ECO TRAIL AND MINTURN WATER LINE CLASS I INVENTORY, EAGLE COUNTY, COLORADO

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INTRODUCTION

Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., presents this Class I Inventory report for two, largely co-located, project areas between the Town of Minturn, Colorado, and Dowd Junction, near the I-70/US Highway 24 interchange (Figure 1). This inventory was done under contract with Inter-Mountain Engineering, Avon, Colorado. The combined study area covers about 49.26 acres. One of the projects is the proposed construction of a recreational trail by Eagle County's ECO Trails department. Inter-Mountain Engineering provided the following description (personal communication via e-mail from Brad Stempihar, Intermountain Engineering, January 24, 2017):

> ECO Trails is proposing to construct a 10.0' wide paved recreational trail on the easterly hillside adjacent to County Road 14 crossing U.S. Forest Service, B.L.M, State Land Board, and Union Pacific lands. The approximately 6,800-lf of paved trail will continue from their existing core trail system near the U.S. Highway 24 and County Road 14 bridge intersection and stop near Taylor Ave in Minturn. The trail system will help connect the local communities and be used by a wide variety of end users.

The other project, co-located with the proposed trail corridor, and then extending farther to the west at the trail corridor's west end, is a proposal by the Town of Minturn to extend a municipal water line to the western end of the study area near the present USFS Holy Cross Ranger District office. Inter-Mountain Engineering provided the following description (personal communication via e-mail from Brad Stempihar, Intermountain Engineering, January 24, 2017):

> The Town of Minturn is proposing to install a new 12" C-900 watermain to extend their municipal water system to the northerly Town limits. The waterline's alignment is anticipated to be installed along County Road 14 to U.S. Highway 24 for future development use.

The purpose of this Class I inventory is to provide Inter-Mountain Engineering, and its clients, with information on known cultural resources in the project area, as well as a summary of

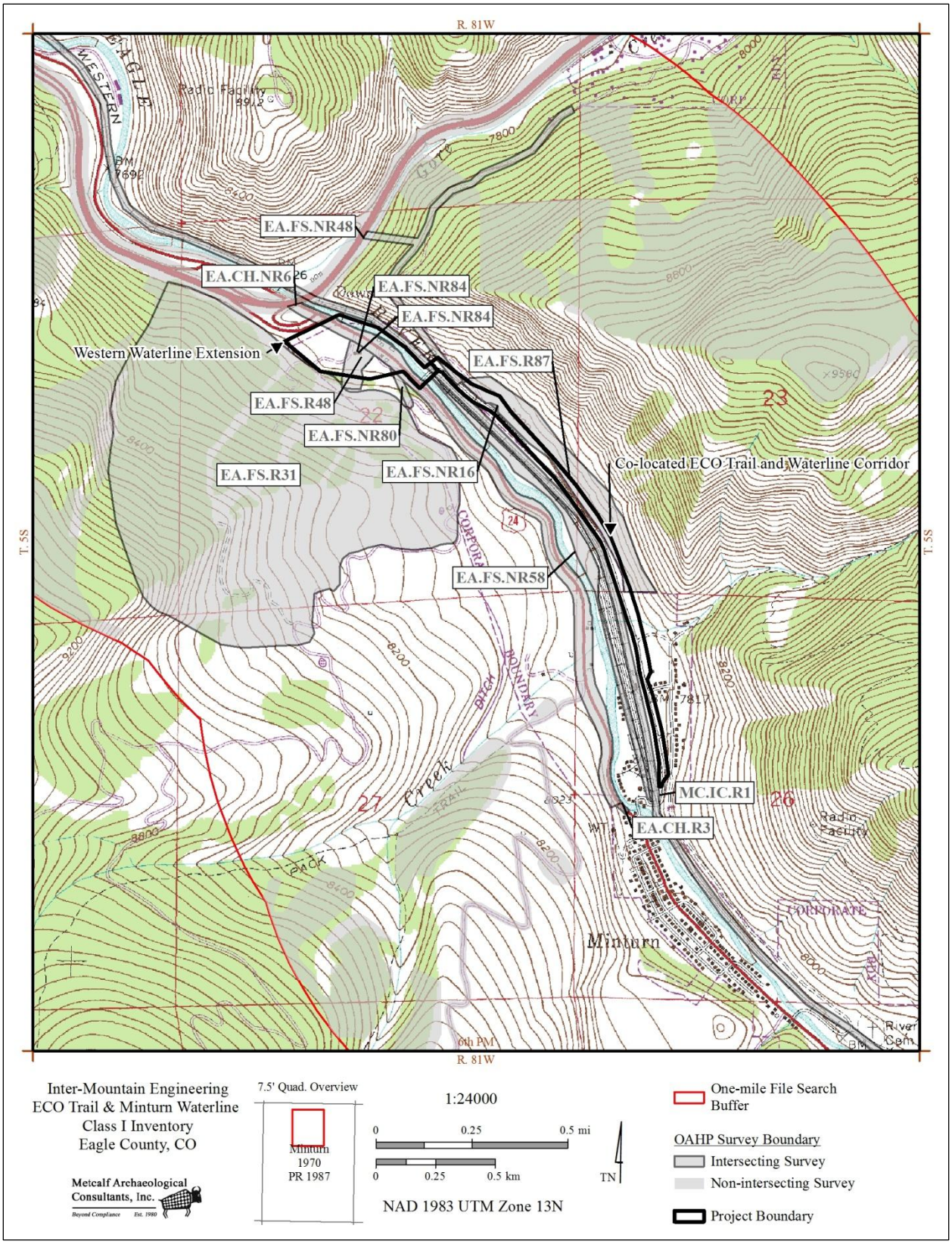

Figure 1. Project area and previous inventories.

cultural resource inventory that has already occurred. The two projects are treated together in this report as they will likely be carefully coordinated with one another for construction, and they do, to a great extent share the same footprint. Included is a short summary of expectations assuming the projects proceed and will then be subject to full Class III inventory. The known federal nexus for the requirement for a Class III inventory under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, is the location of some parts of the two project's footprints on federal land administered by the United States Forest Service, White River National Forest. Other possible federal involvement may also exist depending on other permitting needs, right-of-way access needs, or project funding.

FILES SEARCH RESULTS

The information used in this report derives primarily from querries to the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) for records of previous inventories and previously recorded sites. Metcalf used GIS data from a May 2016 OAHP GIS data request for an earlier iteration of the water line proposal, which more than adequately covers the current project area. Figure 1 shows the boundary of the GIS data request. To confirm the data in that earlier request reflects the most current data, OAHP's online Compass data base was querried on February 7 and 8, 2017, and cross-checked against the GIS data. The GIS data was found to still be current for the present study area.

The OAHP files search returned 12 cultural resources within one quarter mile of the project area. These are listed in Table 1. The resources include 10 sites and two isolated finds. The sites include seven that are historic in age and association, one that is prehistoric, and two that preserve evidence of both historic and prehistoric occupation or use. The historic resources include the railroad and sites associated with the railroad, the existing county road, several debris scatters or dumps, one automobile bridge, and several historic structures. The prehistoric resources are all chipped stone artifact scatters.

The last two columns of Table 1 indicate whether the site or isolated find is found within one or both of the project area footprints. This is based entirely on GIS data from OAHP, much of which predates field use of modern GPS equipment for mapping. Resources where this entry is "maybe" are close enough to the study area boundary that they could reasonably be found to be within it upon ground truthing. Further, whether or not a resource ends up in either project's area of potential effect (APE) will depend on final design and alignment of the two projects. Metcalf assumes that the study area boundaries upon which the Class I is based are slightly expanded from the eventual APE.

One known site that is not listed in OAHP data for the study area is US Highway 24 (5EA2889). Segments of US 24 have been recorded elsewhere, including one segment on the east side of Minturn. The highway is considered to be eligible for the National Register; individual segments of the highway, when recorded, are evaluated as to whether or not they support the eligibility assessment.

Nine previous inventories intersect some part of one or both project areas (Table 2). These inventories include four Class III block inventories for a variety of projects, one paleontological inventory (not addressed further here), three linear inventories, and one historic

Table 1. List of recorded cultural resources within one-quarter mile of the project area.

Site number	Historic/ Prehistoric	SITE NAME, Site type	National Register Evaluation	In co-located project area?	In waterline extension project area?
5EA.198.22	Historic	D&RGWRR MINTURN YARD	NE	no	no
5EA.915	Multi-component	NELSON RANCH; historic ranch complex; prehistoric artifact scatter	E	no	yes
5EA.916	Prehistoric	Chipped stone debitage scatter	NE✓	no	maybe
5EA.1377	Multi-component	Historic debris scatter; prehistoric chipped stone debitage scatter; cairn	NE✓	no	maybe
5EA.1595.5	Historic	DENVER AND RIO GRANDE WESTERN RAILROAD	E✓; supporting segment	no	no
5EA.1629	Historic	TAYLOR STREET BRIDGE	NE✓	no	no
5EA.2163	Historic	Historic structure and debris scatter	NE	no	yes
5EA.2164	Prehistoric	Isolated find (chipped stone debitage)	NE	no	no
5EA.2165	Historic	Isolated find (historic artifacts)	NE	no	maybe
5EA.2882	Historic	Historic dump	NE✓	yes	no
5EA.2883	Historic	Historic artifact scatter	NE	yes	no
5EA.2888.1	Historic	Historic road (County Road 14)	E; non-supporting segment	yes	no

NE = not eligible
E = eligible
✓ = assessment has SHPO concurrence

overview of a significant portion of the Union Pacific rail line between Sage Junction (near Gypsum, Colorado) and Cañon City.

These previous inventories cover approximately 19.15 acres, or about 39%, of the present study area. Depending on the final design of the two projects, there may be portions of the project APE that do not need to be re-inventoried at the Class III level. At the time of a Class III inventory, the cultural resource consultant willalso consult with the USFS to determine the adequacy of previous inventories. This may also result in a request to reinventory certain areas, especially when the previous inventory is an older effort.

Table 2. Previous inventories covering parts of the study area.

OAHP Doc #	Year	Project type	Project name	Agency	Consultant
EA.CH.R3[1]	1990	Class III inventory	Two Sites Near Dowd Junction	CDOT	CDOT
EA.CH.NR6[1]	1990	Paleontological survey	State Highway 24 Between MP 143.3 and 145.12, North of Minturn	CDOT	CDOT
EA.FS.R31[1]	1998	Class III inventory	Meadow Mountain Bugs Timber Sale	USFS-WRNF	USFS-WRNF
EA.FS.R48[1]	2003	Class III inventory	Proposed Holy Cross Ranger District Parking Lot Expansion	USFS-WRNF	USFS-WRNF
EA.FS.R87[2]	2011	Class III inventory	Nine Parcels for the Eagle Valley Land Exchange (Elkins 2011)	USFS-WRNF	Metcalf
EA.FS.NR48[2]	1993	Class III inventory	Dowd Junction Utility Line and Water Pipeline	USFS-WRNF	Metcalf
EA.FS.NR58[1]	1996	Class III inventory	Eagle River Trail	USFS-WRNF	USFS-WRNF
EA.FS.NR80[1]	1992	Class III inventory	Meadow Mountain Road Relocation	USFS-WRNF	USFS-WRNF
MC.IC.R1[1,2]	1996	Historic overview	Sage to Leadville and Malta to Cañon City Segments of the Former D&RGWRR (Tennessee Pass Route)	STB & UPRR	*

Notes:
[1] Covers part of the water line western extension footprint
[2] Covers part of the co-located ECO Trail and water line footprint

Abbreviations:
CDOT = Colorado Department of Transportation
USFS-WRNF = US Forest Service, White River National Forest
STB = Surface Transportation Board
UPRR = Union Pacific Railroad

* DeLeuw, Cather, and Company, Inc., and Myra L. Frank and Associates, Inc.

CULTURE HISTORY

Note: This section is copied from Elkins (2011), a Class III inventory completed several years ago by Metcalf, and which includes one parcel in the current study area, as well as other parcels nearby in the Eagle River valley. This report also provides a good environmental overview of the study area, not repeated here.

The prehistoric culture history of the area can be found in *Colorado Prehistory: A Context for the Northern Colorado River Basin* (Reed and Metcalf 1999). The Historic Period context of the area can be found in *Colorado History: A Context for Historical Archaeology* (Church et al. 2007). This context is presented in a thematic, rather than a chronologic, approach covering Colorado history in terms of the following themes: Protohistoric and Historic Native Americans, Settlements, Victorian Mining Settlements, Ethnicity, Rural Agriculture, Industry, Linear Resources, Recreation, and Government. The contexts are summarized here, but the reader is directed to those documents for more detailed information.

The prehistoric record in the Northern Colorado River Basin is divided into four eras: Paleoindian, Archaic, Formative and Protohistoric. The Paleoindian Era spans approximately the first six millennia of occupation, from about 11,500 B.C. to about 6400 B.C. Several traditions are defined, usually by projectile point types or complexes. This period can be best

characterized by low population densities, high mobility, a significant focus on large mammal procurement, and region- and continent-wide consistency in settlement and subsistence patterns.

The Archaic Era dates between 6400 B.C. and A.D. 1. The Archaic appears to be a continuation and fluorescence of the broad-based subsistence seen at the end of the Paleoindian Era. Populations were still highly mobile, but there was a trend toward more intensive and long-term use of local resources. Reed and Metcalf (1999) identify four periods, Pioneer, Settled, Transitional, and Terminal, defined by changes in mobility, settlement, and subsistence.

The Formative Era (A.D. 1-1300) in this region is characterized by a continuation of previous subsistence strategies (i.e. hunting and gathering) and is consistent with Reed and Metcalf's (1999) Aspen Tradition. Although horticulture and more permanent settlement are usually characteristic of the Formative Era, this widespread move toward horticulture was not experienced in the higher elevations of the Colorado Plateau and the mountains (Reed and Metcalf 1999).

The Protohistoric Era (A.D. 1300-A.D. 1881) includes early contact with Euro-American explorers and fur trappers and concludes with the establishment of Indian reservations. Northwestern Colorado was home to many Numic peoples. The Ute occupied much of northwestern Colorado, but the Yampa River (roughly 40 miles north of the project area) formed a boundary, albeit somewhat flexible, between Ute and Shoshone territory (Reed and Metcalf 1999; Church et al. 2007:35). In 1881, many Ute were removed to reservations, although scattered families continued their traditional lifeway in their traditional territory potentially through the 1920s (Martin et al. 2006: 6-8). Little change is found in settlement and subsistence strategies during this temporal period. Sites from this time may include wickiups and small triangular arrow points of both stone and metal, and sites are often quite ephemeral.

The Historic Period in the region is marked by the first Euro-American explorers in the area, followed closely by trappers, government surveyors, and miners. As the Town of Leadville swelled with miners after 1878 (Church et al. 2007:112), people pushed into the Eagle Valley primarily for hunting and fishing but also to open new areas to mining (Knight and Hammock 1965). The mining boom in the Rockies and farther west in Utah drove the expansion of the railways and fostered the development of agriculture, ranching, and other local industry that began primarily to support mining. In the project area, historic occupation was geared primarily toward the railroad and hunting, ranching, and agriculture.

The history of the Eagle River Valley includes, either directly or indirectly, Spanish, British, French, and American influences. Historic research themes have been identified by Mehls (1982, 1984), and Spurr and Rood (1990) provide a valuable synopsis of the region's history from the earliest Spanish expeditions in the 18th century to 20th century American farming and ranching efforts. The most pertinent historic themes are transportation, mining, and high country farming and ranching. Taken largely from Spurr and Rood (1990), the historical contexts for these themes are summarized below.

The earliest European explorers in the region followed the Ute trails, which in turn likely traced the routes of more ancient trails. Tennessee Pass has been an important route into the

valley since early historic times. From Leadville, the early explorers followed Indian trails on foot or on horseback. The first toll road over the pass was built in 1879 to serve new mining camps. By 1883, stagecoach service operated between Leadville and Dotsero. Railroad development quickly followed road construction and by 1881, the D&RG Railway had been completed to Redcliff from Leadville. Subsequent improvement to this rail line, extension to Glenwood Springs by 1887, and connection to other lines with service to Salt Lake City, helped increase the economic importance of Western Slope towns like Eagle and Minturn (Wilson 1982). Even after rail service extended the length of the Eagle Valley, wagon roads continued to provide important connections between supply centers and mining camps. Some of these roads were precursors to modern highways. By 1940, a paved road was completed over Vail Pass, named for its chief engineer Charles Vail. This would later become Interstate 70, the portion of which near Vail was completed in the late-1960s (Colorado Division of Highways 1971).

The Colorado-wide gold rush of 1859 was the precursor to gold and silver prospecting in western Colorado beginning in the 1870s. Silver became the primary metal produced during this decade, the most important being the lead-silver carbonates found along the Upper Arkansas River near present-day Leadville, Colorado. Closer to the project area, the Town of Redcliff was one of the many towns formed where promising strikes were made. Redcliff was the original county seat of Eagle County, later changed to the Town of Eagle, west of the project area (Mehls 1982:51-54).

Improved access provided by transportation developments in the Eagle River Valley helped encourage Euro-American settlement in larger numbers. The earliest homestead patents date to 1883 and the number of patent filings peaked by 1888. The early settlers focused on subsistence farming and small-scale ranching, perhaps supplementing their livelihoods with the sale of a few cash crops such as lettuce and potatoes. Irrigation projects began immediately following the initial homesteading to divert water from the Eagle River and its perennial tributary creeks to pasture land and tilled cropland. Consolidation of small 40-160 acre homesteads into larger, more economically viable ranches occurred over the next several decades. In addition, several towns in the Eagle Valley, including Eagle, Gypsum, and Edwards, were first established in the 1880s, soon after homesteading began. The original settlers of Vail proper came somewhat later in time and in lower numbers than the rest of the area. The earliest of the original land patents for the Vail area was filed on January 3, 1884 by John Connell Metcalf, but he left the valley after a short residence (Eagle County Courthouse records; Simonton 1987:32-55). Some of the traceable family names in Vail include the Phillipses, Manns, Bauldaufs, Ruders, Shivelys, and Kiahtipeses (Simonton 1987). The Town of Vail, however, would not become fully established until the early 1960s when Vail's ski area was constructed.

The Town of Edwards has a colorful history. It was founded in 1876 by Joseph Brett, a French immigrant who traveled to the area in search of gold rumored to be west of Leadville, Colorado (Mehls 1982). He homesteaded at the modern site of Edwards and ranched until he lost both feet when they froze during a hunting trip. Brett and his wife provided room and board for many travelers through the years and this contributed greatly to their livelihood. The Brett Ranch, complete with large tents used as a lodge and bar, became a common stop for miners,

businessman, fisherman, and hunters; so much so that it was dubbed the "Frenchman's Chateau" and is thought of as Eagle County's first resort.

The nearby Town of Minturn's oldest families settled at the confluence of Gore Creek and the Eagle River in the late 1800s. Some created homesteads and farmed the land, while others mined silver in the mountains high above town. With the arrival of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad in 1881, Minturn quickly developed into a booming crossroads for transportation and industry. By the turn of the century, a growing population of mining and railroad workers and their families raised the demands for business and services in town. In response, Minturn was incorporated on November 15, 1904. The construction of U.S. Highway 24 through Minturn was first proposed by the State of Colorado on April 6, 1926; however, the town trustees opposed its proposed path. By 1936, U.S. Highway 24 was completed over nearby Battle Mountain; and by 1940 it was completed through the Town of Minturn (www.minturn.org/Community/Minturn History).

During World War II, a United States Army training center called Camp Hale was created south of the Gore Valley at Pando. The 10th Mountain Division trained for alpine combat at Camp Hale and fought in Northern Italy. After the war, visitation to the valley increased greatly due to the increased mobility that railroads, personal automobiles, and super-highways allowed. In addition, veterans of the war, who saw many of Europe's famous ski areas, became major players in the growing ski industry in the United States. One of these men, Peter W. Seibert, is credited as the founder of Vail Resort (Vail Resorts 2008, Seibert 2002). Seibert, along with Earl Eaton, climbed one of the peaks above Vail in 1957 and was inspired to build a premier ski resort. The two men needed a U.S. Forest Service permit and approximately 1.8 million dollars to begin construction. Their proposal was met with little support until they began to offer potential investors partial partnership, four lifetime resort passes, and a Vail home site for $10,000 (Seibert 2002). Construction began immediately and Vail Resort officially opened for business on December 15, 1962. At that time, all that existed in the way of a town were four houses and one telephone. Vail Village and the Lionshead gondola would not be fully constructed for another seven years. Between 1962 and 1963, 55,000 skiers visited Vail Resort with ticket prices set at five dollars per person. The majority of construction for the Town of Vail, however, did not occur until the early 1970s (Seibert 2002, Vail Valley Tourism and Convention Bureau 2008).

By 1960 west-central Colorado was a hot spot for vacationers, skiers, hunters, and fisherman. A major stimulus to area tourism was the emphasis placed by various Federal agencies, such as the USDA Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, on recreational use of government land especially between the years of 1948 and 1960 (Mehls 1982:265-266). Commercial hunting and fishing and real estate were just a few of the businesses that profited from increased visitation.

DISCUSSION AND EXPECTATIONS

Metcalf, using results of a files search of OAHP records, and experience in the region and the immediate area, concludes that the likelyhood of finding new historic era resources in the study area is high. Several are already known via previous investigation. It is less likely that new historic era resources will be considered eligible for the National Register. There are

several already known (Nelson Ranch, the railroad, County Road 14, and US Highway 24). Other new historic era sites, including both structural sites and cultural material scatters, may be found, and several are known to exist.

Prehistoric resources are expected to be less common, probably for two primary reasons. First, much of the study area has been disturbed or significantly altered by historic and more recent developments, which can obscure or obliterate the archaeological record of occupations pre-dating the historic era. Second, prehistoric resources in this setting and at higher elevation tend generally to be more subtle manifestations and less easy to discover, though there are notable, though rare, exceptions (i.e. Yarmony House [Metcalf and Black 1991], Vail Pass Camp [Gooding 1981]). The ability to discover is also further hampered by what is often fairly dense ground cover in grassy areas along valley floors, as may be the case here when and if Class III inventory occurs. It may be prudent at that time to conduct limited test excavations for site discovery in certain locations as part of a pedestrian inventory effort.

Sites that are found to be eligible for the National Register, and that will be impacted in some way by the proposed trail and/or waterline, will require that that affect be assessed as part of future work. Project re-design is an alternative at most stages of cultural resource investigations, and instances where a fairly minor realignment of a portion of a trail or utility corridor could avoid impacts to a site, is certainly something that can be considered. Typically, this would occur during the analysis and reporting of a Class III inventory of the project's APE. Depending on these outcomes, and assuming there will be impact to an eligible site, there are several common mitigative strategies that may be recommended. These are just examples; a final mitigation plan, if needed, will be prepared by the cultural resource consultant, in consultation with the USFS, the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office, and other federal or state agencies, as appropriate. For historic era resources, modest research into the history of the resource, more detailed documentation of the resource, and possible monitoring of construction activities is often sufficient. For the eligible sites known in the project area, existing documentation may serve to fulfill some of this. Limited test excavations or monitoring at Nelson Ranch may be appropriate, depending on the final route of the proposed waterline. The goal of this effort would be to document possible historic archaeological materials assocated with the ranch and that might be of sufficient information potential to support the site's eligibility. Additoinal work at prehistoric sites would be recommended following a Class III inventory if sites are found for which testing is an appropriate means to determine whether or not the site is eligible under Criterion d, for its information potential. Testing is typically a second phase of an inventory project and is recommended for and designed to address specific sites in specific depositional contexts, and is further refined by defining what parts of a site will actually be impacted, and to what depth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Metcalf recommends planning for a Class III inventory at such time as the project footprints are better defined and the client is confident the footprint of the project is not going to change. For scheduling purposes, a Class III inventory of a project this size can be completed fairly quickly, start-to-end probably over the course of one or two months. The consultant's report then is reviewed by the USFS, a process that can take several weeks and depends entirely on the USFS's staff availability and internal agency priorities. Modifications to the report may

then be needed. If sites are found that are known to be, or recommened to be, eligible for the National Register, the USFS is usually obligated to consult with the SHPO on findings and recommendations, a review process that can take up to an additional 30 days. Finally, if there is need to conduct mitigative work—if one or both projects is found to have an adverse effect on an eligible site—a plan for that work is prepared, reviewed, and then accepted by the USFS and SHPO, after which it can implemented. This can take several additional months. All of this usually needs to happen before ground is broken. For projects that anticipate mitigation, Metcalf recommends planning to begin the Class III inventory process as early in the season as possible (ground must be snow-free) and anticipate that it will take all of that warm season to complete, given the review steps, and the need to prepare and then execute a mitigation or treatment plan before construction starts. For projects that don't end up requiring some form of mitigation, a three month time frame from initiation of cultural resource work to USFS acceptance of a final report of that work, is reasonably on the order of three months or so.

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