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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kremmling Field Office
P.O. Box 68
Kremmling, CO 80459**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: CO-120-2007-47 CE

PROJECT NAME: Independence Mtn. Commsite Rebuild

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T. 11N., R. 81W., Section 25: NWNE

APPLICANT: Bureau of Land Management

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: Inspections of the Colorado communication sites revealed that many of the sites were not in compliance with the BLM Communication Site Guidelines and Motorola Quality Standards Handbook R56 for technical specifications. The Independence Mountain site requires a fence around the buildings and the equipment and would measure 50'X50'. The building and tower would be replaced and would need to be painted Juniper green or Covert green and all material and paint would be a matte finish. The USFS tower, which is attached to the building, would be unattached and retro fitted to guyed tower with an anchor. The other structures would be removed. BLM would install new exterior halo grounding system and ground all exterior members. The Independence radio site is currently authorized for 208'X208'. All work would be within that area. All Standard BLM cultural discovery stipulations would be adhered to.

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

Name of Plan: Kremmling Resource Management Plan (RMP), Record of Decision (ROD)

Date Approved: December 19, 1984; Updated February 1999

Decision Number/Page: II-B-12 pg.14

Decision Language: Decision Language: Provide the opportunity to utilize public lands for development of facilities which benefit the public, while considering environmental and agency concerns.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 6, Appendix 5.4, Number: (E) (13) “Amendments to existing rights-of-way such as the upgrading of existing facilities which entail no additional disturbances outside the rights-of-way boundary”. None of the following extraordinary circumstances in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety		X
2.2 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
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 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
2.8 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
2.9 Violate a Federal Law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
2.11 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
2.12 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:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility	Date Review Completed
Susan Cassel	Realty Specialist	Realty	7/30/2007
Dennis Gale	Assistant Field Manager	NEPA	8/30/2007
Frank G. Rupp	Archaeologist	Cultural/ Native American Religious concerns	Cultural: 7/10/2007 Native American Consultation: 8/17/07
Paula Belcher	Hydrologist	Soil, Air Water	7/26/2007
Megan McGuire	Wildlife Biologist	T&E	7/27/07
Justin Koppa	GIS Specialist	Visuals	7/27/2007

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: Approximately 20 acres were culturally inventoried for this project proposal. The proposed area of disturbance includes a new building, tower and fence covering a very small portion of the 20 acres (> 200' X 200'). The balance was culturally inventoried as part of Kremmling's pro-active inventory program, and to record and evaluate a previously but poorly recorded cultural site, 5JA849. No new cultural resources were discovered and site 55JA849 is evaluated as not eligible to the National Register of Historic Places, and is located well outside the area of potential effect. Standard BLM cultural discovery stipulations are made part of this Categorical Exclusion and the authorization to proceed.

Threatened and Endangered Species: The proposed project would not impact Endangered, Threatened, or Sensitive Species.

Visual Resources:

Affected Environment: The proposed project area is located in an area classified as VRM Class II in the KFO 1984 Resource Management Plan. The objective of VRM Class II is to retain the existing characteristic landscape. The level of change in any of the basic landscape elements (line, form, color, texture) due to management activities should be low and not evident.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The introduction of new fences around buildings and equipment would be minimally visible from the travel route Hwy 125. New features will create contrast by introducing new colors, shapes and forms into the existing landscape.

After completion and reclamation, long-term impacts from the construction are expected to be minimized. Most of the landscape modifications from construction would not be visible for long distances along CO Hwy 125. The tower and portions of the buildings would potentially be visible along some sections of CO Hwy 125, but would not catch the attention of the casual observer. In addition, to minimize the visibility of the buildings, the buildings would be colored Juniper green or Covert green and all material and paint would be a matte finish. These mitigation options would allow VRM Class II objectives to be met.

No Action: This alternative would maintain the existing character of area.

COMPLIANCE PLAN: The right-of-way would be inspected and monitored periodically to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant. The right-of-way would also be inspected after any maintenance activities to determine compliance with and effectiveness of reclamation measures.

NAME OF PREPARER: Susan L. Cassel

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Dennis Gale

DATE: 8/30/2007

ATTACHMENTS:

1). Project map

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this CER 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 extraordinary circumstance and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ David Stout

DATE SIGNED: 8/31/2007