



DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN & FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



❖ AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN ❖

What is an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

An Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) is a parcel of BLM-administered land where special management attention is aimed at protection of relevant and important values such as geologic, historic and prehistoric, ecologic and biologic, cultural, scientific, and scenic resources. ACECs are an administrative designation made by BLM through a land use plan. ACECs may be proposed by the public or internally within BLM and are unique to BLM; no other federal agency uses this form of designation. An ACEC designation is not required to protect sensitive resources, but it does help identify areas which contain unique values, and it outlines appropriate management actions for those values. Some examples of special management actions in ACECs include restrictions or prohibitions on surface disturbing activities, intensive management of recreation and livestock grazing, and reduction of travel route density.

What decisions would be implemented under the Proposed Plan Alternative?

The Proposed Plan Alternative would include four ACEC designations. There are two ACECs which are currently designated in the NCA; Gunnison Gravels, which is managed to protect evidence of unique geologic processes, and Escalante Canyon, managed for protection of sensitive plants and riparian values. Both of these designations would be carried forward. In addition, two new ACECs would be created. River Rims and Gibbler Mountain ACECs would be designated and have special management actions aimed at the protection of sensitive paleontological resources and rare plant species.

Total acres of ACEC designation in the Proposed Plan Alternative would be 9,011, which is a change of 1,280 acres from the Draft Preferred Alternative (Alternative E) in the Draft RMP. In response to public comments, the Proposed Plan Alternative has been changed to include the Gunnison Gravels ACEC (15 acres) and Gibbler Mountain ACEC (1,265 acres).

Where in the PRMP/FEIS should I look if I'm interested in ACECs?

Specific management actions for each proposed ACEC may be found starting on line 565 of the alternatives matrix in Chapter 2, Volume 1. All of the ACECs are managed to protect and maintain the unique values they contain; however, the specific management actions for each ACEC varies according to the resources in each area. See Appendix M for the process the BLM used in evaluating proposed and existing ACECs, and Appendix R for maps depicting ACECs in the Proposed Plan Alternative.