

**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-110-2012-0106-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: Amend COC023734E

PROJECT NAME: ETC Interconnect

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian
T. 1 S., R 102 W.
Section 31 NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$

APPLICANT: ETC Canyon Pipeline, LLC

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: ETC Canyon Pipeline, LLC (ETC) proposes to install a 4 inch meter and building at the intersection of ETC's existing 10 inch natural gas pipeline and EnCana's existing 10 inch natural gas pipeline (COC56619) that will be used as a transfer point between companies (see Exhibit A). ETC will be gathering some EnCana gas to be delivered back into EnCana's line through this delivery meter.

This amendment to the existing right-of-way (ROW) will be for installation of a 4 inch meter building. The estimated disturbance will be 35 feet long by 35 feet wide. The foot print will be 4 feet by 15 feet skid built, with the building being 4 feet by 6 feet setting in the center of the skid. There will be piping extending past the skid on both ends making the total foot print approximately 4 feet by 22 feet. No temporary work space is necessary. The proposed meter building would be located entirely within the ROWs for both ETC and EnCana. A radio would be installed on the existing site and the meter would be calibrated every 3 months by 1 employee. ETC proposes to use existing roads and the pipeline ROW to access the site with no new roads to be built.

Construction would begin as soon as the proposal is approved. Construction is estimated to take 2 days and would require approximately 6 workers. Construction equipment would include a backhoe, pickup trucks, semi-truck and a flat-bed trailer. Construction will begin by segregating top soil from mineral soil during surface clearing. Pipe excavation will occur in the location where the meter run will be placed. Once the trench is constructed, riser valves will be welded onto both sides of the pipeline. The riser valves would extend above the level of the natural surface and tie into the meter building. Once the construction is complete, the mineral soil would be placed back into the trench and the disturbed area would be final graded. The top soil would be placed back on the surface. ETC would follow all required conditions for this process.

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 2-5

Decision Language: “Make federal oil and gas resources available for leasing and development in a manner that provides reasonable protection for other resource values.”

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, E13: *“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 the bureau.		X
h) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed,		X

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		
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 6/19/2012. 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	6/21/2012
Laura Dixon	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	6/27/2012
Amber Shanklin	Biological Technician – Plants	Special Status Plant Species	6/21/2012

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: The location of the proposed meter facility and the immediate surrounding area has been inventoried at the Class III (100 percent pedestrian) level by all or part of at least six inventory projects (Gordon and Kranzush 1977 compliance dated 11/15/1977, Guilfoyle 2003 compliance dated 1/20/2004, Hauck and Hadden 1994a compliance dated 2/18/1994, 1994b compliance dated 4/19/1994, Honeycutt and Fetterman 1991 compliance dated 8/1/1991, LaPoint et al 1981 compliance dated 1981). These inventories have confirmed that there will be no impacts to known cultural resources and there are no resources on the southeast side of the road and no resources known resources within 1,000 feet of the project location on the northwest side of the Dragon Road.

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 Concerns: The proposed meter valve and building are located in an area generally mapped as the Upper Mesa Verde Group or Formation (Tweto 1979). The BLM, WRFO has classified the formation as a Potential Fossil Yield Classification 5 formation meaning it is known to produce a variety of scientifically noteworthy fossils including dinosaurs and early mammals (c. f. Armstrong and Wolny 1989). If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying sedimentary rock to bury the new pipes and make new connections there is a high potential to impact scientifically noteworthy fossil resources. Any loss of fossil resources would be a long term, irreversible and irretrievable loss of scientific data for the regional database.

Special Status Wildlife Species: The Proposed Action lies within mapped greater sage-grouse general habitat. However, disturbances related to the Proposed Action will occur wholly within pre-disturbed areas and there has been no consistently documented use of the area by birds. The nearest lek is approximately 20 miles away and has not had birds recorded on it since 2009. Therefore, additional impacts to grouse due to the Proposed Action are not expected. There are no other special status wildlife species that are known to inhabit or derive any important use from the area encompassed by the Proposed Action.

Special Status Plant Species: There are no known special status plant species populations near the project area. Design features include utilizing existing roads and the pipeline ROW to access the site with no new roads to be built. The Proposed Action is completely within a pre-disturbed area; therefore, there are no special status plant species issues or concerns associated with the Proposed Action.

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.

Gordon, E. Kinzie, and Kris J. Kranzush

1977 Cultural Resource Inventory Report: North Douglas Creek Line Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Gordon and Kranzush Archaeological Consultants, Boulder, Colorado. (77-13-05: SHPO #RB.LM.DN3)

Guilfoyle, David

2003 Cultural Resource Inventory of Locin Oil's Proposed Pipeline Route along Dragon Road Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Alpine Archeological Consultants, Inc., Montrose, Colorado. (04-83-01: SHPO# RB.LM.R567)

Honeycutt, Linda and Jerry Fetterman

1991 Report on Class III Inventory Conducted for Northwest Pipeline Corporation's Mainline Expansion Project Eastern Utah (Rich, Uintah, Grand and San Juan Counties) and Western Colorado (Rio Blanco, Garfield, Mesa, San Miguel, Dolores and Montezuma Counties). Woods Canyon Archaeological Consultants, Inc., Yellow Jacket, Colorado. (91-71-01: SHPO #MC.E.R4)

Hauck, F. Richard, and Glade V. Hadden

1994a Cultural Resource Evaluations of Ten Proposed Pipelines and Access Routes Within the Colorado Project Area of Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Archeological-Environmental Research Corporation (AERC), Bountiful, Utah. (94-38-03: SHPO #RB.LM.R227)

1994b Cultural Resource Evaluations in Miscellaneous Locations within the Conoco Project Area of Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Archeological-Environmental Research Corporation (AERC), Bountiful, Utah. (4/19/1994: SHPO #RB.LM.NR746)

LaPoint, Halcyon J., Howard M, Davidson, Steven D. Creasman and Karen C Schubert

1981 Archaeological Investigations in the Canyon Pintado Historic District, Rio Blanco County, Colorado: Phase II – Inventory and Test Excavation. Laboratory of Public Archaeology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden'

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

MITIGATION:

1. All applicable terms, conditions, and stipulations contained in original ROW grant COC023734 and any amendments shall be carried forward and remain in full force and effect.
2. At least 90 days prior to termination of the right-of-way, the holder shall contact the Authorized Officer to arrange a joint inspection of the right-of-way. The inspection will result in the development of an acceptable termination and rehabilitation plan submitted by the holder. This plan shall include, but is not limited to, removal of facilities, drainage structures, and surface material; recontouring; topsoiling; or seeding. The Authorized Officer must approve the plan in writing prior to the holder's commencement of any termination activities.
3. 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.
4. Any proposal involving additional surface disturbance outside of the authorized right-of-way requires an application to the BLM for analysis and authorization. New stipulations for construction would be applied to projects subject to the regulations and policies existing at the time of authorization.

5. The holder shall monitor all disturbed and reclaimed areas through final abandonment for the presence of invasive, non-native, and/or noxious plant species. The applicant will be responsible for eradication of noxious weeds that occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder must notify the AO, by telephone and 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), the holder must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.

9. The holder 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 (over 25lbs./day, up to 250lbs./year), or collecting fossils for commercial purposes on public lands.

10. If any paleontological resources are discovered as a result of operations under this authorization, the holder or any of his agents must stop work immediately at that site, immediately contact the BLM Paleontology Coordinator, and make every effort to protect the site from further impacts, including looting, erosion, or other human or natural damage. Work may not resume at that location until approved by the AO. The BLM or designated paleontologist will evaluate the discovery and take action to protect or remove the resource within 10 working days. Within 10 days, the operator will be allowed to continue construction through the site, or will be given the choice of either (a) following the Paleontology Coordinator's instructions for stabilizing the fossil resource in place and avoiding further disturbance to the fossil resource, or (b) following the Paleontology Coordinator's instructions for mitigating impacts to the fossil resource prior to continuing construction through the project area.

11. Any excavations into the underlying native sedimentary stone must be monitored by a permitted paleontologist. The monitoring paleontologist must be present before the start of excavations that may impact bedrock.

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.

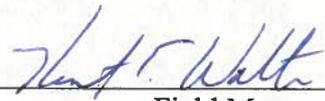
NAME OF PREPARER: Janet Doll

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, E13. 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:

07/10/12

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A--Map

ETC Canyon 4" Meter/Building COC23734E

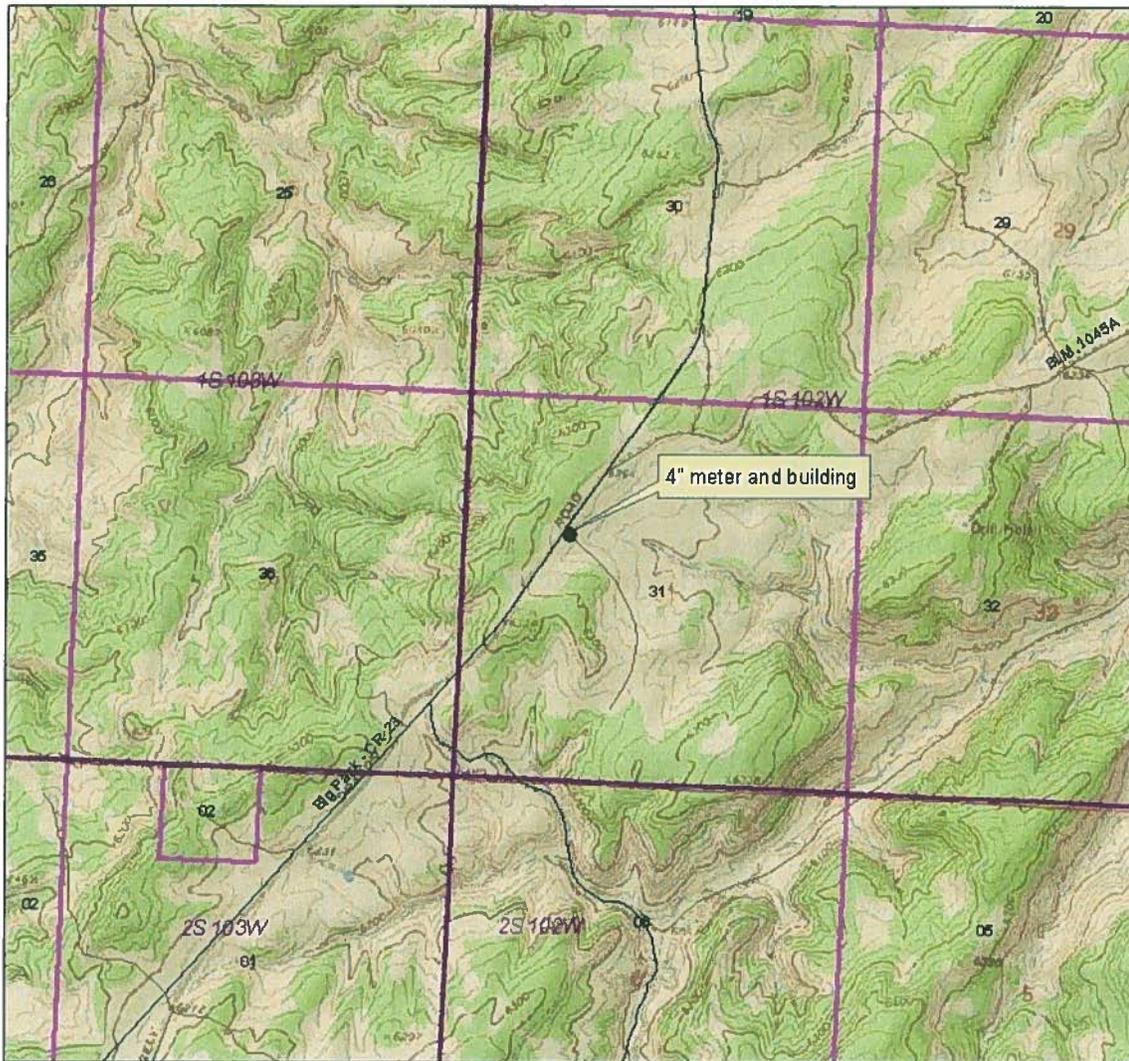


Exhibit A

-  State
-  County
-  BLM
-  USFS
-  NPS
-  Other
-  PLSS_Townships_GCDB2008

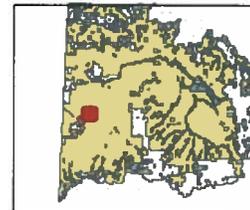


June 2012 JD

0 850 1,700 3,400 Feet

Sources:
BLM, USGS, CDOW, etc.

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



**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: ETC Interconnect

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0106-CX

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0106-CX, authorizing the amendment of right-of-way COC023734E for construction, operation, and maintenance of a 4 inch meter and building.

Mitigation Measures

1. All applicable terms, conditions, and stipulations contained in original ROW grant COC023734 and any amendments shall be carried forward and remain in full force and effect.
2. At least 90 days prior to termination of the right-of-way, the holder shall contact the Authorized Officer to arrange a joint inspection of the right-of-way. The inspection will result in the development of an acceptable termination and rehabilitation plan submitted by the holder. This plan shall include, but is not limited to, removal of facilities, drainage structures, and surface material; recontouring; topsoiling; or seeding. The Authorized Officer must approve the plan in writing prior to the holder's commencement of any termination activities.
3. 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.
4. Any proposal involving additional surface disturbance outside of the authorized right-of-way requires an application to the BLM for analysis and authorization. New stipulations for construction would be applied to projects subject to the regulations and policies existing at the time of authorization.
5. The holder shall monitor all disturbed and reclaimed areas through final abandonment for the presence of invasive, non-native, and/or noxious plant species. The applicant will be responsible for eradication of noxious weeds that occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder must notify the AO, by telephone and 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), the holder must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.
9. The holder 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 (over 25lbs./day, up to 250lbs./year), or collecting fossils for commercial purposes on public lands.
10. If any paleontological resources are discovered as a result of operations under this authorization, the holder or any of his agents must stop work immediately at that site, immediately contact the BLM Paleontology Coordinator, and make every effort to protect the site from further impacts, including looting, erosion, or other human or natural damage. Work may not resume at that location until approved by the AO. The BLM or designated paleontologist will evaluate the discovery and take action to protect or remove the resource within 10 working days. Within 10 days, the operator will be allowed to continue construction through the site, or will be given the choice of either (a) following the Paleontology Coordinator's instructions for stabilizing the fossil resource in place and avoiding further disturbance to the fossil resource, or (b) following the Paleontology Coordinator's instructions for mitigating impacts to the fossil resource prior to continuing construction through the project area.
11. Any excavations into the underlying native sedimentary stone must be monitored by a permitted paleontologist. The monitoring paleontologist must be present before the start of excavations that may impact bedrock.

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 6/20/2012 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, E13. 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:

07/10/12

