

**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-110-2011-0143-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC20275

PROJECT NAME: Cathodic Protection Ground Bed

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian
T.3S., R.101W.,
sec. 1, lot 6.

APPLICANT: Public Service Company of Colorado

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Public Service Company of Colorado (PSCo), an Xcel Energy company, requests authorization from White River Field Office (WRFO) to do preventative maintenance on their existing pipeline COC20275 (see Exhibit A). The cathodic protection information from the pipeline in this general area has indicated a new cathodic protection ground bed is necessary. A cathodic protection ground bed is a facility that is designed to protect the pipeline from corrosion. The construction of this ground bed is within the existing right-of-way (ROW) under the maintenance provisions of the BLM grant. The rectifier controls will be installed on the power pole. An electric cable will be constructed to the deep well in the existing right-of-way with another cable buried from the well and connected to the pipeline. The only above-ground facility will be a telephone type pedestal at the well, used to connect the electric cable. PSCo would like to begin construction this fall so the pipeline remains in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation.

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, E-13. *Amendments to existing rights-of-way, such as the upgrading of existing facilities, which entail no additional disturbances outside the right-of-way boundary.*

The Proposed Action has been reviewed with 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 environmental effects.		X
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		X

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
physical integrity of such sacred sites.		
1) 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 6/28/2011. 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	8/17/2011
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	8/31/2011
Zoe Miller	Ecologist	Special Status Plant Species	7/8/2011

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: There are currently no known cultural resources at the proposed project site. The proposed cathodic protection ground location is covered by all or portions of two Class III (100 percent pedestrian) inventories (Conner 1986, Compliance Dated 11/17/1986, 1993, Compliance Dated 9/29/1993) which did not result in the identification of any surface resources. Due to the location of the project in alluvial fill and an active area of alluvial action and if all disturbance can be confined to the existing disturbance/ROW, it is unlikely that significant cultural resources will be located during excavations for the repairs.

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.

Paleontological Resources: The proposed project is in an area generally mapped as the Mesa Verde Formation (Tweto 1979) which the WRFO has classified as a PFYC 5 formation meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil resources (Armstrong and Wolny 1989). However, examination of photographs of the proposed project area indicates it is in Quaternary Alluvium which is not generally considered fossil bearing in this area (ibid).

Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species: There are no wildlife-related issues or concerns associated with the Proposed Action.

Special Status Plant Species: No effects from the Proposed Action are anticipated on special status plant species.

REFERENCES CITED:

Armstrong, Harley J, and David G. Wolny

1989 Paleontological Resources of Northwest Colorado: A Regional Analysis. Museum of Western Colorado, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Conner, Carl E.

1986 Cultural Resources Inventory Report on Two Proposed Pipeline Connections in Rio Blanco County, Colorado for Fuel Resources Development Company (Feulco). Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado. (86-11-09: SHPO #RB.LM.NR358)

1993 Cultural Resource Inventory Report on a proposed East Douglas Pipeline Reroute in Rio Blanco County, Colorado for Western Gas Supply Company; Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado. (93-11-39: SHPO #RB.LM.NR707)

Tweto, Ogden

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

MITIGATION:

1. The holder is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing archaeological sites or for collecting artifacts.

2. If any archaeological materials are discovered as a result of operations under this authorization, activity in the vicinity of the discovery will cease, and the BLM WRFO Archaeologist will be notified immediately. Work may not resume at that location until approved by the AO. The holder will make every effort to protect the site from further impacts including looting, erosion, or other human or natural damage until BLM determines a treatment approach, and the treatment is completed. Unless previously determined in treatment plans or agreements, BLM will evaluate the cultural resources and, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), select the appropriate mitigation option within 48 hours of the discovery. The holder, under guidance of the BLM, will implement the mitigation in a timely manner. The process will be fully documented in reports, site forms, maps, drawings, and photographs. The BLM will forward documentation to the SHPO for review and concurrence.

3. 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.

4. All applicable terms and conditions contained in the original right-of-way grant (COC20275) and any amendments will be carried forward and remain in full force and effect.

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 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.

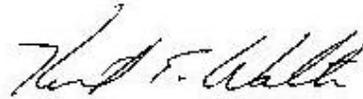
NAME OF PREPARER: Janet Doll

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-13. 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

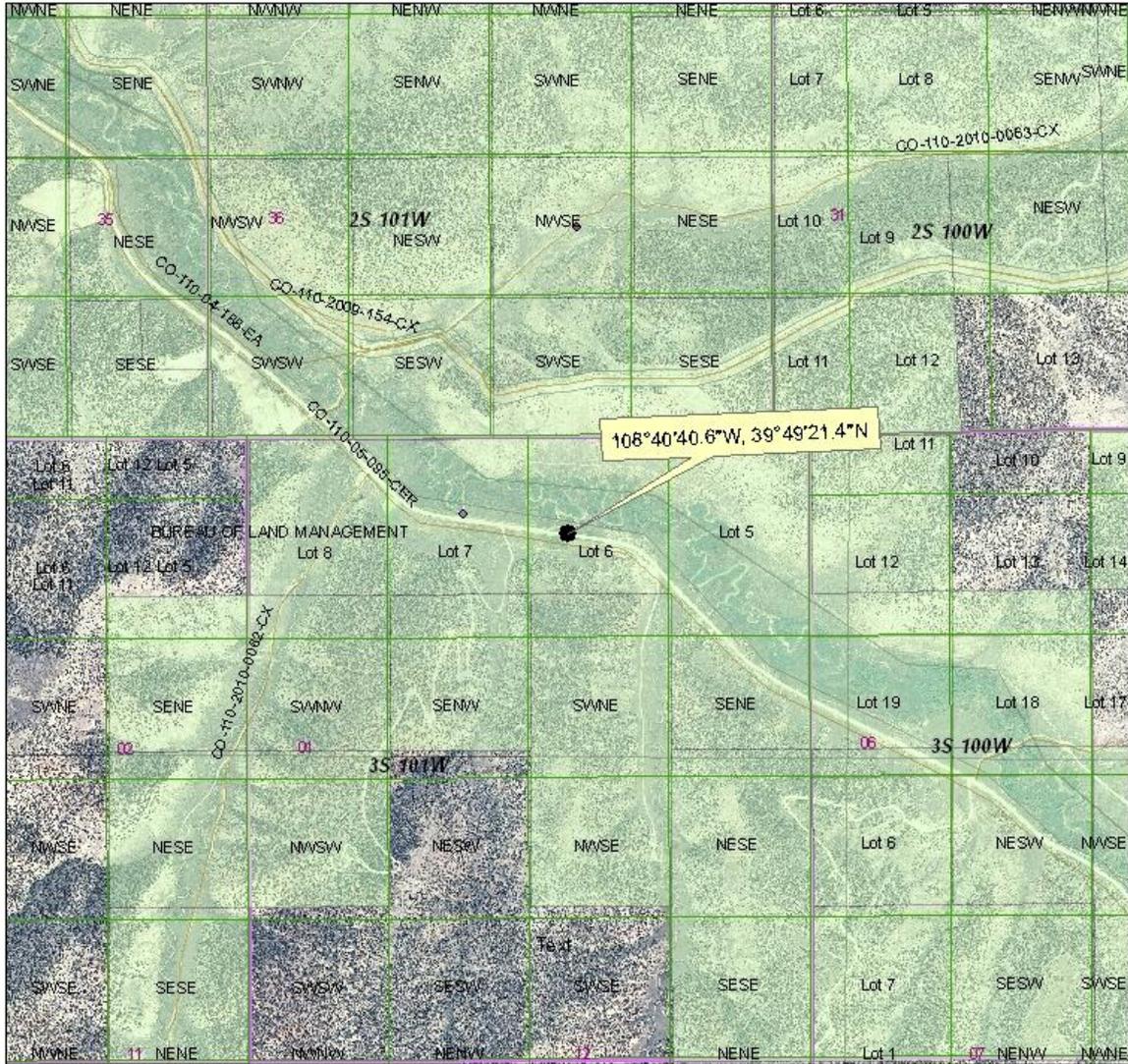
DATE SIGNED:

09/14/2011

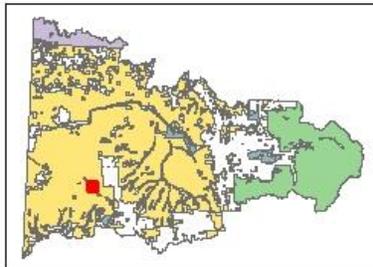
ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A: Map of PSCo Repair on COC20275

CO-110-2011-0143-CX PSCO Repair COC20275

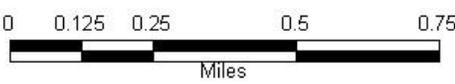


"Although the data presented within this map, and the map itself, have been processed successfully on computers of BLM, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by BLM regarding the use of this map or the data represented, nor does the fact of distribution constitute or imply any such warranty."



Legend

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220 E Market St
Meeker, CO 81641**

DECISION RECORD

PROJECT NAME: Cathodic Protection Ground Bed

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-2011-0143-CX

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-2011-0143-CX, authorizing the construction, operation, and maintenance of a cathodic protection ground bed.

Mitigation Measures

1. The holder is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing archaeological sites or for collecting artifacts.
2. If any archaeological materials are discovered as a result of operations under this authorization, activity in the vicinity of the discovery will cease, and the BLM WRFO Archaeologist will be notified immediately. Work may not resume at that location until approved by the AO. The holder will make every effort to protect the site from further impacts including looting, erosion, or other human or natural damage until BLM determines a treatment approach, and the treatment is completed. Unless previously determined in treatment plans or agreements, BLM will evaluate the cultural resources and, in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), select the appropriate mitigation option within 48 hours of the discovery. The holder, under guidance of the BLM, will implement the mitigation in a timely manner. The process will be fully documented in reports, site forms, maps, drawings, and photographs. The BLM will forward documentation to the SHPO for review and concurrence.
3. 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.
4. All applicable terms and conditions contained in the original right-of-way grant (COC20275) and any amendments will be carried forward and remain in full force and effect.

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

The BLM informed the public about this project by listing it on the online WRFO NEPA Register on 7/13/2011 and a copy of the completed Categorical Exclusion will be posted on the WRFO website.

RATIONALE

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E-13. 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:

09/14/2011