

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Little Snake Field Office
455 Emerson Street
Craig, CO 81625-1129

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA-NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2012-0022-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER/LEASE NUMBER:

Oil & Gas Lease Numbers: COD038678A, COD039907A
Pipeline Right-of-Way Casefile Number: COC075227

PROJECT NAME: Carl Allen Well #44, #50- #54 & associated pipelines

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: SESW, Sec. 32, T. 12 N., R. 97 W., 6th PM.
Moffat County, Colorado

APPLICANT: Wexpro Company & QEP Field Services Company

LAND USE PLAN (LUP) CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The proposed action was reviewed for conformance (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3) with the following plan:

Name of Plans: Little Snake Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (RMP)

Date(s) Approved: October 2011

Results: The Proposed Action is in conformance with the LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP goals, objectives, and management decisions as follows:

Allow for the availability of the federal oil and gas estate (including coalbed natural gas) for exploration and development. Objectives for achieving these goals include:

- Identify and make available the federal oil and gas estate (including coalbed natural gas) for exploration and development.
- Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources (including coalbed natural gas).

Section/Page: Section 2.13 Energy and Minerals/ page RMP-36

NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION: To allow development of federal natural gas resources to meet the public's continuing economic demands for a dependable and affordable supply of oil, while giving due consideration to the protection of other resource values; and facilitate the leaseholder's rights to develop oil and gas resources within their federal mineral leases in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended.

The requested Federal Action is needed to provide access across federal lands managed by the BLM and allow development of minerals within an existing federal unit, according to the principles of multiple use, while maintaining the rights and obligations of other users and protecting resources in the project area.

PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS: The action in this Environmental Assessment (EA) is listed on the NEPA log posted on the Little Snake Field Office web site:
http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Information/nepa/lsfo.html.

The Notices of Staking (NOSs) have been posted in the public room of the Little Snake Field Office (LSFO) for a 30-day public review period beginning July 20, 2011 when the NOSs were received, and may be viewed during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

No comments were received.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES: The proposed action would be to approve six (6) Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) submitted by Wexpro Company and grant a Right-of-Way to QEP Field Services Company for a high and low pressure pipeline. The operator proposes to drill six (6) natural gas wells from one (1) pad on federal land located in the SESW, Sec. 32, T. 12 N., R. 97 W., 6th PM. Moffat County, Colorado into federal minerals. APDs have been filed with the LSFO for the Carl Allen Wells #44, #50, #51, #52, #53, & #54. The APDs include drilling and surface use plans that cover mitigation of impacts to vegetation, soil, surface water, and other resources. Mitigation not incorporated by Wexpro Company in the drilling and surface use plan would be attached by the BLM as Conditions of Approval to an approved APD.

The proposed wells would be located approximately 40 miles southwest from the town of Baggs, WY south of Moffat County Road 4. Construction work would be planned to start during the spring of 2012 and the estimated duration of construction and drilling for the wells would be 16 to 25 days per well and 7 weeks for completion activities and facilities installation for all the wells on the pad. Twenty-two (22) feet of new access road would be constructed. All of the access roads would be upgraded or constructed to have a maximum width of disturbance of 30 feet resulting in an 18-foot running surface and would be constructed in accordance with guidelines established in *The Gold Book: Surface Operating Standards for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development*. Road construction would result in 0.5 acres of disturbance on lease.

The location would be cleared of all vegetation and leveled for drilling. Topsoil and native vegetation would be stockpiled for use in reclamation. Approximately 6.4 acres would be disturbed for construction of the well pad. This would include the 400' by 350' well pad, the topsoil, and subsoil piles. A closed loop system would be utilized and no reserve pit would be authorized. A 230' by 50' cuttings pit would be constructed on the well pad to hold drill mud and cuttings. Drill cuttings would be buried in the cuttings pit when dry. If any of the wells are producers, cut portions of the pad site would be backfilled and unused portions would be stabilized and re-vegetated. If all of the gas wells prove unproductive, they would be properly plugged and the entire pad site and access road would be reclaimed.

QEP Field Services Company has applied for a Right-of-Way (ROW) grant to install, operate, and maintain low pressure and high pressure natural gas buried pipelines. Each pipeline would be approximately 1,094 feet long by 30 feet wide. The pipelines would be buried to a depth of 48 inches across within the pipeline corridor. The proposed pipelines would parallel the access road. Two (2) pipelines are requested to reduce the amount of gas distributed to the compression facilities. The total surface disturbance for the proposed pipelines would be 1.5 acres.

The total surface disturbance for the proposed action would be 8.4 acres.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The No Action alternative would be to reject the APD and, therefore, the well would not be drilled, and the pad, access road, and facilities would not be constructed.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES/MITIGATION

For the following resources and issues, those brought forward for analysis will be addressed below.

Resource/Issue	N/A or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Air Quality			X
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	X		
Cultural Resources			X
Environmental Justice		X	
Flood Plains	X		
Fluid Minerals			X
Forest Management	X		
Hydrology/Ground			See Water Quality-Ground
Hydrology/Surface			See Water Quality-Surface
Invasive/Non-Native Species			X

Lands With Wilderness Characteristics	X		
Migratory Birds			X
Native American Religious Concerns			X
Paleontology			X
Prime and Unique Farmland	X		
Range Management			X
Realty Authorizations			X
Recreation/Transportation		X	
Socio-Economics			X
Soils			X
Solid Minerals		X	
T&E and Sensitive Animals			X
T&E and Sensitive Plants	X		
Upland Vegetation			X
Visual Resources		X	
Waste, Hazardous or Solid			X
Water Quality – Ground			X
Water Quality – Surface			X
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X		
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X		
Wild Horse & Burro Mgmt	X		
Wilderness Study Areas	X		
Wildlife – Aquatic	X		
Wildlife – Terrestrial			X

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: There are five federal Class I areas within 100 kilometers of the LSFO boundary, all of which occur in Colorado. There are no federal Class I areas in Utah or Wyoming within 100 kilometers of the LSFO boundary. There are no non-attainment areas nearby that would be affected by the proposed action.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Short term, local impacts to air quality from dust would result during and after well pad construction. Drilling operations, lasting from 16 to 25 days per well, produce air emissions like exhaust from diesel engines that power drilling equipment. Air pollutants could include nitrogen oxides, particulates, ozone, volatile organic compounds, fugitive natural gas, and carbon monoxide. Gas flaring reduces the health and safety risks in the vicinity of the well by burning combustible and poisonous gases like methane and hydrogen sulfide.

At a regional scale, atmospheric dust, caused by destabilization of soil as a result of land use changes coupled with drought conditions, is receiving increased attention for its ability to alter alpine environments. Dust covered snow melts faster because it can absorb more solar energy, which affects snowpack conditions and can result in earlier and faster spring runoff events. The Colorado Plateau has been identified as a primary dust source for several recent alpine dust events on the Western Slope of Colorado. Areas of low annual precipitation, little to no

vegetation cover, and an available supply of sediment are of primary concern for mitigation of expanding or new sources of dust.

Mitigation Measures: Retaining as much vegetative cover as possible during the project and/or reclaiming and covering disturbed areas shortly following excavation should help keep localized dust down during dry periods.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no new disturbance, drilling rigs, or truck traffic would be anticipated, there would be no effects to air quality resulting from this alternative.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The approval of the APDs, construction of the well pads, upgrading existing roads, constructing a new access road, and installation of buried pipelines are considered undertakings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

BLM has the legal responsibility to take into account the effects of its actions on cultural resources located on federal land. BLM Manual 8100 Series, the Colorado State Protocol and BLM Colorado Handbook of Guidelines and Procedures for Identification, Evaluation, and Mitigation of Cultural Resources provide guidance on how to accomplish Section 106 requirements with the appropriate cultural resource standards. Section 106 of NHPA requires federal agencies to: 1) inventory cultural resources to be affected by federal undertakings, 2) evaluate the importance of cultural resources by determining their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), and 3) consult with the federal and state preservation agencies regarding inventory results, National Register eligibility determinations, and proposed methods to avoid or mitigate impact to eligible sites. Within the state of Colorado, BLM's NHPA obligations are carried out under a Programmatic Agreement between BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). If the undertaking is determined to have “no effect” or “no adverse effect” by the BLM Little Snake Field Office archaeologist then it may proceed under the terms of the Programmatic Agreement. If the undertaking is determined to have “adverse effects” then consultation is initiated with the SHPO.

The prehistoric and historic cultural context for northwestern Colorado has been described in several recent regional contexts. Reed and Metcalf’s (1999) context for the Northern Colorado River Basin is applicable for the prehistoric context and historical contexts include overviews compiled by Frederic J. Athearn (1982) and Michael B. Husband (1984). A historical archaeology context has also been prepared for the state of Colorado by Church and others (2007). In addition, significant cultural resources administered by the LSFO have been discussed in a Class 1 overview (McDonald and Metcalf 2006).

The proposed undertaking has undergone several cultural resource studies:

Darlington, David

2011 *Class III Cultural Resource Inventory and Testing Report for the Wexpro Company Carl Allen No. 44 Well Pad and Access Road Moffat County, Colorado.* 10-WAS-349. BLM LSFO 12.10.2011. OAHP # MF.LM.R873. Western Archaeological Services, Rock Springs, Wyoming.

Murcray, Dirk

2011 *Class III Cultural Resource Inventory for the QEP Field Services Company Carl Allen 44 High Pressure and Low Pressure Natural Gas Pipelines in Moffat County, Colorado.* 11-WAS-172. BLM# 12.31.2011. OAHP#MF.LM.NR1138. Western Archaeological Services, Rock Springs, Wyoming.

One of these studies (Darlington 2011) resulted in the reevaluation of a known prehistoric archaeological site (5MF.5854) and the discovery of a prehistoric archaeological site (5MF.7308). 5MF.5854 was recommended as not eligible for the National Register, reaffirming it's a prior recommendation as not eligible (Tyberg and others 2005). 5MF.7308 was recommended eligible for the National Register.

References

Athearn, Frederic J.

1982 *An Isolated Empire: A History of Northwest Colorado.* Bureau of Land Management-COLORADO. Cultural Resource Series No. 2, Second Edition. Denver.

Church, Minette C., Steven G. Baker, Bonnie J. Clark, Richard f. Carrillo, Jonathan C. Horn, Carl D. Spath, David R. Guilfoyle, and E. Steve Cassells

2007 *Colorado History: A Context for Historical Archaeology.* Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists, Denver.

Husband, Michael B.

1984 *Plateau Country Historic Context.* Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, State Historic Preservation Office, Denver.

Reed, Alan D. and Michael Metcalf

1999 *Colorado Prehistory: A Context for the Northern Colorado River Basin.* Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists, Denver, Colorado.

Tyberg, Joel, Heidi Guy Hays, Scott Phillips, Norma Crumbley, Karen Reed, Jason Burkard, Michael Cregger, Paul Busic, Rick Fell And Sarah Baer

2005 *Class III Cultural Resource Inventory Of The West 3-D Geophysical Exploration Project Area, Moffat County, Colorado.* OAHP# MF.LM.R794. SWCA.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Cultural resources evaluated as eligible for the National Register can be directly or indirectly adversely impacted by surface disturbing activities and or the construction/modification of a building, structure, facility, or infrastructure. The proposed action also has the potential to detract from the integrity of any eligible cultural resources within the view-shed. Indirect adverse impacts to eligible cultural resources include but are not limited to collection of artifacts/cultural material, inadvertent trespass damaging integrity of cultural resources, and damage to the environmental setting.

It was determined in consultations with Moffat County and SHPO (CHS # 59264) that the construction of the Carl Allen Well #44, #50- #54 & associated pipelines will have no adverse effect on 5MF.7308. Natural topography and man-made features will serve to adequately protect the sites. The proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on historic properties. It may proceed as described with the following standard mitigation measures in place.

Mitigation Measures:

1. Due to the high likelihood of buried cultural materials in the project area, an archaeological monitor will be present during any ground disturbing activities as stipulated by the Powder Wash Agreement (BLM 2010).
2. Any cultural and/or paleontological (fossil) resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, on public or Federal land shall be immediately reported to the AO. Holder shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the AO. An evaluation of the discovery will be made by the AO to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values. The holder will be responsible for the cost of evaluation and the AO will make any decision as to proper mitigation measures after consulting with the holder.
3. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the 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 encountered or uncovered during any project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the find and immediately contact the AO at (970) 826-5000. Within five working days, the AO will inform the operator as to:
 - Whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
 - The mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the identified area can be used for project activities again; and
 - Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) (Federal Register Notice, Monday, December 4, 1995, Vol. 60, No. 232) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone at (970) 826-5000, and 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 AO.
4. If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation costs. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from

the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no surface disturbance and no effects on existing cultural resources.

FLUID MINERALS

Affected Environment: The proposed wells would be in favorability zone 4 (highest for oil and gas potential). These wells would penetrate the Wasatch and Fort Union Formations.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: The casing and cementing program would be adequate to protect all of the resources identified above. All coal seams and fresh water zones would also be protected. The BOP system would be adequately sized. All of these zones would be cased off.

Mitigation Measures: None.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no development of fluid minerals and no effects on existing fluid mineral reservoirs.

INVASIVE/NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: Invasive and noxious weeds are present in the area. Invasive annuals such as downy brome (cheatgrass), halogeton, blue mustard and yellow alyssum are common, occupying disturbed areas. Invasive annual weeds are typically established on disturbed and high traffic areas whereas biennial and perennial noxious weeds are less common in occurrence. Perennial noxious weeds that are present within the surrounding areas include Russian knapweed, hoary cress (whitetop), Dalmatian toadflax, Canada thistle, bull thistle, Scotch thistle and other biennial thistles. The LSFO cooperates with the Moffat County Cooperative Weed Management program to employ the principals of Integrated Pest Management to control noxious weeds on public lands within the area of this project.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: The surface disturbing activities and associated traffic involved with construction of the well site, access roads and support infrastructure and subsequent activities would create an environment and provide a mode of transport for invasive species and other noxious weeds to become established. Construction equipment and any other vehicles brought onto the sites can introduce weed species. Wind, water, recreation vehicles, livestock and wildlife would also assist with the distribution of weed seed into the newly disturbed areas. The annual invasive weed species (downy brome, yellow alyssum, blue mustard and other annual

weeds) occur on adjacent areas and would occupy the disturbed areas. The bare soils and the lack of competition from a perennial plant community would allow these weed species to grow and could affect the establishment of seeded plant species. Establishment of perennial grasses and other seeded plants is expected to provide the necessary control of invasive annual weeds within 2 or 3 years. Additional seeding treatments of the disturbed areas may be required in subsequent years if initial seeding efforts are not successful.

The perennial and biennial noxious weeds in the area are less frequently established on the uplands but some potential exists for their establishment in draws and swales or areas that would collect additional water. The largest concern in the project area would be for these species to become established and not be detected, providing seed which can be moved onto adjacent rangelands. The operator would be required to control any invasive and/or noxious weeds that become established within the disturbed areas involved with drilling and operating the well. Prior to applying herbicides on BLM the operator must obtain an approved Pesticide Use Proposal (PUP).

Mitigation attached as Conditions of Approval to minimize disturbance and obtain successful reclamation of the disturbed areas, as well as weed control utilizing integrated practices, including herbicide applications, would help to control the noxious weed species. All principles of Integrated Pest Management should be employed to control noxious and invasive weeds on public lands.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no disturbance is anticipated, no additional effects to the spread of invasive weeds would occur.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2008-050 provides guidance towards meeting BLM's responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Executive Order (EO) 13186. The guidance emphasizes management of habitat for species of conservation concern by avoiding or minimizing negative impacts and restoring and enhancing habitat quality. The LSFO provides both foraging and nesting habitat for a variety of migratory bird species. Several species on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) List occupy these habitats within the LSFO. The project is located in the Northern Rockies Bird Conservation Region.

Native plant communities in the Powder Wash area are comprised primarily of sagebrush and saltbush with an understory of grasses and forbs. Small stand of junipers are also present throughout the Powder Wash area. A variety of migratory birds may utilize these vegetation communities within the project area during the nesting period (May through July) or during spring and fall migrations. Sandstone bluffs and juniper lined ridge tops provide nesting habitat for golden eagles and ferruginous hawks. These features can be found throughout the Powder Wash area. There are multiple historical nest sites for both species in the Powder Wash area.

The project area contains potential nesting and/or foraging habitat for the following USFWS 2008 BCC: ferruginous hawk, Brewer's sparrow, sage sparrow, sage thrasher and loggerhead shrike.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: The Proposed Action would disturb approximately 8.4 acres of migratory bird habitat. Since the proposed well site is near existing disturbances, several roads, and natural gas facilities, habitat quality for migratory birds is already marginal. If construction activities occur during the nesting season, there could be negative impacts to migratory bird species through nest destruction or increased stress leading to nest abandonment. Since habitat is marginal, impacts to migratory bird and their habitat would be minor. Overall, the project is not expected to have a measurable influence on the abundance or distribution of migratory birds at a regional scale.

Mitigation Measures: None.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no disturbance or loss of vegetation is anticipated, there would be no effects to migratory birds under this alternative.

NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CONCERNS

Letters were sent to the Uinta and Ouray Tribal Council, Southern Ute Tribal Council, Ute Mountain Utes Tribal Council, Shoshone Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs in the spring of 2012 discussing upcoming projects including Oil and Gas development in the Powder Wash area the BLM would be working on in FY12 and FY13. Letters were followed up with phone calls. No comments were received and letters are on file at the LSFO. If new information is provided by Native Americans, additional or edited terms and conditions for mitigation may have to be negotiated or enforced to protect resource values.

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The geologic formation at the surface is the Tertiary Age formation, Wasatch Formation, Cathedral Bluffs Tongue (Twc), a variegated claystone, mudstone and sandstone formation. This formation has been classified a PFYC Class 3a formation for the potential for occurrence of scientifically significant fossils.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Scientifically significant fossils are occasionally found within this formation (Armstrong & Wolney, 1989). The potential for discovery of significant fossils on this location is considered to be moderate. The significance of this impact would depend upon the significance of the fossil.

Mitigation Measures: If fossils are discovered during construction or other operations, all activity in the area will cease and the AO will be notified immediately. An assessment of significance will be made within an agreed time frame. Operations will resume only upon written notification by the AO.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no effects to paleontological resources because no ground disturbance would occur.

References

Armstrong, Harley J. and Wolney, David G., 1989, Paleontological Resources of Northwest Colorado: A Regional Analysis, Museum of Western Colorado, Grand Junction, CO, prepared for Bur. Land Management, Vol. I of V.

Miller, A.E., 1977, Geology of Moffat County, Colorado, Colo. Geol. Surv. Map Series 3, 1:126,720.

RANGE MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: The well pad, access road, pipeline and 6 wells would be contained in the Nipple Rim Allotment. The Nipple Rim Allotment is permitted for sheep grazing from October through May for approximately 4,000 AUMs.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: The proposed well pad, associated road, and pipeline construction would remove approximately 8.4 acres of native vegetation. This loss of vegetation and associated disturbance from vehicle traffic, noise and human presence may cause livestock to alter their distribution pattern. This may result in over utilization of the vegetative resources in some areas of the allotment and under-utilization in areas with the most noise and activity. The presence of livestock may hinder reclamation efforts.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative there would be no effects to range resources because no ground disturbance would occur.

REALTY AUTHORIZATIONS

Affected Environment: The proposed project area is located in a developed oil and gas field and contains numerous buried pipeline rights-of-way and other realty authorizations.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: QEP Field Services Company has applied for a Right-of-Way (ROW) grant to install, operate, and maintain low pressure and high pressure natural gas buried

pipelines. Each pipeline would be approximately 1,094 feet long by 30 feet wide. The pipelines would be buried to a depth of 48 inches within the pipeline corridor. Two pipelines are requested to reduce the amount of gas distributed to the compression facilities. After the wells are plugged, the pipelines would be reclaimed. The total surface disturbance for the proposed pipelines would be 1.5 acres.

Existing buried pipelines or other facilities could be accidentally damaged during project activities. Impacts would be temporary until any damage is repaired.

Mitigation Measures: Potential damage to existing rights-of-way would be minimized by the following actions:

- Avoid existing rights-of-way during the project.
- Utilize the “One Call” system to locate and stake the centerline and limits of all underground facilities in the area prior to project initiation.
- Provide 48-hour notice to the owner/operator of all facilities prior to performing any work near existing rights-of-way.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative there would be no need for a realty authorization because no ground disturbance would occur.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Affected Environment: Oil and gas exploration and production, as well as livestock operations, and hunting are the main economic activities of the area.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: The local economy may have some direct but minimal, short-term benefit from support services to the construction and drilling crews, but only a small number of people would be affected. Indirect benefits to the surrounding economy may occur if gas is recovered and leads to additional exploration in the project area. The indirect effects could include effects due to overall employment opportunities related to the gas exploration service support industry in the region as well as the economic benefits to state and county governments related to royalty payments and severance taxes. Generated revenue, as the result of successful drilling operations, would affect only a small number of people and not necessarily people from the socioeconomic area in the vicinity of the project.

It is not likely that the proposed project activities would generate high levels of concern, opposition, or dissatisfaction among local residents. A small, temporary increase in activity and noise disturbance may occur in areas used for grazing or hunting. Public land users would be minimally affected by the proposed action.

Mitigation Measures: None.

No Action Alternative

Ongoing oilfield activities occur in the project area at present, the no action alternative may have some impact to the present socioeconomic environment. The no action alternative may result in a slight reduction in overall employment opportunities in the gas exploration service support industry as well as domestic production of natural gas. This would likely result in reduced federal and state royalty income, and the potential for the federal mineral estate to be drained by wells on adjacent private or state lands. No royalty payments would be made to the federal government from these proposed wells. The no action alternative could generate high levels of concern, opposition, or dissatisfaction among local residents.

SOILS

Affected Environment: The proposed Carl Allen #44, #50-#54 well pad, access road, and pipeline would be located within the Talamantes loam (MU 186; 0-6% slope) and Tresano-Hiatha-Kandaly association (MU 201; 2-20% slope) soil mapping units. Fragile soils are not likely to occur in the proposed project area. Table 1 is a summary of soil properties relevant to the construction of facilities proposed as part of this APD.

Table 1. Summary Analysis of Soil Properties for Carl Allen #44, #50-#54 well pad, access road, and pipeline

Soil Property	Rating
Deep Mechanical Site Preparation (when depth = 0-36")	well-suited
Erosion Hazard (road, trail)	moderate
Construction Limitations for Haul Roads and Log Landings	moderate
Soil Rutting Hazard	severe
Plasticity Index (when depth = 0-120")	MU 201: 7.5% (low); MU 186: 9.4% (low)
Hydrologic Soil Group	B
Representative Slope	~7%
Wind Erodibility Group	6 (low)

Data taken from USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Vegetation and soil would initially be removed from a total of approximately 8.4 acres. Soil productivity would decline due to reduced biological soil activity, impaired water infiltration, mixing of soil horizons, top soil loss, and introduction of weeds. Soil loss from construction would be greatest shortly after project start and would decrease in time as a result of the proposed stabilization through revegetation and reclamation of disturbed areas.

According to the above analysis there are few concerns regarding soil stability. Soil rutting via heavy equipment has the potential to be a problem, particularly when performed during wet conditions. Most heavy equipment will be used on existing roads or to create new roads or pads. No off-road/pad disturbance of soils with heavy equipment is planned. Some erosion is likely from roads, requiring occasional maintenance and simple erosion-control measures. These measures appear to be provided for in the construction plans.

Although multi-well pads are larger in size than traditional single-well sites, they may be preferable from a soil disturbance perspective since overall surface disturbance across the landscape is greatly reduced when fewer pads and access roads are required. Consequently, vehicle trips for well pad services are also reduced since wells are combined to one area, reducing dust creation, erosion potential, and soil compaction.

Mitigation Measures: Use of Best Management Practices and interim reclamation would reduce erosion and sedimentation.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative there would be no effects to soils resources because no ground disturbance would occur.

T&E AND SENSITIVE ANIMALS

Affected Environment: There are no Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed or proposed species that inhabit or derive important benefit from the project area. Critical habitat for the razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail chub and humpback chub is located downstream of the project area.

The general area provides overall habitat for greater sage-grouse, a BLM sensitive species and a candidate for ESA listing. There are no leks within a 4 mile radius of the proposed location and the proposed well is not located with Preliminary Priority Habitat (per WO IM No. 2012-043).

Habitat for one additional BLM sensitive species, the Brewer's sparrow, occurs in the project area. Brewer's sparrows are a summer resident in Colorado and nest in sagebrush stands. Nests are constructed in sagebrush and other shrubs in denser patches of shrubs. This species would likely be nesting in the project area from mid-May through mid-July.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Colorado River Fish

In May 2008, BLM prepared a Programmatic Biological Assessment (PBA) that addresses water depleting activities associated with BLM's fluid minerals program in the Colorado River Basin in Colorado. In response to BLM's PBA, the USFWS issued a Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) (ES/GJ-6-CO-08-F-0006) on December 19, 2008, which determined that BLM water depletions from the Colorado River Basin are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of

the Colorado pike minnow, humpback chub, bonytail, or razorback sucker, and that BLM water depletions are not likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat.

A Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin was initiated in January 1988. The Recovery Program serves as the reasonable and prudent alternative to avoid jeopardy and provide recovery to the endangered fishes by depletions from the Colorado River Basin. The PBO addresses water depletions associated with fluid minerals development on BLM lands, including water used for well drilling, hydrostatic testing of pipelines, and dust abatement on roads. The PBO includes reasonable and prudent alternatives developed by the USFWS which allow BLM to authorize oil and gas wells that result in water depletion while avoiding the likelihood of jeopardy to the endangered fishes and avoiding destruction or adverse modification of their critical habitat. As a reasonable and prudent alternative in the PBO, USFWS authorized BLM to solicit a one-time contribution to the Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin (Recovery Program) in the amount equal to the average annual acre-feet depleted by fluid minerals activities on BLM lands.

This project has been entered into the LSFO fluid minerals water depletion log which will be submitted to the Colorado State BLM Office at the end of the Fiscal Year.

Greater Sage-grouse

The Proposed Action area provides limited habitat for grouse during non-critical times of the year or when moving to and from winter or nesting habitat. Much of the project area has been impacted by previous oil and gas development. Impacts to grouse species from oil and gas development are discussed in the RMP. Impacts include, but are not limited to, direct loss of habitat, displacement due to disturbances, noise and an increase in human activity and habitat fragmentation. Approximately 8.4 acres of sage grouse habitat would be altered with the proposed action. Disturbing 8.4 acres would have minimal impacts to sage grouse habitat on a landscape level, however, sustained development and the proliferation of roads, well pads, pipelines, compressor stations and other surface facilities will continue to reduce habitat patch size and affect both habitat quality and quantity. It is likely that sage grouse use of the area will decrease as disturbances and habitat fragmentation continue.

Brewer's Sparrow

Impacts to Brewer's sparrows are described in the Migratory Bird section of this EA.

Mitigation Measures: None.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no disturbance or loss of vegetation is anticipated, there would be no effects on habitat.

UPLAND VEGETATION

Affected Environment: The proposed Carl Allen #44, #50-#54 well pad, access road, and pipeline would be located within the Talamantes loam (MU 186; 0-6% slope) and Tresano-Hiatha-Kandaly association (MU 201; 2-20% slope) soil mapping units. These soils support the Clayey 9-11", Alkali Upland and Dry Sandy range sites. Predominant vegetation on these range sites include: streambank wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, Nevada bluegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, Wyoming big sagebrush, shadscale, fourwing saltbush, Gardner's saltbush, black sagebrush and winterfat. The proposed well site is in good ecological condition with no sign of previous disturbance or over-utilization by livestock.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would completely remove approximately 8.4 acres of vegetation on Federal surface. The removal of vegetation would be relatively minor in the larger landscape; it becomes a larger action when considered with all of the existing wells in the area. The removal of 8.4 acres of vegetation would be in addition to numerous other plant community intrusions such as the dense road network, other wells, and the Powder Wash Camp. As evidenced by the high levels of halogeton and cheatgrass within the undisturbed plant community, any disturbance at these locations has the potential to greatly increase the presence of these non-native species if required weed management practices are not followed. As required, the sites would be partially reclaimed if the wells are producing wells, and completely reclaimed if the wells do not produce. Aridity, highly saline soils, and weed competition would result in very slow re-establishment of the native species that are reseeded.

Mitigation Measures: Careful adherence to required reclamation practices would be vital to ensuring that the direct impacts of the Proposed Action do not have long-term adverse impacts to the plant community.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no disturbance or loss of vegetation is anticipated, there would be no effects.

WASTE, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 established a comprehensive program for managing hazardous wastes from the time they are produced until their disposal. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations define solid wastes as any "discarded materials" subject to a number of exclusions. The Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 regulates the mitigation of the release of hazardous substances (spillage, leaking, dumping, accumulation, etc.) or threat of a release of hazardous substances into the environment. Civil and criminal penalties may be imposed if the hazardous waste is not managed in a safe manner and according to regulations. The Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) administers hazardous waste regulations for oil and gas activities in Colorado.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequence: The project would fall under environmental regulations that impact disposal practices and impose responsibility and liability for protection of human health and the environment from harmful waste management practices or discharges. The direct impact would be if a solid waste or hazardous material is discarded and contaminates land surface either by solid, semi-solid, liquid, or contained gaseous material. Hazardous, civil, and criminal penalties may be imposed if the waste is not managed in a safe manner, and according to EPA regulations.

Mitigation Measures: The project would be regulated under RCRA Subtitle C regulations, which are extremely stringent, as well as CERCLA that provides for the definition of hazardous substance, pollutant, and contaminant. The mitigation would include the stringent regulation of waste containment within the project area.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no drilling or construction activities would be permitted, there would be no effects.

WATER QUALITY – GROUND

Affected Environment: Rocks at or near the surface consist primarily of Tertiary age, Wasatch Formation member, Cathedral Bluffs Tongue (Twc). These rocks can and do contain potable, useable water.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: There is the potential that during drilling and setting of surface casing the operation will encounter useable groundwater. Fresh to moderately saline groundwater (TDS concentration < 10,000 PPM) is likely to be found within the Wasatch Formation. Water flows are most likely to occur in the sandstone beds of the Wasatch Formation.

Mitigation Measures: The APDs contain geologic downhole reports that require the operator to isolate and protect all fresh to moderately saline water (TDS < 10,000 PPM) encountered during drilling, from communication and contamination with other fluids. The operator is required to submit a report showing the depth and analysis of all groundwater encountered during drilling.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no drilling or construction activities would be permitted, there would be no effects.

WATER QUALITY – SURFACE

Affected Environment: There are no perennial surface waters in or near the proposed project area. Surface runoff from the proposed well site and pipeline would drain into ephemeral

tributaries of Powder Wash, which itself is an ephemeral tributary to the Little Snake River. Water quality for all Powder Wash (and all tributaries of the Little Snake River from a point immediately below the confluence with Fourmile Creek to the confluence with the Yampa River) is use protected and must support Aquatic Life Warm 2, Recreation N, and Agricultural uses. There are no water quality impairments or suspected water quality issues for waters influenced by the project area considered in the proposed action.

Environmental Consequences: Increased sedimentation from disturbed soils along the pipeline corridor towards Powder Wash during spring runoff or from high intensity rainstorms is the most likely environmental consequence from the proposed action. However, it is unlikely that large quantities of sediment would be transported off site and eventually reach perennial waters. According to supporting documents all disturbed areas would be recontoured and seeded, which would reduce the potential impacts caused by surface runoff.

Mitigation Measures: Careful adherence to COAs and use of BMPs.

Reference: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Water Quality Control Commission. 2010. Regulations #33, 37, and 93. <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/regulations/wqccregs/index.html>

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no drilling or construction activities would be permitted, there would be no effects.

WILDLIFE – TERRESTRIAL

Affected Environment: The Powder Wash Area provides marginal habitat for mule deer and pronghorn antelope. Occasionally, elk will utilize the area although this is primarily for migration purposes. This area does not provide critical winter habitat for any of these species. Much of the project area has been impacted by previous oil and gas development. Most big game animals avoid the project area due to heavy human activity associated with the active gas field. Although there are no known raptor nests within a half mile of the proposed pipeline, Powder Wash provides hunting opportunities for golden eagles, red-tailed hawks and ferruginous hawks.

Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences: Approximately 8.4 acres of wildlife habitat would be altered from construction of the wells and pipelines. Impacts to wildlife species from oil and gas development are discussed in the LSFO RMP FEIS (2011). Impacts include, but are not limited to, displacement into less suitable habitat, increased stress and loss of habitat. These impacts are more significant during critical seasons, such as winter or reproduction. Although the project area does not provide critical habitat for wildlife species, some impacts to wildlife would still be expected from this project. Impacts would mostly occur from habitat modification or displacement during construction activities.

Mitigation Measures: None.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, because no drilling or construction activities would be permitted, there would be no effects.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: Cumulative impacts may result from the development of the Carl Allen Wells #44, 50-54 when added to non-project impacts that result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Past actions near the project area that have influence on the landscape are energy development, wildfire, recreation, hunting, grazing, and ranching activities.

Present and proposed actions near the project area are primarily related to the grazing activities with the Nipple Rim Grazing Allotment and continuing energy development of the Powder Wash natural gas field.

Surface disturbance associated with oil and gas activity would increase the potential for erosion and sedimentation. Contrasts in line, form, color, and texture from development would impact the visual qualities on the landscape.

Cumulative impacts to the plant communities within the Powder Wash Unit and adjacent areas include an incremental reduction of continuity in the plant communities in terms of acreages that remain undisturbed. Loss of continuity results in smaller and smaller areas of undisturbed native vegetation and the potential for loss of integrity within the larger plant community. Fragmented plant communities can lose resilience to natural and man-made disturbance due to isolation of areas from seed sources necessary for proper age class distribution of plants, and subsequently, a greater opportunity for stressors such as drought to have a more severe impact on the plant community as a whole. The increased disturbance also makes native plant communities more susceptible to invasion by annual weeds as vectors for increasing weeds. Even with weed control measures applied, the potential for weeds to move further into undisturbed remnant areas increases as these remnants become smaller and more isolated from larger undisturbed areas.

Cumulative impacts to the livestock grazing operations in the area may be increased through the proposed action. This area has not received the rapid rate of energy development compared to other areas of NW Colorado. The development that has occurred in this area has yet to negatively affect livestock production. If continued growth occurs, the growth in wells, roads, and human activity has the potential to reduce the availability of forage in this area far beyond direct impacts caused by construction.

Habitat fragmentation from well pad construction and the associated roads have likely decreased the nesting suitability for migratory birds in the resource area. Ingelfinger (2001) found that roads associated with oil and gas development have a negative impact on passerines bird species. Bird densities were reduced within 100m of each road. Due to the amount of new road

construction and an increase in traffic on these roads, passerine populations in the area are likely decreasing.

The cumulative impacts of additional wells and roads in the project area would continue to degrade habitat for the greater sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. Fragmentation, mostly due to road construction, is an important factor contributing to a decrease in habitat quality. Disturbances such as higher traffic volume and other human activities also contribute to degradation of habitat quality. Continued oil and gas development would lead to decreased use of the habitat.

Although big game species are able to adapt to disturbances better than other wildlife, increased development would still have impacts to mule deer, elk, and antelope. Timing stipulations adequately protect big game species during critical times of the year; however, continued oil and gas development would lead to decreased use of the habitat due to increased human activity. A significant amount of vehicle traffic occurs with oil and gas development. Impacts to big game may be vehicle-animal collisions, as these are a major cause of mortality for big game species.

Future development of the Powder Wash field, for the purpose of energy production, is likely to occur. When added to the existing activities in the project area approval of this proposed action would not cause undue damage to surface or subsurface resources.

References:

Ingelfinger, F. 2001. The Effects of Natural Gas Development on Sagebrush Steppe Passerines in Sublette County, Wyoming. University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.

STANDARDS:

PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITY (animal) STANDARD: Much of the Powder Wash project area is not capable of supporting healthy diverse populations of wildlife. Existing heavy oil and gas development along with the abundance of halogeton has decreased habitat quality throughout the project area. Well locations along the fringe of the developed area are still capable of supporting use by wildlife. The development of these wells is likely to further displace wildlife from this area. This standard is not currently being met. The development of additional wells in this area would not improve habitat conditions for wildlife.

SPECIAL STATUS, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (animal) STANDARD: The project area provides marginal habitat for greater sage grouse. Large portions of the Powderwash landscape are being fragmented due to extensive natural gas development. Sustained development and the proliferation of roads, well pads, pipelines, compressor stations and other surface facilities will continue to reduce habitat patch size and affect both habitat quality and quantity.

PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITY (plant) STANDARD: The Proposed Action would completely remove approximately 8.4 acres of native vegetation. As long as required weed control and reclamation practices are followed, the Proposed Action would meet this standard as negative impacts to the larger plant community would be minimized and the disturbance would be essentially temporary.

SPECIAL STATUS, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (plant) STANDARD: There are no federally listed threatened or endangered or BLM sensitive plant species within or in the vicinity of the proposed well. This standard does not apply.

RIPARIAN SYSTEMS STANDARD: There are no riparian or wetland resources identified on federal lands within the allotment. This standard does not apply.

WATER QUALITY STANDARD: The proposed action would meet the public land health standard for water quality. Interim reclamation of the unused area on the well pads would be completed to minimize sheet and rill erosion from the well site. When the well pad is no longer needed for production operations, the disturbed well pad and access roads would be reclaimed to approximate original contours, topsoil would be redistributed, and adapted plant species would be reseeded. These Best Management Practices would help to reduce accelerated erosion of the sites. There are no water quality impairments or suspected water quality issues for waters influenced by the project area.

UPLAND SOILS STANDARD: The proposed action would not meet the upland soil standard for land health, but it is not expected to while during the operations life of the well, pipeline, and access road. These sites would not exhibit the characteristics of a healthy soil. Upland soil health would return to the well pad and access road disturbance after reclamation practices and well abandonments have been successfully achieved.

PERSONS/AGENCIES CONSULTED: Uintah and Ouray Tribal Council, Colorado Native American Commission, Colorado State Historic Preservation Office.

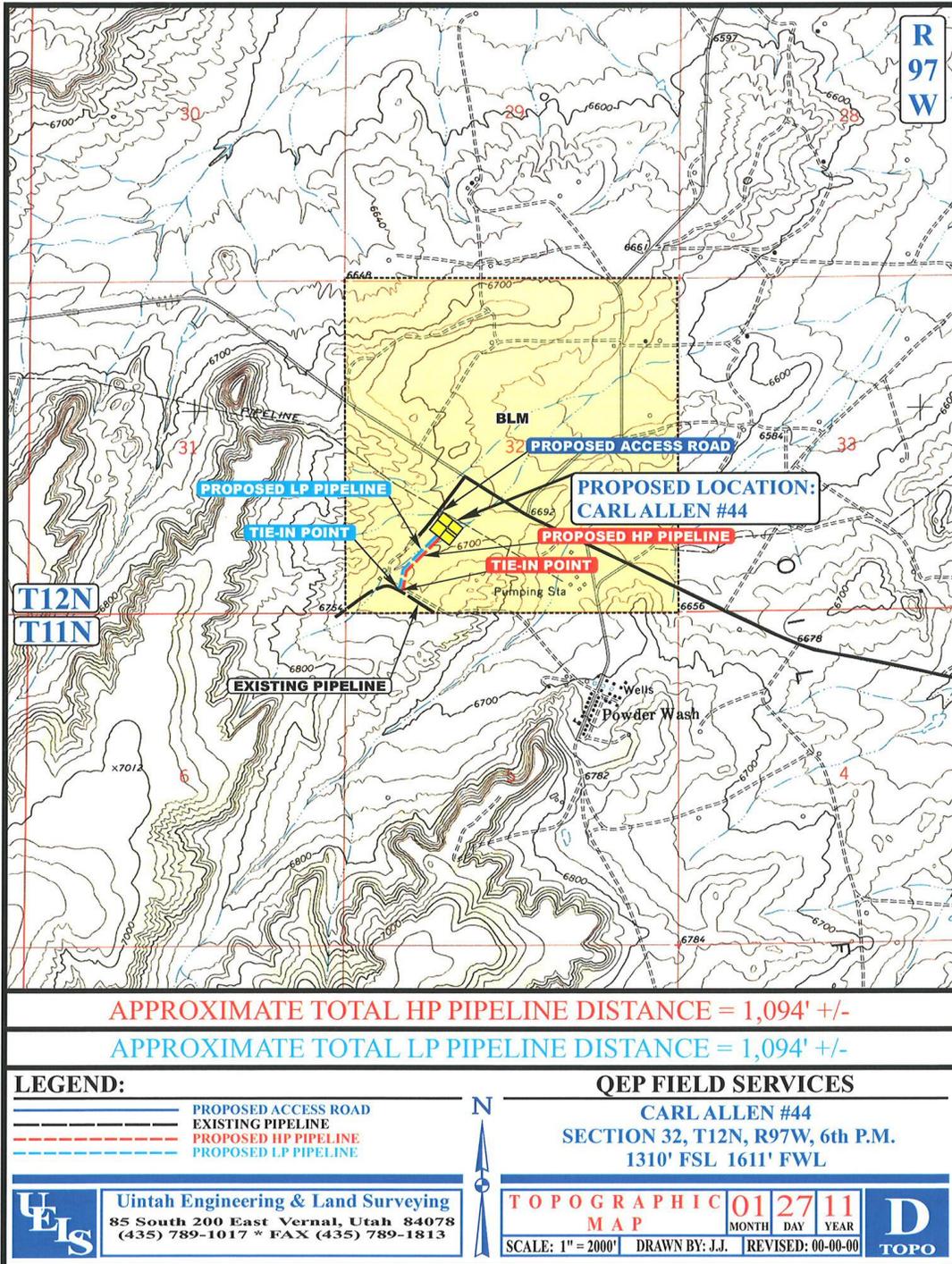
SIGNATURE OF PREPARER: /s/ Shawn Wisner

DATE SIGNED: 02/29/12

SIGNATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWER: /s/ Barbara Sterling

DATE SIGNED: 02/28/12

Attachments: Applicant provided map.



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2012-0022-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the EA and all other available information, I have determined that the proposal and the alternatives analyzed do not constitute a major Federal action that would adversely impact the quality of the human environment. This determination is based on the following factors:

1. Beneficial, adverse, direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts have been disclosed in the EA. Analysis indicated no significant impacts on society as a whole, the affected region, the affected interests or the locality. The physical and biological effects are limited to the Little Snake Resource Area and adjacent land.
2. Public health and safety would not be adversely impacted. There are no known or anticipated concerns with project waste or hazardous materials.
3. There would be no adverse impacts to regional or local air quality, prime or unique farmlands, known paleontological resources on public land within the area, wetlands, floodplain, areas with unique characteristics, ecologically critical areas or designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.
4. There are no highly controversial effects on the environment.
5. There are no effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk. Sufficient information on risk is available based on information in the EA and other past actions of a similar nature.
6. This alternative does not set a precedent for other actions that may be implemented in the future to meet the goals and objectives of adopted Federal, State or local natural resource related plans, policies or programs.
7. No cumulative impacts related to other actions that would have a significant adverse impact were identified or are anticipated.
8. Based on previous and ongoing cultural surveys and through mitigation by avoidance, no adverse impacts to cultural resources were identified or anticipated. There are no known American Indian religious concerns or persons or groups who might be disproportionately and adversely affected as anticipated by the Environmental Justice Policy.
9. No adverse impacts to any threatened or endangered species or their habitat that was determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act were identified. If, at a future time, there could be the potential for adverse impacts, treatments would be modified or mitigated not to have an adverse effect or new analysis would be conducted.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
DOI-BLM-CO-N010- 2012-0022-EA

10. This alternative is in compliance with relevant Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and requirements for the protection of the environment.

I have reviewed the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed activities documented in the Carl Allen Well #44, #50- #54 & associated pipelines EA No. DOI-BLM-N010-2012-0022-EA. I have also reviewed the project record for this analysis and the impacts of the proposed action and alternatives as disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Impacts sections of the EA. Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Because there would not be any significant impact, an environmental impact statement is not required.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Timothy J Wilson for
Wendy Reynolds, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 03/06/12

DECISION RECORD
DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2012-0022-EA

PROJECT NAME: Carl Allen Well #44, #50- #54 and associated pipelines

DECISION: It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action to approve the APDs and ROW, authorizing the construction, drilling, operations, and maintenance of the proposed wells and associated access roads and pipelines.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & CONFORMANCE WITH THE LAND USE PLAN:

This decision is in compliance with the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. This decision is also in conformance with the LSFO RMP October 2011.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS & FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: The Proposed Action was analyzed in DOI-BLM-CO-N010- 2012-0022-EA and was found to have no significant impacts, thus an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Internal scoping was initiated when the project was presented to the LSFO Interdisciplinary Team. The action in this Environmental Assessment (EA) is listed on the NEPA log posted on the Little Snake Field Office web site. The Notices of Staking (NOSs) have been posted in the public room of the LSFO for a 30-day public review period beginning July 20, 2011 when the NOSs were received, and may be viewed during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

No comments were received.

MITIGATION MEASURES: The mitigation measures for this project are found in the file room of the LSFO. The APD 12-point surface use plan, well location maps, and the Conditions of Approval are found in the well case file labeled COD038678A, COD039907A, Carl Allen Well #44, 51-54. ROW stipulations and maps for Grant COC075227 are in the serialized case files.

COMPLIANCE PLAN(S):

Compliance Schedule

Compliance will be conducted during the construction phase and drilling phase to insure that all terms and conditions specified in the lease and the approved APD are followed. In the event a producing well is established, periodic inspections as identified through the Inspection and Enforcement Strategy and independent well observations will be conducted. File inspections will include a review of all required reports and the Monthly Report of Operations will be evaluated for accuracy.

Monitoring Plan

The well location, pipeline, and access road will be monitored during the term of the lease for compliance with pertinent Regulations, Onshore Orders, Notices to Lessees, or subsequent COAs until final abandonment is granted; monitoring will help determine the effectiveness of mitigation and document the need for additional mitigation measures.

Assignment of Responsibility

Responsibility for implementation of the compliance schedule and monitoring plan will be assigned to the Fluid Mineral staff in the Little Snake Field Office. The primary inspector will be the Petroleum Engineering Technician, but the Petroleum Engineer, Natural Resource Specialist, Realty Specialist, and Land Law Examiner will also be involved.

RATIONALE:

1. Approval of the Proposed Action is validating the rights granted with the Federal oil and gas leases to develop the leasehold to provide the commercial commodities of oil and gas.
2. The environmental impacts would be avoided, minimized, or offset with the mitigation measures incorporated into the Proposed Action or attached and enforced by BLM as COAs.

APD PROTEST & APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES: This decision is effective upon the date the decision or approval by the Authorized Officer. Under regulations addressed in 43 CFR Subpart 3165, any party adversely affected has the right to appeal this decision. An informal review of the technical or procedural aspects of the decision may be requested of this office before initiating a formal review request. You have the right to request a State Director review of this decision. You must request a State Director review prior to filing an appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) (43CFR 3165.4).

If you elect to request a State Director Review, the request must be received by the BLM Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, no later than 20 business days after the date the decision was received or considered to have been received. The request must include all supporting documentation unless a request is made for an extension of the filing of supporting documentation. For good cause, such extensions may be granted. You also have the right to appeal the decision issued by the State Director to the IBLA.

ROW PROTEST & APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES: This decision shall take effect immediately upon issuance of a Grant Issued decision 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 4.21 or 43 CFR 2801.10 or 43 CFR 2881.10) 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 455 Emerson Street, Craig, Colorado 81625. 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.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
3. The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the Authorized Officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Rocky Mountain Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 755 Parfet Street, Suite 151, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, not later than 15 days after filing the document with the authorized officer and/or IBLA.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL & DATE SIGNED:

/s/ Timothy J Wilson for
Wendy Reynolds, Field Manager
Little Snake Field Office

03/06/12
Date