

A file search of the Colorado Inventory of Cultural Resources by the Colorado Historical Society in 1984, revealed that no cultural properties in the proposed impact area. These results are presented in Exhibit 7, Archeologic Information.

The intensive field investigations recorded no significant cultural resources. The only phenomena of cultural origins observed in the area was a stock pond, located in the drainage bottom immediately north of the highway (Figure 1a, Regional Map Showing Locations of Project Area). This feature consists of an earthen dam piled in a curvilinear shape across the width of the drainage. A small pond (now dry) is impounded behind this embankment. It is considered to be of fairly recent age.

No significant cultural resources were observed on the PPA. Though the likelihood of cultural resources being found in this area is greater than for the RDA, that possibility was negated by deposits of underground development waste.

No cultural resources were recorded in the proposed project area. Consequently, no further archaeological work is considered to be necessary in those localities and clearance is recommended.

During 2011 a Cultural Resource Inventory was performed on the proposed RDA#1 expansion area and the associated RDA#1 geotechnical investigation area. One site was recorded. The site is not within the area of proposed disturbance. The report is located in Exhibit 7, Archeologic Information.

A Permit Revision (PR-6) was filed for continued mining the Blue Coal Seam. A cultural resource survey was conducted for the area (Exhibit 7) and no cultural resources recommended for further investigation were found. A study of the geologic structure of the area and the Blue Seam mine plan was completed to determine if subsidence from mining would affect the land surface (Exhibit 24). The impacts to cultural resources in the area of mining should not occur but monitoring of subsidence will identify any effects of mining.

The entire length of the former C&W railroad grade (5LA.7112) is previously determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In 2021, a cultural resources survey was conducted to record and evaluate the NRHP eligibility of extant bridges and culverts along the former C&W railroad grade. Two features potentially 45 years old or older were identified within the Project area between the mine and the intersection of the CP&W entrance road to the State Wildlife Area. Both features (5LA.14442 and 5LA.14443) are ubiquitous corrugated metal culverts surrounded by riprap. Both were recommended as not individually eligible for NRHP listing, as well as non-contributing features of the NRHP-eligible C&W railroad grade. A description of these sites is provided in the Cultural Resources report contained in Exhibit 7.

The 2021 cultural resources survey recommended the former C&W railroad grade between Allen Mine and Madrid as eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion A for significance in the areas of Transportation, Commerce, and Industry. The segment of the former C&W between Allen Mine and Weston containing the haul road was found to retain its integrity of location, overall setting, design, materials (in terms of bridges and culverts), feeling, and association. The rail line was removed in 2004 and part of NECC future plan is to reinstall the rail line.

The NRHP-eligible former C&W railroad grade (5LA.7112) was affected by the construction of a haul road between the mine and the intersection of the CP&W entrance road to the State Wildlife Area prior to DRMS approval. Neither the construction of the haul road nor the future reinstallation of the rail line within the former C&W railroad corridor alters or will alter the former C&W's alignment or height. The construction of the haul road and the future reinstallation of the rail line within the former C&W railroad corridor is intended to return the historic resource to its original use, and therefore is consistent