

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

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2004-064-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): C-60150g

PROJECT NAME: Museum of Western Colorado Paleontological Exploration

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T 5 N, R 99 W, Sections 29, 32, access through T 4 N, R 99 W, Sections 7, 8, 18, 19, 30

APPLICANT: John Foster, Ph.D., Museum Of Western Colorado
P.O. Box 20,000
Grand Junction, CO 81502

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: The Morrison formation is renowned for its fossil dinosaurs. The quarry site at Dinosaur National Monument is located in the Morrison formation and is known to contain large bone beds of dinosaur bones. The Brushy Basin Member of the Morrison is not particularly well studied in northwest Colorado outside of Dinosaur National Monument. The BLM and the Museum of Western Colorado have identified an outcropping of the Brushy Basin Member that has exposed bone on the surface (5MF 3723). Dr. John Foster, paleontologist for the museum, would like to prospect the outcrop. Previous visits to the site have resulted in the identification of bone from a sauropod dinosaur, a stegosaurus and a small theropod (meat eating) dinosaur, possibly an allosaurus. The studies indicate that more elements of the dinosaur may be present in the rock.

Proposed Action: The Museum would like to have permit for a temporary camp site for their crew during work at the fossil locality. Initial use is expected from May 4-8, 2004 while they continue surface collecting of the fossils there. If there is more bone in situ then the crew would return in July or August for two to three weeks to excavate, jacket and remove the remaining skeletal elements. Excavation of the skeletal elements, if there are any still present, could involve an area of approximately 4 meters by 6 meters. All work would be with hand tools, no heavy equipment, such as a bulldozer, is anticipated at this time. All jacket material would be packed out by hand or with a small, non-motorized two wheel cart like those used by hunters for

transporting deer. Access to the camp site would be by existing roads and trails, no new construction is anticipated.

No Action Alternative:

Deny the Museum of Western Colorado permit application: the museum would not be permitted to do more than surface collect under their current permit. They would observe standard BLM camping restrictions at all times.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD:

NEED FOR THE ACTION:

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

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

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page:

Decision Language: “Make paleontological resources available for scientific, educational, and appropriate recreational purposes” (ROD P. 2-48). “Excavation permits will be issued under authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 to paleontologists, museum or universities, for scientific and educational purposes” (ROD p. 2-49)

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

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The entire White River RA has been designated as either attainment or unclassified for all pollutants, and most of the area has been designated prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) class II.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Impacts from the proposed action are not anticipated. If mechanical equipment become necessary, the proposed action could result in short term, local impacts to air quality during the excavation, from fugitive dust being blown into the air.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, there would be no adverse affects on air quality.

Mitigation: None.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The fossil locality was examined for cultural resources at the time it was recorded in 1993 with no archaeological remains noted. The proposed campsite location has been inventoried the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Selle 2004, Compliance Dated 4/8/2004) with no cultural resources identified in the inventoried area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No known cultural resources will be impacted at the camp or excavation sites.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to cultural resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines

for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with 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), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: The project area is a combination of vegetation types including; salt desert shrub along the access road, sagebrush in the draw, and pinyon/juniper on the hillsides. No surveys for noxious weeds have been conducted so there is no information on noxious weed species. These sites would support several of the thistle and knapweed species. The project area is within a weed free zone, which requires contractors and land use operators moving surface disturbing equipment into the weed free zones to clean their equipment prior to use on BLM lands. This requirement may be waived by the Field Manager.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action does not include any seeding requirements and as such there is no opportunity for non-native species introduction.

Vehicles with the inventory group would provide a vector for introduction of noxious weed species. As there is no information as to where the support vehicles came from or the noxious weeds occurring in their area, it is recommended that their vehicles be cleaned prior to each visit to the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts to non-native species or noxious weed management.

Mitigation: The recommendation for cleaning vehicles prior to each visit should be considered by the applicant as a “light on the land” type of management practice.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: A variety of migratory birds fulfills nesting requirements in the Wolf Creek area from mid May through early August. Those species identified as having higher conservation interest are listed in the Table below.

Migratory Birds with High Conservation Priority by Habitat Association within the Project Area

Salt desert	Sagebrush	Pinyon-juniper
loggerhead shrike sage sparrow	Brewer’s sparrow green-tailed towhee	gray flycatcher, pinyon jay, juniper titmouse, black-throated gray warbler, violet-green swallow

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Establishment of a primitive camp at the exploration site is expected to have little influence on nesting efforts of local migratory birds. Preliminary exploration of the site will take place prior to nest initiation for most species in the area. In addition, the short duration of occupancy (5 days) should have minimal effects on nesting/courtship behavior. Decreased nesting success is not likely if preliminary findings should warrant further excavation during late-July and August as most species have fledged young by this time.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No effect

Mitigation: None

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

Affected Environment: White-tailed prairie dogs are associated with the salt desert-sage brush communities found in the lower Wolf Creek basin. Prairie dogs do not occupy the narrow sagebrush valleys and wooded ridges associated with the proposed action. Prairie dogs are sparingly distributed along the existing road accessing the exploration site. Young prairie dogs emerge from natal burrows in late May and early June. Above ground activity is dependent on the ability to meet metabolic needs. Prairie dogs may estivate during mid- to late summer if environmental conditions such as temperature or amount of precipitation are unfavorable.

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.

Several other BLM-sensitive species are associated with the salt desert/sage/pinyon-juniper communities found in the lower Wolf Creek basin. Nesting populations of burrowing owls, a high conservation priority in both the Colorado Division of Wildlife and BLM are present but uncommon. These birds return to occupy a prairie dog burrow system in early April and begin nesting soon after. They leave for southern wintering grounds by October. A number of ferruginous hawk nesting territories are located throughout the lower Wolf Creek basin. Nesting begins in mid-April with young typically fledged by mid-July. Nests are almost exclusively located on ridges or upper basin positions in isolated junipers or artificial nest platforms. There are no nests known within one mile of the exploration site. The nearest nest with any history of occupation lies > ¼ mile west of the existing access road. In recent years, small, but increasing numbers of long-billed curlew have appeared in late spring throughout the Resource Area, but notably in prairie dog complexes such as Wolf Creek. Although these salt desert communities are at least superficially suited as nesting habitat, there has been no indication of nesting despite considerable wildlife survey activity by CDOW and BLM. Curlews begin nesting by early June and fledged young by early July.

Although the lower elevation sagebrush ranges in lower Wolf Creek do not represent optimal sage grouse nest and brood habitats, a few small leks and small numbers of broods are found on these arid ranges nonetheless. Strutting grounds are attended March through early May, though none are known to exist north of Highway 40. Broods in late summer gravitate to riparian communities along the channels where succulent forbs persist. Several hundreds of birds, their origin not well understood, appear in these areas by December to winter. The camping and exploration sites are situated in narrow sagebrush valleys that bisect low woodland ridges and do not represent suitable sage grouse habitat.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There are no prairie dog burrow systems located within the immediate vicinity of the project area. An established road into the site passes through a small portion of two prairie dog towns however; infrequent vehicle use on this road would have no substantive impacts on reproductive activities of prairie dogs or those species associated with prairie dog complexes (e.g., black-footed ferret and burrowing owl). Daytime travel should have little effect on black-footed ferrets, a primarily nocturnal species. Preliminary work at the site is expected to be completed prior to the emergence of prairie dog and burrowing owl young. It would be highly unlikely that that nesting efforts of species whose nests are difficult to located in advance (i.e., sage grouse and curlew) would be affected owing to the distribution and relative scarcity of sites. The short duration of occupancy at the site and limited work area would have minimal effects on raptor species nesting in the area.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No effect

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: The proposed action will have little if any influence on the populations or habitats of Threatened and Endangered species in the area, thereby having no bearing on the public land health standard.

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

Affected Environment: There are no threatened, endangered or sensitive plant species occurring within the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: 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.

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

Affected Environment: The proposed action is within segment 13a of the Stream Classification and Water Quality Standards. This segment includes all tributaries to the White River including all wetlands, lakes and reservoirs from a point immediately above the confluence with Piceance Creek to a point immediately above the confluence with Douglas Creek except for the specific listings in Segments 13b through 20.

The proposed action does not include any perennial surface waters and is within the Wolf Creek watershed, which is tributary to the White River. A review of the Colorado's 1989 Nonpoint Source Assessment Report (plus updates), the 305(b) report, the 303(d) list and the Unified Watershed Assessment was one to see if any water quality concerns have been identified. The State has classified this segment as a "Use Protected" reach. Its designated beneficial uses are: Warm Aquatic Life 2, Recreation 2, and Agriculture. The antidegradation review requirements in the Antidegradation Rule, are not applicable to waters designated use-protected. For those waters, only the protection specified in each reach will apply. For this reach, minimum standards for three parameters have been listed. These parameters are: dissolved oxygen = 5.0 mg/l, pH = 6.5 - 9.0 and Fecal Coliform = 2000/100ml and 630/100 ml E. coli. In addition standards for inorganic and metals have also been listed and can be found in the table of stream classifications and water quality standards. This segment retained its Recreation Class 2 designation after sufficient evidence was received that a Recreation Class 1a use was unattainable.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Initially impacts from the proposed action will not be substantial because of the small amount of disturbance and the short period of time the crew will be in the area. If excavation requires more time and mechanical means in August, there would be an increase in potential for suspended sediment during storm events. Because the area is small, these impacts would be minimal.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated from the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: The watershed is within the state standards and would continue to meet state standards as a result of the proposed action.

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

Affected Environment: There are no wetlands or riparian habitats within the immediate vicinity of the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The propose action has no potential to affect wetland or riparian resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No effect

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: The proposed action will not impact any riparian areas. Consequently there would be no effect on the public land health standard for riparian systems.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness, or Wild and Scenic Rivers exist within the area affected by the proposed action. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action. There is no hazardous waste 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: The soils in the area have been mapped by Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in an Order III Soil Survey for Moffat County. The soil mapping unit where the proposed disturbance is #11E, Rentsac-Moyerson-complex, on 25 to 65 percent slopes. Generally, this unit is 40 percent Rentsac soil and 35 percent Moyerson soil. The components of this unit are so intricately intermingled that it was not practical to map them separately at the scale used. Included in this unit are small areas of rock outcrop, Kemmerer soils, Yamo soils, moderately deep loamy textured soils, and moderately deep coarse textured soils. Also included are small areas with a very stony surface.

The Rentsac soil is shallow and somewhat excessively drained. It formed in residuum derived from sandstone. Typically, the surface layer is pale brown calcareous very channery sandy loam 2 inches thick. The underlying material is pale brown and very pale brown calcareous very channery sandy loam 8 inches thick. Hard fractured sandstone bedrock is at a depth of 10 inches. Depth to hard sandstone ranges from 10 to 20 inches. Permeability of the Rentsac soil is moderately rapid. Available water capacity is very low. Effective rooting depth is 10 to 20 inches. Runoff is medium, and the hazard of water erosion is very high. The hazard of soil blowing is slight.

The Moyerson soil is shallow and well drained. It formed in residuum derived from shale. Typically, the surface layer is light brownish gray channery silty clay loam 1 inch thick. The underlying material to a depth of 17 inches is light brownish gray clay. Weakly consolidated shale bedrock is at a depth of 17 inches. Depth to weakly consolidated shale bedrock ranges from 10 to 20 inches. Permeability of the Moyerson soil is slow. Available water capacity is

very low. Effective rooting depth is 10 to 20 inches. Runoff is rapid, and the hazard of water erosion is very high. The hazard of soil blowing is slight.

Both map units are in the Foothill-Juniper woodland site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Because of the location and the type of soils impacts would be limited to a possible increase in suspended sediment during intense storm events. These impacts would be minimal due to the size of the proposed disturbance.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated from the no action alternative.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is necessary.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: This project would not alter the overall condition of the uplands soils nor cause them to not meet the Land Health Standards.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The proposed action's camp site is located within a foothill swale ecological site. This locality is a sagebrush bottom with a vegetative overstory mainly of Wyoming big sagebrush and shadscale, with an understory of western wheatgrass, salina wildrye, and squirreltail. The proposed action's site of extraction is located within a Pinion/Juniper woodland ecological site with a limited understory of herbaceous material.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There is a minimal amount of surface disturbance (24m²) associated with the proposed action. Therefore, the impact to vegetation would be insignificant with a negligible amount of vegetation removed within the confines of the extraction site.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): There would be no impact associated with this proposed action in meeting the Public Land Health Standard. The site is currently meeting Public Land Health Standard for vegetation and would continue to be met under the proposed action.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: There are no aquatic habitats that would be affected by this action.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action has no potential to affect aquatic wildlife.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The proposed action will not affect any aquatic wildlife. As a result, there would be no impacts on the public health land standard for plant and animal communities.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Big game use near the project area is exclusively associated with winter range and winter concentration areas. Raptor surveys were conducted in late March within 500 meters of the site. No raptors were observed nor were any active nests detected.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There would be no influence on big game use or reproduction as all work is scheduled to be completed during the summer months. It is highly unlikely that any raptor species will attempt to nest in the immediate vicinity of the project area, however, the short time frame and minimal disturbance at the site should not negatively impact any nesting efforts. Access to the site will be along an established road system and should have no impacts on terrestrial wildlife along the corridor. If heavy equipment is expected, further mitigation efforts would be required.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No effect

Mitigation: None. However if heavy equipment is found to be necessary, the project proponents would be required to reclaim all surface disturbances to the satisfaction of the BLM authorized officer including, but not limited to, conditioning any vehicle way sufficient to preclude further vehicle travel.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The proposed action would not influence any terrestrial wildlife or habitats associated with these species. As a result there would be no impacts on the public health standards for terrestrial wildlife.

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	

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

GEOLOGY AND MINERALS

Affected Environment: A record search for mining claims resulted in 10 mining having been located in SE Section 29 and the NE Section 32, Township 5 North, Range 99 West, 6th P.M. The last assessment work performed on the claims were in 1993 and 2000 and the mining claims are considered closed.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: None

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The proposed collection and excavation area that the Museum of Western Colorado proposes to study is in the Brushy Basin Member of the Morrison Formation. The Morrison Formation is well known for the production of the more famous species of dinosaurs such as Stegosaurus, Apatosaurus, Tyrannosaurus Rex and Allosaurus. As such the BLM has classified the Morrison Formation and its components as a Category I formation.

The proposed camp location is in an area mapped as the Frontier Sandstone, Mowry, Mancos Shale and Dakota Sandstone members of the Browns Park Formation (Tweto 1979). The BLM has classified the Browns Park Formation and the Mowry Shale as Category I formations meaning that these formations are known to produce scientifically important fossil resources.

The access route crosses the Mancos shale almost exclusively. The Mancos shale has not been classified as a Category I formation. Mancos shale does produce fossils, mostly marine fossil such as bacculites and very, very rarely, if ever, vertebrates.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The natural weathering process is slowly eroding the Morrison Formation and may be exposing embedded fossils. Failure to collect and analyze any fossils that may be exposed constitutes a loss of scientific data for the fossil resource base. Exploration, surface collection of any fossils that have been exposed and possibly excavation of remaining in situ fossils will result in the recovery of important scientific information. It will also help to prevent loss of paleontological and paleo-environmental data due to unauthorized collection of any remains that might be present in the Brushy Basin component of the Morrison Formation. Excavation into the bedrock, should any be undertaken, may result in some accelerated erosion of the formation however, the area to be excavated is limited, is not anticipated to be very deep and does not involve anything more than hand tools. It is believed that the scientific information recovered will outweigh the disturbance to the bedrock involved.

The proposed camp site location is expected to occur on an area of the Browns Park formation, and its components where soil development generally obscures the formation outcrop. Since the camp is expected to be in an area of some soil development and the operation is being undertaken by trained and accredited paleontologists it is expected that any fossils that might be present will be identified, recorded and collected as necessary. This recording and collection activity will preserve important scientific information regarding paleontological resources at the camp location, should any be present and exposed to view on the surface.

The access road will be used as is without any upgrading. Therefore it is not expected that the proposed action to travel along an existing two track road/trail will have any impacts to fossil resources in the Manco Shale.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Under the No Action Alternative the natural erosion process in the area would continue. Any fossil remains that may be present would erode from the bedrock formations, especially the Morrison Formation. Exposed fossils would eventually weather and disintegrate causing a loss of scientific data. There would also be a small potential for unauthorized collection of fossil material that might be exposed as the formation weathers and erodes.

Mitigation: As noted in the proposed action all excavation shall be with hand tools only, no mechanized equipment is permitted. In the event of a severe fire season all fire restrictions shall be adhered to in the camp and excavation areas.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: There are no cumulative impacts identified in this environmental analysis of the proposed action.

Selle, Michael

2004 An Archaeological Inventory of the Proposed Museum of Western Colorado
Paleontological Exploration Base Camp, Moffat County, Colorado. White River Field
Office, Bureau of Land Management, Meeker, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden

1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior,
Reston, Virginia.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED:

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Carol 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
Lisa Belmonte	Biologist	Migratory Birds
Lisa Belmonte	Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Marty O'Mara	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Carol Hollowed	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Lisa Belmonte	Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	ORP	Wilderness
Carol Hollowed	Hydrologist	Soils
Jed Carling	Range Specialist	Vegetation
Chris Ham	ORP	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Jed Carling	Range Specialist	Rangeland Management
Penny Brown	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	ORP	Recreation
Chris Ham	ORP	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

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

CO-110-2004-064-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result 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/RATIONALE: It is my decision to issue a permit for Paleontological exploration as proposed in the description of the proposed action at the beginning of this document

MITIGATION MEASURES: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation cost. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with 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), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

3. The recommendation for cleaning vehicles prior to each visit should be considered by the applicant as a "light on the land" type of management practice.
4. As noted in the proposed action all excavation shall be with hand tools only, no mechanized equipment is permitted. In the event of a severe fire season all fire restrictions shall be adhered to in the camp and excavation areas.
5. If heavy equipment is found to be necessary, the project proponents would be required to reclaim all surface disturbances to the satisfaction of the BLM authorized officer including, but not limited to, conditioning any vehicle way sufficient to preclude further vehicle travel.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING:

NAME OF PREPARER: Michael Selle

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: *Caroline P. Hollowed 4/28/04*

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

Vanna Rholl
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: *4/28/04*

ATTACHMENTS:

Location of Proposed Action CO-110-2004-064-EA

