

**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-110-2012-0109-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

PROJECT NAME: 2012 Emergency Placement of Stock Tank at Corcoran Spring within the Piceance-East Douglas HMA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T2N, R97W, Section 33

APPLICANT: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), White River Field Office (WRFO)

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The WRFO will provide temporary emergency water for wild horses in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area (HMA) in consideration of extreme drought conditions. As of the June 12, 2012, the U.S. Drought Monitor maps identified the majority of Rio Blanco County as a drought intensity category D3, which is "extreme" drought.

The WRFO rangeland management staff has been monitoring drought conditions in the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area since mid-May 2012 and has determined that there are now inadequate water supplies for the horses in the Rocky Ridge Area.

Stock tanks will be used to provide emergency sources of supplemental water. The tank, of an 8 foot diameter, is capable of holding 500 gallons and will be placed on an existing two-track and pipeline crossing just above the Corcoran Spring (see Figure 1) in T2N R97W Section 33. The stock tank will be plumbed so that water leaves the stock tank and discharges into the previously developed spring. The spring was developed in 1969 and reconstructed in 1979. These spring developments are no longer functioning and in need of maintenance and/or reconstruction. Additional NEPA will be completed in order to address this action in the future.

The BLM has obtained a bulk water permit from the Town of Meeker and will use Meeker's municipal bulk water supply as the source of the hauled water. Water will be hauled to the site using a pick-up truck with a gooseneck trailer. A temporary surface pipeline (3/4 inch black poly pipe) will be used to gravity feed water from the two-track roadway site down to the spring.

Placement of temporary water will not exceed 30 days at any one location under this Categorical Exclusion. It may be necessary to continue to provide emergency water for horses if conditions

have not improved, however, at that time, additional locations may be chosen in order to distribute horses to areas where forage may be more available.

The BLM 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.

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.

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.

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 2-26

Decision Language: "Wild horses will be managed to provide a healthy, viable breeding population with a diverse age structure."

"The wild horse herd population will be managed to improve range condition."

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, D2: "*Placement and use of temporary (not to exceed one month) portable corrals and water troughs, providing no new road construction is needed.*"

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, 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 WRFO interdisciplinary team on June 18, 2012. A complete list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the WRFO. The table below lists resource specialists who provided additional remarks concerning cultural resources and special status species.

Name	Title	Resource	Date
Michael Wolfe	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	July 18, 2012
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	July 10, 2012
Amber Shanklin	Biological Technician – Plants	Special Status Plant Species	July 3, 2012

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources: A Class III cultural resource inventory was performed for this undertaking. This included a buffer surrounding the tank and the spring to include an area measuring approximately 350 by 1,100 feet; approximately 9 acres. No cultural properties are located within the area surrounding the Corcoran Spring stock tank location.

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 animals listed, proposed, or candidate to the Endangered Species Act that inhabit or derive important benefit from the project location. The Proposed Action would have no conceivable direct or indirect influence on special status animals or their associated habitats.

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

REFERENCES CITED

Wolfe, Michael S.

2012 Class III Cultural Resource Inventory of the 2012 Emergency West Douglas Herd Area Wild Horse Gather (Phase II) and Emergency Placement of Corcoran Spring Stock Tank in Rio Blanco County, Colorado WRFO #12-10-14,(SHPO # RB.LM.NR2315).

MITIGATION: None.

COMPLIANCE PLAN: On-going inspections and monitoring of this area for wild horse use will be conducted by the BLM WRFO staff during and after the drought conditions.

NAME OF PREPARER: James Roberts and Melissa J. Kindall

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, D2. 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:


Acting Field Manager

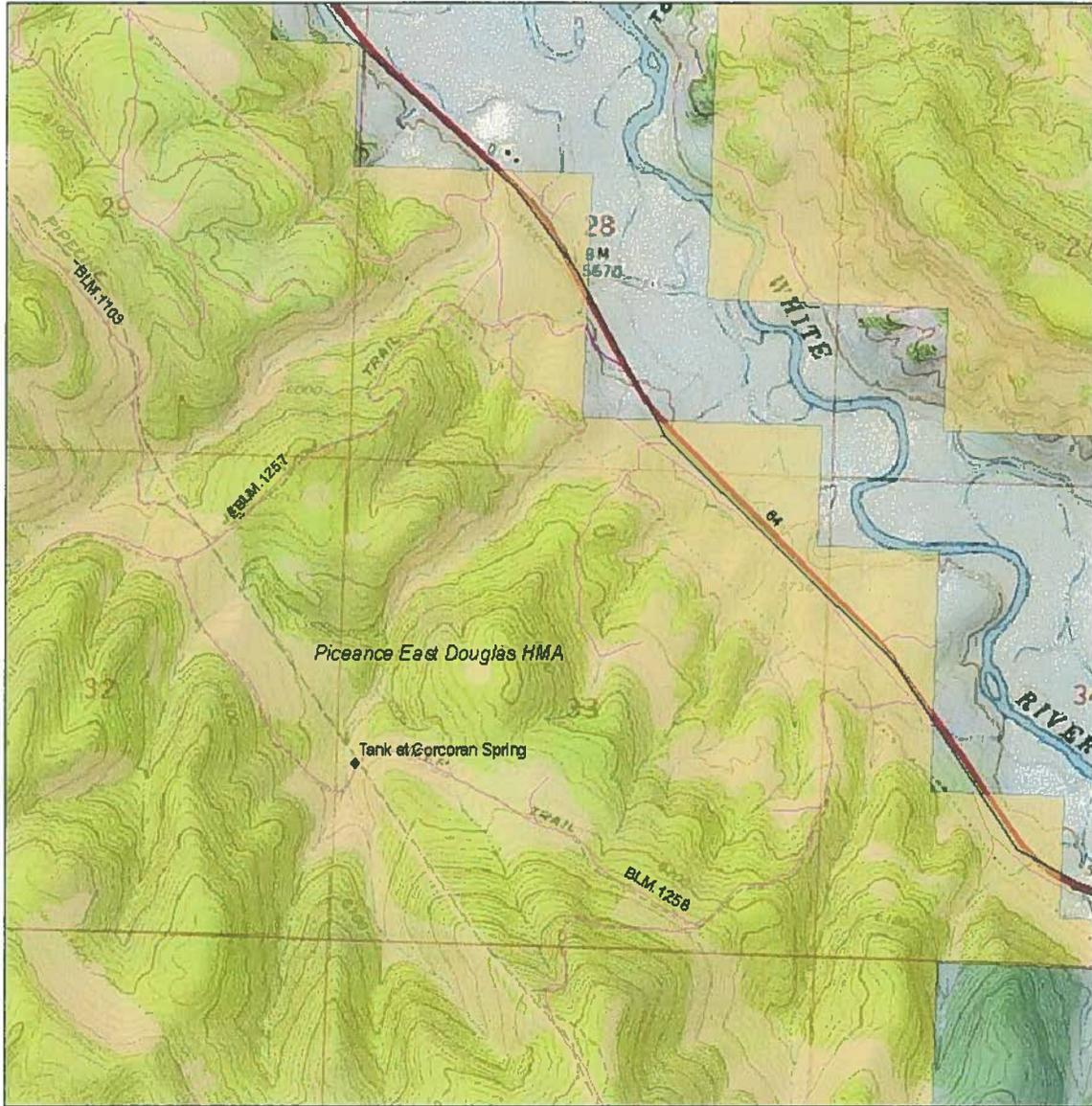
DATE SIGNED: 7/26/2012

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1 – Location of Emergency Supplemental Water at the Corcoran Spring

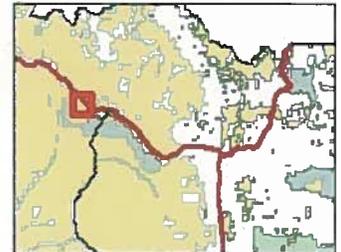
Figure 1: Location of Emergency Supplemental Water at the Corcoran Spring

Corcoran Spring Tank



Contributors:
BLM, USGS, CDDW, etc.

Disclaimer:
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DECISION RECORD

PROJECT NAME: 2012 Emergency Placement of Stock Tank at Corcoran Spring within the Piceance-East Douglas HMA

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2012-0109-CX

DECISION: It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as described in DOI-BLM-CO-110-2012-0109-CX, authorizing the placement and use of a temporary stock tank in the Rocky Ridge area of the Piceance-East Douglas Herd Management Area to provide an emergency supplemental source of water to wild horses that are experiencing extreme drought conditions. The placement and use of the stock tank shall not exceed 30 days. If, after 30 days, it is determined that there is a continued need for supplemental water, there will be additional review and NEPA documentation.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & CONFORMANCE WITH THE LAND USE PLAN: This decision is in compliance with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971, 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 public was notified of this action when it was posted on the WRFO's on-line National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) register on 7/11/2012. A copy of the completed CX will also be posted on the on-line NEPA register.

RATIONALE: The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, D2. 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. Further, providing supplemental water sources as an emergency action during periods of extreme drought demonstrates BLM's commitment to manage wild horses humanely.

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES: 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:


Acting Field Manager

DATE SIGNED:

7/26/2012