

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Royal Gorge Field Office  
3028 E. Main Street  
Canon City, CO 81212**

## **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-042 CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional):

PROJECT NAME: Boulder AML Safety Closures

PLANNING UNIT: Northeast Resource Management Plan, September 1986

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Colorado, Boulder County, Sixth Principal Meridian

Monument Hill	T1N, R71W, NE Section 18
	T1N, R72W, NE Section 13
Emerson Gulch	T1N, R72W, SW Section 13
	T1N, R72W, NW Section 24

APPLICANT: BLM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action is to safeguard hazardous openings related to historic mining in the area. These abandoned mine openings are all within the perimeter of the Fourmile Canyon Fire that burned parts of the Fourmile Canyon area west of Boulder, Colorado in the summer of 2010 (Fig. 1). These openings were both previously safeguarded and damaged by the fire or they were uncovered by the fire. There are 2 smaller areas of focus within the fire perimeter that are the Emerson Gulch project area and the Monument Hill project areas (Fig. 2). Openings include vertical and horizontal openings (shafts and adits) that will be safeguarded using a variety of methods including backfilling, bulkheading, grate installation, and filling with polyurethane foam (PUF) that are outlined in Table 1. Designs for all proposed closures adhere to the General Bid Specifications for the Colorado Inactive Mine Reclamation Program, Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety, Department of Natural Resources, State of Colorado, March 2009. Access to all features will use existing roads and where there are no existing roads; features will be accessed via cross country travel with an ATV or other tracked vehicle. The Mini track loader is typically used to install safety closures. Road and/or trail improvements are not being considered and will not be authorized, except for light pruning of trees. If a track is not sufficient to get equipment into a feature then a hand crew will be required. Work will be done late spring 2013.

The project includes features that will be closed on private land as well as BLM lands. This is being done through a cooperative agreement with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS). DRMS has done all project development and will oversee project construction. BLM is responsible for notifying any unpatented mining claim owners of the proposed activity in accordance with WO IM 2010-0045.

Table 1. Table showing features to be closed and proposed closure method.

<b>MINE FEATURE NAME</b>	<b>FEATURE TYPE</b>	<b>PROPOSED CLOSURE METHOD</b>
EG-09	Adit	Bat Grate w/access
EG-10	Adit	Backfill, Alt Bulkhead or Grate
EG-11	Adit	Backfill, Alt Bulkhead or Grate
EG-15	Adit	Backfill, Alt Bulkhead or Grate
EG-17	Shaft	Backfill, Grate PUF
EG-18	Adit	Backfill or grate
EG-24	Adit	Backfill
EG-26	Adit	Bat Grate w/ access
EG-27	Adit	Bat Grate w/ access
EG-31	Prospect Adit	Bat Grate w/access
EG-32	Prospect Shaft	Backfill
EG-39	Adit	Backfill or grate
6MH	Shaft	Backfill or grate
7MH	Shaft	Backfill
8MH	Prospect Shaft	Backfill
9MH	Shaft/Decline	Backfill
15MH	Adit	Bat Grate with Access, Alt. Backfill
16MH	Adit	Bat Grate with Access, Alt. Backfill
N19	Adit	Backfill

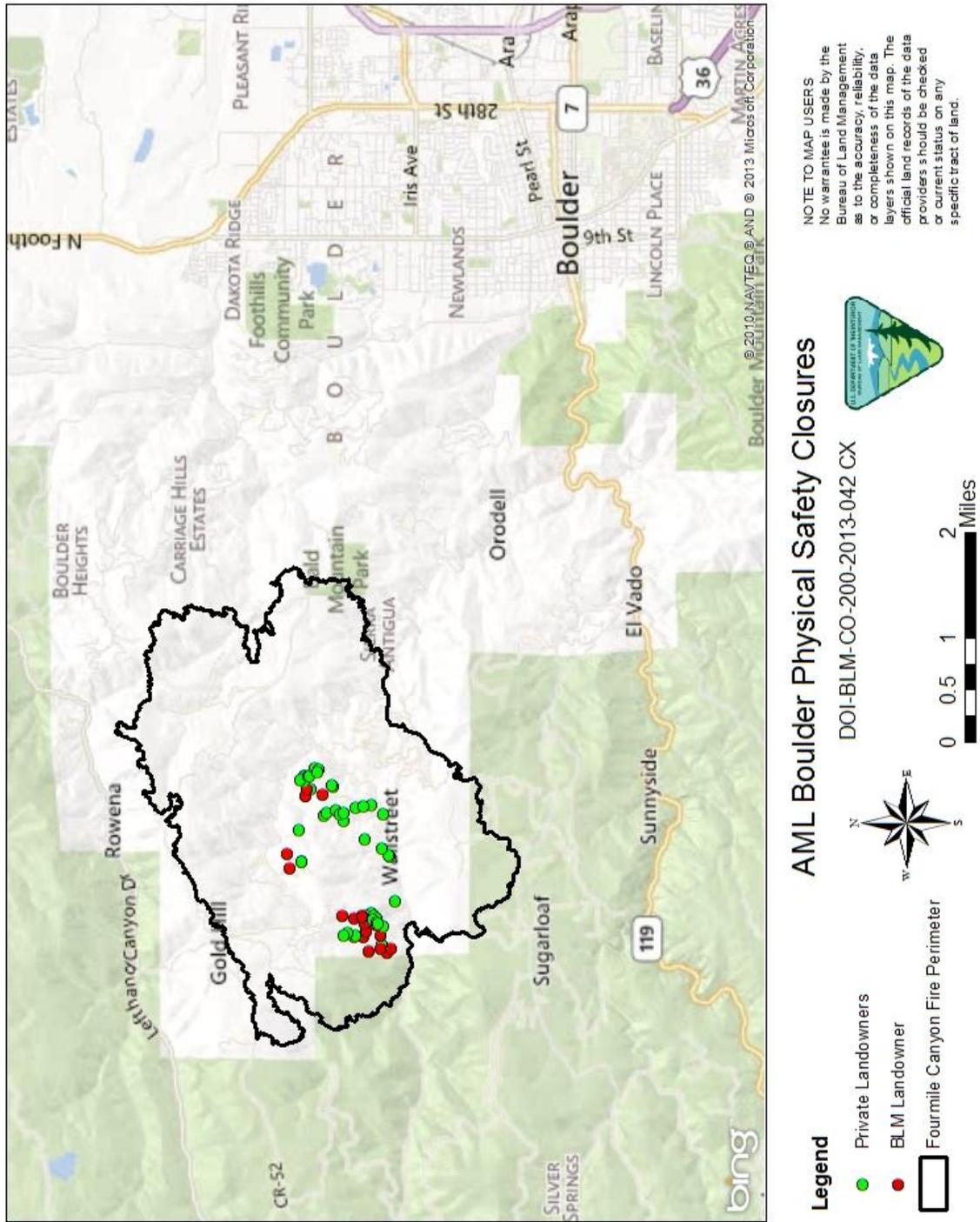
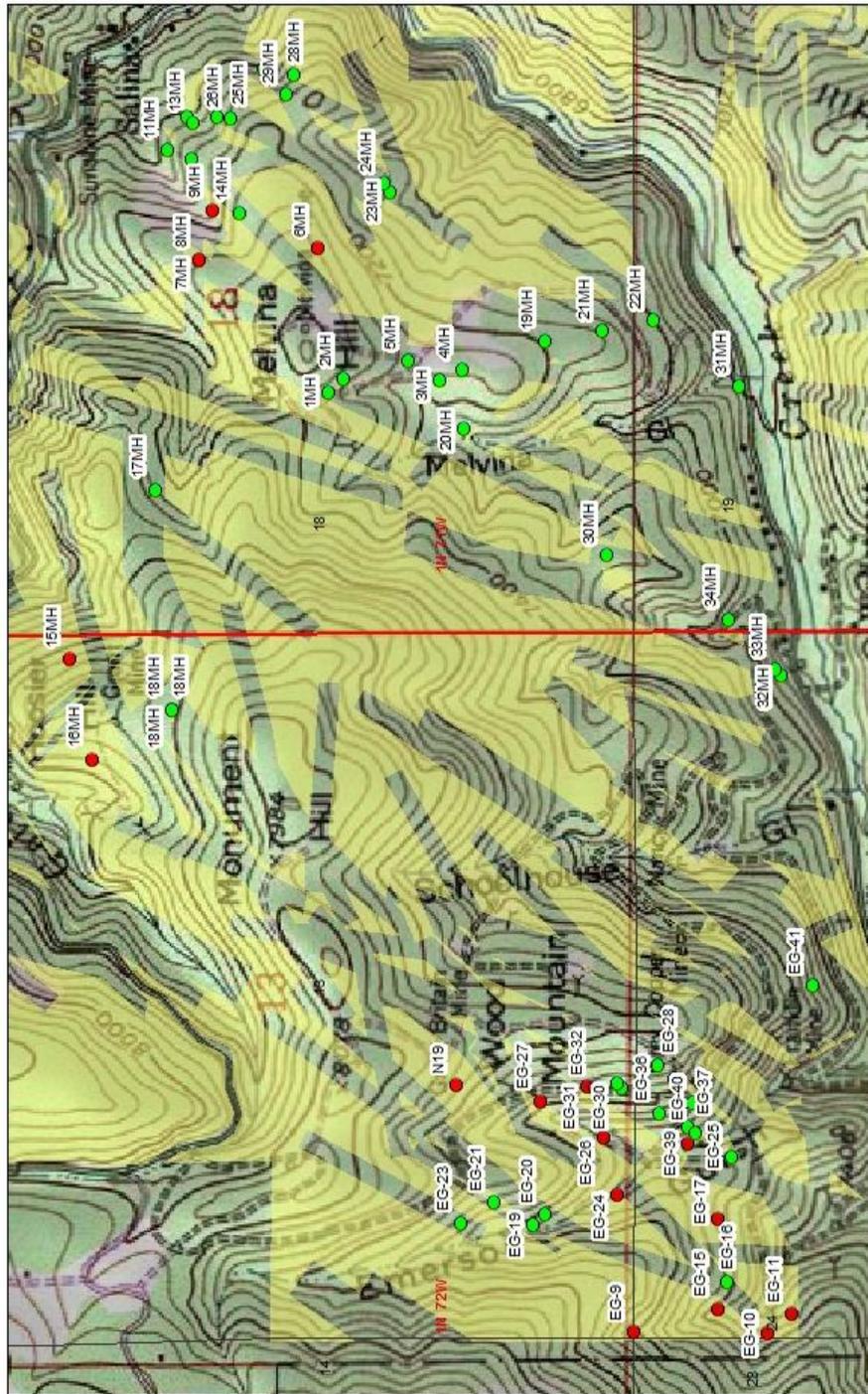


Figure 1. Map showing the overview of the location of the proposed AML Boulder Physical Safety Closures.



**Legend**

**Boulder AML Safety Closures**

- Private Landowners
- BLM Landowner
- BLM surface Ownership

**AML Boulder Physical Safety Closures**

DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-042 CX

**6thPM, T1N R71W Sec. 18, T1N, R72 W Sec 13, and 24**

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles



**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.

Figure 2. Map showing the locations of proposed physical safety closures in the Boulder area.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: Northeast Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: September 1986

Decision Number: Zone 6, Unit 3, 17B –Geologic Features and Hazards

Decision Language: Occurrence of significant geologic features or hazards is unknown on the 30,460 acres. Field investigations during the environmental analysis process and/or new information about features or hazards could change the classification to concern area. New information was found in 2010 after the Fourmile Canyon Fire and field investigations have been made to mitigate hazards.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in DOI Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11.9 J. (8) Installation of minor devices to protect human life (e.g. grates across mines). None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Exclusion Criteria	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		x
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; lands with wilderness characteristics; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		x
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		x
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		x
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		x
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		x
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		x
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		x
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		x
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		x

11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		x
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.		x

<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, 2/22/2013
Jeff Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
Chris Cloninger	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	-----
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland, Weeds	JL, 02/27/2013
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 2/22/2013
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	-----
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	MJS, 03/20/2013
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 2/25/13
Ty Webb	Prescribed Fire Specialist	Air Quality	TW, 2/22/13
Jeffrey Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 2/22/2013
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	KL, 2/26/2013
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	-----
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	KR, 4/02/2013
Martin Weimer	NEPA Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Noise, SocioEconomics	mw, 4/2/13
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	-----
Erin Watkins	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	EW, 3/18/2013
Vera Matthews	Realty Specialist	Realty	-----
Steve Craddock	Realty Specialist	Realty	SRC, 2/26/2013
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	SC 3/1/13
Bob Hurley	Fire Management Officer	Fire	BH, 4/4/2013

REMARKS:

Cadastral: There has been several Dependent Resurveys in the area from years 1980 to 2010 in T. 1 N., R. 71 W., sections 18 and 19 of the section corners and the mineral claim corners as well as in T. 1 N., R. 72 W., sections 13 and 24 of the section corners and the mineral claim corners. The survey monuments in the area that are near the safety closures need to be located and protected so they will not be disturbed.

Cultural Resources: Although cultural resources were found near the area of potential effect [see report CR-RG-12-12 (P) and CR-RG-11-01 (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: There are no records of any federally listed or BLM sensitive species within the project area. The Proposed Action will not result in impacts to TES species.

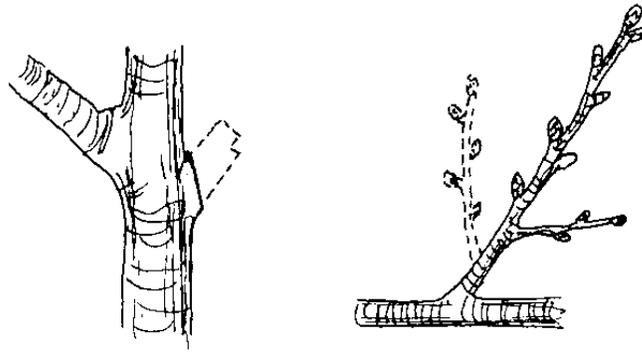
Forest Management: No trees are to be cut or remove by the activity. The pruning of limbs to allow equipment access to the sites shall be authorized. The pruning of all trees should be done as recommended in the compliance plan to avoid unnatural appearance and unnecessary damage to trees. Any slash generated should be lopped and scattered below 1.5 feet. The removal of any wood from public lands by pruning or cutting of trees requires a vegetative permit.

Minerals: All public lands in T 1N, R 71W, section 7 and 8 (all) and T 1N, R72W, sections 12 and 13 (all) and certain lots in section 24 including Lots 59-102, and 104-108 are segregated for exchange (COC 074223FD) and therefore are not open to the mining law. There are mining claims within this area that pre-date the segregation (CMC 118740, CMC 243466-68, CMC 243935-38, and CMC 115653). The associated mining claimants have been contacted via certified letter and the physical safety hazards associated with these claims will be posted in accordance with WO IM 2010-0045.

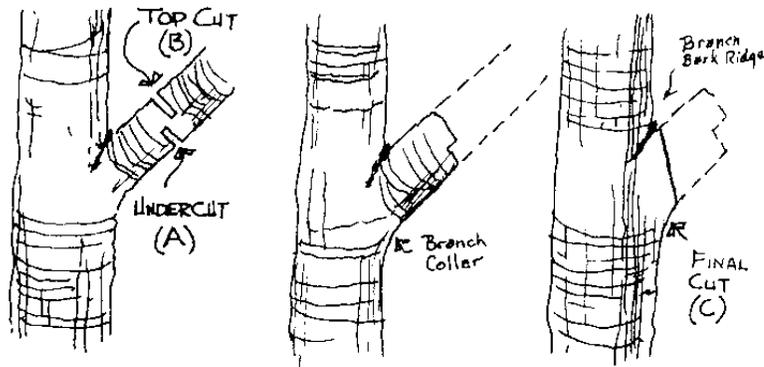
COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional):

Inspections of the safety closures will be conducted at least 5 years after installation to ensure that any post construction settling that may be anticipated does not compromise the safety closure.

ROYAL GORGE FIELD OFFICE TREE PRUNING TECHNIQUES



Whenever the position or weight of a branch does not facilitate hand support and in turn threatens to cause stripping of the bark below the cut, a "jump-cut" should be used.



- A "Undercut" -- Make cut approximately 12" beyond final cut (flush cut). Continue sawing until the pruning saw or chain saw begins to bind (pinching of branch, usually one-third of the way through branch).
- B "Top cut" -- Make cut 1-2" beyond undercut. Continue sawing until limb separates (due to weight) from the stub.
- C "Final cut" -- Make cut as close to the remaining branch or stem as possible without reducing its structural integrity. *Stay outside branch bark ridge & collar.*

If a large free-falling branch will damage structures or other vegetation located below, it is recommended that the limb being removed be lowered with ropes or cut into smaller manageable sections.

NAME OF PREPARER: Melissa J. Smeins

SUPERVISORY REVIEW: Jay M. Raiford

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Martin Weimer

DATE: April 4, 2013

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion and have decided to implement the Proposed Action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

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

DATE SIGNED: 6/17/13