U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
220 E Market St
Meeker, CO 81641

Section 390
Categorical Exclusion for
Oil and Gas Development

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2010-0054-CX (390)

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC-060733

PROJECT NAME: Federal RGU: 511-25-198 Well on Existing Williams' Well Pad 11-25-198

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T1S-R98W, Sec. 25 NWNW

APPLICANT: Williams Production RMT

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Williams Production RMT proposes to drill an additional gas well Federal Ryan Gulch Unit (RGU) on the existing RGU 11-25-198 well pad. The existing pad and gas well was approved in 2007 (CO-110-2007-144-DNA). The pad was expanded in 2009 to accommodate additional wells; currently seven wells have been approved (DOI-BLM-CO-110-2009-0044-DNA) but not yet drilled at this location. Allowing for the drilling of the proposed well would not require any pad expansion or additional surface disturbance. Existing pipeline and access roads would be utilized to service the wells. One more quad separator, and up to one condensate tank and two additional water tanks would be added to the production pad to accommodate this and two other proposed wells Federal RGU: 311-25-198 and Federal RGU: 41-26-198

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3) the following plan:

> Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).
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> Date Approved: 7-1-97
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> Decision Number/Page: Page 2-5
>
> Decision Language: "Make federal oil and gas resources available for leasing and development in a manner that provides reasonable protection for other resource values."

REVIEW OF EXISTING NEPA DOCUMENTS:

List by name and date all existing NEPA documents that cover the Proposed Action.

Name of Document: CO-110-2006-252-EA

Date Approved: 5 January 2007

Name of Document: CO-110-2007-144-DNA

Date Approved: 5-16-07

Name of Document: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2009-0044-DNA

Date Approved: 4-17-09

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The proposed action is categorically excluded from further documentation in accordance with statutory NEPA categorical exclusions (CX), as granted in Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, for oil and gas exploration and development. The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Section 390, based on the qualifying criteria Number (2) of the categories listed below.

Qualifying Criteria	YES	NO
1. Individual surface disturbances of less than five (5) acres so long as the total surface disturbance on the lease is not greater than 150 acres and site-specific analysis in a document prepared pursuant to NEPA has been previously completed. **(a, b, and c below must be yes to have this CX apply)**		
a. Will disturb less than 5 acres, if more than one action is proposed for a lease, each activity is counted separately and each may disturb up to five acres.		
b. The current un-reclaimed surface disturbance readily visible on the entire leasehold is not greater than 150 acres, including the proposed action.		
c. This categorical exclusion includes the requirement of a site-specific NEPA document. A site specific NEPA analysis can be either an exploration and/or development EA/EIS, an EA/EIS for a specific POD, a multi-well EA/EIS or an individual permit approval EA/EIS.		

Qualifying Criteria	YES	NO
2. Drilling an oil and gas location or well pad at a site at which drilling has occurred within five (5) years prior to the date of spudding the well. A "location or well pad" is defined as a previously disturbed or constructed well pad used in support of drilling a well. "Drilling" in the context of, "Drilling has occurred within five (5) years"	X	
3. Drilling an oil or gas well within a developed field for which an approved land use plan or any environmental document prepared pursuant to NEPA analyzed drilling as a reasonably foreseeable activity, so long as such plan or document was approved within five (5) years prior to the date of spudding the well. **(a, b, and c below must be yes to have this CX apply)**		
a. The proposed APD is within a developed oil or gas field. A developed field is defined as any field in which a confirmation well has been completed.		
b. There is an existing NEPA document (including that supporting a land use plan) that contains a reasonably foreseeable development scenario broad enough to encompass this action.		
c. The NEPA document was finalized or supplemented within five years of spudding the well.		
4. Placement of a pipeline in an approved right-of-way corridor, as long as the corridor was approved within five (5) years prior to the date of placement of the pipeline. (To avoid problems, the right-of-way must contain a term or condition that provides for the suspension of the authorization if placement does not begin before the last date that the CX is available, thus requiring the operator to obtain a new right-of-way.) **(a and b below must be yes to have this CX apply)**		
a. The placement of a pipeline in an existing corridor of any type		
b. Placement of the pipeline within five years of approval (or amendment) of the most recent date of a decision (NEPA or permit authorization) are the only two applicable factors for review pursuant to this statute and must both be satisfied to use this CX.		
5. Maintenance of a minor activity, other than any construction or major renovation of a building or facility.		

CX (1) and (3) reference previous NEPA documents, the same or better mitigating measures from the tiered NEPA document will be applied as well as BMPs to reduce impacts to any authorization issued.

CX (2) and (3) must state the date when the previous well was completed or the date the site had workover operations involving a drilling rig of any type or capability; this also includes completion of any plugging operations. Because the 5-year period is tied to the spudding of the pending well, the APD must contain a COA that if no well is spudded by the date the CX is no longer applicable, the APD will expire, thus requiring the operator to obtain a new APD.

CX (4) to avoid problems, the right-of-way must contain a term or condition that provides for the suspension of the authorization if placement does not begin before the last date that the CX is available, thus requiring the operator to obtain a new right-of-way.

For all CX a brief narrative must be included in the well file(s) stating the rationale for making the determination that the categorical exclusion applies. If more than one applies each shall be explained.

Documentation: The last well at this site (RGU 11-25-198) was spudded on 7/4/07. If the operator delays in spudding the new well and the time period between the previous well completion and spudding exceed five years, the operator must suspend preparation for drilling operations until the BLM completes NEPA compliance for the proposed well and issues a new decision on the APD.

Included in the mitigations listed below is the following condition of approval (COA): If the well has not been spudded by July 4, 2012, this APD will expire, and the operator is to cease all operations related to preparing to drill the well thus requiring the operator to obtain a new APD and NEPA analysis.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

The proposed action was presented to, and reviewed by the White River Field Office interdisciplinary team on _ 10-19-09 _____.
Date
A list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the White River Field Office.

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: The previous NEPA documentation in DOI-BLM-CO-110-2009-0044-DNA is adequate. There are no known concerns. (KB 11-16-09)

Native American Religious Concerns: No known concerns. (KB 11-16-09)

Threatened and Endangered Animal Species: There are no listed, proposed, or candidate animals known to inhabit or derive important benefit from lands that this project may influence. This location is encompassed by big game severe winter range and, barring exceptions granted by the WRFO Authorized Officer, development activity associated with this location are subject to timing limitations that disallow drilling and completion operations from 1 January to 30 April. (EH; 11-17-09).

Threatened and Endangered Plant Species: No concerns (MM 11-16-09)

MITIGATION:

1. The operator shall be responsible for informing their employees, contractors, and subcontractors that they would be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts on public lands. If archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:
   - whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
   - the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary).
   - a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

   If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

3. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for disturbing or collecting vertebrate fossils, collecting large amounts of petrified wood, or collecting fossils for commercial purposes on public lands. If significant paleontological resources are discovered during surface disturbing actions or at any other time, the operator or any of his agents must stop

work immediately at the site, immediately contact the Authorized Officer (AO), and make every effort to protect the site from further impacts, including looting, erosion, or other human or natural damage.

The BLM or designated paleontologist will evaluate the discovery and take action to protect or remove the resource within 10 working days. Work may not resume at that location until approved by the official BLM representative.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, significant delays may occur while the AO enacts mitigation procedures. The operator may elect to contract an approved paleontologist to execute site mitigations in order to expedite proceedings. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

4. If the well has not been spudded by July 4, 2012, this APD will expire, and the operator is to cease all operations related to preparing to drill the well thus requiring the operator to obtain a new APD and NEPA analysis.

COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional): On-going compliance inspections and monitoring of drilling, production and post-production activities will be conducted by White River Field Office staff during construction of well pads, access roads, and pipelines. Specific mitigation developed in the associated Categorical Exclusion and the lease terms and conditions will be followed. The Operator will be notified of compliance related issues in writing, and depending on the nature of the issue(s), will be provided 30 days to resolve such issues.

NAME OF PREPARER: Christina J. Barlow

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed.

DATE: 12-24-09

ATTACHMENTS: none

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this CX and have decided to approve the proposed action.

This action is listed in the Instruction Memorandum Number 2005-247 as an action that may be categorically excluded under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. I have evaluated the action relative to the 5 qualifying 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: for Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 12/28/05

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is effective upon the date the decision or approval by the authorized officer. Under regulations addressed in 43 CFR Subpart 3165, any party adversely affected has the right to appeal this decision. An informal review of the technical or procedural aspects of the decision may be requested of this office before initiating a formal review request. You have the right to request a State Director review of this decision. You must request a State Director review prior to filing an appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) (43CFR 3165.4).

If you elect to request a State Director Review, the request must be received by the BLM Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, no later than 20 business days after the date the decision was received or considered to have been received. The request must include all supporting documentation unless a request is made for an extension of the filing of supporting documentation. For good cause, such extensions may be granted. You also have the right to appeal the decision issued by the State Director to the IBLA.

Contact Person: For additional information concerning this decision, contact Christina Barlow, Natural Resource Specialist, White River Field Office, 220 E Market Street, Meeker, CO 81641, Phone (970) 878-3815.