

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Energy Office
2425 S. Grand Avenue, Suite 101
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: CO140-2008-110CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

PROJECT NAME: Williams Wildlife Guzzlers for Wheeler to Webster Geographic Area Plan (GAP) wildlife mitigation and the Grand Valley Geographic Area Plan (GAP) wildlife mitigation.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Township 6 South, Range 96 West, sections 33 and 35 (39 28'34.42" N 108 06'52.40"W pad GM-24-33) and (39 28'50.08" N 108 04'12.98"W pad DOE-1M-35). See Figure 1.

APPLICANT: Williams Production RMT Company

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: This project provides wildlife habitat improvements in year-round wildlife habitat as well as winter range through the installation of two water developments known as guzzlers. The guzzlers are part of a larger mitigation program developed under the Wheeler to Webster GAP and the Grand Valley GAP.

Both guzzlers would be built adjacent to existing well pads in order to eliminate the need for new access roads or trails to installation sites and for ease of maintenance. An implied easement exists for the inspection of the existing well pads which would also allow for access to and maintenance of the two guzzlers. In the fall following installation, disturbed areas would be seeded with a native seed mix to discourage weed invasion. Installation of the two guzzlers would be completed in 2008.

Wildlife Guzzler System

The guzzler consist of a metal gathering apron, a brown colored 1,800 gallon heavy duty polyethylene storage tank, and a drinker that provides access to stored water. The drinker also contains a small animal escape ramp. The metal gathering apron would consist of a steel tube frame covered by tan or green colored corrugated tin. Each apron unit would measure 12' x 24'. Four units would be placed together to form one V-shaped catchment device encompassing an area of 24' x 48'. Each 12' x 24' unit will be placed on six concrete footers, for a total of 24 concrete footers. The storage tank would be set in the ground to a depth up to 24".

Elko Bighorns Unlimited, Boss Tanks, Nevada Division of Wildlife, and the BLM Elko Field Office cooperated to design and produce a water catchment tank that is low maintenance, low profile, easily installed, and resistant to freeze damage. Using this tank precludes failure from float valves or excessive plumbing and joints. The tank and cover are strong enough to withstand elk, cattle, and snow loads without collapsing, puncturing, or cracking. The total weight of the tank and cover is about 800 pounds.

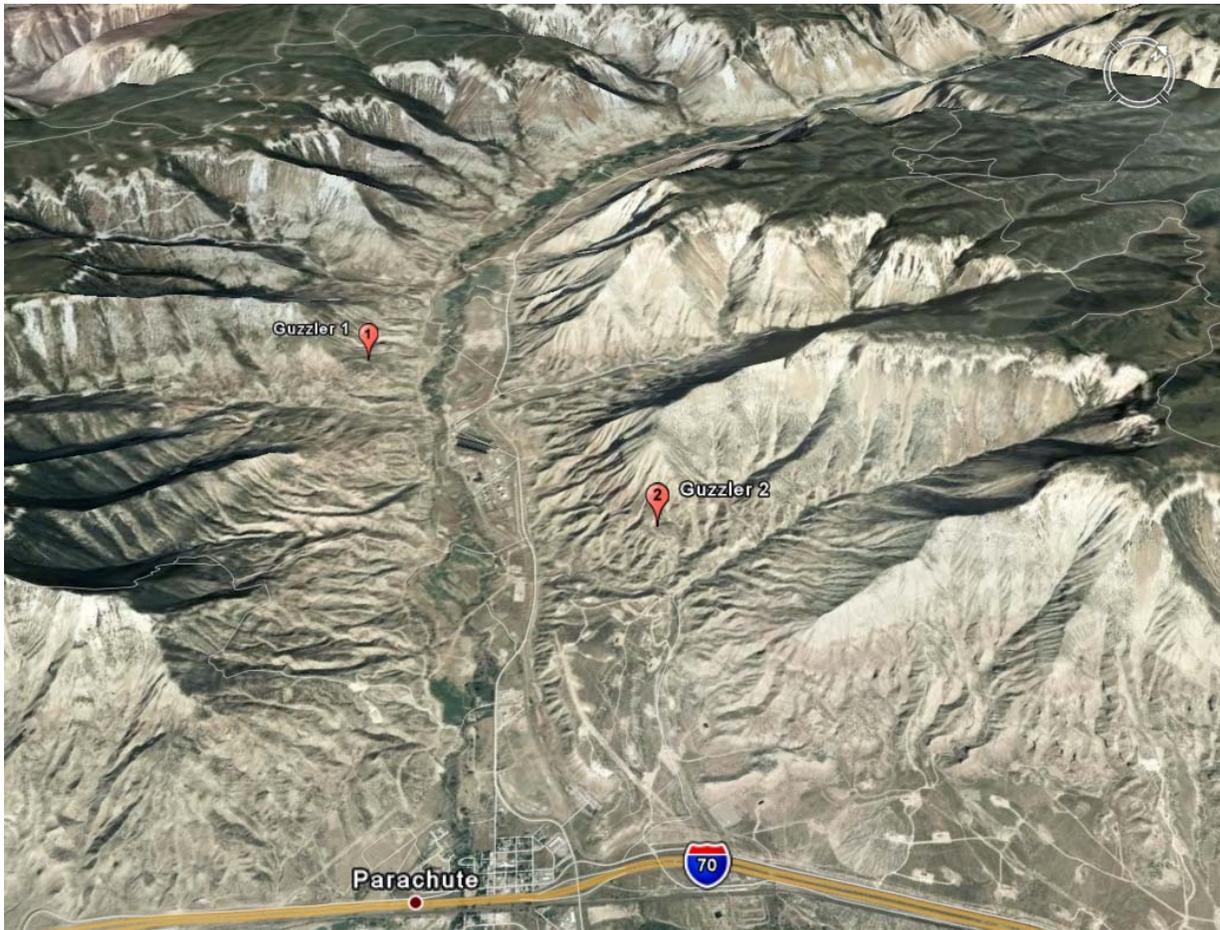


Figure 1. Location of the two wildlife guzzlers north of Parachute, CO.

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

Name of Plan: Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan.

Date Approved: January, 1984; revised in 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: Chapter 2, priority 1, page 18 of the 1984 Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan Record of Decision (ROD).

Decision Language: Monitor, maintain, or improve winter range for mule deer and elk. Focus priorities for specific treatment areas on those game management units having the greatest problems, the most potential, or both.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, Section: A. Fish and Wildlife. Number 3: Construction of perches, nesting platforms, islands, and similar structures for wildlife use. None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

EXCLUSION	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.	_____	<u>X</u>
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	_____	<u>X</u>
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	_____	<u>X</u>
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	_____	<u>X</u>
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	_____	<u>X</u>
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	_____	<u>X</u>
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.	_____	<u>X</u>
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	_____	<u>X</u>
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	_____	<u>X</u>
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	_____	<u>X</u>
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	_____	<u>X</u>
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).	_____	<u>X</u>

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
John Brogan	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources
Beth Brenneman	Ecologist	Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plants
Lindsey Utter	Landscape Planner	Visual Resources
Jeff Cook	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Resources

REMARKS: Guzzler locations were surveyed for cultural resources in response to the original development of the two pads (GM-24-33, DOE-1M-35) and no issues were identified at that time. A field visit with Lindsey Utter to review visual resources was conducted on June 13, 2008. Lindsey recommended that the top of the apron be painted either brown or green and that the bottom be treated such that rust could form on the surface. No other issues were identified.

NAME OF PREPARER: Jeff Cook, Wildlife Biologist

DATE: June 18, 2008

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this CE and have decided to implement the proposed action. This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:



Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist

DATE SIGNED:

June 24, 2008