

# Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

Royal Gorge Field Office

3028 E. Main

Cañon City, CO 81212

OFFICE: Royal Gorge Field Office

PROJECT NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-0005 DN

CASEFILE: (if applicable)

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Texas Creek Trailhead Improvements and Stabilization

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Fremont County, Sixth Principal Meridian, T. 19 S., R. 73 W., Sec. 7.

APPLICANT (if any): BLM

## **A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

The BLM proposes to install a variety of improvements at the Texas Creek Trailhead in order to achieve a number of management goals including; trailhead stabilization, reduction in erosion and sediment contribution to the Arkansas River, improve parking capacity and organization, and improve visitor experiences. These improvements are based on recommendations provided by an Off-Highway Vehicle consultant as part of the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council's (NOHVCC) National OHV Management Services pilot program that aims to provide on the ground resources to land managers to assist with the management of Off-Highway Vehicles.

The following improvements/modifications are proposed:

- 1) Restructure the trailhead and existing fences making it 15' wider and approximately 200' shorter to improve capacity and overall traffic/parking flow and allow for adequate cross drainage (see diagram 1-3 for details).
- 2) Level the trailhead and surface it with road base.
- 3) Construct several ditches both above and through the existing trailhead to manage water flow. Ditches would be lined with rock rip-rap to slow water flow (see diagram 1-3 for details).
- 4) Clean out the existing impoundment above the trailhead and line it with rock rip-rap.
- 5) Construct a 50' wide warm-up loop with a SWECO traildozer that is based primarily on existing routes that were not designated in the Arkansas River Travel Management Plan in the existing area that has been historically used as a "play area". The warm-up loop

would be designed and constructed to be sustainable taking drainage and slope into consideration. This would include installation of fences and barriers to keep users on the designated warm-up loop trail and physically rehab the other user other routes in the “play area”. Rehab would include re-contouring slopes, de-compacting soils and applying seed, fertilizer, mulch and barriers.

- 6) Close a portion of T6025 where it travels through the “play area” and move the junction to an intersection off the warm-up loop identified in #5 above.
- 7) Close T6025A where it travels through the “play area” and move the junction to an intersection off the warm-up loop identified in #5 above.

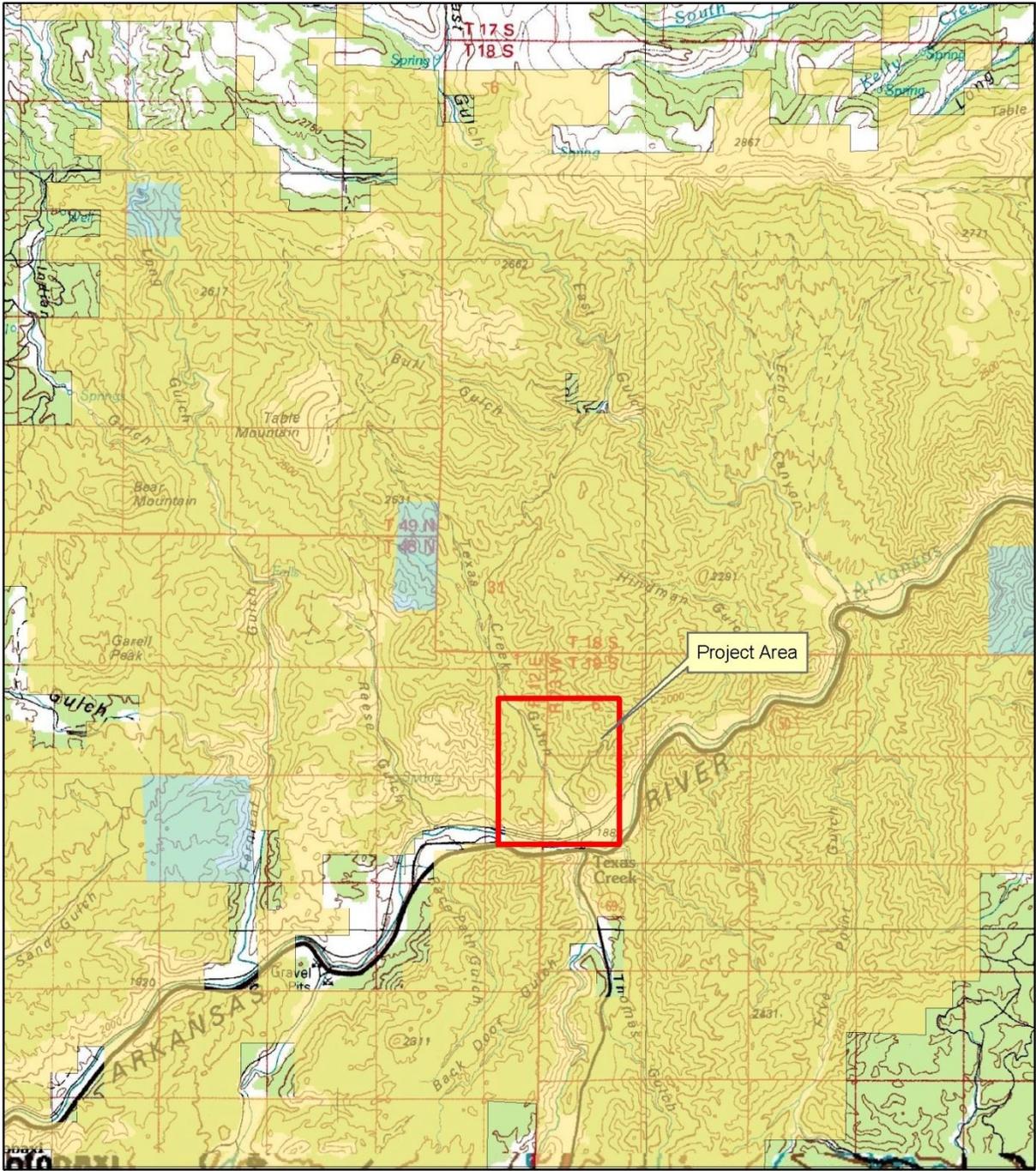
The project would be implemented in stages with items #1-4 above not occurring for several years based on grant cycles and funding availability. The implementation of items #5-7 would occur in the winter 2013/2014 and continue until complete.

Due to load limits of the bridge that crosses the Arkansas River and accesses the trailhead it is currently unclear how the road base, heavy equipment, and rock rip-rap will be brought to the site. Depending upon the solution identified additional NEPA may be required that would be completed once a solution is identified and prior to commencement of work.

Any equipment used for construction would be washed prior to being brought onto site to minimize the spread of noxious weed species.

Seasonal restriction that requires vegetation disturbance would be avoided from May 15 through July 15. This is the breeding and brood rearing season for most Colorado migratory birds. Any action that results in a measurable impact to a species’ population will not be allowed.

Gasoline powered equipment used for construction will have an adequate spill kit with shovels onsite during project implementation.

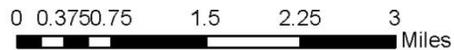


## Texas Creek Trailhead Improvements and Stabilization

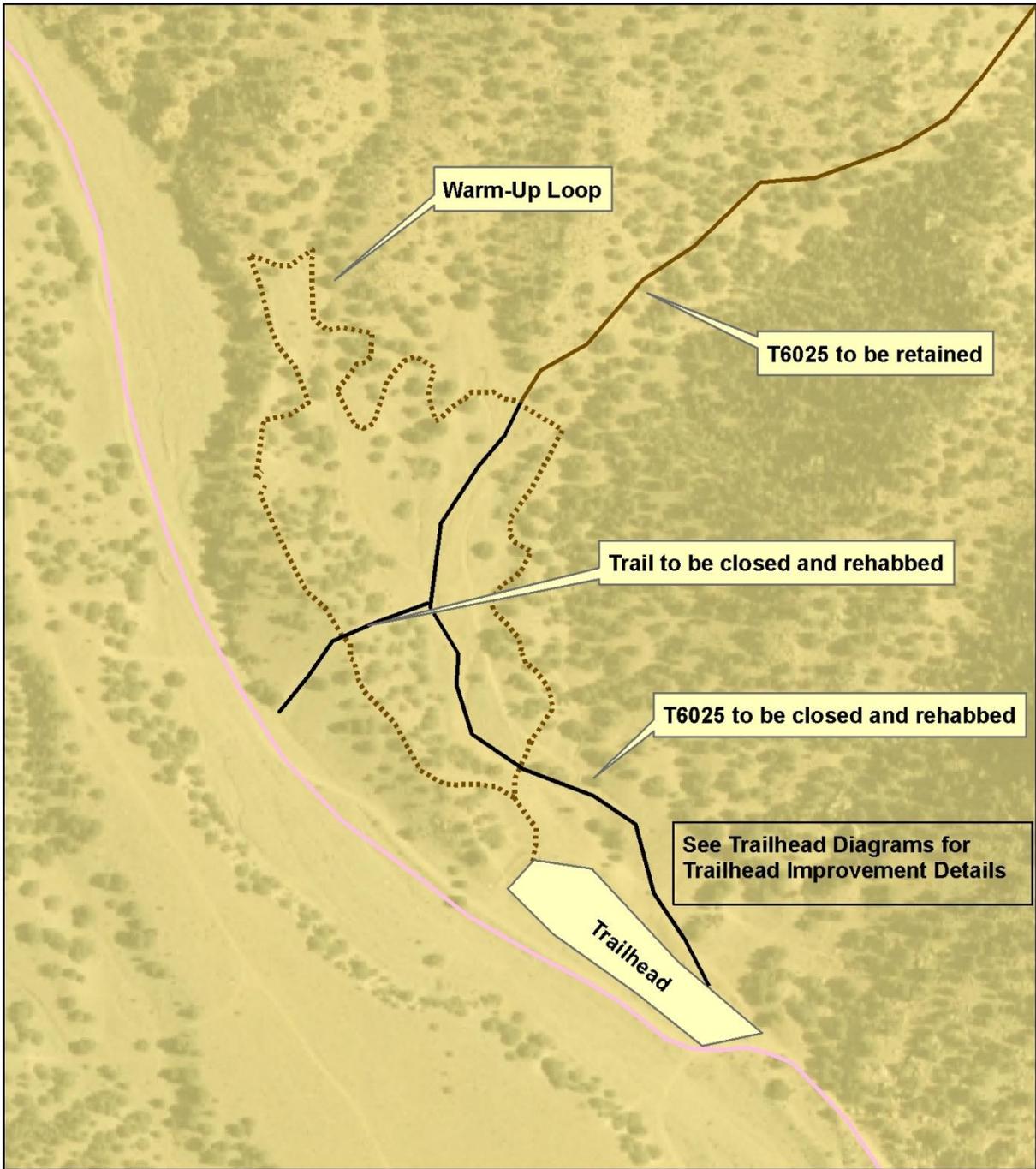


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**T. 19 S., R. 73 W., Section 7**



**NOTE TO MAP USERS**  
 No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data layers shown on this map. The official land records of the data providers should be checked or current status on any specific tract of land.

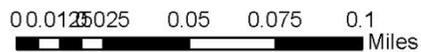


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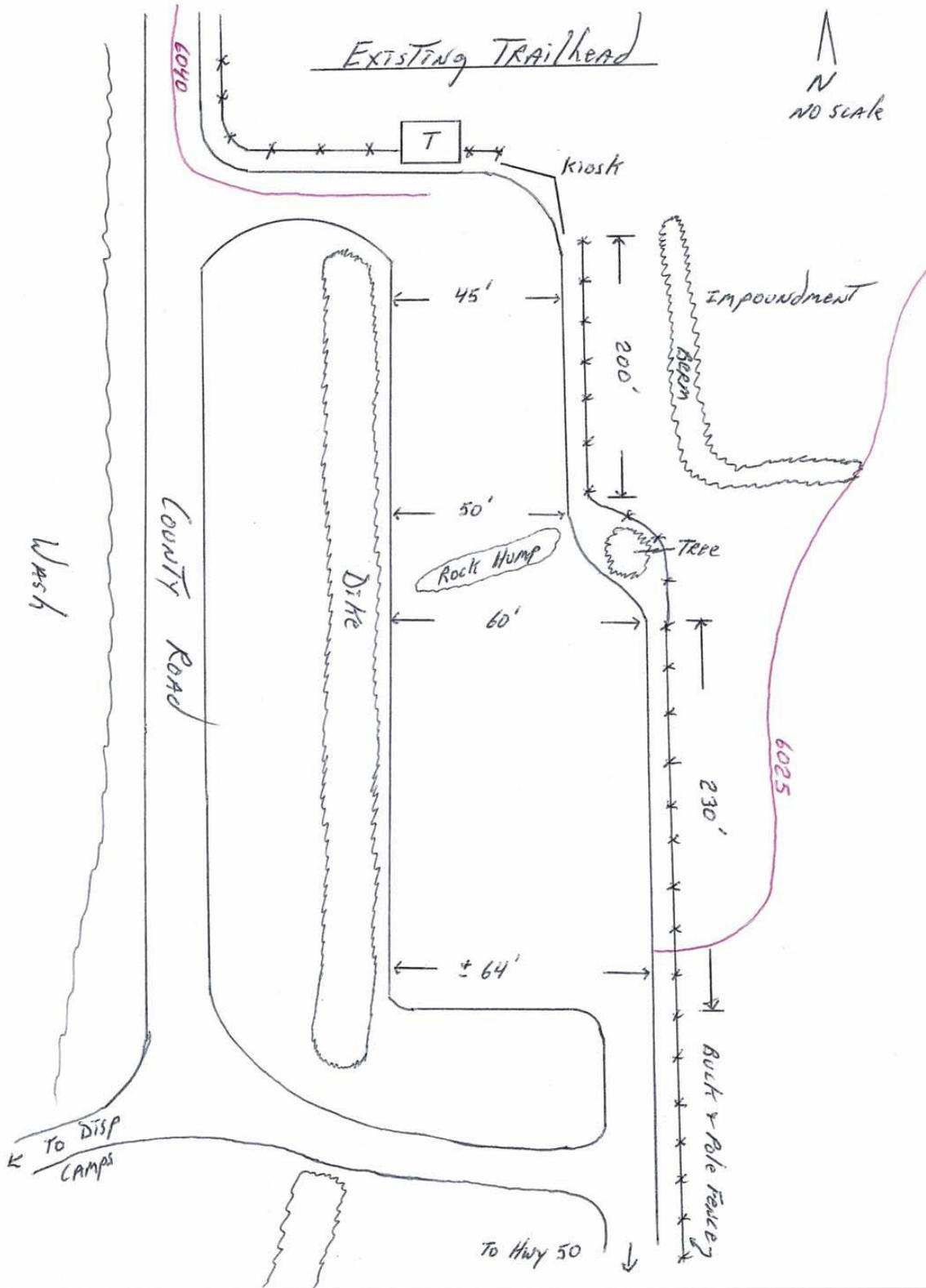


Diagram #1, Existing Trailhead

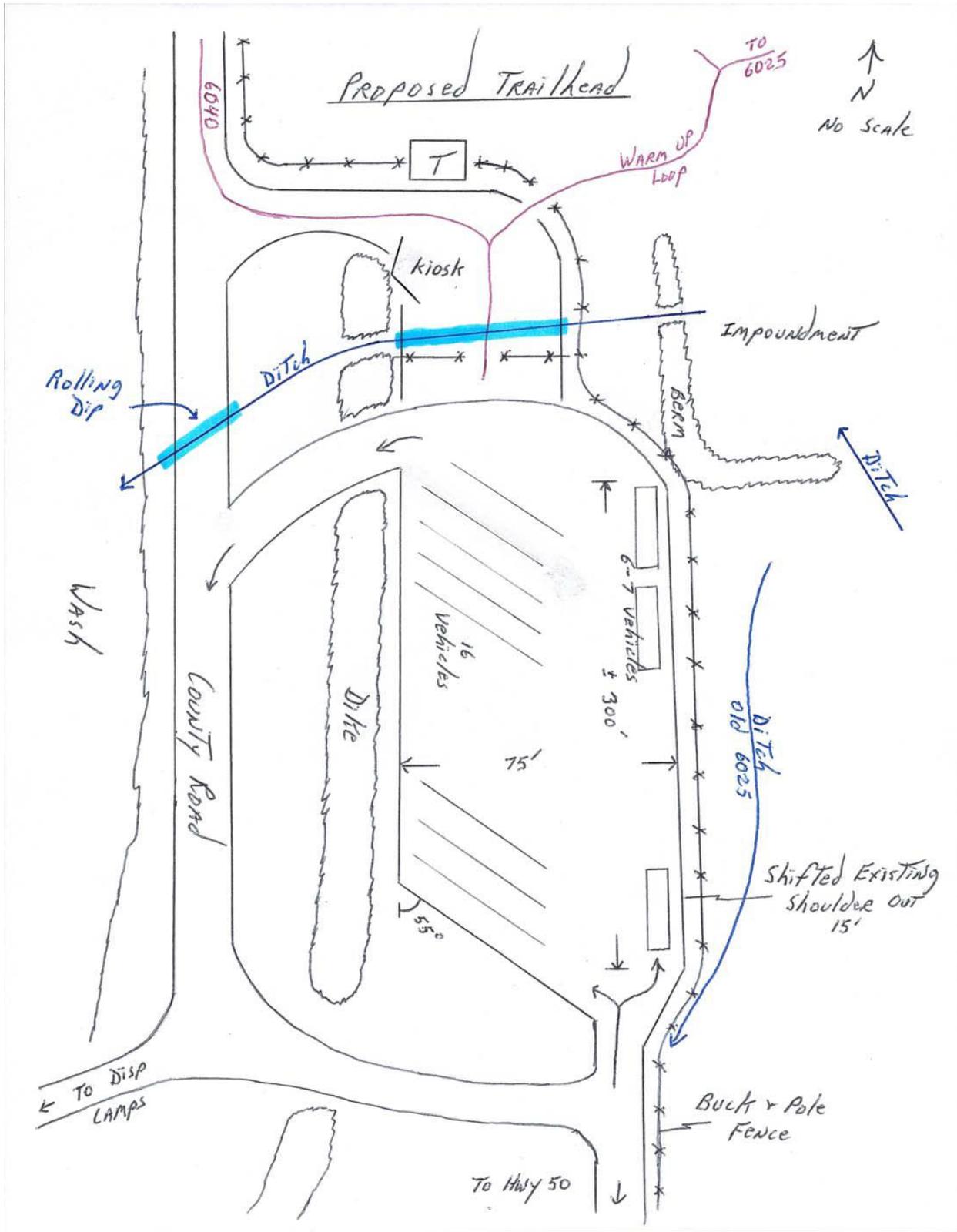


Diagram #2, Proposed Restructuring of Trailhead and Ditches

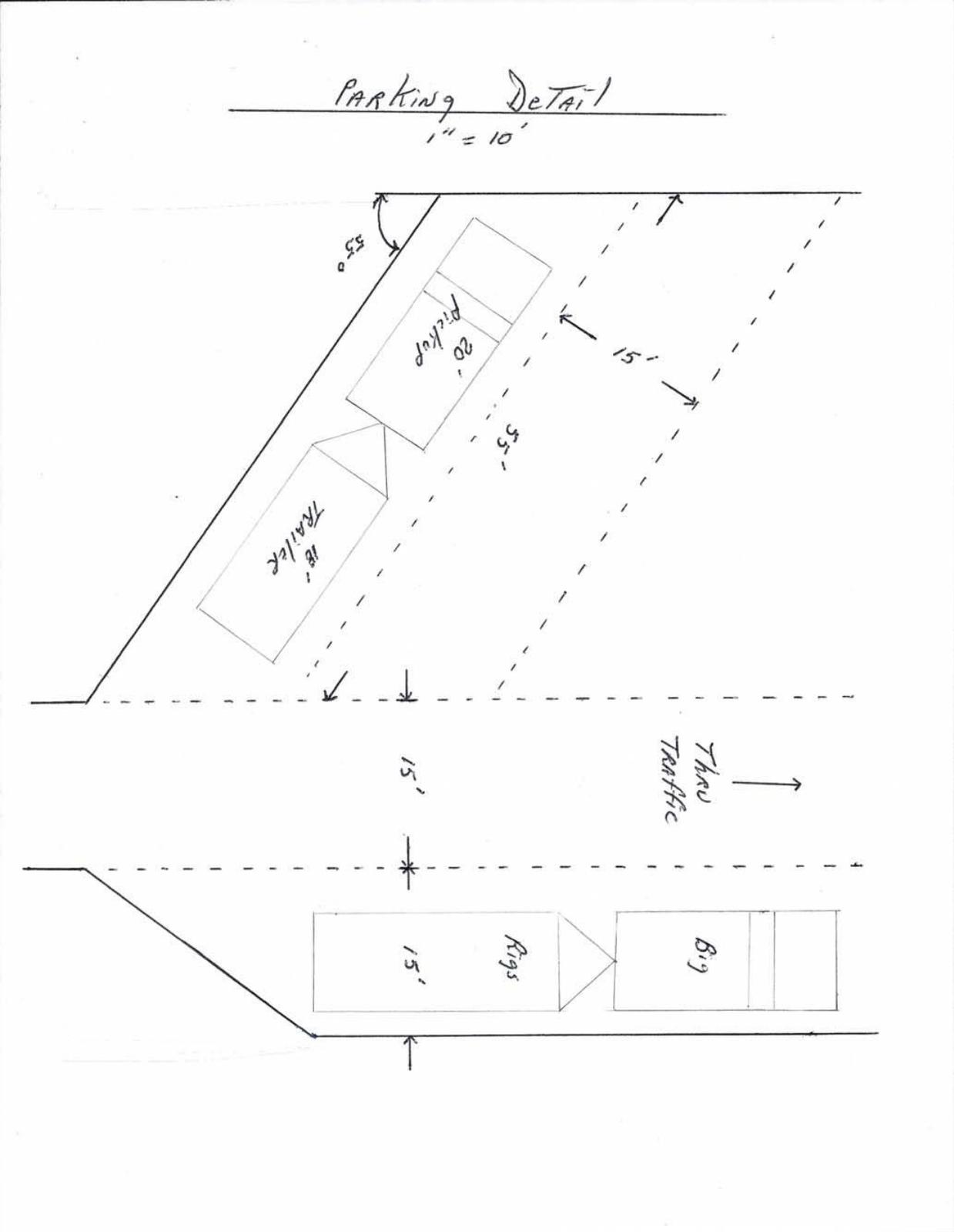


Diagram #3, Detailed Parking Diagram of Restructured Trailhead

## B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name: Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan	Date Approved: 05/13/96
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The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

Decision language and/or explanation of consistency:

1-68: Motorized recreation off-highway vehicle opportunities will be enhanced; use will be managed through limitation or closures to protect values; responsible use will be encouraged through this sub-region where use is allowed.

1-74: Partnerships will be developed with local or regional off-highway vehicle clubs/groups to assist in coordination and enhancing off-highway vehicle recreational opportunities.

1-75: Trails and trailhead facilities for off-highway vehicle use will be established to meet public demand

1-82: Recreation will be managed to provide for: a variety of recreational opportunities and settings; additional opportunities for mountain biking, hiking, off-highway vehicle use, interpretation, and horseback riding; facility development will be accomplished to reduce user conflicts and to improve visitor health and safety.

1-83: Recreation will be managed intensively in the special recreation management area.

## C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all existing NEPA documents that cover the Proposed Action.

Arkansas River Travel Management Plan, CO-200-2006-0086 EA, 05/21/2008

## D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

The Proposed Action is similar to the decision record and is in the same analysis area of the existing NEPA document. The Decision Record for the Arkansas River Travel Management Plan re-affirms the designated road and trail network in the Texas Creek sub-unit including

constructing additional trails for off-highway vehicle use. The restructuring and stabilization of the trailhead is proposed in order to reduce impacts to soil and water resources. By providing organized more structured parking users are more likely to park in appropriate locations reducing the level of disturbance outside of the parking area. Several attempts have been made to limit the amount of play that is occurring adjacent to the trailhead including the installation of a long fence. Since a designated trail travels through this area users access to the play area is still required and despite signing continue to use closed routes. Staff observations of the users and a review of OHV management literature indicate that users desire a place to warm-up before heading out onto the trail system. By offering a managed warm-up loop adjacent to the trailhead we will be meeting public desires and reducing impacts to soil and water resources. The Arkansas River Travel Management Plan recognizes that without adequate maintenance, soil erosion will continue to increase and that parking at trailheads will become more congested and adequately addresses OHV use in the area and impacts associated with the trailhead.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

The existing document analyzed four alternatives for analyzing and comparing the benefits and environmental consequences that would result under different levels of access and use. Each alternative represents a defined level of access and travel uses. The alternatives include the No Action Alternative, a low level of designated routes alternative, a high level of designated routes alternative and the Proposed Action. This Proposed Action was reviewed by the BLM interdisciplinary team and no information was brought to light regarding current environmental concerns, interests, or resource values that would lead one to believe that the range of alternatives and analysis performed is not still considered reasonable and appropriate for the Proposed Action.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

The Proposed Action was reviewed by the BLM interdisciplinary team and no new information or circumstances were brought forward that invalidate the existing analysis substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

The existing NEPA document identified the roads designated as ATV trails included in the Proposed Action and analyzed the direct and indirect impacts of including these trails in the

designated route network and the impact of providing trail based recreation facilities in this area. Direct and indirect impacts of restructuring and stabilizing the trailhead and restricting the trail network adjacent to the trailhead to allow for a warm-up loop are similar from those identified in the existing NEPA document. The trailhead improvements would most likely reduce anticipated impacts to soils and water since it is attempting to stabilize the trailhead by addressing drainage and hardening the site with road base. The warm-up loop would meet users demand for this type of facility near the trailhead while at the same time rehabilitating the extensive network of user created trails associated with play adjacent to the trailhead.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

For the Arkansas River TMP, there was extensive public involvement including a 30 day review period, news releases, and individual mailings. Appropriate agencies were also consulted during this process. Since the trail segments were either identified in the existing document or designated for ATV use, the action does not change substantially, and the review remains adequate. There is no reason for further or expanded review.

**E. Persons/Agencies /BLM Staff Consulted**

<b>INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>Initials/date</b>
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	MR, 12/16/2013
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	JW, 12/9/13
Chris Cloninger	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Weeds	JL, 12/26/2013
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG 10/26/12
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	-----
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	MJS 1/02/2014
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 10/26/12
Ty Webb	Prescribed Fire Specialist	Air Quality	TW, 12/11/13
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 12/6/13
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	KL, 1/8/2014
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	-----
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	MKSG 11/01/2013
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	MMW, 11/7/12

Vera Matthews	Realty Specialist	Realty	vm, 1/30/13
Bob Hurley	Fire Management Officer	Fire Management	BH, 10/25/2012
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	SC 12/17/12

Other Agency Represented: None

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: Cultural Resources: Although an isolated find is present in the area of potential effect [5FN2627; see report CR-RG-13-10 (P)], no sites determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were found. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on any historic properties (those eligible for the NRHP).

Native American Religious Concerns: No possible traditional cultural properties were located during the cultural resources inventory (see above). There is no other known evidence that suggests the project area holds special significance for Native Americans.

Threatened and Endangered Species: Brandegee buckwheat (*Eriogonum brandegei*), dwarf milkweed (*Asclepias uncialus*), and golden blazing star (*Menzelia chrysantha*), all BLM sensitive species, are known to have populations near the proposed trail site. However, the trail reroutes and construction does not pass through any known populations of these sensitive plants. Therefore, the proposed action will have no impacts to threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive species.

Migratory Birds: In order to be in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and BLM policy, BLM must avoid actions, where possible, that result in a “take” of migratory birds. Generally this is a seasonal restriction that requires vegetation disturbance be avoided from May 15 through July 15. This is the breeding and brood rearing season for most Colorado migratory birds. Any action that results in a measurable impact to a species’ population will not be allowed.

Soils/Hydrology: The proposed trails are mainly on soils that have a severe trail erodibility hazard rating. This trail erodibility hazard rating is a function of soil erodibility and slope. The trail as mapped would have an overall slope of 3-4% with some short steeper pitches interspersed. These slopes are shallow enough that with proper trail design and water control, the erosion hazard would be minimized to allow for a sustainable trail network.

Wastes, Solid or Hazardous: Precaution should be taken when handling fuels for equipment. A spill kit should be available as needed during project implementation.

Realty: Authorizations in the area include COC 44142 issued to Fremont County, will not be impacted.

**MITIGATION:** The trail will be monitored by a paleontologist, qualified to hold a Paleontological Resource Use Permit on a cyclic basis of every 5 years to minimize any impact to protected fossil resources. The purpose of monitoring would be to identify and remove any exposed fossil resources from the trail corridor to reduce the chances of fossil theft. A qualified paleontologist shall also be present during any trail construction or trail maintenance that would encounter bedrock.

Seasonal restriction that requires vegetation disturbance be avoided from May 15 through July 15. This is the breeding and brood rearing season for most Colorado migratory birds. Any action that results in a measurable impact to a species' population will not be allowed.

If gasoline powered equipment is used for construction, an adequate spill kit and shovels are required to be onsite during project implementation.

## CONCLUSION

### DOI-BLM-CO-200-2012-0084 DN

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

SIGNATURE OF PROJECT LEAD: Kalem Lenard

SIGNATURE OF NEPA COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

SIGNATURE OF NEPA SUPERVISOR: Melissa K.S. Garcia

SIGNATURE OF THE RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: /s/ Melissa K. Garcia  
for Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE: 2/25/14

**Note:** The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.