

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-110-2012-0102-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC-47675X

PROJECT NAME: Chevron, Well Kill Communication Network Tower Installations

APPLICANT: Chevron USA, Inc.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Chevron is planning to install six, 50 foot towers and one, 80 foot tower for the field wide well kill communication network (see figure 1). There are a total of 10 towers, seven of which are on BLM surface. The tower will have block bases. These towers are to stop the pumps if there is an upset condition at the collection station (high/low separator pressure, high tank level, and low tank level). They send a radio signal out to the producing wells that stop the pumps so that they will not send more fluid to the tank or vessel in order to avoid putting any liquid on the ground or having any type of environmental release, which could be a risk to public health and safety.

The concrete foundations will involve excavating up to 8 ft. x 8 ft. with a small excavator for the concrete foundation to a depth of 4.5 ft., up to an 8 ft. x 8 ft. 8 x 5 ft. block foundation will be used. The 80 foot tower will include the foundation (up to 12 feet by 12 feet by 4.5 feet) with a foundation rebar cage and concrete forms. The concrete foundation will then be poured and the tower assembled. Then the base of the tower will be grouted and the antennas will be place on the tower. Equipment that would be involved for the foundations may include: hydrovac truck, excavator, truck and trailer, concrete truck, crane and bucket truck.

Each base foundation will be within the already disturbed well pad location, there will be no new surface disturbance outside previous disturbance for most towers; however, for one tower (Collection Station 10) the tower will be on undisturbed ground just off the pad location. The sites were selected for existing electrical power available at the locations and proximity to the Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) that controls the station.

Table 1: Location, tower and foundation type of the proposed towers.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	<u>Tower Type</u>	<u>Foundation Type</u>
CS3	BLM	40.14417847	-108.9250827	50ft	Block
CS5	BLM	40.12972559	-108.9166431	50ft	Block

CS8	BLM	40.13771308	-108.9079622	50ft	Block
CS9	BLM	40.11754812	-108.9050057	50ft	Block
CS10	BLM	40.13997698	-108.8897605	50ft	Block
CS11	BLM	40.12877273	-108.8949695	50ft	Block
CS34	BLM	40.10286217	-108.8136768	80ft	Block

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).

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, Number (J-8). "Installation of minor devices to protect human life (e.g., grates across mines)."

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 S. Wolfe	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	9/13/2012
Laura Dixon	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	8/2/2012
Amber Shanklin	Biological Technician – Plants	Special Status Plant Species	8/16/2012

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: No known cultural resources are located within the proposed area of impact. Six of the seven tower locations are located in previously disturbed, bladed well pads where human activity within the past 50 years has created a new land surface to such an extent as to eradicate traces of cultural resources. Because one proposed tower location, Location CS10, is located on undisturbed ground, just off of an existing well pad location, a new cultural resource inventory was performed (Wolfe 2012). This inventory did not document any new cultural resources. The report made a determination of *no effect to historic properties*. Therefore, the project may proceed. Because there always exists the possibility of inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources the following conditions of approval shall be followed:

- 1) The operator 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 operator 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 operator, 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 operator/ 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 operator must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.

Native American Religious Concerns: No Native American concerns are known in the project area.

Special Status Wildlife Species: The general area encompassing the Proposed Action contains mapped white-tailed prairie dog colonies but there are no burrows located on existing pads. White-tailed prairie dogs provide an important shelter and food source for black-footed ferrets and burrowing owls. There nearest (active in 2012) burrowing owl nest is approximately 0.75 miles away from the nearest tower. However, since there will only be negligible new ground disturbance at one tower site, effects from the Proposed Action to white-tailed prairie dogs, ferrets and burrowing owls are not expected.” There are no other wildlife related uses or concerns associated with the Proposed Action.

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

MITIGATION:

1. The operator 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 operator 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 operator, 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.

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4. Construction sites and all facilities shall be maintained in a sanitary condition at all times; waste materials shall be disposed of promptly at an appropriate waste disposal site. "Waste" means all discarded matter including, but not limited to, human waste, trash, garbage, refuse, oil drums, petroleum products, ashes, and equipment.
5. The towers shall be painted a BLM approved, dull, non-reflective color.
6. The holder must provide documentation that appropriate Federal Communications Commission (FCC) permitting has been approved. The holder shall at all times operate its radio-electronic equipment in such a manner as not to cause interference with radio-electronic operations of existing users in the vicinity. If such interference results from holder's operations, holder will promptly, at its own expense, modify its equipment and operations, or shut down if necessary, to eliminate or reduce the interference to the satisfaction of the FCC and/or the BLM.
7. Where applicable, new construction must meet Motorola R-56 standards per guidance from Instruction Memorandum 2010-073.
8. Before final abandonment, compaction of soils will be reduced around the base of the towers and all near surface concrete, concrete should be removed to the rooting depth of reclamation vegetation before seeding.

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.

REFERENCES:

Wolfe, Michael S.

2012 Class III Cultural Resource Inventory of the Chevron Well Kill Communication Network Tower Installations, WRFO # 12-10-21 (RB.LM.NR2321). Manuscript on file at BLM-White River Field Office, Meeker, Colorado

NAME OF PREPARER: Ryan Sandefur

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, J8. 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:

10/11/12

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Map of proposed well kill communication network tower locations.

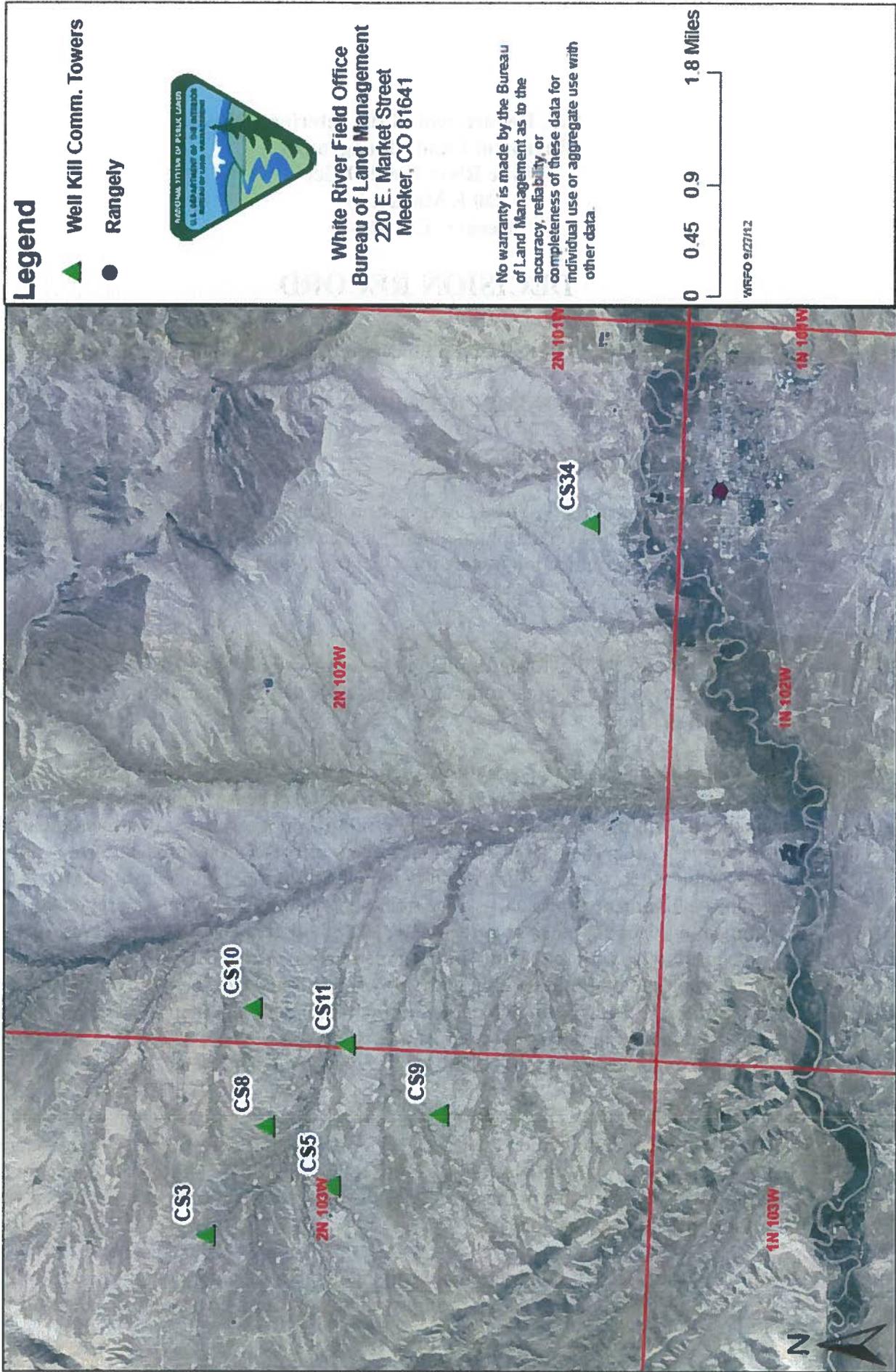


Figure 1: Well kill communication network towers map. Towers are named for the existing collection station they are to be installed on.

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DECISION RECORD

PROJECT NAME: Chevron, Well Kill Communication Network Tower Installations

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0102-CX

DECISION

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0102-CX, authorizing the installation, operation, and maintenance of seven (six 50 foot towers and one 80 foot tower) well kill communication towers for Chevron's field wide well kill communication network.

Mitigation Measures

1. The operator 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 operator 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 operator, 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 operator/ 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 operator must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.
4. Construction sites and all facilities shall be maintained in a sanitary condition at all times; waste materials shall be disposed of promptly at an appropriate waste disposal site.

"Waste" means all discarded matter including, but not limited to, human waste, trash, garbage, refuse, oil drums, petroleum products, ashes, and equipment.

5. The towers shall be painted a BLM approved, dull, non-reflective color.
6. The holder must provide documentation that appropriate Federal Communications Commission (FCC) permitting has been approved. The holder shall at all times operate its radio-electronic equipment in such a manner as not to cause interference with radio-electronic operations of existing users in the vicinity. If such interference results from holder's operations, holder will promptly, at its own expense, modify its equipment and operations, or shut down if necessary, to eliminate or reduce the interference to the satisfaction of the FCC and/or the BLM.
7. Where applicable, new construction must meet Motorola R-56 standards per guidance from Instruction Memorandum 2010-073.
8. Before final abandonment, compaction of soils will be reduced around the base of the towers and all near surface concrete, concrete should be removed to the rooting depth of reclamation vegetation before seeding.

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 7/17/2012 and a copy of the completed Categorical Exclusion will be posted on the WRFO website. As of 10/4/12 no comments or inquiries have been received.

RATIONALE

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, J8. 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. Installation of the communication towers allows Chevron to shut off pumps at the wells in emergency situations if there are issues at the collection stations that may result in a release of fluids. An environmental release could be a risk to public health and safety.

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

State Director Review

Under regulations addressed in 43 CFR 3165.3(b), any adversely affected party that contests a decision of the Authorized Officer may request an administrative review, before the State Director, either with or without oral presentation. Such request, including all supporting documentation, shall be filed in writing with the BLM Colorado State Office at 2850 Youngfield

Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215 within 20 business days of the date such decision was received or considered to have been received. Upon request and showing of good cause, an extension may be granted by the State Director. Such review shall include all factors or circumstances relevant to the particular case.

Appeal

Any party who is adversely affected by the decision of the State Director after State Director review, under 43 CFR 3165.3(b), of a decision may appeal that decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals pursuant to the regulations set out in 43 CFR Part 4.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:



Field Manager

DATE SIGNED:

10/11/12