BLM

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment
for the Gar-Mesa Pipeline Partial Relocation Project

Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND:

This EA has been prepared by the BLM to analyze Public Service Company of Colorado's proposal to relocate a portion of an existing pipeline authorized under right-of-way (ROW) grant number C 05006.

Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo), an Xcel Energy company, is responsible for the safe and efficient delivery of natural gas to its customers. In the interest of meeting this responsibility, PSCo is proposing to replace a segment of the 8 inch natural gas transmission pipeline that delivers natural gas from the interconnect with El Paso Energy, known as the CIG Little Horse Tap near Rangely, Colorado to Grand Junction, Colorado.

The 8-inch pipeline segment was originally installed in 1951, and has subsequently been subjected to frequent landslide activity and minor relocations. The pipeline was moved above ground to its present location in the 1960's after a large landslide damaged the original pipe. Over the past fifty years, the ground support under the pipe at the leg-off point has eroded causing increased stress on the pipe. Continued erosion at the top of the cliff will result in further increase of stress at the support point, and eventual failure of the pipe at this location if no action is taken.

The intent of this project is to relocate the pipeline segment to a more geologically stable location as identified by geo-technical engineering studies. Relocating the pipeline to this new alignment would result in a safer operating environment for the pipeline thus minimizing risk to the public, the surrounding environment and property. Locating the pipe in this new alignment affords the highest probability of maintaining this critical supply of natural gas from this location to the entire Grand Valley. Should this line fail during the winter months, approximately half of the customers in this region would be without natural gas until the pipeline could be repaired, which during the winter would most likely be a several day endeavor.

The subject pipeline segment is approximately one half of a mile long and is located in the 6th Principal Meridian, T. 5 S., R. 102 W., sections 25 and 26. More specifically, the pipeline segment originates in the NE¼ of section 26 adjacent to the State Highway 139 Right-of-Way at the top of Douglas Pass. The pipeline bears east from the origination point and traverses private land (Twin Buttes Land Co) for 122 linear feet before it enters land owned in fee by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The pipeline continues east, then southeast for 230 linear feet on the FAA property, re-entering the land of Twin Buttes Land Company.

The segment continues south by southeast for 575 linear feet to reach the boundary of sections 25 and 26. Of this, 575 linear feet, 411 feet are installed above ground to mitigate the potential effects of sliding activity.

At the boundary of sections 25 and 26, the pipeline crosses into Bureau of Land Management property in Section 25. The pipeline bears south by southeast, south, and south by southwest for 842 linear feet before crossing the boundary of sections 25 and 26 boundary once again entering private land (#11 Enterprises, LTD).

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: C 05006 (Amendment)

PROJECT NAME: Gar-Mesa Pipeline Partial Re-route

PLANNING UNIT: Grand Junction Field Office

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

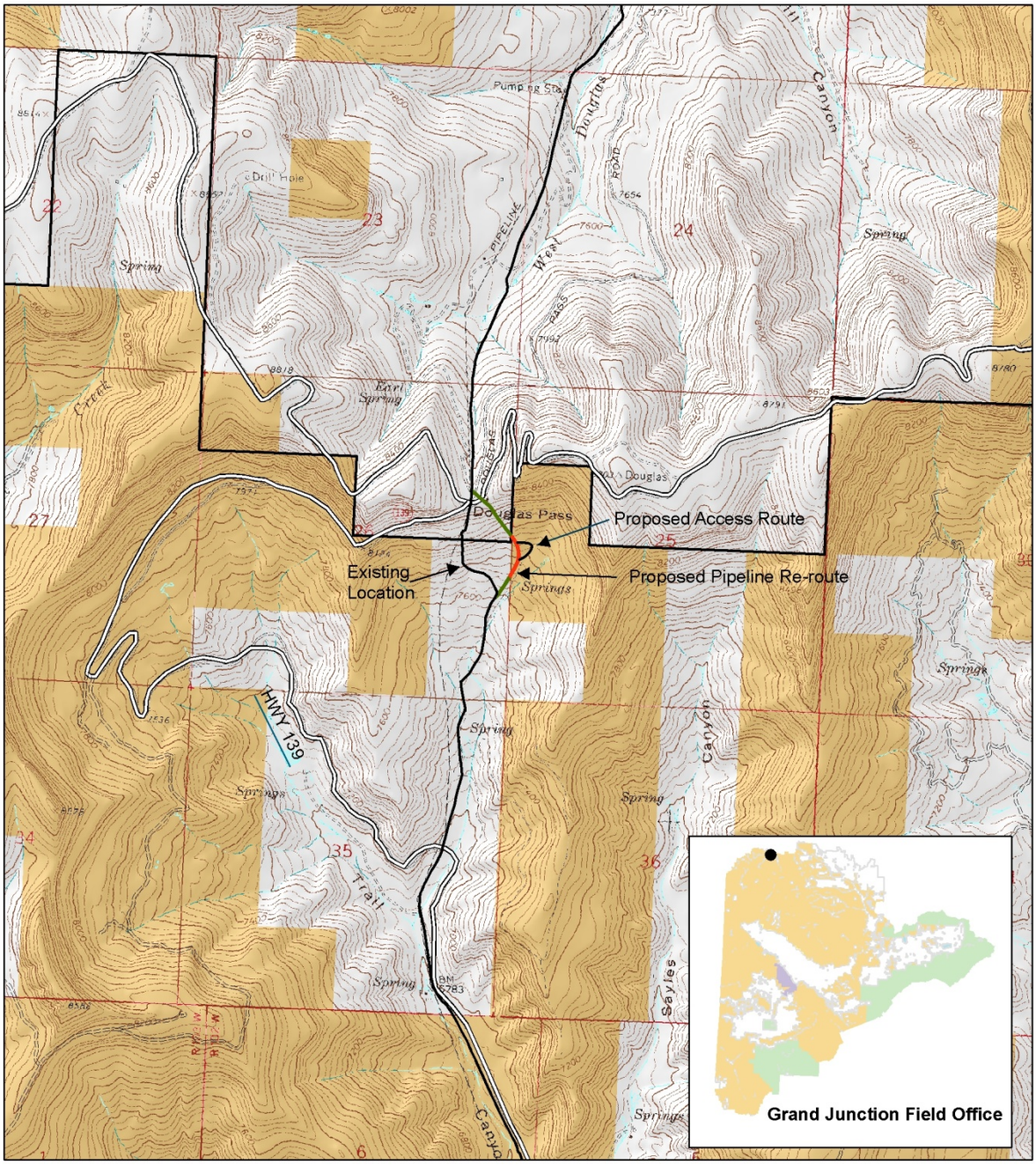
Pipeline Relocation:
6th PM,
T. 5 S., R. 102 W.,
sec. 25, SW¼NW¼, and NW¼SW¼.

Access Road:
6th PM,
T. 5 S., R. 102 W.,
sec. 25, NW¼NW¼SW¼.

Garfield County, Colorado

Douglas Pass, Colorado USGS Quadrangle

Figure 1: Project Map



Public Service Company
Natural Gas Pipeline
CO-130-2012-0037-EA
C 05006 Amendment

6th PM,
T. 5 S., R. 102 W.,
sec. 25, SW¼NW¼, and NW¼SW¼.

Garfield County, Colorado

Douglas Pass , Colorado USGS Quad

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Access Route
Reroute BLM
Reroute Private
Existing Pipeline
GJFO Boundary
BLM
Private

N

1.3 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose for the action is to provide the opportunity to use public land located in the GJFO to construct, operate and maintain a proposed re-route of a portion of the Garmesa Pipeline located near Highway 139 in the 6th P.M., T. 5 S., R. 102 W., section 25. The purpose of the project also includes the opportunity to consider a route and design that would ensure that the project is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner with minimal impacts to natural resources. The need for the action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA), 1920 to respond to a request for a ROW grant authorizing use of public land for roads.

1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1.4.1 Public Scoping:

Scoping, by posting this project on the Grand Junction Field Office NEPA website, was the primary mechanism used by the BLM to invite public involvement. No public comments were received.

1.4.2 Internal Scoping:

Maps of the parcel and description of the proposed action were distributed to the GJFO Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and discussed at IDT meetings. Documentation of which resources would be impacted based on internal scoping and site visits is included in Table 3.1.

1.4.3 Issues Identified:

Based on internal scoping, the following Issues were identified:

1. Would the proposed pipeline construction impact an elk production area?
2. Would removal of vegetation during pipeline construction impact migratory birds?
3. How would construction of the proposed route impact steep slopes or slumping soils?

1.5 DECISION TO BE MADE

The BLM will decide whether to approve the proposed ROW grant amendment for the Gar-Mesa Partial Pipeline Relocation Project, based on the analysis contained in this Environmental Assessment (EA). This EA will analyze the proposed pipeline re-route by PSCo. The BLM may choose to: a) accept the projects as proposed, b) accept the projects with modifications/mitigation, c) accept alternatives to the proposed action, or d) not authorize the projects at this time. The finding associated with this EA may not constitute the final approval for the proposed action.

To permit the action, it would also have to be consistent with other existing authorized activities in the project area. If permitted, this action would include development of appropriate stipulations that would be consistent with the goals, objectives and decisions of the Grand Junction Resource Area Resource Management Plan as well as with applicable policies, regulations, and laws.

CHAPTER 2 - PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information on the Proposed Action and Alternatives. Alternatives considered but not analyzed in detail are also discussed.

2.2 ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

2.2.1 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to move a portion of PSCo' s existing 8-inch pipeline out of an area with slumping soils to a more stable location east of the existing pipeline. The pipeline would be placed adjacent to an existing 26-inch natural gas pipeline owned by William's Northwest Pipeline (Northwest's). The pipeline would be placed approximately 25 feet to the west of the Northwest's pipeline. Under the proposed action the pipeline would cross an additional 842 feet of public land, and would have a ROW 50 feet wide. The pipeline would be relocated immediately following approval of the project. The pipeline would be buried at least 36 inches deep public land.

Schedule

PSCo intends to perform relocation of the pipeline during the summer months of 2012. Due to the high elevation of the project, it is anticipated that construction would commence during the summer of 2012. PSCo has hired W.C. Striegel, Inc. to perform the pipeline construction and relocation work. Construction work is scheduled to take approximately 15 days with restoration of the site to be scheduled immediately following construction, and estimated to take 3 to 5 days to complete. The proposed construction hours are from 7:00 AM to 7:30 PM Monday through Saturday, and may be extended from dawn to dusk if warranted by the short construction window available in the project location.

Pipeline ROW & Workspace

PSCo is requesting a 50 foot wide right of way directly adjacent to and including portions of the existing 26 inch Northwest pipeline. Because the new pipeline is directly adjacent to an existing pipeline, it is anticipated that only 25 feet of linear corridor would be new disturbance from construction of the pipeline. At the request of Northwest, a safety buffer of 5 feet from the centerline of the existing pipeline would be maintained for the protection of the existing facilities. The new pipeline would be located approximately 25 feet' west of the existing pipeline providing 20 feet of work space to the east and 25 feet of work space to the west of the PSCo pipeline.

The necessary easement to cross the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) fee parcel has been obtained. Since the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has a lease or similar land right to use the FAA property, it has reviewed the proposed construction plan and will issue a permit once a definite start date is determined in June or early July. PSCo has worked with Northwest on the above ground parallel portion of the pipeline and agreed on a 25 foot separation west of the existing Williams/Northwest pipeline. An easement has been obtained

from the Twin Buttes Land Company, LLC. An easement is in the process of being reviewed and executed by #11 Enterprises Ltd.

There is an existing access road around the section of the pipeline route that crosses the BLM property that was built during the construction of the Northwest pipeline in this corridor. The access road is approximately 500 feet long and 12 feet wide. PSCo is proposing to amend their ROW grant to include long-term use of this road as an ancillary facility to the pipeline. Their proposed ROW for the road is 500 feet long 25 feet wide, which matches Northwest pipeline road ROW. The road was necessary for access by four wheel drive pickups to get around this lower steep section for access to the upper section of the route. It is intended to utilize this road on this project for the same purpose to provide the safest means for this necessary type of vehicle including welding rigs to haul minor materials and equipment to the upper reaches of the route. It would be necessary to move fallen trees and some larger rocks from the road path to make it accessible to wheeled vehicles but the need for remedial grading is not anticipated. Necessary reclamation would be performed in this area upon completion with the intent to leave a driving path for small four wheelers to be used by operations personnel for routine maintenance and inspection of the pipeline.

No work would commence on the site until the executed easement with #11 Enterprises Ltd, the CDOT permit, and BLM approval is obtained.

Site Preparation

Construction would start with the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater management. Environmental compliance for all soil disturbing activities would be governed by a site specific Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) administered by PSCo. A copy of this plan is attached to this document and lists specific BMPs for protecting the work area. Access to the site would be from State Highway 139 for the upper portion of the project and along the existing Northwest pipeline access road for the lower portion of the project.

Prior to delivery, equipment would be cleaned to prevent the spread of noxious and invasive weeds into the project area. In addition, all organic materials used in BMPs should be certified weed-free.

After BMP installation, the topsoil would be removed and segregated along the route and protected from erosion.

Wetlands near the stock pond located on private land at the south end of the ROW may require alternative pipeline installation methods, possibly including boring under the wetlands.

Pipeline Testing and Tie-in

Prior to placing the line in service, the pipeline would be strength tested to the requirements of 49 CFR 192 using nitrogen as the test medium. Nitrogen was chosen as the test medium to minimize the construction schedule and potential erosion on the site. The strength test would be conducted for a minimum of eight (8) hours.

At the completion of the strength test, the new pipeline segment would be tied in to the existing pipeline by welding. The pipeline would then be purged of air and nitrogen and placed in service. A leak survey would be conducted after the pipeline is placed in service.

Site Restoration

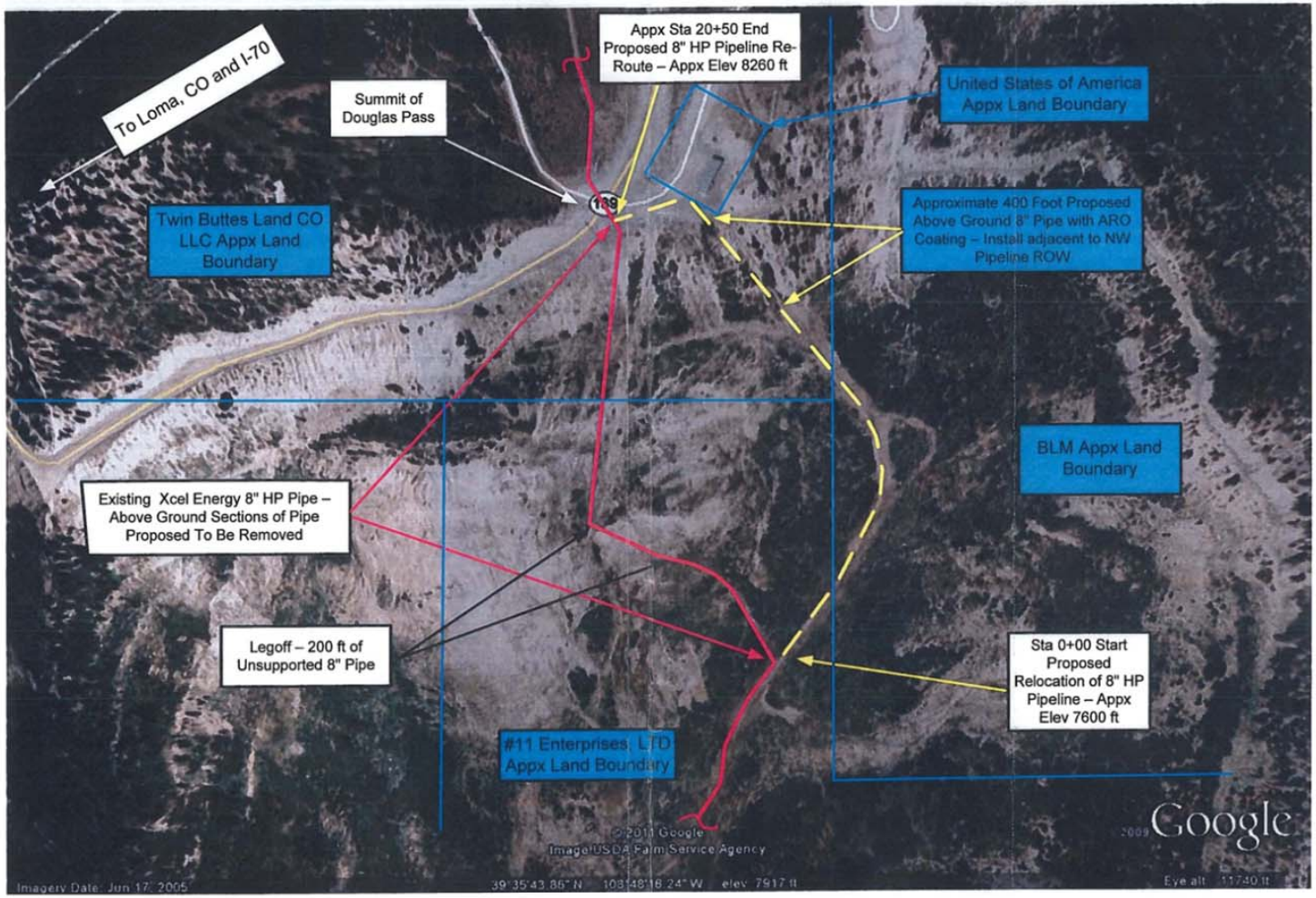
Once the pipeline is in service, all of the above ground segments of the old pipeline would be removed between the tie-in points. The retired pipeline would be tested for hazardous materials and removed from the site or abandoned in place.

The disturbed areas of the project site would be restored as near as possible to the original lines and grades and the topsoil spread for permanent restoration. All disturbed areas would receive the temporary and permanent BMPs as described in the SWMP. These BMPs would be maintained until vegetation in the disturbed areas has reached 70% of the pre-disturbance level. At this time, all non-biodegradable BMPs would be removed. Final removal of the BMPs is anticipated in the spring of 2013.

Pipeline Operation and Maintenance

PSCo would operate the pipeline in accordance with the regulations of 49 CFR 192 (US DOT) and the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. These regulations require patrolling, maintenance, and integrity management activities that would require the pipeline right of way to be maintained free of substantial overgrowth and accessible for service. The pipeline corridor for this project would be maintained in the same manner as the existing Northwest pipeline in the same corridor. The access to the site would continue to be existing access road utilized today by both Northwest Pipeline and Public Service Company of Colorado. This access is and would continue to be utilized and maintained in conjunction with the current and revised easement agreements with #11 Enterprises and Twin Buttes Land Co., and new agreements and permits with CDOT, the FAA and the BLM should it approve this ROW grant amendment.

Xcel Energy Proposed Re-Roue, 8" Douglas Pass Legoff, Hwy 139, Garfield County, CO



2.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative the proposed ROW amendment would be denied and PSCo would not be able to move the pipeline to the proposed location, which partially crosses public land managed by the BLM. Failure to relocate a portion of the pipeline may cause the line to fail, which could lead to gas outages in private residences and businesses located in the Grand Valley. Failure of the pipeline may also cause environmental damage and degradation if a spill occurred. PSCo would need to find a route located on private property with soils that are stable enough to hold the pipeline. The proposed re-route could possibly occur only on private land; however the existing pipeline crosses large spans of public land and could not be authorized without using public land.

2.4 PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: GRAND JUNCTION Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: JANUARY, 1987

Decision Number/Page: 2-29

Decision Language: To respond, in a timely manner, to requests for utility authorizations on public land while considering environmental, social, economic, and interagency concerns.

In January 1997, the Colorado State Office of the BLM approved the Standards for Public Land Health and amended all RMPs in the State. Standards describe the conditions needed to sustain public land health and apply to all uses of public lands.

Standard 1: Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, land form, and geologic processes.

Standard 2: Riparian systems associated with both running and standing water function properly and have the ability to recover from major disturbance such as fire, severe grazing, or 100-year floods.

Standard 3: Healthy, productive plant and animal communities of native and other desirable species are maintained at viable population levels commensurate with the species and habitat's potential.

Standard 4: Special status, threatened and endangered species (federal and state), and other plants and animals officially designated by the BLM, and their habitats are maintained or enhanced by sustaining healthy, native plant and animal communities.

Standard 5: The water quality of all water bodies, including ground water where applicable, located on or influenced by BLM lands will achieve or exceed the Water Quality Standards established by the State of Colorado.

Because standards exist for each of these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in Chapter 3 of this document.

CHAPTER 3 - AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND EFFECTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section provides a description of the human and natural environmental resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action and presents comparative analyses of the direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the affected environment stemming from the implementation of the actions under the Proposed Action and other alternatives analyzed.

This EA draws upon information compiled in the Grand Junction Resource Area RMP (BLM 1987).

3.1.1 Elements Not Affected

The following elements, identified as not being present or not affected will not be brought forward for additional analysis:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern – There are no Areas of Critical Environmental Concern in the immediate vicinity of the project area.

Farmlands, Prime and Unique – There are no prime or unique farmlands in the project area.

Wilderness – There are no Wilderness areas, Wilderness Study Areas or inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics in the immediate vicinity of the project area.

Special Status Plants – There are no known special status plants or habitat for special status plants in the project area.

Geology/Minerals –The pipeline would not affect any unique geologic features or solid mineral resources.

Transportation/Access – Motorized vehicle access to the portion of the proposed pipeline that crosses BLM-managed lands requires crossing private land, and only 842 feet of this route is on BLM public land.

Fire/Fuels – Construction of the proposed pipeline relocation would create a temporary fire break that would persist until vegetation grows back to its current density.

Wild Horse and Burros – The proposed project is located outside of the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Area. There are no wild horses within the project area.

Range Management – The pipeline would not affect livestock management on the East Salt Allotment.

Table 3.1–1: Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation necessary	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date	Comments
PHYSICAL RESOURCES						
Air and Climate	☐	☐	☒	☒	ND 6/12/12	
Water (surface & subsurface, floodplains)	☐	☐	☒	☒	ND 5/21/12	
Soils	☐	☐	☒	☒	ND 5/21/12	
Geological/Mineral Resources	☐	☒	☐	☐	DSG 5/22/12	No impacts to unique geologic features.
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES						
Special Status Plants	☒	☒	☐	☐	ARL 5/15/12	
Special Status Wildlife	☐	☐	☒	☒	HLP 5/21/12	See below
Migratory Birds	☐	☐	☒	☒	HLP 5/21/12	See below
Other Important Wildlife Habitat	☐	☐	☒	☒	HLP 5/21/12	See below
Vegetation, Forestry	☐	☐	☒	☐	SC 5/31/12	
Invasive, Non-native Species	☐	☐	☒	☐	MT 5/23/12	
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	☐	☒	☐	☐	CARS 5/15/12	
HERITAGE RESOURCES AND HUMAN ENV.						
Cultural or Historical	☐	☐	☒	☐	ALR 5/24/12	Surveys required.
Paleontological	☐	☐	☒	☐	DSG 5/22/12	
Tribal& American Indian Religious Concerns	☐	☐	☒	☐	ALR 5/24/12	Surveys required.
Visual Resources	☐	☐	☒	☐	CPP 6/11/12	
Social/Economic	☐	☐	☒	☐	CE 5/21/12	No action could affect industry
Transportation and Access	☐	☒	☐	☐	CPP 6/11/12	

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation necessary	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date	Comments
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	☐	☐	☒	☐	AK 5/16/12	
LAND RESOURCES						
Recreation	☐	☐	☒	☐	CPP 6/11/12	Possible impacts to hunters
Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs, WSR)	☒	☐	☐	☐	CPP 6/11/12	
Wilderness & Wilderness Characteristics	☒	☐	☐	☐	CPP 6/11/12	
Range Management	☐	☒	☐	☐	SC 5/31/12	
Wild Horse and Burros	☒	☐	☐	☐	CARS 7/20/12	
Land Tenure, ROW, Other Uses	☐	☐	☒	☐	CARS 5/15/12	
Fire/Fuels	☐	☒	☐	☐	JP 5/29/12	

3.1.2 Past, Present, Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the cumulative effects of proposals under their review. Cumulative effects are defined in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR §1508.7 as "…the impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency…or person undertakes such other actions." The CEQ states that the "cumulative effects analyses should be conducted on the scale of human communities, landscapes, watersheds, or airsheds" using the concept of "project impact zone" or more simply put, the area that might be affected by the proposed action. The area that may be affected by this project includes varies by resource. To assess past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions that may occur within the affected area a review of GJFO NEPA log and our field office GIS data was completed. The following list includes all past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions known to the BLM that may occur within the affected area:

Past Actions:

Other past activities include the construction of Highway 139, William's Northwest natural gas pipeline (COC 086650), re-route of the Ignacio to Sumas pipeline (C 011243), and construction of an access road to Northwest's pipeline re-route.

Private: Improvements located on private property in the project area include portions of Highway 139, an FAA building, and a stock pond.

Present Actions:
Existing facilities such as Highway 139, pipelines, access roads, and stock ponds continue to be used. Livestock grazing also continues on both public and private land. The public land is open to hunting and guided hunting trips are likely occurring on the adjacent private property. There are no other known pending proposals in the project area.

Reasonably Foreseeable Actions:
Continued maintenance of existing facilities is expected to occur as long as existing facilities are in use. Construction of other facilities that support energy infrastructure will likely occur within or near the project area in the future.

This description of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions was considered when analyzing cumulative effects in sections 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 below.

3.2 PHYSICAL RESOURCES

3.2.1 Air Quality and Climate Change

Current Conditions

The primary sources of air pollutants in the region are fugitive dust from the desert to the west of the planning area, unpaved roads and streets, seasonal sanding for winter travel, motor vehicles, and wood-burning stove emissions. Seasonal wildfires throughout the western U. S. may also contribute to air pollutants and regional haze. The ambient pollutant levels are usually near or below measurable limits, except for high short-term increases in PM_{10} levels (primarily wind-blown dust), ozone, and carbon monoxide. Within the Rocky Mountain region, occasional peak ozone levels are relatively high, but are of unknown origin. Elevated concentrations may be the result of long-range transport from urban areas, subsidence of stratospheric ozone or photochemical reactions with natural hydrocarbons. Occasional peak concentrations of CO and SO_2 may be found in the immediate vicinity of combustion equipment. Locations vulnerable to decreasing air quality include the immediate areas around mining and farm tilling, local population centers, and distant areas affected by long-range transportation of pollutants. Representative monitoring of air quality in the general area indicates that the existing air quality is well within acceptable standards.

The EPA General Conformity regulations require that an analysis (as well as a possible formal conformity determination) be performed for federally sponsored or funded actions in non-attainment areas and in designated maintenance areas when the total direct and indirect net air pollutant emissions (or their precursors) exceed specified levels. Since the GJFO is not within a non-attainment or a maintenance area, the Clean Air Act conformity regulations do not apply.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the no-action alternative the pipeline would not be re-routed and no direct impacts to air quality would result. Indirectly, the existing pipeline would remain in soils mapped has being vulnerable to mass wasting. Portions of the pipeline in

these vulnerable areas would be more susceptible to damage which could result in leakage of natural gas to the atmosphere. Venting of natural gas to the atmosphere would contribute towards air quality degradation at the local level until the pipeline is repaired.

Cumulative Effects:
If damage to the existing pipeline were to occur, venting of natural gas to the atmosphere would contribute towards air quality degradation at the local level until the pipeline is repaired.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
The primary impact to air quality resulting from the proposed action would be increased fugitive dust production resulting from surface disturbance associated with the pipeline re-route. Decreased air quality would be anticipated to occur locally (at the site) until reclamation is complete or air quality BMPs are implemented.

Cumulative Effects:
Cumulative impacts to air quality are not anticipated to occur from short term increases in fugitive dust production.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
Surface disturbing actions should not occur when wind speeds exceed 35 mph. Reclamation of disturbed areas should occur as soon as practicable to minimize soil exposure to wind. The use of dust suppressants (water) should be utilized on disturbed areas to reduce fugitive dust production.

3.2.2 Soils (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Current Conditions

Both the proposed pipeline re-route and existing pipeline to be reclaimed are situated in soil mapping unit 47 (Hesperus-Empedrado, moist-pagoda complex) within the Douglas-Plateau Area NRCS soil survey. All of soil mapping unit 47 is identified by BLM as being vulnerable to mass wasting events. However, soil mapping unit 47 is mapped as a soil complex by the NRCS and thus erosional characteristics vary throughout the mapped soil complex. Observation of aerial photography indicates active mass wasting (slumping) in the area of the existing pipeline proposed for reclamation. Evaluation of topographic maps and aerial photography of the area proposed for the pipeline re-route indicates no active mass wasting and established upland vegetation (namely mature Pinyon and Juniper) situated on a distinguishable finger ridge.

A land health assessment conducted by BLM in 2005 in this area indicated land health standard 1 was meeting with problems. The rational for this rating was the occurrence of mass wasting throughout the landscape. Though mass wasting was thought to be a natural characteristic of the soils in this landscape, it was theorized that human activities

(namely road construction) had contributed to the quantity and frequency of mass wasting events since development has occurred.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the no-action alternative no direct impacts would occur from either the pipeline re-route or reclamation of the current pipeline. Indirectly, routine maintenance of the existing line could result in accelerated erosion and potentially contribute towards additional mass wasting events. Because the existing pipeline is within an active slump area, it is not anticipated that the no-action alternative would directly result in a change in BLMs finding for public land health standard 1. However, re-evaluation of this site following severe mass wasting (regardless of what triggered the event) could lead BLM to change its current finding for Public Land Health Standard 1 from meeting with problems to not meeting.

Cumulative Effects:
Increased erosion from the existing pipeline corridor could contribute to large, severe mass wasting events within the existing slump area. Re-evaluation of this site following severe mass wasting could lead BLM to change its current finding for Public Land Health Standard 1 from meeting with problems to not meeting.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Direct impacts associated with the proposed pipeline re-route, access road, and reclamation of the existing pipeline would be primarily confined to the construction area of the buried pipeline (1 acre on BLM). The types of impacts includes soil compaction within the ROW and temporary work areas associated with construction equipment, loss of soil structure due to soil mixing and excavation, increased soil erosion resulting from removal of surface stabilizing agents such as vegetation, rock, or woody debris. Soil productivity may also be directly impacted from leaks or spills of environmentally unfriendly substances (e.g. equipment fuels and lubricants). Soil erosion could also be an indirect impact to soil resources if desirable vegetative soil stabilizing agents are replaced by less effect species. However, both direct and indirect impacts to soil resources are anticipated to be sufficiently mitigated through implementation of Best Management Practices outlined in the PSCo's State approved SWMP. Re-routing the existing pipeline to a more stable and suitable area would limit the need for constant maintenance along the current ROW. Reclamation of the existing pipeline would help better stabilize an active slump area improving soil health. The proposed action would not result in any changes to the current finding for public land health standard 1.

Cumulative Effects:
The proposed pipeline re-route is anticipated to required less maintenance and cause less environmental damage associated with erosion. Reclamation of the existing line would likely result in enhanced stabilization of an active slump area.

Enhanced stabilization of the slump area would reduce erosion and could improve soil health in this area over time.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
Implementation of soil stabilizing BMPs identified in the applicant's State approved SWMP would suffice as mitigation.

3.2.3 Water (surface and groundwater, floodplains) (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Current conditions

The proposed action is situated entirely within water quality stream segment 13a of the Lower Colorado River Basin. The 2012 CDPHE-WQCC Regulation No. 93 Section 303d List of Impaired Waters and Monitoring and Evaluation List, was reviewed to determine if Lower Colorado River stream segment 13a was listed. Stream segment 13a was not identified on the 303(d) or Monitoring and Evaluation list (CDPHE-WQCC, 2012) and currently meets State water quality standards.

A land health assessment conducted by BLM in 2005 in this area indicated land health standard 5 was meeting with problems. The rational for this rating was the occurrence of mass wasting throughout the landscape and potential for sediment to impair water quality. Though mass wasting was thought to be a natural characteristic of the soils in this landscape, it was theorized that human activities (namely road construction) had contributed to the quantity and frequency of mass wasting events since development has occurred.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the no-action alternative no direct impacts would occur from either the pipeline re-route or reclamation of the current pipeline. Indirectly, routine maintenance of the existing line could result in accelerated erosion and potentially contribute towards water quality degradation downstream. Because the existing pipeline is within an active slump area, it is not anticipated that the no-action alternative would directly result in a change in BLMs finding for public land health standard 5. However, re-evaluation of this site following severe mass wasting (regardless of what triggered the event) could lead BLM to change its current finding for Public Land Health Standard 5 from meeting with problems to not meeting.

Cumulative Effects:
Increased erosion from the existing pipeline corridor could contribute to large, severe mass wasting events within the existing slump area. Increased erosion from the slump area could contribute towards water quality degradation downstream (when compared to current conditions). Re-evaluation of this site following severe mass wasting could lead BLM to change its current finding for Public Land Health Standard 5 from meeting with problems to not meeting.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Direct impacts associated with the proposed pipeline re-route, access road, and reclamation of the existing pipeline would be primarily confined to the construction area of the buried pipeline (1 acre on BLM). Increased erosion from disturbed areas could increase sediment delivery to Trail Canyon and East Salt Creek degrading water quality. However, implementation of BMPs aimed at minimizing soil loss associated with pipeline construction is anticipated to sufficiently mitigate any impacts to downstream water quality. Re-routing the existing pipeline to a more stable and suitable area would limit the need for constant maintenance along the current ROW. Reclamation of the existing pipeline would help better stabilize an active slump area improving watershed health.

The proposed action would not result in any changes to the current finding for public land health standard 5.

Cumulative Effects:

The proposed pipeline re-route is anticipated to required less maintenance and cause less environmental damage associated with erosion. Reclamation of the existing line would likely result in enhanced stabilization of an active slump area. Enhanced stabilization of the slump area would reduce erosion from current conditions and could improve watershed health in this area over time.

3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.3.1 Invasive, Non-native Species#

Current Conditions:

The general area of the proposed project was inventoried for noxious weeds during the 2004 field season; however the specific site was not included in the survey. General inferences can be made for the Douglas Pass area, which is known for locally abundant houndstongue.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

If the project were not undertaken, there would be no new disturbance, and therefore a decreased chance of new weeds being introduced within the disturbed area. However, if the existing pipeline fails, there would likely be a greater amount of disturbance under an emergency repair response.

Cumulative Effects:

Over the long-term the reduced disturbance, decreases the chance for weed invasion.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
The proposed action is very small in scale, and not likely to contribute significantly to noxious weed problems in the Douglas Pass area. The proposed BMPs for weed mitigation should result in negligible impact.

Cumulative Effects:
Disturbances regardless of source are a potential for weed invasion. All permitted projects such as this one have built-in mitigation measures for weed management which should help reduce new populations of weeds from impacting the resource area.

3.3.2 Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Current conditions

Sensitive species known to occur in the action are primarily raptors and other migratory birds. A raptor survey was conducted in this area in 2011 and no nests were found. GJFO raptor survey protocol considers surveys to be valid for 2 years, therefore if construction occurs prior to Feb 1, 2013 no further surveys are needed. Biological surveys also assessed the areas potential to support Mexican Spotted Owls and it was determined the area was of poor habitat quality for the species. Migratory birds of conservation concern that are likely to occur in the area include Brewer's Sparrow, Cassin's Finch, Flammulated Owl, and Lewis's Woodpecker. Surveys for Migratory birds were not conducted, peak breeding season for migratory birds in this area is typically from May 15 to July 15.

A land health assessment was completed in this area in 2009, the site was determined to be meeting land health standards with problems due to slumping soils and their effects on hydrologic processes and vegetation.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the no action alternative the pipeline would either be rerouted to private land or reauthorized in the same location. Direct and indirect impacts would include habitat loss, potential loss of nests, and nestlings, and disturbance due to rerouting or rebuilding. If construction occurred outside of the breeding season for migratory birds and raptors disturbance impacts would be primarily indirect through loss of breeding habitat. The timeline for the no action alternative is unclear and direct impacts to these species may be more likely under the no action alternative than under the proposed action. The no action alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet Public Land Health Standard 4 overall.

Cumulative Effects:
The area is currently fragmented as it is adjacent to a state highway, additional pipelines and an FAA facility, the no action alternative would not be expected to

significantly contribute to impacts to Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Direct and indirect impacts would include habitat loss and disturbance due to rerouting or rebuilding. However if construction occurred outside of the peak breeding season for migratory birds and is conducted prior to February 2013 direct impacts to raptors and migratory birds would be expected to be negligible, impacts would primarily be indirect through habitat loss. The proposed action alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet Public Land Health Standard 4.

Cumulative Effects:
The area is currently fragmented as it is adjacent to a state highway, additional pipelines and an FAA facility, the no action alternative would not be expected to significantly contribute to impacts to Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
Construction should be completed prior to Feb 1, 2013, if not completed by this time further raptor surveys would be required.

To comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act vegetation removal should occur outside of the peak breeding season for migratory birds (May 15 to July 15 annually).

3.3.3 Vegetation (grasslands, forest management) (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Current conditions

The proposed pipeline reroute would cross a Brushy Loam ecological site on BLM land. The main vegetation in the area of the existing project and proposed reroute includes: 1) trees: Douglas fir and aspen trees; 2) shrubs: Gambel oak, serviceberry, sagebrush, snowberry, rabbitbrush and wild rose; 3) forbs: yarrow, lupine and vetches; 4) grasses: western wheatgrass, poa, stipa, Indian ricegrass, brome, Junegrass and elk sedge. Though Land Health conducted in 2009 assessed the area as meeting Standard 3, overall it rated meeting with problems due to slumping soils.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would remain where it is or rerouted through private land. The pipeline is in unstable, slumping soils requiring maintenance that has the potential to further damage and impact soils and vegetation. Problems with slumping soils would be expected to continue making it difficult for land health to improve.

Cumulative Effects:
The main concern is the unstable, slumping soils. Other actions in the area combined with the No Action would not be expected to cause negative impacts.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Topsoil and vegetation would be removed to install the pipeline which is expected to take 15 days and restoration approximately 3 to 5 days. After the pipeline is placed in service, the topsoil would be replaced and vegetated with seed mixes approved by the BLM and individual land owners to 70% of non-disturbed areas. The pipeline reroute would be in stable soils and vegetation would be expected to recover under the re-vegetation process. Equipment would be cleaned before entering the project area to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Land Health is expected to maintain or improve under the Proposed Action.

Cumulative Effects:
No negative impacts to vegetation are expected from other actions in the area combined with the Proposed Action.

3.3.4 Wildlife (includes fish, aquatic and terrestrial) (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Current conditions

The action area includes mule deer summer range, elk overall winter range, and an elk production area. Additional species likely to occur in the area include black bear, coyote, bobcat, and a number of small mammals and reptiles (migratory birds are addressed in the special status species section). Aquatic species habitat does not occur in the action area. A land health assessment was completed in this area in 2009, the site was determined to be meeting land health standards with problems due to slumping soils and their effects on hydrologic processes and vegetation.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the no action alternative the pipeline would either be rerouted to private land or reauthorized in the same location. Direct and indirect impacts would include habitat loss and disturbance due to rerouting or rebuilding. However if construction occurred outside of the calving season for elk impacts to this species reproduction would be minimized. The timeline for the no action alternative is unclear therefore impacts to elk may be more likely under the no action alternative than under the proposed action. The no action alternative is not expected to impact the area's ability to meet Public Land Health Standard 4.

Cumulative Effects:
The area is currently fragmented as it is adjacent to a state highway, additional pipelines and an FAA facility, the no action alternative would not be expected to significantly contribute to impacts to Wildlife Species.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Direct and indirect impacts from the proposal would include habitat loss and disturbance due to rerouting or rebuilding. However if construction occurred outside of the elk calving season impacts to elk would be limited to indirect impacts through habitat loss. The proposed alignment is on the edge of an elk calving area and is not expected to compromise the integrity of the majority of this calving area. The proposed action alternative is not expected to impact the areas ability to meet Public Land Health Standard 4.

Cumulative Effects:
The area is currently fragmented as it is adjacent to a state highway, additional pipelines and an FAA facility, the proposed action alternative would not be expected to significantly contribute to impacts to Wildlife Species.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
The proposed reroute partially crosses an elk production area, to avoid impacts to calving elk intensive construction activities should be avoided from April 15-June 30 annually.

3.4 HERITAGE RESOURCES AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

3.4.1 Cultural Resources

Current Conditions

A records search of the general project area, and a Class III inventory of the Area of Potential Effect (APE), as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), was completed by ARCADIS, a Colorado BLM permitted cultural resource contracting firm (GJFO CRIR 17212-01). Conditions of the existing cultural environment are described in the survey report which is hereby incorporated by reference. The following description briefly summarizes cultural resources in the APE. A total of 12.6 acres were inventoried (exceptions were made where slopes exceeded 60%) and no cultural resources were found within the area therefore no further work is required. The project inventory and evaluation is in compliance with the NHPA, the Colorado State Protocol Agreement, and other federal law, regulation, policy, and guidelines regarding cultural resources.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would not be relocated and there could be the potential for cultural resources unknown to the agency below the project area to be affected by slumping from unstable soils.

Cumulative Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative, the pipeline would not be rerouted and there could be the potential for cultural resources unknown to the agency below the project area to be affected by slumping from unstable soils, which would decrease

the overall amount of scientific information that could be learned from cultural resources in the field office.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the pipeline would be rerouted and there would be no direct or indirect impacts to cultural resources known to the BLM.

Cumulative Effects:
Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the pipeline would be rerouted and there would be no cumulative impacts to cultural resources known to the BLM.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
The following stipulations would protect any cultural resources in the area that are not known to the agency:

1. All persons in the area who are associated with this project should be informed that any person who, without a permit, injures, destroys, excavates, appropriates or removes any historic or prehistoric ruin, artifact, object of antiquity, Native American remains, Native American cultural item, or archaeological resources on public lands is subject to arrest and penalty of law (16 USC 433, 16 USC 470, 18 USC 641, 18 USC 1170, and 18 USC 1361). Strict adherence to the confidentiality of information concerning the nature and location of archeological resources would be required of the proponent and all of their subcontractors (Archaeological Resource Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 470hh)

2. Inadvertent Discovery: The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) [16 USC 470s., 36 CFR 800.13], as amended, requires that if newly discovered historic or archaeological materials or other cultural resources are identified during the Proposed Action implementation, work in that area must stop and the BLM Authorized Officer (AO) must be notified immediately. Within five working days the AO would determine the actions that would likely have to be completed before the site can be used (assuming in place preservation is not necessary).

3. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) [25 USC 3001 et seq., 43 CFR 10.4] requires that if inadvertent discovery of Native American Human Remains or Objects of Cultural Patrimony occurs, any activity must cease in the area of discovery, a reasonable effort made to protect the item(s) discovered, and immediate notice be made to the BLM Authorized Officer, as well as the appropriate Native American group(s) (IV.C.2). Notice may be followed by a 30-day delay (NAGPRA Section 3(d)).

4. The operator may relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and delays associated with this process, as long as the new area has been

appropriately inventoried and has no resource concerns, and the exposed materials are recorded and stabilized. Otherwise, the operator should be responsible for mitigation costs. The BLM authorized officer would provide technical and procedural guidelines for relocation and/or to conduct mitigation. Upon verification from the BLM authorized officer that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator would be allowed to resume construction.

5. Antiquities, historic ruins, prehistoric ruins, and other cultural or paleontological objects of scientific interest that are outside the authorization boundaries but potentially affected, either directly or indirectly, by the proposed action should also be included in this evaluation or mitigation. Impacts that occur to such resources as a result of the authorized activities should be mitigated at the operator's cost, including the cost of consultation with Native American groups

3.4.2 Paleontological Resources

Current Conditions

The surface geology is composed of Tertiary age Green River Formation. This geologic unit is rated as a Class 3 using the BLM Potential Fossil Yield Classification system. It has yielded fossilized remains of primates, crocodilians, fish, amphibians, turtles, birds, insects and plant fragments.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would remain where it is or rerouted through private land. If rerouted through private land impacts to paleontological resources would be similar to those generated by the proposed action.

Cumulative Effects:

If the pipeline was rerouted through private land new paleontological resources could be discovered and add to other discoveries in the area, or resources could be damaged by construction activities.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Direct effects could occur from construction activities damaging or allowing for discovery of currently unknown subsurface paleontological resources. Indirect effects could occur from introducing people into an area with unknown resources on the surface near the project area. New discoveries could be made or resources could be vandalized or stolen.

Cumulative Effects:

Impacts described above for the proposed action could contribute to ongoing impacts or discoveries surrounding the project area.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
The Standard Education/Discovery stipulation for paleontological resource protection would protect any newly discovered paleontological resources. Under the stipulation, if resources are discovered all work in the area should cease and the BLM Authorized Officer (AO) should be notified immediately.

3.4.3 Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns

Current Conditions

American Indian religious concerns are legislatively considered under several acts and Executive Orders, namely the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (PL 95-341), the Native American Graves Environmental Assessment Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (PL 101-601), and Executive Order 13007 (1996; Indian Sacred Sites). In summary, these require, in concert with other provisions such as those found in the NHPA and ARPA, that the federal government carefully and proactively take into consideration traditional and religious Native American culture and life and ensure, to the degree possible, that access to sacred sites, the treatment of human remains, the possession of sacred items, the conduct of traditional religious practices, and the preservation of important cultural properties are considered and not unduly infringed upon. In some cases, these concerns are directly related to "historic properties" and "archaeological resources". In some cases elements of the landscape without archaeological or other human material remains may be involved. Identification of these concerns is normally completed during the land use planning efforts, reference to existing studies, or via direct consultation. There is no known evidence that suggests the project area holds special significance for Native Americans, or is actively used to maintain any traditional practices. The project would not alter or limit any access if there were traditional uses that are not known to the agency.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would not be rerouted and there would be no direct or indirect effects to Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns.

Cumulative Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would not be rerouted and there would be no cumulative effects to Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
Under the No Action Alternative the pipeline would be rerouted and there would be no direct or indirect effects to Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns.

Cumulative Effects:

Under the Proposed Action alternative, the pipeline would be rerouted. Implementing the reroute would contribute to cumulative impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions by changing the landscape from that known by Traditional Utes. There are no specific sites of concern identified in the project area; it is rather the broader continued change that modern culture brings to the landscape. There would not be significant long term construction-related surface disturbing activity or impacts.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:
The Standard Stipulations under the Cultural Resources section (3.4.1) should protect any Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns unknown to the agency. If additional information were to come forward as part of the NEPA process, alterations could be made to the proposed action to accommodate Tribal and Native American Religious Concerns.

3.4.4 Visual Resources

Current Conditions

The proposed project area is located immediately southeast of Douglas Pass along Colorado State Highway 139, which is part of the Dinosaur Diamond Scenic and Historic Byway. The proposed project site lies within the northeast portion of the Colorado Plateau physiographic province. The project is sited within Visual Resource Inventory (VRI) Class II, Scenic Quality B (Scenic Quality Rating Unit 01) (BLM 2009).

The characteristic landscape is a series ridges, mountains and valleys creating a somewhat enclosed landscape with some panoramic elements due to its high position on the area's topography. The topography is comprised of steep, rugged ridges and hillsides/mountains with numerous cliffs and large areas of slumping soils. Most of the landscape is thickly vegetated with Douglas Fir, mountain shrubs and scattered aspen groves on the higher slopes, and pinyon-juniper woodlands at lower elevations in the middle ground and background. This landscape exhibits moderate to steeply sloping diagonal lines and numerous irregular rounded and angular forms. Colors are predominantly mottled shades of dark green created by the vegetation, along with lighter shades of green, tan and grey, creating a medium to coarsely mottled texture on the landscape. Built elements include Highway 139, highway signs, fencing, a large Colorado Department of Transportation maintenance building (galvanized grey steel structure), and portions of existing gas pipelines and pipeline roads which add distinct vertical and horizontal contrasts in form and line to the landscape, as well as adding moderate to high contrast in color and texture with the surrounding landscape.

The area is primarily used by travelers along Highway 139, ranchers, oil and gas operators, and hunters who would constitute the typical casual observer. The key observation point would be from Highway 139 at Douglas Pass looking southeast toward the proposed project site.

Under the current RMP, the proposed project site is in an area designated as Visual Resource Management Class III. VRM Class III objectives are "to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape" (BLM 1987).

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

There would be no direct effects to visual resources under the No Action Alternative. Indirect effects could include further exposure of the existing pipeline if soils continue to slump. Failure of the existing pipeline could result in visual impacts due to emergency repair operations. These impacts would likely include short-term increases in visual contrasts in color and texture from surface disturbing operations (vehicle traffic and potential excavations) to repair a failed gas line.

Cumulative Effects:

Under the No Action Alternative the visual landscape would continue to change due to on-going natural gas drilling and gathering activities, along with the natural soil movement/slumping that is prevalent in the area. These activities and processes would have a relatively long-term effect on the visual quality of the viewshed.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

The casual observer would usually be traveling by vehicle along Colorado State Highway 139 over Douglas Pass. The proposed project site would be partially visible for approximately 30-40 seconds for northbound traffic traveling at the posted speed limit of 25 mph. The site would likely be unnoticed by southbound traffic. Travelers stopping and looking southeast from the top of Douglas Pass would overlook the pipeline route. During construction of the new pipeline, and removal of the old pipeline, the observer would likely see the vehicles, equipment and personnel associated with pipeline installation and removal. Fugitive dust from the project could also be visible during this phase depending on soil conditions. The exposed soil and stormwater management structures resulting from the pipeline installation and removal would moderately increase visual contrast mainly through changes in color (lighter) and texture (smoother) on the landscape. Since the proposed reroute follows an existing pipeline, visual impacts to line and form would be minimal. These contrasts would be most pronounced during and immediately following the construction/removal phase. Visual contrasts would diminish over time, especially following restoration operations, and if maintenance traffic along the pipeline is kept to a minimum. Removal of the underground sections of the abandoned section of pipeline (rather than leaving it in place) would create more short term visual impacts, but could prevent future visual impacts if the old pipeline surfaces due to soil movement and erosion.

The project area has a moderate level of existing contrast consisting of roads, highway maintenance buildings and equipment, fences, and other oil and gas development. Because the long-term visual modifications caused by this pipeline would not dominate the landscape from observation points along Hwy 139, the Proposed Action would meet the objective of the VRM III classification. However, the designation of Hwy 139 as a National Scenic and Historic Byway, warrants careful adherence to best management practices for reclamation and visual mitigation to reduce visual contrast from the proposed project.

Cumulative Effects:
The visual landscape would continue to change due to on-going natural gas drilling and gathering activities, along with the natural soil movement/slumping that is prevalent in the area. Moving the pipeline to a more stable location would lessen the visual impacts from past and present pipeline placements on unstable soils, and could help promote more careful site selection for future projects with similar circumstances. These activities and processes would have a relatively long-term effect on the visual quality of the viewshed.

3.4.5 Social, Economic, Environmental Justice

Current Conditions

The Proposed Action project area is located in western Garfield County, but also serves mesa county residents in living in the Grand Valley. The economy of western Garfield County, which is sparsely populated and dominated by public land, is characterized by ranching and energy development. State Highway 139 links the project area with communities along Interstate-70 in western Mesa County, including Mack, Loma, Fruita, and Grand Junction.

Population. Between 2000 and 2010, Garfield County's population increased 29 percent, from 43,791 to 56,389 compared to a statewide growth rate of 17 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2011). The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (CDOLA) projects that population growth rates in Garfield County will continue to exceed the statewide average and that by 2020, Garfield County's population will grow to 88,490 by 2020 (CDOLA, 2011).

Employment and Income. The number of wage and salary employees in Garfield County increased from 19,190 in 2000 to 28,648 in 2008 and decreased to 23,095 in 2010. Most of the job gains and losses were in the Mining and Construction sectors. Service industries are major sources of employment in Garfield County, accounting for 44 percent of all wage jobs. In 2010, the highest average wages in Garfield County were paid in the Mining ($78,176) and Utilities ($73,682) sectors (Colorado Department of Labor and Employment – CDLE, 2011).

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

If the project is not completed then the existing pipeline could fail, which may lead to reduced availability of natural gas for businesses and residents in both Garfield and Mesa County. The worst case scenario or failure of the pipeline during the winter could cause short-term gas outages during pipeline repair activities. Revenues in affected counties could be slightly impacted if businesses are forced to shut down due to natural gas outages. PSCo would be required to repair their pipeline in its current location or to find a different route on private land under this alternative.

Cumulative Effects:
Cumulative impacts are speculative because it is not known if the pipeline would fail in its current location. Short-term cumulative impacts from the pipeline failing could be an increased cost of natural gas for PSCo's customers, which may affect other aspects of local economies.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
The proposed action would create a few short-term jobs during the construction and reclamation of the pipeline re-route. These jobs are not likely to create a noticeable impact on local economies. Important indirect impacts would result from improving the reliability of PSCo's natural gas pipeline. Jobs created during construction of the pipeline are not expected to have a long-term impact on Garfield County's economy. Construction is only expected to take 3 weeks to complete and the workforce would be small.

Cumulative Effects:
No noticeable cumulative impacts are expected from proposed action.

3.4.6 Wastes, Hazardous or Solid

Current Conditions

Hazardous and solid wastes are not a part of the natural environment but could be introduced into the environment as a result of implementation of the proposed action. This could be in the form of spilled fuels and lubricants used during the construction process.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:
There would be no direct effects if no action is taken. There could be indirect effects if the vulnerable sections of pipeline are not replaced. A pipeline failure could result in spilling of liquids associated with the natural gas.

Cumulative Effects:
Cumulative effects associated with the no action alternative are expected to be minimal. A pipeline failure would likely be repaired and it would be required that

any contamination be quickly cleaned up. Clean-up would likely cause as much or more surface disturbance than would replacing the pipeline.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Fuel spills for machinery used during the construction process would be the threat. Standard stipulations and practices outlined in the POD (best management practices) should negate or minimize this problem.

Cumulative Effects:

Any spills would be required to be cleaned up immediately. There should be no negative cumulative effects. Replacing the vulnerable pipe and thereby reducing the risk of a pipeline failure and subsequent leak of natural gas liquids might be considered a positive effect which could eliminate negative cumulative impacts.

3.5 LAND RESOURCES

3.5.1 Recreation

Current Conditions

According to the 1987 RMP, the project area lies within an unclassified Recreation Management category. The Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Management Designation is "open – general areas where no significant ORV issues occur" (BLM 1987). Hunters in the area frequently use OHVs, and hunting is the primary recreational activity. The ongoing revision process for the RMP proposes some changes to the 1987 RMP, including the travel management designations. Revised travel management designations for the project area have not been finalized. No developed recreational facilities, such as campgrounds or picnic areas are located within or near the project area. Recreation use in the area can be characterized as dispersed recreation with a relatively low level of intensity. The exception to this general description is big-game hunting in the fall. The Project Area is located in CPW GMU 30. This GMU has historically been very popular with big-game hunters and can be expected to remain so into the future. The GJFO manages three Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) for big game hunting and five SRPs for mountain lion hunting in the area. The following big game outfitters are authorized to operate in the project area: Mark Davies Outfitters, High Lonesome Lodge, Rimrock Outfitters. The following mountain lion outfitters are authorized to operate in the project area: Alameno Outfitters, Backcountry Outfitters, Biggerstaff Outfitters, Cat Track Outfitters, and Mark Davies Outfitters.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

No impacts to recreation activities would occur if the proposed project is not approved.

Cumulative Effects:

Continued oil and gas activities in the area would continue to have an impact on recreation users for the long-term. Big game hunters would be impacted by changes to habitat and potential changes in animal distribution.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

The proposed action would result in increased vehicle traffic, noise, dust, and human activity during the construction and restoration phases of the project, which would likely displace some game species in localized areas within close proximity to these activities, and both hunters and game would be displaced to other locations outside of the project area. In the short term, the pipeline construction would contribute to a decline in the area's naturalness, altering the setting character for recreation opportunities in the area. Following restoration operations the setting character would likely return to current conditions, or possibly a more natural setting since the above-ground sections of the old pipeline would be removed.

Cumulative Effects:

The proposed action, along with other energy development activities in the area would incrementally reduce naturalness, and would likely alter game species use patterns, potentially reducing hunting opportunities and success rates. Other effects on recreation would be related to general recreation and demographic trends in the region.

3.5.2 Land Tenure, Rights of Way and other Uses

Current Conditions

The proposed pipeline would be placed immediately to the west of Northwest's Pipeline existing 26 inch natural gas pipeline authorized under COC 086650 in 1962. Northwest's pipeline ROW is 50 feet wide and 929 feet long. This ROW is a re-route for a section of the Ignacio-Sumas natural gas pipeline. Northwest also holds a pipeline access road ROW (COC 60066) along a segment of the proposed pipeline ROW that was authorized in 1996. Northwest's road ROW is 25 feet wide and approximately 500 feet long. The running surface for the road is only approved at 12 feet wide. PSCo has also applied for authorization to use this existing road. There are no other ROWs within the immediate project area.

No Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no potential for new direct or indirect impacts to the existing ROWs. PSCo's proposed pipeline re-route would not be authorized on public land. PSCo would need to find a different route on private land or leave the pipeline in its current location.

Cumulative Effects:

There would be no new cumulative effects under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action

Direct and Indirect Effects:

Direct impacts to existing ROW facility could occur during construction or maintenance of the proposed pipeline if locations of existing facilities are not properly identified. PSCo has been coordinating with Northwest to ensure that their proposed project would have no impacts on the existing pipeline. Use of the existing access road could also cause impacts from vehicles if the road is used during wet conditions, or if it is not properly maintained. Indirect effects to the pipeline could result from increased surface runoff over disturbed areas following construction, and prior to successful reclamation. PSCo has submitted a stormwater management plan to Garfield County that would reduce potential impacts to the pipeline from erosion. PSCo should closely follow their stormwater management plan and begin reclamation efforts immediately following completion of pipeline construction. Installation of stormwater control devices and establishment of vegetation on the ROW would reduce the potential for impacts from the proposal.

Cumulative Effects:

Cumulative effects under the proposed action would be the same as the No Action alternative. The segment of the Ignacio-Sumas pipeline that could be impacted by the proposal is very small.

Protective/Mitigation Measures:

The proponent should properly mark the boundaries of the proposed ROW during construction to ensure that disturbance stays within the ROW and away from other existing facilities. Properly marking the ROW boundaries would eliminate the potential of damaging the Northwest's pipeline during construction. The proponent should also keep a copy of the ROW grant and stipulations onsite at all times during construction and maintenance activities. Having copies of the ROW grant onsite would ensure that all of the stipulations and proponent design features are followed. PSCo should contact BLM at least 60 days before conducting any maintenance activities.

CHAPTER 4 - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

4.1 LIST OF PREPARERS AND PARTICIPANTS

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW

NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
Christina Stark	Riparian Coordinator/Project Manager	Riparian/Wetlands, Land Tenure/Status, Realty Authorizations
Julia Christiansen	Natural Resource Specialist	Surface Management and Permitting for Oil & Gas
Alissa Leavitt-Reynolds	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
Chris Pipkin	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access, Transportation, Recreation, VRM, Wilderness, ACECs
Scott Clarke	Range Management Specialist	Vegetation, Range
Jacob Martin	Range Management Specialist	Forestry
Jim Dollerschell	Range Management Specialist	Wild Horse & Burro Act
David Scott Gerwe	Geologist	Geology, Paleontology
Alan Kraus	Hazardous Materials Specialist	Hazardous Materials
Heidi Plank	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Terrestrial & Aquatic Wildlife
Anna Lincoln	Ecologist	Land Health Assessment, Range Ecology, Special Status Plant Species
Collin Ewing	Environmental Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Prime & Unique Farmlands, Environmental Coordinator
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Soils, Air Quality, Water Quality, Hydrology, Water Rights
Mark Taber	Natural Resource Specialist	Weed Coordinator, Invasive, Non-Native Species
Lathan Johnson	Fire Ecologist Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Ecology, Fuels Management

4.2 TRIBES, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

Efforts were made to contact High Lonesome Ranch to discuss the proposed action, but BLM received no response.

CHAPTER 5 - REFERENCES

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 1985. Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Grand Junction Field Office. Grand Junction, Colorado.

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GJFO CRIR 17212-01. 2012. Public Service Company of Colorado Douglas Pass Pipeline Realignment, Garfield County, Colorado, Class III Cultural Resource Inventory by ARCADIS. Manuscript on file at the BLM Grand Junction Field Office (BLM CRIR 17212-01).

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UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Gar-Mesa Pipeline Partial Relocation

DOI-BLM-CO-130 2012-0037-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Land Management prepared an Environmental Assessment to analyze the effects of Public Service Company's (PSCo) proposal to relocate a portion of an existing natural gas pipeline (C 05006) and proposed access route within a 1.3 acre area around Douglas Pass, Colorado. The EA considered a range of 2 alternatives from 0 to 1.3 acres. The public was notified about the proposal via the Grand Junction Field Office web site, and efforts were made to contact the adjacent property owner. No comments were received.

PSCo is proposing to replace a segment of the 8-inch natural gas transmission pipeline that delivers natural gas from the interconnect with El Paso Energy, known as the CIG Little Horse Tap near Rangeley, Colorado to Grand Junction, Colorado. The 8-inch pipeline segment was originally installed in 1951, and has subsequently been subjected to frequent landslide activity and minor relocations. The pipeline was moved above ground to its present location in the 1960's after a large landslide damaged the original pipe. Over the past fifty years, the ground support under the pipe at the leg-off point has eroded causing increased stress on the pipe. Continued erosion at the top of the cliff will result in further increase of stress at the support point and eventual failure of the pipe at this location if no action is taken.

The intent of this project is to relocate the pipeline segment to a more geologically stable location as identified by geo-technical engineering studies. Relocating the pipeline to this new alignment would result in a safer operating environment for the pipeline thus minimizing risk to the public, the surrounding environment and property. Locating the pipe in this new alignment affords the highest probability of maintaining this critical supply of natural gas from this location to the entire Grand Valley. Should this line fail during the winter months, approximately half of the customers in this region would be without natural gas until the pipeline could be repaired, which during the winter would most likely be a several day endeavor.

The entire subject pipeline segment is approximately one half of a mile long and is located in the 6th Principal Meridian, T. 5 S., R. 102 W., sections 25 and 26. More specifically, the pipeline

segment originates on private land adjacent to the State Highway 139 Right-of-Way at the top of Douglas Pass. The pipeline traverses private land owned by Twin Buttes Land Co., Federal Aviation Administration, and High Lonesome Ranch. At the boundary of sections 25 and 26, the pipeline crosses into Bureau of Land Management property in Section 25.

The EA identified one alternative as a Proposed Action, which is PSCo's proposal. The Proposed Action shall refer to Alternative 1.

Intensity

I have considered the potential intensity and severity of the impacts anticipated from the Gar-Mesa Partial Pipeline Relocation Project decision relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

This project may have minor short term impacts to soils, vegetation, and wildlife; however these impacts are not significant. This project would have a long term net benefit on the stability of the pipeline, which would increase the reliability of the pipeline. The project would also provide long-term benefits to natural resources, because the existing route is located on steep slopes with slumping soils.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The proposed action is not expected to impact public health and safety. Alternative 1 would help to protect public health and safety by moving the pipeline out of an area with highly unstable soils.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are no significant impacts to cultural or historic resources, riparian vegetation, parklands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or wild and scenic rivers within the project area. Riparian habitat on private land would be avoided under Alternative 1. There are also no municipal water supplies in the project area.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The impacts of pipeline construction are generally well known and documented in the academic and business communities. Therefore the environmental effects are not likely to be controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

Natural gas pipeline construction projects have a long history in the region and pose no unique or unknown risks.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

This decision is like one of many that have previously been made and will continue to be made by BLM responsible officials regarding natural gas pipeline construction on public lands. The decision is within the scope of the Resource Management Plan and is not expected to establish a precedent for future actions. The decision does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

There are no significant cumulative effects on the environment, either when combined with the effects created by past and concurrent projects, or when combined with the effects from natural changes taking place in the environment or from reasonably foreseeable future projects. Alternative 2, the no action alternative has a greater potential of larger and longer term impacts than Alternative 1, due to the potential failure of the existing pipeline. Failure of the pipeline could lead to release of natural gas into the surrounding environment. Resource damage associated with the cleanup of a spill is expected to be larger and longer-term than resource damage associated with the proposed action.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

No facilities listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places were found during field surveys, therefore there would be no adverse impacts to the above resources.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

There are no threatened or endangered species or their habitat present in the project area. As a result no impacts are expected to endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitats.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

This decision complies with other Federal, State, or local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the information contained in the EA, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: 1) the implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the “Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan," (*January, 1987*); (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plan; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment.

Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

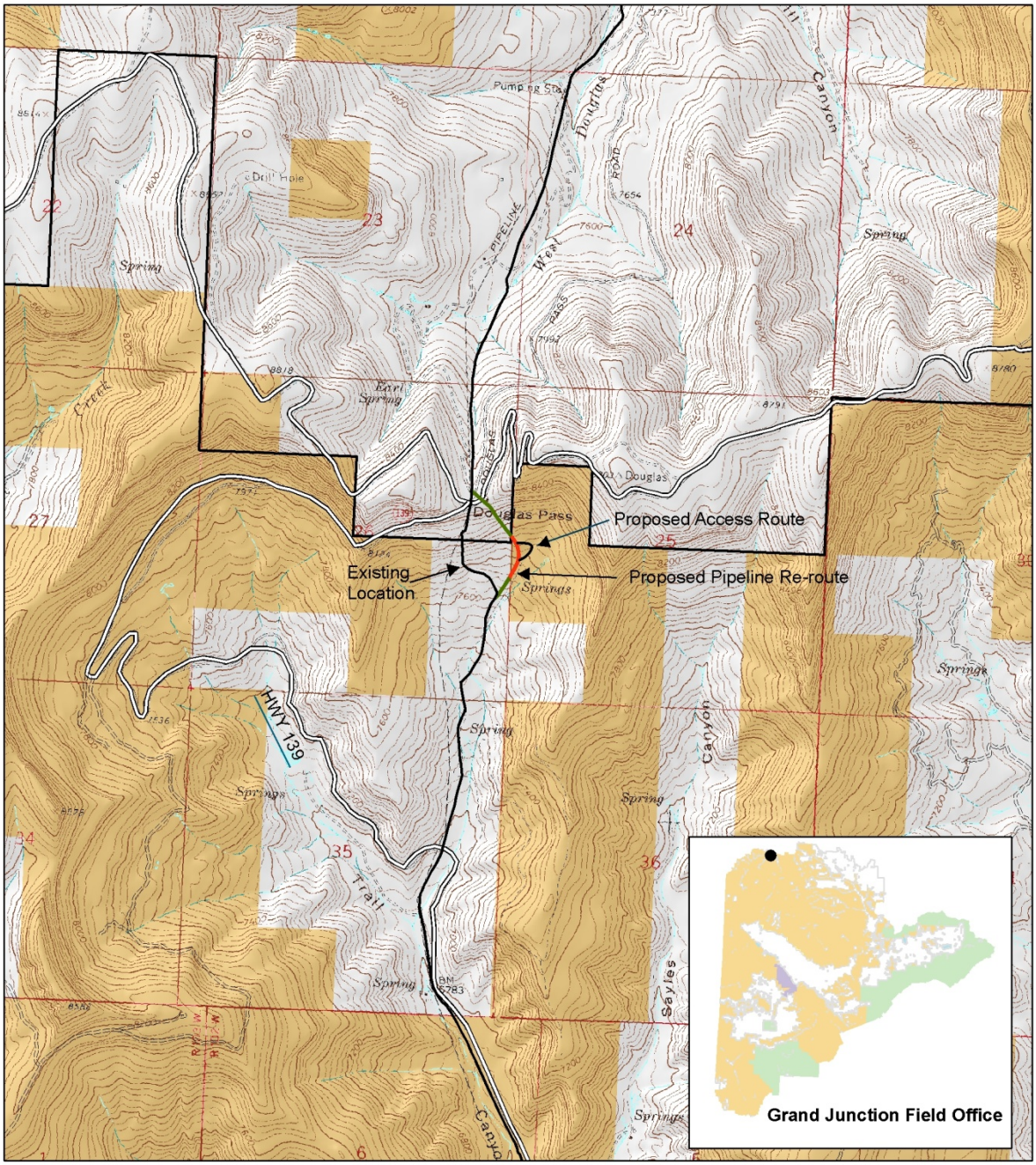
This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR '1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA.

Catherine Rehn 7/30/12

Field Manager
Grand Junction Field Office

Date

Attachment A: Project Area



Public Service Company
Natural Gas Pipeline
CO-130-2012-0037-EA
C 05006 Amendment

6th PM,
T. 5 S., R. 102 W.,
sec. 25, SW¼NW¼, and NW¼SW¼.

Garfield County, Colorado

Douglas Pass , Colorado USGS Quad

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Access Route
Reroute BLM
Reroute Private
Existing Pipeline
GJFO Boundary
BLM
Private

N

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SPECIAL STIPULATIONS

1. Surface disturbing actions should cease when wind speeds exceed 35 mph.

2. Reclamation of disturbed areas should occur be completed within 30 days of completing construction.

3. Dust suppressants such as water should be utilized on disturbed areas to reduce fugitive dust production during construction and prior to reclamation.

4. Additional raptor surveys should be required if construction is not completed prior to Feb 1, 2013.

5. Vegetation removal or disturbance should occur outside of the peak breeding season for migratory birds of May 15 to July 15 annually.

6. Construction and non-emergency maintenance activities should not occur between April 15- June 30 annually in elk production areas.

STANDARD STIPULATIONS

1. Any cultural and/or paleontological resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, on public or Federal land should be immediately reported to the authorized officer. Holder should suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer. An evaluation of the discovery would be made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values. The holder would be responsible for the cost of evaluation and any decision as to proper mitigation measures would be made by the authorized officer after consulting with the holder.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the authorized officer, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

3. The operator or its contractor is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they would be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activity, the operator must stop work in the area of the discovery that might further disturb such materials and immediately contact the Administrative Officer. Within five working days, the AO would inform the operator as to the mitigation measures the operator would likely

have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in-place preservation is not necessary).

4. The holder should notify the AO at least 60 days prior to non-emergency activities that would cause surface disturbance in the ROWs. BLM would determine whether any special resource (cultural, plants, animal, etc.) inventories, treatments, or mitigation are required. The authorized officer may require the completion of a special status species surveys by a third party contractor at the expense of the holder, or the BLM may choose to complete the survey. The BLM may take actions or make recommendations to protect any special status plant populations identified near or on the right-of-way.

5. A "Notice to Proceed" stipulation should be required for any non-emergency activities as defined above that would cause surface disturbance on the ROWs. Any request for a "Notice to Proceed" should be made to the AO, who should review the proposed action for consistency with resource management concerns such as wildlife, big game winter range, paleontology, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resource protection. Additional measures may be required to protect these resources.

6. On the Right-of-Way, the holder should monitor and control those noxious weeds that may occur or be found, as listed in the booklet, Noxious Weeds of Mesa County. If chemical control is necessary, use of pesticides should comply with the applicable Federal and State laws. Pesticides should be used only in accordance with their registered uses and within limitations imposed by the Secretary of the Interior. Prior to the use of pesticides, the holder should obtain from the authorized officer written approval of a plan showing the type and quantity of material to be used, the pest(s) to be controlled, method of application, location of storage and disposal of containers, and any other information deemed necessary by the authorized officer. Emergency use of pesticides should be approved in writing by the authorized officer prior to such use.

7. The holder should comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated. In any event, the holder should comply with the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, as amended (15 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.) with regard to any toxic substances that are used, generated by or stored on the right-of-way or on facilities authorized under this right-of-way grant (see 40 CFR, Part 702-799 and especially, provisions on polychlorinated biphenyls, 40 CFR 761.1-761.193). Additionally, any release of toxic substances (leaks, spills, etc.) in excess of the reportable quantity established by 40 CFR, Part 117 should be reported as required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, Section 102b. A copy of any report required or requested by any Federal agency or State government as a result of a reportable release or spill of any toxic substances should be furnished to the authorized officer concurrent with the filing of the reports to the involved Federal agency or State government.

8. The holder should comply with applicable State standards for public health and safety, environmental protection and siting, construction, operation and maintenance, if these State standards are more stringent than Federal standards for similar projects.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE

DECISION RECORD

Gar-Mesa Pipeline Partial Relocation

DOI-BLM-CO-130-2012-0037-EA

DECISION:
It is my decision to authorize Public Service Company of Colorado's (PSCo) proposed partial pipeline relocation project and requested access as described in the attached environmental assessment (EA). PSCo has proposed to relocate a portion of an existing pipeline to a more geologically stable location on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The relocation route on public land is 842 feet long and 50 feet wide containing approximately 0.97 acre. The proposed access route associated with the pipeline relocation is approximately 500 feet long and 50 feet wide with a 12 foot wide running surface, containing 0.29 acres. The total acres associated with PSCo request for a ROW amendment on public land is approximately 1.26 acres. A full description of the proposed action is included in the attached EA and hereby incorporated by reference.

This decision is contingent on meeting all mitigation measures requirements listed below and included in attachment B.

The public was notified about the proposal via the Grand Junction Field Office web site, and efforts were made to contact the adjacent property owner. No comments were received.

This office completed an Environmental Assessment that analyzed the proposed action and reached a Finding of No Significant Impact.

RATIONALE:
I have determined that authorization the proposed pipeline relocation will allow PSCo with the opportunity to ensure the reliability of their existing natural gas pipeline. Authorization of the proposal along with BLM required mitigation will provided necessary protection of natural resources in project area, while reducing the potential for a natural gas leak that might result if the pipeline is not relocated and fails.

The Proposed Action will allow for the relocation of pipeline to an area with increased geologic stability. Approval of the Proposed Action benefits public health and safety, and surrounding natural resources, because the deterioration of the existing pipeline and geologic instability of the existing route. The proposed re-route of the pipeline will ensure stability and reliability of the pipeline. Failure of the pipeline during the winter could result in widespread disruptions to natural gas supplies for customers in the Grand Valley and surrounding communities that are served by the pipeline, which could last several days.

The Proposed Action also co-locates PSCo's existing 8-inch natural pipeline with William's Northwest's (Northwest's) natural gas pipeline. The relocated segment of PSCo's pipeline would be placed partially in areas with previous disturbance from Northwest's existing buried pipeline. The proposed realignment reduces the amount of new surface disturbance or segmentation of undisturbed areas.

The decision to authorize the proposed pipeline relocation and access route, as proposed under the Proposed Action does not result in any unnecessary or undue environmental degradation. This decision is also in conformance with the Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan. Under this decision PSCo will be required to place their natural gas pipeline adjacent to William's existing pipeline. PSCo will also be allowed to use the requested access route currently used by Northwest.

A cultural resource inventory was completed in the project area. No cultural or historic resources were identified during the field survey; therefore no mitigation measures are necessary. Any cultural or historic resources that are found during construction or maintenance activities will be protected by the inadvertent discovery stipulations.

No sensitive plants or plant habitat was identified within the project area. Sensitive wildlife species and habitat that may be present in the project area include migratory birds and elk calving habitat. Construction activities will be restricted during critical wildlife calving and nesting periods. Construction and non-emergency maintenance activities will also be restricted during these time periods.

Required special and standard stipulations along with operator committed design features will protect sensitive resources and reduce the potential for any long-term (greater than 5 years) negative impacts to resources located in the project area. No long-term impacts are expected to result from approval of the proposed natural gas pipeline relocation and access route.

MITIGATION MEASURES\MONITORING:
Special mitigation measures include the following items. General and standard stipulations are included in Attachment B. No construction monitoring needs have been identified for this action.

1. Surface disturbing actions shall cease when wind speeds exceed 35 mph.

2. Reclamation of disturbed areas shall occur be completed within 30 days of completing construction.

3. Dust suppressants such as water shall be utilized on disturbed areas to reduce fugitive dust production during construction and prior to reclamation.

4. Additional raptor surveys will be required if construction is not completed prior to Feb 1, 2013.

5. Surface disturbance shall not be allowed between May 15 and July 15 to prevent potential taking of migratory birds and/or eggs unless otherwise approved by the Grand Junction Field Office Manager. If vegetation removal can be planned and accomplished prior to May 15, then exception to this condition can be granted to allow work on the project during the closure period

6. Construction and non-emergency maintenance activities shall not occur between April 15th and June 30th annually in elk production areas, unless authorization is received by the BLM Authorized Officer.

PROTEST/APPEALS:

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer, and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2801.10(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at Grand Junction Field Office, 2815 H Road, grand Junction, Colorado, 81506. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.

NAME OF PREPARER: Christina Stark

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Collin Ewing

DATE: 7/27/12

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

Catherine Robertson

Grand Junction Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 7/30/12

ATTACHMENTS:

1) Project Map
2) Stipulations

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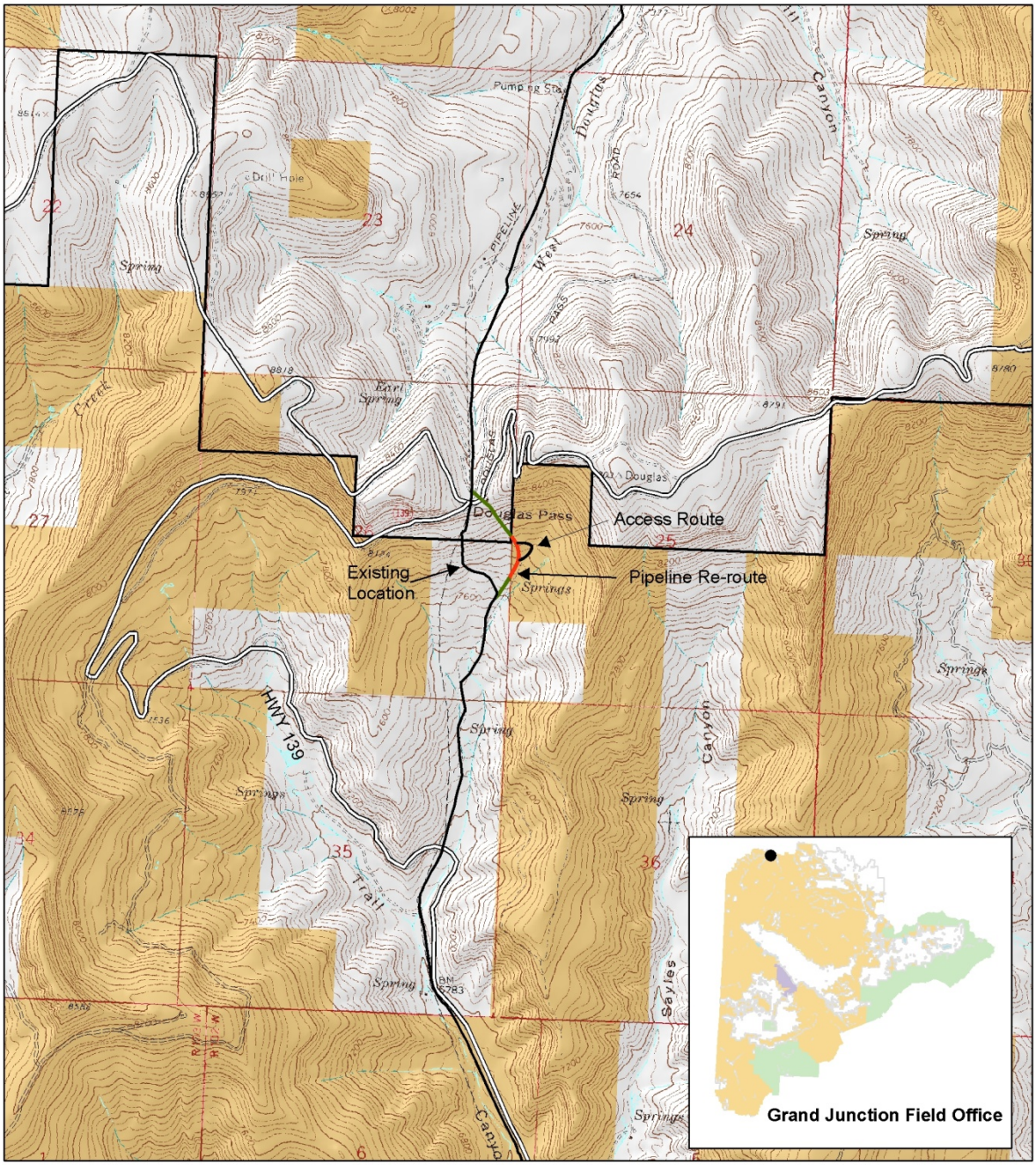
ATTACHMENT A: PROJECT MAP



Public Service Company
Natural Gas Pipeline
CO-130-2012-0037-EA
C 05006 Amendment

6th PM,
T. 5 S., R. 102 W.,
sec. 25, SW¼NW¼, and NW¼SW¼.

Garfield County, Colorado

Douglas Pass , Colorado USGS Quad

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Access_route
Reroute BLM
Reroute Private
Existing Pipeline
GJFO Boundary
BLM
Private

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Attachment B: Stipulations

SPECIAL STIPULATIONS

1. All terms, conditions, and stipulations of the original right-of-way grant dated August 25 1952, and subsequent amendments, remain in full force and effect. The stipulations included in this grant apply to all portions of the ROW including those areas in the original grant.

2. Surface disturbing actions shall cease when wind speeds exceed 35 mph.

1. Reclamation of disturbed areas shall occur be completed within 30 days of completing construction.

3. Dust suppressants such as water shall be utilized on disturbed areas to reduce fugitive dust production during construction and prior to reclamation.

4. Additional raptor surveys will be required if construction is not completed prior to Feb 1, 2013.

5. Surface disturbance shall not be allowed between May 15 and July 15 to prevent potential taking of migratory birds and/or eggs unless otherwise approved by the Grand Junction Field Office Manager. If vegetation removal can be planned and accomplished prior to May 15, then exception to this condition can be granted to allow work on the project during the closure period.

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STANDARD STIPULATIONS

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5. A "Notice to Proceed" stipulation shall be required for any non-emergency activities as defined above that would cause surface disturbance on the ROWs. Any request for a "Notice to Proceed" should be made to the AO, who shall review the proposed action for consistency with resource management concerns such as wildlife, big game winter range, paleontology, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resource protection. Additional measures may be required to protect these resources.

6. On the Rights-of-Ways, the holder shall monitor and control those noxious weeds that may occur or be found, as listed in the booklet, Noxious Weeds of Mesa County. If chemical control is necessary, use of pesticides shall comply with the applicable Federal and State laws. Pesticides shall be used only in accordance with their registered uses and within limitations imposed by the Secretary of the Interior. Prior to the use of pesticides, the holder shall obtain from the authorized officer written approval of a plan showing the type and quantity of material to be used, the pest(s) to be controlled, method of application, location of storage and disposal of containers, and any other information deemed necessary by the authorized officer. Emergency use of pesticides shall be approved in writing by the authorized officer prior to such use.

7. The holder shall comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated. In any event, the holder shall comply with the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, as amended (15 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.) with regard to any toxic substances that are used, generated by or stored on the right-of-way or on facilities authorized under this right-of-way grant (see 40 CFR, Part 702-799 and especially, provisions on polychlorinated biphenyls, 40 CFR 761.1-761.193). Additionally, any release of toxic substances (leaks, spills, etc.) in excess of the reportable quantity established by 40 CFR, Part 117 shall be reported as required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, Section 102b. A copy of any report required or requested by any Federal agency or State government as a result of a reportable release or spill of any toxic substances shall be furnished to the

authorized officer concurrent with the filing of the reports to the involved Federal agency or State government.

8. The holder shall comply with applicable State standards for public health and safety, environmental protection and siting, construction, operation and maintenance, if these State standards are more stringent than Federal standards for similar projects.