

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Determination of NEPA Adequacy
DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2015-0009**

February 2015

Sound Democrat Mill Stabilization

Location: NMPM, T42N, R7W, Sec. 12; Handies Peak Quadrangle; San Juan County, CO

Applicant/Address:

Bureau of Land Management, in partnership with Mountain Studies Institute

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Worksheet

Determination of NEPA Adequacy

U.S. Department of the Interior
Utah Bureau of Land Management

The signed CONCLUSION at the end of this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal analysis process and does not constitute an appealable decision; however, it constitutes an administrative record to be provided as evidence in protest, appeals and legal procedures.

OFFICE: Tres Rios Field Office

TRACKING NUMBER:

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: TR15012

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE: Sound Democrat Mill Stabilization/Historic Preservation

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T42N, R7W, Sec. 12; USGS Handies Peak, CO Quadrangle

APPLICANT (if any): Mountain Studies Institute in partnership with BLM

A. Description of the Proposed Action and Any Applicable Mitigation Measures

The BLM, in partnership with Mountain Studies Institute, proposes to continue the stabilization of the Sound Democrat Mill. Stabilization work previously occurred at the Mill in 1992 – 1996. The proposed stabilization treatments are summarized as:

- Structural stabilization of the foundation, walls, floor, and roof to preserve the building and ensure public safety.
- Installation of doors and windows.
- Establishment of positive drainage around the footprint of the building.
- Reconstruction of the north wall.

A detailed list of the proposed stabilization treatments is presented in Attachment 1. The legal location for Animas Forks is T42N, R6W, Section 6; NMPM (Figure1.)

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

San Juan/San Miguel Resource Management Plan, Sept 1985

The proposed project 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):

“Develop and protect suitable cultural resource properties for public enjoyment through such practices as interpretive signing, stabilization, etc.” (Management Guidance, Cultural, p.33)

“Manage cultural resources for protection, preservation, investigation, & public use” (Management Guidance, Culture, p.43)

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

Alpine Triangle Cultural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, (December 13, 1994: p.77, 111-112)

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g. biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).

The following documents include the preservation/stabilization of cultural resources/historic sites in the Alpine Loop as an objective and/or management direction:

Alpine Triangle RAMP/EA, 2010; EA: p.47 (2.3.6 Recreation Management Spring, Summer, and Fall Use); p.115 (4.1.2 Cultural Resources); RAMP: Appendix A (3.2.2 Recreation Management - Spring, Summer, and Fall Use)

American Flats/Silverton-Lower Lake Fork SRMA, 1986; p.41 (e. Resource Protection, Action b.)

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?

Yes
 No

Documentation of answer and explanation: Selected Alternative A (proposed action) of the Alpine Triangle CRMP includes stabilization of cultural resources (p. 75-77). The Sound Democrat Mill is referenced as a site specific action in Alternative A of the Alpine Triangle Cultural Resource Management Plan and Environmental Analysis (p.77, 111-112). The project is within the EA analysis area. This project is a continuation of previous stabilization work at the Mill conducted under the Alpine Triangle EA and CRMP. Additionally, the Alpine Triangle CRMP and EA provide management direction and management criteria for the stabilization of historic mining sites which the Sound Democrat Mill stabilization project meets (p.42).

- Sites that are in the greatest danger of being adversely impacted by recreational users including uses of the Alpine Loop Back Country Byway
- Sites that are under threat of deterioration or loss from natural forces
- Sites that are historically important, and/or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- Sites that have the greatest need for stabilization
- Sites that have the greatest potential for interpretation
- Sites that are wholly or partially on lands managed by the BLM

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

Yes
 No

Documentation of answer and explanation: The analysis in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/ EA considered environmental concerns, interests and resource values that are appropriate for the Alpine Loop, and the range of alternatives analyzed is reasonable. Additional documents, such as the Alpine Triangle RAMP/EA, indicate the issues and concerns analyzed in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/EA are still current.

3. Is existing analysis adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standards assessment; recent endangered species listings, updated list 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?

Yes
 No

Documentation of answer and explanation: Additional analysis, such as that conducted for the Alpine Triangle RAMP/EA, support the conclusion that the proposed project would not result in any substantial changes in the affected environmental and environmental impacts conclusions in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/EA.

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?

Yes
 No

Documentation of answer and explanation: Yes, the environmental consequences will be consistent to those analyzed in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/EA. The proposed project is within

the parameters of the analysis conducted for preservation measures used for the stabilization of historic sites in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/EA. Stabilization of the Sound Democrat Mill is a specific action item in the Alpine Triangle CRMP/EA. The analysis states, "Impacts from stabilization will be minimal, and will not be adverse. A net benefit to cultural resources is achieved through stabilization in that it often preserves the architectural integrity of the site and makes it safe and accessible for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations" (p.82-83). The primary impact will be to the Mill, as a cultural resource.

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

Yes
 No

Documentation of answer and explanation: Yes, there was extensive public involvement and interagency review associated with the Alpine Triangle Cultural Resource Management Plan and Environmental Analysis which included the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer, San Juan and Hinsdale Counties, the Colorado Scenic Byways Commission, the Lost 4-wheelers, the Colorado Ghost Town Club, Hinsdale County Historical Society and the San Juan County Historical Society, the Town of Silverton and the Town of Lake City. The public involvement remains adequate for the proposed action.

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resource Represented</u>
Aaron B. Rutledge	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds, Special Status Species, T& E Wildlife Species, Terrestrial Wildlife
Jeff Christenson	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Visual Resources, Wild & Scenic Rivers, Wilderness/WSA
Mike Jensen	Rangeland Management Specialist	Livestock Grazing, Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds, T&E Plant Species, Sensitive Plant Species, Wild Horse & Burro
Bruce Bourcy	Archaeologist	All remaining resources
Lindsey Eoff	Environmental Coordinator	NEPA Compliance

CONCLUSION (If you found that one or more of these criteria is not met, then you cannot conclude that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action).

Plan Conformance:

- This proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan.
- This proposal does not conform to the applicable land use plan

Determination of NEPA Adequacy

- 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.
- The existing NEPA documentation does not fully cover the proposed action. Additional NEPA documentation is needed if the project is to be further considered.

Bruce Barney
Signature of Project Lead

2-23-15
Date

Lindsey [Signature]
Signature of NEPA Coordinator

2/23/15
Date

Caro [Signature]
Signature of the Responsible Official

2-23-15
Date

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Project location maps