



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Colorado River Valley Field Office  
2300 River Frontage Road  
Silt, Colorado 81652  
[www.co.blm.gov](http://www.co.blm.gov)

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
COC 75502/286203

## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOI-BLM-CO-N040-2012-0084-CX

### A. Background

BLM Office: Colorado River Valley Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No:  
COC 75502/286203

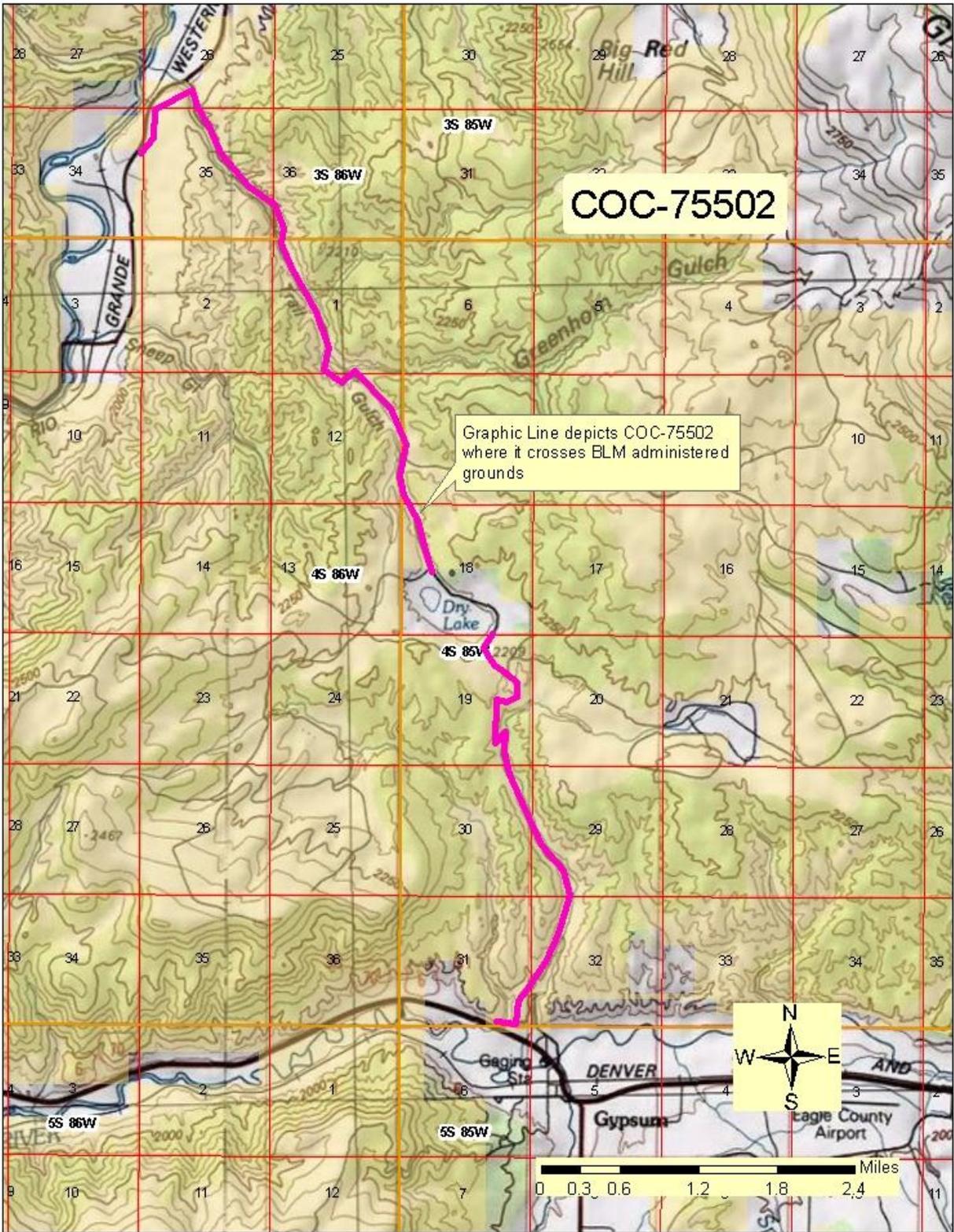
Proposed Action Title/Type: CenturyTel of Eagle-Fiber Optic Placement

Location of Proposed Action:

Sections 26, 34, 35 and 36, T.3S, R86W, Sections 1 and 12, T4S, R86W and Sections 7, 18 19, 29, 30, 31 and 32, T4S, R85W.

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to authorize a new right-of-way grant (COC-75502) for CenturyTel of Eagle for placement of 52,673 feet of fiber optic cable, consisting of 1427 feet of aerial fiber on two separate crossings and 51,246 feet of buried fiber, placed in the westerly wheel-track of Trail Gulch Road. The proposed right-of-way will have a width of 10 feet, 5 feet on each side of center line, occupying approximately 12.1 acres. Term is 20 years.



**A. Land Use Plan Conformance:**

The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for and is in conformance with (43 CFR §1610.5 and § 2800, BLM 1617.3) the following plan:

Name of Plan: Record of Decision and 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: Page 41, Utility and Communication Facility Management.

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

**B. Compliance with NEPA:**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E. Realty Numbers:

(13) Amendments to existing rights-of-way, such as the upgrading of existing facilities, which entail no additional disturbances outside the right-of-way boundary.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

EXCLUSIONS	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
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.		X
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		X
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
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.		X
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.		X
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the		X

protection of the environment.		
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
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).		X
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).		X

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
Erin Leifeld	Archaeologist	Cultural and Native American Concerns
Kimberly Miller	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, WSR, Wilderness
Greg Wolfgang	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Travel Management, VRM
Carla DeYoung	Ecologist	ACEC, T/E/S Plants, Vegetation
Sylvia Ringer	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife, T/E/S Wildlife, Migratory Birds
Pauline Adams	Hydrologist	Soil, Air, Water
Isaac Pittman	Rangeland Mgt Spec.	Range Management
Monte Senior	Rangeland Mgt Spec.	Invasive Species, Noxious Weeds
Rusty Stark	Fuels Specialist	Fuels
Everett Bartz	Rangeland Mgt. Spec.	Riparian

REMARKS/MITIGATION (the following mitigations will be carried forward within the permit under Special Conditions:

Cultural Resources

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 Colorado BLM permitted cultural resource contracting firms. A total of nine cultural resource inventories (CRVFO CRIR# 82, 234, 591, 1084, 1012-07, 1116, 1197-9, 5403-4, and 5411-4) have been completed to cover the entire extent of the project area. During cultural resource inventory, a total of 6 sites and 6 isolated finds were located and documented. Of the six sites, four are historic sites (5EA93.2, 5EA923, 5EA923.2, and 5EA2841) which mainly consist of historic road segments and a historic telephone line and are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The remaining two of the six sites are prehistoric sites; one is a prehistoric open lithic scatter (5EA2840) which is potentially eligible for the NRHP and one is a prehistoric open camp (5EA2839) which is eligible for the NRHP. Although these resources fall within the ROW they will not be impacted by the proposed project because they are out of the road and up on the slope/bench above the direct area of disturbance and therefore the project will have no adverse effect to cultural resources. 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.

Mitigations

Sites 5EA2839 and 5EA2840 will be avoided and protected during project implementation.

Cultural Resource Stipulations:

- a. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization or its contractor must notify the AO, 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), the holder

must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.

- b. The operator or its contractor is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will 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 AO. Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in place preservation is not necessary).
- c. The holder shall notify the AO at least 180 days prior to non-emergency activities that would cause surface disturbance in the ROW or TUP. The BLM will determine if a cultural resource inventory, treatment, or mitigation is required.
- d. A "Notice to Proceed" stipulation shall be required for any non-emergency activities as defined above that would cause surface disturbance on the ROW or TUP. 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.

## **VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:**

*Affected Environment:* The proposed project area is located in an area classified as VRM Class II, III and IV in the GSRA 1984 Resource Management Plan. The objective of this class II is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes to the landscape must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. The objective of Class III's is 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. The objective of Class IV is to provide for management activities that require major modifications to the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape can be high. The management activities may dominate the view and may be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repetition of the basic visual elements of form, line, color, and texture.

*Environmental Consequences/Mitigation of the Proposed Action:* The proposed action would create linear corridors and straight lines in the landscape. The following design features would mitigate the linear corridors and straight lines and would maintain a natural appearing landscape and the proposed action would meet VRM Class II, II, and IV objectives:

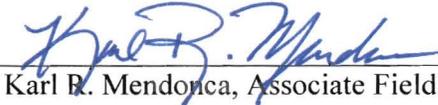
When vegetation is pruned to reduce fire hazards associated with the power lines, thinning and feathering of the adjacent vegetation should also be incorporated to mimic the natural edge of existing vegetation.

The mitigation outlined for Access and Transportation will mitigate the creation of new routes causing linear features under the power lines.

*Environmental Consequences of the "No Action" Alternative:* The no action would maintain the existing landscape character and would meet all three VRM Class objectives.

I considered this action and determined that it 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.

**C. Signature**

Authorizing Official:  Date: 8/7/2012  
Karl R. Mendonca, Associate Field Manager

**Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Karl Mendonca, Associate Field Manger, Colorado River Valley Field Office, 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO 81652, (970)876-9004.

## RIGHT-OF-WAY RENEWAL STIPULATIONS

1. The holder shall contact the Authorized Officer (AO) at least 60 days prior to the anticipated start of any surface disturbing activities. It is the holder's responsibility to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated. The BLM will determine if any surveys or inventories are required. As necessary, the holder shall demonstrate compliance in writing, i.e., with surveys and inventories completed by qualified individuals, with the following laws including, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act (if potential habitat is determined to be present), the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Evaluations and inventories can be completed by BLM, or by the holder in order to meet the holder's schedule and subject to approval by the AO. Inventories may be time sensitive and may require US Fish and Wildlife Service concurrence, therefore this process could take longer than 60 days to complete. The holder shall not initiate any surface disturbing activities on the right-of-way without prior written approval, as determined necessary by the AO.

2. Cultural Resources, Education/Discovery Stipulation:

### *Cultural Resources*

If subsurface cultural values are uncovered during operations, all work in the vicinity of the resource will cease and the authorized officer with the BLM notified immediately. The operator shall take any additional measures requested by the BLM to protect discoveries until they can be adequately evaluated by the permitted archaeologist. Within 48 hours of the discovery, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and consulting parties will be notified of the discovery and consultation will begin to determine an appropriate mitigation measure. BLM in cooperation with the operator will ensure that the discovery is protected from further disturbance until mitigation is completed. Operations may resume at the discovery site upon receipt of written instructions and authorization by the authorized officer.

### *Native American human remains*

Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder 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 on federal land. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4 (c) and (d), the holder must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery that could adversely affect the discovery. The holder shall make a reasonable effort to protect the human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony for a period of thirty days after written notice is provided to the authorized officer, or until the authorized officer has issued a written notice to proceed, whichever occurs first. Any relocation, additional construction, or use that is not in accord with the approved conditions shall not be initiated without the prior written approval of the authorized officer. A copy of the complete right-of-way grant, including all plans and stipulations shall be made available at the right-of-way site during construction. Noncompliance with the above will be grounds for an immediate temporary suspension of activities if it constitutes a threat to public health or the environment.

3. The holder shall be responsible for weed control within the limits of the right-of-way. The holder is responsible for consultation with the authorized officer and/or local authorities for acceptable weed control methods (within limits imposed in the grant stipulations) including

pesticides/herbicides approved for use on BLM land. Use of pesticides/herbicides shall comply with the applicable Federal and state laws. Pesticides/herbicides 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/herbicides, the holder shall obtain from the authorized officer written approval of the applicant's plan showing the type and quantity of material to be used, 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. The plan should be submitted no later than March 1 of any calendar year to cover the proposed activities for the next growing season. Emergency use of pesticides/herbicides shall be approved in writing by the authorized officer prior to such use.

4. 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.
5. The holder shall comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated regarding toxic substances or hazardous materials. 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 of 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 of State government.
6. All construction, operation and maintenance shall be within the authorized limits of the right-of-way granted herein.
7. No burning of trash, litter, trees, brush or other vegetative material shall be allowed under this grant.
8. No construction or routine maintenance activities shall be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support such equipment. If the equipment creates ruts in excess of four (4) inches deep, the soil shall be deemed too wet to adequately support the construction equipment.
9. The holder shall disturb the minimum amount of soils and vegetation necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility. The holder shall recontour disturbed areas as necessary by grading to restore the area to approximately the original contour of the ground as directed by the authorized officer.
10. The holder shall contact the AO to determine the appropriate seed mix to be used on all disturbed areas in the right-of-way.

11. For access and maintenance of facilities, the holder shall use existing roads. When existing roads are not available, the holder may use the right-of-way for access. BLM roads should not be maintained without first consulting with the authorized officer.
12. Prior to termination of the right-of-way, the holder shall contact the authorized officer to arrange a joint inspection of the right-of-way. This inspection will be held to agree to an acceptable termination and rehabilitation plan as necessary. This plan shall include, but is not limited to, removal of facilities, drainage structures, or surface material, recontouring, topsoiling, or seeding. The authorized officer must approve the plan in writing prior to the holder's commencement of any termination activities.