

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

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

WPX RGU 33-25-198 Frac Line Re-route **DOI-BLM-CO-N05-2015-0006-CX**

Identifying Information

Project Title: WPX RGU 33-25-198 Frac Line Re-route

Legal Description: T.1S R.98W Section 25

Applicant: WPX Energy Rocky Mountain

Casefile/Project Number: COC-60733

Conformance with the Land Use Plan

The Proposed Action is subject to and is in conformance (43 CFR 1610.5) with the following land use plan:

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

Date Approved: July 1997

Decision Language: “Make federal oil and gas resources available for leasing and development in a manner that provides reasonable protection for other resource values.” (page 2-5)

Proposed Action

Project Components and General Schedule

In August 2014, the RGU 33-25-198 well pad was analyzed in the DOI-BLM-CO-N05-2014-0054-DNA. This analysis included remote fracking the wells on this location from the RGU-11-25-198 with a 3 inch temporary surface line (approximately 19,047 feet). This line would be removed approximately 10 months after the date of the first completion. However, WPX has submitted a Sundry Notice requesting the route of the temporary surface line be re-routed. It would be from the RGU-31-25-198 pad versus the RGU 11-25-198 pad (Figure 1). This re-route would shorten the length by approximately 3,500 feet, for a total length of 15,547 feet. The frac lines will be run along the road, so no additional disturbance would be required on either the pad

or the roads. Drilling is anticipated to occur January 2015 with the fracking and completions to follow. The estimated duration is approximately 150 days.

BLM Required Conditions of Approval to Mitigate Impacts to Cultural and Paleontological Resources

1. The applicant 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 applicant 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 applicant, 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 applicant 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.

Categorical Exclusion Review

The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, E18: “Temporary placement of pipeline above ground.”

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

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
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 White River Field Office interdisciplinary team on November 4, 2014. 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 review or remarks concerning cultural resources and special status species.

Name	Title	Resource	Date
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	1/21/2015
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	12/3/2014
Heather Woodruff	Ecologist	Special Status Plant Species	11/6/2014
Joseph David	Planning and Environmental Coordinator	NEPA Compliance	2/2/2015

Cultural Resources: The proposed surface line reroute is in areas covered by at least three inventories (Conner 2013 compliance dated 6/14/2013, Conner *et al* 2011 compliance dated 9/6/2011, Mills 2013 compliance dated 7/2/2013) which have not identified any cultural resources in the immediate project area. However, there are cultural resources located less than 1,000 feet (305 meters) from the proposed pipeline route. Provided all workers remain within the working area of the pipeline, there should be no new direct impacts to cultural resources. However, improved access and increased human activity in the area could potentially result in unlawful collection artifacts from the sites. The impacts from unlawful collection are not

currently quantifiable, but do represent a long term, permanent, irreversible and irretrievable loss of data from the regional archaeological database.

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.

Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species: The surface line route would be located on existing well access that supports frequent well development activity. The majority of the route traverses regenerating woodlands (vintage chainings) that offer no woodland raptor nest substrate. The route bisects a small (~85 meter diameter, less than 3 acres) remnant stand of mature woodland whose utility as a woodland raptor nest stand is largely diminished by ongoing traffic use. The project is encompassed by big game severe winter range that is normally subject to timing restrictions that prohibit disruptive activity from December 1 to April 30. However, this location and the frac line route are situated within an area where winter timing limitations have been temporarily excepted within the framework of a cooperatively developed wildlife mitigation plan (i.e., BLM, CPW, WPX). Although this project is subject to winter timing limitations, it will qualify for an exception provided the work remains consistent with the most current version of the WMP (i.e., through the winter of 2014/2015).

Threatened and Endangered Plant Species: The frac line re-route and surrounding area has had three previous surveys for special status plant species (SSPS). These were all performed within the last three years (2012-2014) because of other energy related activities going on in the surrounding area. No suitable or occupied SSPS habitat was identified during any of the surveys. The closest occupied SSPS habitat is approximately 1.1 miles to the east of the frac line re-route in the Ryan Gulch ACEC. Therefore, there are no associated issues or concerns with the frac line re-route.

References Cited

Conner, Carl E.

- 2013 Class III Cultural Resources Survey for the Proposed RGU #33-25-198 Well Location and Related Access In Rio Blanco County, Colorado for WPX Energy Rocky Mountain, LLC. Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado. (13-11-08: OAH # RB.LM.R2355)

Conner, Carl E., Nicole Darnell and Barbara Davenport

- 2011 Class III Cultural Resource Inventory Report for the Proposed RGU 32-25-198 Well Location in Rio Blanco County, Colorado for Williams Field Service Company, LLC. Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado. (11-11-28: OHAP #RB.LM.R1263)

Mills, Hannah

- 2013 Class III Cultural Resources Survey for the NE Ryan Gulch Water Recycling Pit in Rio Blanco County, Colorado for WPX Energy Rocky Mountain, LLC. Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado. (13-11-11: OAH # RB.LM.NR2358)

Mitigation

1. Project work would not be authorized between the dates of December 1 and April 30 to reduce cumulative energetic and physiological demands on big game during the winter and early spring seasons. Exceptions would be considered by BLM consistent with most current wildlife mitigation plan strategies.

Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted

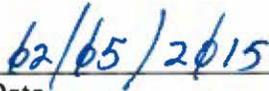
Colorado SHPO, 9/8/2011, 6/28/2013, 7/12/2014

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, E18. 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.



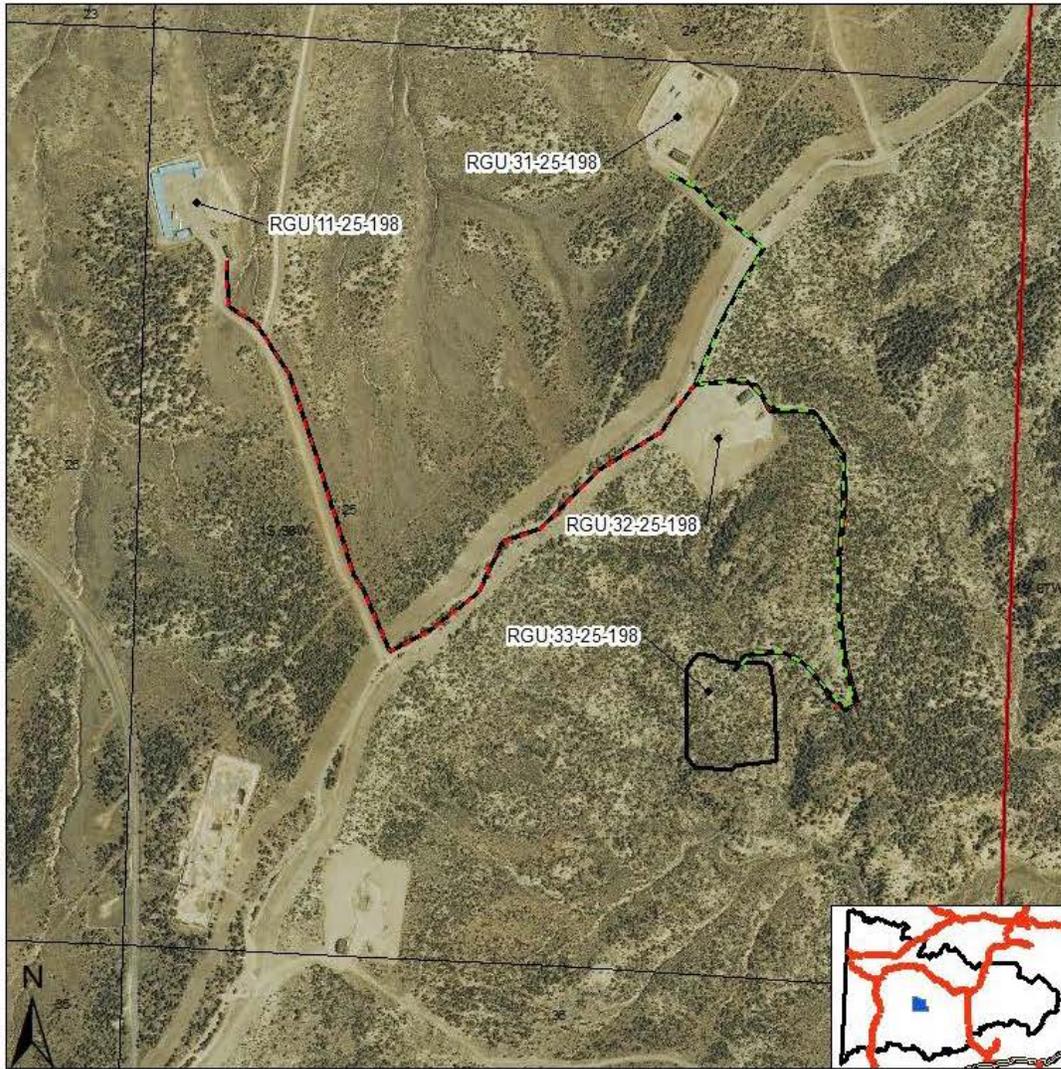
Field Manager



Date

Appendix A. Figures

Figure 1:



Legend

- Proposed Frac Line
- Original Frac Line
- RGU 33-25-198

0 0.15 0.3 Miles

NO WARRANTY IS MADE BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT AS TO THE ACCURACY, RELIABILITY, OR COMPLETENESS OF THESE DATA FOR INDIVIDUAL USE OR AGGREGATION USE WITH OTHER DATA.



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Figure 1: Map depicting the proposed re-route of the frac line for the RGU 33-25-198 pad.