vegetation including old stumps or woody debris, decaying matter and grasses will be removed. The area will be reseeded with an appropriate Forest Service approved certified weed-free native seed mix.

Any portion of the enclosure fence around the collection area disturbed during reconstruction will be replaced or repaired.

The campground will be closed for up to 120 days during reconstruction.

When compared to the other alternatives this alternative will best meet the purpose and need of the action. My rationale is based on the following:

- The Mill Hollow water system has provided a potable water source since 1959 which has added to the health and safety of the public recreating in the vicinity. I have determined that there is a need to continue to provide a reliable source of safe drinking water for campers and picnickers in the Mill Hollow Campground, and for those using the day use areas and dispersed areas in the vicinity.

- Although Alternative 3 would also meet the need to provide a reliable source of safe drinking water, the selected alternative would further enhance the quality of the recreation opportunities in the vicinity by providing upgraded and accessible facilities. I have decided that the full reconstruction of the facilities, as stated above, best meets the needs of the public and is the most appropriate level of reconstruction for this project.
- The replacement of the water distribution lines, water hydrants and sump pads will add a slightly larger area of ground disturbance, approximately ½ acre, than would Alternative 3 but will reduce the annual maintenance costs associated with older facilities and will contribute to the overall ability of the site to improve water conservation.
- The selected alternative will also provide a greater level of public health and safety through replacement of the hydrants with new automatic shut off hydrants properly designed to eliminate cross connection contamination caused by back flow into the system from trailers hooking up to hydrants.
- Threatened, endangered or sensitive species are not likely to be adversely affected nor will any species move toward listing as threatened or endangered.
- The proposed action will contribute negligible impact, affecting less than 0.01% (0.07 acres) of the existing wetlands in Mill Hollow watershed.
- This alternative meets requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Utah Public Drinking Water Rules.

I based my decision on my review of the environmental effects in the Mill Hollow Water System Reconstruction EA and on the project record.

### Required Mitigation

The following mitigation measures were identified in the EA and are required as conditions of this authorization.

1. Reconstruction activities would take place during the summer camping season, but would be timed to have the least impact on recreationists.
2. Any ground disturbance associated with the project will be seeded with an approved certified weed-free native seed mix and mulched with certified weed-free material.
3. The pulling of tree/shrub stumps will be limited to the collection area and to the area directly above the water distribution lines.
4. Naturally recontour disturbed surface and install rolling grade dips to direct flow off of the road prism and prevent concentrated flow or runoff for segments of water delivery system that lies within the existing spring access road alignment.
5. If topography does not provide an adequate screen for the collection box, storage tank and hypochlorinator, shrubs or trees will be planted to diminish associated visual effect.

6. Where practical, any necessary access road or trail closure activity, etc. should use natural materials in lieu of steel gates, wire fences and other man-made structures. If any boulders are used as barriers, they should be partially buried and arranged so as to appear natural.
7. Any needed signage should be kept to an appropriate minimum in size, quantity, color and reflectivity and should fit within the context of the surrounding landscape.
8. Surfaces of any required man wells, covers, gates, fences, etc., should be of a color and finish so as not to reflect sunlight and to minimize visibility. In this case, a spruce green to blend with adjacent conifer cover is preferred.
9. Development should be the minimum functionally necessary. No material, obsolete or unneeded equipment should be stored on or near the site.
10. Fugitive dust will be minimized during reconstruction activities by watering as appropriate.
11. Appropriate warning signs will be installed to inform the public of any dangers or hazards present during reconstruction activities.
12. Options for providing interpretive information/signing for recreationists regarding the reconstruction activities will be considered and provided as appropriate.
13. The Forest Service and/or the campground concessionaire will monitor for the presence of noxious weeds; and if detected, weeds will be treated using standard methods as provided for in the Forest Plan (pages 3-15 through 17). In addition, standard language for pressure washing all construction equipment would be included in any contract issued for the project (Alternatives 2 & 3).
14. Standard Department of Agriculture Clause, 452.236-73 for protecting any cultural or historical resources discovered during reconstruction activities would be included in any contract issued for the project. If any sites are located during project implementation, measures will be taken to avoid impact to them. The Forest Archaeologist will be notified so the sites can be evaluated for eligibility to the National Register (Alternatives 2 & 3).
15. Any topsoil disturbed during excavation will be stockpiled and used in the restoration of disturbed areas.

### Other Alternatives Considered

In addition to the selected alternative, I considered two other alternatives. A comparison of these alternatives can be found in the EA on pages 14-17.

#### Alternative 1

##### No Action

Under the No Action alternative, current management plans would continue to guide management of the project area.

This alternative was not selected because it does not respond to the stated purpose or need of the project.

### Alternative 3

Alternative 3 proposed removal and replacement of the collection box, storage tank and hypochlorinator portions of the water system structures.

Although this alternative would meet the purpose and need for the project, it does not fully address public health and safety by eliminating cross connection contamination, and will not enhance the accessibility of the campground or the water conservation opportunities.

## Public Involvement

As described in the background, the need for this action was identified in 1997. A proposal to remove and replace the water system structures was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions Winter Edition 2003. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment during scoping January 3, 2003 to February 8, 2003. In addition, as part of the public involvement process, the agency sent a scoping letter describing the proposal to 115 contacts on January 3, 2003 and a request for comments was published in the Legal Notice section of the “*Provo Daily Herald*” on January 12, 2003. In response, three comment letters were received.

Using the comments from the public, other agencies, and internal Forest Service scoping, the interdisciplinary team identified several issues regarding the effects of the proposed action. Main issues of concern included impacts to wetlands, Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species, recreation opportunities and public health and safety (see EA pages 5-6). To address these concerns, the Forest Service created the alternatives described above.

In addition, and in accordance with the 2003 Revised Notice, Comment and Appeal Procedures (36 CFR 215), a detailed description of the Proposed Action and alternatives was distributed on March 19, 2004 to those who commented on the January 3, 2004 scoping notice. A letter was sent to all others on the original scoping notice contact list informing them of the documents’ availability and requesting comments. A request for comments was published in the Legal Notice section of the “*Provo Daily Herald*” on March 24, 2003. In response, two comment letters were received.

## Finding of No Significant Impact

After considering the environmental effects described in the EA, I have determined that these actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts (40 CFR 1508.27). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. I base my finding on the following:

### (A) Context

*The context of the Selected Alternative is limited to the Mill Hollow Campground Water System Reconstruction project area. [40 CFR 1508.27(a)].*

Activities and environmental effects associated with my decision will be confined to the project area described in the EA. Actions will be limited to those actions disclosed in this document and its appendices. Further, my decision is consistent with the management area direction, desired future conditions, and Forest Plan standards specified for the area (EA, pp. 3).

*(B) Intensity Factors*

*(1) My decision will not result in any significant beneficial or adverse effects [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(1)].*

The analysis documented in the Environmental Consequences section of the EA did not identify any individually or cumulatively significant adverse short or long-term impacts resulting from implementation of the Selected Alternative. The application of management requirements and mitigation measures will insure that any adverse effects are minimal (EA, pp. 13-14)

*(2) There will be no significant effects on public health and safety [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)].*

The Selected Alternative will not adversely affect public health and safety. Management requirements and mitigation measures will be in place to inform and protect the public during project activities (EA, pages 13-14). Proposed activities will meet water quality standards set by the Clean Water Act.

*(3) My decision will not result in any significant effects on any unique characteristics of the geographic area, historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3)].*

The analysis documented in the EA and the project record discloses that the Selected Alternative will not result in any effects on Inventoried Roadless Areas (EA, p.28), or cultural or historic resources (EA, pp. 5), and will not result in any major effects on wetlands (EA, p. 18-19).

*(4) The Selected Alternative will not result in any effects that are likely to be highly controversial [40CFR 1508.27(b)(4)].*

Controversy in this context refers to scientific dispute over the effects of the Federal action, not opposition to its implementation. The scientific basis for the analysis is contained in the project record and summarized in the EA. Standard analysis techniques and models were used. The effects of the Selected Alternative are minor (EA, pp. 14-32) and are supported by scientific research as referenced in the EA.

*(5) The Selected Alternative will not result in any highly uncertain, unique, or unknown risks [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)].*

The environmental analysis (which includes the EA, resource technical reports, monitoring reports on file at the Heber District Office, Biological Assessments, and Biological Evaluations) determined that the Selected Alternative will not involve any highly uncertain or unknown risks. The management activities associated with my decision are typical of those successfully implemented in the past on the Uinta National Forest.

*(6) My decision does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)].*

The Selected Alternative will not set a precedent for future actions with significant effects. The Selected Alternative applies only to reconstruction of the Mill Hollow Campground Water System as discussed in the EA. Future proposed projects would be subject to site-specific analysis and implementation would hinge on that analysis.

*(7) The analysis documented in the EA discloses that my decision will not result in any significant cumulative effects [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)].*

The Environmental Consequences section of the EA discloses that the Selected Alternative will not result in any significant cumulative effects (EA, pp. 19, 20-21, 27-28, 30-31, 32).

*(8) My decision will not adversely affect sites or objects listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)].*

The project area was surveyed for cultural resources and no sites of any kind were found, thus there will be No Historic Properties affected by the project. Concurrence on this project was received from the Utah State Historic Preservation Office on May 28, 2003 (Project Record). Mitigation measures appropriate to all action alternatives will include actions taken in the event any cultural or historic resources are discovered during implementation of the project. The Forest Archaeologist will be notified so the sites can be evaluated for eligibility to the National Register (EA, pp. 5, 13-14).

*(9) My decision will not adversely affect threatened or endangered species or their habitats [40 CFR 1508.27 (b)(9)].*

My decision will not have an adverse direct, indirect or cumulative effect on any threatened, endangered or sensitive (TES) species within or outside the project area. The Biological Evaluation for the Intermountain Region (R4) Forest Service Sensitive Plant Species listed slender moonwort and dainty moonwort as having a “May Impact” potential effect. Therefore, the project may impact individual plants or habitat, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards Federal listing or loss of viability to the population or species. (EA pp.21-28, and Appendices pp. 37-40).

*(10) My decision is consistent with Federal, State, and local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)].*

The Purpose and Need section of the EA (pp. 2-3) discloses consistency of the Selected Alternative with applicable laws and regulations relating to federal natural resource management. The Environmental Consequences section of the EA and the Project Record provide supporting information.

## **Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations**

This decision to remove and replace the water system structures including the collection box, water storage tank, hypochlorinator and enclosure, distribution lines, hydrants, sump pads and placement of an impermeable liner with two feet of soil over the collection lines is consistent with the intent of the forest plan's long term goals and objectives. The project area is allocated for developed recreation use, Management Prescription 4.5 in the Upper Provo Management Area as identified in the Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The project was designed in conformance with land and resource management plan standards and incorporates appropriate land and resource management plan goals for providing diverse and suitable recreational opportunities and providing facilities that are safe and responsive to public needs. (Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, Forest Wide Goal No. 6 and Forest Wide Goal No. 8 page 2-1).

## Implementation Date

If no appeal is received, implementation of this decision may occur on, but not before 5 business days from the close of the appeal filing period. If an appeal is received, implementation may not occur for 15 days following the date of appeal disposition.

## Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is subject to appeal in accordance with 36 CFR 215.7. A notice of appeal must be in writing and clearly state that it is a Notice of Appeal being filed in pursuant to 36 CFR 215.7. Appeals must be filed with USDA Forest Service, Uinta National Forest, ATTN: Forest Supervisor Peter W. Karp - Appeals Deciding Officer, 88 West 100 North, Provo, UT 84601; FAX to (801) 342-5144; or you may hand-deliver an appeal to the above address during normal business hours from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays. Appeals may also be sent by e-mail to [appeals-intermtn-uinta@fs.fed.us](mailto:appeals-intermtn-uinta@fs.fed.us). Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14 and must be filed within 45 days of the date of legal notice of this decision in the "*Provo Daily Herald*".

## Contact

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service appeal process, contact Lisa Heiser, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Heber Ranger District, P.O. Box 190; Heber City, UT 84032, (435) 654-0470

/s/ Steven W. Scheid  
Steven W. Scheid  
Acting District Ranger  
Heber Ranger District

May 14, 2004  
Date

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