



Executive Director Determination on Request to Extend FAST-41 Final Completion Date by More Than 30 Days

January 29, 2026

La Jara Mesa

I. Summary

The La Jara Mesa Project (La Jara Mesa), sponsored by Laramide Resources, Ltd. (Project Sponsor), is a “covered project” under Title 41 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41), 42 U.S.C. § 4370m *et seq.* The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), has principal responsibility for environmental review of the Project under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq.*, which makes USDA the lead agency for both NEPA and FAST-41.

USDA submitted a request to the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) Executive Director to extend the intermediate and final milestones for multiple actions on the Project’s permitting timetable. This includes modifications for the following actions:

- USDA’s mine plan of operations;
- USDA’s environmental review under NEPA; and
- USDA’s consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106), 54 U.S.C. § 306108.

This is USDA’s first request to extend completion dates on the Project’s permitting timetable. For the following reasons, USDA’s extension request is **GRANTED**, and the Project permitting timetable will be revised accordingly.

II. Legal Standard

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(i)(II) & (IV), a lead agency may extend a final completion date by more than 30 days beyond the original final completion date only after consulting with the Project Sponsor and obtaining Executive Director approval. After receiving an extension request, the Executive Director must consult with the Project Sponsor and make a determination on the record whether to grant the requested date change. The Executive Director’s determination is based on consideration of “relevant factors,” including, but not limited to:

- (i) the size and complexity of the covered project;
- (ii) the resources available to each participating agency;
- (iii) the regional or national economic significance of the project;
- (iv) the sensitivity of the natural or historic resources that may be affected by the project;



- (v) the financing plan for the project; and
- (vi) the extent to which similar projects in geographic proximity to the project were recently subject to environmental review or similar procedures under State law.

42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-2(c)(2)(B) and 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(i)(IV). Executive Director determinations made pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(i)(IV) are not subject to judicial review.

42 U.S.C. § 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(iv)(I).

III. Background

On behalf of the Project Sponsor, USDA submitted a request to modify the completion dates shown in the table immediately below. This revised schedule is necessary to accommodate the Project Sponsor's collection of baseline data and surveys for evaluation of cultural and tribal resources.

The Project Sponsor requested a schedule delay of six to twelve months to allow better alignment between the state and federal permitting processes. The Forest Service will continue the completeness review of the Mine Plan of Operations (MPO) while the Project Sponsor focuses on data collection for both federal and state permitting. Data captured will inform the MPO, NEPA, and Section 106 consultation.

Action Agency	Action	Milestone	Current Date	Requested Date
USDA	Mine Plan of Operations	Submittal of draft initial Plan of Operations (Applicant Action)	12/05/2025	Complete
		Acceptance of complete initial Plan of Operations (Agency Action)	03/05/2026	09/30/2026
		Submittal of final Plan of Operations and financial assurance (Applicant Action)	11/17/2028	01/17/2029
		Approval of final Plan of Operations (Agency Action)	01/31/2028	01/31/2029
	NEPA	Issuance of Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (Agency Action)	04/03/2026	11/12/2026
		Publication of the Federal Register Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Draft EIS and concurrent CAA Section 309 Review (Agency Action)	12/02/2026	09/07/2027
		Publication of the Federal Register NOA of a Final EIS (Agency Action)	06/18/2027	07/03/2028
		Issuance of Lead Agency draft Record of Decision (Agency Action)	06/18/2027	07/03/2028
		Issuance of a Final Record of Decision (Agency Action)	11/17/2027	11/17/2028
	Section 106	Consultation initiated with SHPO/THPO	07/18/2023	Complete
		Section 106 consultation concluded	05/18/2027	06/01/2028



Consultation with Project Sponsor on Extension Requests

Prior to submitting an extension request to the Executive Director, USDA consulted with the Project Sponsor per 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(i)(I) and represents that the Project Sponsor accepts the proposed permitting timetable extension.

The Executive Director also consulted with the Project Sponsor, as required by 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-2(c)(2)(D)(i)(IV), and similarly found that the Project Sponsor does not object to the requested permitting timetable modification. In fact, the Project Sponsor is the impetus for the extension.

IV. Discussion

The primary driver of the timetable modification for this Project is to provide the Project Sponsor additional time to conduct baseline data collection surveys, while aligning submission for state and federal permitting requirements. FAST-41 is a voluntary process, and thus a project sponsor can choose to pause, cancel, or slow down a timeline as they see fit. Given these circumstances, extending the completion dates addressed in this Executive Director Determination is warranted.

V. Determination

USDA's extension request is **GRANTED**, and the permitting timetable is revised as requested.



Emily Domenech
Executive Director
Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council

