

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Field Office
50629 US Highway 6 & 24
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-140-2008-057 EA

PROJECT NAME: Gypsum Red Hill Trail Reroute

LOCATION: T5S, R86W Section 14

APPLICANT: BLM

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to reroute a single-track motorized trail that has steep, eroding and unsustainable reaches. Approximately 1.6 miles of new trail would be constructed, and 1.2 miles of existing trail would be closed and rehabilitated.

The proposed reroute is to be a motorized route with a tread width of 12"-18" and a clearance corridor of 3' wide by 8' high. It will incorporate switchbacks and other standard trail-design principles so that erosion and maintenance needs are minimal.

The centerline of the new trail is flagged. The trail would be constructed in spring/summer 2008, using hand tools such as pulaskis, shovels, and loppers.

No Action Alternative: Do not construct a reroute of the designated trail. The existing trail would continue to be used.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION: The current trail is steep in some sections, using a fall-line configuration. This causes trail erosion, and, in the long term, is not sustainable. The reroute would solve this problem.

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: Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan.

Date Approved: Jan. 1984, revised 1988, amended in November 1991 - Oil and Gas Leasing and Development - Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended Nov. 1996 - Colorado Standards and Guidelines; amended in August 1997 - Castle Peak Travel Management Plan; amended in March 1999 - Oil and Gas Leasing & Development Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended in November 1999 - Red Hill Plan Amendment; and amended in September 2002 – Fire Management Plan for Wildland Fire Management and Prescriptive Vegetation Treatment Guidance.

Decision Number/Page: Page 34 of the Glenwood Springs Resource Area Resource Management Plan:

Decision Language: Recreation Resource Management Objective, To ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreational opportunities which the public seeks and which are not readily available from other sources, to reduce the impacts of recreational use on fragile and unique resource values, and to provide for visitor safety.

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH:

In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. The five standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands.

The Eagle River South Watershed Land Health Assessment was conducted on the landscape which encompasses the proposed action in 2002, and the determination was signed in 2003. Overall, the project area was found to be meeting all the standards, except Standard 4 for greater sage grouse.

The impact analysis herein must address whether the proposed action or any alternatives being analyzed would result in impacts that would maintain, improve, or deteriorate land health conditions for each of the five standards. These analyses are located in specific elements listed below:

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section provides a description of the human and natural environmental resources that could be affected by the proposed action and no action alternative. In addition, the section presents comparative analyses of the direct and indirect consequences on the affected environment stemming from the implementation of the various actions.

A variety of laws, regulations, and policy directives mandate the evaluation of the effects of a proposed action and alternative(s) on certain critical environmental elements. Not all of the critical elements that require inclusion in this EA are present, or if they are present, may not be affected by the proposed action and alternative (Table 1). Only those mandatory critical elements that are present and affected are described in the following narrative.

In addition to the mandatory critical elements, there are additional resources that would be impacted by the proposed action and alternative. These are presented under **Other Affected Resources.**

Critical Elements

Table 1. Critical Elements of the Human Environment									
<i>Critical Element</i>	<i>Present</i>		<i>Affected</i>		<i>Critical Element</i>	<i>Present</i>		<i>Affected</i>	
	Yes	No	Yes	No		Yes	No	Yes	No
Air Quality	X			X	Prime or Unique Farmlands		X		X

ACECs		X		X	Special Status Species*	X		X	
Cultural Resources		X		X	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid		X		X
Environmental Justice	x			x	Water Quality, Surface and Ground*	X		X	
Floodplains		X		X	Wetlands and Riparian Zones*		X		X
Invasive, Non-native Species	X		X		Wild and Scenic Rivers		X		X
Migratory Birds	X		X		Wilderness/ WSAs		X		X
Native American Religious Concerns		X		X					

* Public Land Health Standard

Cultural Resources:

Affected Environment: A Class III cultural resource inventory (GSFO# 15808-1) was conducted of the trail reroute. No cultural properties were identified that are eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, no formal consultation with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was needed and a determination of “**No Historic Properties Affected**” was made in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NRHP), as amended (16 USC 470f), National BLM/SHPO Programmatic Agreement (1997), and Colorado Protocol (1998).

Environmental Consequences: As no historic properties were identified there will be no beneficial or adverse affect on cultural resources. However, indirect long-term cumulative impacts from increased access and the increased presence of the public could result in a range of impacts to known and undiscovered cultural resources in the vicinity of the reroute. These impacts could range from illegal collection and excavation to vandalism.

Mitigation: The Education/Discovery stipulation needs to be added and stressed to the personnel constructing, rehabilitating, and riding on the trail informing them of their responsibilities to protect and report any cultural resources encountered. Additionally they should be made aware of requirements under the American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

No Action Alternative

Environmental Consequences: Under this alternative the reroute would not be constructed and the existing trail would continue to degrade causing erosional problems and riding beyond the existing trail possibly exposing previously buried cultural resources.

Environmental Justice

Affected Environment:

Review of 2001 data from US Census Bureau indicates the median annual income of Garfield County averages \$43,560 and is neither an impoverished or wealthy county. Median annual income of Eagle County averages \$51,578 and is not impoverished but is considered a wealthy county. U.S. Census Bureau data from July, 2004 shows the minority population of Garfield and Eagle County comprises less than 3 % of the total population¹.

¹ Table CO-EST2002-ASRO-02-08-County Population Estimates by Race Alone and Hispanic or Latino Origin: July 1, 2002
Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau
Release Date: September 18, 2003
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Garfield County		Eagle County	
Median Household Income		Median Household Income	
Estimate	90% Confidence Interval	Estimate	90% Confidence Interval
\$50,119	\$ 47,045 to \$53,393	\$59,037	\$55,067 to \$63,294

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The proposed action and alternatives are not expected to create a disproportionately high and adverse human health impact or environmental effect on minority or low-income populations within the area.

Invasive, Non-native Species

Affected Environment: No comprehensive surveys have been conducted in the project area, however, no invasive, non-native species are known to occur there.

Environmental Consequences: Noxious weed populations are a threat to land health as they contribute to loss of rangeland productivity, increased soil erosion, reduced species richness, reduced wildlife habitat quality, and reduced aesthetic quality. Weeds generally germinate and become established in areas of surface disturbing activities or other human activities such as road construction and maintenance, vehicular traffic, big game and livestock grazing. Noxious weeds or weed seed attached to OHVs may be introduced into the project area from other areas.

Mitigation: The closed route would be reseeded with native grasses to minimize the risk of noxious weeds or invasive, non-native species becoming established in these disturbed areas.

No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, surface disturbing activities associated with the trail reroute would not take place thereby not creating a niche for noxious and invasive species to become established.

Migratory Birds

Affected Environment: Vegetation communities within the project area are comprised of sagebrush and pinyon/juniper woodlands. These community types typically provide nesting habitat for a large array of migratory birds during the breeding season. Several species listed on the USFWS's Bird of Conservation Concern List, sage sparrow, pinyon jay and black-throated gray warbler, potentially nest in the area. Additional high interest birds that may nest in this habitat type include Brewer's sparrow, grey flycatcher and juniper titmouse.

Environmental Consequences:

Proposed Action: The proposed action has a low potential to result in the 'take' of any migratory bird. Nesting attempts may be disrupted and some nests may be accidentally destroyed if the trail is constructed during the breeding season (May – July). Once construction of the trail is complete, there would be no further potential to interfere materially with nest substrate. As the trail is already in use, rerouting a portion of the trail is unlikely to reduce the extent or quality of habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions.

No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, there would be no risk of 'take' from trail construction.

Native American Religious Concerns

Affected Environment: The Ute tribes claim this area as part of their ancestral homeland. At present, no Native American concerns are known within the project area and none were identified during the inventory. The Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Bands, the primary Native American tribe with ties to this area of the GSFO, have indicated that they do not wish to be consulted for small projects or projects where no Native American areas of concern have been identified either through survey or past consultations. Therefore, formal consultation was not undertaken. If new data are disclosed, new terms and conditions may have to be negotiated to accommodate their concerns.

Environmental Consequences: Although there would be no direct impacts from the proposed action, indirect impacts from increased access and personnel in the vicinity of the proposed project could result in impacts to unknown Native American resources ranging from illegal collection to vandalism.

Mitigation: A standard Education/Discovery stipulation for the protection of Native American values. The importance of this stipulation should be stressed to the personnel constructing, rehabilitating, and riding on the trail informing them of their responsibilities to protect and report any cultural resources encountered. Additionally they should be made aware of requirements under the American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

No Action Alternative

Environmental Consequences: Same as Cultural Resources.

Special Status Species (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 4)

Affected Environment: According to the latest species list from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (<http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/endspp/CountyLists/COLORADO.pdf>), the following Federally listed, proposed, or candidate plant and animal species may occur within or be impacted by actions occurring in Eagle County: Ute Ladies' Tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), black-footed ferret (*Mustela nigripes*), Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), Mexican spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*), yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly (*Boloria acrocnema*), razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*), Colorado pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*), bonytail chub (*Gila elegans*), and humpback chub (*Gila cypha*).

Specific to the proposed action area, there are no federal listed, proposed, or candidate plant species or their habitat within the area. The BLM sensitive plant species, *Penstemon harringtonii*, is known to occur in sagebrush habitat immediately north and west of the proposed trail reroute, and potential habitat exists within the project area. This species generally occurs in open sagebrush habitat on rocky loam or rocky clay loam soils between the elevations of 6,200 to 9,200 feet.

The general area is mapped as historic habitat for one BLM sensitive wildlife species, the greater sage grouse. There are no leks located near the proposed project area.

Environmental Consequences:

Penstemon harringtonii: Surface disturbance associated with trail construction and use of the new trail may cause direct losses of plants within the trail alignment and indirect impacts associated with potential increases in noxious weeds, dust from the trail inhibiting photosynthesis or pollination and overall fragmentation of habitat for this special status plant. Surveys for this species will be conducted along the

proposed trail alignment prior to beginning any trail construction. Final alignment of the trail may be modified to avoid or minimize any impacts to this species.

Greater Sage Grouse: The proposed trail re-route would have minimal impacts to sage grouse habitat. Sagebrush stands in the vicinity of the project provide suitable habitat for greater sage grouse, however, no grouse have been observed in this area for several years. The proposed action would not degrade habitat or preclude this species from utilizing the general area.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for Special Status Species:

Penstemon harringtonii:

Surface disturbance associated with trail construction and use of the new trail may cause direct losses of plants within the trail reroute and indirect impacts associated with potential increases in noxious weeds, dust from the trail inhibiting photosynthesis or pollination and overall fragmentation of habitat for this special status plant. Surveys for this species will be conducted along the proposed trail alignment prior to beginning any trail construction. Final alignment of the trail may be modified to avoid or minimize any impacts to this species.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for Special Status Species: In 2002, a formal land health assessment was conducted on the Eagle River South Landscape which encompasses the project area. Standard 4 for sage grouse was not being met because sage grouse populations within the landscape have been in decline for decades. Although the majority of individual sites assessed within mapped sage grouse habitats were meeting Standard 3, a combination of habitat condition, fragmentation, recreation and human use issues, loss of habitat, fire suppression etc. were negatively affecting sage grouse on a landscape scale.

Standard 4 for *Penstemon harringtonii* was being met at the time of the assessment. With mitigation to avoid or minimize losses to *Penstemon harringtonii*, the proposed action should not prevent achievement of the Standard for special status species.

Water Quality, Surface and Ground (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 5)

Affected Environment: The proposed activities would occur southwest of the Town of Gypsum and south of the Eagle River and I-70 within the 5,987 acre Spring Gulch 6th field watershed. Within the immediate vicinity of the proposed activities are two unnamed ephemeral drainage which are currently being crossed by the existing route and would also be crossed by the proposed reroute. These drainages are not currently on the State of Colorado's *Stream Classifications and Water Quality Standards* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 37) list, *303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments Requiring TMDLS* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 93), or the *Monitoring and Evaluation List* (CDPHE, Water Quality Control Commission, Regulation No. 94) as a waterbodies suspected to have water quality problems. At this time no water quality data are available for these unnamed ephemeral drainages.

Proposed Action:

Environmental Consequences: Construction of the proposed reroute would result in some soil compaction and displacement that increase the likelihood of erosional processes, especially on steep slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. Due to the close proximity of this proposed route to the nearby unnamed ephemeral drainages, there is potential that sediment associated with trail building activities would reach these drainages. By implementing standard

trail design principles it is anticipated that these potential negative impacts would be greatly reduced. In addition, the existing steep eroding route would be rehabilitated to minimize erosion and further soil degradation.

No Action:

Environmental Consequences: The no action alternative would result in continued trail use on the steep existing route which would in turn result in continued soil displacement and compaction. Degradation of these soils could further result in additional sediment available for transport to the nearby drainage.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard 5 for Water Quality: In 2002, the BLM Glenwood Springs Field Office conducted the Eagle River South Watershed Land Health Assessment in which water quality samples were taken on area drainages. During that time however, no water quality data were collected on the above mentioned unnamed ephemeral drainages. Based on the existing conditions and possible improvements associated with the proposed activities, it is anticipated that the proposed activities would not likely prevent Standard 5 for Water Quality from being met.

Other Affected Resources

In addition to the critical elements, the resources presented in Table 2 were considered for impact analysis relative to the proposed action and no action alternative. Resources that would be affected by the proposed action and no action alternative are discussed below.

Table 2. Other Resources Considered in the Analysis.			
<i>Resource</i>	<i>NA or Not Present</i>	<i>Present and Not Affected</i>	<i>Present and Affected</i>
Access and Transportation	x		
Cadastral Survey	x		
Fire/Fuels Management	x		
Forest Management	x		
Geology and Minerals	X		
Law Enforcement		x	
Paleontology	X		
Noise	X		
Range Management		X	
Realty Authorizations	x		
Recreation		x	
Socio-Economics	x		
Soils			X
Vegetation	x		
Visual Resources	x		
Water Rights	X		
Wildlife, Aquatic	x		
Wildlife, Terrestrial			X

Recreation

Affected Environment:

Gypsum Red Hill is used for a multitude of recreation activities; this trail is primarily used by dirt bikers. No visitor conflicts on this trail or in the area are known.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

The reroute would improve visitors' experiences by being a more interesting trail. If not rerouted, the existing trail will become gullied and unpleasant to ride. The portion of trail that would be closed would be replaced both in length and in improved quality.

Soils (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 1)

Affected Environment: According to the *Soil Survey of Aspen-Gypsum Area, Colorado: Parts of Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin Counties* (USDA 1992), the proposed activities would occur on two different soil map units that can be identified by the numerical code assigned by the soil survey. These two soil map units have water erosion hazards that range from slight to severe. It is important to note that only a small portion of the proposed activities would occur in areas mapped as CSU 4 (Controlled Surface Use) for erosive soils on slopes greater than 30%. Following is a brief description of the two soil map units found within the proposed action area.

- Earsman-Rock outcrop complex (33) – This soil map unit is found on mountainsides and ridges at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 8,500 feet and on slopes of 12 to 65 percent. Approximately 45 percent of this unit is Earsman very stony sandy loam and 35 percent Rock outcrop. The Earsman soil is shallow, excessively drained, and derived from calcareous redbed sandstone. Surface runoff for this soil map unit is rapid and the water erosion hazard is classified as slight to severe depending on slope. Primary uses for this soil map unit include rangeland, wildlife habitat, fence posts, and firewood.
- Southface cobbly sandy loam (99) – This deep, well drained soil is found on mountainsides, valley sides, and alluvial fans at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 7,000 feet and on slopes of 25 to 65 percent. It is derived from redbed sandstone and shale colluvium and alluvium. Surface runoff is rapid and the water erosion hazard is moderate. Primary uses for this soil include wildlife habitat and rangeland.

Proposed Action:

Environmental Consequences: Construction of the proposed reroute would result in some soil compaction and displacement that increase the likelihood of erosional processes, especially on steep slopes and areas devoid of vegetation. Soil detachment and sediment transport are likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. Due to the close proximity of this proposed reroute to the nearby unnamed ephemeral drainages, there is potential that sediment associated with trail building activities would reach these drainages. By implementing standard trail design principles it is anticipated that these potential negative impacts would be greatly reduced. In addition, the existing route located on steep erosive slopes would be rehabilitated to minimize erosion and further soil degradation. Given the degrading conditions of the existing route on the steep slopes; the impacts of the proposed reroute would be minimal by comparison.

No Action:

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The no action alternative would result in continued trail use on the steep erosive slopes which would in turn result in continued displacement and compaction of these soils and sediment available for transport to the nearby unnamed ephemeral drainages.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard 1 for Upland Soils: In 2002, the BLM Glenwood Springs Field Office conducted the Eagle River South Watershed Land Health Assessment that encompasses the Red Hill Common Allotment in which the proposed activities lie. During the land health assessment, personnel determined that the 12,467 acre allotment was achieving or moving towards achieving Standard

1 for Upland Soils. The proposed activities which could possibly improve existing soil conditions would not likely prevent Standard 1 for Upland Soils from being met.

Vegetation (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Vegetative communities within the area proposed for new trail construction are comprised of sagebrush and pinyon/juniper woodlands. Vegetation within the area proposed for trail closure and rehabilitation include sagebrush and some pinyon-juniper woodlands.

Environmental Consequences:

Proposed Action:

The proposed action would result in the loss of sagebrush and pinyon-juniper vegetation along 1.6 miles of new trail (approximately 0.60 acres). An existing trail of 1.2 miles in length would be closed and rehabilitated. The existing trail also traverses through sagebrush and pinyon-juniper vegetation and includes some steep sections of trail that are experiencing accelerated erosion. Following closure of this route, the trail should be scarified and reseeded with a certified weed-free mix of native grasses. If properly reclaimed, the area should support native herbaceous vegetation within 3-5 years. Sagebrush may take 10 years or more to recolonize the disturbed area and it may take more than 100 years for mature pinyon-juniper trees to develop.

Proper recreation management should ensure that trail users do not cut the switchbacks, creating new unauthorized trail segments and destroying more vegetation.

The surface disturbance associated with constructing a new trail and closing and rehabilitating an existing trail would create a niche for the invasion of noxious weeds. Prepping the site and seeding the disturbed areas would help to minimize the potential for weed invasions. See the Invasive, Non-native Species section for additional mitigating measures to prevent or control noxious weeds in the project area.

No Action:

Under the No Action alternative, no new trail would be constructed and the existing trail would not be closed and rehabilitated. Motorized and mechanized use of the existing trail would continue. Soil losses associated with accelerated erosion on the existing route may result in additional losses of vegetation.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for Plant and Animal Communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): In 2002, a formal Land Health Assessment was conducted for this area. The portion of the landscape which includes the proposed action was found to be meeting Standard 3 for plant and animal communities. Overall, ground cover was adequate to protect soils and vegetation was in fair to good condition. However, certain concerns were raised regarding hedging on shrubs, pinyon-juniper encroachment into sagebrush sites and a lack of forbs. Cheatgrass dominates the understory in several low-elevation sagebrush sites and poses a risk of expansion following fire or other disturbances. The proposed action would not preclude this standard from being met.

Wildlife, Aquatic (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 3)

Affected Environment:

The project site is located near the head of a small ephemeral drainage that feeds ephemeral Spring Gulch approximately 1.7 miles downstream. Spring Gulch feeds Gypsum Creek approximately 0.7 miles downstream. Gypsum Creek contains brook, brown, and rainbow trout, and mottled sculpin as well as a variety of aquatic insects.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action:

Construction of the newly proposed trail segment would result in some soil compaction and displacement and increase the likelihood of erosional processes. Soil detachment and sediment transport are more likely to occur during runoff events associated with spring snowmelt and short-duration high intensity thunderstorms. Due to the close proximity of the proposed trail segment to a nearby unnamed ephemeral drainage, it is likely that sediment associated with trail building activities would reach these drainages. Sediment that reaches Gypsum Creek can impact resident trout by silting in important spawning habitat and smothering eggs. Important pool habitat can be lost as sediment accumulates and reduces stream complexity. Aquatic insect production can be impaired as interstitial spaces amongst the gravel and cobble is covered with fine sediments. The reduction in insect productivity reduces important food sources for trout, as well as some birds and mammals. By implementing standard trail design principles (e.g., outsliping, properly spaced waterbars, proper alignment incorporating switchbacks) it is anticipated that potential negative impacts would be reduced. In addition, the existing trail located on steep erosive slopes would be closed and rehabilitated to eliminate erosion and further soil displacement. A net increase of 0.4 miles of trail would result, creating more opportunity for erosion to occur, but being on a better designed and built trail, overall impacts should be reduced.

No Action:

Under the no action alternative, no trail construction or closure and rehabilitation would occur. The existing trail would continue to be used and would continue to result in undo soil erosion. Impacts discussed under the proposed action above would be intensified.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard 3 for Plant and Animal Communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial):

A formal Land Health Assessment was completed for this area in 2003. The watershed was meeting Standard 3 for aquatic wildlife. The proposed action should have little bearing on the watersheds ability to continue to meet standard 3 for aquatic wildlife. The no action alternative would result in continued increased sediment, but would still have little bearing on the areas achievement of Standard 3 for aquatic wildlife.

Wildlife, Terrestrial (includes an analysis of Public Land Health Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Vegetation communities within the project area are comprised of sagebrush and pinyon/juniper woodlands. These habitat types provide cover and forage for a variety of wildlife species, including big game species, reptiles, small mammals and birds. The project area provides important winter habitat for mule deer.

Environmental Consequences:

Proposed Action: Trail construction would impact a small amount of wildlife habitat. Wildlife species may be displaced from the project area during trail construction due to noise and an increase in human presence. Most species would return after trail construction and are likely already habituated to some human presence as the trail is already in use. The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on the distribution or abundance of wildlife species on a landscape level.

No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to wildlife species from the no action alternative.

Analysis on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also **Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic**): A formal Land Health Assessment was completed for this area in 2003. For the most part, the Red Hill Common allotment was meeting the standards. Overall, ground

cover was adequate to protect soils and vegetation was in fair to good condition. However, certain concerns were raised regarding hedging on shrubs, pinyon-juniper encroachment into sagebrush sites and a lack of forbs. Cheatgrass dominates the understory in several low-elevation sagebrush sites and poses a risk of expansion following fire or other disturbances. The proposed action would not preclude this standard from being met.

SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are the incremental effects caused by management actions considering all other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions affecting a resource. These can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taken over time and the effects can be either additive or subtract from the effects of other actions. In summary, the proposed action is not expected to result in cumulative impacts.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Isaac Pittman	Rangeland Management Specialist	Rangeland Management, NEPA Lead
Michael Kinser	Rangeland Management Specialist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones, Range Management
Kay Hopkins	Outdoor Recreation Planner	ACEC, WSR, Wilderness, VRM
Cheryl Harrison	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns
Desa Ausmus	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds, T&E, Terrestrial Wildlife
Carla DeYoung	Ecologist	Vegetation, T/E/S Plants, Land Health Stds
Jeff O’Connell	Hydrologist/Geologist	Soil, Air, Water, Geology
Dereck Wilson	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Brian Maiorano	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Project Leader, Recreation

REFERENCES:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
 1984. *Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan*. Glenwood Springs Field Office.

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The environmental assessment, analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action, has been reviewed. The proposed action with mitigation measures result in a finding of no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

Rationale: The analysis of the proposed action with mitigation measures did not identify any impacts that would be significant in nature either in context or intensity. The trail reroute will improve recreation opportunities and other resources. In addition, there is nothing to indicate the action is highly controversial or that it is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant actions.

Mitigation Measures

1. The closed route would be reseeded with native grasses to minimize the risk of noxious weeds or invasive, non-native species becoming established in these disturbed areas.

NAME OF PREPARER: Brian Maiorano

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: 

DATE SIGNED: 4/16/2008

APPENDDICES: None

ATTACHMENTS: Trail Map, Education/Discovery/NAGPRA Stipulation

Education/Discovery Stipulation/NAGPRA

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires that if newly discovered cultural resources are identified during project implementation, work in that area must stop and the agency Authorized Officer notified immediately (36 CFR 800.13). The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), requires that if inadvertent discovery of Native American Remains or Objects occurs, activity must cease in the area of discovery, a reasonable effort made to protect the item(s) discovered, and immediate notice 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)). Further actions also require compliance under the provisions of NHPA and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act.