

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

**Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2013-0012**

September, 2013

**Dolores River Canyon Livestock Crossing &
Special Recreation Permits**

Dolores & San Miguel Counties, CO

*Project Proponent:
USDI BLM
Tres Rios Field Office*

Tres Rios Field Office
29211 Highway 184
Dolores, CO 81323
970-882-6841



**Dolores River Canyon Livestock Crossing & Special Recreation Permits
DOI-BLM-CO-SO10-2013-0012**

**CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to authorize livestock crossing across public lands along the Dolores River Canyon as both a recreation business and livestock operation. Crossing would occur over approximately 23 miles of the Big Canyon Road (Dolores County Rd. 10) and the Snaggletooth/Dolores River Road from the Dove Creek Pump Station to Slick Rock in Dolores and San Miguel Counties. See attached location map (Appendix A). If approved, crossing would occur on an annual basis not to exceed 7 days within a timeframe of October 30th -December 1st. A maximum of eight people, including any recreational clients, eight horses, four tents, and two support vehicles are involved in the cattle drive. The herd consists of a maximum of 160 cows, which is the total number permitted on the East Pines Common Allotment.

Although the applicant has been crossing through this route for multiple years under a BLM Special Recreation Permit (SRP) and Grazing Authorizations, Colorado BLM guidance as of July 2012 mandates both a) NEPA compliance for all livestock crossing and b) issuance of associated crossing permits (Colorado IM No. CO-2012-031).

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the proposed action is to respond to an application for a Livestock Crossing Permit and associated Special Recreation Permit through BLM-administered lands within the Tres Rios Field Office. The need for the proposed action is to comply with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Taylor Grazing Act, which requires the BLM to respond to requests for livestock to cross BLM-administered lands. Consistent with the recreation permit regulations at 43 CFR 2390 and the BLM Handbook for Recreation Permit Administration (H-2930-1), if a use authorized by another program – in this instance, livestock administration— has a commercial recreation component, an SRP is required in addition to the program permit.

Decision to Be Made

The BLM will decide whether or not to grant the Livestock Crossing Permit and Special Recreation Permit, and if so, under what terms and conditions.

CONFORMANCE WITH BLM LAND USE PLAN

The Proposed Action has been found to be in conformance with, the San Juan/San Miguel Planning Area Resource Management Plan (SJSMP), as approved September 1985, and as amended October 1991 (43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM 1617.3).

Even though the Land Use Plan does not specifically provide for the issuance of livestock crossing permits, the proposed action is consistent with the resource goals and objectives of Livestock Grazing Management (SJSMP at 5-6) and Recreation (SJSMP at 13-14). The majority of the analysis area is in Emphasis Area C: emphasis on Recreation.

For Emphasis Area C, in regards to Livestock Grazing, specific management direction in the RMP states, "Manage livestock grazing to make it compatible with recreation use." (SJSMP at 35). With regards to Recreation within Emphasis Area C, General Guidance in the RMP states, "Manage for a variety of recreation opportunities consistent with classifications determined in Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) inventories." (SJSMP at 34).

RELATIONSHIP TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND OTHER PLANS

- The proposed action to review and issue a livestock crossing permit is consistent with the public lands grazing regulations (43 CFR 4100).
- 43 Code of Federal Regulations 4130-6.3 authorize the BLM to issue crossing permits to any applicant who demonstrates a need to trail livestock through public land or other BLM-administered lands.
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 1701 et seq.)
- Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1974
- National Historical Preservation Act of 1966 as Amended (1980)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 USC 4321 et seq.)
- 1973 Endangered Species Act, as amended
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 USC 703711)
- Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended
- The proposed action to review and issue a Special Recreation Permit is consistent with the public lands recreation permit regulations (43 CFR 2930) and the BLM Recreation Permit Administration Handbook H-2930-1.
- In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. A finding for each standard will be made in the environmental analysis (next section).

SCOPING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND ISSUES

The BLM Tres Rios Field Office internally scoped the proposed action at a meeting on September 26, 2012 and onsite tour October 30, 2012. A letter was sent to interested publics on March 21, 2013. In addition, the letter was posted to the Tres Rios NEPA website at http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Information/nepa/TRFO_NEPA.html

Four comment letters were received during the public scoping period (March 21 – April 22, 2013). Comment letters were received from three government agencies and one individual. As a result of internal and external scoping, the following preliminary issues and concerns were identified:

Cultural Resources

- Concerns were expressed that the proposed action could potentially affect cultural resources.

Wildlife

- The proposed action could potentially affect wildlife species and their habitat including bighorn sheep and otters

Recreation

- The proposed action could affect recreation including impacts to camping via overnight resting of cows during trailing activities.

Invasive Species, Noxious Weeds

- The proposed action has the potential to increase noxious weeds.

Water Quality

- The proposed action could impact water quality in the Dolores River.

CHAPTER 2 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

This EA focuses on the Proposed and No Action alternatives. Since the BLM has not identified unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources, there is no need for development and description of alternatives to the proposed action. The No Action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the Proposed Action.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to 1) authorize livestock crossing across public lands along the Dolores River Canyon via a Crossing Permit and to 2) authorize the associated, simultaneous recreation business via a Special Recreation Permit. For the purposes of analysis, both the livestock crossing and recreation aspects of the action are considered to have the same effects.

Livestock crossing would occur over approximately 23 miles of the Big Canyon road (D.C. Rd. 10) and the Snaggletooth/Dolores River road from the Dove Creek Pump Station to Slick Rock in Dolores and San Miguel Counties. See attached location map (Figure 1). The SRP will be issued with the standard SOPs (see Appendix II), and the crossing permit will specify the duration, timing, overnight locations, and route as permit terms and conditions. The Special Recreation Permit would be issued to allow the applicant to take paying clients along during trailing operations.

If approved, the crossing will occur on an annual basis not to exceed 7 days within a timeframe of October 30th–December 1st. A maximum of eight people and horses, four tents, and two support vehicles are involved in the cattle drive. The herd consists of a maximum of 160 cows, which is the total permitted on the applicant's East Pines Common Allotment. A maximum of 6 nights' stay would be permitted between two existing campsites.

The proposed route will be analyzed using a 100 foot corridor, comprised of 50 feet in either direction from the centerline. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) includes BLM surface. Ancillary use– including the two dispersed campsites and livestock bedding locations – are included as part of the APE.

For purposes of analysis, the temporal scope of both actions would be 10 years.

NO ACTION

The No Action alternative is to deny authorization of both the livestock crossing and Special Recreation permits. Crossing through BLM administered lands would not occur, nor would the associated commercial recreation operation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL

No alternatives are needed to address any unresolved resource conflicts.

CHAPTER 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL SETTING

The proposed crossing route would occur on county roads that follow the Dolores River, beginning approximately 4 miles east of Dove Creek, Colorado, (See attached location map, Appendix A). The proposed route crosses entirely through Bureau of Land Management-administered land. Elevation along the proposed route ranges from 7,200' to 8,000', and precipitation varies from 15.25" to 19.5" according to elevation. The vegetation in the area consists of piñon/juniper woodland, mountain shrub alliance, sagebrush steppe land, and ponderosa pine/Gambel oak forest.

The proposed route lies within an area of Colorado that was the homeland of numerous Native American tribes. More recent uses of the area include ranching, hunting, gas and oil exploration, mining, and logging, and firewood collection.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment was considered and analyzed by an interdisciplinary team. The following table (Table 3.1) indicates which resources of concern are either not present in the project area or would not be impacted to a degree that requires detailed analysis. Resources and/or concerns which could be impacted—whether directly, indirectly, or both—to a level requiring further analysis are described in Chapter 3; impacts on these resources are analyzed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.1. Resources or Concerns Not Affected

Resource/Concern	Rationale for Dismissal from Further Analysis
Air Quality	Not present
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Not present
Cultural Resources	Present, potentially affected, see below
Fish Habitat	No impact
Forests	Not present
Floodplains	No impact
Migratory Birds	Concern not present, action occurs outside of migratory bird season.
Native American Religious and other Concerns	Not present
Farmlands (prime and unique)	Not present
Threatened or Endangered Species	Not present

Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	Not present
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Present, not affected
Wilderness	Not present
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	Present, potentially affected
Environmental Justice	Not present
Wetland-Riparian Zones	No impact
Water Quality, Drinking/Ground	No impact
Soils	No impact
Vegetation	Present, potentially affected, see below
Invasive, non-native species	Present, potentially affected, see below
Rangelands`	Present, potentially affected, see below
Wildlife, Terrestrial	Present, potentially affected, see below
Recreation	Present, potentially affected, see below

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Three previous archaeological studies were conducted within the project area (Toll, 1977, Arrington, n.d., and Harden, 2007). Archaeological sites are present along the Dolores River corridor and indicate that human presence in the area spans 12,000 years. Site types in the project area consists mostly of small, temporarily used lithic scatters, or campsites associated with resource procurement activities dating to the archaic period, as well as historic ranching and mining activities.

Current Survey

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, requires Federal agencies to locate and assess all heritage resources within the Area of Potential Effect for all undertakings. Because this area had been previously surveyed, a literature search and GIS analysis was conducted to identify sites within the Area of Potential Effect for this project. Sites were identified within 100 feet off the center-line of the right-of-way, which is an existing two-track road. A total of three sites were identified as being within the Area of Potential Effect. These sites were revisited in order to assess their present condition and to determine if there is a potential for adverse effects as a result of this project.

The revisited sites include 5SM37, 5SM49, and 5SM2010. Only 5SM2010 is considered eligible for inclusion onto the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Sites 5SM37 and 5SM49 are considered not eligible for the NRHP. Site 5SM2010 will require monitoring and/or avoidance measures to ensure no adverse impacts occur as a result of the associated Federal undertaking. Descriptions and locations of these newly recorded sites are described in detail in the associated report (Bell 2013) but are not included within the current document due to Federal regulation (43CFR § 7.18).

VEGETATION

The predominate vegetation types that occur within the proposed trailing route along the Dolores River corridor consist of pinon/juniper woodlands and mountain shrub communities. The primary ecological site descriptions associated with these vegetation types are listed below:

Loamy Foothills

This site occurs on gentle, usually rolling, terrain on mesas, benches, alluvial fans, foothill valleys and broad plateaus. It is typical of the “bean country” of southwestern Colorado. This site tends to be dominated by piñon pine and juniper with an understory of perennial grasses mixed with big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) or black sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*). Perennial grasses include western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), needle-and-thread (*Hesperostipa comata*) and junegrass (*Koeleria asiatica*). Other less dominate shrub species include Antelope bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentate*), Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), True mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*) and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nutt.*).

Mountain Loam

This site generally occurs on hills and mesas with gentle slopes ranging from 1 to 12 percent. This site tends to be dominated by Gambel oak (*Quercus gambelii*), Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), curleaf mountain-mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*) and cliff fendlerbush (*Fendlera rupicola*). Associated perennial grass species include western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), muttongrass (*Poa fendleriana*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*) and Arizona fescue (*Festuca arizonica*).

INVASIVE, NON— NATIVE SPECIES

Invasive noxious weeds and other invasive vegetation species are aggressively competitive and can often out-compete native vegetation, especially on recently disturbed sites. A “noxious weed” is usually a non-native plant that has been designated by Federal or State law as generally possessing one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage; parasitic; a carrier or host of serious insects or disease; non-native, new or not common to the United States. “Invasive vegetation”, as defined by Executive Order 13112, is defined as “non-native plants whose introduction does, or is likely to, cause economic or environmental harm to human health.”

There have been extensive noxious weed inventories and ongoing noxious weed treatment activities throughout the proposed trailing route along the Dolores River corridor. These activities are a direct result of the riparian restoration activities that have been taking place throughout the Dolores River Corridor as part of the Dolores River Restoration Plan and associated partnerships.

Noxious weed infestations that have been documented along the proposed trailing route include Dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*), musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), salt cedar (*Tamarisk ramosissima*) and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*). The following table identifies the number of acres by noxious weed species that have been documented and subsequently treated within the proposed project area:

Common Name	Scientific Name	Acres Inventoried	Acres Treated
Dalmatian toadflax	<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	19.5	19.5
musk thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>	45	45
Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	5	5
Russian knapweed	<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	45	10
Salt cedar	<i>Tamarisk ramosissima</i>	55	55
Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	<1	<1

RANGE MANAGEMENT

Domestic livestock grazing has occurred on public lands in Colorado since the late 1870s. The livestock industry has been an integral part of community development, as well as overall lifestyle, in southwestern Colorado. Public lands supply winter, spring and summer grazing for dependent livestock producers and represent a significant portion of their total operations. In Colorado, nearly 1,500 livestock operators are authorized for grazing use on 2,500 grazing areas called allotments through an approved grazing permit/lease.

Issuance of a term grazing permit for an allotment determines the amount of forage resources allocated to livestock grazing on a particular parcel of BLM administered public land. This allocation is defined by the mandatory terms and conditions specified in the permit. These include the:

- Kind and number of livestock,
- The period of use,
- The amount of use, in Animal Unit Months.

Permit/leases are generally issued for a term of 10 years.

Livestock use levels are measured in Animal Unit Months (AUMs). An AUM is the amount of forage it takes to support one cow/calf pair, one bull, five sheep or one horse for one month.

Although livestock grazing is a primary land use surrounding the project area, no livestock grazing except for what occurs during the trailing operation is currently permitted.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL

Habitat is available in the project area for Mexican spotted owl. The Dolores River is part of the Colorado River watershed. No endangered fish species are present in this section of the Dolores River.

The proposed action will not occur during critical Big Horn Sheep lambing periods or in important otter habitat critical to reproductive success.

RECREATION

The Dolores River Canyon, along its entire length within the Tres Rios Field Office, is managed as a Special Recreation Management Area. The area has historically been recognized by BLM and the general public as a nationally significant, unique resource capable of providing highly

sought after, widely valued recreation opportunities. While many recreation opportunities exist in the canyon, including OHV touring on designated routes, wildlife viewing, photography, camping, hiking, and biking, the focal recreational experience centers around seasonal boating activities during spring runoff. Existing recreational use of the corridor includes casual (general public) as well as commercial, permitted activities. There are 15 Special Recreation Permits for guided river trips, 2-3 permits for fishing (some of which also floatboat), and 1 permit for 'dude ranching'.

LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

The Dolores River Canyon between Mountain Sheep Point and the Disappointment Valley was inventoried and found to contain Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC). The canyon in this reach is bisected by County Road 10/14F, which also serves as the boundary between two separate LWC units (CO-030-301a and CO-030-301b referred to as Snaggletooth units A and B) and is the route the trailing operation would utilize. Both units were found to be of sufficient size (greater than 5,000 acres), generally natural in appearance, and provide outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS

PROPOSED ACTION

This section analyzes the impacts of the proposed action on those resources identified and described in Chapter 3, the affected environment.

CULTURAL

The direct impacts that occur where livestock concentrate include trampling, chiseling, and churning of site soils, cultural features, and cultural artifacts, artifact breaks, and impacts from standing, leaning, and rubbing against historic structures, above-ground cultural features, and rock art (e.g. Broadhead 2001, Osbourn et al. 1987). Indirect impacts include soil erosion, gullying, and increased potential for unlawful collection and vandalism (e.g. Broadhead 2001, Osbourn et al. 1987). Continued livestock crossing may cause substantial ground disturbance and result in cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to historic properties (BLM 2005).

VEGETATION

The potential impacts from livestock to existing vegetation along the trailing route would consist of grazing on existing vegetation, trampling and soil compaction. These impacts would potentially be higher in those locations that are designated for overnighting cattle due to the fact that livestock would be congregated in small areas for a longer period of time (2-3 days).

It is anticipated that the potential impacts from livestock to the existing vegetation will be negligible due to the fact that the action will occur for a very short duration during the fall through early winter period. During this time period existing vegetation that may be susceptible to grazing will have already matured, set seed and will be in a dormant state. Grazing during the dormant period (fall/winter) has been shown to have the least impact on existing vegetation. In addition, the soils most likely will be dry and/or frozen which will reduce the potential for soil compaction along the trailing route.

INVASIVE, NON— NATIVE SPECIES

The extent and amount of ground disturbance that may occur as result of this activity, primarily from livestock hoof action and other associated trailing activities would vary depending on the duration of the activity. In those areas designated for overnight camping spots, the ground disturbing impacts from livestock hoof action would be greater than in areas in which livestock are trailed through for a very short time period such as a few hours.

It is anticipated that the potential for the spread and establishment of noxious weeds would be negligible throughout most of the trailing route with exception to the designated camp sites. Outside of the designated camp sites, the potential impacts from livestock trailing and subsequent establishment or spread of noxious weed species would be minimal due to the following factors: 1) livestock trailing would occur along an existing unimproved road reducing the potential of new ground disturbance; 2) the duration of trailing would be for a very short period of time; and 3) trailing would occur in the late fall to early winter when noxious weeds species that may be present are dormant.

The potential impacts and ground disturbance from livestock would potentially be higher at designated camp sites due to the fact that livestock would be congregated in small areas. As a result, the amount of ground disturbance would be increased in these areas from trampling and hoof action by livestock. These areas would be potentially susceptible to the spread and establishment of noxious weed species.

Therefore, in order to mitigate the potential spread and establishment of noxious weeds, periodic monitoring would be conducted along the livestock trailing route with emphasis for monitoring on both camp site locations. This periodic monitoring will increase the ability for early detection and appropriate treatment of noxious weeds.

RANGE MANAGEMENT

The proposed action would involve the short term loss of vegetation from livestock grazing during trailing activities. However, due to the short nature of trailing activity where cattle are continuously “driven”, the impact will be spread over a 23 mile section of the river corridor.

Use of cattle driving methods such as pushing cattle through the proposed project area via coordination with the permittee would minimize effects to range resources.

It is not anticipated that any changes in water quality would result due to implementation of the proposed action. Fecal coliform is not a major concern in the Dolores River especially during fall flows. Due to the short nature of the proposed project stream bank alteration or damage due to cattle trailing and grazing would be minimized.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL

A wildlife clearance report was completed on 4/18/2013. Impacts to: Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate species listed under the Endangered Species Act, BLM Special Status Species, Birds of Conservation Concern, and migratory birds were addressed in the report. No impacts to BLM special status species, birds of conservation concern, or migratory birds are anticipated. Impacts to Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Species are listed below in table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Federally listed species for the BLM Tres Rios Field Office based on July 14th, 2010 list from the FWS and the quarterly updates received at the Tres Rios Field Office.

Species	Status	Presence	Project Effects	Rationale
Canada lynx	Threatened	NP	NE	No habitat in project area
New Mexico jumping mouse	Candidate	NS	NE	Hibernating during project implementation
Gunnison sage-grouse	Proposed	NP	NE	No habitat in project area
Gunnison sage-grouse critical habitat	Proposed	NP	NE	No habitat in project area
Mexican spotted owl	Threatened	NS	NE	Project activity outside MSO breeding time frame
Southwestern willow flycatcher	Endangered	NS	NE	All activity outside breeding season
Yellow-billed cuckoo	Candidate	NS	NE	All activity outside breeding season
Bonytail	Endangered	NP	NE	Not present, no downstream impacts
Colorado pikeminnow	Endangered	NP	NE	Not present, no downstream impacts
Greenback cutthroat trout	Threatened	NP	NE	No habitat in project area
Humpback chub	Endangered	NP	NE	Not present, no downstream impacts
Razorback sucker	Endangered	NP	NE	Not present, no downstream impacts
Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly	Endangered	NP	NE	No habitat in project area

**Project effect determinations are: no effect (NE); may affect (MA); not likely to adversely affect (NLAA); likely to adversely affect (LAA). Presence determinations are: habitat not present (NP); habitat present species not expected to occur (NS); suspected occurrence (S); known occurrence (K)*

There is no effect to any species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Initiation of section 7 consultation with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is not necessary.

RECREATION

The proposed action would be expected to impact the recreational experience and opportunities of the general public for approximately one week in late fall to early winter. Direct impacts would result from the loss of camping opportunities where trailing operations overnight within the canyon. These impacts would be mitigated by the timing of the operations (outside of the high use, spring boating and camping season) and would expect to impact fewer than 20 visitors, maximum.

The proposed action would also impact the recreational opportunity of visitors wishing to experience the 'western lifestyle' through participation in 'dude ranching' with the permittee. The SRP issuance allows for the permittee to operate a business on public lands engaging guests in activities such as horseback riding, tent camping, cattle driving.

LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed action would result in cattle trailing along County Road 10, which forms the boundary between LWC units Snaggletooth A and B. The use would not appreciably increase either human or vehicle traffic along the boundary of these units, though the presence of cattle for up to 1 week in this narrow canyon could impact the naturalness and outstanding opportunity for solitude of the unit for visitors during that timeframe. There are no temporary or permanent facilities proposed in conjunction with this action which would affect the long term naturalness of the units. Evidence of the passage of cattle would indirectly impact the naturalness of the unit for as long as a growing season, though not to an extent noticeable by the general public. The physical size of the units, and the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation, would not be affected.

NO ACTION

CULTURAL

If the no action alternative is selected there would be no direct, indirect or cumulative effects from the proposed action to cultural resources.

VEGETATION

Because there would be no measurable direct or indirect environmental effects from the Proposed or No Action Alternatives, no potential exists for cumulative impacts.

INVASIVE, NON-- NATIVE SPECIES

If the no action alternative is selected there would be no direct, indirect or cumulative effects from the proposed action. However, there still exists the potential for the spread and establishment of noxious weeds within the proposed project area. The potential for spread would exist due to the fact that 1) noxious weeds are currently present within the project area; 2) vectors for the spread of noxious weeds will continue to exist such as unimproved roads and trails recreational activities such as OHV and mountain biking use currently occurring along the same proposed livestock trailing route.

RANGE MANAGEMENT

Because there would be no measurable direct or indirect environmental effects from the Proposed or No Action Alternatives, no potential exists for cumulative impacts.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL

Because there would be no measurable direct or indirect environmental effects from the Proposed or No Action Alternatives, no potential exists for cumulative impacts.

RECREATION

Under the no-action alternative there would be no impacts to the general public recreational use and associated benefits of the Dolores River Canyon area. The opportunity for visitors to experience the recreational activities and benefits offered by the permittee would be lost.

LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

Under the no-action alternative there would be no impacts to the wilderness characteristics present in Snaggletooth Units A and B.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The geographic Cumulative Effects Study Area is the same as the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The temporal scope of this cumulative effects analysis is ten years (life of the proposed permits).

Past Actions

Past actions that affect the same components of the environment as the proposed action are: livestock grazing, recreational activities via river and road, wildlife habitat improvement projects and mineral extraction.

Present Actions

Present actions that affect the same components of the environment as the proposed action are: livestock grazing and recreational activities.

Reasonable Foreseeable Future Actions

Mineral extraction would occur near and possibly within the project area. Livestock grazing would continue to occur on public and private land. Recreational uses such as hunting, river running as well as recreational uses of the road corridor would continue. Off-road motorized vehicle usage will likely continue in the area.

Because there would be no measurable direct or indirect environmental effects from the Proposed or No Action Alternatives, no potential exists for cumulative impacts.

CHAPTER 5

PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the proposed action by a scoping letter mailed March 21, 2013 to local stakeholders, Dolores and San Miguel Counties, the Town of Dove Creek, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, area recreation user groups and outfitters, area commercial operators, and area environmental groups. It was also posted on the Tres Rios Field Office homepage on March 23, 2013. Four have contacted the BLM in response to the notice.

In addition, the BLM consulted with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for undertakings of the proposed action, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 470). Under the current protocol agreement with the Colorado BLM and the Colorado SHPO, this undertaking does not exceed any of the review thresholds listed in Part VII (A) of the Protocol. An informational letter was sent to the Colorado SHPO.

List of Preparers

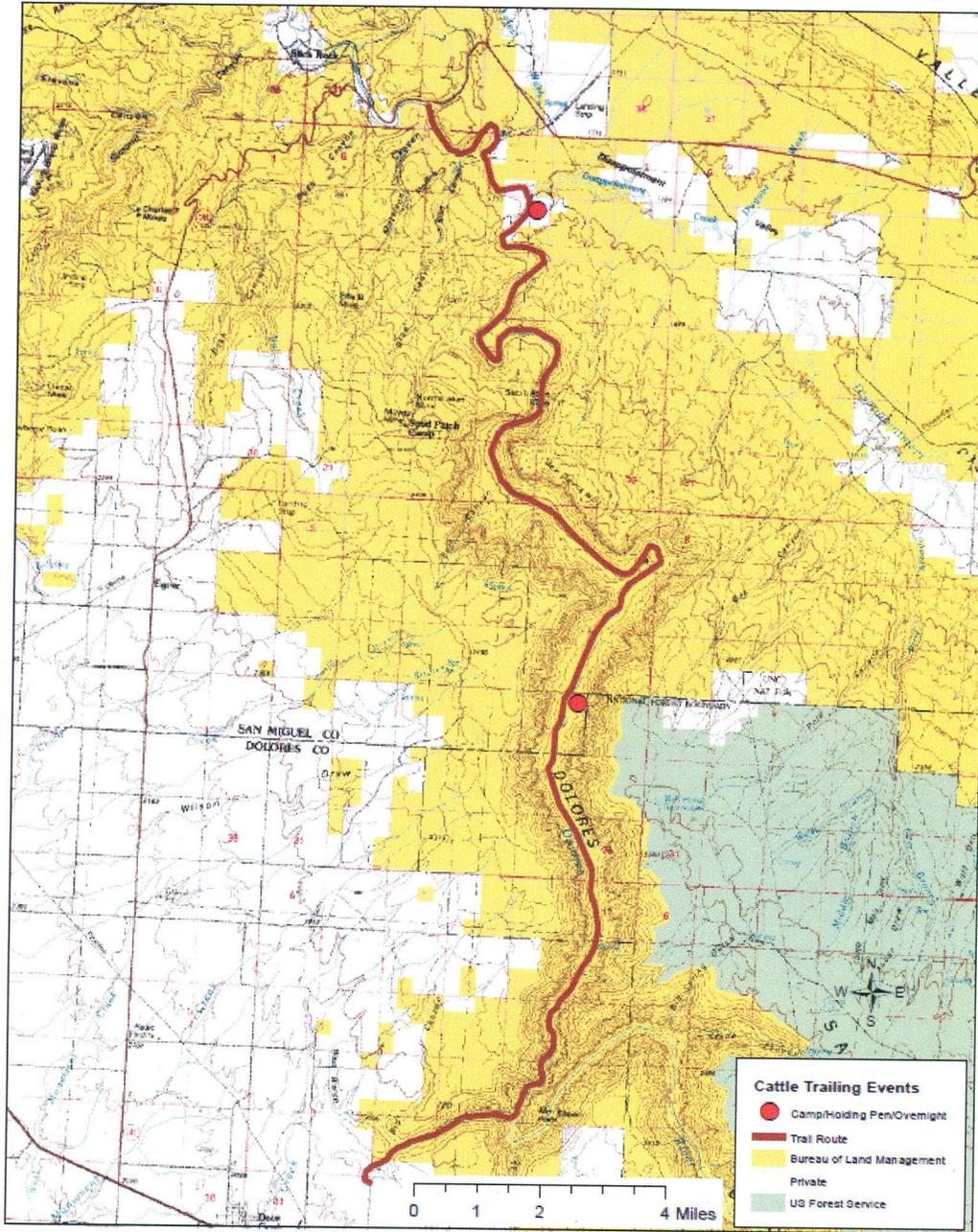
BLM Preparers

Name	Title	Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document
Samantha Staley & Tom Rice	Project Lead	IDT Lead; Quality Control; Livestock Grazing
Gina Jones	NEPA Coordinator	NEPA Compliance
Nate West	Wildlife Biologist	Fisheries; Wildlife; Terrestrial
Jared Scott	GIS Specialist	GIS
Julie Bell	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources
Jeff Christensen	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation; Visual Resources
Mike Jensen	Range RMS	Invasive, Non-Native Species; Vegetation,

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Map

Dolores Canyon Trailing Permit



References

Arrington, Kristie

n.d. Class III Cultural Resources Survey as part of the Bureau of Land Management's Dolores River Planning Survey, Durango, Colorado

Bell, Julie A.

2013 *Dolores Canyon Livestock Crossing and Special Recreation Permit: A Class II Cultural Resource Inventory of 23 Miles of the Dolores River Canyon, Dolores and San Miguel Counties, Colorado*. Ms. on file, Bureau of Land Management, Tres Rios Field Office, Dolores, Colorado.

Broadhead, Wade

2001 *Brief Synopsis of Experiments Concerning Effects of Grazing on Archaeological Sites*. Ms. on file, Bureau of Land Management, Gunnison Field Office, Gunnison, Colorado.

Bureau of Land Management

2005 *Summary of Livestock Grazing Impacts on Archaeological Sites Located on BLM-Administered Lands in Colorado: A Study of Cultural Resource Assessments for Grazing Permit Renewals from Fiscal Years 1998 to 2004*. Ms of file, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, Lakewood, Colorado.

Harden, Patrick

2007 *Canyon Bighorn HFT Cultural Resources Inventory, San Miguel County, Colorado*. Ms. on file, Bureau of Land Management, Tres Rios Field Office, Dolores, Colorado.

Osbourn, Alan, S. Vetter, R. Hartley , L. Walsh, J. Brown

1987 *Impacts of Domestic Livestock Grazing in the Archaeological Resources of Capitol Reef National Park, Utah. Occasional Studies in Anthropology No. 20*. Ms. on file, Midwest Archaeological Center, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Toll, Wolcott

1975 *Dolores River Archaeology, 1975 Survey and Synthesis: Archaeological Resources in the Dolores Rover Canyon from the Dolores River Ranch to the Colorado River*. Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder.