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

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2004-087-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): COC23734AR and COC66620

PROJECT NAME: Banta Ridge Pipeline Tie-ins

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado
T. 1 S., R. 103 W.,
Sec. 3, SE¼SW¼, E½SE¼;
Sec. 7, S½SW¼, SW¼SE¼, N½SE¼;
Sec. 8, S½NW¼, W½SW¼, NE¼SE¼;
Sec. 9, NW¼SW¼;
Sec. 16, W½SW¼;
Sec. 17, E½NE¼, W½NW¼, SE¼SW¼, SW¼SE¼, N½SE¼;
Sec. 18, SE¼NE¼, N½NW¼;
Sec. 19, N½NE¼, SW¼NE¼;
Sec. 20, E½NW¼, NW¼NW¼, E½SW¼;
Sec. 21, NW¼NW¼.

APPLICANT: Canyon Gas Resources

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: Canyon Gas Resources has applied for several pipeline tie-ins to their gathering system.

Proposed Action: The proposed action is to construct, operate, and terminate new tie-in's on Canyon's existing 4-inch and 8-inch gathering lines. A new 8-inch pipeline will be constructed from the BR Fed. 14-18 to the BR Fed. 11-18. The new tie-in's from the well to the tie-in points are mostly 3-inch. There are two 4-inch lines that will dump into an existing gathering line. These new tie-in's will serve as new delivery point's allowing better service for Evergreen's wells. The construction workforce is expected to be five to ten people. Construction will include the following steps: Surveying and staking; clearing; surface and buried pipe installation; erosion control, installation of hot taps and related equipment; and cleanup/reclamation. The rights-of-way and pipeline segments are as follows:

COC66620 (Amendment): Total of 7,240 feet of 3-inch Banta Ridge Federal Wells

Well #BR Fed. 4-8	2,180 feet
Well #BR Fed. 13-17	340 feet
Well #BR Fed. 16-18	740 feet
Well #BR Fed. 10-19	2,140 feet
Well #BR Fed. 13-20	820 feet

4-inch pipeline:

From the tie-in at the Fed. 13-20 to the tie-in at the Fed/ 0-17 = 840 feet

COC23734AR (Amendment): Total of 8,630 feet of 3-inch Banta Ridge Federal Wells

Well #BR Fed. 5-9	1,020 feet
Well #BR Fed. 7-3	1,750 feet
Well #BR Fed. 2-7	620 feet
Well #BR Fed. 4-7	2,080 feet
Well #BR Fed. 8-7	580 feet
Well #BR Fed. 10-18	1,580 feet
Well #BR Fed. 12A-18	580 feet
Well #BR Fed. 14-18	420 feet

4-inch pipeline:

From the tie-in at the Fed. 13-17 to the tie-in at the Fed. 8-18 = 1,940 feet

COC23734AR (Amendment): Total of 11,570 feet of 8-inch

This action will be authorized by Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended and the term of the amendments will run concurrent with the original grants for COC66620 and COC23734AR.

No Action Alternative: The no action alternative would deny the application and other means of transport ting product would have to be found.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: The question of having Evergreen install all surface lines for this project was raised due to the fact that the project area lies within a Class II VRM area. This alternative was considered, but eliminated from further analysis because of the high amount of condensate in the gas to be transported in these pipelines. Due to the amount of condensate (water) in the gas, surface pipelines freeze in the winter months due to extreme cold temperatures. The gas out of the formations that the wells are producing from have a higher BTU content/wet rich raw gas 1100 BTU, which in the winter, the surface lines actually become a refrigeration plant in the field.

NEED FOR THE ACTION: To respond to the request by applicant to exercise Federal mineral lease rights and develop hydrocarbon reserves.

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: Pages 2-49 thru 2-52

Decision Language: "To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values".

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

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: There are no special designation air sheds or non-attainment areas nearby that would be affected by the proposed action. During periods of low precipitation, air quality in the area of the proposed action is often diminished by dust caused by human disturbance.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would result in short term, local impacts to air quality during and after construction, due to dust being blown into the air. After adequate vegetation is reestablished, blowing dust should return to pre-construction levels.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No increase in dust will occur.

Mitigation: None.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The proposed well tie pipeline routes largely follow access roads and have been inventoried for cultural resources as follows: Well #BR Fed. 4-8: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/15/2004; Well #BR Fed. 13-17: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/15/2004 one site located on access road near 8-18 well. Well #BR Fed. 16-18, Well #BR Fed 10-19 and Well #BR Fed. 13-20: Pennefather-O'Brien 2003, Compliance Dated 11/09/2003
Tie-in at Fed. 13-20 to the tie-in at the Fed 0-17: Elkins and Montgomery 2001, Compliance Dated 12/14/2001, Pennefather-O'Brien 2003, Compliance Dated 11/09/2003; Well #BR Fed. 5-9: Montgomery and Ball 2001, Compliance Dated 7/11/2001; Well #BR Fed. 7-3, and Well #BR Fed. 2-7: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/13/2004 with one isolated find on well pad 2-7. Well #BR Fed. 4-7: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/13/2004; Well #BR Fed. 8-7: Pennefather-O'Brien 2003, Compliance Dated 11/09/2003, Conner 1995, Compliance Dated 4/11/1995; Well #BR Fed. 10-18 and Well #BR Fed. 12A-18: Pennefather-O'Brien 2003, Compliance Dated 11/09/2003; Well #BR Fed. 14-18: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/13/2004, Montgomery 2002, Compliance Dated 6/13/2002, Conner 1995, Compliance Dated 4/11/1995, Pointkowski 2004, Compliance Dated 4/28/2004; Tie-in Fed. 13-17 to the tie-in at the Fed. 8-18: Scott 2004, Compliance Dated 1/15/2004, Elkins and Montgomery 2001, Compliance Dated 12/14/2001

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The two cultural resources identified in the above listed inventories were determined ineligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and either damaged or destroyed during well pad and access road construction. Therefore there will be no new impacts to known cultural resources under the proposed action.

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/RECLAMATION: (This includes vegetation information related to Public Land Health Standard 3.)

Affected Environment: The proposed project is within the salt desert shrub and juniper woodland vegetation associations. The salt desert shrub soils are moderately deep and also derived from shale. This soil is saline which makes for difficult reclamation. The juniper woodland soils in this area are shallow and shale derived. Past reclamation efforts have included non-native species, which have performed well in soil stabilization.

The two noxious weeds found in this area are halogeaton and cheatgrass. Both of these species are found throughout the area. Halogeaton has the ability to rapidly colonize disturbed areas, but is easily controlled by successful revegetation. Cheatgrass is found throughout the area in all of the plant communities. This specie can hinder reclamation because of its highly competitive nature. Non-native species have been shown to out-compete cheatgrass. Noxious weeds, such as knapweeds, transported on site by construction equipment and support vehicles would also be of concern.

Impact of Proposed Action: Using the proposed non-native seed mix would adequately stabilize soils. These species have not been shown to move off site or to interbreed with adjacent plant species.

With prompt control of any noxious weeds that occur on the project area there would not be any adverse impacts to the adjacent plant communities. Prompt reclamation would prevent cheatgrass and halogeaton from establishing.

Impact of No Action Alternative: There would be no impacts.

Mitigative Measures: Use Seed Mix #2 for reclamation. In accordance with Condition of Approval #179 from Appendix B of the White River ROD/RMP, application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: Non-game populations associated with these ranges are widespread and common throughout sagebrush and pinyon-juniper habitats in this Resource Area (e.g., green-tailed and spotted towhee, vesper and lark sparrows). There are no specialized or narrowly endemic species known to occupy the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Although this action would represent an incremental and longer term reduction in the extent of sagebrush habitat available for migratory bird breeding functions, implementation of this project would have no measurable influence on the abundance or distribution of breeding migratory birds even at the smallest landscape scale.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Incremental reductions of sagebrush rangelands would not occur at this time or place.

Mitigation: None.

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

Affected Environment: There are no threatened, endangered or sensitive animal 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 are no threatened, endangered or sensitive animal species occurring within the project area. Thus, this standard is not applicable.

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.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at this site.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project.

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

Affected Environment: The proposed action is within the White River, Gillam Draw, and Douglas Creek watersheds. The State has identified them in segments 12, 13b and 22 respectively, in the Numeric Standards and Classification. 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 done to see if any water quality concerns have been identified. This proposed action is in a Category 1, Priority 2, watershed (The Lower White) identified in the Unified Watershed Assessment report. The state has reasons to believe this watershed has water quality problems (sediment and salinity loads) that may impair the watershed.

Segments 12 and 22 have been classified as Aquatic Life Warm 1, Recreation 1a, Water Supply and Agriculture. The state has further defined water quality parameters with table values. These standards reflect the ambient water quality and define maximum allowable concentrations for the various water quality parameters. The anti-degradation rule applies to this segment meaning no further water quality degradation is allowable that would interfere with or become harmful to the designated uses.

Segment 13b has been classified as a "Use Protected" reach. Its designated beneficial uses are: Warm Aquatic Life 2, Recreation 2, and Agriculture. The antidegredation review requirements in the Antidegredation 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.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: One problem that could arise from the proposed action would be an increase in sediment transport. Annual runoff from these watersheds is dynamic and dependent on some aspects we control, such as the amount of vegetation retained for watershed protection and vegetation density. Depleting the vegetation cover needed to protect watersheds from raindrop impact and runoff could cause short-term erosion problems and increased sedimentation to the White River until successful best management practices (BMPs) have been implemented and proven successful. The magnitude of these impacts is dependent on the amount of surface disturbance and climatic conditions during the time the soils are exposed to the elements.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No impacts from the no-action alternative are anticipated.

Mitigation: Through the use of BMPs, keep sediment from leaving the proposed site.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: The water quality of the drainages discussed above is well within the criteria set by the state, thus meeting the land health standard. The proposed action will not change this status.

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

Affected Environment: There are no wetlands or riparian zones occurring within the project area. Thus, this standard is not applicable.

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 riparian systems: There are no wetlands or riparian zones within this project area and this standard is not applicable.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:

No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness Study Areas, 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.

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 have been mapped in an order III soil survey by NRCS and are available from that office for review. Refer to the table below for the type of soils affected by the proposed action.

Soil Number	Soil Name	Soil pH	Permeability	Water Capacity	RunOff	Erosion Potential	Range site	Slope
5	Badland				Very rapid	Very high	None	50-100%
7	Billings silty clay loam	7.4-9.0	0.06-0.2	0.15-0.18	Rapid	Moderate to high	Alkaline Slopes	0-5%
55	Nihill channery sandy loam	7.4-8.4	2.0-6.0	0.10-0.12	Medium	Moderate to very high	Saltdesert Breaks	5-50%
74	Rentsac-Moyerson-Rock Outcrop complex	6.6-8.4	2.0-6.0	0.12-0.16	Medium	Moderate to very high	PJ Woodlands/Clayey Slopes	5-65%
78	Rock Outcrop	---	---	---	Very high	Slight	None	50-100%
90	Torrifluventsgullied	---	---	---	Rapid	Very high	None	
91	Torriorthents-Rock Outcrop complex	---	---	---	Rapid	Very high	Stoney Foothills	15-90%
93	Turley fine sandy loam	7.4-9.0	2.0-6.0	0.13-0.15	Medium	Slight	Alkaline Slopes	0-3%
94	Turley fine sandy loam	7.4-9.0	2.0-6.0	0.13-0.15	Medium	Slight to moderate	Alkaline Slopes	3-8%

Revegetation limitations for these soil types include an arid climate, saline and droughty soil condition. This location has *not* been mapped as areas that have fragile soils on slopes greater than 35 %. No special designations have been assigned to this location.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: There would be an increase in erosion and sedimentation from overland flows, due to removal of vegetation, soil compaction, and exposure of underlying soil layers. These impacts would be short term during the construction phase and for a period after construction providing successful reclamation occurs.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Impacts are not anticipated.

Mitigation: Apply the following Conditions of Approval from Appendix B of White River ROD/RMP: Slopes within the disturbed area shall be stabilized by non-vegetative practices designed to hold the soil in place and minimize erosion. Vegetative cover shall be reestablished to increase infiltration and provide additional protection from erosion.

When erosion is anticipated, sediment barriers shall be constructed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent it from leaving the site. In addition, straining or filtration mechanisms may also contribute to sediment removal from runoff.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: Soils at the proposed location meet the criteria established in the Public Land Health Standard. The proposed action would not change this status.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: The project area is primarily salt desert shrub with junipers growing on ridgetops. These salt desert shrub vegetation associations are on sites with relatively clayey soils, high salt content and relatively low precipitation 10-12 inches. Junipers are found on shallow, rocky soils primarily ridge tops.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Following reclamation these vegetation sites have relatively good success at establishment of perennial vegetation cover. The salt desert shrub type should be adequately reclaimed in 3-5 years with the native community dominating within 20 years. The juniper woodland would establish cover suitable for soil retention within 3-5 years and initial establishment of junipers in 15-20 years. Development of a late seral community would take 150-200 years.

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

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* The above described plant communities meet the standards for plant health. This status will not change with the proposed action.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: There is no aquatic wildlife within this 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 plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): There is no aquatic wildlife within this project area. Thus, this standard is not applicable.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: This proposed project was examined in the field. Over 5.5 miles of pipeline will be constructed, mostly buried along existing roads. All but approximately 0.5 miles of the lines will be buried. The terrain within the project area is variable, with most of the affected area consisting of sagebrush habitat. Approximately 0.5 miles of the lines crosses pinyon-juniper habitat. Rimrock is prevalent adjacent to many sections of line, holding high potential for nesting raptors, particularly golden eagles. An active golden eagle nest was identified on 24 and 26 March 2004 in 1S, 103W, Section 17, SW, SW on a rock ledge adjacent to a road and within ¼ mile of Well #13-20. A follow-up visit conducted on 21 April 2004 revealed the presence of a downy chick in the nest being brooded by an adult eagle. The entire project area falls within normal winter range for mule deer.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The development of oil/gas facilities in areas previously undisturbed by commercial oil/gas activities results in incremental reductions of normal winter range habitat for big game, as well as a short-term increase in the disturbance from construction activities. Additionally, it will result in short-term increased activity in an area holding high potential for nesting by raptors, with the potential for disturbance to an active golden eagle nest (see above). Possible removal of trees could occur in the two small sections of pinyon-juniper if a surface line is not constructed in those areas.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Failure to construct this project would reduce short-term construction activity levels in this area. No net loss of sagebrush habitat and/or normal winter range would occur at this time or place. The golden eagle nest would not be disturbed.

Mitigation: No construction or development activities will be allowed within ¼ mile of the active golden eagle nest in 1S, 103W, Section 17, SW, SW from February 1 through August 15. This stipulation applies not just to vehicles, but to non-motorized human activity, as golden eagles are highly susceptible to nest abandonment if disturbed. This stipulation applies to activity on Wells 13-20, 11-20 and 3-20 since access to these wells is via a route that passes very close to the nest (less than a ¼ mile). This nest will be monitored this year and in subsequent years to determine activity. Exceptions to this timing limitation are at the discretion of the BLM. It's the responsibility of Evergreen Operating Corp. to contact the BLM for the current status of this nest prior to beginning construction activities if it is between the above dates. Again, this applies to non-motorized human activities as well.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): This project would not jeopardize the viability of any animal population. It would have no significant consequence on terrestrial habitat condition, utility, or function, nor have any discernible affect on animal abundance or distribution at any landscape scale. This public land health standard will thus be met.

<u>OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS</u>: 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			
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		

ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

Affected Environment: The Cottonwood Creek/Banta Ridge area is serviced by a series of BLM routes. Motorized travel is limited to existing routes from October 1 through April 30 of each year. For the period of May 1 through September 30, cross-country travel is permitted so long as no resource damage occurs.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Pipeline corridors can easily be construed as new routes by recreationists and therefore may add to the existing transportation system if reclamation does not occur promptly. If reclamation succeeds, there will be no impacts.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No impact.

Mitigation: None.

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The well pads and well ties are located in formations as listed below, by legal descriptions:

Sec. 3, SE¼SW¼, E½SE¼; Mesa Verde Group (Tweto 1979), a Class I fossil bearing formation.

Sec. 7, S½SW¼, SW¼SE¼, N½SE¼; Sec. 8, S½NW¼, W½SW¼, NE¼SE¼; Sec. 17, E½NE¼, W½NW¼, SE¼SW¼, SW¼SE¼, N½SE¼; Sec. 18, SE¼NE¼, N½NW¼; are in areas that are mapped as the Parachute Creek Member of the Green River Formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has categorized as a Class I fossil bearing formation

Sec. 9, NW¼SW¼; Sec. 16, W½SW¼; Sec. 19, N½NE¼, SW¼NE¼; Sec. 20, E½NW¼, NW¼NW¼, E½SW¼; and Sec. 21, NW¼NW¼ are mapped being in the Douglas Creek member of the Green River Formation, which the BLM has categorized as a Class II fossil bearing formation.

In the BLM Class I fossil bearing formations are those formations that are known producers of scientifically important fossil resources. Class II fossil formations are those formations whose fossil bearing potential and the scientific importance of those fossils is not clearly and fully understood in the area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: If, at any time, it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation of any Class I formation to bury any of the well tie lines there is a potential to impact scientifically important fossil resources. The potential to impact scientifically important fossils during excavation into Class II formations is unknown.

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

Mitigation: If at any time during installation of the well tie pipelines it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formations a paleontological monitor shall be present during the excavation.

RANGE MANAGEMENT:

*Affected Environment***:** The proposed project is within the Banta Flats allotment. This allotment is grazed by sheep during the winter and spring.

Impact of Proposed Action: The proposed project would remove one animal unit month (AUM) of important forage for livestock during the life of the project. Halogeaton was discussed in the noxious weed section. This weed is highly toxic to sheep. If disturbed soils are reclaimed promptly there would not be a problem with this weed. Using sheep wire on all pits would prevent access to livestock.

Impact of No Action Alternative: There would be no adverse impacts.

Mitigative Measures: The operator will install sheep wire fencing to prevent livestock from accessing all constructed pits. Also, in accordance with Condition of Approval #181 from Appendix B of the White River ROD/RMP, reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the Authorized officer.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: This project is in a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class 2 area. The objective of this class is to retain the existing characteristic landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The level of change to the existing landscape will be low. Since these pipeline tie-ins will be adjacent to existing pipeline, roads and well pads and revegetation will minimize visual impacts; the standards for VRM Class 2 will be met.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: None

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: Cumulative impacts from oil and gas development were analyzed in the White River Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS) completed in June 1996. Current development, including the proposed action, has not exceeded the cumulative impacts from the foreseeable development analyzed in the PRMP/FEIS.

REFERENCES CITED:

Conner, Carl E.
1995 Cultural Resource Inventory Report on Twenty-seven Well Locations and Associated Access Roads/Pipeline Routes in the Douglas Creek Arch Area Rio Blanco County, Colorado for Snyder Oil Corporation.

Elkins, Melissa and Keith Montgomery
2001 Cultural Resource Inventory of Bonneville Fuel Corporation's 8 Well Locations South of Rangely, Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Montgomery Archaeological Consultants, Moab, Utah.

Montgomery, Jacki
2002 Cultural Resource Inventory of Bonneville Fuel Corporation's Banta Ridge Federal $4-18-1-103 and #12-18-1-103 Well Locations and Access Roads, Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Montgomery Archaeological Consultants, Moab, Colorado.

Montgomery, Keith and Sarah Ball
2001 Cultural Resource Inventory of Bonneville Fuel Corporation's 8 Wells Southwest of Rangely, Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Montgomery Archaeological Consultants, Moab, Utah

Pointkowski, Michael
2003 Negative Report of the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory of Two Well Ties for Canyon Gas, Rion Blanco County, Colorado. Uncompahgre Archaeological Consultants, Grand Junction, Colorado

Scott, John M.
2003 Four Proposed Carbon Energy Corporation Banta Ridge Wells (Fed. 2-7-1S-103, Fed. 4-7-1S-103, Fed. 7-3-1S-103, Fed. 14-18-1S-103): A Cultural Resource Inventory in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., Eagle, Colorado.

2004 Carbon Energy's Banta Ridge Federal 13-17-1S-103 and 4-8-1S-103 Well Pads and Access Road: Resource Inventory, Rio Blanco County, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden
1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. Unites States Geologic Survey, Department of the 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
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife 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
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	ORP	Wilderness
Carol Hollowed	Hydrologist	Soils
Robert Fowler	Forester	Vegetation
Glenn Klingler	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Carol Hollowed	Hydrologist	Access and Transportation

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
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	ORP	Recreation
Max McCoy	NRS	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	NRS	Wild Horses

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

CO-110-2004-087-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 approve the proposed action with the mitigation measures listed below:

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. Use Seed Mix #2 from the White River ROD/RMP for reclamation.

Seed Mix #	Species (Variety)	Lbs PLS/ Acre	Range sites
2	Western wheatgrass (Arriba) Pubescent wheatgrass (Luna) Russian wildrye (Bozoisky) Crested wheatgrass (Fairway/Ephraim) Yellow sweetclover (Madrid) Fourwing saltbush (Wytana/Rincon) Alternates: Winterfat	3 2 2 2 0.5 2	Alkaline Slopes, Clayey Foothills, Clayey Slopes, Claypan, Mountain Shale

4. In accordance with the White River ROD/RMP, application of herbicides must be under field supervision of an EPA-certified pesticide applicator. Herbicides must be registered by the EPA and application proposals must be approved by the BLM.

5. The operator shall be required to collect and properly dispose of any solid wastes generated by this project.

6. No construction or development activities will be allowed within ¼ mile of the active golden eagle nest in 1S, 103W, Section 17, SW, SW from February 1 through August 15. This stipulation applies not just to vehicles, but to non-motorized human activity, as golden eagles are highly susceptible to nest abandonment if disturbed. This stipulation applies to activity on Wells 13-20, 11-20 and 3-20 since access to these wells is via a route that passes very close to the nest (less than a ¼ mile). This nest will be monitored this year and in subsequent years to determine activity. Exceptions to this timing limitation are at the discretion of the BLM. It's the responsibility of Evergreen Operating Corp. to contact the BLM for the current status of this nest prior to beginning construction activities if it is between the above dates. Again, this applies to non-motorized human activities as well.

7. If at any time during installation of the well tie pipelines it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formations a paleontological monitor shall be present during the excavation.

8. The operator will install sheep wire fencing to prevent livestock from accessing all constructed pits. Also, in accordance with Condition of Approval #181 from Appendix B of the White River ROD/RMP, reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within six months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the authorized officer.

9. Best Management Practices (BMPs) need to be employed to keep sediment from leaving the site.

10. Slopes within the disturbed area shall be stabilized by non-vegetative practices designed to hold the soil in place and minimize erosion. Vegetative cover shall be reestablished to increase infiltration and provide additional protection from erosion.

11. When erosion is anticipated, sediment barriers shall be constructed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent it from leaving the site. In addition, straining or filtration mechanisms may also contribute to sediment removal from runoff.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: Compliance will be conducted by the realty staff every five years.

NAME OF PREPARER: Penny Brown

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline P. Halbwed 5/21/04

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: Vernon Rhell
Acting Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 5/21/04

ATTACHMENTS: Map of the Location of the Proposed Action.

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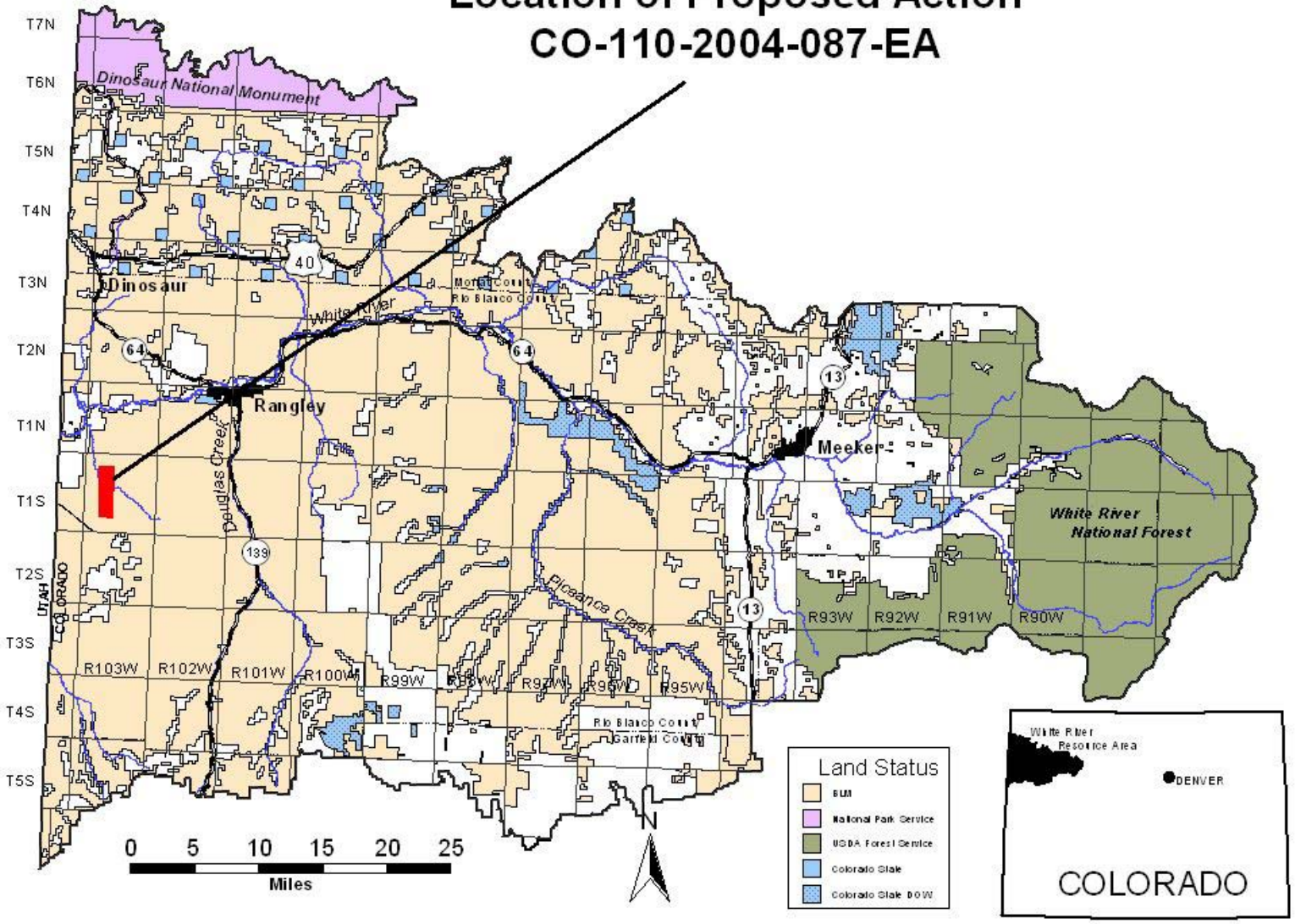
Location of Proposed Action
CO-110-2004-087-EA