

**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-200-2013-0017 CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional):

PROJECT NAME: SRP Motorcycle Trials in Grand Canyon Hills and Texas Creek

PLANNING UNIT: Arkansas River, Sub-region #1

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Fremont County, Sixth P.M.,  
T.48 N., R.12 E., Sec. 3, 10, 11 and 14.  
T.18 S., R.71 W., Sec 33 and 34.  
T.19 S., R.71 W., Sec 3 and 4.

APPLICANT: Larry Lund, Rocky Mountain Trials Association (RMTA)

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

Rocky Mountain Trials Association (RMTA) has held a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) to hold Motorcycle Trials competitive events since 1991. The Proposed Action would authorize a ten year SRP to be issued to RMTA for an event every other year, switching between Grand Canyon Hills (Volcano Gulch) and Texas Creek (Reese Gulch). (See Map 1- 4)

The trials events are a “non-speed” competition involving precision turning and low speed maneuvering of a motorcycle over natural terrain obstacles. Approximately 40 participants compete individually in designated sections of the area marked for the participant and for spectators. These sections are located on rocky areas above the drainages. When possible, designated routes are used to travel between sections. Use of the area is non-exclusive; public access will not be blocked.

RMTA events are club events including national events. All events may include training days prior to the two day competitive event typically held on weekends between April and November. Proposed event dates will be submitted to the BLM annually before March 30.

Compliance with the standard stipulations for permitted activities and additional standard stipulations for competitive and off-highway vehicle events is required. Monitoring of these areas has shown minimal impacts to resources in Grand Canyon Hills due to the rocky area they are operating on. Texas Creek has seen some change as the bikes enter and exit the staging areas. RMTA has raked these routes after events. If the project involves oil or fuel usage,

transfer or storage, an adequate spill kit and shovels are required to be onsite during events. The project proponent will be responsible for adhering to all applicable local, State and Federal regulations in the event of a spill, which includes following the proper notification procedures in BLM's Spill Contingency Plan.

The event organizer will provide portable toilets, trash cans and water for the event. Flagging must be removed and clean-up will be done within 48 hours after the event. Permittee will manage parking of campers and trailers to stay within 100 feet of the designated routes.

Authority to issue SRP's is found in BLM Handbook H-2930-1 and 43 CFR Part 2930. Issuing an SRP is a discretionary action with final approval by the authorized officer. Applications may be denied based upon factors such as non-compliance with land use plans or designations; a moratorium on permits issued as part of a planning process; the results of an environmental analysis; other resource values; an allocation system; public health and safety concerns; applicant's past performance; or the inability of the managing office to issue, manage, and monitor the proposed use.

**Figure 1** Overview Map of Texas Creek- Reese Gulch area in maroon.

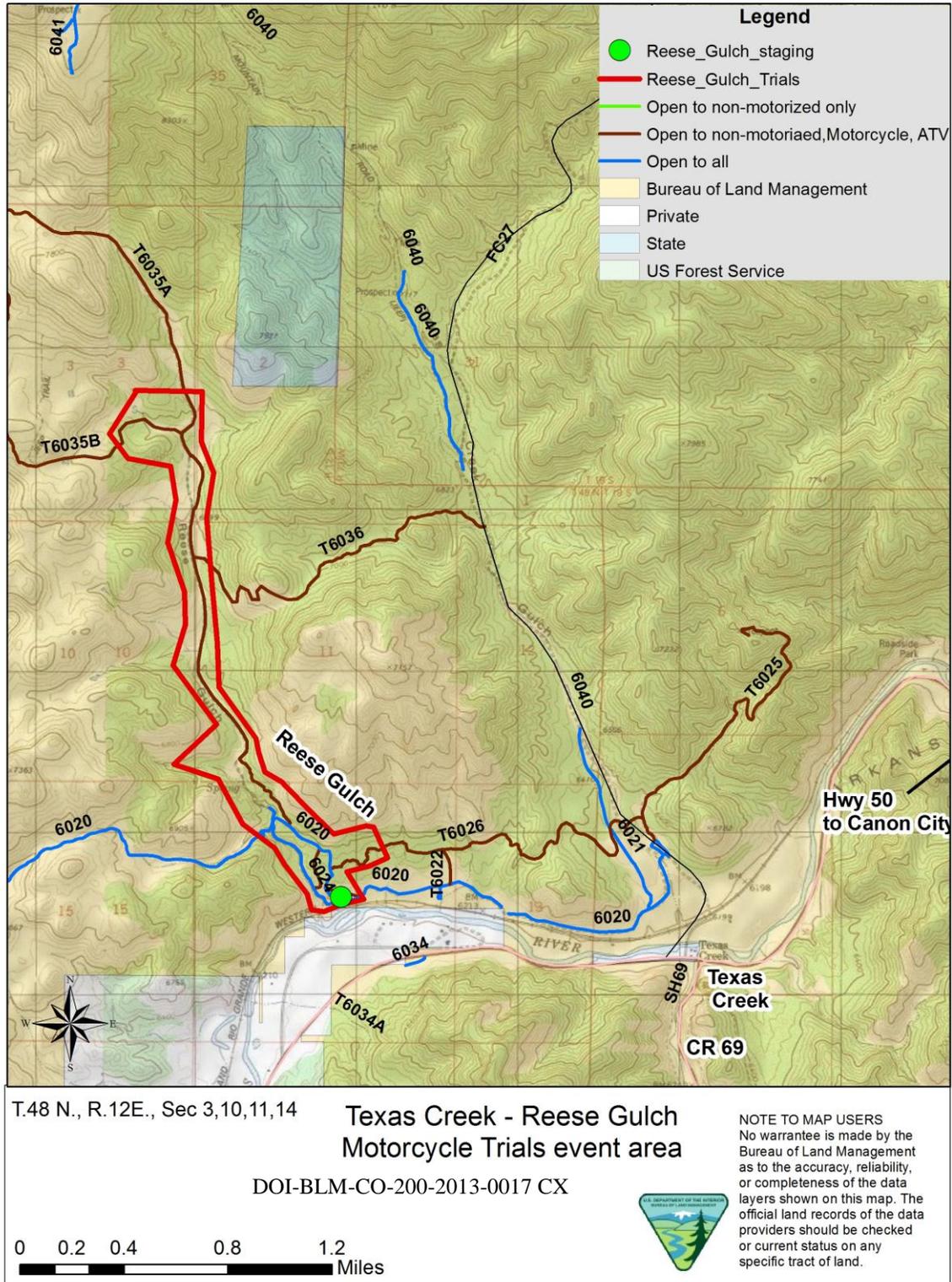
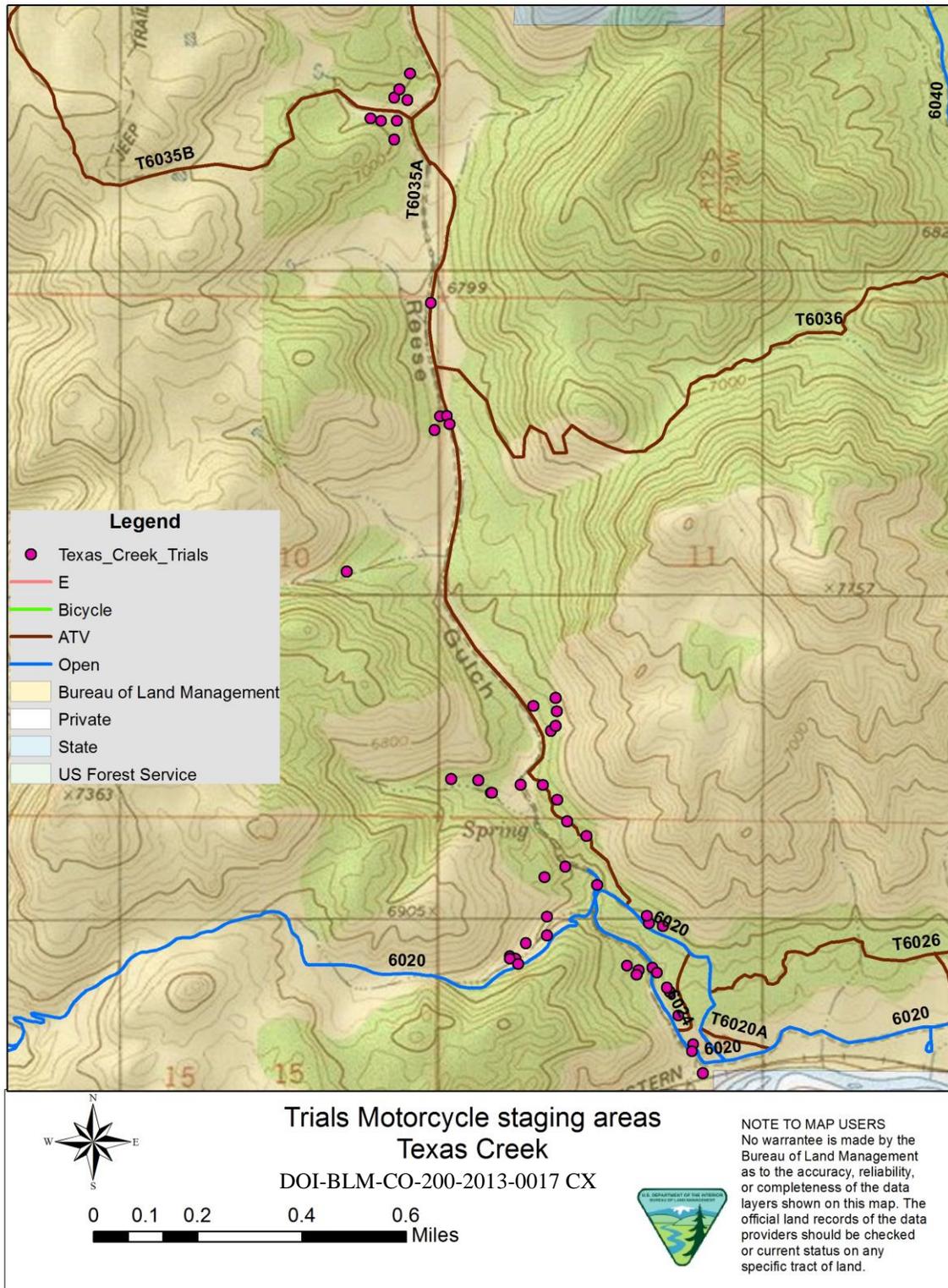
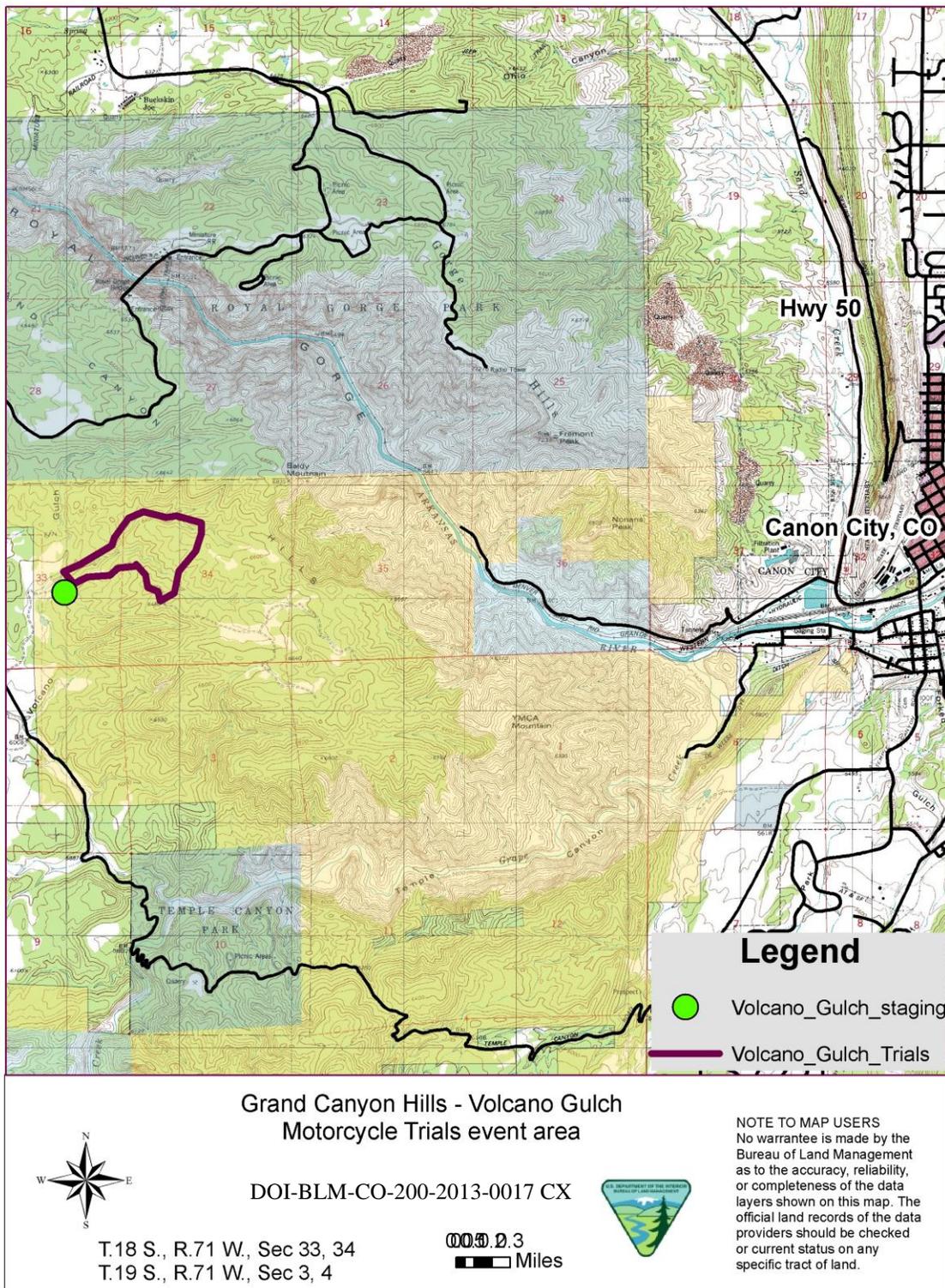


Figure 2 Reese Gulch dots represent section sites where event is held.



**Figure 3 Grand Canyon Hills- Volcano Gulch overview**





PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: 05/13/96

Decision Number: 1-82, 1-86

Decision Language:

1-82 Recreation will be managed to provide for a variety of recreational opportunities and settings, additional opportunities for off-highway vehicle use

1-86 various actions will occur to enhance recreation: upland recreation opportunities emphasizing a balance between resource protection and tourism

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in DOI Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11.9H (1). 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, 9/9/2013
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, 01/07/2013
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 1/10/2013
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	SSC, 1/18/2013
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	-----
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 1/8/13
Ty Webb	Prescribed Fire Specialist	Air Quality	TW, 1/7/2013
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 1/11/13
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	KL, 1/7/2013
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers	-----
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	KR, 1/7/2013
Martin Weimer	NEPA Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Noise, SocioEconomics	mw, 1/7/13
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	-----
Michael Troyer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	MDT 6/3/2013
Vera Matthews	Realty Specialist	Realty	vm, 1/30/2013
Steve Craddock	Realty Specialist	Realty	-----
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	-----
Bob Hurley	Fire Management Officer	Fire	BH, 1/25/2013

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: No historic properties were found in the area of potential effect [see report CR-RG-13-109 (N) and CR-RG-13-111 (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 species within or near the project area. A BLM sensitive plant, Arkansas canyon stickleaf (*Nuttallia densa*), is known to occur in the area. The plant occurs along washes, naturally disturbed sites, and steep rocky slopes. The plant is abundant throughout Bighorn Sheep Canyon where habitat is present. During event planning, BLM personal will assist with the designation of travel routes between sites to minimize the disturbance and destruction of Arkansas canyon stickleaf.

Hydrology/Soils/Water Quality: A field visit was made to the Reese Gulch and Grand Canyon Hills portions to determine if new trails were being formed by the last twenty years of similar use. No signs of motorcycle use outside of the recent previous events were found. Overall, it appears vegetation is being matted down by the events, but quickly recovers. Therefore, soils and water quality are being minimally impacted by the events and no residual impacts are apparent from past use.

COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional): On September 4, 2013 the Grand Canyon Hills area was revisited to determine the impacts of the Royal Gorge Fire. The burn area reached the edge of the event area to the northeast. The event area was affected by high water flow and sediment deposited in the drainage used to access event sections. Although this is a minimal, it was decided that the 2013 event scheduled for Grand Canyon Hills would be moved to a different location for resource protection. The area will be checked again before scheduling a 2015 event.

NAME OF PREPARER: Linda Skinner

SUPERVISORY REVIEW: Melissa K.S. Garcia

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

DATE: 10/21/13

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 10 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

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SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

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

DATE SIGNED: 10/22/13