United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

CO13000(8550)

July 2, 2004

Dear Reviewer:

Environmental Assessment CO-130-2004-029-EA, analyzing the proposed construction of a new foot/horse bridge across the Gunnison River at Bridgeport, is available for your review. Comments will be accepted through August 2, 2004. Comments or questions may be addressed to Britta Laub, at 970.244.3031 or e-mailed to Britta_Laub@co.blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Catherine Robertson
Field Manager

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-130-2004-029-EA

PROJECT NAME: Bridgeport Bridge

PLANNING UNIT: Grand Junction Field Office

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: N½NE¼ Sec. 18, T.14 S., R.98 W., 6th Principal Meridian

APPLICANT: Bureau of Land Management, Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO)

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES
The Grand Junction Field Office proposes to construct a foot/horse bridge spanning the Gunnison River in the above location, which is also known as Bridgeport. The bridge would provide reasonable access into the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA) for the public and for BLM, consistent with proposed management for the area.

Background/Introduction:
The existing Bridgeport Bridge provides private foot, horse, and vehicle access across the Gunnison River. The bridge is privately owned, and the bridge abutments are on public (BLM) land. The bridge owners have a BLM right-of-way that grants them use of the public land for the bridge abutments, and also allows legal access to the private land at Bridgeport Ranch. The bridge also provides access for Mr. Billyie Rambo, who is a life estate lease-holder in Little Dominguez Canyon. The road from Highway 50 leading to an existing public parking area and the railroad track is a Mesa County road. From there to the bridge, the road is on public land and includes a Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. In 1983, a gate and lock were placed on the road at the existing parking area by the railroad, approximately 0.8 miles from the bridge to prevent the public from driving to the bridge, to reduce vandalism to the bridge and surrounding private property, and to reduce liability.

The earliest documents in BLM files show an easement and right-of-way, and a cooperative *agreement* (March 5, 1941) indicating that ownership of the bridge rested with the United States of America. During the 1940s and until 1952, the bridge was mainly used for cattle herding and to get farm produce from the private land to the railroad on the east side of the Gunnison River. The signers of the documents were to be responsible for all maintenance on the bridge.
In June 1952, service on the railroad was discontinued and another means of access had to be found. In July 1952, Mesa County, in cooperation with the ranchers and private landowners, built a road from Highway 50 down Deer Creek to the railroad right-of-way. The D&RGWR built approximately one mile of road along its siding to the bridge. The new county road opened the area to vehicular use by the general public, which began to make extensive use of the bridge for access to Dominguez Canyon.

In 1967, a BLM engineer reported that the condition of the bridge would no longer stand continued use by vehicles. BLM published a Public Notice on August 29, 1967, closing the bridge to all vehicle traffic unless a proposal was offered which would remove government liability. Later in August 1967, lawyers representing the cooperators and DOI Solicitors worked out an agreement which would indemnify the BLM. The bridge was then closed to vehicle use by the general public but foot traffic was allowed to continue. The safety of the bridge again became an issue in late 1973. The BLM District Manager began proceedings to close the bridge to all use and to have the bridge dismantled. In January 1974, BLM received a letter from an attorney who represented the Musser Brothers Ranches which stated that they believed the title to the bridge rested with a previous land owner and not with the BLM. In February 1974, BLM received another letter from the attorney which stated that he had talked with the former landowner and that he had no further interest in the bridge and, therefore, quit-claimed the bridge to the Musser Brother Ranches. Musser Brothers Ranches recorded the quit claim deed with Mesa County in December 1974.

The BLM District Manager discussed the matter with the BLM, Colorado State Director and it was decided to accept the quit claim deed and to issue the Musser Brotners Ranches a Special Land Use Permit (SLUP) for the bridge abutments which were located on public land. The SLUP was signed in December 1974, and was to be in effect until December 1979. A second permit, a temporary use permit (TUP), was issued in October 1979 and was to continue until 1984. During the spring and summer of 1983, the ranch manager for the Musser Ranch at Bridgeport reported continued vandalism to the bridge, irrigation ditches, and other structures. He posted the bridge as no public access and attempted to block the county road so that vehicles could not reach the bridge site. In 1983, the Musser Brothers filed a right-of-way application to legalize their access to their property across the bridge since the TUP restricted use to those parties transporting cattle across the bridge and for agricultural purposes. The Mussers also proposed construction of a barricade on Mesa County Road 39.50 approximately .8 mile from the bridge to stop vandalism of the bridge and nearby private property. BLM contacted the Mesa County Road Department to discuss the possible road closure.

A BLM land report and environmental assessment record of decision was issued in October 1983 approving the right-of-way grant in exchange for public foot access across the bridge. The record of decision also approved the construction of a barricade. A gate with a lock was subsequently constructed on the county road to stop vehicle traffic to the bridge. On October 29, 1985, BLM received notice from one of its engineers that the bridge was not safe for any type of use and that continued public access constitutes a public hazard and liability. On January 31, 1986, in the interest of public safety, BLM issued an emergency closure to public access across the bridge; after a 30-day public review and comment period, the Grand Junction District manager issued a decision on August 5, 1986, closing the Bridgeport Bridge to public access.

By letter dated August 11, 1986, Mr. Edwin Marston appealed that decision to the Interior board of land Appeals (IBLA), alleging that BLM's decision to close the bridge to public use was arbitrary. The appeal was dismissed by IBLA in its decision dated June 23, 1988.

The bridge has remained closed to public use since January 1986 after it was declared unsafe for any type of use. The bridge owners, however, continue to use the bridge for their ranching

operations. Despite recent improvements to the bridge decking and structure, a recent BLM engineering evaluation determined that the bridge does not meet public safety requirements.

Private use of the bridge while the public is excluded from its use has created friction. Many visitors to the Dominquez WSA trespass by traveling over the bridge. This access point is popular with the public because it is the most direct access (approximately 1 ½ mile) to the cultural and natural resource features in lower Dominquez Canyon. Closure of the bridge to public access has been ineffective. Public use of the private, closed bridge also presents public health and safety issues as the public continues to use the bridge and the bridge has been determined to not meet public safety requirements. To alleviate public concerns and to provide reasonable public access to the Dominguez WSA area, BLM proposes to construct a foot/horse bridge across the Gunnison River. This proposed action was the preferred alternative described in the Decision Record and FONSI of the document referred to in the following paragraph. BLM was also to try and obtain funding for this action.

The Decision Record and FONSI for the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area Wilderness Interim Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, signed August 5, 1986 discusses in depth the history of the existing bridge and access issues in the Bridgeport area. This document is available at the GJFO.

Proposed Action: The BLM proposes to construct a foot/horse bridge to provide non-motorized/non-mechanized access to the Dominguez WSA. Approximate cost would be $700,000. The bridge would entail a 250-foot span across the Gunnison River at a point not less than 920 feet upstream of the existing bridge, thereby avoiding an historical site. Avoidance of the site, using construction mitigation measures, could also be carried out if the bridge needs to be located less than 920 feet from the existing bridge. Public access would be along the existing access road to the current private bridge. At that point, a trail approximately 10 feet in width would be constructed to the new bridge. Because of the cultural history and artifacts located in this area, the trail would be constructed by removing surface vegetation, and hauling in material suitable for a trail used by the public.

Public parking would remain at its present location, and non-mechanized/non-motorized access only would also be maintained. The locked gate would allow the private landowner to access the existing vehicular bridge owned by him, and authorized under previous and existing ROW agreements. Union Pacific Railroad employees also access their sidings and operations area through this gate, and BLM would have administrative access.

If increased public use in the future warrants an overflow parking area, it would be constructed to the east of the present parking location. The future parking site was used to provide rock rip-rap for protection of the railroad tracks during several years of very high runoff, and was cleared for cultural and T&E species in an EA prepared for the rock removal. Increased visitor use may also require the installation of sanitary facilities adjacent to one of the parking areas.

A truss-type bridge rather than a cable-suspension bridge is proposed, because the construction period is shorter (approximately two weeks after abutments are installed), the area disturbed by abutments is smaller, and security concerns are fewer. Heavy equipment, including a dozer, back-hoe, pile-driving truck, crane, and concrete provider, would be used in bridge construction; much of this equipment would need to cross the river. A ford area either in the Dominguez

Creek vicinity, or downstream from the bridge site, will be utilized for heavy equipment access. A temporary wooden crib would be installed about midpoint in the river to enable installation of the bridge span. The crib would be removed immediately after bridge installation. The primary construction staging site would be the parking area on the east side of the existing bridge. All construction activity would occur during the period between March 20 and December 10 (9 months). During two of these nine months, August and September, no construction activities would touch the river bottom (see Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species section). Construction is expected to occur in 2005 and require 3 months.

Vehicle/Foot/Horse Bridge Alternative: Under this Alternative, a truss bridge designed to carry vehicular traffic (in addition to foot/horse traffic) would be constructed. This bridge would not be open to public vehicular traffic. The width of the bridge would be 14 feet and placement of abutments would require permanent removal of vegetation from approximately 150 square feet of riverbank on each side of the river. Additional surface disturbed during construction would be reclaimed. Over-flow parking would be provided at a site located just to the east of the present parking area. Approximate cost of the bridge would be $800,000.

No Action Alternative: Under the No Action Alternative, construction of a new bridge would not take place; the existing bridge would remain in place. Public emergency closure of the bridge would remain in effect. The bridge owners would maintain their bridge for their own needs. No legal public access would be established at the Bridgeport site. The public wishing to access the WSA at this site would likely continue to trespass on the existing, private bridge. Public health and safety issues stemming from unauthorized public use of the private bridge would continue.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD:
A cable-supported bridge design was also considered. This would disturb approximately twice the area, including cable anchors for the backstay cables, located approximately 80-feet behind each abutment. Current security issues were considered; a cable-type bridge is vulnerable to the use of commercially available thermite, which can easily be applied to cable supports, ignited to burn through the cables, and bring down the bridge. For these reasons, this alternative design was not carried forward.

NEED FOR THE ACTION: The only available access to the east side of the Dominguez WSA is to boat across the Gunnison River, or to hike in from the Dad's Flat access road, Cactus Park trailhead, or Dominguez campground. These access routes are very difficult or unattainable for a major part of the public and as such, these members of the public continue to use the bridge in trespass. Although the private landowner has signed the bridge as "Private Property/No Trespassing", he has made no other efforts to restrict use on the bridge by the general public. The trespass problem, vandalism to the privately owned bridge and property, and the documented findings of the unsafe and hazardous condition of the bridge which precluded public use, warrant BLM action. A new bridge would provide safe and easier access to this area for the public;it was also identified for construction in the Decision Record and FONSI (1986) referenced in the "Background/Introduction" section above.

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: GRAND JUNCTION Resource Management Plan. (The proposed Action is also in conformance with the following document: Decision Record Rationale and FONSI/ Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area/ Wilderness Interim Management Plan and Environmental Assessment (CO-076-6-28), dated August 8, 1986.)

Date Approved: JANUARY, 1987

Decision Number/Page: RE- 6 page 2-20, RE-8 page 2-20, VI-1 page 2-21; WI-4; page 2-23

Decision Language:

RE-6: Manage the Gunnison River Corridor to protect recreational opportunities in and along the river.

RE-8: Review project proposals to ensure compliance with this plan's (RMP) river protection constraints on other land uses.

VI-1: Adopt VRM classes as listed in Table 15/Map15, VRM Class II.

WI-4: Manage all seven WSAs under BLM's *Interim Management Policy* pending congressional action on wilderness recommendations. Review projects proposed within these WSAs to determine whether they would impair the suitability of such areas for wilderness designation.

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:

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The proposed action will have no air quality impacts.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None

__DPS 3-18-04____
Initial and Date

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Affected Environment: There will be no ACECs affected by this proposal.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None

__DPS 3-18-04___
Initial and Date

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: A literature review of the project area, including the recreation trail in lower Big Dominguez Canyon, was conducted to provide background to develop management actions to protect cultural resources from both direct and indirect effects of the bridge

construction. A field inventory of the Area of Potential Effect as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was conducted by Aline LaForge, BLM Archaeologist with positive findings (CRIR GJFO-1004-12). The following information about five newly recorded historic sites is based on 1895 General Land Office (GLO) survey notes and maps. The standard gauge segment of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad between Bridgeport and Deer Creek, moved to its present location with the construction of the tunnel downstream in 1884 and was mapped by GLO in 1895, and currently owned by Union Pacific Railroad, is 5ME7351.10. An unnamed road on river left associated with the Trolly Ferry transportation the homestead on Sand Flat, and the grazing use and mining in Big Dominguez Canyon is 5ME14348. An unnamed road on river right predates the 1884 alignment of the standard gauge rail and is associated with the Trolly Ferry is 5ME14350. An irrigation ditch that predates 1895 on river left starts at the concrete dam across Dominguez Creek is 5ME14349. This ditch delivered water to a newly planted fruit orchard on Sand Flat, and is still used today. The Bridgeport Railroad Station and Trolly Ferry site is 5ME14351. The majority of the site is on river right upstream from the current bridge with the anchor and historic inscriptions on a large boulder the only extant remains of the ferry on river left. Although there is a reference in the right-of-way files to ownership of a bridge on a 1926 deed associated with the ranch on Sand Flat, most records indicate that the existing Bridgeport Bridge, 5ME14419, was built at its present location in 1935 from materials salvaged from another bridge abandoned by Mesa County. The history of ownership is summarized in the background section of this document.

The location of the required heavy equipment ford of the Gunnison River has not been identified by the engineers at this time. A literature review and field inventory will be conducted by the BLM archaeologist and any historic properties eligible for nomination to the NRHP will be avoided or mitigation will be designed in consultation with the SHPO and conducted prior to use.

No Class III inventory has been conducted in Big Dominguez Creek canyon. The first rock art (petroglyph) site was recorded in the canyon in 1967. A judgmental survey, part of the Dominguez Reservoir study, was conducted in 1975. Two petroglyph sites and two historic stone cabins were recorded. A follow-up survey mapped and photographed the two petroglyph sites and recorded an additional two petroglyph sites. A previously unrecorded petroglyph site was reported to the BLM by avocational archaeologists in 1999. It is likely that unrecorded, significant cultural resources are present in the canyon.

- Previously Recorded Cultural Resources in lower Big Dominguez Creek Canyon

Site #	**Type**	**Vandalized**	**Visible from Trail**	**First recorded**	**Last reevaluated**
5ME158	Petroglyphs/Rock Shelters	Yes	Yes	1975	1979
5ME159	Petroglyphs	Yes	Yes	1975	1979
5ME521	Historic Stone structure	Yes	Yes	1975	--
5ME522	Sheltered Rock structure	Yes	Yes	1975	--
5ME696	Petrolgyph	Unknown	Unknown	1967	--
5ME5918	Petroglyphs	No	No	1979	--
5ME5919	Petroglyphs	No	No	1979	--
5ME12174	Petrolgyph	No	No	1999	--

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:
The table below addresses the direct effect of bridge construction on historic properties for either action alternative, and indicates the BLM's recommendation of eligibility, the mitigation, action, or use that will insure a determination of No Effect to any contributing component of an eligible Historical Property. Recommendations were developed in consultation with Jim Green of the State Historic Preservation Office. Formal consultation will be concluded prior to construction.

	NRHP	Criterion 36CFR60.4	Action / Mitigation	Effect
5ME14419	Not Eligible	none	(Privately Owned Existing Bridge)	No Effect
5ME7351.10	Eligible	"a"	Use access road, avoid surface disturbance	No Effect
5ME14348	Not Eligible	none	No Further Work	No Effect
5ME14349	Eligible	"c"	Avoid surface disturbance	No Effect
5ME14350	Need Data	"d"	Preserve / Avoid surface disturbance	No Effect
5ME14351 Bridgeport RR Station & Trolly Ferry	Eligible	"a", "d"	• Archival Research & Detailed Mapping. • Avoid surface disturbance • Construction monitoring. • Interpretive signing for cultural resources & Bridgeport history at bridge access.	No Effect

The indirect impacts from recreation use from either action alternative are difficult to assess. Vandalism to the most visible sites was documented at their first recording. Often vandalism to sites is attributed to vehicle access and lack of interpretive education. The proposed action addresses both of these issues to the benefit of cultural resources. There is a correlation between visibility from the trail and vandalism. None of the sites have had any documented monitoring. As recreation use increases in the canyon it is likely that visitor impacts, especially unintentional erosion from foot traffic or unauthorized collection of artifacts from both recorded and unrecorded sites, will continue to deteriorate these resources. Complete baseline information is needed to establish a consistent monitoring program.

Priority will be given to funding a re-evaluation of the six petroglyph sites and Class III cultural inventory of the trail to document known but unrecorded sites. The results would provide baseline documentation for monitoring to be coordinated with other Dominguez Canyon WSA monitoring. This first phase is critical to developing a management plan and allocation of use for cultural resources in this section of Dominguez Canyon WSA.

Selection of the No Action Alternative would continue management under the current conditions allowing deterioration of cultural resources through benign neglect. Baseline information would not be available for future recreation management plans and the public would continue to use the area as a recreation resource without awareness or appreciation for the rich prehistory and history.

___AIL 6-15-04____
Initial and Date

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Affected Environment: There are no disproportionately high and/or adverse human health or environmental effects proposed with this project on minority populations and low-income populations.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None

___DPS 3-18-04____
Initial and Date

FARMLANDS, PRIME AND UNIQUE

Affected Environment: There are no Prime and Unique Farmlands affected by this proposal.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None

___DPS 3-18-04__
Initial and Date

FLOODPLAINS

Affected Environment: The bridge abutments would touch the 100-year floodplain and the ford area will go through the natural high water area. This will affect the riparian community and potentially increase sediment into the river for a short period of time.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: For both alternative: A 404 permit from the Corps of Engineers will be obtained prior to any construction activities on the abutments or the ford area. Mature cottonwoods and willows should be avoided if possible during this construction to reduce damage to native plant populations and areas of Tamarisk should be targeted for the placement of abutments and ford area.

LBR 3-29-04
Initial and Date

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: Regardless of alternatives, there is a fair amount of Russian knapweed at the current bridge site and the proposed bridge site. The river corridor as a whole is plagued by quite a bit of this weed, not just at the site.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Normally we would require construction equipment be cleaned before arriving on the site, and this is still the case so we don't import any new weeds to this riparian corridor. However, it would also be wise for the builder to clean their equipment before leaving the site so they don't take Russian knapweed seed with them to the next job. The logical place to clean equipment is the construction staging area near the existing bridge, where weed crews can easily access. BLM will plan to treat the area around the new bridge to mitigate transporting seeds into the WSA.

MT 2/17/04
Initial and Date

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: No species on the US Fish & Wildlife Service's list of Birds of Conservation Concern 2004 nests at the site of the proposed action. Other protected species do nest at the site (spotted towhee, yellow-breasted chat, blue grosbeak).

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The project disturbance area is so small that the risk of "take" of birds is negligible. In addition, birds nest during the time that the river flow peaks, when bridge construction would be most expensive. The indirect effect of increasing human traffic poses an increased chance of "take", especially under the vehicle access version of the proposed action. However, the proposed action does not direct human traffic into a recognized sensitive situation and so should be innocent under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

_RL 3-19-04_
Initial and Date

NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CONCERNS

Affected Environment: Project notification letters were sent to the three tribes that traditionally used the project area, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and Uintah & Ouray Tribal Business Committee in March 2004. The Southern Ute Indian Tribe

provided the only response and indicated that there are no known impacts to areas that are sensitive to the tribe in regards to the proposed bridge work. They did ask to be notified in the event of inadvertent discoveries of sites, artifacts, or human remains. Because known Ute sites will be included in the survey and monitoring plans developed for Dominguez Canyon WSA the tribes would be provided information once that phase of the project is initiated. The tribes should be consulted if images of petroglyph sites are proposed for use in interpretive materials.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None. No further consultation was conducted.

__AIL 6-15-2004_
Initial and Date

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment**:** This EA serves as BLM's Biological Assessment of the proposed Bridgeport Bridge Project for Section 7 Consultation Purposes. The list of species that the BLM expects that the US Fish & Wildlife Service would supply at consultation initiation is as follows:

Listed Species	Candidate & Nominated Species
Black-footed Ferret **E**	Gunnison Sage-grouse **C**
Bald Eagle **T**	Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo **C**
Mexican Spotted Owl **T**	White-tailed Prairie Dog **N**
Colorado Pikeminnow **E**	*Penstemon debilis* **C**
Razorback Sucker **E**	*Phacelia submutica* **C**
Sclerocactus glaucus **T**	

The project site by the Gunnison River is not in or adjacent to the habitats of black-footed ferrets, Gunnison sage-grouse, white-tailed prairie dogs, or the plants, *Penstemon debilis*, and *Phacelia submutica*. The river canyon has features resembling the habitats of spotted owls and yellow-billed cuckoos. The area has been surveyed for spotted owls with a negative finding and there are no historical records of them occurring here or nearby. There is no tree habitat required by the cuckoo in the proposed project area. *Sclerocactus glaucus* plants occur outside the river bottom habitat in the Dominguez area and not at the proposed new bridge site or along the short road to it.

Bald eagles travel up and down the Gunnison River past the point of the proposed action. The river and its 100-year floodplain at this point is critical habitat for the Colorado River pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. The BLM sensitive roundtail chub and probably the flannelmouth sucker occur in this stretch of the river. Another sensitive species, the Northern leopard frog has recently been found along the Gunnison River below the point of the proposed new Bridgeport Bridge site. River otters, endangered species on the Colorado State ESA list, have been reported at Bridgeport.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation**:** The project would not affect the listed ferret, owl or *Sclerocactus*, nor the candidate grouse, cuckoo, *Penstemon* or *Phacelia*, nor the nominated prairie dog. No effects, direct, indirect, cumulative or from interrelated or interconnected actions, are predicted to result to these animals from constructing a new Bridgeport Bridge. Traditionally new travel routes that avoid the threatened cactus plants have been sufficient to be judged to have "no effect". Since the preferred "alternative" of the proposed action is for no vehicle access, a determination of "no affect" on the cactus is more certain.

If the construction activity occurs outside of the winter high-use period for bald eagles, December 10 to March 20, a "no affect" determination for this species would be accurate. During the winter bald eagles would avoid a half to three-quarter mile stretch of the river temporarily. This would be a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination.

The bridge abutments would touch the 100-year floodplain and the construction equipment crossing the river would create small and short-term effects on the critical habitat of the pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. These effects would be minimized by creating no disturbance in the river between August 1 and September 30 to avoid larval fish unable to evade the hazard (P. Gelatt, USFWS, pers comm.). Work in the river during August and September would likely be a simple "may affect" situation (susceptible to a more lengthy formal consultation).

The Section 7 determination statement is that either version of the proposed action receives a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination. This would be a direct effect. No indirect effect, significant cumulative effect or effect from interrelated and interconnected actions are foreseen. This determination is made on the account of the Colorado pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. Note that the BLM preferred alternative is the "Foot/Horseback Bridge Alternative". The No Action Alternative would have no affect on any species.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: To achieve "no affect" on bald eagles (no consultation required) and "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" on two endangered river fishes (requires consultation), the construction period is limited to nine months, with a river bottom restriction during two of these months, August and September. This standard is likely to be met after Section 7 Consultation and construction of the new bridge.

RL 3-19-04, DLS 22 March 04
Initial and Date

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: Hazardous and solid wastes are not a part of the affected environment.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Hazardous wastes could be introduced to the environment during the construction of the bridge in the form of spilled fuel and lubricants for the construction equipment used or any hazardous materials which may be a component of the bridge itself. Care should be taken to prevent this. All vehicle fueling and maintenance activities should take place at the parking lot downriver on the east side of the railroad tracks. To alleviate the potential problem of vandalism or accidental releases, there should be no storage of hazardous materials (fuels, etc.) at the construction site. Any spills of hazardous materials should be immediately reported to the BLM. These measures and standard contract terms should adequately safeguard against hazardous materials concerns.

AEK 17 February 2004
Initial and Date

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND

Affected Environment: The bridge would span the Gunnison River. The Gunnison River is a perennially flowing stream with seasonal variation of flow. High flow occurs in May and June and baseflow conditions occur late fall and winter. Natural flow conditions have been modified by upstream reservoirs and irrigation withdrawals. Water quality is fair with specific conductance in the range of 400 to 2500 microsiemens common. Major ions are sodium,

calcium, bicarbonate, and sulfate. Sediment levels range up to 3300 milligrams per liter during high flow period and drop to below 20 during baseflow conditions.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Construction of the bridge would involve excavation adjacent to the river for the abutments. This could introduce sediment into the river. Use of silt fences or other controls should be used to reduce sediment introduction. If heavy equipment needs to be positioned in the river during construction, those activities should occur during low flow, and the period limited to the minimum time required to accomplish the activity. This should reduce the potential for fuel spills and sediment impacts. If any placement of dredge or fill material occurs below the ordinary high water level in the river a 404 permit would be required from the Corps of Engineers.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: This activity is not projected to violate water quality standards for the Gunnison River, therefore standard 5 would be met.

__JS 2/18/04 ___
Initial and Date

WETLANDS & RIPARIAN ZONES

Affected Environment: The Gunnison river has a perennial water flow that fluctuates throughout the year due to snow melt, irrigation withdraws, and convective thunderstorms. The associated riparian area is meeting PFC (properly functioning condition) in terms of protecting the river banks from erosion and filtering sediment however, the plant community is not the desired plant community. The riparian community consists of Cottonwoods, willows, sumac, sedges, rushes, poison ivy, and there is excessive amount of Tamarisk in the river corridor.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: To minimize the impact to native riparian plants, bridge construction needs to take place in an area where the vegetation is mainly comprised of Tamarisk and other non-natives. Areas of disturbance should be replanted to native riparian vegetation common to the area. All equipment should be power washed to reduce the possibility of introducing new noxious weeds into the area.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: This river system is meeting PFC, and due the small size of the proposed project it is not projected to have a long term impact of the functionality of the riparian system.

LBR 3-29-04
Initial and Date

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Affected Environment: The Grand Junction Field Office manages no designated Wild or Scenic Rivers, therefore no Wild and Scenic Rivers would be impacted by the proposed action.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: None.

BNL 6-03-04
Initial and Date

WILDERNESS

Affected Environment: The proposed action is not located within a Wilderness or Wilderness Study Area. A portion of the proposed action is located within the 100’ setback of the eastern boundary of the Dominquez Canyon WSA. The Dominquez WSA is accessed on its east boundary via the Bridgeport Bridge and by commercial and private boaters on the Gunnison River. Primary attractions in the WSA include petroglyphs, waterfalls, and potholes in Big Dominquez Canyon. Primary users include hikers and private and commercial boaters. Many boaters use the mouth of Dominquez Canyon as a one or two day camp spot. Commercial float outfitters use the river May through September and regularly lead hikes into the WSA from the Gunnison River. Group size is not limited on the Gunnison River and no permit system is

established. Most users conducting overnight float trips camp at the mouth of Dominquez Canyon. Most of this use is from large commercial canoe groups who often have 25 or more in each party. It is not unusual on many summer weekends to have 2 -3 parties camped in this area. These users access the WSA via the river rather than across the existing bridge. This area is used year round but use in the winter is significantly less than in the summer. During the summer use season, it is not uncommon to encounter 50-100 people within 1 ½ mile of the mouth of Dominquez Canyon. During the high use summer season, temperatures range between 90-105 degrees Celsius. Because of the heat, most users congregate within the canyon between the river and the petroglyphs and do not explore other areas within the WSA. This leads the canyon receiving the primary use impacts (social trailing, vegetation trampling). This localized area is approximately .2% of the entire WSA (WSA totals 73,888 acres, canyon bottom area containing impacts totals approximately 150 acres).

The Dominquez Canyon WSA was studied under Section 603 of FLPMA and is recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. Congress is expected to carry the recommendation forward and designate the area as wilderness to be managed as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System. When the area is designated as wilderness, it is anticipated that visitation will increase on a short term basis then taper off to around existing use levels with use increasing over time (use in Big Dominquez in FY 2003 is estimated at approximately 2,400). Formal wilderness designation could aggravate the existing access situation with additional visitors attempting to access the wilderness in trespass across an unsafe bridge.

As discussed in EA# CO-076-6-28, management issues need to be resolved pending Congressional action on the Dominquez wilderness suitability recommendation and the plan (EA# CO-076-6-28) proposes management actions to resolve these issues. Specific issues/objectives in this plan include: Access and Bridgeport Bridge " Provide reasonable access into the Dominquez Canyon WSA for the public and BLM consistent with proposed management for the area. Reestablish historical levels of public access in the Bridgeport vicinity." And Recreation "The dominant recreation management issue involves the need for reestablishing reasonable public foot access in the Bridgeport vicinity." And "Reestablish reasonable public access into the WSA in the Bridgeport area…" The preferred alternative contains seven subalternatives for resolving the access issue with subalternative five as the preferred. Subalternative five states: "Barricade existing bridge/construct new foot-horse bridge/remove gate. The bridge owners would construct and maintain a barricade (adequate security fence) on both ends of the bridge to prevent public access onto the bridge. BLM would sign the bridge closed to public access. The ROW with the Musser Brothers would be amended to remove the condition for public foot access across the bridge. The BLM would then construct and maintain a new foot-horse bridge or relocate and modify a used vehicle bridge upstream about .3 mile above the existing bridge. The new bridge would be designed to accommodate foot and horse traffic only. Use on a used vehicle bridge would be limited to that which is historical use associated with the owners of the existing bridge. A used vehicle bridge would be considered only if costs of relocation, modification, and long-term maintenance were comparable to new bridge construction. Following construction of the new bridge or used vehicle bridge, the locked gate on the county road would be removed. Construction of the new bridge would be subject to availability of BLM funding." The BLM has obtained the funding required to implement the proposed action in EA# CO-076-6-28.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Construction of a non-motorized/non-mechanized (foot/horse) bridge would allow for a safe, legal crossing of the Gunnison River to access the Dominquez WSA. Because visitors are currently using the existing bridge to access the WSA, additional visits (new or existing users) to the WSA via a new legal access (BLM bridge) are not expected to dramatically exceed current use levels. Establishment of legal access via a new bridge prior to wilderness designation would prevent additional trespass by and provide for the safety of members of the public who would be drawn to the area because of wilderness designation.

During the bridge construction period, some visitors en route to the WSA at the Bridgeport site may experience negative feelings about sites and sounds of the construction equipment and workers. This could lead to vandalism of the equipment and/or harassment of the workers. Some users may be displaced during this period, while others recreation experience may be impacted negatively. The public should be educated through BLM outreach at least one month prior to any construction equipment is moved to the site to mitigate negative recreation experience impacts. A cultural resource message should be incorporated into commercial float outfitters agenda to educate the boating/hiking clients about the sensitivity of cultural resources and WSA management requirements and issues. To inform visitors to the area about potential safety hazards due to the necessity to cross active railroad tracks to access the trail and foot/horse bridge, an interpretive kiosk should be placed in the parking area warning of the hazard. The kiosk would also be used to display cultural resource information including appropriate behavior when visiting cultural resource sites (don't touch the petroglyphs, etc). BLM should place a traffic counter on the bridge to determine number of visits via the legal bridge. BLM should consider establishing group size limits and a permit system for use of the river and Dominquez Canyon.

To prevent access and possible impairment to the WSA by mechanized/motorized vehicles, it is recommended that the BLM: 1.) sign the access road from the railroad to the bridge and the bridge as "Non-Motorized/Non-Mechanized Access Only" with applicable penalties for violating the travel designation. The travel designation for the area west of the river is currently "limited to existing routes" which means motorized travel is authorized on routes which were in existence at the time of approval of the RMP in 1987. To address the inconsistencies between the proposed sign verbage and travel designation, the BLM should amend the travel management portion of the RMP to prevent public motorized/mechanized travel on the road between the existing parking area and the proposed bridge, while allowing administrative motorized access for the BLM, railroad, and the private landowner. 2.) restrict travel across bridge to non-motorized/non-mechanized through various means (gating, signage, barricades, etc), 3.) encourage volunteer participation in monitoring WSA use from this site and educating visitors about appropriate uses of WSAs, and 4.) To address increasing use at this site, elsewhere within the WSA, and on adjacent public lands, the BLM foresees the need to develop a Community Stewardship Plan. The Community Stewardship Plan would address the management of public lands along the Gunnison River Corridor, the Dominquez Canyon WSA, the Old Spanish Trail (a designated National Historic Trail), and Cactus Park. This plan would incorporate the management tools of Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) and Benefits Based Management (BBM).

BNL 6-03-04
Initial and Date

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

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

SOILS:

Affected Environment: Soils in the proposed bridge location are on a low, first terrace, and are within the floodplain of the Gunnison River. Soils are stratified, with textures ranging from stony sand to loamy sand and sandy loam. Some silty layers are also present, as is river cobble.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Construction of the bridge abutments and any associated access trails will remove affected soils from productivity. Riprap or other bank and soil protection measures should be implemented as necessary to protect adjacent soils and prevent the river bank from eroding around the abutments.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: Much of this area is already disturbed by railroad operations and access roads. Construction of abutments would take a relatively minor amount of soils out of productivity. These are not upland soils. However, they are in a floodplain and riparian area.

_TBargsten 2-9-04_____
Initial and Date

VEGETATION

Affected Environment: The site is currently dominated by tamarisk within the riparian zone and adjacent upland area contains rabbit brush, sage brush, greasewood, sanddrop seed and cheat grass.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The construction of a new bridge at this site will result in soil disturbance that will need to be rehabilitated to restore a diverse plant community and reduce invasion by non-native plants such as cheat grass. The following is the recommended seed mix: sand dropseed 2#/acre, western wheatgrass 2#/acre, Indian ricegrass 2#/acre, Reed canary grass 2#/acre, and skunkbush (sumac) .1#/acre. See the riparian section for additional reclamation needs.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial): If rehabilitation is successful and a diverse native plant community is established standard number 3 will be met.

_HMetz 02/18/04
Initial and Date

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC

Affected Environment: The river and its 100-year floodplain are designated by the FWS as critical habitat for the Colorado River pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. The BLM sensitive roundtail chub and the flannelmouth sucker also occur in this reach of the river. Construction of the bridge would involve excavation adjacent to the river for the abutments.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The bridge abutments would touch the 100-year floodplain and the construction equipment crossing the river would create small and short-term effects on the critical habitat of the pikeminnow and the razorback sucker. BLM will initiate Section 7 Consultation for this proposal. Bridge construction could introduce sediment into the river. The use of silt fences or other controls should be used to reduce sediment introduction. If heavy equipment needs to be positioned in the river during construction, it

should occur during low flow, and the period limited to the minimum required to accomplish the activity. This should reduce the potential for fuel spills and sediment impacts to the river.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for aquatic wildlife:
This standard is likely to be met after Section 7 Consultation, and construction mitigation is followed.

DLS 22 March 04
Initial and Date

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL

Affected Environment: The canyon wildlife here includes, desert bighorn sheep, ring-tailed cat, waterfowl (high percent diving ducks), chukar partridge, plateau whiptail lizards to name a few conspicuous or notable ones. The habitat on the east bank is common reed/canary reedgrass, Russian knapweed, tamarisk, basin big sagebrush/rubber rabbitbrush, greasewood (in that order away from the river). Upstream and downstream of the site is skunkbrush. The west bank abutment site is on a steep slope of canary reedgrass, coyote willow, skunkbrush, poison ivy, four-winged saltbush/greasewood (in that order up from the water's edge).

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Either "alternative" within the proposed action and the No Action Alternative would make no significant direct effect on wildlife. By avoiding skunkbrush and placing the abutment in the thin strip of exotic plants, the effect of a small "footprint" on habitat is further minimized. The habitat narrows at this point making it the least obtrusive site for these abutments. The bridge would have indirect effects. Currently the locked gate, almost a mile away from the bridge, reduces the number of visitors and the gate on the existing bridge screens out still more. With a bridge open to the public and an open road to it, more visitors will enter the WSA. The Vehicle/Foot/Horseback Bridge "alternative" would have the greater indirect adverse effect on wildlife. More likely, bighorn sheep and waterfowl would make less use of the area around the bridge. If it is decided that the bridge is a private/public cooperative venture and the bridge accommodates motor vehicles, but is closed to public vehicles, the effect on wildlife would be approximately the same as the Foot/Horseback Bridge "alternative".

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The banks at the point of the proposed bridge are covered with mix of native and exotic plant species. This indicates a plant community in fair condition. The animal community here is in a viable condition within the natural limitations of a narrow riparian habitat.

RL 3-19-04
Initial and Date

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 Brought Forward for Analysis
Access			X
Cadastral Survey	NA		
Fire			
Forest Management	DPS		
Geology and Minerals	BMF		

Hydrology/Water Rights		X	
Law Enforcement			
Paleontology	BMF		
Noise			
Range Management			X
Realty Authorizations			X
Recreation			X
Socio-Economics			
Transportation			X
Visual Resources			X

Access and Transportation:
Affected Environment: Currently, access across the river to public and private land is restricted to a bridge that is unsafe and illegal for the public to utilize. Legal access to the public land west of the river is difficult, as the river must be forded by foot or floated by watercraft. The existence of the bridge and historic legal access across the bridge has led to a public expectation of continued use/access to the WSA at this point. The current road from the railroad to the bridge does not see vehicle use other than administrative and private landowner use as the road is gated at the existing parking area.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: Building the bridge would allow for legal and safe access to the WSA and private land. The road between the existing parking area and the existing Bridgeport Bridge should be delineated with fencing so hikers traveling from the parking area to the bridge are directed along the path they should utilize. Design of the fencing to delineate the path should ensure vehicle access to the existing Bridgeport Bridge by the private landowner is not precluded.

DTrappett 03/8/04-
BNL 6-3-04
Initial and Date

Realty Authorizations:

The following land uses and right-of-ways are present:

COC-0 093947	railroad	Union Pacific Railroad
C-36786	access/bridge abutments	MIKA AG CORP
COC-40209	powerline	Grand Valley Power
Cl 392	Power Site Withdrawal	USGS
Withdrawal, BLM	Colo. River Storage Recl. Project, 1957	

Geographic Index No. 022 shows no mining claims of record.

Contact with Union Pacific Railroad personnel was finally obtained on May 26, 2004. Dan Zack, Joan Preble, and Bob Cordova (Grand Junction yard, Maintenance of Right-of-Way Superintendent) were visited with regarding the Proposed Action. Construction of a T-post 2 smooth wire strand fence off the ballasted area of the railroad grade to direct the public to the track crossing/with crossing buck, and hanging the "No Trespassing" signs on the fence, was discussed with Mr. Cordova. He stated that BLM could go ahead with the proposal, and if any concerns arose, they would be worked out. If possible, he would like the fence

constructed approximately 30 feet away from the near rail (closest to the road). The "No Trespassing" signs will be attached to the fence, also directing the public away from the tracks.

TBargsten 2-9-04
Initial and Date

Range Management:
Affected Environment: The existing bridge has provide key access for moving cattle across the Gunnison River going to and from the Gibbler Common and Triangle Mesa grazing allotments.
Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The proposed bridge will help insure continued access to these allotments.

HMetz 02/18/04
Initial and Date

Recreation:
Affected Environment: Because of the interrelatedness of the Wilderness and Recreation resource, these sections of the EA were combined and can be found under the Wilderness/WSA section of EA.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: see Wilderness/WSA section of EA.

BNL 06/03/04
Initial and Date

Visual Resources:
Affected Environment: The VRM Class for the proposed action area is VRM Class II. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the 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. The VRM system looks to the visual effect of management activities at a landscape level.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation: The design and placement of the bridge as described in the proposed action would not attract the attention of the casual observer beyond that which occurs with the existing bridge. Some contrast might occur between the existing bridge and the proposed bridge. To minimize contrast and retain the existing character of the landscape, the bridge is proposed to be constructed from "Cor Ten" steel which has a natural oxidized finish that requires no paint and is self weathering. Utilization of this material would allow the bridge to "look rusted" the day it would be installed. The color of the bridge would blend in with the color of red slickrock canyon of the river corridor and would not provide contrast in the eyes of the casual observer against the colors of the Gunnison River which is muddy for a portion of the year. The proposed bridge would blend in with the lines and textures of the surrounding sedimentary strata and precambrian bedrock of schist, gneiss, and granite. The form of the proposed bridge would not create a strong contrast with the existing environment as it would be built from trusses that are angular, with the bridge deck frame parallel to the river.

BNL 06/03/04
Initial and Date

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED:

	Colorado Department of Wildlife (CDOW)
Al Pfister	US Fish & Wildlife Service
Dan Zack	Union Pacific Railroad
Joan Preble	Union Pacific Railroad
Bob Cordova	Union Pacific Railroad
Jim Green	State Historic Preservation Office, Intergovernmental Services
Howard Richards	Chairman, Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Judy Knight-Frank	Chair, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
Maxine Natches	Chair, Uintah & Ouray Tribal Business Committee

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Tom Bargsten	Surface Reclamation Specialist	Soils
Aline LaForge	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns
Britta Laub	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, VRM, Wild & Scenic Rivers
Jim Dollerschell	Range Management Specialist	Range, Wild Horse & Burro Act
Bruce Fowler	Geologist	Geology, Paleontology
Alan Kraus	Hazard Materials Specialist	Hazardous Materials
Robin Lacy	Reality Specialist	Land Status/Reality Authorizations
Ron Lambeth	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Bird Treaty Act, T&E Species, Wildlife-Terrestrial
Harley Metz	Ecologist	Range, Land Health Assessment
Perry McCoy	Law Enforcement Officer	Law Enforcement
Lynae Rogers	Range Management Specialist	Range, Riparian, Flood Plains
Jim Scheidt	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Hydrology, Water Rights
David L. Smith	Fisheries Biologist	T&E Species, Wildlife-Aquatic
David P. Stevens	Natural Resource Specialist Environmental Coordinator	Forestry, Air Quality, Environmental Justice, Prime & Unique Farmlands,
Mark Taber (Weeds)	Range Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species
Dave Trappett	Surface Reclamation Specialist	Access & Transportaion

FONSI

CO-130-2004-029-EA

The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures 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 RECORD

DECISION: It is my decision to implement the proposed action as described.

RATIONALE: My decision is based on the following rationale:
A decision was made in environmental assessment EA-CO-076-6-28 to construct a new foot/horse bridge at the Bridgeport site to provide public access to the Dominquez Canyon WSA. Construction of a new bridge was deferred until BLM funding could be secured. The BLM has obtained the funding required to implement the decision in the EA. It is anticipated that providing safe legal public access at this site will increase use in the WSA. To address increasing use at this site, elsewhere within the WSA, and on adjacent public lands, the BLM foresees the need to develop a Community Stewardship Plan. The Community Stewardship Plan would address the management of public lands along the Gunnison River Corridor, the Dominquez WSA, the Old Spanish Trail (a designated National Historic Trail), and Cactus Park. The Bureau has requested fiscal year 2005 funding for resource inventory and assessment to support this effort. This plan would incorporate the management tools of Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) and Benefits Based Management (BBM).

The following recommendations from this EA would be incorporated into the Community Stewardship Plan and will be implemented as Bridge construction activities progress to manage current and potential additional use.

- The access road from the railroad to the bridge, and the bridge, shall be signed as "Non-Motorized/Non-Mechanized Access Only" with applicable penalties for violating the travel designation (the travel designation for the area west of the river is currently "limited to existing routes" which means motorized travel is authorized on routes which were in existence at the time of approval of the RMP in 1987. To address the inconsistencies between the proposed sign verbage and travel designation, the BLM should amend the travel management portion of the RMP to prevent public motorized/mechanized travel on the road between the existing parking area and the proposed bridge, while allowing administrative motorized access for the BLM, railroad, and the private landowner. This action would be deferred until development of the Community Stewardship Plan.)
- restrict travel across bridge to non-motorized/non-mechanized through various means (gating, signage, barricades, etc),
- appropriate measures shall be implemented to encourage volunteer participation in monitoring WSA use from this site and educating visitors about appropriate uses of WSAs.
- The public shall be educated through BLM outreach at least one month prior to any construction equipment is moved to the site, to mitigate negative recreation experience impacts.

- A cultural resource message shall be incorporated into commercial float outfitters agenda to educate the boating/hiking clients about the sensitivity of cultural resources and WSA management requirements and issues.

- Group size limits and a permit system for use of the river and Dominquez Canyon shall be established within the Community Stewardship Plan.

- An interpretive kiosk shall be placed in the parking area, warning of the active railroad and train hazard. The kiosk would also be used to display area history and cultural resource information including appropriate behavior when visiting cultural resource sites (don't touch the petroglyphs, "Take only pictures", etc).

- BLM shall place a traffic counter on the new bridge to determine number of visits.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. BLM will initiate Section 7 Consultation for this proposal.
2. A 404 permit will be obtained from the Corps of Engineers prior to any construction in the river.
3. No construction in the river shall take place from August 1 through September 30.
4. Areas of disturbance should be replanted to native riparian vegetation common to the area. This may be done as part of BLM's volunteer program.
5. Overflow parking will be established just to the east of the present parking area.
6. A 42-inch high fence consisting of T-posts and smooth wire (or other appropriate material) shall be constructed between the foot of the railroad berm and the access road, extending to the established railroad crossing. After crossing the railroad track, and beginning at the base of the railroad track berm, the fence shall continue alongside the access road and newly constructed path to the BLM foot and horse bridge. **Openings in the fence shall be located at current Union Pacific Railroad access points to provide unobstructed access for railroad maintenance and operation. The materials, height, and location of the fence shall be designed so as not to interfere with railroad maintenance and operations. Changes in the fence after construction may be necessary if it is found to cause such interference. Design of the fencing to delineate the path should also ensure vehicle access to the existing Bridgeport Bridge by the private landowner.**
7. Use of silt fences or other sediment/erosion controls shall be used to reduce sediment introduction to the river. If heavy equipment needs to be positioned in the river during construction, it should occur during low flow, and the period limited to the minimum required to accomplish the activity to reduce the potential for fuel spills and sediment impacts to the river.
8. Construction activities shall be conducted to disturb the minimum area necessary for construction of the access road, parking area, and bridge abutments.
9. Depending on final bridge location construction activities within the boundary of 5ME14351 will be limited to only the minimum necessary, and the site surface will be buffered with either metal or heavy wood sheeting in areas determined to be sensitive to surface disturbance. Based on the results of the archive and mapping, and consultation with the SHPO, an on-site monitor to ensure surface protection may be required. Provision of the compliance monitor will be the responsibility of the construction contractor.
10. Drainages shall not be blocked or filled with loose dirt or debris; all soil erosion associated with the operation must be stabilized to a condition at least equal to that present before disturbance.

11. All disturbed areas shall be contoured to blend with the natural topography. Blending is defined as reducing form, line, and color contrast associated with the surface disturbance so that the project area will fit into the natural landscape as much as possible.
12. The right-of-way shall be maintained in a safe, usable condition, as directed by the authorized officer.
13. A Hazardous Materials and Safety Plan shall be provided to BLM by the contractor(or provided to the contractor by BLM, depending on the terms and stipulations of the work order) before construction activities begin.
14. Trash shall be confined in a covered container while the project is in progress. Upon completion, all trash, flagging, laths, etc. shall be removed and hauled to an authorized disposal site. The holder shall promptly remove and dispose in an authorized sanitary landfill, all waste generated by its activities. Waste includes, but is not limited to, human waste, trash, garbage, petroleum products, ashes and equipment. No burning of trash, trees, brush or any other material shall be allowed.
15. Dissemination of information regarding all resource value protective mitigation measures to all personnel involved in the field is the contractor's responsibility. This will include informing all sub-contractors involved in all aspects of the fieldwork associated with project construction. The contractor will be considered the responsible party if protective measures are ignored or violated.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING:

NAME OF PREPARER: Tom Bargsten 2-5-04

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ David P. Stevens

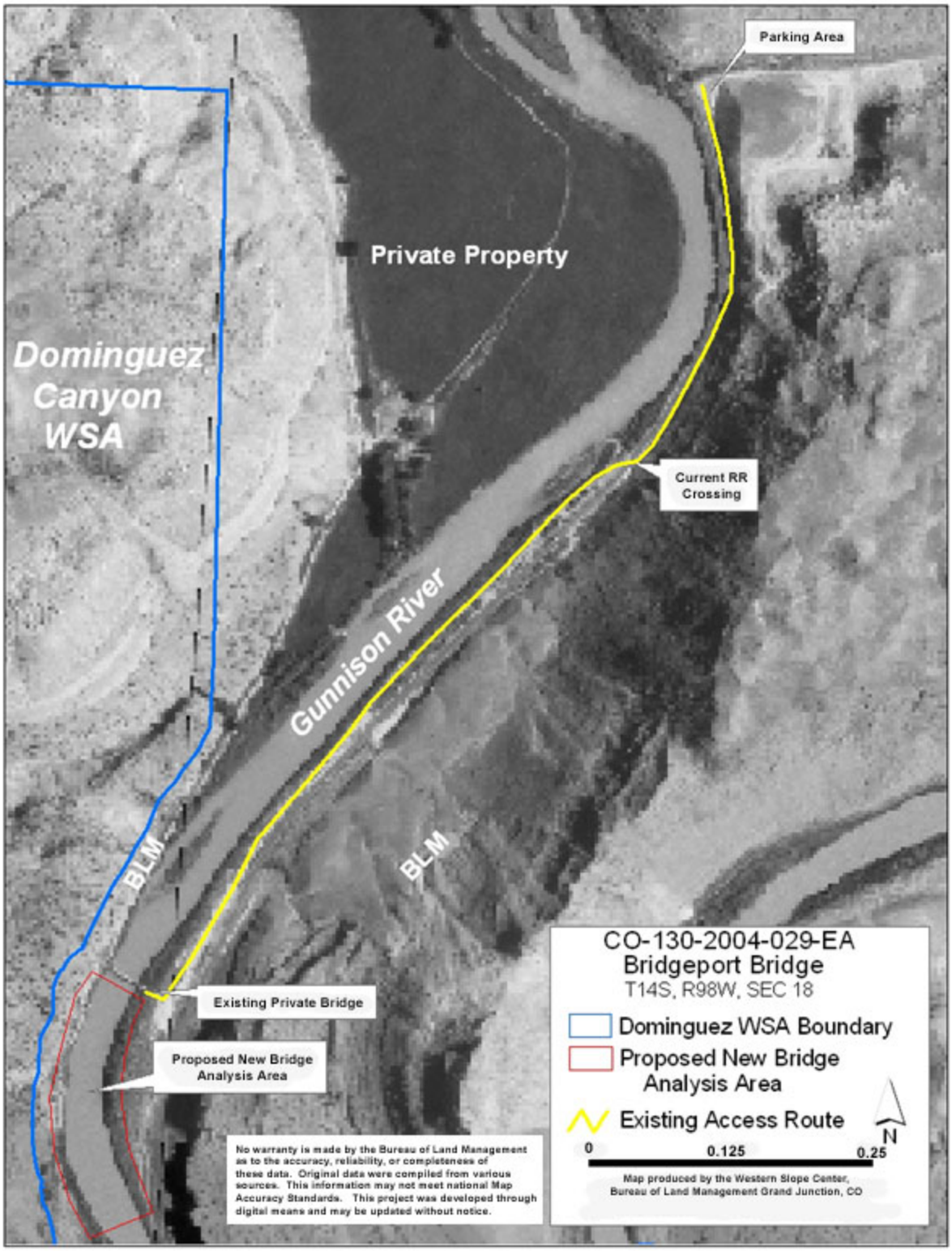
DATE: 3-18-04

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____
Grand Junction Field Manager

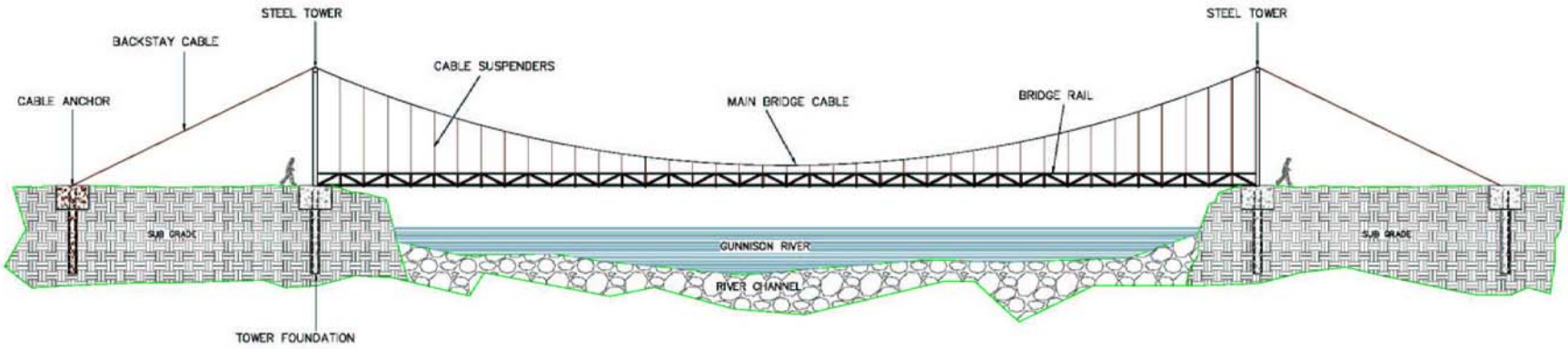
DATE SIGNED:

APPENDICES:

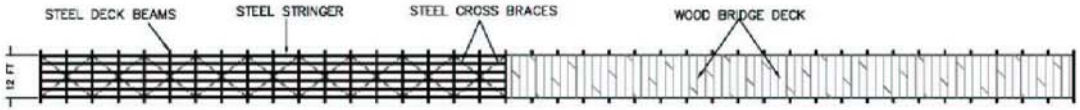
ATTACHMENTS: Location Map
Bridgeport concept bridge, cable
Bridgeport concept bridge, truss


Parking Area
Private Property
Dominguez Canyon WSA
Current RR Crossing
Gunnison River
BLM
BLM
Existing Private Bridge
Proposed New Bridge Analysis Area
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet national Map Accuracy Standards. This project was developed through digital means and may be updated without notice.
CO-130-2004-029-EA
Bridgeport Bridge
T14S, R98W, SEC 18
Dominguez WSA Boundary
Proposed New Bridge Analysis Area
Existing Access Route
N
0
0.125
0.25
Map produced by the Western Slope Center, Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction, CO

PROPOSED BRIDGEPORT CABLE SUSPENSION BRIDGE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE

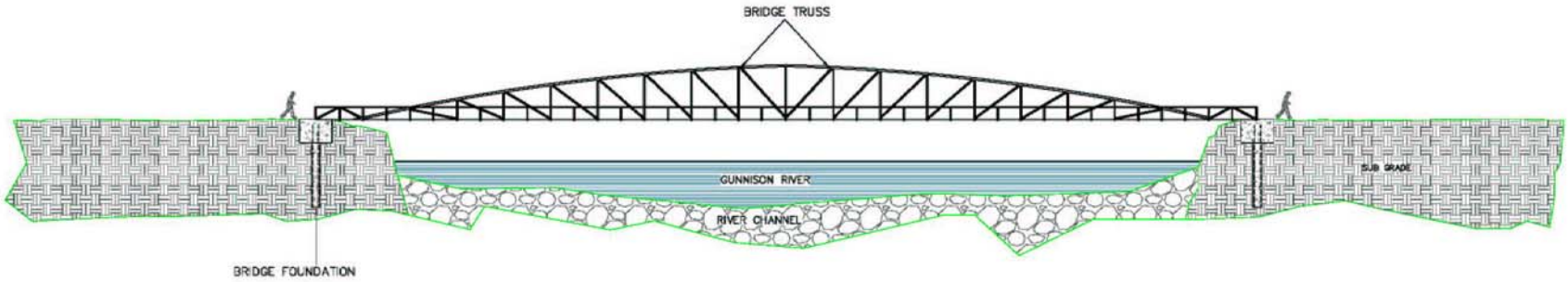


BRIDGE ELEVATION

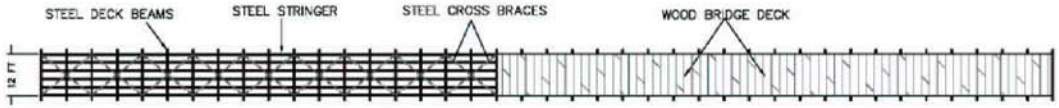


BRIDGE DECK FRAME PLAN

PROPOSED BRIDGEPORT TRUSS BRIDGE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT
GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE



BRIDGE ELEVATION



BRIDGE DECK FRAME PLAN