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COLORADO STATE ARCH. & HIST. COMMISSION

CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY
FOR
AMERICAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION,
WELLS 15-1 AND 15-4,
RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO

By

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Prepared for:

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For submission to:

District Archaeologist
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Survey Area and Methodology

COLO. OIL & GAS CONS. COMM.

Cultural resource surveys were conducted of two proposed gas wells and access roads on Bureau of Land Management property in Trail Canyon off the East Douglas Creek Drainage in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. These well sites, known as 15-1 and 15-4, were surveyed on April 5, 1978, by Steven G. Baker of Centuries Research, Inc., on behalf of American Resources Management Corporation of Salt Lake City. The survey was conducted under authority of an Antiquities Permit issued by the Department of the Interior to Centuries Research, Inc.

Well Site 15-1

Description: Well Site 15-1 (Fig. 1) is 200' x 200' square and is located on alluvial deposits in the floor of a small unnamed tributary gulch which enters Trail Canyon, a tributary of East Douglas Creek, from the north. The formal location of this site is T4S, R101W, Sec. 15, NW, SE, NW (Fig.1). This gulch exhibits steep and rugged sandstone walls and has a small intermittent stream path through it. Overall, the floor of the gulch appears to be actively eroding and sagebrush is the most conspicuous floral element on it. The rimrock about the gulch evidences a pinyon and juniper community. An access road will extend 600' northward from the present Trail Canyon road to the well pad. This road will be 20' wide. This pad and road are completely restricted to the alluvial deposits of the valley floor.

Survey Method and Findings: Archaeological sites or other significant cultural resources were not anticipated at the proposed drill site or within the right-of-way of the access road due to their location on active flood plain deposits. The surface of the proposed well site was completely surveyed by walking transects about 20 feet apart. The route of the access road was also walked in its entirety so that an effective corridor of approximately 30 feet was covered.

No archaeological sites or other cultural resources were found on the proposed drill site or in the right-of-way of the proposed access road. An historic Euroamerican structural site was, however, located immediately adjacent to the Trail Canyon road directly opposite from the area where the access road will depart toward the well pad. This site has been designated 5RB815 by the State Archaeologist of Colorado. The site appears to date from ca. 1930's as indicated by glass and tin food and beverage containers in a midden surrounding the small log dugout which is the central feature of the site. The dugout structure measures about 8 x 10 feet and was probably a seasonal residence for a shepherd or cattleman. The site is not of great importance as a cultural resource but is, nevertheless, significant in the historical archaeology of Northwestern Colorado.

Recommendations: Development of Well No. 15-1 and its access road will not disturb any cultural resources unless unprogrammed construction activity extends south of the present Trail Canyon Road. If this occurs, 5RB815 could be damaged or destroyed. It is recommended that the project area be considered free of cultural resources contingent upon American Resource Management Corporation's acknowledgement of its awareness of the close proximity of 5RB815 and the corporation's responsibility for protecting it. If this is done, then the immediate impact areas can be considered free of cultural resources.

Well Site 15-4

Description: Well Site 15-4 (Fig. 1) is 200' x 200' square and is located on alluvial deposits in the floor of Trail Canyon, immediately adjacent to the intermittent stream which flows through the canyon. The site is located 200' south of the Trail Canyon Road. The formal location of this site is T4S, R101W, Sec. 15, SE, NW, SW. This site is located in a sagebrush floral community on active flood plain deposits. An access road will extend 200' south of the present Trail Canyon road to the well pad.

Survey Method and Findings: Archaeological sites or other significant cultural resources were not anticipated at the proposed drill site or within the right-of-way of the access road due to their location on active flood plain deposits. The surface of the proposed well site was completely surveyed by walking transects about 20 feet apart. The route of the access road was also walked in its entirety so that an effective corridor of approximately 30 feet was covered.

No archaeological sites or other cultural resources were found on the proposed drill site or in the right-of-way of the proposed access road.

Recommendations: Development of Well No. 15-4 and its access road will not disturb any cultural resources. It is recommended that No. 15-4 be considered free and clear of cultural resources.