

Record of Decision 4: Appendix H

Archaeological Resources Technical Memorandum

April 2017



ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

SH 56 to SH 392

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1.0 Introduction and background

In August of 2011, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the North I-25 project. Through their obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), CDOT and FHWA considered the project's potential to impact to cultural resources. At the time the 2011 FEIS was issued, funding had not been secured for the entirety of the Preferred Alternative; therefore, FHWA and CDOT planned the phased implementation of the 2011 FEIS Preferred Alternative. Details of the phasing components are included in Chapter 8 of the 2011 FEIS and are not repeated here. The proposed project is included in the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) fiscally constrained 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, and funding for the project is included in the NFRMPO FY 2016 to FY 2019 Transportation Improvement Program. In December of 2011, CDOT, FHWA and SHPO signed a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (Section 106 PA) for the entire North I-25 project. Since then, some segments of the project have been constructed.

CDOT is now moving forward with the segment of the North I-25 project located between State Highway (SH) 56 and SH 392, in both Larimer and Weld counties. To complete the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for this project, CDOT and FHWA are completing a Record of Decision 4 (ROD4) based on the FEIS and information updated since the FEIS. In support of ROD4, this report updates the archaeological analyses prepared for the 2011 FEIS. The ROD4 documents the final agency decision for improvements to Interstate 25 (I-25) between SH 56 and SH 392.

The ROD4 Selected Alternative consists of reconstruction and widening of I-25 between SH 56 and SH 392 (approximately 12 miles) to include the addition of one buffer-separated express lane in each direction. The improvements included in the ROD4 Selected Alternative are consistent with the 2011 FEIS Preferred Alternative, except that no new general purpose lanes will be constructed as part of ROD4 (for more information on the ROD4 Selected Alternative, see Chapter 2 of the ROD4 document).

2.0 Archaeological Analysis for ROD4

The 2011 FEIS recorded two non-eligible archaeological resources located between SH 392 and SH 56. These are 5LR.11427 and 5WL.5325. An additional resource, 5WL.5322 is located just south of this project's limits, but is also not eligible. All three of these resources consist of open historic scatters. However, survey was limited by right-of-entry.

3.0 Survey Areas

For ROD4, right-of-entry was requested for all parcels not previously surveyed, which included 41 parcels. Right-of-entry was granted for 15 of the parcels, which were then surveyed for archaeological sites. These parcels are shown in Figures 1 through 4. Some parcel numbers appear twice because some parcels intersect the construction footprint twice. A Class III inventory was completed within the project's construction footprint on all 15 parcels. Representative photos of the surveyed areas are presented on Figures 5 through 7. All parcels were heavily disturbed on the surface, either by agricultural use or development.

Figure 1. New survey areas in northern portion of the ROD4 corridor

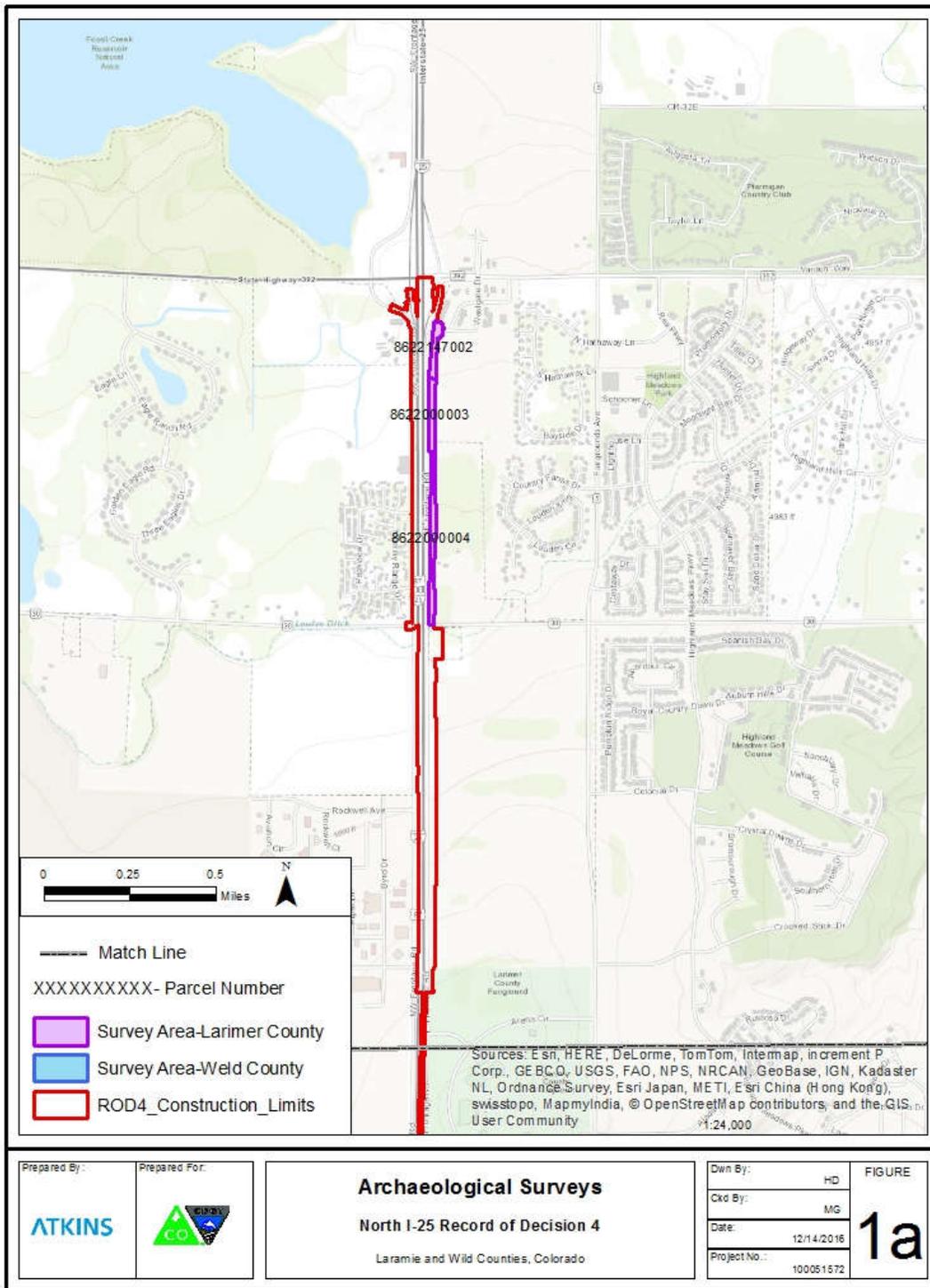


Figure 2. New survey areas in central portion of the ROD4 corridor

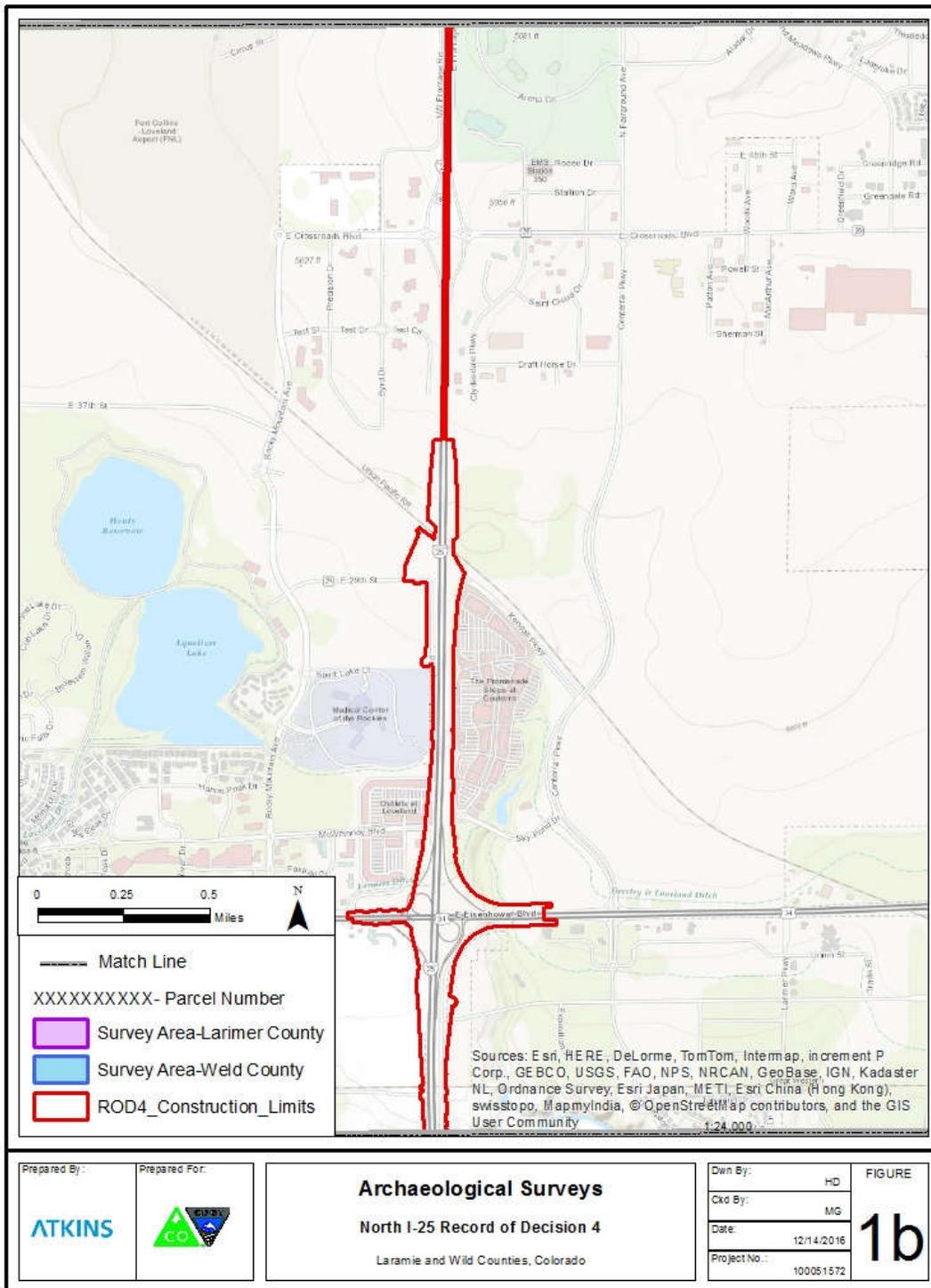


Figure 3. New survey areas in central portion of the ROD4 corridor

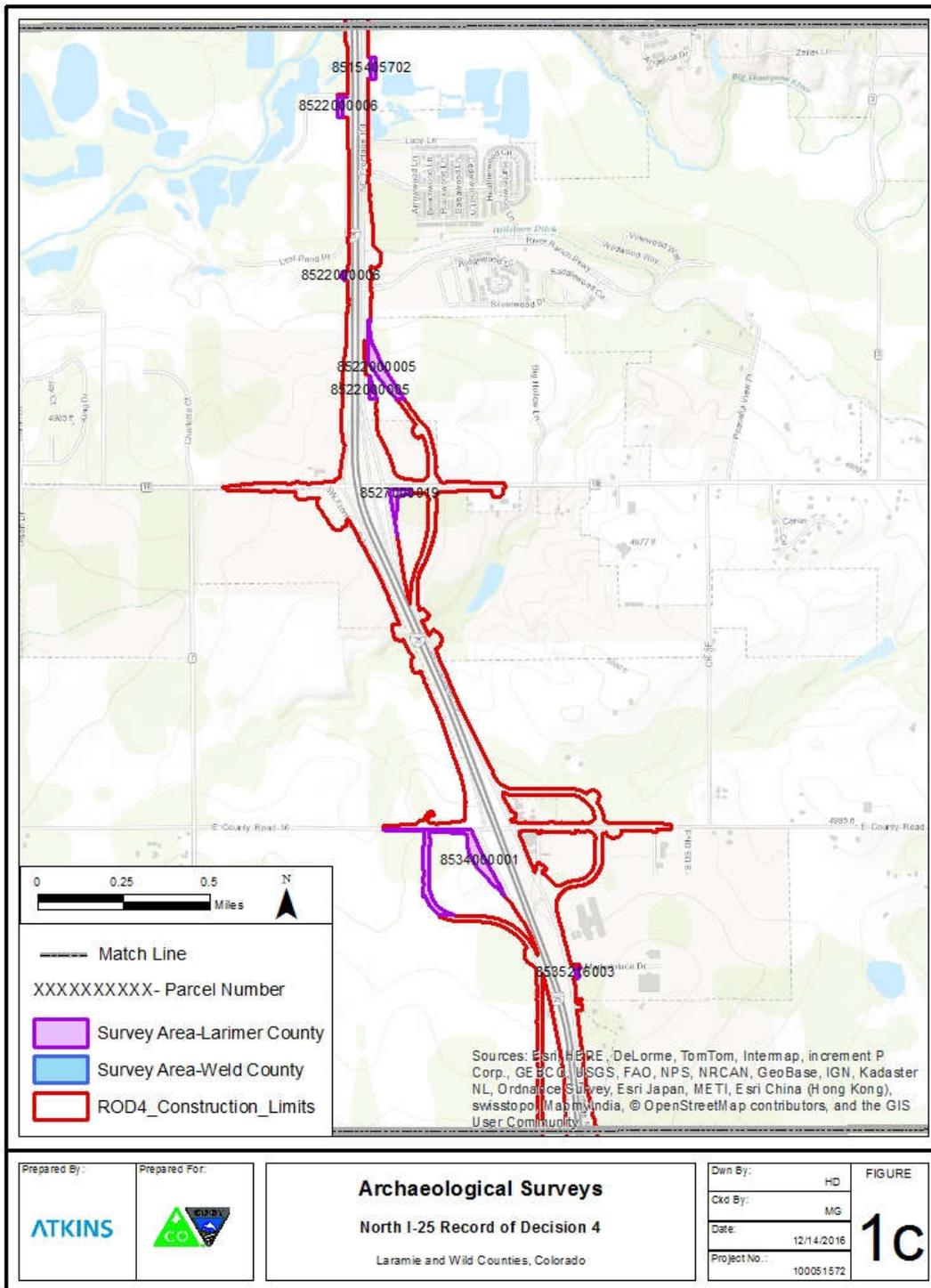


Figure 4. New survey areas in southern portion of the ROD4 corridor

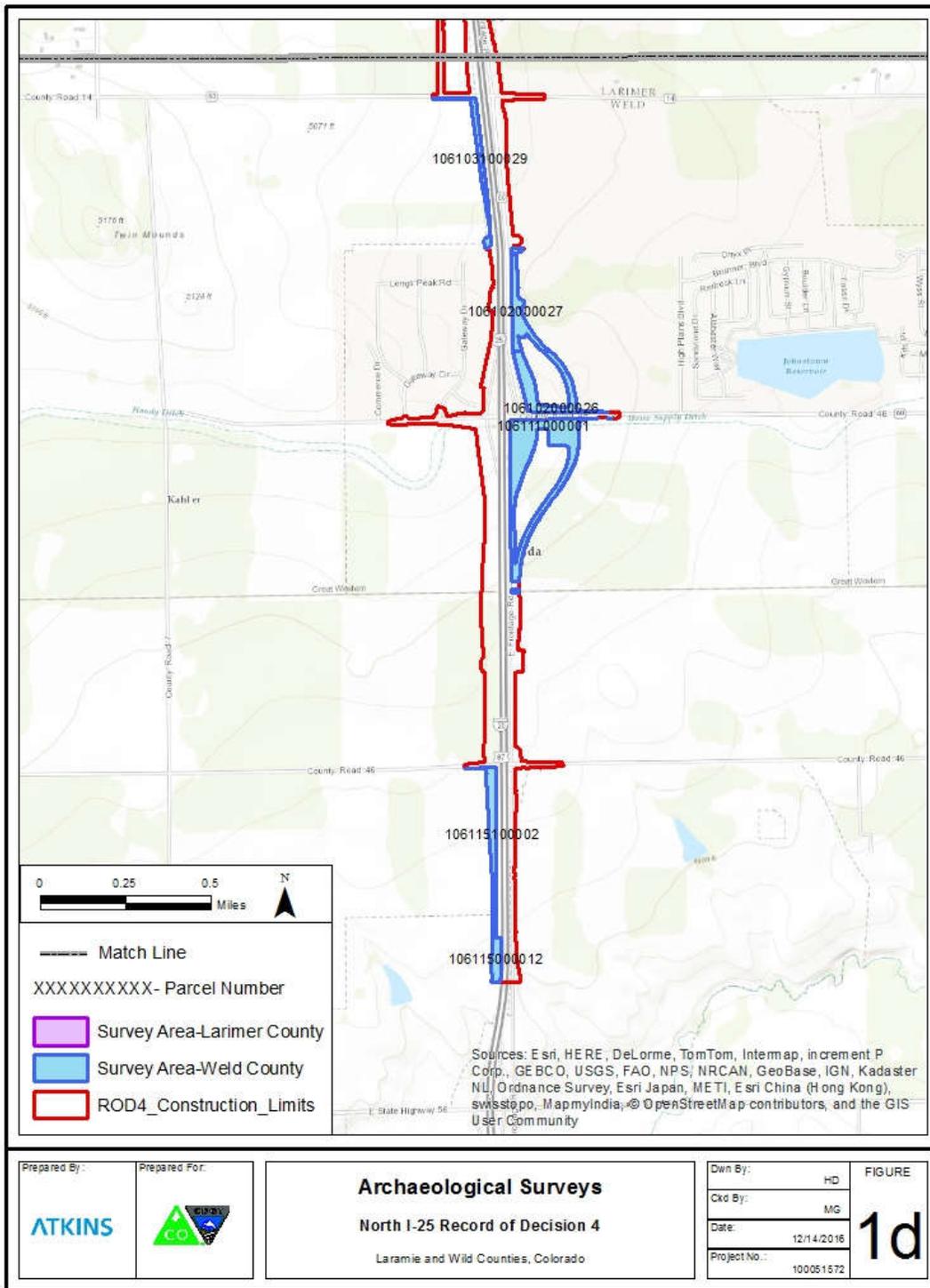


Figure 5. Parcel 106115100002, immediately south of County Road 46, looking south



Figure 6. Parcel 106103100029, immediately south of County Road 14, looking south



Figure 7. Parcel 106111000001, immediately south of County Road 60, looking south



4.0 Results

No new archaeological sites were documented in these surveys. Per the Section 106 PA, previously recorded sites are to be revisited and eligibility determinations reconsidered. Two non-eligible sites were previously documented (5LR.11427 and 5WL.5325). The only previously recorded site for which right-of-entry permission was obtained is 5LR.11427, located just south of SH 392 on the east side of I-25. Site 5LR.11427 was previously determined to be not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A survey of the site revealed that it is unchanged since its original recording and, therefore, no re-visitation form was completed for the site.

The Section 106 PA stipulates that CDOT will survey all unsurveyed parcels upon acquisition, and consult with SHPO pursuant to 36 CFR 800 at that time. In addition, the contractor shall be required to comply with 36 CFR 800.13 for unanticipated discoveries during construction.

5.0 Conclusions

The Class III inventory conducted in accessible parcels documented no new archaeological sites in the North I-25 ROD4 corridor. Of the two non-eligible sites previously documented (5LR.11427 and 5WL.5325), only one site (5LR.11427) was surveyed for this effort, and it has not significantly changed since its original recording. The other site (5WL.5325) was not surveyed because no right-of-entry was granted. Results are the same as described in the 2011 FEIS.