

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2011-0132-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: Amend COC0123685 and COC75007(TUP)

PROJECT NAME: Repair of Questar Pipeline ML 68 Anomaly

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian
T2S, R101W,
Section 34

APPLICANT: Questar Pipeline Company

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Background:

Questar Pipeline Company is the owner of the grant numbered COC0123685 for a 14-inch natural gas pipeline in Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M. in Rio Blanco County, Colorado.

Questar recently completed an internal test of the pipeline as required by the Department of Transportation. The test revealed that there is significant concern at this location to warrant excavating and replacing the anomalies. All repair of the pipeline will be done within the right-of-way. A Temporary Use Permit will be required due to dirt work outside the right-of-way.

Proposed Action:

Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M.: (39.8336936, -108.7091228)

Questar Pipeline requests authorization to excavate and repair the anomaly detected during the test. They propose to cut out and replace the damaged portion of the line. The damaged portion of the line will be removed and new pipe will be installed. The length of the disturbance will be approximately 300 feet and the width would extend 50 feet from the existing pipeline. Twenty-five feet will be located within the existing right-of-way and Questar plans to utilize 25 extra feet within the previously disturbed work area. As the Excel line is only 10 feet from the Questar line on the south, all work will be north of the existing Questar line. A Temporary Use Permit will be issued due to the work outside the right-of-way (COC75007). It will be necessary to remove a portion of the existing livestock fence to reclaim dirt that is on the other side of the fence. This

dirt was never pulled back over the pipeline when the original line was completed. The portion of the fence to be removed will be replaced by Questar. The applicant seeks to perform the work before the grazing allotment is utilized for cattle in the fall.

An area map is attached as Exhibit A

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with (43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM 1601.08) the following plan:

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Page 2-49

Decision Language: “To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values.”

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, Number (E-19): “*Issuance of short term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its original condition.*”

The Proposed Action has been reviewed with respect to the list of extraordinary circumstances (43 CFR 46.215) described in the table below.

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
a) Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety.		X
b) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; 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
c) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		X
d) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
e) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant		X

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
environmental effects.		
f) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
g) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau of office.		X
h) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
i) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
j) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations		X
k) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		X
l) 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 REVIEW:

The Proposed Action was presented to, and reviewed by, the White River Field Office interdisciplinary team on 7/5/2011. A complete list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the White River Field Office. The table below lists resource specialists who provided additional remarks concerning cultural resources and special status species.

Name	Title	Resource	Date
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	7/19/2011
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	7/19/2011
Zoe Miller	Ecologist	Special Status Plant Species	7/20/2011

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M.: The proposed pipeline replacement area has been inventoried at the Class III (100 percent pedestrian) level (Pennefather-O'Brien et al 1992 Compliance Dated 12/17/1992, Weston and Welch 2006 Compliance Dated 11/30/2006) with no cultural resources identified in the inventoried area. It is unlikely that the Proposed Action will have any impacts on any known cultural resources.

Paleontological Resources: Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M.: The proposed pipeline repair is located in an area generally mapped as the Upper Mesa Verde formation (Tweto 1979). The BLM WRFO has classified the Mesa Verde as a PFYC 5 formation meaning it is known to produce scientifically noteworthy fossil resources (c.f. Armstrong and Wolny 1989). The proposed work area is located between two known plant fossil localities which suggest that excavations into the underlying rock formations could produce more fossil resources. If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying sedimentary rock formation to provide a safe working area for pipe replacement there is a high potential to impact scientifically noteworthy fossil resources.

Native American Religious Concerns: No Native American Religious Concerns are known in the area, and none have been noted by Northern Ute tribal authorities. Should recommended inventories or future consultations with Tribal authorities reveal the existence of such sensitive properties, appropriate mitigation and/or protection measures may be undertaken

Special Status Wildlife Species: There are no wildlife-related issues or concerns associated with these proposed pipeline repairs. The site is encompassed by general big game winter ranges whose utility is presently influenced by closely associated multiple parallel pipeline corridors and/or maintained well access roads. The project site margins, bordered by existing pipeline or road corridors, are distanced from potential woodland raptor nest habitat by intervening ridgeline features or 50+ meters of woodland foliage. Although the potential for woodland raptor nest activity occurring in close proximity to these two sites is low, nesting activity by this date (mid-July) would be completed or nearing completion and juveniles that may remain associated with the sites would be resistant to more lengthy absences by the adult birds. Similarly, primary nesting functions for all passerine migratory birds would be finalized by this date.

Special Status Plant Species: There are no special status plant species concerns associated with the Proposed Action.

REFERENCES CITED:

- Armstrong, Harley j. and David G. Wolny
1989 Paleontological Resources of Northwestern Colorado: A Regional Analysis, Museum of Western Colorado, Grand Junction, Colorado.
- Pennefather-O'Brien, Elizabeth, Patrick Lubinski, and Michael D. Metcalf
1992 Colorado Interstate Gas Company Uinta Basin lateral 20" Pipeline: Class III Cultural Resource Final Report Utah, Colorado and Wyoming. Metcalf Archaeological, Consultants, Inc., Eagle, Colorado. (92-54-26: SHPO # MC.LM.R71)

Weston, Jason D., and James M. Welch

2006 Twin Basin Gathering System: Class III Cultural Resource Inventory for Installation of a Natural Gas Gathering system Pipeline in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Western Land Services, Inc., Sheridan, Wyoming.

Tweto, Ogden

1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

MITIGATION: All terms, conditions, and stipulations of the original grant COC0123685 shall be carried forward and remain in full force and effect.

1. The holder is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing paleontological sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the holder 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 holder as to:

- whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
- the mitigation measures the holder will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not feasible)

If the holder 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 holder 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 holder will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. If it becomes necessary at any time, at this location Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M., to excavate into the underlying sedimentary stone to provide adequate safe working space to perform pipeline replacement, a paleontological monitor shall be present before any such excavation begins and until all excavations are completed and the pipeline is ready to be reburied.

3. All sites shall be monitored and treated for noxious weeds, on an annual basis, for the life of the project until Final Abandonment has been approved by the BLM.

4. Pesticide Use Proposals (PUPs) shall be submitted to and approved by the BLM before applying herbicides on BLM lands. The PUP will include target weed species, the herbicides to be used, application rates and timeframes, estimated acres to be treated, as well as maps showing known locations of weeds and areas to be treated.

5. The holder shall conduct all activities associated with the construction, operation, and termination of the right-of-way within the authorized limits of the right-of-way or temporary use permit.

6. Promptly revegetate all disturbed areas with Native Seed Mix #3 listed below. Seeding rates are shown as pounds of Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre and apply to drill seeding. For broadcast application, double the seeding rate and then harrow to insure seed coverage. Applied seed must be certified and free of noxious weeds, and seed certification tags must be submitted to the Authorized Officer.

Cultivar	Species	Scientific Name	Application Rate (lbs PLS/acre)
Rosanna	Western Wheatgrass	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	4
Whitmar	Bluebunch Wheatgrass	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata ssp. inermis</i>	3.5
Rimrock	Indian Ricegrass	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	3
Needle and Thread Grass		<i>Hesperostipa comata ssp. comata</i>	2.5
Maple Grove	Lewis Flax	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	1
Scarlet Globemallow		<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	0.5
Alternates:*			
Critana	Thickspike Wheatgrass	<i>Elymus lanceolatus ssp. lanceolatus</i>	3
	Sulphur Flower	<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	1.5

COMPLIANCE PLAN: On-going compliance inspections and monitoring will be conducted by the BLM White River Field Office staff during and after construction. Specific mitigation developed in this document will be followed. The holder 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: Janet W. Doll

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Heather Sauls

COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E-19. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:



Field Manager

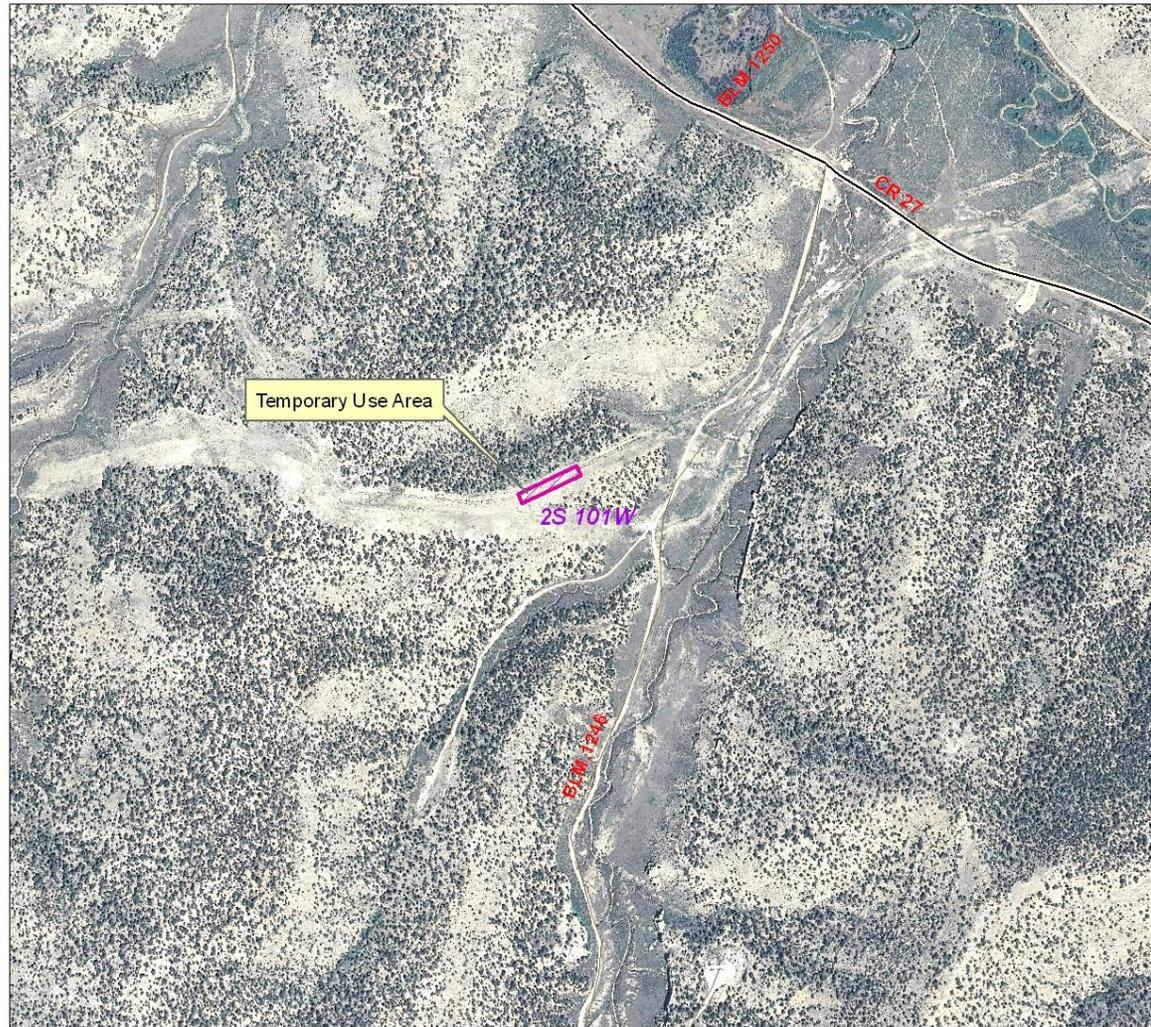
DATE SIGNED:

8/10/11

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit A – Maps of Proposed Action

TUP COC75007 for Questar Anomaly Repair
T2S, R101W, sec. 34

EXHIBIT A



- DOI-BLM-CO-110-2011-0132-CX
- State
- County
- BLM
- USFS
- NPS
- Other
- PLSS_Townships_GCD82008

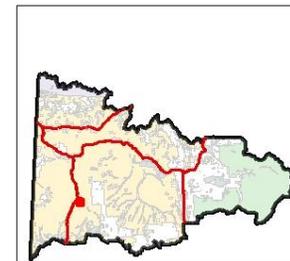


Sources:
BLM, USGS, CDOW, etc.

Disclaimer:
Although the data presented within this map, and the map itself, have been processed successfully on computers of BLM, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by BLM regarding the use of this map or the data represented, nor does the fact of distribution constitute or imply any such warranty.



July 2011



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

DECISION RECORD

PROJECT NAME: Repair of Questar Pipeline ML 68 Anomaly

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2011-0132-CX

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-110-2011-0132-CX, authorizing the repair of the anomaly on the pipeline that was detected during testing. In addition to the pipeline repair, a temporary use permit will be issued to remove a fence and pull dirt back over the existing pipeline. The fence will be replaced when the dirt work has been completed.

Mitigation Measures

1. The holder is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing paleontological sites, or for collecting fossils. If fossil materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the holder 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 holder as to:

- whether the materials appear to be of noteworthy scientific interest
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2. If it becomes necessary at any time, at Section 34, T2S, R101W, 6th P. M. to excavate into the underlying sedimentary stone to provide adequate safe working space to perform pipeline replacement a paleontological monitor shall be present before any such excavation begins and until all excavations are completed and the pipeline is ready to be reburied.

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5. The holder shall conduct all activities associated with the construction, operation, and termination of the right-of-way within the authorized limits of the right-of-way or temporary use permit.
6. Promptly revegetate all disturbed areas with native seed mix #3 listed below. Seeding rates are shown as pounds of Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre and apply to drill seeding. For broadcast application, double the seeding rate and then harrow to insure seed coverage. Applied seed must be certified and free of noxious weeds, and seed certification tags must be submitted to the Authorized Officer.

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COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & CONFORMANCE WITH THE LAND USE PLAN

This decision is in compliance with the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. It is also in conformance with the 1997 White River Record of Decision/Approved Resource Management Plan.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

External scoping was conducted for this project by listing it on the WRFO's on-line National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) register on 7/13/2011.

RATIONALE

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E19. This categorical

exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply.

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2801.10(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a Notice of Appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at White River Field Office, 220 East Market St., Meeker, CO 81641 with copies sent to the Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, 755 Parfet St., Suite 151, Lakewood, CO 80215, and to the Department of the Interior, Board of Land Appeals, 801 North Quincy St., MS300-QC, Arlington, VA, 22203. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals at the above address within 30 days after the Notice of Appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:



Field Manager

DATE SIGNED:

08/10/11