

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Categorical Exclusion
for
Colorado Army National Guard
Grand Valley Shooting Range**

Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506

DOI-BLM-CO-N030-2015-0014-CX

May 2015



LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Ute Principal Meridian, Mesa County, Colorado

T. 1 N., R. 1 E.,

Section 4, Lots 3 and 4, SW¹/₄NW¹/₄;

Section 5, Lot 1, SE¹/₄NE¹/₄.

APPLICANT: Colorado Army National Guard

CASE FILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC077004

INTRODUCTION: The Colorado Army National Guard (COARNG) proposes to utilize the Grand Valley Shooting Range for conducting small arms firing training. This use would eliminate the need for The Guard to travel to the eastern slope of Colorado.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Colorado Army National Guard (COARNG) proposes to utilize the Grand Valley shooting range for conducting small arms firing training activity which would include as many as 90 soldiers, approximately 3 times a year. Each soldier would shoot approximately 100 rounds per event. Planned usage would be for up to three (3) periods per year, approx. 36 hours in duration, falling over weekends that would be forecasted a minimum of 120 days in advance. All expended brass and dunnage would be picked up and removed from the range at the end of each event. A military Range Officer would be in charge of the training event to ensure proper range operation and safety.

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: Grand Junction Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: January, 1987

Decision Number/Page: Page 2-29

Decision Language: The objective of the GJFO RMP under Public Utilities Management is “to respond in a timely manner, to requests for utility authorizations on public land while considering environmental, social, economic, and interagency concerns.”

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW:

The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9 E: “Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition.”

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

There are no extraordinary circumstances having effects, which may significantly affect the environment. I considered the following resource conditions in determining whether

extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action warranted further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS (516 DM 2, Appendix 2):

Note: add all comments about resources below under the appropriate question. Do not add a remarks or analysis section.

1. Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety.

The proposed action is not expected to impact public health and safety because A Military Range Officer will be in charge of the training event to ensure proper range operation and safety.

2. Have adverse effects 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.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Previous Class III cultural resource inventory has occurred in portions of the project area for the shooting range perimeter fence (BLM GJFO 1014-09/OAHP Doc. No. ME.LM.NR623) and no cultural resources were found. The project is located at a heavily used, BLM maintained rifle shooting range. The survey area is badly littered with trash, spent cartridge cases, and broken clay pigeon fragments. The lease for this land was issued to Mesa County for the construction of the range in 1973. The range has been actively utilized, improved, and maintained since that time. The previous ground disturbance from the shooting range has modified the surface so extensively that the likelihood of finding intact cultural resources is negligible. No additional cultural inventory was conducted due to this environment and the fact that there will be no additional surface disturbance beyond the shooting that has occurred since 1973 on the range. This decision is in compliance with the evaluation required by the National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 800, Colorado BLM's Protocol with the State Historic Preservation Office, and the 2011 CO BLM Handbook for Cultural Resources (Section VI.E.2, p. 25).

SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS: No wilderness characteristics.

DRINKING WATER AQUIFERS; WETLANDS, FLOODPLAINS: The proposed activity will have no effect on riparian or wetland zones, as none are located within the shooting area. Since the proposed National Guard activity is limited to the existing shooting range, and does not include any activity beyond what occurs daily at the range, no additional impacts are anticipated. The closest ephemeral creek, Leech Creek, is outside of the shooting range.

MIGRATORY BIRDS: Since there is no increase in disturbance beyond ordinary use there will not be an effect on nesting or important migratory stopover areas.

3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.

The impacts of target shooting are generally well known and documented in the local community. Therefore, the environmental effects are not likely to be controversial.

4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Target shooting has a long history in the region and poses no unique or unknown risks.

5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

The decision is within the scope of the Resource Management Plan is not expected to establish a precedent for future actions.

6. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

This is a stand-alone project. There are no projects with significant environmental impacts known to BLM that would result directly or indirectly from implementation of this project.

7. Have adverse effects on properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. No

8. Have adverse effects 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.

Special Status Species Plants – Colorado hookless cactus are known to occur in the area, but the proposed action is not likely to result in an increase in effects to the federally listed species. Since motorized travel will be limited to designated routes and foot traffic will be within the shooting range, the proposed action is not likely to result in impacts beyond what occurs daily.

Special Status Species Animals - Other Important Wildlife Habitat – The nature of the impacts from the proposed activities are not expected to impact wildlife or their habitat, including special status species, any more than ongoing casual use activities in the area.

9. Have the potential to violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

This decision complies with other Federal, State, or local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

10. Have the potential for a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.

The minority and low-income populations of the county are small relative to state-wide averages and such populations are dispersed throughout the county. Therefore, no minority or low-income populations would suffer disproportionately high and adverse

effects as a result of the Proposed Action.

11. Restrict access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.

There are no known features in the shooting range that suggests that the project area holds special significance for Native Americans for traditional or religious purposes and the project would not alter or limit any access if there were traditional uses that are not known to the agency.

12. Significantly, 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.

The Proposed Action will occur within an existing disturbance. The actions of The Colorado Army National Guard will not promote spread of noxious weeds.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
Alissa Leavitt-Reynolds	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
Anna Lincoln	Ecologist	Special Status Species
Heidi Plank	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife, Fisheries, Special Status Species
Janet Doll	Realty, Lead	Right-of-Way Authorization

NAME OF PREPARER: Janet Doll

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Christina Stark

DATE: 5/8/15

Table 1– Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact*	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation Necessary ?	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date	Comments
PHYSICAL RESOURCES						
Air and Climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	PLB 3/18/15	
Water (surface & subsurface, floodplains)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	PLB 3/18/15	
Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	PLB 3/18/15	
Geological/Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 2/13/15	
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES						
Special Status Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ALE 3/16/15	
Special Status Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ALE 3/16/15	
Migratory Birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ALE 3/16/15	
Other Important Wildlife Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ALE 3/16/15	
Vegetation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JAM 3/4/15	
Forestry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JAM 3/4/15	
Invasive, Non-native Species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	MT 2/25/15	
Riparian Zones/ Wetlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ARL 3/23/15	
HERITAGE RESOURCES AND HUMAN ENV.						
Cultural or Historical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ALR 2/27/15	Will need to attach SHPO letter to final NEPA document.
Paleontological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	DSG 2/13/15	
Tribal & American Indian Religious Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	ALR 2/27/15	
Visual Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	AW 2/20/15	
Social/Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	CS 3/20/15	

Table 1– Potentially Impacted Resources

Resources	Not Present On Location	No Impact*	Potentially Impacted	Mitigation Necessary ?	BLM Evaluator Initial & Date	Comments
Transportation and Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	AW 2/20/15	
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AK 4/7/2015	
LAND RESOURCES						
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	AW 2/20/15	
Special Designations (ACEC, SMAs, WSR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	AW 2/20/15	
Wilderness & Wilderness Characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	AW 2/20/15	
Range Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JAM 3/4/15	
Wild Horse and Burros	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JAM 3/4/15	
Land Tenure, ROW, Other Uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JD 4/14/15	
Fire/Fuels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	JP 2/12/15	

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE**

DECISION DOCUMENT

**Colorado Army National Guard
Grand Valley Shooting Range
DOI-BLM-CO-NO30-2015-0014-CX**

DECISION:

I have reviewed this document and it is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-NO300-2015-0014-CX, authorizing a short-term right-of-way to the Colorado Army National Guard for use of the Grand Valley Shooting Range. This project is categorically excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS under 516 DM 11.9 E: "Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition."

RATIONALE:

This action is listed in the Department Handbook H-1790-1 as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that no extraordinary circumstances exist.

The Colorado Army National Guard (COARNG) proposes to utilize the Grand Valley Shooting Range for conducting small arms firing training. This use would eliminate the need for The Guard to travel to the eastern slope of Colorado, thus reducing budget costs.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

Public scoping was conducted by holding a community meeting at the National Guard Readiness Center on Thursday, April 9th at 6:00. The project information was also posted on the Grand Junction Field Office NEPA website, this was the primary mechanism used by the BLM to initially identify issues from the public. Internal scoping for the project included presentation and discussion of the project at BLM interdisciplinary meetings (IDT).

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES: Appeals may be made to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior, Board of Land Appeals (Board) in strict compliance with the regulations in 43 CFR Part 4. Notices of appeal must be filed in this office within 30 days after publication of this decision. If a notice of appeal does not include a statement of reasons, such statement must be filed with this office and the Board within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed. The notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, 755 Parfet Street, Suite 151, Lakewood, Colorado 80215.)



Wayne Werkmeister
Acting Field Manager
Grand Junction Field Office

5-8-15

Date

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit A: Project Map.
Exhibit B: Stipulations

Exhibit B: Stipulations

- 1) All persons in the area who are associated with this project shall be informed that any person who, without a permit, injures, destroys, excavates, appropriates or removes any historic or prehistoric ruin, artifact, object of antiquity, Native American remains, Native American cultural item, or archaeological resources on public lands is subject to arrest and penalty of law (16 USC 433, 16 USC 470, 18 USC 641, 18 USC 1170, and 18 USC 1361). Strict adherence to the confidentiality of information concerning the nature and location of archeological resources would be required of the proponent and all of their subcontractors (Archaeological Resource Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 470hh).
- 2) Inadvertent Discovery: The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) [16 USC 470s., 36 CFR 800.13], as amended, requires that if newly discovered historic or archaeological materials or other cultural resources are identified during the Proposed Action implementation, work in that area must stop and the BLM Authorized Officer (AO) must be notified immediately. Within five working days the AO will determine the actions that will likely have to be completed before the site can be used (assuming in place preservation is not necessary).
- 3) The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) [25 USC 3001 et seq., 43 CFR 10.4] requires that if inadvertent discovery of Native American Human Remains or Objects of Cultural Patrimony occurs, any activity must cease in the area of discovery, a reasonable effort made to protect the item(s) discovered, and immediate notice be made to the BLM Authorized Officer, as well as the appropriate Native American group(s) (IV.C.2). Notice may be followed by a 30-day delay (NAGPRA
- 4) Antiquities, historic ruins, prehistoric ruins, and other cultural or paleontological objects of scientific interest that are outside the authorization boundaries but potentially affected, either directly or indirectly, by the proposed action shall also be included in this evaluation or mitigation. Impacts that occur to such resources as a result of the authorized activities shall be mitigated at the operator's cost, including the cost of consultation with Native American groups.
- 5) At least 90 days prior to termination of the ROW, the holder shall contact the Authorized Officer to arrange a joint inspection of the right-of-way. This inspection will be held to agree to an acceptable termination and rehabilitation plan. This plan shall include, but is not limited to, removal of facilities, drainage structures, removal of surface material; re-contouring, top-soiling, or seeding. The Authorized Officer must approve the plan in writing prior to the holder's commencement of any termination activities.
- 6) The holder shall conduct all activities associated with the construction, operation, and termination of the right-of-way within the authorized limits of the ROW.