

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-200-2013-0086 DN

CASEFILE: (if applicable)

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Seep Springs; ATV Connector Trails and Route Designation Modification

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Fremont County, 6th Principal Meridian, T. 17 S., R. 70 W., Sec. 7, 8, 17 and 18.

APPLICANT (if any): BLM

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

The BLM proposes to construct two ATV connector trails, trail 1 (1.5 miles) will connect from the end of 5830F to 5830E this will also connect at the dead end of route A in the process, connector trail 2 (300 yards) will connect dead end routes E and F. These connector trails would create two additional loop trail opportunities that provide more options in the trail system and a higher quality and variety to the recreational experience. A 0.5 mile connector trail was originally identified in the Gold Belt Travel Management Plan in this same area to enhance users experience by providing additional trail based loop opportunities. At one time it was believed to be unfeasible due to a large rock ledge and with further investigation an alternative route was identified that would still provide a sustainable high quality trail recreation experience.

In order to provide a well-organized and easy to follow route network and reduce the amount of dead end routes a number of changes to other route designations are also proposed. ATV route B (240 yards) and the primitive roads C (200 yards), D (200 yards) and E (150 yards) that would be rendered obsolete by the new connector trails and are proposed to be closed and rehabilitated. Route B is over grown and is unidentifiable, while route C is unsustainable because it was constructed on a fall line. Routes D and E are short spurs that dead end with tight turn-arounds and see very little use. The designation of a portion of route F (500 yards) would be changed from full size vehicle to ATV trail due to the other changes in the route network where only ATV width vehicles can reach this section and Route G (220 yards) would be changed from

closed to open. This project would result in a trail system that is more sustainable and functional while also providing a more engaging experience for trail based recreation.

Trail/Route	Proposed Action	Distance (yards)
Trail 1	New ATV Trail	2,640
Trail 2	New ATV Trail	300
ATV Trail B	Designation changed to closed	240
Full-size vehicle route C	Designation changed to closed	200
Full-size vehicle route D	Designation changed to closed	200
Full-size vehicle route E	Designation changed to closed	150
Full-size vehicle route F	Designation changed to ATV	500
Closed route G	Designation changed to ATV	220

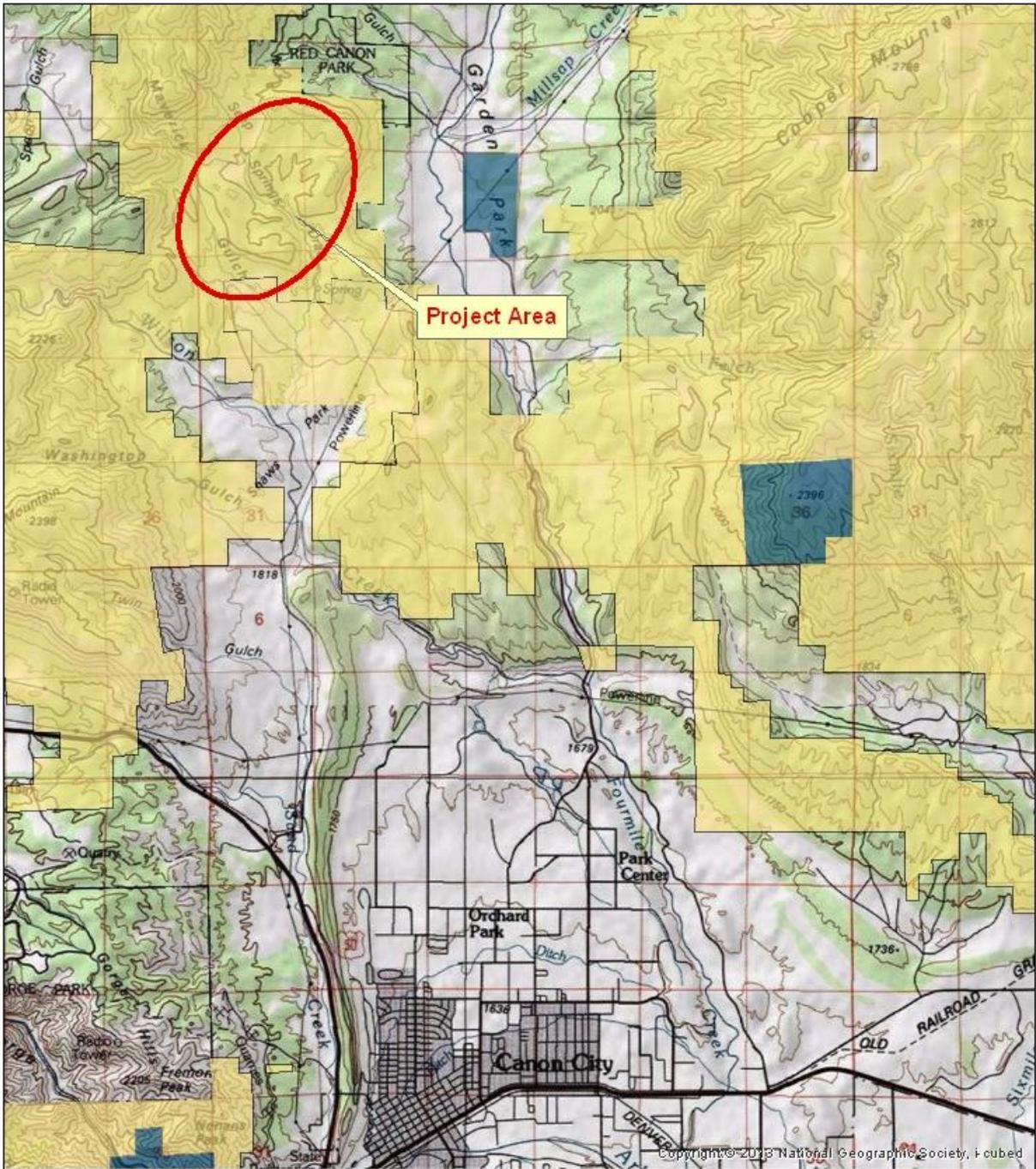
The connector trails would be constructed through the use of a SWECO trail dozer and would be approximately 50” in width to accommodate ATVs and other 50” wide vehicles. Trail design and construction would follow sustainable trail guidelines including contour design, rolling grade dips and grade reversals to minimize erosion and provide a long lasting low maintenance trail. Rehabilitation for the closed routes could include de-compaction of the soil, seeding with an appropriate seed mix and use of mulch.

Any equipment used for construction would be washed prior to being brought onto site to minimize the spread of noxious weed species. The location of the trail would be located and designed to avoid highly erosive soils and sensitive plant species. If fossil resources are discovered during construction all construction activities would cease and BLM specialists would be brought in to advise and supervise. Construction of the trail could begin as early as winter 2013/2014 and continue until completed pending funding and personnel.

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.

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.



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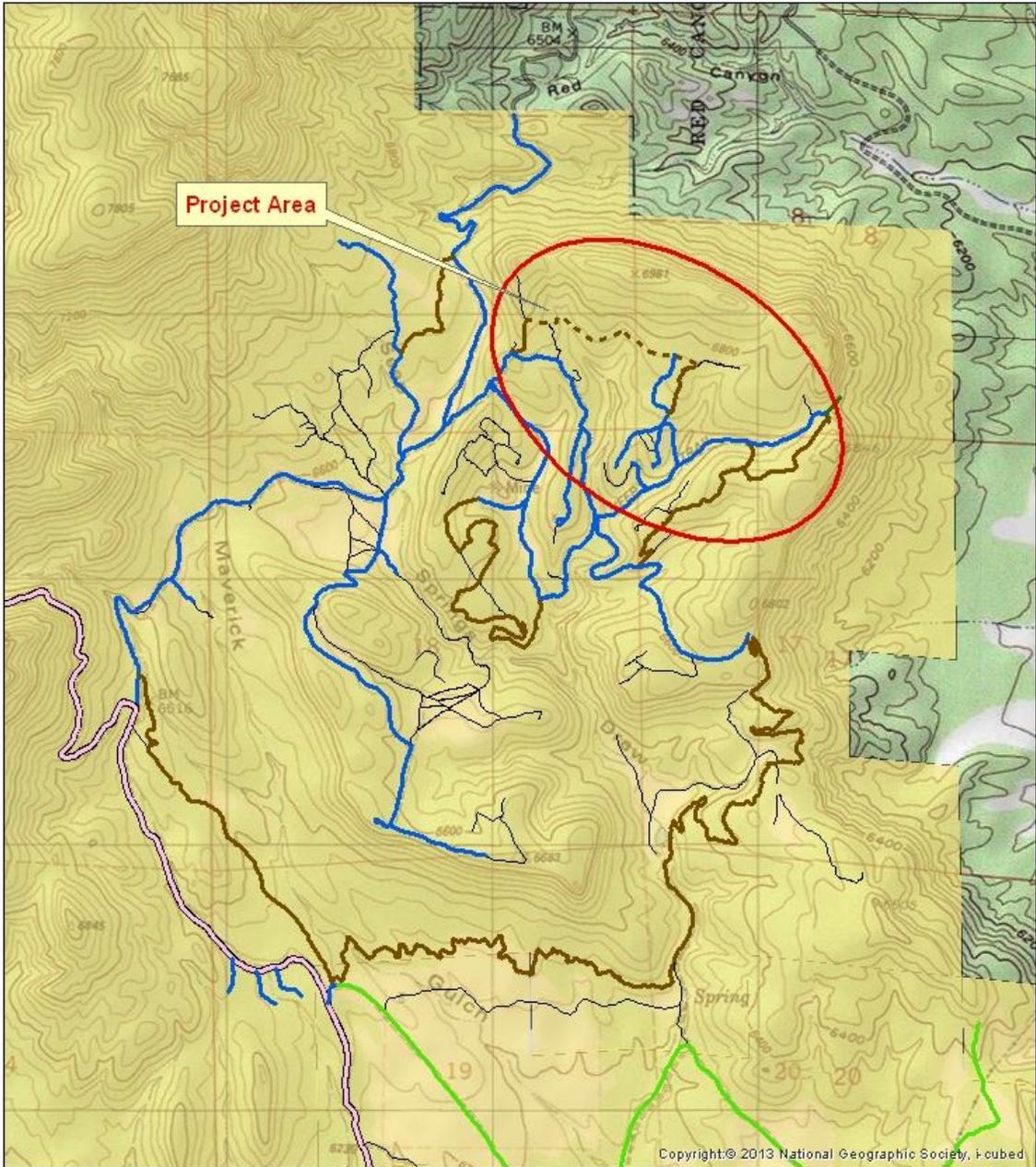
6th PM, T17S, R70W
 Sec. 7, 8, 17, and 18

0 0.3250.65 1.3 1.95 2.6 Miles



NOTE TO MAP USERS
 No warrantee 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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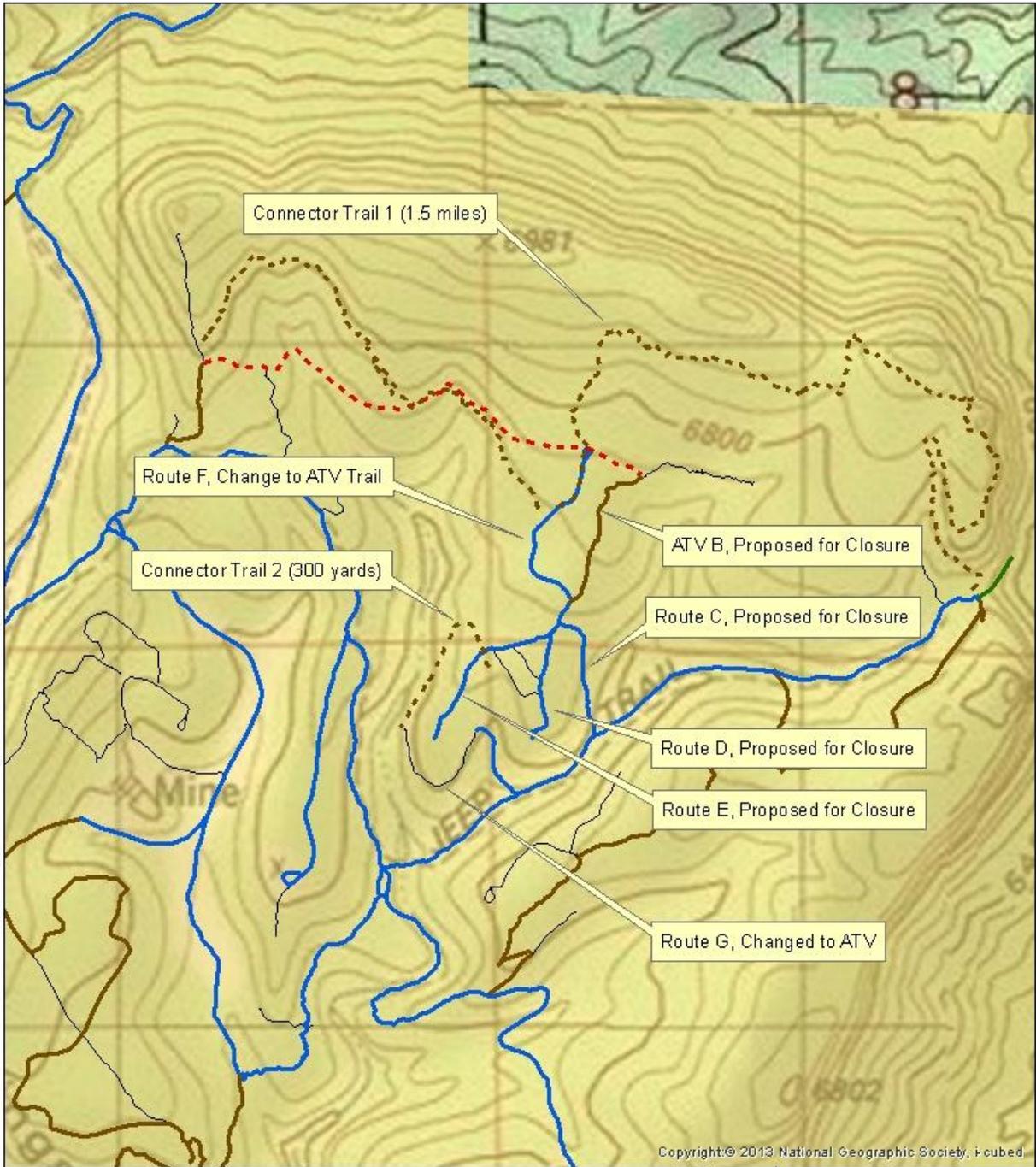
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**6th PM, T17S, R70W
Sec. 7, 8, 17, and 18**

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 0.6 Miles



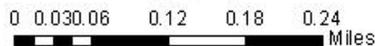
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B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

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:

5-86: 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.

5-87: Recreation on the larger part of this sub-region will be managed intensively in a special recreation management area.

5-90: Various actions will occur to enhance recreation: upland recreation opportunities emphasizing a balance between resource protection and tourism; coordination with various volunteer and user groups; monitoring and visitor contacts to ensure visitor safety, resource protection, and visitor information availability; provide for acquisitions or easements to enhance water based recreation, mountain biking, off-highway vehicle use, hiking horseback riding, hunting, and natural/cultural resource interpretation.

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.

Gold Belt Travel Management Plan, CO-200-2003-0090 EA, 06/02/04

Garden Park and Shaws Park Acquisition Area Travel Management Plan, DOI-BLM-CO-200-2009-0019 EA, 7/14/09

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 essentially the same analysis area of the existing NEPA document. The Decision Record for the Gold Belt Travel Management Plan decided to construct an ATV connector trail in a similar location as the proposed action along with the need to provide additional loop opportunities to improve motorized recreation experiences. Other items out of the proposed action are similar to the existing NEPA document in that they are providing motorized trail experiences in a similar location with an altered arrangement to better meet current demands. Although the connector trails and changes in route designations in the Proposed Action are slightly different than what is identified in the existing document the updated location provides similar connections and experiences but is based on recreation preferences, sustainable design, and ground-truthing of feasible trail locations and additional staff expertise in trail system management. The existing document does not specifically identify the connections as proposed or the changes in designation but it does designate the routes and analyzes the impacts of recreation use in the area. The Proposed Action would not change type or intensity of this use while improving visitor services and reduces resource impacts and conflicts.

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 three action alternatives and a no action alternative. Each action alternative represented a defined level of access and travel uses including the Proposed Action Alternative, the High Use Alternative and the Low Use Alternative. The High Use Alternative analyzed the impacts of a higher density of routes within the planning area while the Low Use Alternative analyzed the impacts of having a lower route density network. 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 constructing the connector trails and changing the designation of routes are similar to those identified in the existing NEPA document since the original document identified a new connector trail in essentially the same location and analyzed the impacts of designating motor vehicle routes in this area. Although the new connector trails and route designations are slightly different than those analyzed in the existing document, impacts to soil resources are similar since there is not a large increase in mileage to the overall trail system and routes not necessary for the trail system would be closed and rehabilitated somewhat offsetting impacts.

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

For the Gold Belt 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

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW			
NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	Initials/date
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	MR, 8/21/2013
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
Chris Cloninger	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	CC, 8/19/13
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Weeds	JL, 08/30/2013
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 9/25/2013
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	-----
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	MJS, 10/21/2013
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 8/28/13
Ty Webb	Prescribed Fire Specialist	Air Quality	mw for TY, 8/19/13
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 8/20/13
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	KL, 9/4/2013
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	-----

Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	KR, 8/26/13
Martin Weimer	NEPA Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Noise, SocioEconomics	mw, 8/19/13
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	-----
Michael Troyer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	8/9/2013
Steve Craddock	Realty Specialist	Realty	SRC, 9/11/2013
Bob Hurley	Fire Management Officer	Fire Management	8/16/2013
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	-----

Other Agency Represented: None

REMARKS:

Cadastral Survey: Connecting Trail 2 falls extremely close to the section corner of sections 7, 8, 17 and 18 of T. 17 S., R. 70 W., 6th P.M. This section corner is a 1965 BLM brass cap and needs to be located and protected.

Cultural Resources: No historic properties were found in the area of potential effect [see report CR-RG-13-153 (N)]. Therefore, the proposed undertaking will have no effect 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: There are no records of any federally listed or BLM sensitive species within or near the project area. The Proposed Action will not result in impacts to TES species.

Forestry: Thinning or pruning of pinyon trees must be done outside of the pinyon ips beetle flight period. These beetles typically flight period is between April 1 – October 1. This is based on temperatures and not the calendar. There is an epidemic pinyon ips beetle population in this area.

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 changes to the trail network would ultimately relocate existing trails and uses to a more manageable and sustainable trail system. In the long term, this would result in greater soil stability, less erosion, and sediment production in the watershed.

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

Paleontologic/Fossil Resources: The trail traverses parts of the Dakota and Morrison formations that are both fossiliferous geologic units containing dinosaur fossils. Both the Dakota and Morrison formations are Class 5 paleontologic units, according to the Colorado Potential Fossil Yield Classification that classifies geologic formations based on the likelihood of finding federally protected vertebrate fossils. Class 5 formations are the land manager's highest concern for paleontological resource protection. These areas are likely to receive high levels of both authorized and unauthorized use. Mitigation of ground disturbing activities is required because the BLM is required to protect and manage paleontological resources on federal lands.

The potential to discover vertebrate remains or their traces exists along the proposed trail corridor both during construction and after construction. Any vertebrate fossils that are discovered at any time during trail construction should be reported to the BLM. Trail construction may continue as long as the fossil specimen would not be damaged or destroyed by the activity. The BLM shall evaluate or have evaluated such discoveries and shall notify the trail crew what action shall be taken with respect to such discoveries. The trail should be periodically monitored after construction due to increased rates of erosion in and near the trail corridor that can potentially uncover new fossil material.

MITIGATION: None

CONCLUSION

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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 AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

/s/ Keith E. Berger
Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 11/5/13

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.