

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
San Luis Valley Field Office
46525 Highway 114
Saguache, CO 81212**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-F03-2014-010-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): Permit # CO-500-OG-09-01

PROJECT NAME: Recreation- SRP College-level Geology Field Course

PLANNING UNIT: San Luis Valley #1

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: New Mexico Principal Meridian
T. 45 N., R. 4 E.,
secs. 1, 12, 13, and 24.
T. 46 N., R. 4 E.,
sec. 36.
T. 45 N., R. 5 E.,
secs. 4 thru 9, inclusive, 16 thru 21, inclusive 28
thru 30, inclusive.
T. 46 N., R. 5 E.,
secs. 31 thru 33, inclusive.

APPLICANT: Richard Wendlandt, Colorado School of Mines (CSM)

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The applicant currently holds a 10-year permit expiring 12/31/2019. The Proposed Action would allow the above applicant to utilize their permit for commercial guided college-level educational program (geology field course) within the Sheep Creek and Saguache Creek areas (see map below). The BLM will allow CSM to conduct their field program for one-week duration to complete their geology field course exercise during the month of June of each calendar year. CSM is allowed a maximum of 45 participants/students per day to conduct their field program activities and will be between the hours of 0800 and 1730.

The activities of the students during this week of the field program involve geologic mapping of the bedrock geology and geologic structures and interpretation of the geologic history of the region. Participants in the class will be constructing geologic maps based on direct observation of all available rock outcroppings within their permitted area.

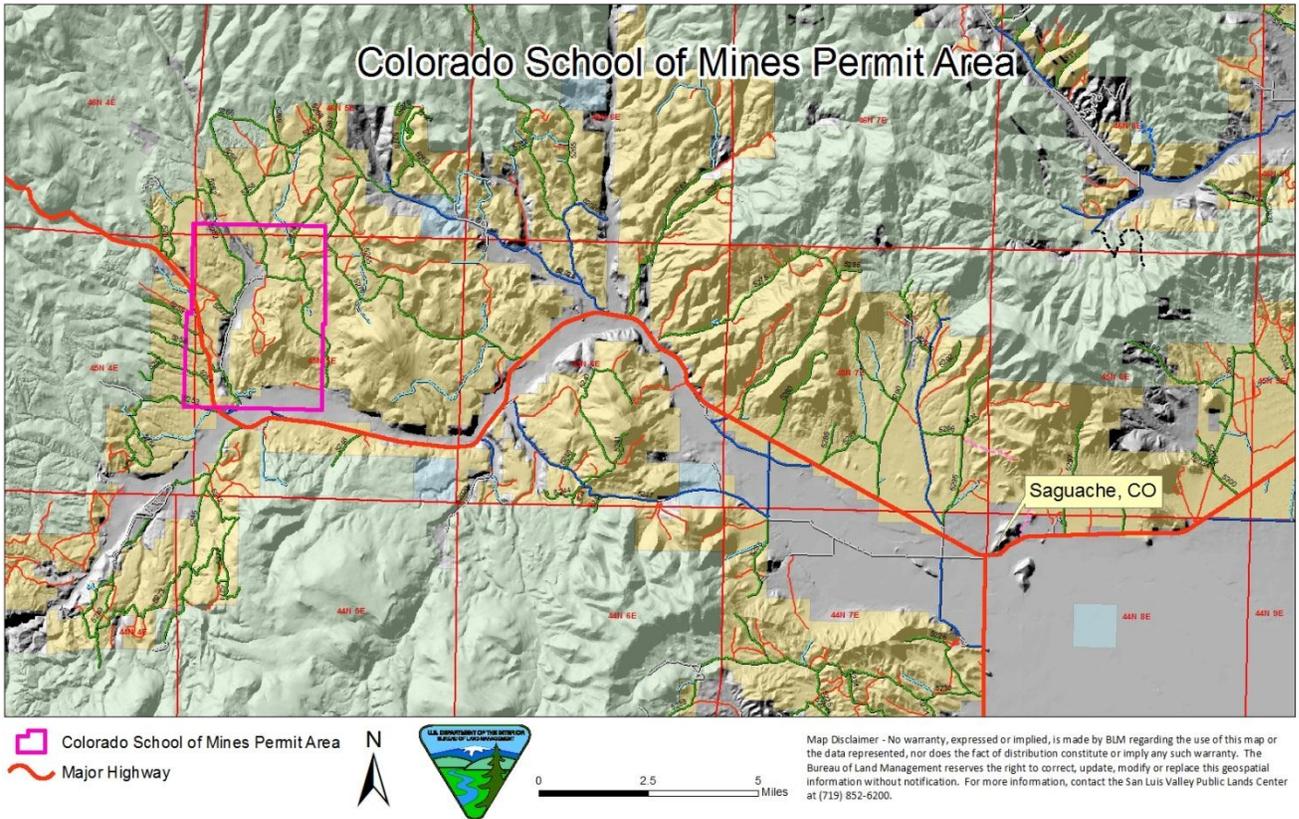
CSM educational field program is committed to resource protection including the education of Leave NO Trace and Tread Lightly principles and understands that cultural resources are protected by federal laws and regulations and shall not be collected or moved from their original location. CSM educational field program will travel to location by passenger vans and by foot. CSM will only travel on legal system road mark for motorized use and will park in existing parking areas or pull-off on the sides of roads not creating any ground disturbance. All other travel off road will be by foot. CSM educational field program participants will be camping at the USFS Buffalo Pass Campground.

No authorization is included in the analysis for dispersed camps, staging area, trail constructions, or other forms of concentrated use on BLM Lands. Any proposal for such activities would require a separate analysis.

Authority to issue SRP's is found in BLM SRP 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.

Use of BLM public land is non-exclusive. Commercial use, competitive use/events, or organized group use is year-round, unless there is a Special Order to close for resource protection or improvements. The permitted area may be subject to seasonal closures based on weather conditions for resource protection.

Map 1. Overview



PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: San Luis Valley Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: September 1991

Decision Number: 1-23

Decision Language: 1-23 Allow continued dispersed recreational opportunities on BLM-administered lands.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in DOI Departmental Manual Part 516 Chapter 11 _(). 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.		
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		X

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.		
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

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW

NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	Initials/date
Alyssa Radcliff	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds, Fisheries	ANR 4/21/14
Jeffery Williams	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland	JW 5/12/2014
Eduardo Duran	NRS	Riparian, T&E species	END 5/14/14
Andrew Archuleta	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology, Waste Hazardous or Solid	AA 5/7/2014
Negussie Tedela	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils, Air Quality	NT 05/05/14
Sean Hines	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey, Management of Land Boundaries	SJH 3/11/14

Sean Noonan	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	STN 3/11/14
Alyssa Radcliff	Wildlife Biologist	Invasive Plants	ANR 4/21/14
Jeff Brown	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	JGB 5/12/2014
Leon Montoya	Realty Specialist	Realty	LM 5/7/2014
Brian Garcia	LEO	Law Enforcement	BKG 5/6/2014
Paul Minow	Fuels Specialist	Fuels	PM 4/28/2014

REMARKS: None

COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional):

NAME OF PREPARER: Heather Salaz

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

DATE: 5/28/14

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.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

/s/ Andrew Archuleta
Andrew Archuleta, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 6/03/2014