
2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Proposed Action (Buried Pipeline)

Barrick and ELLCO submitted an application to the BLM on May 2, 1997, to amend existing right-of-way N-52388 for a term of 30 years. The amendment seeks to expand the existing right-of-way width from 40 feet to 80 feet to accommodate the installation of a second pipeline consisting of approximately 3,936 feet of 48-inch diameter steel pipe. A temporary use permit would be required for construction. The location of the proposed pipeline (Section 32, T36N, R49E and Section 4, T35N, R49E, Eureka County) is depicted on Figure 2-1. The proposed pipeline would enable Barrick to separate water from the treatment plant that meets the discharge limitations established by the NPDES Permit from water that can be used for irrigation purposes without treatment. Segregating the flows would reduce the treatment costs incurred by Barrick. In addition, the proposed pipeline would eliminate hydraulic constraints that limit the quantity of water that can be delivered to irrigation. This would increase irrigation use of pumped groundwater by approximately 8,000 gpm during peak irrigation periods. Finally, the proposed pipeline would enable Barrick to recirculate water from the Sand Dune Canal to the TS Ranch Reservoir at the same time that water is being discharged to the Humboldt River. The proposed pipeline could convey up to 65,000 gpm and is intended for year-round use.

Prior to pipeline construction, shrubs and large rocks along the pipeline corridor would be removed, and topsoil would be stripped and stockpiled. Track-mounted hoes and backhoe tractors would excavate a trench approximately 90 inches wide to a depth of approximately 6 feet. Pipe would be delivered to the construction site by tractor-trailer rigs and strung along the pipeline corridor. Pipe sections would be laid out and aligned in the trench, and the joints welded. Welded pipeline joints would be inspected prior to

backfilling the trench to locate any defects that might affect the integrity of the pipeline.

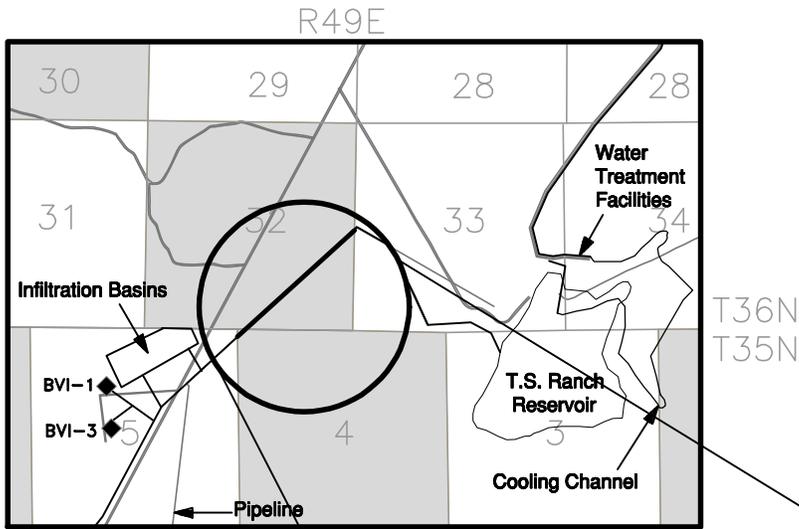
The proposed pipeline would be buried in a trench with a minimum of 2 feet of cover. The trench would be backfilled and graded to contour with the surrounding surface immediately following installation of the pipeline. Installation of the pipeline would be completed within approximately a 2-week period. The disturbed area would be reclaimed immediately following construction using an BLM-approved seed mix. The proposed seed mixture shown in Table 2-1 includes species adapted for quick establishment; this would minimize the potential for invasion by undesirable non-native species and noxious weeds. After construction and reclamation, disturbance along the pipeline right-of-way would be limited to a 10-foot wide, 2-track access road. Upon termination of discharge operations, the pipeline would be sealed and abandoned in place, and the access road would be ripped and revegetated.

2.2 Alternatives to the Proposed Action (No Action)

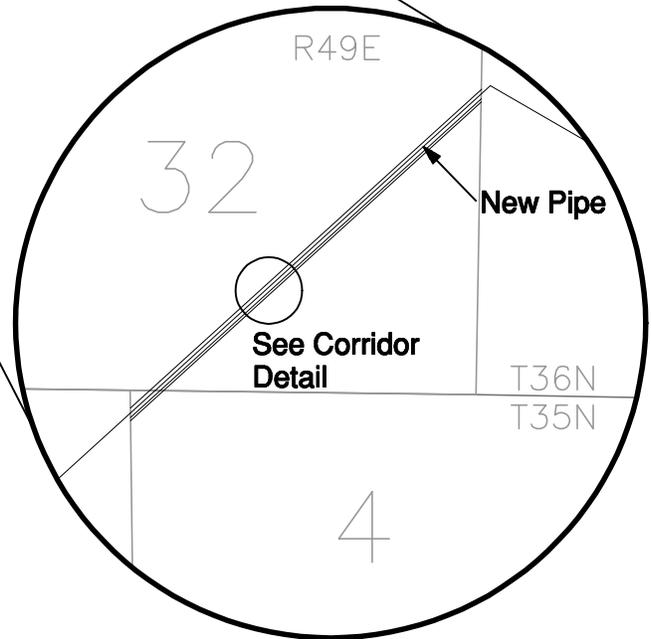
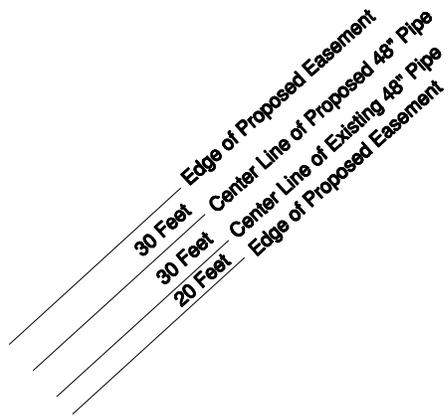
Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed buried pipeline would not be constructed, and the disturbance described along the 3,936-foot right-of-way in Section 2.1 would not occur. Without the buried pipeline, the operational flexibility of the water distribution system would not be realized; additional water treatment would be necessary, which would increase the quantity of precipitate generated by the treatment process; and less water could be delivered to irrigation uses.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

Removing the pipeline following the end of operations was considered as an alternative to abandoning the pipeline in place. This alternative would redisturb the right-of-way following the revegetation and reclamation that would occur immediately after construction. Given that there would be no potential soil, water, or vegetation



Corridor Detail



Legend

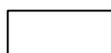
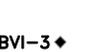
-  Public Lands Administrated by BLM
-  Private Lands
-  Section
-  Road
-  Proposed Pipeline
-  Injection Well

Figure 2-1
Proposed Action - Buried Pipeline Location

**Table 2-1
Seed Mixture**

Common Name	Scientific Name	PLS LBS/ACRE
Bluebunch wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron spicatum</i>	4
Great Basin wildrye	<i>Elymus cinereus</i>	2
Western wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron smithii</i>	4
Thickspike wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron dasystachyum</i>	4
Prostrate kochia	<i>Kochia prostrata</i>	0.5
Lewis flax	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	2
Fourwing saltbush	<i>Atriplex canescens</i>	3.5
Total		20.0

PLS = pure live seed.

impacts associated with leaving the pipeline in place, the redisturbance associated with removing the pipeline would result in increased adverse air quality, soil, vegetation, and wildlife impacts. Therefore, pipeline removal was eliminated from detailed consideration.

2.4 Agency Preferred Alternative

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, federal agencies are required by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1502.14[e]) to identify their preferred alternative for a project in the Draft EIS, if a preference has been identified. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Proposed Action for this Supplemental EIS, i.e., the action upon which the BLM will make a decision, is the installation of the buried water pipeline. The BLM has identified the Proposed Action as the agency preferred alternative. The BLM is reviewing monitoring and mitigation measures identified during the analysis of the Proposed Action and Barrick's continuing dewatering and water management operations; the BLM will identify required monitoring and mitigation measures in the Record of Decision for this Supplemental EIS.