

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
White River Field Office  
73544 Hwy 64  
Meeker, CO 81641

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**NUMBER:** CO-110-2004-044-EA

**CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER** (optional):

**PROJECT NAME:** Pesticide Use Proposals for bare ground

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Area Wide

**APPLICANT:** White River Field Office

**ISSUES AND CONCERNS** (optional):

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:**

***Background/Introduction:*** It has become common for oil and gas production companies to remove vegetation around their production facilities. Some areas can be treated by mechanical methods such as blading or dragging. Those areas close to meter houses, tanks and other production equipment could be sprayed with several types of chemicals to kill all the vegetation. During the last four years this Field Office has analyzed and approved eleven proposals for the application of chemicals to establish and maintain bare ground around production facilities.

***Proposed Action:*** The proposed action is to use chemicals to kill the existing vegetation and promote bare ground around the production facilities. The chemicals to be analyzed in this document are: Round Up(glyphosate), Krovar (bromacil and diuron), Sahara(diuron and imazapyr) and Karmex DF(diuron). Areas to be treated will have been previously disturbed during the construction phase of the project. The area to be treated will be limited to a distance of up to 10 feet from the edge of well heads, meter houses, treaters, etc. Equipment enclosed in fences would be protected from the encroachment of vegetation out to the fence.

All control activities would be in compliance with the Record of Decision for "Vegetative Treatment on BLM Lands", in Thirteen Western States(BLM1991).

Glyphosates: A nonselective, foliar, translocated herbicide with no soil activity. Rainfall within six hours after application may reduce effectiveness. Glyphosate translocates to roots and rhizomes of perennial weeds. Complete control may require retreatment. The Rodeo formulation

requires additional nonionic surfactant and is formulated for aquatic sites. Water solubility is 12,000 ppm. This chemical inhibits amino acid and protein synthesis. Surface loss potential is large. Leaching potential is small. Half-life in soil is 30 days.

Bromacil: A substituted uracil compound used as a pre- and post emergence, somewhat selective soil residual herbicide. Controls a wide range of weeds. A minimum amount of water will activate bromacil, which functions by inhibiting photosynthesis. Surface loss potential is minimal. Leaching potential is large. Half life in soil is 90 days.

Diuron: A substituted urea compound used as a pre- or post emergence, selective herbicide and soil-residual herbicide. This material is absorbed by plant roots and translocated. It is foliar-absorbed when used with a wetting agent. Diuron may persist in the soil for several months. Diuron inhibits photosynthesis. Surface loss potential is large. Leaching potential is medium. Half-life in soil is 60 days.

Imazpyr: This broadspectrum herbicide can be applied pre or post emergence to weeds. It is stable for at least 18 months, kills plants within two to four weeks with residual activity, and is currently registered for use in non-crop areas such as industrial sites and rights-of-way.

Application would be by a combination of backpack, truck or ATV sprayer. The method of herbicide application would be dependant on the size and location of the weeds to be treated.

All spraying will be under the control of a certified herbicide applicator.

#### Mitigation and Stipulations:

- The applicant is required to provide the Herbicide Application reports prior to October 1, of each year, including a map of actual area sprayed and total quantity of chemical applied.
- Application of pesticides and herbicides on public lands will conform to BLM Manual H-9011-1 and 9015.
- Only federally registered herbicides would be used.
- Herbicides would be applied as per label instructions and restrictions.
- The intake operation of water for mixing would be arranged so that an air gap or reservoir would be placed between the live water intake and the mixing tank to prevent back flow or siphoning of chemical into the water source.
- Chemical containers will be disposed of as required by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- To minimize drift, application of all herbicides would be confined to periods when wind speed is less than 6 miles per hour. Application would not occur during precipitation, or if there is a threat of precipitation.
- In the event raptor nest activity is discovered within treatment areas, restrictions on motorized application equipment and approach to the nest site would be applied until nest functions are complete.
- Herbicide application on the White River's 100-year floodplain (i.e., endangered Colorado pike-minnow and other Colorado River fishes) or within 100 feet of floodplains of systems that are occupied by BLM sensitive species (see Threatened and Endangered Species section below) will require a separate NEPA analysis. Although label and BLM-imposed application measures are generally considered adequate to prevent any direct or indirect impact to these aquatic communities from spot treatments, site-specific review of proposed actions is necessary to make Endangered Species Act determinations.
- As a means of being able to validate control action to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the location, extent, and manner of application for all treatment areas should be documented and mapped using GPS technology and this information provided to BLM annually for review within the timeframe specified in the noxious weed section below.
- The following buffer strips will be provided for streams and riparian areas that are not associated with a special status fishery (see Aquatic Wildlife section): a minimum buffer strip of 25 feet wide will be provided for vehicle spraying and 10 feet for hand application. Any deviations must be in accordance with the label for the herbicide. Herbicides will be wiped on individual plants within 10 feet of water where application is critical.
- Always refer to chemical label instructions for additional guidance on use near water and required buffer zones.
- To enhance effectiveness and prevent transport into streams, apply chemicals during appropriate weather conditions (generally calm and dry) and during the optimum time for control of the target pest or weed.

### ***Safeguard Measures***

- All individuals associated with the handling or application of herbicides on public lands would be familiar with the chemicals used and emergency procedures to be used in case of herbicide spill.
- The safe use of herbicides includes precautionary measures to prevent accidental spills. The following written precautions describe measures that would be used to reduce the chance of such accidents.

- The applicable Federal regulations concerning the storage and disposal of herbicides and herbicide containers would be followed. These are described in the EPA's "Regulations for acceptance and Procedures for Disposal and Storage", Federal Register notices as amended. It is essential to prevent damage to containers so that leaks do not develop; care would be exercised so that containers would not be punctured or ruptured, and so that the lids or caps would not be loosened.
- Precautions would be taken in the loading and stacking of herbicide containers in the transporting vehicle to assure that they would not fall as the vehicle moves.
- Open containers would not be transported. Partly empty containers would be securely re-sealed before transportation.
- Mixed herbicide will not be transported.

***No Action Alternative:*** No chemical treatment of weeds would occur.

**NEED FOR THE ACTION:** The White River Field Office has received requests for the application of chemicals to maintain bare ground around production facilities.

**PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:**

**a. Name of Plan:** White River Record of Decision/Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

**b. Date Approved:** July 1, 1997

**c. Page/Decision:** 2-55 To manage fire to protect public health, safety and property as well as allowing fire to carry out important ecological functions.

**d.** The proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3) The action conforms to the decisions/pages of the plan listed above.

**AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:**

**STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH:** In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

## **CRITICAL ELEMENTS**

### **INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES**

*Affected Environment:* The goal for the project sites is the maintenance of bare ground. The reclamation requirement of these sites is contained within the permit or other authorization.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Glyphosphate would not affect reclamation of the site, as the chemical becomes completely tied up in clay particles. Bromacil, Diuron, and Imazpyr are all soil activated relatively persistent chemicals which could prevent seedling germination for a short period of time (less than 5 years), negatively impacting the reclamation effort. At such time as the herbicides lose their effectiveness, by degradation or dilution, reclamation would proceed normally.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* There would be no impacts.

*Mitigation:* None

### **MIGRATORY BIRDS**

*Affected Environment:* A large array of migratory birds fulfills nesting functions throughout the Resource Area during the months of May, June, and July. However, the proposed treatments would be confined to fenced industrial facility yards and the immediate vicinity of oil and gas production and transportation equipment that has been maintained in a heavily disturbed and non-vegetated state and provide no practical cover or forage component for migratory bird use.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Short duration and localized herbicide application activities during early to mid-summer would have no further influence on nearby nesting habitats than periodic well and pipeline inspection and maintenance activities. These episodes would have no reasonable probability of adversely affecting local reproductive efforts or recruitment.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* It is assumed that vegetation on these sites would be treated mechanically. Mechanical treatment would probably involve more frequent and perhaps longer duration activity at control sites, but due to the nature of these sites, influences on birds nesting in surrounding habitats would likely remain similar to those discussed in the proposed action.

*Mitigation:* None

### **THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)**

*Affected Environment:* All perennial and intermittent stream systems within the Resource Area eventually contribute to endangered Colorado River fisheries in the Colorado, White, Green, and Yampa Rivers. The White River between Rio Blanco Lake and the Utah state line is designated critical habitat for the endangered Colorado pike-minnow, although present occupation is confined to the reach below Taylor Draw dam. Maintenance of proper bank, channel and floodplain function is specifically identified as essential to the continued existence of this fishery.

The White River corridor serves as an activity hub for nesting and wintering populations of threatened bald eagles. A number of nest and winter roost sites are associated with the river's cottonwood galleries.

Riparian/wetland habitats above 8000 feet possess general potential for occupation by the candidate boreal toad. However, there are no historical or recent indications (e.g., 1996 Natural Heritage Program inventory on the Roan Plateau) that boreal toad occupied such habitats on the Piceance/Douglas divides, Roan Plateau, or Blue Mountain.

Under the auspices of a non-essential, experimental population rule and a cooperatively developed ferret management plan, black-footed ferrets have been released (or dispersed from Utah releases) annually in the Coyote Basin and Wolf Creek Management Areas since 1999. Ferret distribution is confined to the Area's lower elevation salt desert communities that support white-tailed prairie dogs, essentially a narrow corridor along Highway 40 from Elk Springs to the Utah line. Ferrets have successfully reproduced in Coyote Basin and although not yet established, a small number of ferrets are thought to persist in the Wolf Creek area. These prairie dog communities also support nesting populations of burrowing owl, an uncommon species that has high conservation priority in both the Colorado Division of Wildlife and BLM. These birds return to occupy prairie dog burrow systems in early April and begin nesting soon after. By October, the birds leave for southern wintering grounds.

There are a number of fishes that have been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act (Colorado River cutthroat trout) or are listed by BLM as sensitive (effectively the same status as species candidate for listing), including: roundtail chub, and bluehead, flannelmouth, and mountain suckers. The following stream systems harbor populations of these fishes: the White River 100-year floodplain (Colorado pike-minnow and other upper Colorado River fishes), Bitter Creek, Piceance Creek, Crooked Wash, Big Beaver Creek, Trapper's Creek, East Douglas Creek and its tributaries, and Black Sulphur Creek and its tributaries.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* These herbicides are slightly toxic to practically nontoxic to terrestrial vertebrates. Control activity would be confined to weedy annuals and pioneering shrubs (e.g., rabbitbrush) within graveled and fenced yards around existing industrial facilities or within 10 feet of oil and gas production and transportation facilities (expected to be < 1/20 acre per treatment site). The barren and disturbed nature of ground in close proximity to these industrial features offer no attributes attractive to terrestrial birds or mammals. Because of the localized nature of weed control, the improbable risk of herbicide exposure, and the low toxicity of these compounds, there is no reasonable likelihood

that weed treatment as proposed poses a threat to black-footed ferret, bald eagle, boreal toad, or burrowing owl, or BLM sensitive species, such as the white-tailed prairie dog. Summer control activities would be short term and dispersed and do not represent activity levels or time frames that would have any substantive influence on sensitive habitats and/or breeding activities of special status species.

Aquatic organisms are typically more susceptible to direct exposure and the toxic effects of herbicide than terrestrial wildlife. Chemical can enter aquatic systems through direct application, drift, surface runoff, or percolation/leaching. These chemicals are soluble and mobile in water and can persist for long periods in the soil profile.

In flowing water conditions, imazapyr is practically non-toxic to fish and aquatic invertebrates; bromacil is slightly toxic to fish and practically non-toxic to aquatic invertebrates; diuron and the proposed formulation of glyphosate are moderately toxic to fish (48 hour LC50 of 4-42 ppm (parts per million)) and can be highly toxic to aquatic invertebrates (LC50 1-4 ppm). None of the chemicals have been shown to bioaccumulate. Imazapyr and glyphosate share the property of binding tightly to soil particles and have little propensity to move beyond treatment sites. Bromacil and diuron adsorb weakly to soil particles, especially those low in organic matter, and can be expected to move downward through the soil. Bromacil can be found in the upper 2-3 feet in soils other than sand. Direct leaching experiments of diuron from sandy-gravelly soils in a roadside shoulder and ditch with no benefit of dilution from the surrounding watershed yielded leachate of less than 1 ppm. The expected release of diuron from clayey, shale-derived soils associated with the proposed project areas under these circumstances (i.e., rainstorm soon after application) would be lower.

Flat grades maintained around these facilities (i.e., treated areas would generally be located on interior portions of well pads or pipeline corridors), as well as the overland and/or ephemeral channel distances generally separating treatment sites from live water would be expected to substantially reduce or attenuate potential fugitive release to downstream systems. Treatments proposed adjacent to streams that support or contribute to special status fisheries would be reviewed separately to insure that protection measures are adequate to minimize risk of exposure. Additional mitigation may be applied to these actions if warranted. With adherence to BLM and label-prescribed mitigation and safeguards incorporated within the proposed action, there is no reasonable potential for anything but trace (i.e., unmeasurable) and short term release of herbicides to channels that host or contribute to special status fisheries. It is inconceivable that aquatic communities in the White River would be exposed to herbicide at concentrations and duration capable of being measured or exerting adverse influence on aquatic plants, vertebrates, or invertebrates.

Although highly unlikely that a population of boreal toad exists near any potential treatment site, much less be exposed to herbicide, available literature suggests that amphibia are generally less sensitive to herbicide exposure than are aquatic invertebrates or fish (*USFWS, 1986. Manual of Acute Toxicity. Resource Publ. 160*). The provisions under which herbicides would be applied under the proposed action would be sufficient to avoid any reasonable likelihood of boreal toads or their habitat being adversely affected.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* Under this alternative there would be no potential for exposing special status species to fugitive levels of herbicide.

*Mitigation:* Integral with proposed action

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species:* The proposed and no-action alternatives are not generally applicable to Public Land Health Standards since the treatment areas are closely associated with oil and gas production and transportation facilities that occupy lands that have been previously dedicated to an industrial use and bear virtually no functional value for wildlife resources.

Product application safeguards integral with the proposed action effectively eliminate the potential for exposing special status species to harmful levels of herbicides. Thus, meeting of this standard would not be affected by the proposed action.

#### **THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)**

*Affected Environment:* It is assumed that, when warranted, threatened and endangered plant surveys were completed for each well pad or compressor facility and that impacts have been mitigated prior to construction of the facility. Therefore, it is unlikely that any special status plants are present in the area of bare ground to be treated with herbicides.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Impacts from the proposed action are not anticipated.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* Impacts from not permitting the area wide pesticide permit are not anticipated.

*Mitigation:* No additional mitigation is needed, provided that all spraying be confined to existing disturbance.

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species:* Product application safeguards integral with the proposed action effectively eliminate the potential for exposing special status species to harmful levels of herbicides. There is no reasonable likelihood that the proposed action or no action alternative would have an influence on the condition or function of Threatened, Endangered, or Sensitive plant species. Thus there would be no effect on achieving the land health standard.

#### **WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID**

*Affected Environment:* Blading or digging of vegetation does not involve hazardous wastes. Under the proposed action, Round Up, Krovar, Sahara and Karmex DF would be used for herbicidal weed control. These chemicals are approved for use on public lands and were

analyzed in the EIS for Vegetation Treatments on BLM Lands in the 13 Western States (BLM 1991).

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Use of herbicides for control of noxious weeds is a common and reasonable practice. Use of these chemicals as detailed in this environment assessment would prevent any generation of hazardous wastes.

Since these chemicals will be used as per label instructions, a reportable release will not occur.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* There would be no opportunity for development of hazardous waste.

*Mitigation:* None

## **WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)**

*Affected Environment:* Surface water quality data is available for several sites on the White River, major tributaries, and many ephemeral drainage in the Piceance Basin through various USGS publications. The Colorado Department of Public Health, Water Quality Control Commission, has adopted (Colorado Department of Public Health 2004) basic standards and an antidegradation rule for all surface waters in the resource area. These standards reflect the ambient water quality and define maximum allowable concentrations for various water quality parameters. Most surface water segments on BLM lands are in the "use protected" category that states, at a minimum, all state surface waters shall be maintained and protected. No further water quality degradation is allowable that would further interfere with or become harmful to that streams designated use.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Achieving bare ground around well facilities would expose surface waters to the possibility of increased sedimentation. Drift into drainage bottoms or springs may occur, altering water quality temporarily. The use of the best management practices outlined as mitigation in the proposed action would help eliminate most of these negative impacts imposed by the proposed action.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* There would be no opportunity for drift of herbicides into drainage bottoms or springs, and no impacts on water quality.

*Mitigation:* No additional mitigation.

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality:* Implementation of the proposed action would not cause water quality to be outside the standards set by the State of Colorado, which is the standard for water quality on public lands.

## **WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)**

*Affected Environment:* The White River Resource Area contains a number of riparian zones. Table 2-9, Appendix D, page 8 of the White River ROD/RMP shows the high priority riparian habitats, Functioning Condition, acres and ecological condition. Twenty eight riparian areas are identified containing 719 acres of riparian habitat.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* During preparation of a site-specific Pesticide Use Proposal, affected riparian areas would be identified along with precautions and measures to avoid impact to these sensitive areas. Precautions would be imposed, in addition to the buffer strips identified in the mitigation section. With the mitigation and stipulations identified within the proposed action, the actual opportunity for damage to riparian habitats is small. If herbicides were to contaminate the riparian zone, those animals and plants which are susceptible to the bare ground chemicals are expected to be damaged or killed, depending on the concentration and the non-target plant susceptibility.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* Under this alternative there would be no opportunity for herbicides to contaminate riparian zones, and there would be no opportunity for non-target plants to be affected.

*Mitigation:* See the mitigation and stipulations identified in the proposed action.

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems:* Using the mitigation requirements of the proposed action, there are no expected negative impacts to riparian areas.

#### **CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:**

No Wilderness Areas, ACECs, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, or Wild and Scenic Rivers exist within the area affected by the proposed action. There are also no Air Quality, Cultural, Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

#### **NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS**

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

##### **SOILS** (includes a finding on Standard 1)

*Affected Environment:* Soils of the area are generally deep and well drained with a loam surface texture and channery sandy clay loam subsoil extending to greater than 30 inches. In an undisturbed condition runoff is slow and the erosion hazard is slight. However, if the surface is disturbed, and runoff is rapid the erosion hazard can be severe

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Because this process will remove all vegetation, bare soil is susceptible to surface erosion.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* Vegetation and litter helps slow runoff and erosion. Impacts are not anticipated if the proposed action were not permitted.

*Mitigation:* No additional mitigation.

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils:* The standard does not apply to proposed areas of bare ground.

### **VEGETATION** (includes a finding on Standard 3)

*Affected Environment:* The proposed bare ground sites provide suitable habitat for a number of weedy species with the most common members being that of the koshia, cheatgrass, pigweed, marshelder, and Russian thistle. All of these species are prolific seed producers and produce large biomasses of vegetation, that when dry is highly flammable.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Under the proposed action chemical control would be used to prevent all vegetation growth. Use of Glyphosphate would only control those plants that are actively growing and would have no impacts on seeds. Bromacil, Diuron, and Imazpyr are all soil activated relatively persistent chemicals which control actively growing plants and prevent germination of seeds. All of these chemicals are adapted to maintaining bare ground conditions. Using these chemicals around facilities, as opposed to the entire facility, decreases the opportunity for excess chemical buildup and runoff from the site during runoff events. There are not expected to be offsite problems resulting from runoff containing herbicide.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* Control of vegetation would continue by manual methods. There would be no opportunity for herbicides to be transported offsite by runoff.

*Mitigation:* None

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities* (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): This standard does not apply to authorized areas of bare ground.

### **WILDLIFE, AQUATIC** (includes a finding on Standard 3)

*Affected Environment:* Streams that support aquatic habitats are distributed across the Resource Area (Tables 2-24, 25, and 26 in draft RMP). Essentially all perennial and some of the larger intermittent streams support simple invertebrate-based aquatic communities, but in the context of herbicide application, of most concern are those that directly or indirectly support vertebrate forms (i.e., mammals, amphibians, sport or native nongame fish). The following table lists those systems that are known to support higher order aquatic habitats by Geographic Reference Area (GRA).

Douglas GRA		Piceance GRA		Danforth Hills GRA
Douglas Ck		Cow Ck and tribs		Flag Ck and tribs
West Ck		Fawn Ck and tribs		Wilson Ck and tribs
West Douglas Ck		Dry Fork and tribs		Good Spring Ck and tribs
West Evacuation Ck		Willow Ck and tribs		Fawn Ck reservoir
Bitter Ck		Hunter Ck and tribs		
Spring Ck		Clear Ck		Crooked Wash GRA
		Ryan Gulch		Deep Channel Ck
Blue Mountain GRA		Stake Springs Draw		Tschuddi Gulch
Meadow Ck		Duck Ck and tribs		Scenery Gulch
Divide Ck reservoir				Black's Gulch
Peterson Draw reservoir				

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* Aquatic organisms are usually more susceptible to direct exposure and the toxic effects of herbicide than terrestrial wildlife. Small-scale applications of these chemicals consistent with those safeguards integral with the proposed action would pose virtually no toxic threat to aquatic wildlife, including amphibians, fish, or macro-invertebrates, or to those resident birds and mammals that may be associated with riparian or aquatic systems (see also discussion in Threatened and Endangered Species section).

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* It is assumed that vegetation on these sites would be treated mechanically. There would be no potential for trace delivery of herbicide into the respective aquatic habitats. Similar to the proposed action, there would be no effective change in the quality or condition of aquatic habitats subtending these actions.

*Mitigation:* integral with proposed action

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities* (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The proposed and no-action alternatives are not generally applicable to Public Land Health Standards since the treatment areas are closely associated with oil and gas production and transportation facilities that occupy lands that have been previously dedicated to an industrial use and bear virtually no functional value for wildlife resources.

Safeguards incorporated within the proposed action would prevent aquatic organisms from being exposed to harmful levels of chemical such that weed control would have no effective influence on the demographics or distribution of aquatic organisms in the White River Resource Area.

**WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL** (includes a finding on Standard 3)

*Affected Environment:* The Resource Area supports season long use by big game, sage and blue grouse, as well as a diverse assemblage of resident and migratory non-game birds and mammals. However, the proposed treatments would be confined to fenced industrial facility yards and the immediate vicinity of oil and gas production and transportation equipment that has been maintained in a heavily disturbed and non-vegetated state and provide no practical cover or forage value for resident wildlife.

*Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action:* These herbicides are slightly to practically nontoxic to terrestrial vertebrates. The risk of resident wildlife becoming exposed to harmful levels of herbicides is improbable because of the localized nature of weed control on sites unattractive for wildlife use (i.e., low toxicity of compounds, sustained human activity around facilities in barren setting). Short duration and localized herbicide application activities during early to mid-summer would have no further influence on surrounding habitats than periodic well and pipeline inspection and maintenance activities. Control activities would not represent activity levels or time frames that would be deleterious to sensitive habitats and/or breeding activities of big game, grouse, or raptor.

*Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative:* It is assumed that vegetation on these sites would be treated mechanically. Mechanical treatment would probably involve more frequent and perhaps longer duration activity at control sites, but due to the nature of these sites, influences on resident wildlife in surrounding habitats would be similar to those discussed in the proposed action.

*Mitigation:* None, other than those integral with proposed action

*Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities* (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The Public Land Health Standards are not generally applicable to the proposed treatment sites since these areas are closely associated with oil and gas production and transportation facilities that occupy lands that have been previously dedicated to an industrial use and bear virtually no functional value for wildlife resources.

Product application safeguards integral with the proposed action effectively eliminate the potential for exposing resident wildlife to harmful levels of herbicides.

**OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS:** For the following elements, those brought forward for analysis will be formatted as shown above.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management	X		
Forest Management	X		
Geology and Minerals	X		
Hydrology/Water Rights		X	
Law Enforcement		X	
Paleontology		X	
Rangeland Management	X		
Realty Authorizations	X		
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Transportation	X		

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Visual Resources	X		
Wild Horses		X	

**CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY:** This project, for bare ground vegetation control, is proposed for areas that are already bare ground, industrial type sites. The proposed action would maintain this condition at proposed locations through out the White River Resource Area. The cumulative impacts will be consistent with those as analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States(1991).

**REFERENCES:**

BLM (1994). White River Resource Area, Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Available on the internet at: <http://www.co.blm.gov/nepa/rmpdocs/wrfodocs/wrformp.htm>

BLM (1991). Record of Decision, Final Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States. U.S. Department of the Interior. Available on the internet at <http://www.blm.gov/weeds/VegEIS/index.htm>.

BLM (1979). Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review. U.S. Department of the Interior.

Colorado Department of Public Health, Water Quality Control Commission (2004). Regulation No. 37, Classifications and Numeric Standards for Lower Colorado River Basin. Available on the internet at <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/op/regs/waterqualityregs.asp>.

Mayer, F.L. (1986). Manual of acute toxicity : interpretation and data base for 410 chemicals and 66 species of freshwater animals. Resource Publication, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service.

USFWS. (1986) Manual of Acute Toxicity. Resource Publication 160.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area of Responsibility</b>
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	NRS	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	NRS	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Robert Fowler	Forester	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Ed Hollowed	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Marty O'Mara	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Robert Fowler	Forester	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Caroline Hollowed	Hydrologist	Soils
Robert Fowler	Forester	Vegetation
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	NRS	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Robert Fowler	Forester	Rangeland Management
Penny Brown	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Max McCoy	NRS	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	NRS	Wild Horses

**Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record  
(FONSI/DR)**

**CO-110-2004-44-EA**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE:** The environmental assessment analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action has been reviewed, resulting in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

**DECISION AND RATIONALE:** It is my decision to implement the proposed action for the control of unwanted vegetation around production facilities. This alternative is approved, subject to the mitigation, stipulations, and safeguard measures identified in proposed action and the Final Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991). With these mitigation, stipulations and safeguard measures, the potential environmental impacts from implementing the proposed action are expected to be minimal.

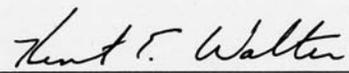
**MITIGATION MEASURES:** NONE

**NAME OF PREPARER:** Max McCoy

**NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR:**



**SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:**



Field Manager

**DATE SIGNED:**

04/08/04