

Final Wild & Scenic River Eligibility Report For the Royal Gorge Field Office

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Royal Gorge Field Office • COLORADO

NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



**Final
Wild & Scenic River
Eligibility Report
For the
Royal Gorge Field Office**

Prepared by
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Bureau of Land Management
Royal Gorge Field Office
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Executive Summary

In accordance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-542) and Bureau of Land Management Manual 6400, *Wild and Scenic Rivers—Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, Planning, and Management* (BLM 2012), the Bureau of Land Management is conducting a wild and scenic river evaluation of the waterways within the boundaries of the Royal Gorge Field Office. This is being done as part of the planning process for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan, which is a revision of two separate older plans, the Northeast Resource Management Plan (BLM 1986b), as amended, and the Royal Gorge Resource Area Resource Management Plan (BLM 1996), as amended. This document describes the first part of the wild and scenic river evaluation for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan: the eligibility determination.

For this eligibility study, the Bureau of Land Management examined river and stream segments in the Eastern Colorado planning area, which comprises the surface or subsurface lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management within the Royal Gorge Field Office. Only those segments that pass through or are bordered by public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management were evaluated. Private, State and other federally administered lands were not part of the study.

All Bureau of Land Management stream segments were evaluated for free-flowing status and outstandingly remarkable values, and the results were published in the *Draft Wild and Scenic Eligibility Report for the Royal Gorge Field Office*, which was made available for public comment for 90 days. The Royal Gorge Field Office's interdisciplinary team for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan initially found 10 eligible stream segments in the planning area: four Arkansas River segments, Beaver Creek, East Beaver Creek, West Beaver Creek, Eightmile Creek, Fourmile Creek, and Grape Creek. In response to public comments, the team evaluated and added seven more—East Gulch, Cottonwood Creek, East Fork Arkansas River, Falls Gulch, Little High Creek, Pass Creek, and Red Creek—and split the Grape Creek segment into three.

The second part of the Wild and Scenic River evaluation for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan is the suitability study. Over the next coming months, using public input and land status records, the interdisciplinary team will evaluate stream segments identified in this report as eligible to see whether they are suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, under the authority of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The results of this suitability determination will be published in the draft Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

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1.1 Overview

In 2015, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO), completed the eligibility phase of a wild and scenic river (WSR) study as part of its planning process for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan (ECRMP), which is a revision of two older RMPs, the Northeast RMP (BLM 1986b) and the Royal Gorge Resource Area RMP (BLM 1996). The Eastern Colorado RMP will supersede both current RMPs and will incorporate information from this eligibility report. More information about the Eastern Colorado RMP and the planning process for the RMP revision can be found on the BLM ECRMP website: <http://on.doi.gov/1HVULcA>.

1.2 The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, P.L. 90-542, (WSR Act) preserved “certain selected rivers” that “possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values... in their free-flowing condition... for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.” In this act, eight rivers or river segments were included as initial components in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS). Congress and/or the Secretary of the Interior have added 195 rivers or river segments to the NWSRS since the law was enacted.

1.3 Why the BLM Conducted a Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Study

Congress passed the WSR Act to provide a national policy for preserving and protecting selected river segments in their free-flowing condition for the benefit of present and future generations. Section 5(d) of the WSR Act (P.L. 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271–1287) directs Federal agencies to consider potential WSRs in all planning for the use and development of water and related resources. To fulfill this requirement, the BLM inventories and evaluates rivers when it develops or revises an RMP for public lands in a specified area, as the RGFO is doing for the ECRMP.

1.4 Authorities and Guides

The following authorities and guides were used to inform the WSR planning process throughout the eligibility and tentative classification phase:

- Publications by the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordination Council. These consist of various technical papers relating to the evaluation of WSRs. Available online: <http://www.rivers.gov/publications.php>.
- Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, P.L. 90-542, as amended. This is the congressional legislative direction for WSR planning.
- BLM Manual 6400 (BLM 2012). This manual establishes BLM policy, program direction, and procedural standards for fulfilling the requirements of the WSR Act.

1.5 Collaboration with Local Governments, Agencies, Tribes, Organizations, and the Public

As part of the WSR eligibility determination process, cooperating agencies and the public were able to review the BLM's draft eligibility determinations as described in the draft version of this report, which was available for comment during the scoping phase for the Eastern Colorado RMP. The BLM developed the final eligibility report partly on the basis of these comments.

1.6 Previous WSR Studies in the Project Area

The Royal Gorge Resource Area RMP (BLM 1996) included the results of a WSR study conducted between October 1989 and November 1992. This study analyzed 61 streams and rivers in the Arkansas River Basin for potential designation into the NWSRS. The BLM evaluated in detail the eligibility of the Arkansas River, Beaver Creek, Badger Creek, Fourmile Creek, Eightmile Creek, Grape Creek, and South Apache Creek. The WSR report for the Royal Gorge Resource Area RMP identified portions of the Arkansas River and Beaver Creek as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. No further suitability study was completed for BLM-administered public lands within the RGFO, including the old Northeast Field Office.

1.7 Description of the Project Area

The project area for the present WSR eligibility study consists of public lands in the Arkansas and South Platte River Basins of Colorado administered by the RGFO, covering 38 counties. All streams containing BLM shoreline were reviewed to determine whether they are free-flowing and contain one or more outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs), which would make them eligible for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

1.8 Changes from the Draft Eligibility Report

This wild and scenic river eligibility report was released in draft form for public comment in June 2015. The public comment period lasted until September 15, 2015, during which time the BLM received several letters offering substantive suggestions for changing the recommendations in the draft report. The content of these letters and further details regarding responses to specific comments addressed in this report are provided in Appendix G. The following list summarizes the changes made in response to public comments and subsequent further internal review:

- In response to comments made by the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche Grasslands, the language in section 4.1 has been changed.
- In response to comments made by the Wilderness Society et al., the BLM did as follows:
 - Made changes to section 3.4, Identification of Outstandingly Remarkable Values, and section 3.4.8, Other Values, to clarify the BLM's criteria for identifying ORVs.
 - Modified the segments and classification for Grape Creek (section E.8).
 - Added a wildlife ORV to the Grape Creek evaluation (section E.8).

- Modified the segments and classification for Beaver Creek (section E.3).
- Removed references to *Nuttallia densa* from the Arkansas River ORVs (section E.1), as this species is dependent on soil moisture but not river-dependent or river-related (see Appendix G).
- Added seven stream segments to the list determined eligible for WSR designation (see sections E.9 to E.15):
 - East Gulch
 - Cottonwood Creek
 - East Fork Arkansas River
 - Falls Gulch
 - Little High Creek
 - Pass Creek
 - Red Creek

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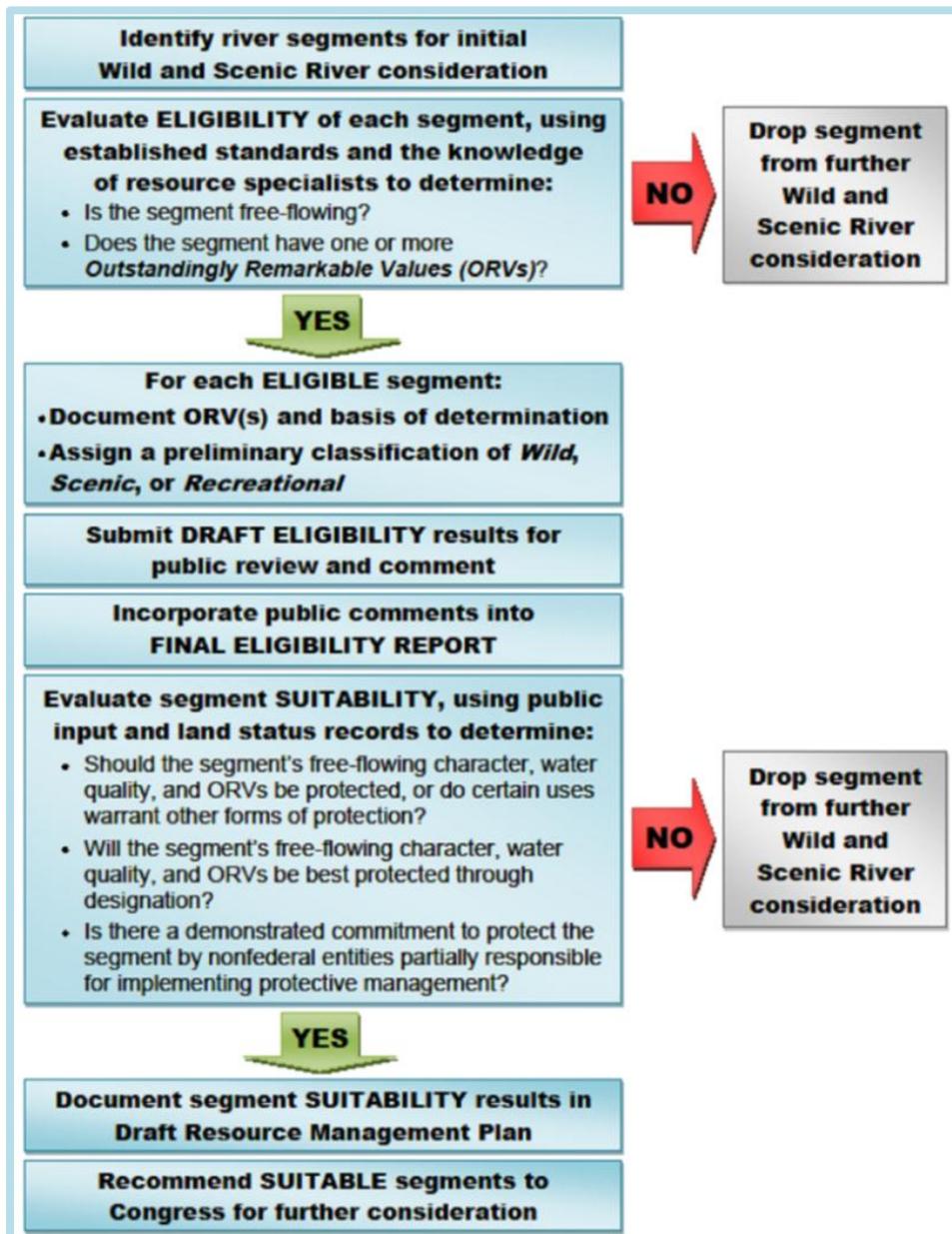
Chapter 2. Steps in the Wild and Scenic River Study

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2.1 Introduction

A WSR study is composed of two main parts: the eligibility phase and the suitability phase. The eligibility phase is completed during the data-gathering stage of the RMP, and the suitability phase is done during the formulation of the draft and proposed RMP (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Flow Chart of the Wild and Scenic River Evaluation Process



2.2 Eligibility Phase

River and Stream Identification

A river study area extends the length of the identified river segment and includes the river area and its immediate environment, and it includes (or totals) an average of no more than 320 acres per mile from the ordinary high water mark on both sides of the river. For this WSR study, the planning team usually assumed a preliminary boundary of 0.25 mile from the ordinary high water mark on both sides of the river.

Tentative Classification

If the eligibility phase determines segments to be eligible, the BLM assigns a tentative classification and establishes management measures needed to ensure appropriate protection of the values supporting the eligibility and classification determinations. Appendix B shows the tentative classification criteria for this WSR study.

There are three classes for rivers designated under the WSR Act: wild, scenic, and recreational. Classes are based on the type and degree of human development and access associated with the river and adjacent lands at the time of the eligibility determination. The classification assigned during the eligibility phase is tentative. The final classification is determined by Congress, along with designation of a river segment as part of the NWSRS.

Protective Management

River segments determined to be eligible are afforded interim protective management until a suitability study is completed. As stated in BLM Manual 6400 (BLM 2012), with respect to eligibility criteria and protective management, the BLM's policy is to protect any ORVs identified in the eligibility determination process to assure a decision on suitability can be made. Once a stream is determined to be eligible, the BLM is required to use its broad discretionary authority to not significantly impact river-related values or make decisions that might lead the BLM to determine that a stream is no longer eligible. It is the BLM's policy to manage and protect the free-flowing character, tentative classification, and identified ORVs of eligible rivers according to the decisions in the associated RMP. This protection occurs at the point of eligibility determination, so as not to adversely constrain the suitability assessment or subsequent recommendation to Congress.

2.3 Suitability Phase

The suitability phase is to determine whether eligible river segments are suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS according to the criteria given in the WSR Act. The suitability evaluation does not result in actual designation but only a suitability determination for designation. The BLM cannot administratively designate a stream by means of a planning decision or other agency into the NWSRS, and no segment studied is, or will be, automatically designated as part of the NWSRS. Only Congress can designate a WSR. In some instances, the Secretary of the Interior may designate a WSR when the governor of a State, under certain conditions, petitions for a river to be designated. Members of Congress will ultimately choose the legislative language if any suitable segments are presented to them.

Water-protection strategies and measures to meet the purposes of the WSR Act will be the responsibility of Congress if any legislation is proposed. Rivers found not suitable would be dropped from further consideration and managed according to the objectives outlined in the RMP. The suitability phase for the rivers and streams in the ECRMP planning area has not yet been conducted and is not part of this report. During ECRMP development, the BLM will complete the suitability phase for all streams determined to be eligible.

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Chapter 3. Eligibility Review

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3.1 Introduction

BLM-managed lands in the RGFO are highly fragmented. For this eligibility study, 372 stream segments were identified as crossing BLM lands. To streamline the evaluation process, an intensive review was conducted only for streams adjacent to BLM-managed lands that have at least 0.25 miles of surface flow; however, the interdisciplinary team (IDT) reviewed the list of streams having less than 0.25 miles of flow over BLM lands to ensure that none of these short segments have river-related values that merit more intensive evaluation.

3.2 Identification of Potentially Eligible Rivers

Rivers to consider were identified from the following sources:

- Nationwide Rivers Inventory list (NPS 2014).
- American Whitewater National Whitewater Inventory (American Whitewater 2015).
- GIS data: The geographic information system (GIS) methods used for this study integrated BLM, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) data to compile and analyze stream information. Stream data were correlated with land ownership to generate a list of streams that contain shoreline administered by the BLM. The BLM, USGS, and CPW stream databases were compared to ensure that the team considered all segments within the planning area. GIS methods were also used to measure segment distances and prepare the report maps (Appendix F).
- Professional specialists within the RGFO.

In addition, in 2015, the public, other Federal agencies, the State of Colorado, and local governments reviewed the draft version of this eligibility study and commented on the initial results.

Appendices C and D at the end of this report list all rivers and streams considered in this study. Those that have more than 0.25 miles of surface flow or are administered by the BLM for more than 0.25 miles are listed in Appendix D. Appendix E is a detailed review of rivers and streams that were found to be both free-flowing and have ORVs.

3.3 Determination Whether Rivers Are Free-flowing

As defined in the WSR Act, Section 15(b), free-flowing, “as applied to any river or section of a river, means existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway. The existence, however, of low dams, diversion works, and other minor structures at the time any river is proposed for inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system shall not automatically bar its consideration for such inclusion: *Provided*, That this shall not be construed to authorize, intend, or encourage future construction of such structures within components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.” All of the stream and river segments reviewed by the IDT for this report were determined to be free-flowing.

3.4 Identification of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

For a river to be eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS, it must possess one or more ORVs. To be determined outstandingly remarkable, resources should be river-related and at least regional in significance. Rare, unique, or exemplary river-related resources are considered. The criteria to determine eligibility are described in sections 3.4.1 to 3.4.8 below (from BLM Manual 6400, Chapter 3, section 3.1).

3.4.1 Scenery

The landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features and/or attractions. The BLM's visual resource inventory handbook, H-8410-1 (BLM 1986a), may be used in assessing visual quality and in evaluating the effect of development on scenic values. The rating area must be scenic quality "A" as defined in the handbook. When analyzing scenic values, additional factors, such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed, may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse along the majority of the river or river segment.

3.4.2 Recreation

Recreational opportunities within the subject river corridor are, or have the potential to be, popular enough to attract visitors from throughout or beyond the region of comparison or are unique or rare within the region. River-related opportunities include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, interpretation, wildlife observation, camping, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating. Such a recreational opportunity may be an ORV without the underlying recreational resource being an ORV (e.g., fishing may be an ORV without the fish species being an ORV). The river may provide settings for national or regional usage or competitive events.

3.4.3 Geology

The river area contains one or more examples of a geologic feature, process, or phenomenon that is unique or rare within the region of comparison. The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage of development, represent a "textbook" example, and/or represent a unique or rare combination of geologic features (erosional, volcanic, glacial, or other geologic features).

3.4.4 Fish

Fish values include either indigenous fish populations or habitat or a combination of these river-related conditions.

Populations

The river is nationally or regionally an important producer of indigenous resident and/or anadromous fish species. Of particular significance is the presence of wild stocks and/or Federal- or State-listed or candidate, threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive species. Diversity of

species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination that it is an ORV.

Habitat

The river provides exceptionally high-quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region of comparison. Of particular significance is habitat for wild stocks and/or Federal- or State-listed or candidate, threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive species. Diversity of habitat is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination that it is an ORV.

3.4.5 Wildlife

Wildlife values include either terrestrial or aquatic wildlife populations or habitat, or a combination of these.

Populations

The river, or area within the river corridor, contains nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species dependent on the river environment. Of particular significance are species considered to be unique to the area and/or populations of Federal- or State-listed or candidate, threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive species. Diversity of species is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination that it is an ORV.

Habitat

The river, or area within the river corridor, provides exceptionally high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance and/or may provide unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for Federal- or State-listed or candidate, threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive species. Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met. Diversity of habitat is an important consideration and could, in itself, lead to a determination that it is an ORV.

To apply the BLM manual criteria for wildlife habitat to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used the following:

- To be considered as a potential ORV, the habitat must be clearly river-related. The focus of the analysis is wildlife use of the riparian zone associated with the stream.
- The wildlife habitat must be of sufficient acreage and quality to play a major role in the life stages of the wildlife populations that use the riparian habitat.

To apply the BLM manual criteria for wildlife species to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used the following:

- The wildlife species in question must make significant and recurring usage of the stream and its associated riparian habitats. Occasional usage of the stream corridor by wildlife species within the river corridor would not qualify, even if those species are sensitive, threatened, or endangered.
- The stream in question must support regionally significant populations of wildlife.

3.4.6 Historical

The river, or area within the river corridor, has scientific value or contains a rare or outstanding example of a district, site, building, or structure that is associated with an event, person, or distinctive style. Likely candidates include sites that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the national level or have been designated a national historic landmark by the Secretary of the Interior.

3.4.7 Cultural

The river, or area within the river corridor, contains rare or outstanding examples of historic or prehistoric locations of human activity, occupation, or use, including locations of traditional cultural or religious importance to specified social and/or cultural groups. Likely candidates might include a unique plant procurement site of contemporary significance.

3.4.8 Other Values

While no specific national evaluation guidelines have been developed for the “other similar values” category, assessments of additional river-related values consistent with the foregoing guidance may be developed as part of the eligibility process, including, but not limited to, hydrological and paleontological resources or scientific study opportunities. By way of example, the following evaluation guidelines describe possible river-related botanical resources:

Botany

The area within the river corridor contains riparian communities that are ranked critically imperiled by State-based natural heritage programs. Alternatively, the river contains exemplary examples, in terms of health, resilience, species diversity, and age diversity, of more common riparian communities. The river corridor may also contain exemplary and rare types of ecological refugia (palm oases) or vegetation habitats (hanging gardens or rare soil types) that support river-related species. The river may also contain river-related plant species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or appear on the BLM’s sensitive species list.

To apply the BLM manual criteria for botany to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used all of the following:

- To be considered as a potential ORV, the plant species or plant associations must be clearly river-related. Plants and plant communities must be associated with the riparian zone associated with a stream channel. Plants and plant communities that are typically found in upland habitats will not be considered, even if representatives of those plants and plant communities happen to occur within stream corridors.
- The plant or plant community must be ranked by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) as critically imperiled or imperiled at the global or national level. These rankings are labeled as G1, G2, N1, or N2 in reports published by the CNHP. Alternatively, the plant species or plant association must be ranked by CNHP as an “A”

(excellent) occurrence of a vulnerable (ranked G3 or N3) plant species or plant community.

- Excellent or good (A- or B-ranked) occurrences of plant species or plant communities that CNHP identifies as “apparently secure” (G4, N4) or secure (G5,N5) will not qualify alone as an outstandingly remarkable value; however, such occurrences may be included in the eligibility report as further documentation of botanical values found in a stream corridor that has already been identified as eligible based upon the criteria described above.

3.5 Regions of Comparison

To be determined outstandingly remarkable, a river-related value must be regionally significant. The regions of comparison for this review were based on EPA Level III ecoregions for the respective stream within the RGFO. Streams in the RGFO were located within one of three ecoregions: Southern Rockies, Southwestern Tablelands, and High Plains. Each resource was compared by the IDT to other such resources within the region of comparison. The IDT considered the exemplary, rare, or unique qualities of each resource in order to determine regional (or national) significance. Those river segments deemed to have insufficient value were dropped from further consideration.

3.6 Determination of Rivers and Streams with ORVs

The interdisciplinary team subject matter specialists reviewed the initial GIS data for rivers and streams in the ECRMP planning area with the purpose of identifying all the segments that potentially contained ORVs. This review found ORVs for six free-flowing streams and rivers. The Arkansas River was split into four segments, while streams with multiple forks were split by each unique segment making a total of five rivers and streams, with 10 segments having ORVs. These segments were further evaluated for eligibility. Additional segments were evaluated and added as a result of public comments during the comment period for the draft eligibility report (see section 3.8 below). Appendix E provides the specific ORV descriptions developed by the IDT specialists for these eligible segments.

3.7 Tentative Classification

For a WSR study, a tentative classification of wild, scenic, or recreational is determined for all eligible rivers and segments. Tentative classifications are based on the type and degree of human development associated with the river and adjacent land, as they exist at the time of the evaluation. The four key elements are as follows:

- Water resource development
- Shoreline development
- Accessibility
- Water quality

Eligible rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational on the basis of human activities. A wild river is one that is free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds essentially primitive, and with unpolluted waters. A scenic river may have some development, and may be

accessible in places by roads. A recreational river is a river or segment of river accessible by road or railroad. It may have more extensive development along its shoreline, and it may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past (see Appendix B, Classification Criteria).

3.8 Eligibility of Rivers, Streams, and Segments

The BLM RGFO interdisciplinary team initially found 10 streams, rivers, or segments to be eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS. As a result of public comments submitted during the comment period for the draft eligibility report, and the IDT's subsequent internal evaluation, one stream was divided into three segments, and eight new streams were added to this list, bringing the total number of eligible segments to 20. Table 3.1 below contains summary information about the rivers and segments found to be eligible. The preliminary boundaries are 0.25 mile from the ordinary high water mark on both sides of the rivers.

Table 3.1. Eligible Rivers and Segments in the RGFO (BLM-Administered Lands and Related Waters Only)

Watercourse and Segment Description	Map No. (See Appendix F)	Segment Length¹	Total River Miles	ORVs	Tentative Classification
Arkansas River					
<i>Segment 1</i> Confluence of East Fork and Tennessee Creek to Buena Vista	Map 1	8	36	Recreation, scenery, wildlife, botany, fish, cultural	Recreational
<i>Segment 2</i> Buena Vista to Salida	Map 2	9	20	Recreation, scenery, wildlife, botany, fish, cultural	Recreational
<i>Segment 3</i> Salida to Parkdale	Map 3	25	48	Recreation, scenery, wildlife, botany, fish, cultural	Recreational
<i>Segment 4</i> Parkdale to Cañon City	Map 4	3	8	Recreation, scenery, wildlife	Recreational
Beaver Creek All portions from the confluence of East Beaver Creek and West Beaver Creek to the lower boundary of the wilderness study area	Map 5	0.3	1.9	Recreation, scenery, botany	Scenic

Watercourse and Segment Description	Map No. (See Appendix F)	Segment Length¹	Total River Miles	ORVs	Tentative Classification
boundary					
East Beaver Creek All portions from the Teller/Fremont County line downstream to the confluence with West Beaver Creek	Map 5	2	5	Recreation, scenery	Wild
West Beaver Creek All portions from just downstream of Skagway Reservoir downstream to the confluence with East Beaver Creek	Map 5	0.3	8	Recreation, scenery, botany	Wild
Eightmile Creek All portions from the area where Eightmile Creek enters BLM-administered lands near Nipple Mountain to private land near the mouth of Phantom Canyon	Map 6	14	15	Scenery, recreation, botany, cultural	Recreational
Fourmile Creek From the private/BLM property line downstream of the Lakemoor West subdivision to the headgate of Canon Heights Ditch	Map 7	10	23	Paleontology, scenery, recreation, botany	Recreational
Grape Creek					
<i>Segment 1</i> Outlet of DeWeese Reservoir to the	Map 8	3	5	Recreation, scenery	Scenic

Watercourse and Segment Description	Map No. (See Appendix F)	Segment Length¹	Total River Miles	ORVs	Tentative Classification
wilderness study area boundary					
<i>Segment 2</i> Within the two wilderness study areas	Map 8	13	14	Recreation, scenery, wildlife	Wild
<i>Segment 3</i> Northern wilderness study area boundary to the confluence with the Arkansas River	Map 8	4	8	Recreation, scenery	Recreational
East Gulch Headwaters to private land boundary near confluence with Bull Gulch	Map 9	4.4	4.8	Botany	Scenic
Cottonwood Creek From BLM land boundary near Soapy Hill to BLM land boundary near Little Crampton Mountain	Map 10	6	7.2	Botany	Wild
East Fork Arkansas River From BLM land boundary near Chalk Creek to BLM land boundary near Birdseye Gulch	Map 11	3.5	3.6	Botany	Recreational
Falls Gulch Headwaters to private property boundary near Bernard Creek	Map 12	.1	.1	Hydrology, botany	Scenic
Little High Creek	Map 13	1.8	1.8	Botany	Wild

Watercourse and Segment Description	Map No. (See Appendix F)	Segment Length¹	Total River Miles	ORVs	Tentative Classification
From BLM land boundary west of Booger Red Hill to confluence with Fourmile Creek					
Pass Creek From BLM–private land boundary downstream to BLM–private land boundary	Map 14	1.5	1.5	Botany	Recreational
Red Creek From BLM boundary at southern end of Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area to BLM–Colorado State Land Board boundary	Map 15	1.6	1.6	Botany	Wild

¹ Free-flowing BLM river miles (approximate)

3.9 Suitability Study

The BLM will further review the suitability of the 19 eligible segments in Table 3.1 for recommendation for congressional designation into the NWSRS. This will be done within the framework of the ongoing planning process for the Eastern Colorado RMP (see Chapter 1).

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Chapter 4. Collaboration with Agencies Having Contiguous Boundaries

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4.1 Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands

The Pike and San Isabel National Forests border BLM lands in many places throughout the study area. In 2004, the U.S. Forest Service completed a WSR suitability study for the South Platte and the North Fork of the South Platte (USFS 2004). There are no BLM-administered lands within or adjacent to these segments. The Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands completed a draft wild and scenic rivers eligibility analysis in 2013 in support of the Forest and Grassland Plan review. The draft determined that four streams are eligible, including Bear Creek, Lost Creek, Chalk Creek, and South Cottonwood Creek. The BLM has reviewed these eligibility determinations and concluded that it does not manage any lands along these streams.

4.2 Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland

The Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests cover the northern portion of the study area, and several rivers in this area have been studied previously by the USFS. Colorado's only designated WSR, the Cache la Poudre, is in this part of the RGFO planning area and is managed by the national forest. BLM-administered lands are small and scattered throughout this area and do not generally influence river management.

4.3 Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Colorado Parks and Wildlife manages substantial amounts of land in some segments, most notably Beaver Creek. No WSR suitability study has been completed by CPW, and the agency is not required to study its waterways.

4.4 City of Cañon City

The City of Cañon City manages substantial amounts of land in Segment 4 of the Arkansas River (the Royal Gorge). No WSR suitability study has been completed by the city, and the city is not required to study its waterways.

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Chapter 5. Interdisciplinary Team

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Table 5.1 below lists the members of the BLM RGFO interdisciplinary team and their areas of expertise.

Table 5.1. Members of the Royal Gorge Field Office Interdisciplinary Team

Name	Occupation	Areas of expertise
Stephanie Carter	Geologist	Geology/minerals, solid minerals (locatable, salable, solid leasables), abandoned mine lands, hazardous materials, and public safety
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Geology/minerals, paleontological resources, coal, fluid minerals (oil and gas, coal bed methane and geothermal), solid minerals, abandoned mine lands, hazardous materials, and public safety
John Smeins	Hydrologist/Project Lead	Water resources, soil resources, farmlands prime and unique (agricultural use)
John Lamman	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive species, vegetation, livestock grazing
Jeff Williams	Rangeland Management Specialist	Vegetation, livestock grazing
Chris Cloninger	Rangeland Management Specialist	Vegetation, livestock grazing
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial wildlife (includes migratory birds), special status species (federally threatened, endangered, proposed, and BLM sensitive species)
Lara Duran	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial wildlife (includes migratory birds), special status species (federally threatened, endangered, proposed, and BLM sensitive species)
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic wildlife, wetlands and riparian resources
Glenda Torres	Natural Resource Specialist	Wildland fire ecology and management
Monica Weimer	Archeologist	Cultural resources, Native American concerns
Kalem Lenard	Recreation Manager	Recreation, visual resources, lands proposed for protection of wilderness characteristics, travel and transportation management
Linda Skinner	Recreation Manager	Recreation, visual resources, lands proposed for

Name	Occupation	Areas of expertise
		protection of wilderness characteristics, travel and transportation management
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry
Aaron Richter	Natural Resource Specialist	Fluid minerals (oil and gas, coal bed methane, and geothermal)
Rich Rotte	Realty Specialist	Land tenure, rights of way and land use authorizations, withdrawals and classifications, waterpower/reservoir resources
John Nahomenuk	River Manager	Recreation, areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs), national scenic byways, WSRs, wilderness areas and wilderness study areas
Molly Purnell	GIS Specialist	GIS data management, map-making, and related tasks
Marie Lawrence	Technical Writer-Editor	Writing, editing and associated tasks

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Appendix A. Data Sources

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Table A.1 shows the data sources that were reviewed in order to locate rivers within the Royal Gorge Field Office for the eligibility analysis. Only rivers and streams where the BLM administers more than 0.25 miles underwent further analysis (see Appendix D).

Table A.1. Data Sources for the RGFO Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Analysis

River	Segment Description	Total River Miles	Recommended Classification	Outstandingly Remarkable Values
Source: Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NPS 2014)				
Arkansas River				
	Pine Creek to Buena Vista (1982/1993)	10	W	S,R,G, F,W ¹
	Salida to Pine Creek (continues downstream to Cañon City in Section 13f) (1982)	39	n.d. ²	S,R,G,F
	Cañon City to Salida (continues upstream to Pine Creek in Section 16) (1982)	52	n.d. ²	S,R,F,W
	Salida to Vallie Bridge (1982/1993)	20	W	S,R,G,F,W
	From Buena Vista to the Town of Salida (1982/1993)	29	W	S,R,G,F,W
	Vallie Bridge to the west edge of the Royal Gorge Park (1982/1993)	31	W	S,R,G,F,W
	USFS boundary north of Leadville to Pine Creek (1993)	37	W	S,R,G,F,W
Badger Creek	Arkansas River to	25	n.d. ²	S,R,G,F

River	Segment Description	Total River Miles	Recommended Classification	Outstandingly Remarkable Values
	source (1982)			
Beaver Creek	Skagway Reservoir to east side of State refuge (1993)	20	W	S,R,G,F
Source: National Whitewater Inventory (American Whitewater 2015)				
Arkansas River				
	Granite to Numbers launch site	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	The Numbers	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Railroad bridge launch to Buena Vista	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Buena Vista to Fisherman's Bridge	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Fisherman's Bridge access to Stone Bridge access	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Stone Bridge to Salida	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Salida to Rincon	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Rincon to Pinnacle Rock	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Pinnacle Rock to Parkdale launch	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
	Parkdale launch to Cañon City	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address
Grape Creek	Bear Gulch to Arkansas River	Not specifically listed	Did not address	Did not address

River	Segment Description	Total River Miles	Recommended Classification	Outstandingly Remarkable Values
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¹S = scenery; R = recreation; G = geology; F = fish; W = wildlife

²No data

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Appendix B. Classification Criteria

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Table B.1 describes the criteria used by the BLM's interdisciplinary team to classify river and stream study segments in the Royal Gorge Field Office.

Table B.1. Criteria for Wild and Scenic River Classification

Attribute	Wild	Scenic	Recreational
Water resource development	Free of impoundment	Free of impoundment	<p>Some existing impoundment or diversion.</p> <p>The existence of low dams, diversions, or other modifications of the waterway are acceptable, provided the waterway remains generally natural and riverine in appearance.</p>
Shoreline development	<p>Essentially primitive. Little or no evidence of human activity.</p> <p>The presence of a few inconspicuous structures, particularly those of historic or cultural value, is acceptable.</p> <p>A limited amount of domestic livestock grazing or hay production is acceptable.</p> <p>Little or no evidence of past timber harvest. No ongoing timber harvest.</p>	<p>Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial evidence of human activity.</p> <p>The presence of small communities or dispersed dwellings or farm structures is acceptable.</p> <p>The presence of grazing, hay production, or row crops is acceptable.</p> <p>Evidence of past or ongoing timber harvest is acceptable, provided the forest appears natural from the riverbank.</p>	<p>Some development. Substantial evidence of human activity.</p> <p>The presence of extensive residential development and a few commercial structures is acceptable.</p> <p>Lands may have been developed for the full range of agricultural and forestry uses.</p> <p>May show evidence of past and ongoing timber harvest.</p>
Accessibility	Generally inaccessible except by trail.	Accessible in places by road.	Readily accessible by road or railroad.

Attribute	Wild	Scenic	Recreational
	No roads, railroads or other provision for vehicular travel within the river area. A few existing roads leading to the boundary of the river area is acceptable.	Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads or railroads is acceptable.	The existence of parallel roads or railroads on one or both banks as well as bridge crossings and other river access points is acceptable.
Water quality	Meets or exceeds Federal criteria for federally approved State standards for aesthetics, for propagation of fish and wildlife normally adapted to the habitat of the river, and for primary contact recreation (swimming), except where exceeded by natural conditions.	No criteria prescribed by the WSR Act. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 made it a national goal that all waters of the United States be fishable and swimmable, so rivers are not precluded from scenic or recreational classification because of poor water quality at the time of their study, provided a water quality improvement plan exists or is being developed in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws.	

Appendix C. Streams with Less Than 0.25 Miles of Surface Flow

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The Royal Gorge Field Office consists of numerous, scattered parcels of land, resulting in many short segments of streams. A total of 372 unique streams exist within the planning area. The interdisciplinary team reviewed the entire list of streams, and no possible ORV's were found in these very short segments. Consequently, the team decided to focus on segments that are 0.25 miles long, or longer. Table C.1 lists the segments in the study area that are less than 0.25 miles. Appendix D lists the final segments that were evaluated by the IDT.

Table C.1. River and Stream Segments Less Than 0.25 Mile Long in the RGFO

Stream or Segment	Length (Miles)
Abeyta Creek South	0.05
Adobe Canyon	0.07
Aldrich Gulch	0.23
Antelope Gulch	0.08
Arkansas River Lake Fork No.1	0.13
Arkansas River South	0.06
Baker Gulch	0.12
Beaver Creek West No.2	0.05
Black Draw	0.22
Blackhawk Gulch	0.18
Boulder Creek South No.1	0.14
Browns Creek No. 1	0.05
Buckeye Gulch	0.02
Caddoa Creek	0.01
California Gulch (creek)	0.00
Carolina Gulch	0.11
Cash Gulch	0.04
Cedar Creek	0.05
Chalk Creek	0.05
Chicosa Creek North	0.00
Chicosa Creek South	0.10
Cimarron River	0.08

Stream or Segment	Length (Miles)
Clear Creek	0.02
Clear Creek North Fork	0.24
Cochetopa Creek Little	0.22
Cocklebur Creek	0.21
Columbine Gulch	0.01
Deer Creek	0.22
Echo (canyon) Creek	0.03
English Gulch	0.19
Eureka Gulch	0.19
Evans Gulch Little	0.03
Falling Rock Gulch	0.12
Fountain Creek Little	0.09
Four Mile Creek	0.06
Fourmile Creek No.1	0.00
Fourmile Gulch	0.12
Frenchman Creek	0.08
Froze Creek	0.11
Gas Creek	0.17
Glendale Gulch	0.06
Graneros Creek No. 2	0.20
Halfmoon Creek No. 1	0.06
Haynes Creek	0.07
Ingram Gulch	0.15
Italian Gulch	0.07
Lake Fork Arkansas River	0.13
Louis Gulch	0.19
Maitland Arroyo	0.16

Stream or Segment	Length (Miles)
Martland Gulch	0.24
Mauricio Canyon	0.11
May Creek South	0.21
Melvina Gulch	0.18
Michigan Creek	0.10
Middle Creek	0.00
Middle Creek North	0.03
Milligan Arroyo	0.13
Mineral Creek	0.05
Mosher Creek	0.24
Muddy Creek	0.12
Muley Gulch	0.19
Mullock Gulch	0.09
North Draw	0.04
Packer Gulch	0.05
Park Gulch North Branch	0.02
Park Gulch South Branch	0.11
Pond Creek	0.07
Querida Gulch	0.01
Republican River South Fork No. 1	0.24
Sacramento Creek	0.14
Salt Canyon	0.22
Salt Creek	0.05
San Isidro Creek	0.00
Sand Creek	0.04
Sandy Arroyo	0.23
Silverheels Gulch	0.06

Stream or Segment	Length (Miles)
Soda Creek	0.05
Spruce Creek	0.01
St. Vrain Creek South No. 1	0.07
Stanton Creek	0.02
Tallahassee Creek Middle	0.20
Thompson Gulch	0.22
Turkey Creek No. 1	0.05
Turkey Creek No. 2	0.00
Two Butte Creek	0.02
Waugh Gulch	0.21
West Creek	0.16
Willis Gulch	0.07

Appendix D. Major Streams Reviewed for This Study

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Table D.1 shows rivers and streams administered by the BLM within the planning area with greater than 0.25 miles of surface flow. These segments were the major focus of this study.

Table D.1. Rivers and Streams in the RGFO Greater Than 0.25 Mile Long

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Adobe Creek	Headwaters Adobe Creek	0.96	Lincoln	Yes	No	Not eligible
Alkali Gulch	West Creek–Arkansas River	3.40	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Apache Creek South	Apache Creek	0.27	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Arkansas River	Arkansas River	51.62	Chaffee, Fremont, Lake	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
Arnold Gulch	Little Cottonwood Creek–Arkansas River	0.40	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Arroyo Hondo	Outlet Turkey Creek	1.06	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Asher Gulch	Middle Currant Creek	1.39	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Back Door Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	2.85	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Badger Creek	Headwaters Badger Creek	9.31	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Badger Gulch	Maverick Gulch–Arkansas River	2.23	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Bald Mountain Gulch	Little Cottonwood Creek– Arkansas River	0.89	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Balm Of Gilead Creek	Elevenmile Reservoir	0.61	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Barnard Creek	Barnard Creek	4.71	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Basin Gulch	Monument Creek	1.60	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bear Creek	Bear Creek	0.29	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bear Gulch	Dead Mule Gulch - Grape Creek	1.05	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Beaver Creek	Patton Canyon– Beaver Creek	0.31	Fremont	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
Beaver Creek East	East Beaver Creek	1.50	Fremont	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
Beaver Creek West East Fork	Headwaters West Beaver Creek	0.83	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bernard Creek	Falls Gulch	3.82	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bijou Creek	Nile Reservoir– Bijou Creek	0.28	Morgan	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bills Creek	Willow Creek– Badger Creek	1.58	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Binckley Gulch	Lower	0.53	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Currant Creek					
Birdseye Gulch	East Fork Arkansas River	2.82	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Black Gulch	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	1.93	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Blank Gulch	Missouri Park–South Arkansas River	0.42	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bob Creek	Upper Bob Creek	0.78	Crowley	Yes	No	Not eligible
Box Canyon	Maverick Gulch–Arkansas River	1.40	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Box Creek	Box Creek	2.51	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Brush Hollow Creek	Brush Hollow Creek–Arkansas River	2.17	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Buffalo Gulch	Buffalo Gulch	1.07	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bull Canyon	Turkey Ridge	0.31	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bull Gulch	East Gulch	4.31	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Bumback Gulch	Royal Gorge	1.76	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Butter Creek	Big Cottonwood Creek	0.97	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cache Creek	Cache	2.71	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Creek– Arkansas River					
Carrol Creek	Carrol Creek	10.09	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cedar Springs Gulch	Hamilton Creek– Arkansas River	3.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chalk Creek	East Fork Arkansas River	0.66	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chase Gulch	Headwaters Chase Gulch	0.70	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chase Gulch	North Clear Creek	0.31	Gilpin	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chavez Arroyo	Chavez Arroyo	0.52	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chipmunk Gulch	Little James Creek	0.65	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Chloride Gulch	City of Westcliffe– Grape Creek	0.70	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
City Creek	City Creek– Wilson Creek	1.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Clear Creek North Fork	North Clear Creek	1.20	Gilpin	Yes	No	Not eligible
Coal Creek	Guajatoya Creek	0.25	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Coal Kiln Gulch	Maxwell Creek– Arkansas River	0.35	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Colorado Canyon	Powell Arroyo–Purgatoire River	0.92	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Copper Gulch	Copper Gulch	4.07	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Copper King Canyon	Indian Creek	0.26	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Canyon	Reilly Canyon	0.26	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Creek	Lower Cottonwood Creek	7.62	Fremont	Yes	Yes	Eligible
Cottonwood Creek	Cottonwood Creek–Arkansas River	2.56	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Creek Little	Little Cottonwood Creek–Arkansas River	2.15	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Creek Big	Big Cottonwood Creek	0.91	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Creek Middle	Cottonwood Creek–Arkansas River	3.05	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cottonwood Gulch	Ute Creek–Arkansas River	1.63	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cripple Creek	Cripple Creek–Four Mile Creek	1.77	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Crooked Creek	Crooked	1.00	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Creek					
Cross Creek	Elevenmile Reservoir	0.29	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Crystal Falls Creek	Headwaters Grape Creek	0.49	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Cucharas River	Turkey Ridge	7.01	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Currant Creek	Middle Currant Creek	11.69	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dead Goat Gulch	Squaw Creek–Arkansas River	2.51	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dead Horse Creek	Deadhorse Creek	0.26	Lincoln	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dead Horse Gulch	Ute Creek–Arkansas River	2.47	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dead Mule Gulch	Dead Mule Gulch–Grape Creek	1.49	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Deep Canyon	Manzanares Creek–Huerfano River	1.35	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Deep Gulch	Falls Gulch	0.41	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Democrat Creek	Dead Mule Gulch–Grape Creek	0.83	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Devils Gulch	Moss Gulch	0.54	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dirty Gulch	Monument	0.67	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Creek					
Dog Springs Arroyo	Dog Springs Arroyo	1.84	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Droney Gulch	Squaw Creek–Arkansas River	0.70	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Dry Creek	Dry Creek	0.99	Otero	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Badger Creek	Willow Creek–Badger Creek	2.11	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Fork Arkansas River	East Fork Arkansas River	0.9	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Fork Arkansas River	East Fork Arkansas River	3.63	Lake	Yes	Yes	Eligible
East Fork Eightmile Creek	Eightmile Creek	5.85	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Fork Milsap Creek	Millsap Creek	2.89	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Fork Turkey Creek	Headwaters Turkey Creek	2.27	El Paso	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Gulch	East Gulch	2.06	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
East Gulch	East Gulch	4.76	Fremont	Yes	Yes	Eligible
Echo Canyon	Texas Creek Gulch–Arkansas River	4.46	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Eightmile	Eightmile	14.44	Fremont	Yes	Possibly	In-depth

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Creek	Creek					analysis
Emerson Gulch	Fourmile Creek	0.57	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Emma Paul Canyon	Turkey Ridge	1.47	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Evans Gulch	East Fork Arkansas River	0.38	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Falls Gulch	West Creek–Arkansas River	4.26	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Falls Gulch	Falls Gulch	2.55	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Falls Gulch	Falls Gulch	1.26	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Falls Gulch	Falls Gulch	0.14	Fremont	Yes	Yes	Eligible
Fear Creek	Tallahassee Creek	1.52	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Felch Creek	Garden Park–Four Mile Creek	6.62	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Five Point Gulch	Five Point Gulch–Arkansas River	6.90	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Fourmile Canyon Creek	Fourmile Creek	0.91	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Fourmile Creek	Four Mile Creek	0.70	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Fourmile Creek	Four Mile Creek	0.71	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Fourmile Creek	Four Mile Creek	10.92	Fremont/Teller	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
Fox Canyon Creek	Hamilton Creek–	0.80	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Arkansas River					
Gable Creek	Three Elk Creek–Arkansas River	0.35	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Galster Gulch	Carrol Creek	0.38	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Goat Park Gulch	Temple Canyon–Grape Creek	3.18	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Gold Run	Fourmile Creek	0.60	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Gooseberry Gulch	Washington Gulch–Wilson Creek	0.91	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Gotera Canyon	Gotera Canyon	0.43	Las animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Grape Creek	Temple Canyon–Grape Creek	19.96	Custer/Fremont	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
Greasewood Arroyo	Greasewood Arroyo	1.49	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Green Creek	Green Creek	0.67	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Green Gulch	Browns Canyon	1.64	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Green Mountain Gulch	Carrol Creek	1.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Gribbles Run	Gribbles Run	1.41	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Gross Creek	Falls Gulch	0.97	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hamilton Creek	Hamilton Creek– Arkansas River	2.28	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hawkin Gulch	Boulder Creek Canyon	0.60	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hayden Creek	Hayden Creek	0.31	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hayden Gulch	Cache Creek– Arkansas River	1.03	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Heck Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	2.72	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hellgate Gulch	Dead Mule Gulch– Grape Creek	0.46	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Henthorn Gulch	Falls Gulch	1.98	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
High Creek	High Creek	5.16	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hindman Gulch	Texas Creek Gulch– Arkansas River	3.21	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Hop Gulch	Three Elk Creek– Arkansas River	1.62	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Huerfano River	Headwaters Huerfano River	0.27	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Indian Springs Gulch	Copper Gulch	0.80	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Iowa Gulch	City of Leadville— Arkansas River	3.21	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Jennings Gulch	Temple Canyon— Grape Creek	1.07	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Jesus Canyon	Jesus Canyon	0.25	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Kerr Gulch	West Creek— Arkansas River	3.72	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Keystone Canyon	Turkey Ridge	1.04	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Kiln Gulch	West Creek— Arkansas River	2.41	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
King Gulch	King Gulch— South Arkansas River	0.28	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Kramer Creek	Lower Kramer Creek	2.56	Pueblo	Yes	No	Not eligible
Lapin Creek	Antelope Creek	0.51	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Leavenworth Gulch	City of Westcliffe— Grape Creek	0.49	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Left Hand Creek	Upper Left Hand Creek	0.95	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Lick Skillet Gulch	Upper Left Hand Creek	0.27	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Likely Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	2.18	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Little Badger Creek	Little Badger Creek—Badger Creek	2.89	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Little High Creek	Cripple Creek—Four Mile Creek	1.77	Fremont	Yes	Yes	In-depth analysis
Little Turkey Creek	Headwaters Turkey Creek	1.56	El Paso	Yes	No	Not eligible
Loggie Gulch	Maverick Gulch—Arkansas River	1.01	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Long Gulch	Tallahassee Creek	0.72	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Long Hungry Gulch	Cripple Creek—Four Mile Creek	3.75	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Longfellow Gulch	Maverick Gulch—Arkansas River	2.06	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Longs Gulch	Squaw Creek Arkansas River	1.31	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Low Pass	Cache	1.95	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Gulch	Creek– Arkansas River					
Mack Gulch	Middle Currant Creek	1.98	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Mack Gulch Little	Middle Currant Creek	2.14	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Manzanares Creek	Manzanares Creek– Huerfano River	0.76	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Marsh Gulch	Temple Canyon– Grape Creek	2.12	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Martin Creek	Manzanares Creek– Huerfano River	0.25	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Max Canyon	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	2.09	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
May Creek	May Creek	0.43	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
McClure Gulch	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	0.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
McCoy Gulch	Sand Gulch	3.28	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
McIntyre Gulch	Copper Gulch	4.43	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Meadow Gulch (lower)	Lower Cottonwood Creek	1.97	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Meadow Gulch	Middle	0.38	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
(upper)	Cottonwood Creek					
Mill Gulch	Mill Gulch	3.46	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Miner Gulch	Lower Currant Creek	0.84	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Mitchell Gulch	West Creek–Arkansas River	4.47	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Monument Creek	Monument Creek	3.16	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Mud Gulch	Falls Gulch	0.77	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Mud Springs Gulch	Headwaters Chase Gulch	1.10	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Mulligan Canyon	Reilly Canyon	0.57	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
North Abeyta Creek	North Abeyta Creek	1.02	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
North Fork Millsap Creek	Millsap Creek	4.03	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
North May Creek	May Creek	0.28	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
North Waugh Creek	Upper Cottonwood Creek	1.77	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Oak Creek	Oak Creek–Huerfano River	0.56	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Oak Creek	Falls Gulch	0.86	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Oil Creek	Headwaters Four Mile	2.36	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Creek					
Packer Gulch	Headwaters Tarryall Creek	1.37	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Palmer Gulch	Falls Gulch	1.56	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Palo Duro Creek	Manzanares Creek–Huerfano River	1.67	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pantleon Creek	Pantleon Creek	0.79	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Paris Creek	Thirtyone Mile Creek	1.17	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Park Gulch	Park Gulch	1.38	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pass Creek	Little Cochetopa Creek	1.53	Chaffee	Yes	Yes	In-depth analysis
Pass Creek Spring Branch	Pass Creek	0.44	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Phelps Canyon	Reilly Canyon	0.31	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pine Gulch	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	3.07	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Placer Creek	Missouri Park–South Arkansas River	0.39	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pole Canyon	Badito Cone–Huerfano River	0.40	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pole Gulch	Hamilton Creek–Arkansas	1.56	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	River					
Poncha Creek	Grays Creek–Poncha Creek	1.37	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pond Creek	Pond Creek	0.40	Crowley	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pony Gulch	Cripple Creek–Four Mile Creek	3.30	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pope Arroyo	Apache Creek	0.47	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Powell Arroyo	Powell Arroyo	0.28	Pueblo	Yes	No	Not eligible
Pruden Creek	Elevenmile Reservoir	0.50	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Purgatoire River	Gutierrez Canyon–Purgatoire River	1.25	Las Animas	Yes	No	Not eligible
Quagmire Creek	Monument Creek	0.43	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Railroad Gulch	Railroad Gulch	1.25	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rattlesnake Gulch	Cripple Creek–Four Mile Creek	3.09	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Red Canyon South	Oak Creek–Huerfano River	2.57	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Red Creek	Red Creek	1.56	Fremont	Yes	Yes	In-depth analysis
Red Gulch	Monument Creek	2.83	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Reese Gulch	Texas	2.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Creek Gulch–Arkansas River					
Rice Gulch	City Creek–Wilson Creek	1.29	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rito Oso	May Creek	0.63	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Road Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	3.61	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rock Arroyo	Rock Arroyo–Purgatoire River	0.49	Otero	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rock Creek	Gribbles Run	0.82	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rock Creek	Three Elk Creek–Arkansas River	0.84	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Russell Gulch	North Clear Creek	0.29	Gilpin	Yes	No	Not eligible
Rye Slough	Rye Slough	2.44	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Saint Charles River	Upper Saint Charles River	0.75	Pueblo	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Arroyo	Outlet Muddy Creek	1.16	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Gulch	King Gulch–South Arkansas River	0.77	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Sand Gulch	Sand Gulch–Arkansas River	5.81	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Gulch	Lower Cottonwood Creek	2.88	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Gulch	Falls Gulch	2.63	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Gulch	Sand Gulch	3.31	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sand Hollow	Cottonwood Canyon	0.39	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sandy Creek	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	1.01	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Saunders Arroyo	Saunders Arroyo	0.46	Pueblo	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sawmill Gulch	Two-Bit Gulch–Arkansas River	0.46	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sawmill Gulch	Cache Creek–Arkansas River	0.66	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sawmill Gulch	Browns Canyon	0.83	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sawmill Gulch	Temple Canyon–Grape Creek	3.32	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Schoolhouse Gulch	Fourmile Creek	0.27	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sevenmile Creek	Four Mile Creek	1.38	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sevenmile	Outlet	2.20	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Gulch	Middle Fork South Platte River					
Sevenmile Gulch	Dead Mule Gulch–Grape Creek	0.46	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Seymour Gulch	Lower Currant Creek	0.76	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sheep Creek	Headwaters Huerfano River	0.33	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sheep Creek	Froze Creek	0.84	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Shelton Creek	Shelton Creek	0.33	Bent	Yes	No	Not eligible
Short Creek	Hamilton Creek–Arkansas River	0.78	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sixmile Creek	Sixmile Creek–Arkansas River	5.54	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Smith Gulch	Lower Currant Creek	0.80	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
South Boulder Creek	Lower South Boulder Creek	0.53	Boulder	Yes	No	Not eligible
South Crooked Creek	Crooked Creek	0.42	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
South Fork Yellowstone Creek	South Oak Creek	0.49	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
South Mosquito Creek	Mosquito Creek	0.63	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
South Platte River	Town of Snyder–South Platte River	0.60	Logan	Yes	No	Not eligible
Spike Buck Gulch	Five Point Gulch–Arkansas River	6.06	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Spring Creek	Two-Bit Gulch–Arkansas River	1.20	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Spring Gulch	Browns Canyon	1.93	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Spring Gulch	Maverick Gulch–Arkansas River	2.87	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Spring Gulch	Monument Creek	0.35	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Stanley Creek	Headwaters Huerfano River	2.70	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Stanton Creek	Headwaters Huerfano River	1.63	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Stout Creek	West Creek–Arkansas River	0.28	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sullivan Creek	Falls Gulch	2.03	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sulphur Gulch	Five Point Gulch–	2.13	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Arkansas River					
Sunset City Gulch	Copper Gulch	3.15	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Sweetwater Gulch	Ute Creek–Arkansas River	3.47	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Tallahassee Creek	Tallahassee Creek	6.30	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Taylor Gulch	Maverick Gulch–Arkansas River	3.13	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Tennessee Creek	Tennessee Creeks	1.49	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Texas Creek	Lower Texas Creek	3.73	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Texas Creek Gulch	Texas Creek Gulch–Arkansas River	4.27	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Thirtyone Mile Creek	Thirtyone Mile Creek	2.27	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Thomas Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	2.70	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Thompson Arroyo	Thompson Arroyo–Arkansas River	0.55	Otero	Yes	No	Not eligible
Threemile Creek	Three Mile Creek	2.19	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Tie Gulch Creek	Cache Creek–	0.32	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
	Arkansas River					
Titusville Gulch	Rock Gulch	0.26	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Tombstone Gulch	Willow Creek–Badger Creek	0.29	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Trout Creek	Trout Creek	1.93	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Turkey Creek	Headwaters Turkey Creek	0.42	El Paso	Yes	No	Not eligible
Turkey Gulch	Lower Texas Creek	4.14	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Twelvemile Creek	Twelve Mile Creek	0.43	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Twelvemile Hole	Lower Cottonwood Creek	0.51	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Two Bit Creek	Two-Bit Gulch–Arkansas River	0.64	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible
Two Creek	Willow Creek–Badger Creek	1.52	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Tyndall Gulch	Johnson Gulch	0.75	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible
Union Creek	Elevenmile Reservoir	0.80	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Union Gulch Dry	City of Leadville–Arkansas River	1.01	Lake	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Ute Creek	Ute Creek–Arkansas River	3.85	Chaffee	Yes	No	Not eligible
Volcano Gulch	Temple Canyon–Grape Creek	2.28	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Wagon Tongue Creek	Wagon Tongue Creek–Badger Creek	1.47	Park	Yes	No	Not eligible
Washtub Gulch	Copper Gulch	0.87	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
West Beaver Creek	Headwaters West Beaver Creek	0.63	Fremont/Teller	Yes	Possibly	In-depth analysis
West Fork Turkey Creek	Headwaters Turkey Creek	3.16	El Paso	Yes	No	Not eligible
West Mill Creek	Patton Canyon–Beaver Creek	3.16	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
West Mill Gulch	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	1.69	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Westfall Gulch	McClure Gulch–Pine Gulch	1.18	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Willow Creek	Headwaters West Beaver Creek	0.26	Teller	Yes	No	Not eligible
Wilmer Gulch	Wilmer Gulch	0.55	Custer	Yes	No	Not eligible

Stream	Watershed Name	BLM Length (Miles)	County	Free-flowing?	ORVs?	Determination
Wilson Creek	Cripple Creek–Four Mile Creek	11.79	Fremont	Yes	No	Not eligible
Yellowstone Creek	South Oak Creek	0.33	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible
Yellowstone Creek South Fork	South Oak Creek	0.49	Huerfano	Yes	No	Not eligible

Appendix E. Analysis of Eligible Rivers and Streams

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E.1. Arkansas River: Segments 1–3

Location of River Segments

Segment 1: Confluence of East Fork and Tennessee Creek to Buena Vista (Map 1)

Segment 2: Buena Vista to Salida (Map 2)

Segment 3: Salida to Parkdale (Map 3)

Tentative Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.1 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for Segments 1–3 of the Arkansas River.

Table E.1. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Arkansas River, Segments 1–3

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational		Substantial evidence of human activity; houses, roads, railroad, and ranch development present.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total (East Fork/Tennessee Creek confluence to Parkdale)	Flow in the Arkansas River is intensively managed, with trans-mountain diversions and heavy downstream demands. Through much of the segment, the currently unused Denver & Rio Grande railroad and Highways 50 and 24 closely parallel the river. Construction of these transportation features modified the corridor to some degree and channelized the river in certain areas. Small diversions exist throughout the segments. The river study corridor is still, however, in an essentially natural state. The river is managed as a conduit for downstream water right owners and is manipulated daily to provide water storage and flow for downstream needs. The WSR Act criteria require that a river be free-flowing and not impounded, but do not require that the river possess natural hydrology. Segments 1–3 of the Arkansas River clearly meet the criteria for free-flowing.
42	104	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

Arkansas River Segments 1–3 provide a remarkable diversity of river recreation environments because of their changing and dramatic scenic beauty, the biological productivity of the river and its associated riparian zone, steep river gradients, and a mix of natural and agricultural settings. In turn, this variety of environments provides a very broad spectrum of river-related recreational experiences. Very few rivers offer recreational opportunities for such a wide range of abilities, ages, and interests. This is made more remarkable by the ease of access to various types of river environments, and their proximity to one another. Few other rivers provide the opportunity to recreate in wild river canyons and agricultural settings within the same trip or even the same day. These recreational opportunities are supported by a high density of recreational facilities, such as boat ramps, campgrounds, highway pullouts, and interpretive sites.

The variety of river-related recreational opportunities draws a high number of visitors to the river corridor each year. The Arkansas River Headwaters Recreation Area reported 711,000 visitor days during 2013 (AHRA 2014a). Of these, 248,000 were for sightseeing, 73,000 were for fishing, 37,000 were for picnicking, 245,000 were for boating, and 36,000 were for camping. The total also included 15,000 visitors who participated in a variety of river-oriented recreational events, such as whitewater festivals, races, and training events. The Arkansas River draws visitors from all regions of the United States, and from foreign nations, because of the high quality of the recreational experiences that are available.

The following activities comprise the recreation ORV:

Whitewater Boating

Arkansas River Segments 1–3, particularly between Granite and Parkdale, receive heavy recreational use of national importance and are the most heavily commercially boated sections of whitewater river in the United States. In 2015, 50 commercially permitted river outfitters provided more than 225,000 trips on these segments.

The recreational boating experience on Segments 1–3 is made outstandingly remarkable by a number of factors. Recreational users are drawn by the variety of boating experiences available, which include Class I to Class V rapids and river gradients ranging from 26 to 66 feet per river mile. The high number of possible put-in points provides a variety of experiences that can be tailored to skill level and time available. Boaters can easily access put-in points for boating through Browns Canyon National Monument from State highways, which allows them to enjoy a river with wilderness qualities on a day trip. On other rivers, these types of experiences are available only on expensive, multi-day trips.

Users are also able to tailor boating trips to fulfill their desired scenic experience. In the upper part of these segments, users can raft through a high mountain valley lined by peaks over 14,000 feet high. In the lower part of these segments, users can experience narrow canyons and a channel controlled by prominent geologic outcrops. Finally, recreational users are drawn by the predictability of flows, which allows boating on the river when flows are insufficient for boating on other rivers in the region. The Arkansas River Flow Management Program, administered

jointly by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and CPW, ensures that boatable flows are available annually from Memorial Day through August 15.

Fishing

Arkansas River Segments 1–3 support sufficient numbers and size of fish to earn “Gold Medal” standing from the State of Colorado, a category that designates the highest level of fish production when compared to other streams in the State. The length contributed by the Arkansas River to the total miles of gold medal waters in Colorado is substantial, representing approximately one-third of the statewide total.

Fishing opportunities along the Arkansas River are considered outstanding when compared to other streams in the Southern Rocky Mountain region for a number of reasons. The high levels of fish production, when coupled with proximity to the urban centers of Colorado’s densely populated Front Range, provide angling opportunities for an unusually high number of recreational users. Recreational users experience a high catch rate of fish, and they have easy access to many miles of public fishing waters, so recreational user satisfaction with the experience is unusually high. Due to the moderate climate, the river rarely freezes for any significant duration of time, so angling and general visitation occur in all seasons. Only the snowmelt runoff season reduces fishing opportunities, when high flows prevent bank fishing in the river’s eddies and backwaters. The river supports varying styles of fishing, but is regionally famous for macroinvertebrate hatches that draw large numbers of fly-fishing enthusiasts.

Recreational fishing opportunities along Segments 1–3 are sufficiently well known and recognized to support a significant outfitter industry aimed at anglers. Commercial outfitters offer float-fishing boating trips and guided wade-fishing opportunities. A substantial portion of the lodging, outdoor equipment sales, restaurant business, and overall visitation in the upper Arkansas River watershed is directly related to year-round fishing opportunities.

The recreational fishing experience is enhanced by predictable flow rates and recreational user management. After snowmelt runoff ceases, users can expect wade-able flows because of the Arkansas River Flow Management Program. During late summer and fall, flow rates are set to maximize fish reproduction, recruitment, and growth. During the heavy-use boating season from June through mid-August, commercial launches are timed and situated to ensure opportunities for angling solitude.

Camping and Picnicking

Arkansas River Segments 1–3 provide unusual opportunities to camp and picnic in a river-oriented setting. Campers are able to set up base camps for outdoor activities in close proximity to the river and then participate in an unusually broad array of activities in the river corridor that are easily accessible. These activities include boating, fishing, wildlife watching, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and photography. Camping opportunities are relatively close to towns along the river, enabling visitors to easily access services and river-oriented events. Segments 1–3 contain six developed campgrounds that charge a fee, one no-fee campground, and a very broad array of dispersed camping sites that do not provide developed amenities, but do not charge fees. The broad array of camping and picnicking locations provides an unusual opportunity for one or two-day stays in close proximity to major urban centers.

Recreational Driving

Arkansas River Segments 1–3 provide regionally important opportunities for recreational driving. Throughout the segments, U.S. and State highways parallel the river, because the river corridor is the most direct access route through mountainous and rugged terrain. Between Parkdale and Salida, a U.S. highway is directly adjacent to the river, providing the visitor with the opportunity to view a wide array of river-related activities and natural resource values. The driving experience is enhanced by a high number of pullouts, viewpoints, and interpretive kiosks. During the driving experience, the visitor is able to enjoy an unusual diversity of scenery, ranging from desert to high altitude alpine environments. Visiting motorists are also able to participate in an unusual variety of highly accessible experiences, including viewing wildlife, viewing whitewater boaters, enjoying riverside picnics, swimming, and enjoying small beaches. Because of the high quality of the recreational driving experience along these highways, they are included in the College Peaks National Scenic Byway and the Top of Rockies National Scenic Byway.

Scenery

Arkansas River Segments 1–3 have remained remarkably undeveloped, despite the fact that those parts of the river corridor have been modified by a railroad, State and Federal highways, and agricultural activity. The relatively undeveloped condition of these segments allows visitors to have a wide range of scenic experiences, from alpine to desert environments, and allows them to experience what Colorado looked like before significant urbanization, when agriculture and ranching dominated the local economy.

Segment 1 originates in lofty mountains exceeding 13,000 feet, near Leadville, and then flows through wide open grasslands at altitudes near 10,000 feet. In Segment 1, mountainous terrain is immediately adjacent to the river, or mountains provide a backdrop for high altitude grasslands and irrigated pastures. Visitors experience the changing shapes and colors of water, contrasted with either a rocky and forested streamside environment, or with sweeping views of high mountain peaks. The constantly changing composition and shape of the river valley provide continuing scenic interest as one travels through the river corridor. In the fall, riparian vegetation colors provide a pleasing contrast to coniferous vegetation and to grasslands and meadows.

In Segment 2, the Arkansas River is a central focal point of the middle Arkansas River valley. The water and associated riparian vegetation provide unique complementing colors to the surrounding arid terrain of slopes covered with pinyon-juniper forests and to agricultural fields. This is especially prevalent in the fall, when deciduous riparian vegetation turns yellow. In winter, river ice flows provide dramatic opportunities for capturing outstanding photographic images. This segment also flows through Browns Canyon National Monument. The monument provides a wild river scenic environment, where fast-flowing whitewater and large rapids contrast with an extremely rugged and arid environment in which large expanses of undulating rock outcrops contrast with low-density pinyon-juniper forests.

In Segment 3, the Arkansas River offers a dramatic contrast in rock, water, soils, and vegetation, with large rock outcroppings immediately adjacent to the river. Visitors can see geological formations in colors varying from shades of pink to orange depending upon the time of day and

time of year. These colorful formations stand in contrast to sparse vegetation in various shades of brown and green. As the river traverses around erosion-resistant rocks, an ever-changing combination of landforms and views emerges.

The scenic quality of Segments 1–2 is confirmed by the fact that the river corridor has been designated as part of two national scenic byways: the Top of Rockies National Scenic Byway and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway. These byways are two of only 53 designated scenic byways in the United States. The byways use the major highways U.S. 50, U.S. 285, State Highway 24, and State Highway 291. Portions of both byways are in very close proximity to the Arkansas River. The byways showcase the rich history of the West and its relationship to the use of natural resources, in a highly scenic setting.

Wildlife

The wildlife ORV is comprised of two components: wildlife populations and wildlife habitat.

Wildlife Populations

The river corridor contains a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Studies of the bighorn sheep population have revealed that it is highly affiliated with the river. Bighorn sheep migrate along the entire river corridor between Pole Mountain and Parkdale to find water, forage, and hiding cover. Activities that occur in the river corridor include lambing, feeding, and escape from predators. This population behavior contrasts with other bighorn sheep populations in Colorado, where the populations migrate between higher elevations and lower elevations and only occasionally use streamside habitats. The bighorn sheep population is comprised of three herds: Grape, Browns Canyon, and Fernleaf. The bighorn sheep population in the valley now numbers 550–600 sheep that spend all or a portion of the year adjacent to the Arkansas River.

The Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II (Wickersham 2011) documented 43 to 86 different species of birds using the river or breeding along it during the breeding season, including the following regionally rare or sensitive species: osprey, prairie falcon, blue grosbeak, white-winged dove, Lewis' woodpecker, Cassin's kingbird, black phoebe, indigo bunting, yellow-breasted chat, great blue heron, and least flycatcher.

The Arkansas River corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM sensitive species: white-faced ibis (BLM sensitive), American white pelican (BLM sensitive), bald eagle (BLM sensitive, State species of concern, and federally protected), golden eagle (federally protected), and American peregrine falcon (BLM sensitive and State species of concern). Townsend's big-eared bat (BLM sensitive; G3/S2 State imperiled) was documented with a maternity colony along the river as well as the blue butterfly, *Euphilotes rita coloradensis* (S2 State imperiled).

Gunnison's prairie dog (BLM sensitive), has active colonies along the Arkansas River corridor. Although this species is not considered riparian-dependent, this particular colony is unique in that it is one of the northernmost mountainous populations and is located at a high elevation and in a long, narrow valley, whereas the majority of colonies are at lower elevations and in wider valleys along the perimeter of the mountainous terrain in the southwest and western portions of the State.

Although habitat for these species exists in many river corridors in Colorado, the Arkansas River corridor is unique for the diversity of wildlife species that occupy it.

Wildlife Habitat

The Arkansas River has a very unique biogeography because of its large range of altitudes, relatively warm climate in Segments 2–3, highly varied geology and landscape features, and highly varied vegetation types that range from alpine to desert. The river valley contains both east-west and north-south orientations, which produce an unusually high number of microclimates and habitat niches. As a result, the wildlife assemblages present in Segments 1–3 include a longitudinal overlap of southern species with northern species, and an altitudinal overlap of mountainous species with valley/plains species.

The Arkansas River is a very important north-south and east-west migration corridor for large game mammals, specifically Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, American elk, mule deer, black bear, and pronghorn. The presence of the river attracts and draws these large animals, but the Arkansas River's varied terrain facilitates their movement across very large distances, ensuring that genetic diversity of those populations are maintained. Such movement corridors and genetic exchange are especially necessary for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which generally have small herd sizes and are sensitive to diseases and other risk factors.

The east-west linkage corridor crossing the Arkansas River is a vital connection for the threatened Canada lynx moving from the southwestern portion of the State to the northern portion of the State and beyond. The linkage is one of the few such corridors out of 40 in the State of Colorado that cross a 4th or higher order river, and this is because of the river terrain, river features, and proximity of the river to hiding cover.

The Arkansas River also provides excellent reproductive or foraging habitat for bald eagle, golden eagle, American peregrine falcon, osprey, prairie falcon, numerous migratory and resident birds, Gunnison's prairie dog (BLM sensitive), American elk, black bear, and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The Arkansas River provides rich reproductive and foraging habitats for these species because of the abundance and proximity of cliffs, perches, hiding cover, prey sources, and diverse vegetation. Although a major transportation corridor parallels the Arkansas River and the river is a popular sport destination, many sections of the river corridor are unaltered, quiet during certain times of the year, rugged, and relatively inaccessible to humans, providing animals with the solitude and cover needed for reproductive success.

Botany

Three sites along the Arkansas River were ranked by the CNHP as B1 outstanding biodiversity, four as B2 very high biodiversity, and two as B3 high biodiversity, specifically for rare, endemic, or sensitive plant populations and associations.

The area within the Arkansas River corridor contains two riparian plant associations that are ranked G3 globally vulnerable by CNHP: *Populus angustifolia*–*Alnus incana* (S3 State vulnerable) and *Betula occidentalis*–mesic forb shubland (S2 State imperiled).

Fish

The Arkansas River fishery no longer consists exclusively of native fish species, because of historic fish stocking and management practices. The native trout that once occupied the river, the yellowfin trout, is now considered extinct. The fishery is now composed of brown trout and rainbow trout—which are introduced species—and long-nosed dace, a native non-sport species. Nonetheless, the modern Arkansas River fishery qualifies as an ORV based upon multiple metrics.

Brown trout biometrics in the Arkansas River vary substantially in response to flow conditions, but long-term averages qualify the river as a gold medal fishery. Between 2002 and 2012, brown trout numbers per acre of stream habitat ranged from 140 to 450. Brown trout in excess of 14 inches in length numbered from 7 to 51 per acre of stream habitat. Pounds of brown trout per acre ranged from 89 to 223 per acre of stream habitat. Rainbow trout biometrics have improved substantially during this time period, with rainbow trout comprising 23 percent of the fish community at Wellsville in 2012. The long-term density of all trout species is 250 fish per acre.

Given the number of river miles that are considered as qualifying for gold medal status, along with the size of the river channel, the Arkansas River is one of the most significant fisheries in the Southern Rocky Mountain region, based upon the number of acres of outstanding fish habitat. Fish populations are expected to continue to improve, as CPW and cooperators continue to implement management measures to address constraints on the fish populations. These include measures to address water quality issues associated with historic mining in the Leadville area, fish population management techniques to address fish disease issues, and efforts to fine tune the voluntary flow management program to provide flow rates and timing that benefit fish populations.

Cultural

The cultural resources in the Arkansas River corridor were analyzed from a different regional perspective than other resources in this eligibility report, because the river received substantial use from populations living in the western Great Plains, in addition to populations that inhabited the Southern Rocky Mountain region. The Arkansas River corridor served as an important route into the mountains for prehistoric (pre-1540) and protohistoric (post-1540 aboriginal) populations. Tribes that historically used the Arkansas River corridor are extensive and diverse, including the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, Crow Creek Sioux, Eastern Shoshone, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Arapaho Tribe, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Ute Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pawnee Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Southern Ute Tribe, Standing Rock Lakota Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The corridor was also heavily used by early American and Spanish explorers, and miners and travelers, during the historic period (1850 to the present).

In the arid landscapes of the western Great Plains and Southern Rocky Mountains, the plentiful water, accompanying vegetation, animal diversity, arable land, and other resources found along the river were used by cultural communities while they occupied and passed through the area. In addition, the Arkansas River corridor was a subsistence refuge during periods of climatic

hardship, and an area of abundance at other times, which allowed populations to move into and explore adjacent landscapes.

A high number of aboriginal sites are present along the river. Most of the sites are unexcavated, but they contain important artifacts that reveal the occupational and migration patterns of aboriginal populations. Some sections of the river contain continuous sites that stretch on either side of the river for multiple miles. Many of these sites qualify for the National Register of Historic Places.

During the period from 1878 to the present, three major historic railroads (the Denver & Rio Grande; the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe; and the Colorado Midland) built grades along the river. Of particular interest, historic forts associated with the “railroad war” between the Denver & Rio Grande and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe over control of the canyon (1878–1880) are located within the corridor. These sites also qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to railroad routes, the corridor also contains the Leadville Wagon and Stage Road. The Arkansas River was the prominent feature that allowed for construction of these transportation systems. The ease of following the shorelines, floodplains, and canyons allowed early settlers to overcome the engineering and expense obstacles to constructing transportation systems in mountainous terrain. These transportation systems are highly significant, because they allowed miners, ranchers, farmers, and hunters to use and settle the Arkansas River valley.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.2 summarizes the previous study’s findings for Segments 1–3 of the Arkansas River (BLM 1996).

Table E.2. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for Segments 1–3

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes	Yes	Recreational

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The previous study of these segments of the Arkansas River found them to both be free-flowing and have ORVs (BLM 1996); however, the remarkable values that were determined earlier consisted only of recreational and historical resources. This WSR eligibility report finds that several other ORVs are also present. Recreation continues to be an ORV, and historical values are discussed under the cultural ORV, because they should be viewed in context along with cultural resources from earlier periods when the dominant influence along the river were aboriginal peoples.

In the present study, the previous Segments 3 and 4 were merged into one segment (Segment 3) because of the similar character of these two segments. The lower end of these segments was moved from the western boundary of Royal Gorge Park to Parkdale, so that the Royal Gorge segment of the river could be looked at as a whole, rather than as ending in the gorge.

E.2. Arkansas River: Segment 4

Location of River Segment

Parkdale to Cañon City (Map 4)

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.3 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for Segment 4 of the Arkansas River.

Table E.3. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Arkansas River, Segment 4

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational		Substantial evidence of human activity; roads, trails, railroad, and park development present.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total (Parkdale to Pink House)	Flow in the Arkansas River is intensively managed, with trans-mountain diversions and heavy downstream demands. Through much of the segment, the currently unused Denver-Rio Grande railroad makes up the north bank of the river. Construction of these transportation features modified the corridor to some degree and channelized the river in many areas. A diversion exists just before the Pink House Recreation Site. The river study corridor is still, however, in an essentially natural state. The river is managed as a conduit for downstream water right owners and is manipulated daily to provide water storage and flow for downstream needs. The WSR Act criteria require that a river be free-flowing, not in a naturally flowing state. Segment 4 of the Arkansas River clearly meets the free-flowing criteria.
3	8	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

This segment offers a dramatically different recreational experience from Segments 1–3. The upper part of the segment flows through the Royal Gorge, one of the deepest river canyons in the United States. Even though the gorge is crossed by a bridge, the recreational user on the river

experiences a sense of solitude and grandeur. The lower part of the segment is characterized as a high plains river, with a gradient of only 15 feet per river mile. This segment of the river offers a tranquil river experience. The user can see changes in vegetation, geology, and wildlife as the river transitions from a high-gradient mountain river to a low-gradient plains river.

The following activities comprise the recreation ORV in Segment 4:

Whitewater Boating

The portion of the segment running through the Royal Gorge offers a highly technical boating experience with Class III–V rapids that can be very challenging during both low and high flows.

Similarly to Segments 1–3, the Arkansas River in this segment receives heavy recreational use of national importance and is one of the most heavily commercially boated whitewater rivers in the United States. In 2015, there are currently 50 commercially permitted river outfitters providing trips in this segment. Users are attracted to the segment to experience boating through an extremely deep canyon with vertical walls. Even though the Royal Gorge supports a very high number of boating trips, departures are timed so that visitors can experience a feeling of solitude. The power of the river and the challenges of boating through it are magnified by the noise of the river in the gorge.

Fishing

Segment 4 provides a unique recreational fishing experience. Access to the Royal Gorge portion of the segment is typically by boat, and anglers stop to fish in holes where water velocity is slower and large congregations of trout occur. Anglers can fish in a very deep and narrow canyon, experience a sense of solitude, and directly encounter the river's power and noise.

Scenery

Seeing the Royal Gorge from the river, including the entrance to and exit from the Royal Gorge, is a unique scenic opportunity within the Southern Rocky Mountain region. At the entrance to the gorge, the visitor is struck by the contrast between the lush vegetation on the river banks and the sparse vegetation on the river canyon walls. Once the visitor enters the gorge, the visitor experiences a sense of awe at the extremely deep canyon and vertical walls. The scenic interest is heightened by multiple factors. The canyon walls contain spires, crevices, and striations, variations in rock color, and obvious indications of the orientation of various geological formations. The visual experience changes throughout the day, as light direction and intensity reveal various features or cast them into shadow.

When visitors exit the canyon on the river, the change in scenic qualities is immediate, with much more light and a much less confined river canyon. Overall, on this segment, the visitor has a complete canyon experience, starting with a fairly open river corridor, transitioning to a very narrow canyon, and then opening to a portion of the segment where the river becomes a tranquil plains river with a much lower gradient.

Wildlife

Wildlife Populations

In 1974, the Peregrine Fund and the Colorado Division of Wildlife attempted the first foster egg exchange between prairie falcon and American peregrine falcon (BLM sensitive, State species of concern) in the Royal Gorge. This successful management action launched the recovery of the American peregrine falcon in Colorado and the entire eastern portion of the U.S., and allowed this species to be de-listed from the Endangered Species Act in 1999. The population in the Royal Gorge remains a conservation population for the American peregrine falcon.

Wildlife Habitats

American peregrine falcon habitat within the Royal Gorge is an exceptionally suitable breeding habitat in the State due to the height advantage of the V-shaped canyon with extremely high and long cliffs that overlook water with abundant river-dependent prey. These canyon features are necessary for the dive-bombing aerial tactics that the American peregrine falcon uses for hunting, pursuing prey, defending nest territories, and courtship, tactics for which this species is much admired.

This river segment provides regionally important habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Bighorn sheep that inhabit portions of the Arkansas River corridor east of Parkdale will migrate to this portion of the river for winter range and severe winter range.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.4 summarizes the previous study's findings for Segment 4 of the Arkansas River (BLM 1996).

Table E.4. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for Segment 4

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes/no	Yes/no	Recreational/none

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The previous study had this segment beginning at the upstream boundary between BLM and the Royal Gorge Park. For the present study, the segment was adjusted to begin at the Parkdale river access point, so the Royal Gorge segment of the river could be considered as a whole. The previous study did not find this section suitable, because the BLM administered very little land in the segment. The City of Cañon City also previously requested that the Royal Gorge Park not be considered. Since then, land acquisitions by the BLM and CPW near the mouth of the canyon added more land under public ownership, and the upper canyon above the park is now mainly administered by the BLM. In addition, part of this study will revisit the city's interest: Cañon City's preferences for long-term management of this segment will be considered during the suitability phase of the WSR study.

E.3. Beaver Creek

Location of River Segment

Confluence of East and West Beaver Creeks to the southern boundary of the wilderness study area (Map 5).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.5 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the Beaver Creek segment.

Table E.5. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Beaver Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild		This entire segment is located in the wilderness study area, and little evidence of human encroachment is present.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	Beaver Creek in this segment only contains minor diversion structures associated with downstream agriculture.
0.3	1.9	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

Beaver Creek provides an outstandingly remarkable recreational experience because of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation close to major metropolitan areas.

The trail system for Beaver Creek begins at the north end of the Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area. The trail system receives light visitor use and is mostly used by day hikers. The trail system is maintained but would still be considered primitive. Some visitors backpack into the area and spend the night. Angling occurs along Beaver Creek and the east and west forks. The fish are small, but hooking them is challenging due to the narrow nature of the creek and the streamside vegetation. The rugged terrain prevents extensive cross-country travel; however, strong hikers do leave the trail to find unconfined, primitive recreational opportunities and additional solitude. Recreational users are few and are drawn by the spectacular scenery, experiencing a narrow canyon environment with perennial water, and boulder-scrambling opportunities.

Scenery

Lower Beaver Creek has a class A scenic quality rating. The lower portion of Beaver Creek leaves the steep mountain peaks that are found in the upper reaches of the east and west forks and travels through rolling hills that eventually join the plains south of the State wildlife area. Although adjacent scenery is typically not visible while walking along the creek itself, it is visible when the visitor takes the time to scramble uphill from the creek. From this perspective, the landscape opens up, and views of Pikes Peak to the north and the Wet Mountains across the valley to the south and west, along with the rugged Sangre de Cristo range, become visible.

Botany

The main stem of Beaver Creek has two sites rated B2 very high biodiversity by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, specifically for rare plant conservation.

In the upper reaches of the main stem of Beaver Creek where the canyon starts to form, *Populus angustifolia*–*Salix irrorata* (G2/S2 imperiled) and the *Populus angustifolia*–*Alnus incana* (G3 globally vulnerable) riparian plant associations occur. The *Populus angustifolia*–*Salix irrorata* association occupies approximately 2.0 acres along the creek corridor, while the *Populus angustifolia*–*Alnus incana* occupies approximately 9.5 acres along the stream corridor. These acreages are significant, considering the narrow width of the riparian corridor.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.6 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Beaver Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.6. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Beaver Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes	Yes	Upper: wild Lower: scenic

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The outcome of the present study is largely the same as the previous study. It is, however, unclear how the land ownership was previously calculated. In the last study, land ownership along Beaver Creek was 49 percent BLM, 37 percent State, and 14 percent private. Possibly due to better mapping, almost all (84 percent) of the creek itself is on State land, with a narrow band of State land following the creek, surrounded by BLM land. It is possible that these numbers are the acres involved (0.25 miles on either side) and not stream miles. The present study looks at ownership in stream miles. The other difference is that the previous study lumped all three Beaver Creek segments (east, west, and main) into one. The present study separates out each segment.

E.4. East Beaver Creek

Location of River Segment

All portions from the Teller–Fremont County line downstream to the confluence with West Beaver Creek (Map 5).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.7 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the East Beaver Creek segment.

Table E.7. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the East Beaver Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild		There are no roads and very little evidence of human encroachment. Some of the original power line poles are still visible on the trail that connects East and West Beaver Creek.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	There are no impoundments in this segment.
2	5	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

East Beaver Creek provides an outstandingly remarkable recreational experience because of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation close to major metropolitan areas. The trail along the east fork is known as Trail Gulch. This trail meanders at varying distances away from the creek and gains elevation at a moderate rate. Spruce, pine, cottonwood, and a mature, healthy riparian zone provide some shade compared to the stark, barren, rocky trail found along the west fork. Most recreation is limited to day hikes; however, some overnight backpacking does occur. Cross-country travel is difficult due to the rugged topography. Some hunting occurs, and the area has a very high concentration of mountain lions. Angling does occur, but the creek is not known for its fishery. Recreational users are few in number and are drawn by spectacular scenery, experiencing a narrow canyon environment with perennial water, and boulder-scrambling opportunities.

Scenery

East Beaver Creek has a class A scenic quality rating. The east fork flows through a steep canyon that is over 1,000-feet deep in places. The scenery is stunning due to the mix of dark green conifer forests, grey-black rock spires, and yellow-green riparian areas, creating a variety of colors and stark contrasts. The shadows created by the monolithic rock outcroppings add to the scenic qualities of the area.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.8 summarizes the previous study's findings for the East Beaver Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.8. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the East Beaver Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes	Yes	Wild

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

In the previous study, this segment was included as part of the larger Beaver Creek segment (see section E.3).

E.5. West Beaver Creek

Location of River Segment

All portions from just downstream of Skagway Reservoir to the confluence with East Beaver Creek (Map 5).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.9 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the West Beaver Creek segment.

Table E.9. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the West Beaver Creek Segment

Tentative Classification	Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild	The only road in this segment is a short road that parallels the creek for 0.85 miles below Skagway Reservoir and provides access to a part-time residence to the east. No residences exist in this segment, but some evidence of

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
		historic activity is present. Much of this is associated with the old power plant. All evidence is very minor.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	No impoundments exist downstream of Skagway Reservoir to the confluence with East Beaver Creek.
0.3	8	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

West Beaver Creek provides an outstandingly remarkable recreational experience because of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation close to major metropolitan areas. West Beaver Creek provides the same types of recreational activities and experiences that are found in Beaver Creek and East Beaver Creek. The trail that parallels West Beaver Creek is more open, has less vegetative cover, is narrow, rocky, and loses and gains elevation more regularly than East Beaver Creek. The trail becomes more difficult to follow once you pass the power line trail that cuts over to East Beaver Creek. Above this point, the creek is constricted through a series of large boulder-choked passages, and the trail becomes difficult to follow for some distance. The primitive, unconfined, recreational opportunities provide the visitor with outstanding opportunities for solitude. Fishing, backpacking, and hunting all occur throughout the area. Recreational users are limited in number and are drawn by the spectacular scenery, experiencing a canyon environment with perennial water, and boulder-scrambling opportunities.

Scenery

West Beaver Creek has a class A visual quality rating. The scenery along West Beaver Creek differs from the east side in that the landscape is more open, vegetation is somewhat sparser, and views are more open. The canyon is still very deep, and the distance views are only visible once you are able to climb out of the canyon. The color contrast is spectacular, with a blend of green, yellow, and red vegetation interspersed throughout the light-colored rock formations.

Botany

West Beaver Creek has a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) riparian natural community: narrowleaf cottonwood–bluestem willow (*Populus angustifolia*–*Salix irrorata*) woodland. It has several excellent (A-ranked) occurrences of globally vulnerable riparian natural communities: one each of narrowleaf cottonwood–thinleaf alder (*Populus angustifolia*–*Alnus incana*) woodland (G3/S3), narrowleaf cottonwood–Douglas-fir (*Populus angustifolia*–*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodland (G3/S2), and thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*)–mesic graminoids shrubland (G3/S3).

There is a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable Geyer willow (*Salix geyeriana*)–mountain willow (*Salix monticola*)–mesic forb shrubland (G3/S3), an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the apparently globally secure (G4?/S2) river birch–starry false lily of the valley (*Betula occidentalis*–*Maianthemum stellatum*) shrubland, and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3G4/S3) plains cottonwood–(peachleaf willow)–(coyote willow, sandbar willow) (*Populus deltoides*–(*Salix amygdaloides*)–*Salix (exigua, interior)*) woodland. *Salix geyeriana*–*Salix monticola*–mesic forb shrubland is a G3 globally vulnerable riparian plant association located in West Beaver Creek.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.10 summarizes the previous study’s findings for the West Beaver Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.10. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the West Beaver Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes	Yes	Wild

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Previously, this segment was included as part of the larger Beaver Creek segment (see section E.3).

E.6. Eightmile Creek

Location of River Segment

All portions from the area where Eightmile Creek enters BLM-administered lands near Nipple Mountain to private land near the mouth of Phantom Canyon (Map 6).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.11 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the Eightmile Creek segment.

Table E.11. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Eightmile Creek Segment

Tentative Classification	Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational	Eightmile Creek is paralleled by a county road and once had a railroad along its entire length. Some historic remains can be found where town sites were once located to service the

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
		railroads.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	There are no diversions or dams on Eightmile Creek, and the stream is considered free-flowing. At the turn of the century, Eightmile Creek was affected by the efforts to drain the mines in the Cripple Creek Mining District. The Carlton Tunnel was drilled under the mines and Eightmile Creek drainage to assist in draining the mines. There is evidence that the creek was perennial prior to completion of the tunnel; however, since completion, the creek has had only intermittent flows.
14	15	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

The canyon is visited by thousands of visitors a year. These visitors are attracted by a unique combination of scenic, cultural, and natural attractions that are easily accessible on the Gold Belt National Scenic Byway. The Gold Belt National Scenic Byway was one of the first byways designated in the country.

The canyon attracts many who are interested in the history of mining. Interpretive books and signs, an audio tour, and numerous other media formats tell the story of the Cripple Creek Mining District, known as the “World’s Greatest Gold Camp.” Getting the gold out of the district was a task in itself. At first, wagon trains transported the gold ore out of the district. When the district started to boom, another means was needed to keep up with the demand of getting the ore out of the district to the smelters. At first, the railroad was successful financially; however, the railway was built along the banks of Eightmile Creek, and the mainline was frequently washed out by flash floods. Eventually, rebuilding after floods became unprofitable, as other more competitive rail lines reached the mining districts. It would not have been possible to build the railroad if Eightmile Creek did not provide some type of pathway, due to the steep canyon walls.

Visitors also come to the canyon to enjoy a wide variety of scenic views. These views are easily accessible because of multiple turnouts along the Gold Belt Byway. Part of the attraction is that historic features associated with mining history are embedded in a highly scenic and largely natural landscape.

Visitors can also enjoy natural features associated with Fourmile Creek. The creek and its associated vegetation are directly visible from a large portion of the Gold Belt Scenic Byway. In addition, the byway route includes locations where visitors can swim in the creek when it is

flowing, or stop for a picnic. Dispersed campgrounds allow visitors to enjoy quiet time and time with family and friends under the shade trees in the riparian zone.

Scenery

Eightmile Creek is unusual in the Southern Rocky Mountain region, because it is a very long canyon. It starts at high alpine elevation and continues to low desert elevation, in a natural, largely undeveloped condition. Eightmile Creek has a class A scenic quality rating. Natural forces that shaped the canyon and creek are still in evidence. Flash floods that played havoc on an historic railroad route continue to shape the character of the canyon. Although intermittent, the creek continues to shape the canyon through large flow events. Steep canyon walls and strange rock formations contrast against dark vegetation and enhance the scenic qualities of the canyon. Vegetation along the creek, which is light green during the growing season and yellow during the fall, provides a striking contrast to the predominantly dark green coniferous vegetation. The scenic quality of the creek has been confirmed by the designation of the Gold Belt National Scenic Byway, which is very close to the creek throughout most of its route.

Botany

Riparian plant associations found in Eightmile Creek include approximately 31 acres of *Populus angustifolia–juniperous scopulorum* (G2 globally imperiled) and approximately 9 acres of *Populus angustifolia–Pseudotsuga menziesii* woodland (G3 globally vulnerable). Given the narrow size of the riparian zone along the creek, these are significant and regionally important occurrences of these plant associations.

Cultural

The Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad was built in 1894, and in order to cross the drainage near Adelaide, a steel bridge with a bend in it was also constructed in that year. The railroad was completely washed out in 1912, but not the bridge, which was converted into a highway bridge. This bridge is the last remaining original structure associated with the railroad, and is remarkable for its unique construction. The Adelaide Steel Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.12 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Eightmile Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.12. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Eightmile Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
Yes	No	Recreational

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The previous study found that Eightmile Creek was not eligible for further study due to a lack of ORVs.

E.7. Fourmile Creek

Location of River Segment

From the private–BLM property line downstream of the Lakemoor West subdivision to the headgate of Canon Heights Ditch (Map 7).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.13 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the Fourmile Creek segment.

Table E.13. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Fourmile Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational		A county road parallels the creek for most of its length. Where the creek is not accessible by county road, it is accessible by BLM roads that terminate close to the creek.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	Although the creek’s flow regime has been highly modified by upstream storage projects and multiple diversions for irrigation purposes, the creek remains perennial throughout its length to the headgate of Canon Heights Ditch. During a significant portion of the year, the Canon Heights Ditch can divert most of the flow of the creek. During drought periods, the creek can be dry below the Canon Heights Ditch.
10	23	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

The recreational experience available along Fourmile Creek is considered to be outstanding within the region because of the unusual combination of such experiences available to visitors. While driving along the Gold Belt Scenic Byway, visitors can stop to view and learn about some of the nation’s best paleontological resources. When Fourmile Creek is flowing, they can swim

in the creek and picnic adjacent to it, which are popular activities on hot days. Visitors can also stop to use or simply view the Shelf Road Rock Climbing Area. The Shelf Road itself is a recreational driving attraction; motorists navigate a narrow road immediately adjacent to a cliff dropping several hundred feet down to Fourmile Creek. At the top of the Shelf Road, visitors can enjoy long range views of the Pikes Peak Region. Wildlife viewing, especially of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, is common along the creek and Shelf Road. If the visitor is interested in a creek-oriented recreational experience with more solitude, BLM roads can take them to more remote parts of the creek.

Paleontology

The Garden Park Fossil Area, which includes the Marsh and Cleveland Quarries, is one of the most productive and historically important locations in the United States for the study of Late Jurassic dinosaurs. Fossil hunters and scientists from across the country have excavated in Garden Park since 1877, when the nearby town of Cañon City, Colorado, was still young. Many of the dinosaurs that were first discovered in Garden Park are now household names, including the first complete skeleton of *Allosaurus*, some of the most complete *Stegosaurus* skeletons (3), as well as *Camarasaurus*, *Ceratosaurus*, and *Diplodocus*. Much of the early knowledge of dinosaurs in North America came from work in the Garden Park Fossil Area.

Dinosaurs found in Garden Park are on display in almost every major natural history museum in the United States, including the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the American Museum of Natural History. Only Como Bluff in Wyoming and Dinosaur National Monument Quarry in Utah are comparable to the Garden Park Fossil Area in the amount of fossil vertebrate material and the long history of museum excavations. The paleontological value of the Garden Park Fossil Area is considered to be river-related, because the downcutting of Fourmile Creek is the only reason that the fossils are viewable and accessible.

Scenery

Fourmile Creek has a class A visual quality rating. Where it flows, the creek is the main force that carves the canyon. Sheer cliff faces, large rock outcroppings, sparse vegetation, and long-range views of prominent features in the Pikes Peak region provide a setting that attracts visitors to this stunning scenic area. The Booger Red Hill area provides a very striking combination of colors and landscape forms because of the unique geology of that area. In the Booger Red Hill area, visitors are also able to enter narrow side canyons and find tributaries that are filled with vegetation in an otherwise arid landscape with very limited woody vegetation.

Botany

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program rates one site in Fourmile Creek as having B1 outstanding biodiversity, one site as having B2 very high biodiversity, and two sites as having B4 moderate biodiversity. All four sites are rated for rare plant conservation.

Riparian plant associations found in Fourmile Creek that may be considered an ORV for Fourmile Creek are *Alnus incana*–mesic graminoid shrubland (G3/S3 vulnerable) and *Populus angustifolia*–*Salix irrorata* (G2 globally imperiled/S2 State imperiled).

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.14 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Fourmile Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.14. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Fourmile Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No/yes	No	Recreational

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The previous study concluded that Fourmile Creek is not in a free-flowing state due to the Canon Heights Irrigation Company diversion that exists across the creek. The previous study also concluded that the entire stream flow, except during the highest flows, is diverted into an irrigation ditch for a distance of 660 feet. Because of this diversion, Fourmile Creek was not considered to be free-flowing. The BLM re-evaluated this determination for the present study and concluded that Fourmile Creek is free-flowing until it reaches the headgate of the Canon Heights Ditch and that the portion of the creek that is free-flowing contains multiple ORVs.

E.8. Grape Creek

Location of River Segments

Segment 1: Outlet of DeWeese Reservoir to the wilderness study area boundary (Map 8).

Segment 2: Within the two wilderness study areas (Map 8).

Segment 3: Northern wilderness study area boundary to the confluence with the Arkansas River (Map 8).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.15 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the Grape Creek segments.

Table E.15. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Grape Creek Segments

Tentative Classification	Reasons for Tentative Classification
Segment 1: Scenic Segment 2: Wild Segment 3: Recreational	The segments have multiple points where access is available by road, including a road down Bear Gulch and roads in Temple Canyon Park. In addition, the segments have infrastructure related to the operations of the DeWeese-Dye Ditch and Reservoir Company,

		including a diversion structure, primitive road access used only by the company, and bridges.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total (Outlet of DeWeese Reservoir to Confluence with the Arkansas River)	The segments under study have a predictable flow regime and are not impounded by dams.
20	27	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Recreation

Grape Creek provides an outstandingly remarkable recreational experience because of opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation close to major metropolitan areas. Grape Creek flows through two BLM wilderness study areas, and the creek corridor provides relatively easy access to these undeveloped landscapes. The recreational opportunities are considered outstanding because of the variety of easily accessible river-related activities, including fishing, picnicking, swimming, camping, horseback riding, hiking, and photography.

Recreational opportunities are also outstanding because of the scenic resources in the stream corridor, described below under the scenery ORV. Recreational opportunities are enhanced because the creek corridor is generally accessible, usable, and free of major snow and ice during winter, when other major creek corridors in the Southern Rocky Mountain region are not accessible for a wide range of recreational activities. The lack of an official trail system along the creek in the two wilderness study areas adds interest and challenge for recreational users, because they are forced to cross the creek multiple times if they want to traverse the creek corridor.

Scenery

Grape Creek has a class A visual quality rating, because the visitor is able to experience a very broad range of scenic views and landscape types. The upper portion of the creek is more open, with views of wide bowls, grasslands, rolling hills, stands of ponderosa pine, and mountain vistas. Parts of the creek are strewn with boulders washed in from side drainages, adding to the visual interest. Downstream from Bear Gulch, the creek canyon becomes much narrower. This portion of the creek includes a feature named “The Tights,” which has waterfalls, deep pools, and places where the creek has cut through erosion-resistant rocks. The lower portion of the creek is very unusual for the southern Rocky Mountain region, with a perennial stream flowing through a canyon with desert vegetation, such as cholla cactus and yucca. Together, all of these features combine to offer continually changing visual interest to visitors who walk along the creek channel.

Wildlife

The herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep that utilizes Grape Creek Canyon is considered to be part of the Temple Canyon S49 herd, which also makes use of the Arkansas River Canyon. The S49 is highly affiliated with the Arkansas River and Grape Creek, making extensive use of the cover, forage, and water provided by these streams. Since Temple Canyon S49 is a native herd, it is considered a Tier 1 conservation priority herd by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Tier 1 herds are considered essential for maintaining viable populations with high genetic diversity within Colorado and the Southern Rocky Mountain region.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.16 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Grape Creek segments (BLM 1996).

Table E.16. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Grape Creek Segments

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	Scenic

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

The previous study stated that the stream flow is completely manipulated by the irrigation company and cannot be considered to be naturally flowing. Since the time of the previous study, the BLM wild and scenic rivers manual has been updated to state that natural hydrology is not a prerequisite for determining that a stream is in free-flowing condition (BLM 2012). The only prerequisites are that a stream has a predictable pattern of flow and that no impoundments exist on the portions of the stream being studied. As these segments are located downstream from the DeWeese Reservoir, they meet those criteria.

E.9. East Gulch

Location of River Segment

Headwaters to private land boundary near confluence with Bull Gulch (Map 9).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.17 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the East Gulch segment.

Table E.17. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the East Gulch Segment

Tentative Classification	Reasons for Tentative Classification
Scenic	Some road and trail crossings exist.

Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable seasonal flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
4.4	4.8	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site encompasses an excellent to good (AB-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S2) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood–river birch (*Populus angustifolia*–*Betula occidentalis*) woodland and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2) narrowleaf cottonwood –Douglas-fir (*Populus angustifolia* –*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodland.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.18 summarizes the previous study’s findings for the East Gulch segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.18. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the East Gulch Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

East Gulch was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.10. Cottonwood Creek

Location of River Segment

From BLM land boundary near Soapy Hill to BLM land boundary near Little Crampton Mountain (Map 10).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.19 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the Cottonwood Creek segment.

Table E.19. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Cottonwood Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild		No known road crossings or developed trails intersect the creek on BLM lands.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable seasonal flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
6	7.6	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site encompasses a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood–Rocky Mountain juniper (*Populus angustifolia*–*Juniperus scopulorum*) woodland.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.20 summarizes the previous study’s findings for the Cottonwood Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.20. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Cottonwood Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Cottonwood Creek was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.11. East Fork Arkansas River

Location of River Segment

From BLM land boundary near Chalk Creek to BLM land boundary near Birdseye Gulch (Map 11).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.21 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the East Fork Arkansas River segment.

Table E.21. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the East Fork Arkansas River Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational		State Highway 91 runs adjacent to the river. ROWs for pipelines and power transmission lines run adjacent to the river.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable perennial flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
3.5	3.6	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site contains a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) montane willow carr plant community (*Salix ligulifolia*).

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.22 summarizes the previous study's findings for the East Fork Arkansas River segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.22. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the East Fork Arkansas River Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

East Fork Arkansas River was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.12. Falls Gulch

Location of River Segment

Headwaters to private property boundary near Bernard Creek (Map 12).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.23 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the Falls Gulch segment.

Table E.23. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Falls Gulch Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Scenic		Two-track road parallels a portion of the creek.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable perennial flow regime created by spring discharge and is not impounded by dams.
0.14	0.14	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Hydrology/Botany

This site encompasses a spring-fed wetland occurring in a narrow hanging valley above a travertine cliff. The cliff is formed by a travertine plug within one of several drainages that dissect a local sandstone hogback surrounded by granitic bedrock in the western portion of the county. This plug has backed-up drainage forming a wetland. A perennial stream is formed from several seepage areas that feed a network of rivulets that course through the fen-like sedge wetland perched behind the cliff. The stream plummets over the cliff as a 100-foot waterfall before joining Bernard Creek below. A small grove of balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) occupies the mouth of the stream as it falls over the cliff face. Water birch (*Betula occidentalis*) clings to the cliff face and occupies stream sides below until the tributary meets Bernard Creek. This site has a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S2) riparian shrubland, water birch–mesic graminoids (*Betula occidentalis*–mesic graminoids) natural community.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.24 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Falls Gulch segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.24. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Falls Gulch Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Falls Gulch was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.13. Little High Creek

Location of River Segment

From BLM land boundary west of Booger Red Hill to confluence with Fourmile Creek (Map 13).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.25 shows the BLM's tentative classification and determination for the Little High Creek segment.

Table E.25. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Little High Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild		No known roads, trails, or development within the creek corridor.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable seasonal flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
1.8	1.8	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site encompasses a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood–bluestem willow (*Populus angustifolia*–*Salix irrorata*) woodland. This plant association has been documented only in the Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico and along the Colorado Front Range.

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.26 summarizes the previous study's findings for the Little High Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.26. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Little High Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Little High Creek was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.14. Pass Creek

Location of River Segment

From BLM–private land boundary downstream to BLM–private land boundary (Map 14).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.27 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the Pass Creek segment.

Table E.27. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Pass Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Recreational		County road runs adjacent to creek.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable perennial flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
1.5	1.5	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site contains a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) montane riparian forest (*Populus angustifolia–Juniperus scopulorum*).

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.28 summarizes the previous study’s findings for the Pass Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.28. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Pass Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Pass Creek was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

E.15. Red Creek

Location of River Segment

From BLM boundary at southern end of Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area to BLM–Colorado State Land Board boundary (Map 15).

Classification and Free-flowing Determination

Table E.29 shows the BLM’s tentative classification and determination for the Red Creek segment.

Table E.29. Tentative WSR Classification and Determination for the Red Creek Segment

Tentative Classification		Reasons for Tentative Classification
Wild		No known roads, trails, or development within stream corridor.
Free-flowing River Length (Miles)		Reasons for Free-flowing Determination
BLM	Total	The segment under study has a predictable perennial flow regime and is not impounded by dams.
1.6	1.6	

Description of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

Botany

This site encompasses an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable riparian natural community, Douglas-fir–river birch (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*–*Betula occidentalis*) woodland (G3?/S3).

1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

Table E.30 summarizes the previous study’s findings for the Red Creek segment (BLM 1996).

Table E.30. 1992 Wild and Scenic River Study Determinations for the Red Creek Segment

Eligible?	Suitable?	Classification
No	No	N/A

Differences Between the 1992 Study and the Present Study

Red Creek was not found to have ORVs in 1992 and was not analyzed in detail.

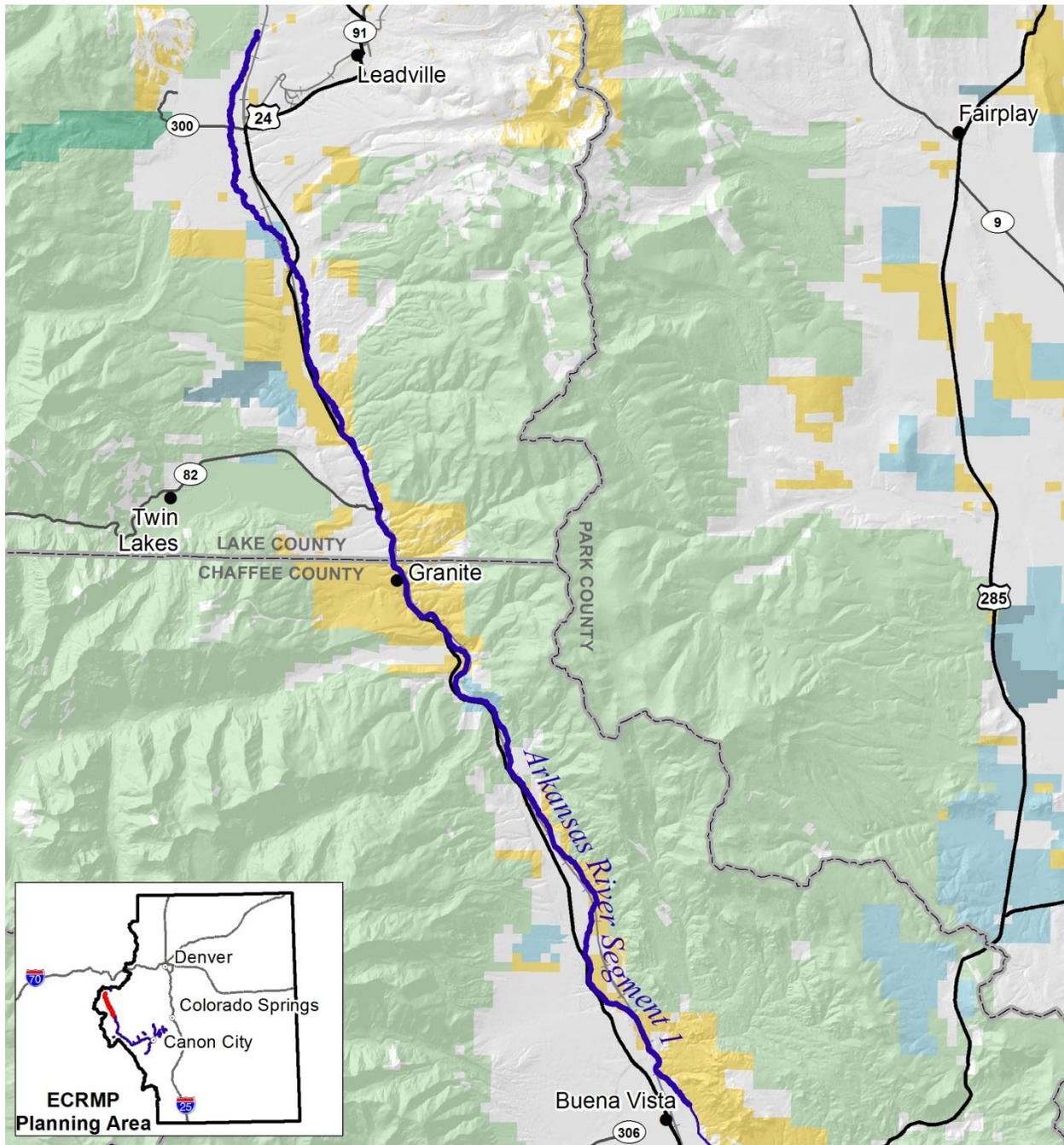
Appendix F. Maps

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Map 1. Arkansas River Segment 1



Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Arkansas River Segment 1	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic, Cultural, Wildlife, Fish	Recreational	BLM	8.02	36.27
			Private	25.59	
			State	1.69	
			USFS	0.98	

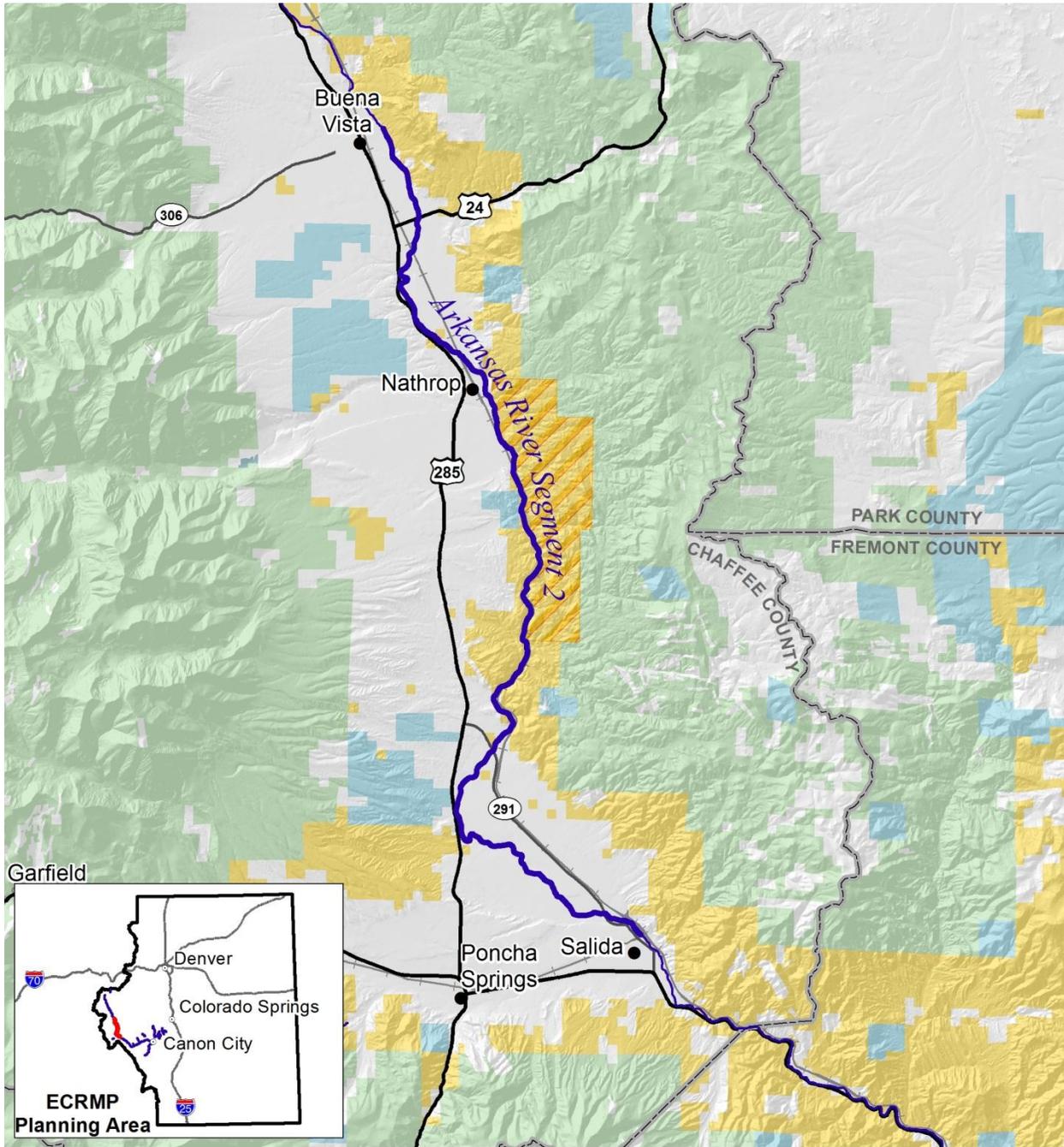
— River Segment
 Bureau of Land Management
 Municipal
 Railroad
 Bureau of Reclamation
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 State
 US Forest Service
 Private

1:275,000

0 2.5 5
Miles

No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 2. Arkansas River Segment 2

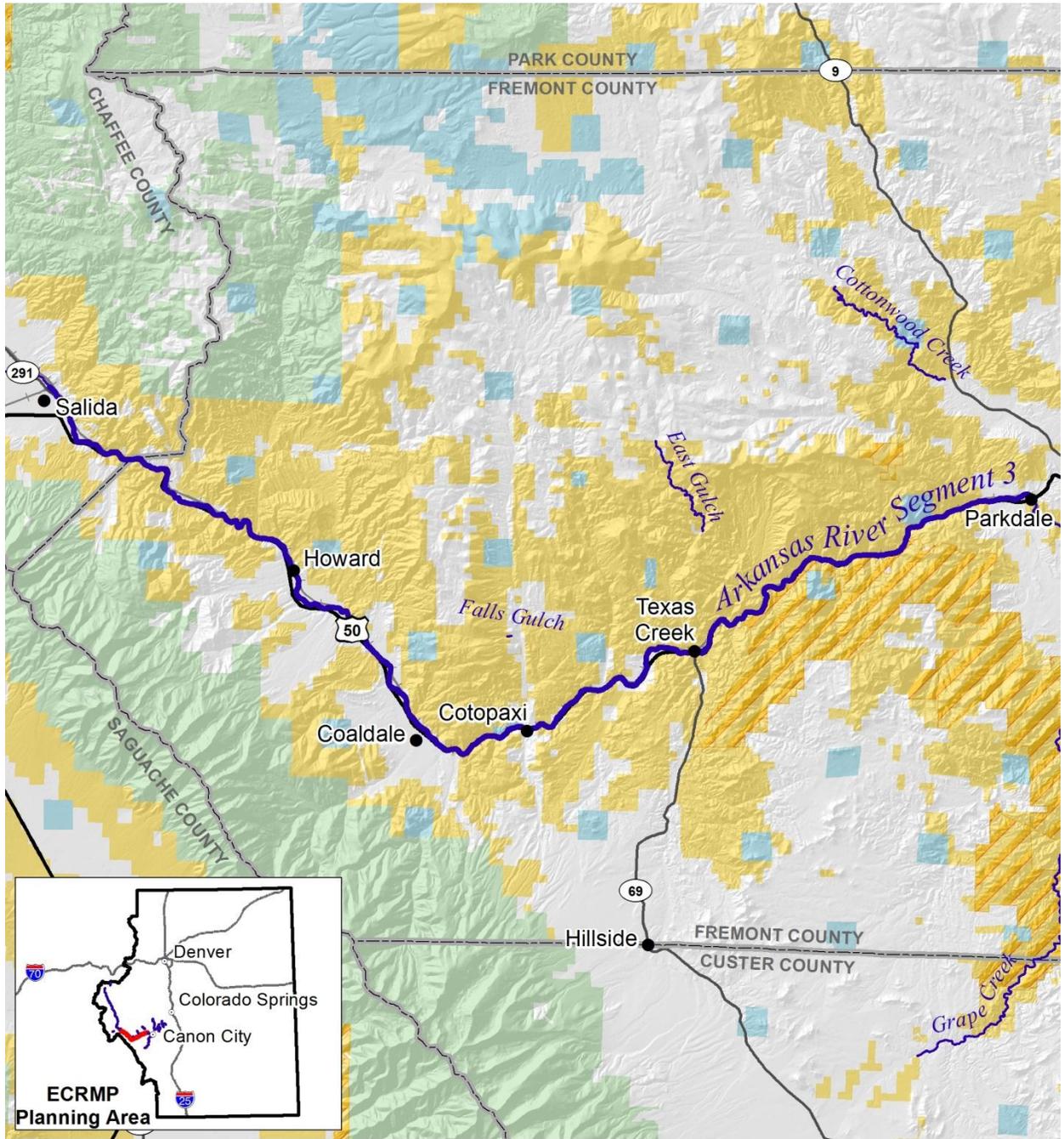


Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Arkansas River Segment 2	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic, Cultural, Wildlife, Fish	Recreational	BLM	9.20	29.08
			Private	19.88	

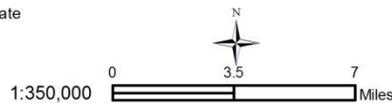


No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 3. Arkansas River Segment 3

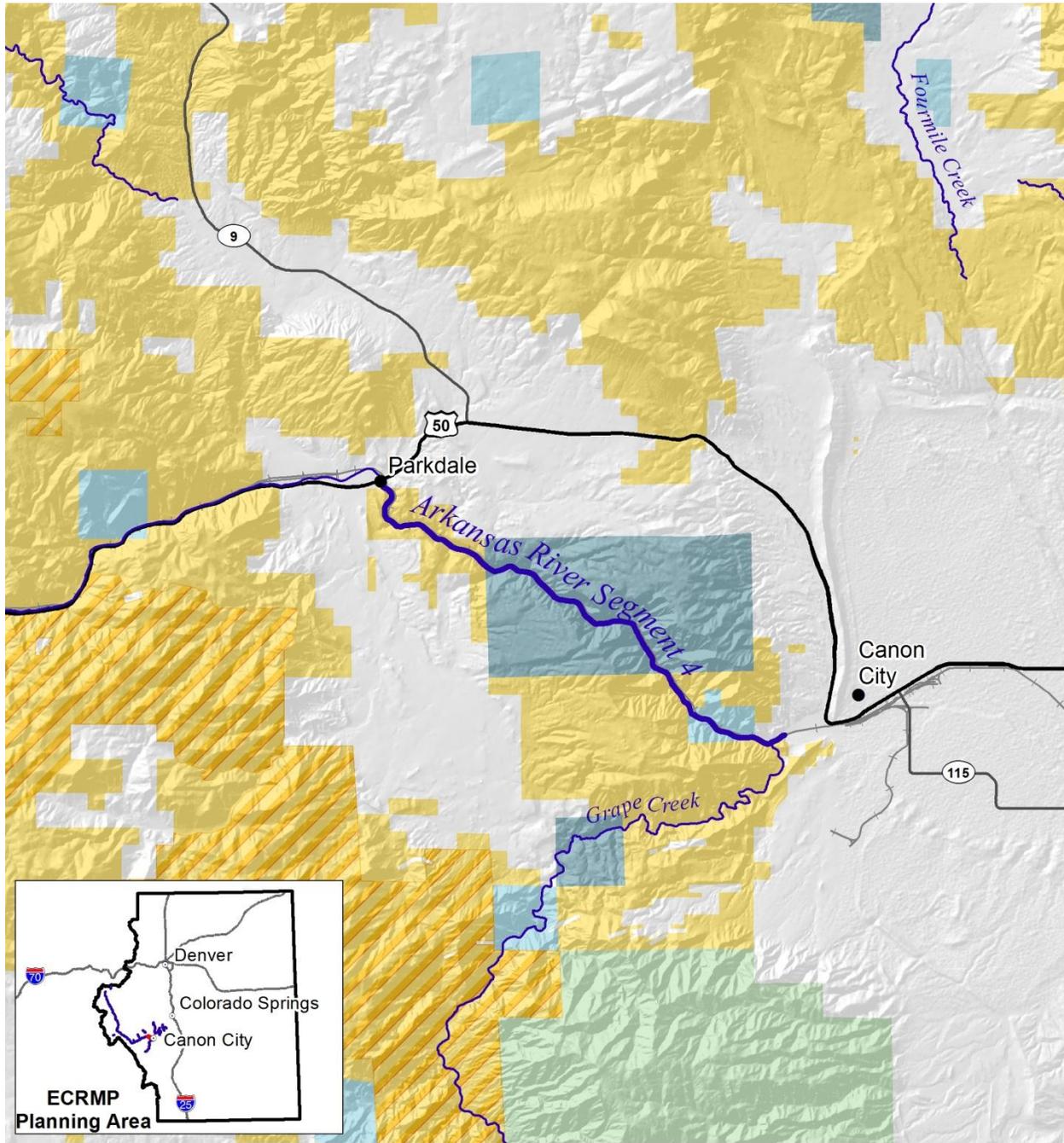


Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Arkansas River Segment 3	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic, Cultural, Wildlife, Fish	Recreational	BLM	25.30	47.93
			Private	21.55	
			State	1.08	



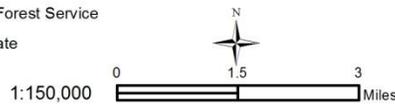
No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 4. Arkansas River Segment 4



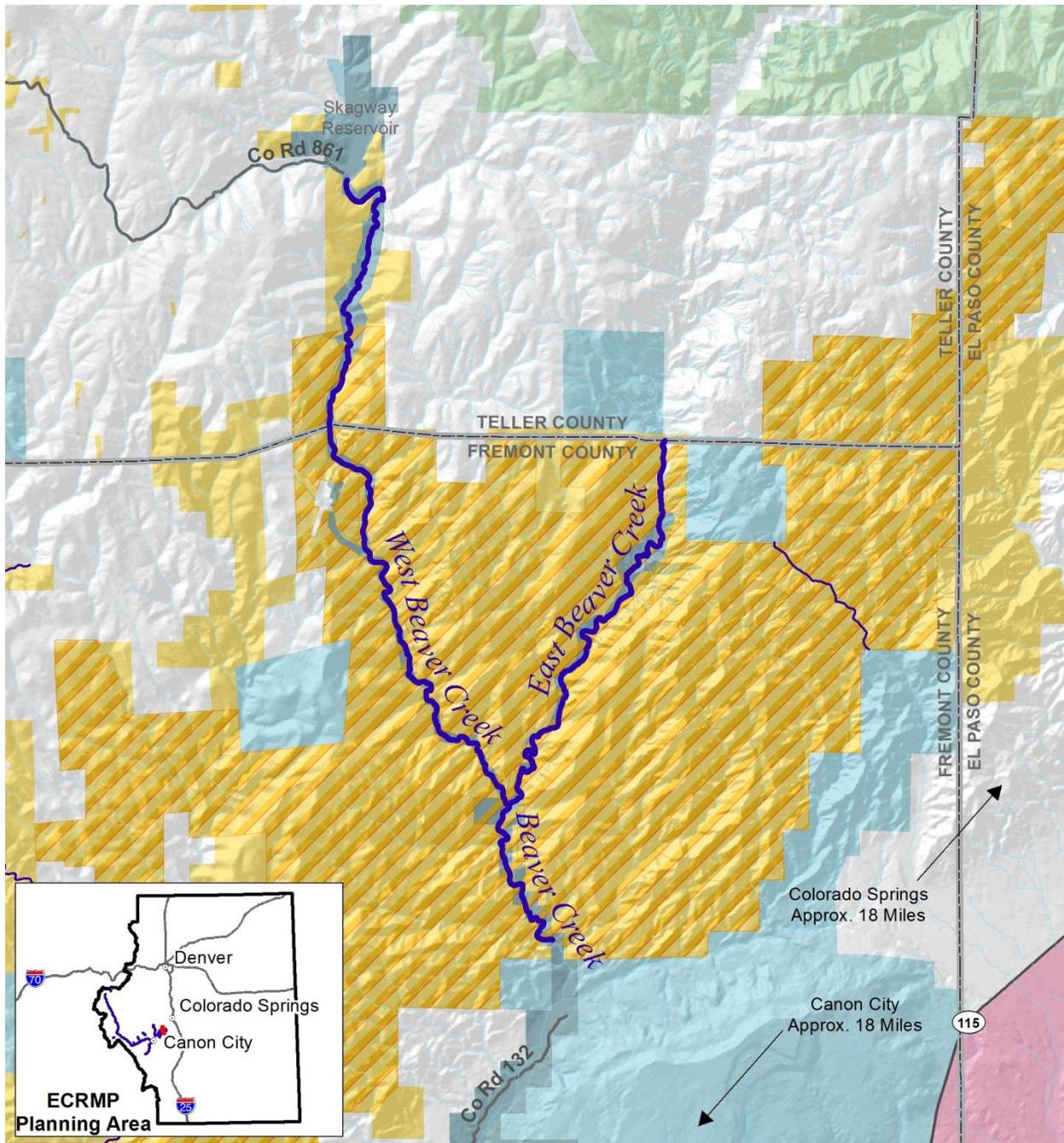
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Arkansas River Segment 4	Recreation, Scenery, Wildlife	Recreational	BLM	2.80	8.03
			Municipal	3.45	
			Private	0.66	
			State	1.12	

- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- City of Canon City
- Railroad
- State
- US Forest Service
- WSA
- Private



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 5. Beaver Creek



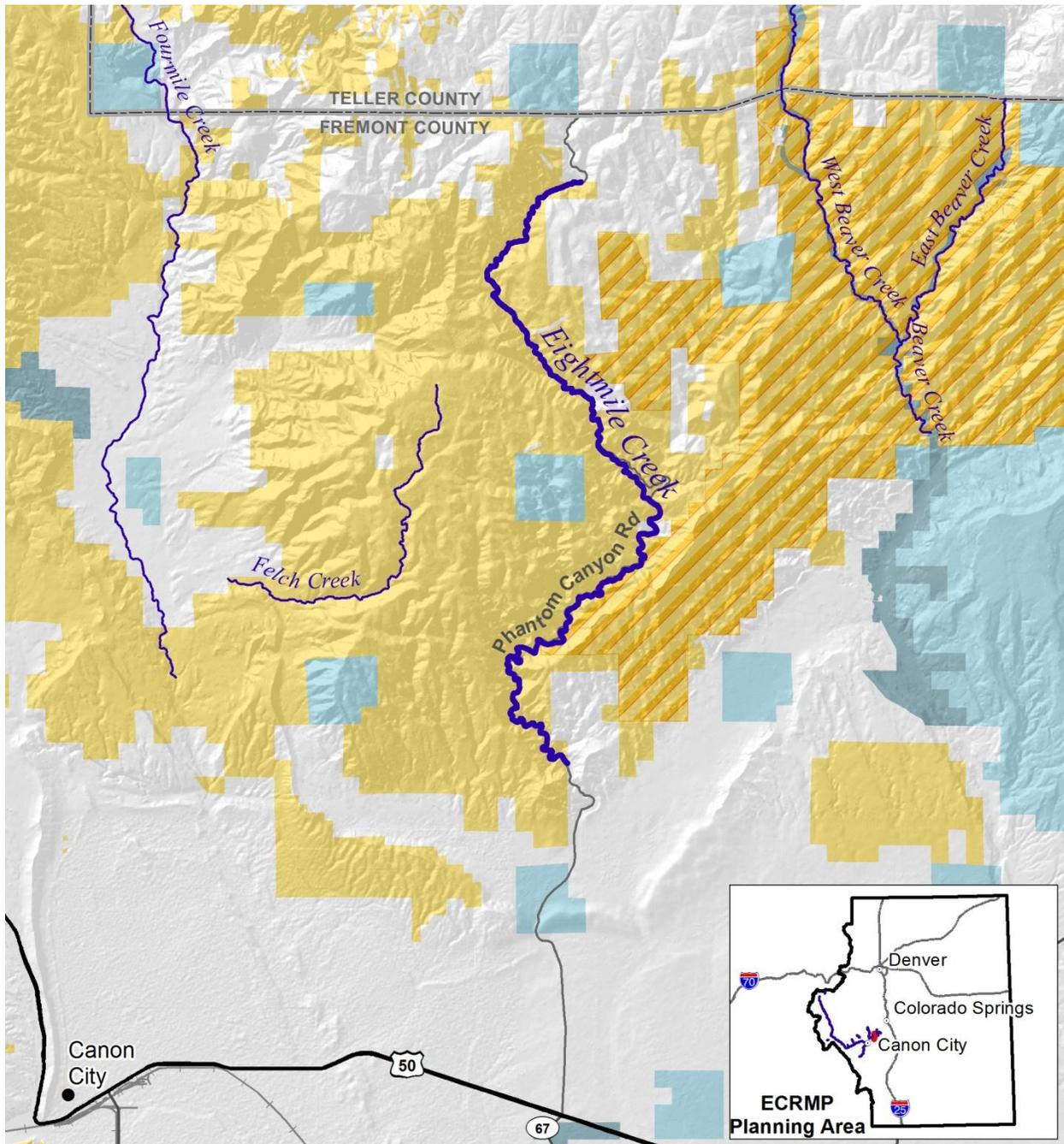
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Beaver Creek	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic	Wild	BLM	0.31	1.90
			State - CPW	1.59	
East Beaver Creek	Recreation, Scenery	Wild	BLM	1.88	5.10
			State - CPW	3.22	
West Beaver Creek	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic	Wild	BLM	0.29	8.20
			State - CPW	7.91	

— River Segment
 Bureau of Land Management
 State - Beaver Creek SWA
 Beaver Creek WSA
 Military Reservation
 US Forest Service
 State
 Private

1:100,000
 0 1 2 Miles

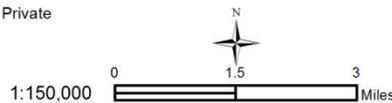
No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 6. Eightmile Creek



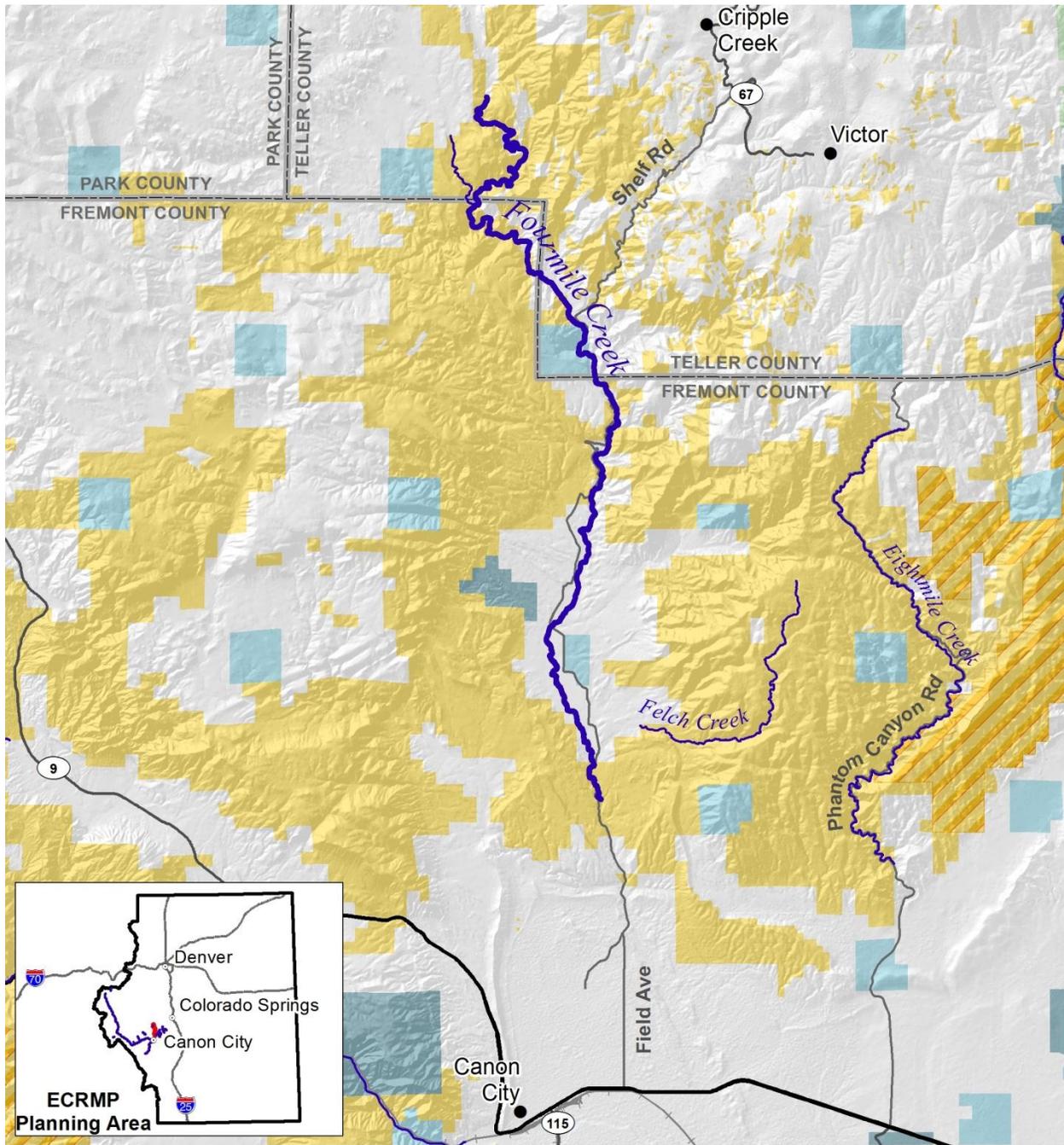
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Eightmile Creek	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic, Cultural	Recreational	BLM	14.44	15.12
			Private	0.68	

- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- Municipal
- Railroad
- State
- Private
- Beaver Creek WSA



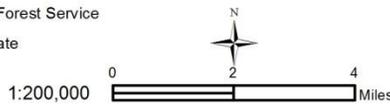
No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 7. Fourmile Creek



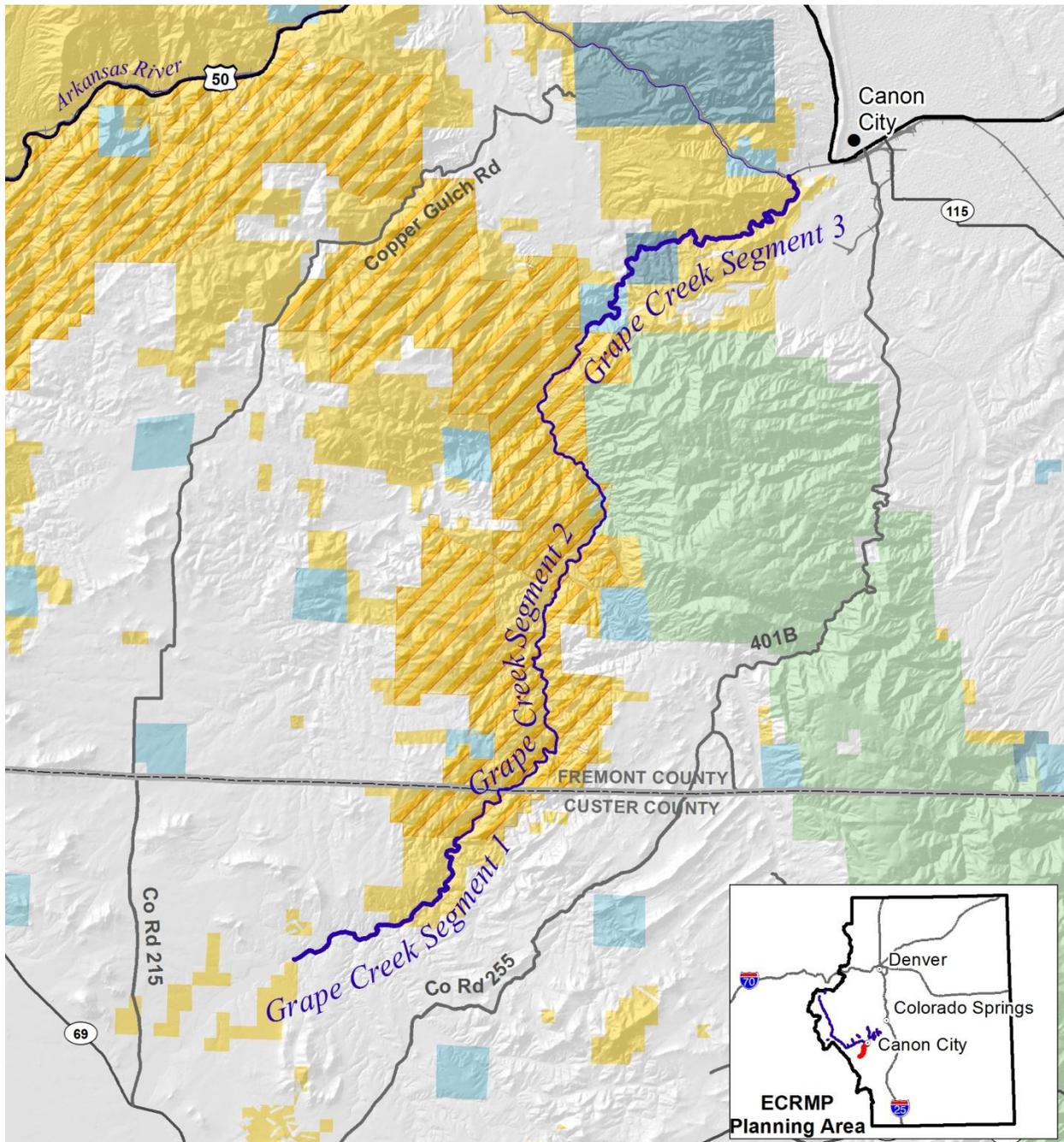
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Fourmile Creek	Recreation, Scenery, Botanic, Paleontology	Recreational	BLM	10.43	23.16
			Private	11.86	
			State	0.88	

- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- Municipal
- Railroad
- State
- US Forest Service
- WSA
- Private



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 8. Grape Creek



Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Grape Cr Seg 1	Recreation, Scenery	Scenic	BLM	3.04	5.41
			Private	2.37	
Grape Cr Seg 2	Recreation, Scenery, Wildlife	Wild	BLM	12.68	14.11
			USFS	1.43	
			BLM	4.14	
Grape Cr Seg 3	Recreation, Scenery	Recreational	Municipal	1.61	7.94
			Private	0.44	
			State	1.75	

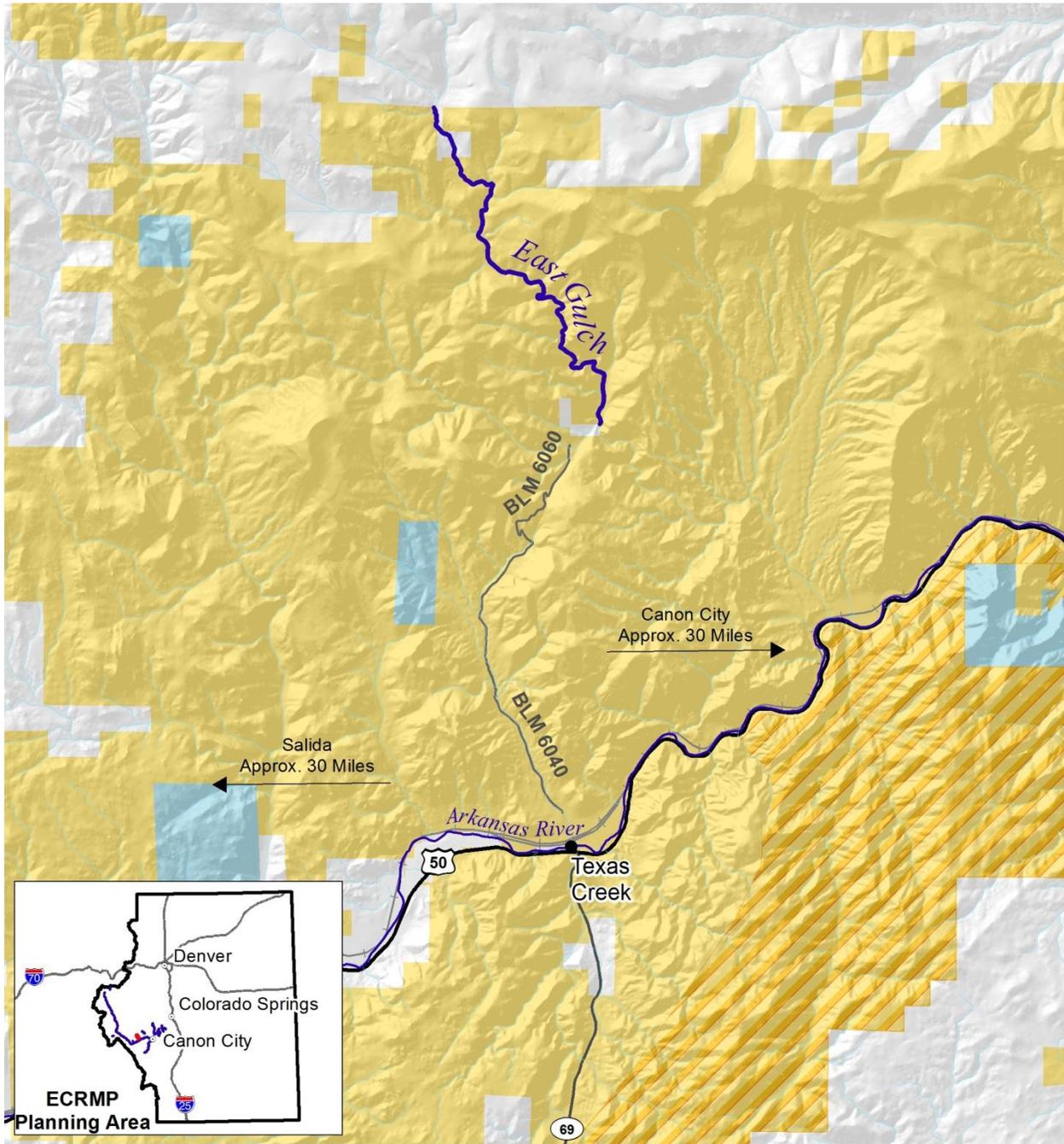
Bureau of Land Management
 State
 US Forest Service
 Private

River Segment
 Railroad
 WSA

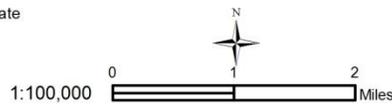
1:200,000 0 2 4 Miles

No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 9. East Gulch

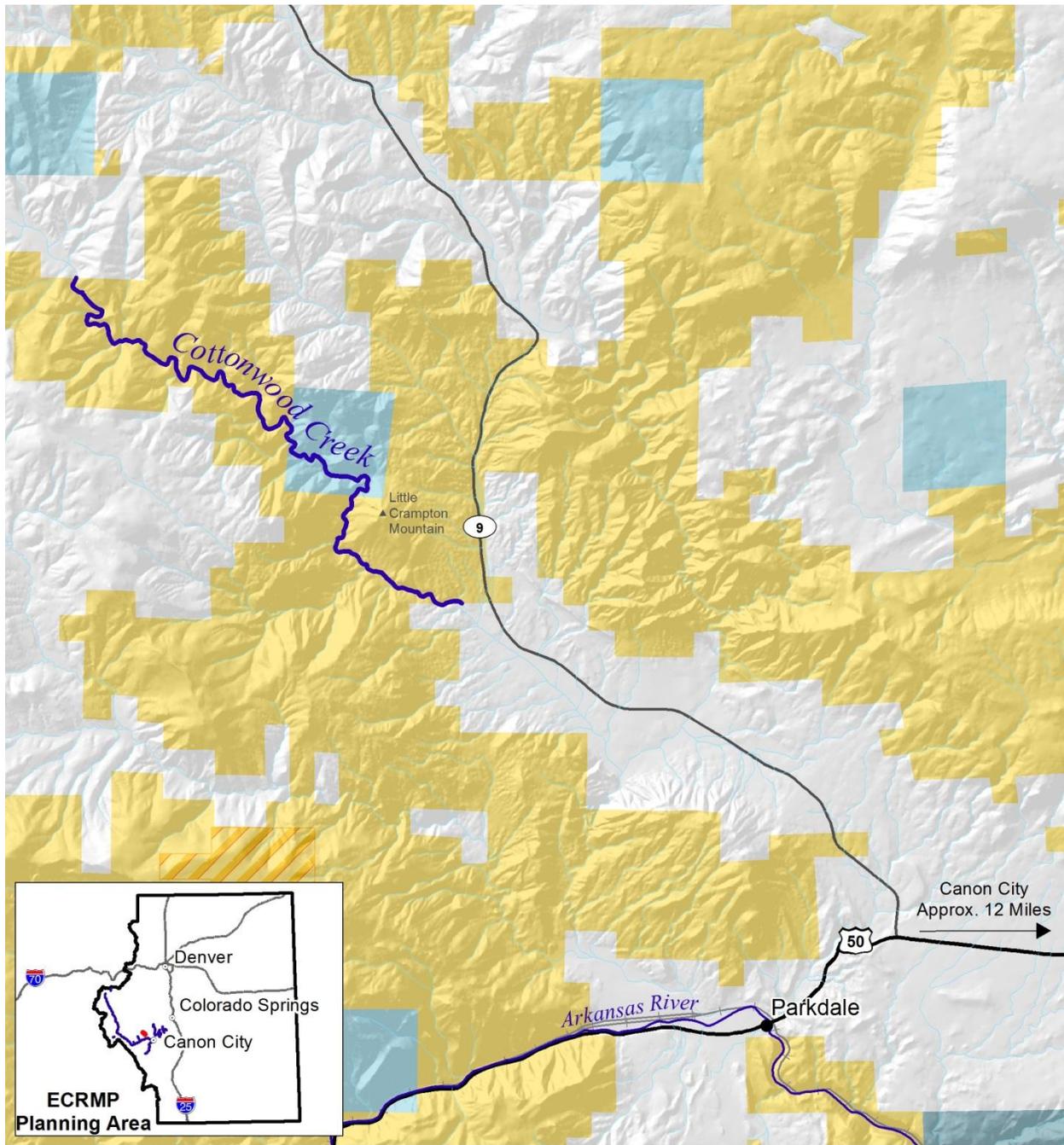


Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
East Gulch	Botanic	Scenic	BLM	4.39	4.76
			Private	0.37	



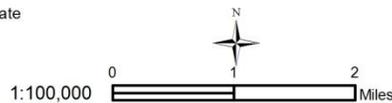
No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 10. Cottonwood Creek



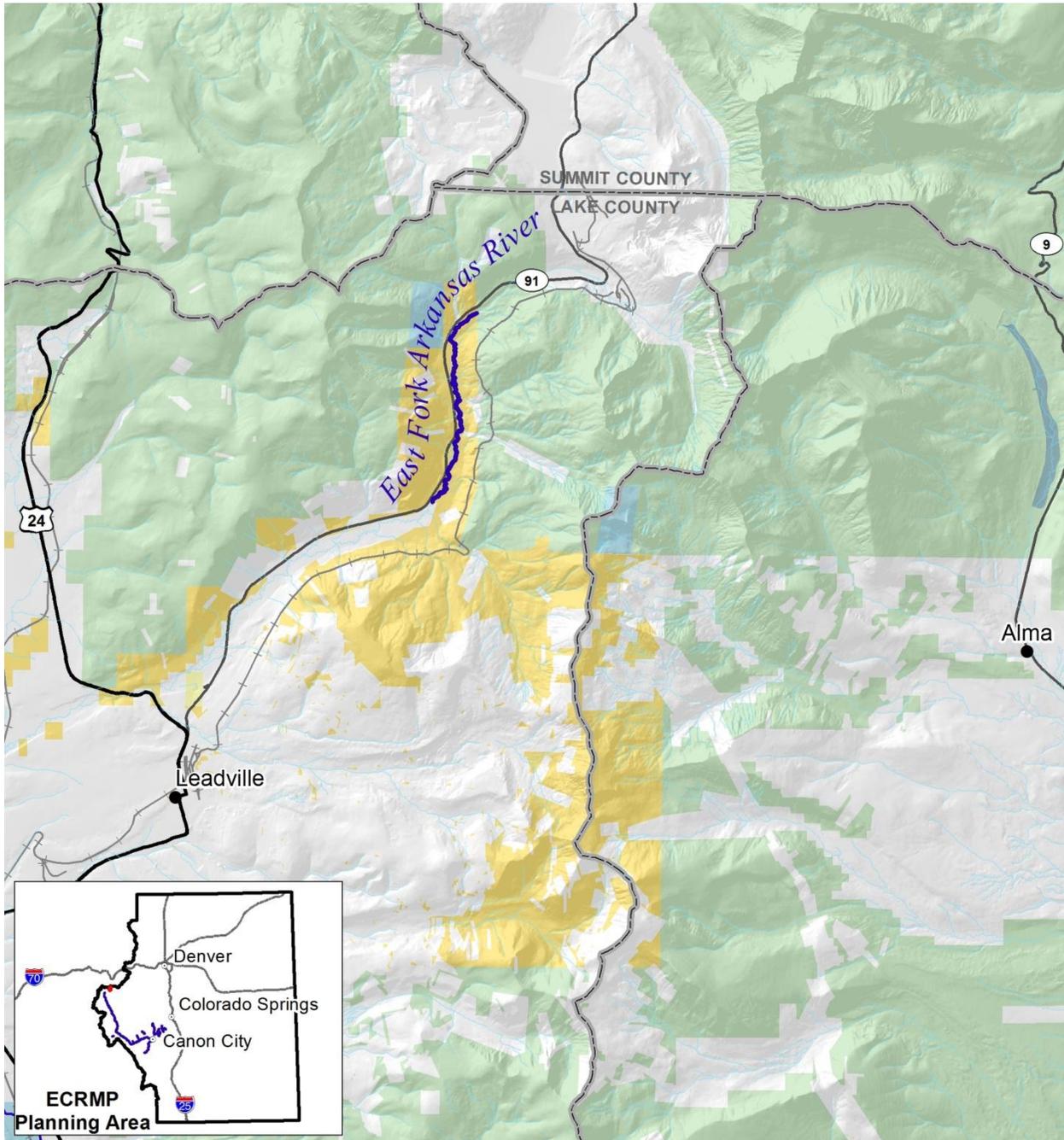
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Cottonwood Creek	Botanic	Wild	BLM	6.04	7.62
			Private	0.08	
			State	1.50	

- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- Municipal
- Railroad
- State
- Private
- WSA



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 11. East Fork Arkansas River

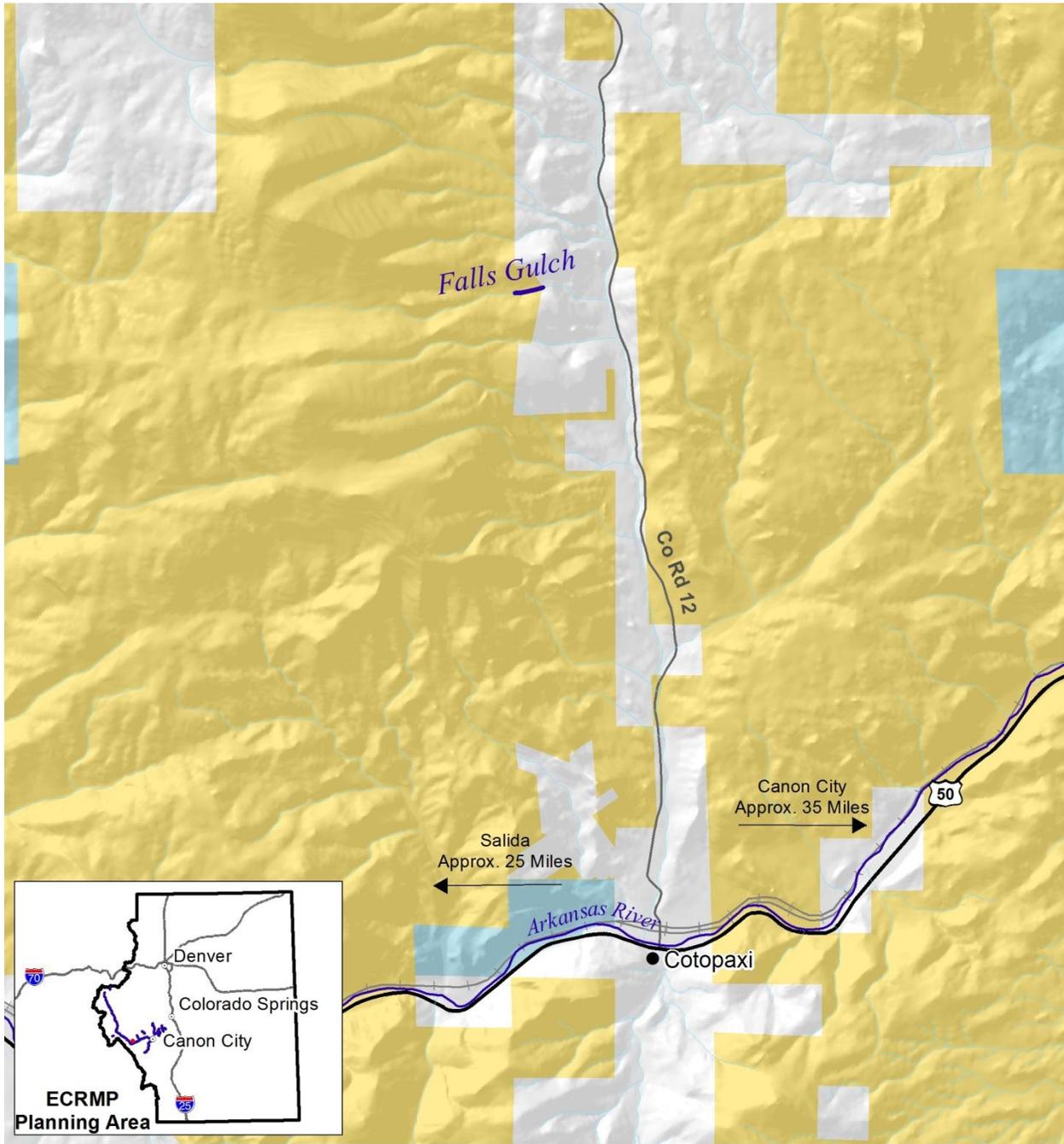


Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
East Fork Arkansas River	Botanic	Recreational	BLM	3.47	3.63
			Private	0.15	



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 12. Falls Gulch



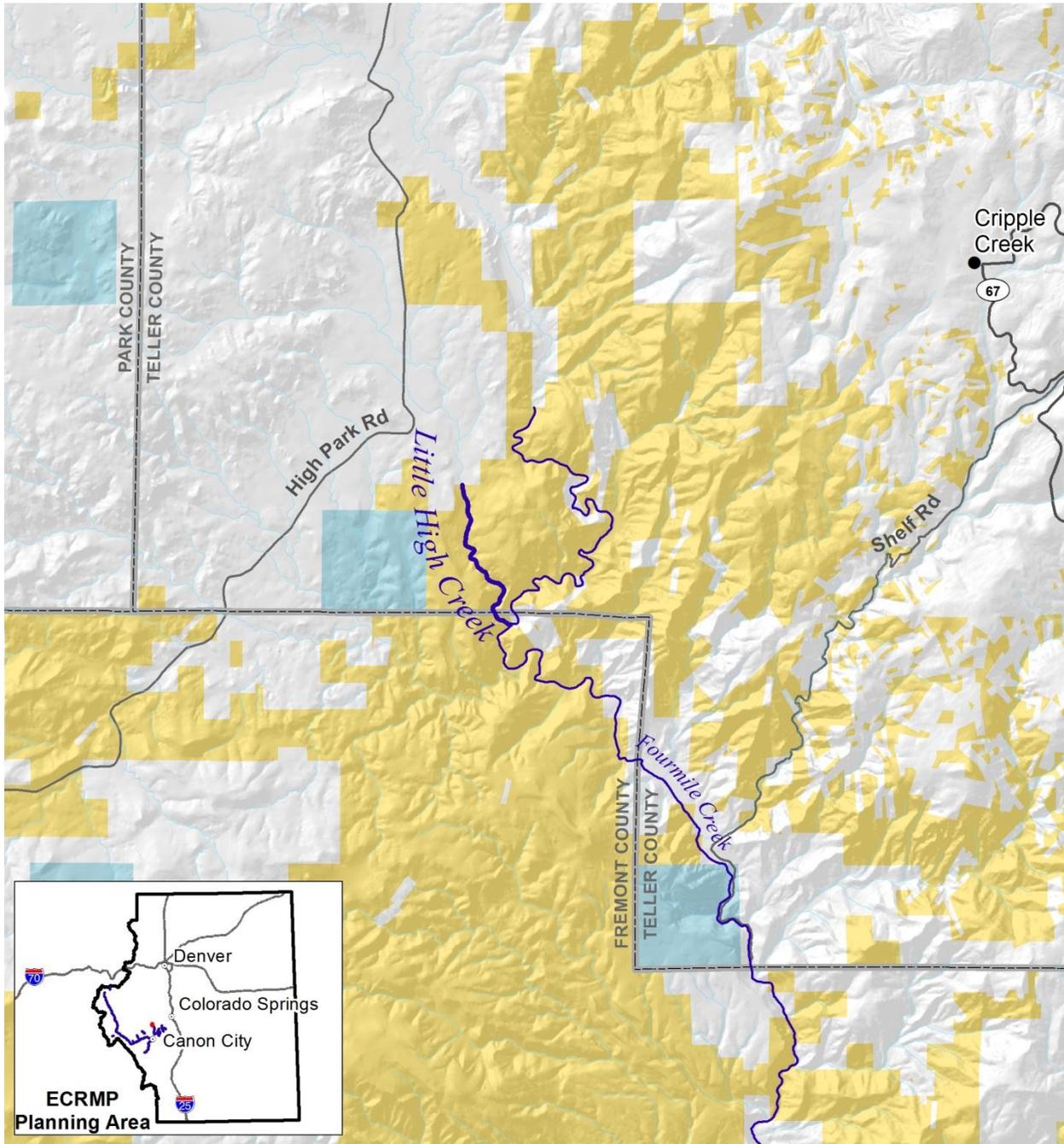
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Falls Gulch	Hydrologic, Botanic	Scenic	BLM	0.14	0.14

— River Segment
 Bureau of Land Management
 State
 Railroad
 Private

1:50,000
 0 0.5 1 Miles

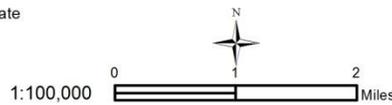
No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 13. Little High Creek



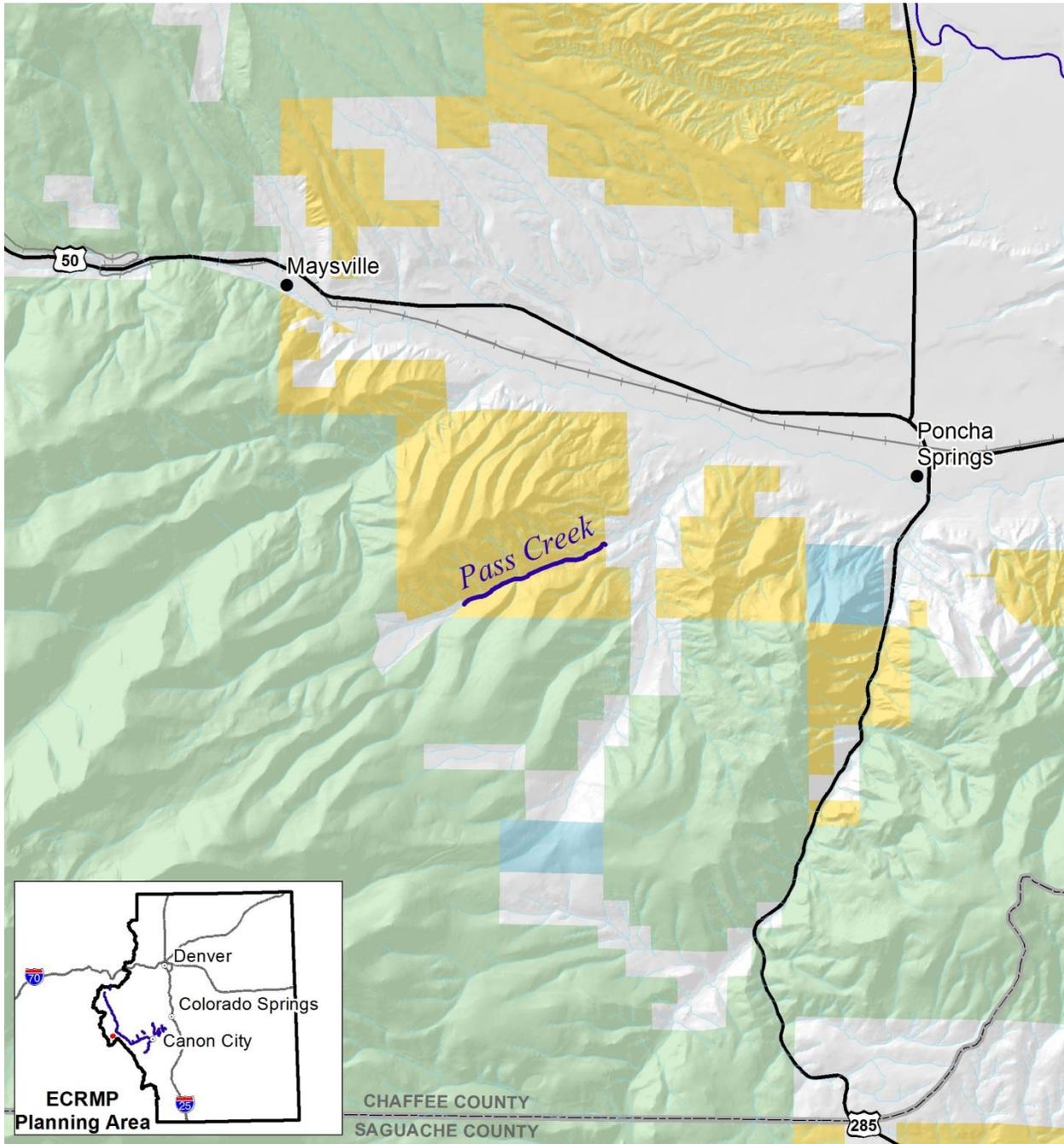
Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Little High Creek	Botanic	Wild	BLM	1.77	1.77

- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Private
- Railroad
- WSA



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

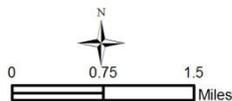
Map 14. Pass Creek



Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Pass Creek	Botanic	Recreational	BLM	1.53	1.53

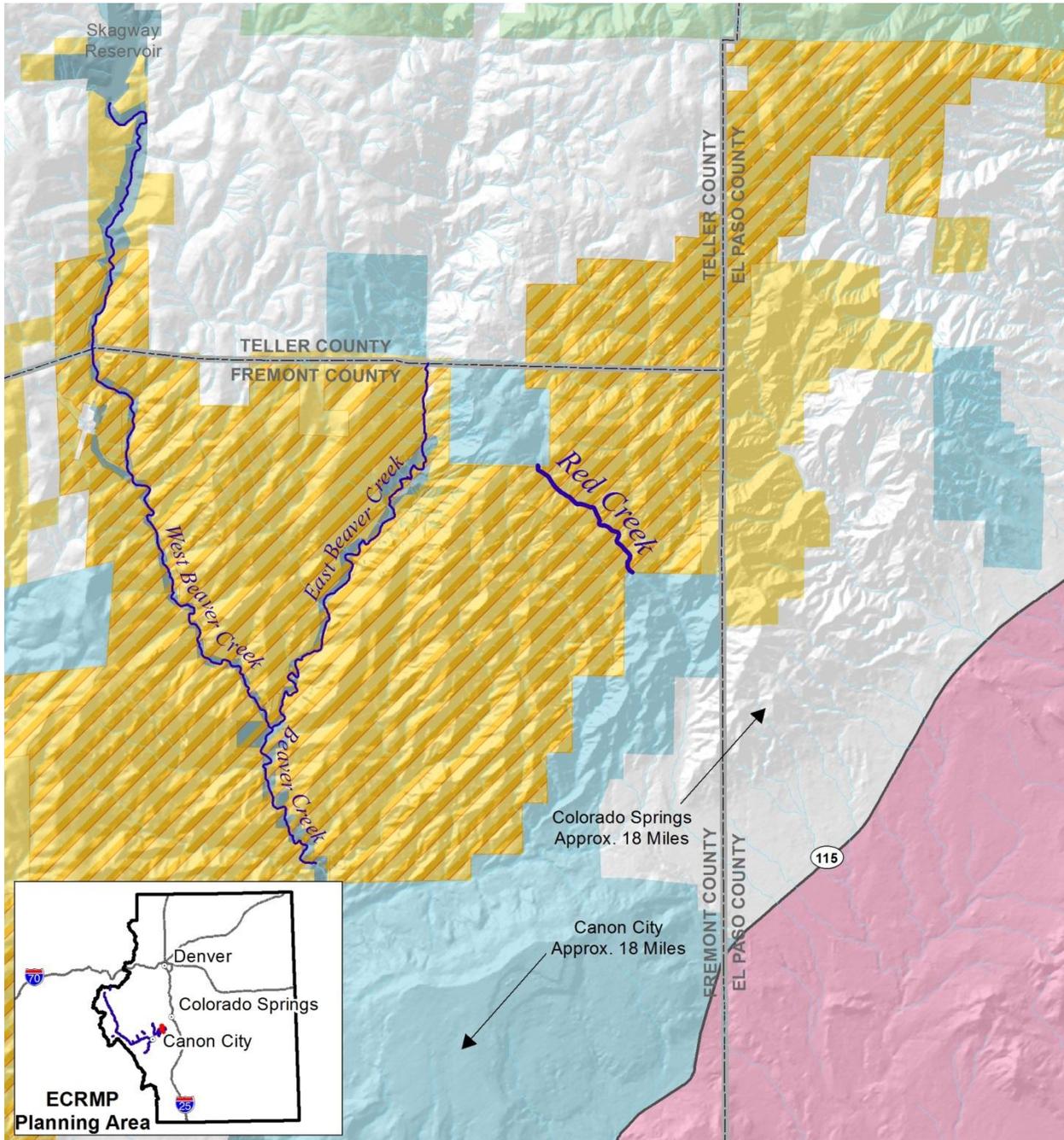
- River Segment
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- Railroad
- State
- Private

1:100,000



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Map 15. Red Creek



Segment Name	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Tentative Classification	Land Ownership	Segment Miles by Ownership	Total Segment Miles
Red Creek	Botanic	Wild	BLM	1.56	1.56

Bureau of Land Management
 State - Beaver Creek SWA
 US Forest Service

Beaver Creek WSA
 Military Reservation
 State
 Private

1:100,000
0
1
2
 Miles

No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

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Appendix G. Responses to Public Comments on the Draft WSR Eligibility Report

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G.1. Comments from Pike and San Isabel National Forests

	United States Department of Agriculture	Forest Service	Pike/San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron/Comanche National Grasslands	2840 Kachina Drive Pueblo, CO 81008 719-553-1400 FAX: 719-553-1440	
---	---	-------------------	--	---	---

File Code: 1900

Date: **SEP - 9 2015**

RECEIVED

SEP 14 2015

Keith Berger
Field Manager
3028 Main St
Canon City, CO 81212

Dear Keith,

John Dow, the Pike/San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron/Comanche National Grasslands (PSICC) Land Management Planner, reviewed your Draft Wild and Scenic River Eligibility (WSR) Report for the Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan. John compared the river segments you identified for WSR in-depth analysis with the PSICC draft potential WSR.

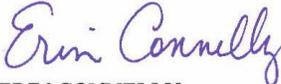
The Forests and Grasslands completed a Draft Wild and Scenic River Suitability Analysis in 2013 in support of Forest and Grassland Plan revision. The PSICC Draft Wild and Scenic River Suitability Analysis determined 4 streams eligible for WSR inclusion; Bear Creek on the Pikes Peak Ranger District, Lost Creek on the South Park and South Platte Ranger Districts, and Chalk Creek and South Cottonwood Creek on the Salida Ranger District. It appears the river segments the PSICC considered for WSR eligibility do not cross BLM lands. However, as you know activities on upper or lower river segments can affect WSR eligibility and suitability for an entire river. Please review the PSICC comments below concerning the river segments the BLM draft report identified for in-depth analysis.

The BLM draft WSR analysis includes several Cottonwood Creeks. None of them are identified as South Cottonwood Creek and none are considered WSR eligible. Please review your Cottonwood Creek eligibility analysis to ensure your ineligible designation does not adversely affect the WSR potential of South Cottonwood Creek.

Chalk Creek is not mentioned in your suitability analysis. I believe Chalk Creek exits the PSICC and enters the Arkansas River without crossing BLM lands. Please check your analysis to make sure my assumption is correct.

Aside from the comments regarding South Cottonwood and Chalk Creeks, the PSICC agrees with the other river segments selected for in-depth WSR analysis in the Draft Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report for the Royal Gorge Field Office.

Sincerely,


 ERIN CONNELLY
 Forest and Grassland Supervisor
 cc: John Smeins



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Existing Conditions and Trends:

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Mike Smith	Forest Planning Staff	Canon City, CO
Lisa Leeman	Geographic Information Systems Analyst	Pueblo, CO
Carl Bauer	Recreation and Lands Staff	Canon City, CO
Steve Priest	Recreation and Lands Staff	Morrison, CO
Steve Culver	Fisheries Biologist	Morrison, CO
Jeff Hyatt	Recreation and Lands Staff	Fairplay, CO
Bill Mulholland	Recreation and Lands Staff	Leadville, CO
Jimmy Gaudry	Recreation Planner	Leadville, CO
Ann Ewing	Visitor Information Specialist	Salida, CO
Dana Butler	Hydrologist	Colorado Springs, CO
Loretta Crystal	Natural Resource Specialist	Pueblo, CO

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1. Introduction

This report describes the current status of rivers and streams, within the Pike and San Isabel National Forests that are eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Also summarized are the procedures for determining eligibility and suitability of additional rivers and streams that may be recommended for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River (WSR) system. A separate report will be prepared documenting the WSR eligibility and suitability evaluations to be conducted as part of the revision process for the 1984 Land and Resource Management Plan for the Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands (1984 Forest Plan) (USDA FS 1984a).

This report contributes to the revision of the 1984 Forest Plan for the Pike and San Isabel National Forests (Forests). For the plan revision process, the Forests are divided into three geographic areas: the Front Range Geographic Area, the Upper Arkansas Geographic Area, and the South Arkansas Geographic Area. In this report, existing conditions and trends for wild and scenic rivers are described, where possible, according to the geographic area(s) in which they occur.

Front-Range Geographic Area

The Front Range Geographic Area includes all of the South Platte and Pikes Peak Ranger Districts, and the Eleven Mile canyon and Tarryall areas of the South Park Ranger Districts, covering a total of about 1,070,000 acres. It also includes portions of Clear Creek, Douglas, El Paso, Jefferson, Park, and Teller counties.

Upper Arkansas Geographic Area

The Upper Arkansas Geographical Area includes the Leadville and Salida Ranger Districts and the western portion of the South Park Ranger District. It also includes portions of Chaffee, Lake, Park and Saguache counties. This geographical area encompasses approximately 960,000 acres.

South Arkansas Geographic Area

The South Arkansas Geographic Area includes the San Carlos Ranger District and the southern part of the Salida Ranger District; it is approximately 475,000 acres in the Wet Mountains, Spanish Peaks, and along the east flank of the Sangre de Cristo Range. This geographic area reaches across parts of six counties: Costilla, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Las Animas, and Pueblo.

Each of these three geographical areas features a different mix of wild and scenic river opportunities and clientele, with differing management challenges. Identifying these geographical areas allows the Forest Service to adapt forest-wide management practices to local conditions and situations and make it easier for readers to find information about specific areas of interest.

2. Wild and Scenic River Evaluation

2.1. What is a Wild and Scenic River?

In the 1960s, it became apparent that our rivers were being dammed, dredged, diked, diverted, and degraded at an alarming rate. To help prevent further degradation Congress enacted the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) in 1968 (Public Law 90-542), which created the National WSR System. This legislation established a system for protecting unique or outstandingly free-flowing rivers nationwide. For a river to be eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System it must be “free-flowing¹” and possess one or more “outstandingly remarkable values.” Once a river is designated, the Act provides protective measures for management activities and development on public lands in the river corridor. The Act is notable for safeguarding the special character of these rivers, while also recognizing the potential for their appropriate use and development. It also encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection.

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271-1287) states,

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dams and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes. (Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, October 2, 1968)

Agencies are required in Section 5(d)(1) of the Act to consider and evaluate rivers on lands they manage for potential designation while preparing their broader land and resource management plans. It further requires that “the Secretary of the Interior shall make specific studies and investigations to determine which additional wild, scenic and recreational river areas...shall be evaluated in planning reports by all Federal agencies as potential alternative uses of water and related land resources involved.”

2.2. Eligibility and Suitability for Designation

The primary process in which to establish a National WSR is conducted through studies by federal land management agencies², which then present their recommendations to Congress. This study process requires two steps before a river can be included in the

¹ The term *free-flowing* is defined in the Act at Section 16(b) as “existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway.”

² Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS), and U. S. Forest Service (USFS).

National WSR system. The first step is an evaluation of a river's eligibility and potential classification. The second step involves conducting a suitability analysis to determine which eligible streams should be recommended to Congress for inclusion in the National WSR system (FSH 1909.12, sec.82.1-84.1).

The eligibility analysis consists of an examination of the river's hydrology, including any man-made alterations and an inventory of its natural, cultural and recreational resources. There are a variety of methods to determine whether certain resources are unique, rare or exemplary to make them outstandingly remarkable. The determination that an area contains ORVs is a professional judgment on the part of the inter-disciplinary team (IDT), based on objective, scientific analysis with input from organizations and individuals familiar with specific river resources as part of the process.

In order to be assessed as outstandingly remarkable, a river-related value must be a unique, rare or exemplary feature that is significant at a comparative regional or national scale. The area, region or scale of comparison is not fixed and may vary depending on the value being considered. Typically, a "region" is defined on the scale of an administrative unit, a portion of a state, or an appropriately scaled physiographic or hydrologic unit.

While the spectrum of resources that may be considered is broad, all values should be directly river-related. That is, they should:

1. Be located in the river or on its immediate shore lands (generally within ¼ mile on either side of the river);
2. Contribute substantially to the functioning of the river ecosystem; and/or
3. Owe their location or existence to the presence of the river.

Eligibility criteria include:

- **Scenery** - The landscape element of landform, vegetation, water, color and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features and/or attractions.
- **Recreation** - Recreational opportunities are, or have the potential to be, popular enough to attract visitors from throughout or beyond the region of comparison or are unique or rare within the region.
- **Geology** - The river or the area within the river corridor contains one or more example of a geologic feature, process or phenomenon that is unique or rare within the region of comparison (e.g., erosional, volcanic, glacial).
- **Fish** - Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of either fish populations, habitat, or a combination of these river-related conditions.
- **Wildlife** - Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either terrestrial or aquatic wildlife populations or habitat or a combination of these conditions.
- **Prehistory** - The river or area within the river corridor contains a site(s) where there is evidence of occupation or use by Native Americans that has unique or rare characteristics or exceptional human interest value(s).

- **History** - The river or area within the river corridor contains a site(s) or feature associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that was rare or one-of-a-kind in the region.
- **Other Values** - Other rare and/or unique, river-related values may include hydrological, paleontological and botanical resources.

The Act and Interagency Guidelines³ provide the following direction for establishing preliminary classifications for eligible rivers:

Wild rivers - Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

Scenic river areas - Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

Recreational river areas - Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shore lines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

Regardless of classification, each river in the National System is administered with the goal of protecting and enhancing the values that caused it to be designated. Designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property. Recreation, agricultural practices, residential development, and other uses may continue. Protection of the river is provided through voluntary stewardship by landowners and river users and through regulation and programs of federal, state, local, or tribal governments. In most cases not all land within boundaries is, or will be, publicly owned, and the Act limits how much land the federal government is allowed to acquire from willing sellers. Visitors to these rivers are cautioned to be aware of and respect private property rights.

The Act purposefully strives to balance dam and other construction at appropriate sections of rivers with permanent protection for some of the country's most outstanding free-flowing rivers. To accomplish this, it prohibits federal support for actions such as the construction of dams or other in-stream activities that would harm the river's free-flowing condition, water quality, or outstanding resource values. However, designation does not affect existing water rights or the existing jurisdiction of states and the federal government over waters as determined by established principles of law.

The final procedural step, suitability, provides the basis for determining whether or not to recommend a river as part of the National System. A suitability analysis is designed to answer the following questions:

³ "Department of the Interior and Agriculture Interagency Guidelines for Eligibility, Classification and Management of River Areas," published in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 47, No. 173; September 7, 1982, pp. 39454-39461), provides direction to agencies in the study and administration of WSRs.

1. Should the river's free-flowing character, water quality, and ORVs be protected, or are one or more other uses important enough to warrant doing otherwise?
2. Will the river's free-flowing character, water quality, and ORVs be protected through designation? Is it the best method for protecting the river corridor?
3. Is there a demonstrated commitment to protect the river by any nonfederal entities that may be partially responsible for implementing protective management?

For detailed information involving the criteria for determining eligibility and suitability of rivers for inclusion in the National WSR System, refer to FSH 1909.12, chapter 80 and the "The Wild and Scenic River Study Process, Technical Report of the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council" (Diedrich and Thomas 1999).

3. Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Forests

As of 2008, the National System protects more than 11,000 miles of 166 rivers in 38 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, which is a little more than one-quarter of one percent of the nation's rivers. Since 1968, Congress has designated only one river within the State of Colorado for inclusion in the WSR system: the Cache la Poudre River. Three rivers or streams within or near the Forests have been determined eligible and suitable for inclusion in the WSR system: South Platte River, Arkansas River, and Beaver Creek. However, Congress has yet to initiate action that would designate them part of the WSR system.

3.1. Previous eligibility and suitability studies

The Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) is a listing, by the National Park Service, of more than 3,400 free-flowing river segments in the United States that are believed to possess one or more ORVs judged to be of more than local or regional interest. In 1982, the NRI listed segments of four rivers within or near the Forests as being potentially eligible for National WSR designation (USDI National Park Service 1982). The river segments listed were:

1. Badger Creek from its headwaters to its confluence with the Arkansas River,
2. South Platte River from Elevenmile Canyon Reservoir to Cheesman Reservoir,
3. Arkansas River from just north of Leadville to Cañon City, and
4. Beaver Creek from Skagway Reservoir to the southern boundary of the Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area.

During development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (USDA FS 1984b) for the 1984 Forest Plan, rivers and streams on the Forests were studied for inclusion in the National WSR System. Of the rivers and streams that were evaluated for their free-flowing character and outstandingly remarkable values, only two were selected for further study under the definitions of the WSRA. They were:

1. Badger Creek, and the
2. South Platte River.

In 1993 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) completed WSR evaluations for the following streams as part of their resource management planning process:

1. Badger Creek,
2. Beaver Creek, and the
3. Arkansas River.

The results of eligibility and suitability studies that were conducted on these and other river and stream segments by the Forest Service and the BLM are summarized below. See Appendix A for a map of rivers and streams within or near the Forests that are eligible and suitable for inclusion in the WSR System.

3.1.1. Badger Creek eligibility studies

The Badger Creek eligibility study concluded that the segment from its source to its confluence with the Arkansas River was determined to be not eligible for inclusion in the WSR system due to the intermittent nature of its flows and lack of ORVs (USDA FS 1984b, appendix F).. A WSR study conducted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as part of their resource management planning process, also concluded that Badger Creek was not eligible for further study under the WSRA, based on its lack of ORVs (USDI BLM 1993).

3.1.2. Beaver Creek eligibility and suitability studies

The Beaver Creek eligibility and suitability study, conducted by BLM, concluded that both the west and east forks of Beaver Creek from Skagway Reservoir and the Fremont / Teller county line, respectively, downstream to the south boundary of the Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area are eligible and suitable for WSR designation, with a tentative classification of *wild river* for the upper segment (14 miles) and *scenic river* for the lower segment (6 miles) (USDI BLM 1993).

The headwaters of both the west and east forks of Beaver Creek are located on the Pike National Forest two to three miles upstream from the segments determined by the BLM to be eligible and suitable for inclusion in the WSR system.

Congress has not acted to include the Beaver Creek in the National WSR system. However, the BLM and Colorado Division of Wildlife are managing the stream to protect its free-flowing character and ORVs for potential inclusion into the National WSR system.

3.1.3. Arkansas River eligibility and suitability studies

The Arkansas River eligibility and suitability study, conducted by BLM, concluded that the segment from just north of Leadville to Cañon City is eligible and suitable for WSR

designation, with a tentative classification of *recreational river*. Outstandingly recreational values on the Arkansas River include scenery, recreation, geology, fisheries, wild, and heritage. The recreation ORV specifically relates to the Arkansas River as being “the most commercially rafted river in the United States” (USDI BLM 1993).

The San Isabel National Forest borders approximately two miles of the eligible and suitable river segment of the Arkansas River between Leadville and Buena Vista. National Forest System (NFS) lands provide access to a stretch of rapids known as the “Numbers”, which is an extremely wild and challenging section for kayaking enthusiasts. The “Numbers” has been regularly used as a training ground for competitive kayaking, and has been the site of the World Cup Kayaking and the Colorado Cup competitions.

The portions of the Arkansas River eligible and suitable for WSR designation are managed as part of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA). The AHRA is a cooperative venture between the BLM and the State of Colorado Division of Parks and Recreation to improve management of the river and adjacent public lands for recreation purposes. Congress has not acted to include the upper Arkansas River in the National WSR system. However, the BLM, through the AHRA, is managing the river to protect the river and its ORVs for potential inclusion into the National WSR system.

3.1.4. South Platte River eligibility and suitability studies

The South Platte River eligibility study concluded that the 49.4 miles of the South Platte River from Elevenmile Reservoir Dam downstream (excluding Cheesman Reservoir) to the high water line of Strontia Springs Reservoir and a 22.9 mile segment of the North Fork South Platte River was found to be eligible for inclusion in the National WSR system. The various segments of the river were classified as either *wild, scenic or recreational* river areas. However, the Forest Service deferred finalizing the suitability study, deciding instead to manage the river under the South Platte Protection Plan (USDA Forest Service 2004b, appendix A). After years of study and cooperation between many agencies and user groups, the South Platte Protection Plan was developed to provide protection similar to the WSRA for portions of the main stem of the South Platte River and its North Fork tributary (USDA FS 2004a). This protection plan includes a 10-year moratorium on any dam facilities.

A 17-member advisory board representing local governments, user groups, and technical specialists was established under the South Platte Protection Plan to help manage these rivers for the values that were found in the WSR study. Funding to conduct management activities is available, in part, from an endowment established by the protection plan.

3.2. New eligibility studies

As part of the current forest plan revision process, 236 streams and rivers flowing across the Forests were reviewed in 2007 for potential inclusion in the WSR system. The review process identified the dominant streams in each 6th level watershed (10,000 to 40,000 acres) where a large part (at least 20-30%) of the watershed occurs within the exterior boundaries of the Forests. Each stream was evaluated for its free-flowing

character, and for any ORVs as defined by the WSRA and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process (Diedrich and Thomas 1999). For the purposes of this evaluation, the regional scale of significance for rating stream-related ORVs was the State of Colorado.

These preliminary reviews identified 4 river and stream segments as needing further study for potential inclusion in the WSR system. All other streams on the Forests were found to be ineligible based on a lack of ORVs or not possessing a free-flowing nature, or both. Rivers and streams to be evaluated through the current forest planning process for potential inclusion in the National System are listed by Geographic Area in Table 1. See also, Appendix A for a map of the rivers and streams within the Forests that are currently being evaluated for potential inclusion in the WSR system.

Comment [UF51]: Reduce these 10 streams to 4 – Lost, Bear, Chalk, S Cottonwood on the WSR map

Table 3.2. River / stream segments with potential for inclusion in the WSR System

Geographic Area	Stream Segment	Ranger District
Front Range	Bear Creek	Pikes Peak
	Lost Creek / Goose Creek	South Park and South Platte
Upper Arkansas	Chalk Creek	Salida
	South Cottonwood Creek	Salida

These river and stream segments will be studied through the Forest Plan revision process, with regard to their eligibility for inclusion in the WSR system. These studies will provide background for further environmental analysis, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and serve as the basis for any future proposals by Congress to include additional streams or rivers in the WSR system.

During the Forest Plan revision process, the Forest Service will only focus on the first two steps (eligibility and classification). The third step (suitability studies) will be conducted outside of the plan revision process when:

- Strong public interest or support is demonstrated for WSR designation, or
- Congress expresses interest in a specific river for WSR designation, or
- A proposed project would alter a river's free-flowing character of the ORVs that made the river eligible

The identification of a river for study through the forest planning process does not trigger any protection under the WSRA. However, if a river is found eligible for inclusion in the National WSR system, Forest Service policy requires interim protection be provided to protect the values that make the river eligible or suitable for inclusion. To manage a river for its potential inclusion into the National WSR system, the Forests Plan will provide direction using other authorities to protect the free-flowing character, water quality and ORVs of rivers and streams determined to be eligible for inclusion in the WSR System.

4. Trends

4.1. Regional Population Growth

An expanding regional population with greater disposable income is driving an increased demand for recreation opportunities on the Forests. The population of the 12 primary counties that are associated with the Forests⁴ grew from 919,255 in 1980 to 1,493,072 in 2000, a 62% increase within 20 years. The Colorado State Demography Office predicts the population of these 12 counties will grow to nearly 2.2 million by the year 2020, a projected 138% increase over the 40 year period (Colorado Department of Local Government 2006b). Table 1.6 (Colorado Department of Local Government 2006b) displays a past, present and predicted future populations for the 12 primary counties encompassing the Forests.

Table 4.1. Past, present and projected populations for the 12 primary counties encompassing the Forests

County	1980 Population	2000 Population	2020 Population (projected)
Chaffee	13,227	16,242	23,143
Custer	1,528	3,503	6,471
Douglas	25,153	175,766	414,633
El Paso	309,424	516,929	762,879
Fremont	28,676	46,145	62,084
Huerfano	6,440	7,862	10,641
Jefferson	371,741	527,056	607,417
Lake	8,830	7,812	13,875
Las Animas	14,897	15,207	21,529
Park	5,333	14,523	37,130
Pueblo	125,972	141,472	193,001
Teller	8,034	20,555	30,841
Total	919,255	1,493,072	2,183,644

4.2. Expanding Wild and Scenic River Use

Expanding populations have changed the landscape of the state of Colorado; traditional use areas and wilderness landscapes are now nearby for many once rural, but now urban communities. Colorado's population has been increasing steadily, a trend which is expected to continue, according to the State Demographer. Trends identified by the State Demographer and other experts (Colorado Department of Natural Resources 2008) state:

⁴ The 12 counties that overlie major sections of the Forests and are socio-economically linked to the Forests include; Chaffee, Custer, Douglas, El Paso, Fremont, Huerfano, Jefferson, Lake, Las Animas, Park, Pueblo and Teller Counties. There are 3 other counties that include minor areas of the Forests, and are not strongly linked socio-economically to the Forests – Costilla, Clear Creek and Saguache counties.

- The population of Colorado is expected to grow at an annual average rate of 2.3%, reaching 6.65 million by 2025, a total increase of 47% from the current population of 4.52 million.
- Continued growth along the Front Range extending into the foothills areas is predicted by the Center for the American West. Increasing densities will be concentrated in strips of private land in the mountain resorts and West Slope communities.

Outdoor pursuits are what set the Colorado experience apart from other destinations. Colorado's greatest product strengths, compared to the U.S. norm for destinations, are largely outdoors oriented. Mountain / wilderness activities, such as mountain climbing, biking, hiking, camping, and rafting are amongst the most popular outdoor experiences sought by people coming to Colorado as a destination. Colorado is ranked among the top five states for dream destinations, behind Hawaii, Florida, California, and Alaska.

River rafting is a popular way to experience Colorado's deep canyons and remote scenery whether on a meandering family float trip assisted by professional guides or riding the rapids of a Class V river segment. River rafting contributes over \$153 million to Colorado's economy each year. Colorado's river rafting industry experienced phenomenal growth between 1988 and 1998, with annual increases of up to 23% per year. However, growth leveled between 1999 and 2001 with a serious decline in 2002 due to significant drought, wildfires, and September 11. The industry recovered from this decline between 2003 and 2006, with over 510,000 people experiencing the whitewater thrill of Colorado's rivers by guided licensed rafting companies in 2006. The number of Colorado's rafters remained steady between 2005 and 2006 mirroring the national trend (Colorado Department of Natural Resources 2008).

5. Design Criteria: Legal and Administrative Framework

This section provides an overview of the major laws, regulations, and policies that influence decisions relating to wild and scenic rivers, their designation and management on the Forests. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, but highlights some of the major legal and administrative direction that applies to wild and scenic rivers on NFS lands.

Laws and Acts

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (1965) - (P.L.66-517) authorizes permits for recreation, such as group activities, organized events, motorized recreational vehicle use, and other specialized recreation activities of limited duration.

Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (2005) - (P.L. 108-447) expands the authority of the Forest Service to collect fees from the public for recreation related activities and facilities including some of those associated with wild and scenic rivers.

Forest Management – Organic Acts (1897, 1899 and 1901) - (16 U.S.C. 473-475, 477-482, 551) require the Forest Service to protect the National Forest System including designated wild and scenic rivers which are a part of that system from fire and other depredations. The authority to regulate and monitor wild and scenic rivers derives from these acts.

National Environmental Policy Act (1970) - (P.L. 91-190) provides for analyzing the environmental consequences of proposed management actions on all National Forest System lands, including management actions taken to establish and manage wild and scenic rivers.

National Forest Management Act (1976) - (P.L. 94-588 as amended) is the primary statute governing the administration of the national forests. The National Forest Management Act reorganized, expanded and otherwise amended the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, which called for the management of renewable resources on national forest lands. The National Forest Management Act provides that management direction for wild and scenic rivers be incorporated into forest plans and sets minimum standards for the content of the plans.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968) - (P.L. 90-542) established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and prescribed the methods for future additions to the system.

Regulations

Wild and Scenic River regulations (36 CFR 297)
Planning regulations (36 CFR 219)

Forest Service Directives

Forest Service Manual 1950 – Environmental Policies and Procedures
Forest Service Manual 2300 – Recreation, Wilderness, and Related Resource Management
Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 – Land and Resource Management Planning Handbook, Chapter 80 – Wild and Scenic River Evaluation

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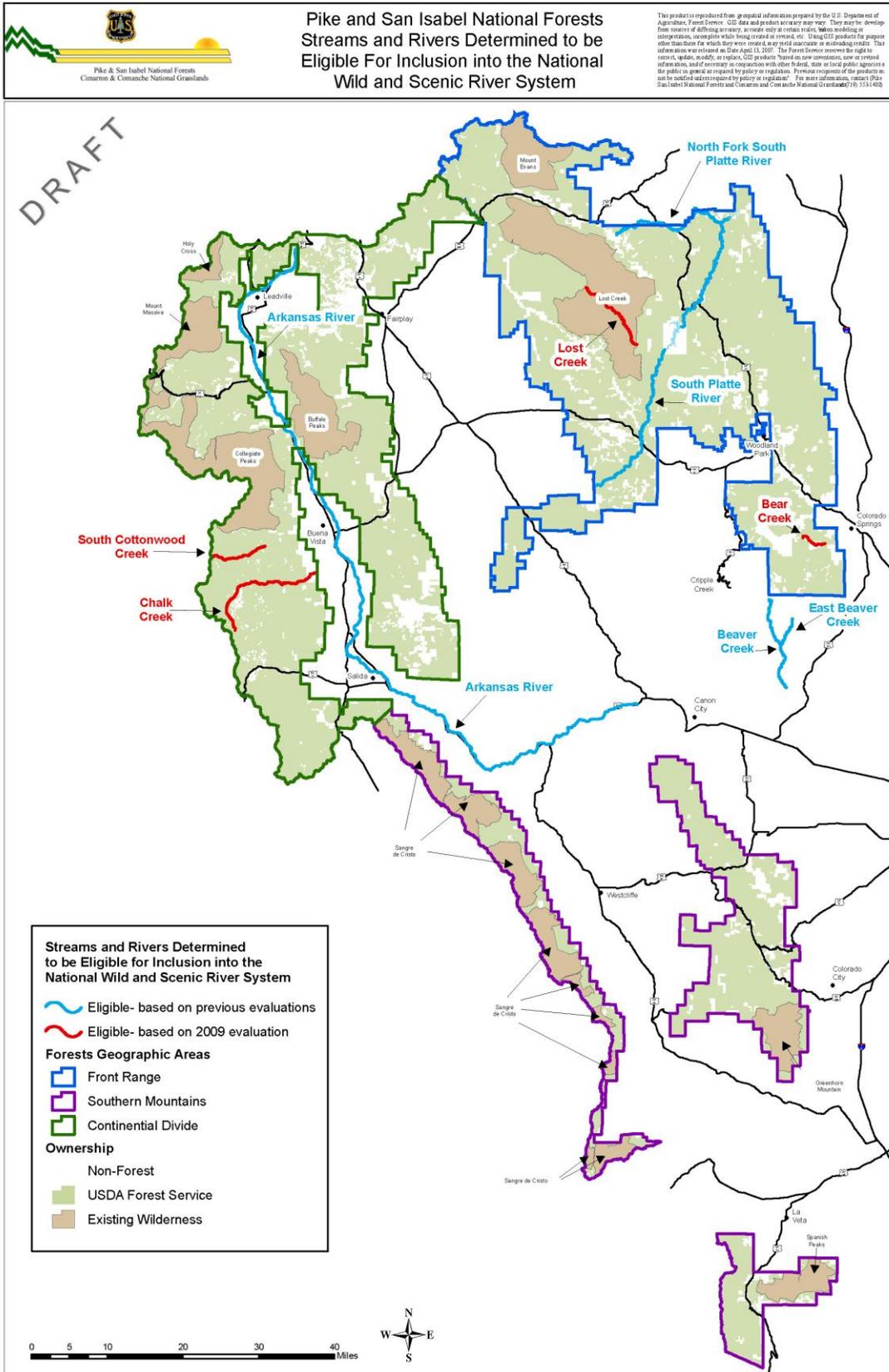
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U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1993. Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Royal Gorge Resource Area – Appendix L: Wild and Scenic River Study Report. U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management: Canon City, CO. 34p.

**Appendix A: Map of streams and rivers, within the
Forests, that are eligible or being studied for inclusion in
the National Wild and Scenic River System**



G.1.1. Response to Comments from Pike and San Isabel National Forests

The following language has been added to section 4.1:

The Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands completed a draft wild and scenic rivers eligibility analysis in 2013 in support of the Forest and Grassland Plan review. The draft determined that four streams are eligible, including Bear Creek, Lost Creek, Chalk Creek, and South Cottonwood Creek. The BLM has reviewed these eligibility determinations and concluded that it does not manage any lands along these streams.

G.2. Comments from John Stansfield, Wild Connections

9/17/2015 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - Additional Comments on ECO W&S Eligibility Report

 RG_RMP_Comments, BLM_CO <blm_co_rg_rmp_comments@blm.gov>

Additional Comments on ECO W&S Eligibility Report
1 message

John Stansfield <jorcstan@juno.com> Wed, Sep 16, 2015 at 11:19 AM
To: ecrmp.comments@blm.gov

To: Keith Berger, Field Manager
John Smeins, Lead Planner
BLM Royal Gorge Field Office

Due to communication problems, I was unable to include the following additional comments on behalf of Wild Connections regarding the Draft Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report for the Royal Gorge Field Office into the comments submitted by Wild Connections, Conservation Colorado, the Wilderness Society, and Steve Smith (AKA conservationists). Please consider my comments an addition to the conservationists' comment document.

Sincerely,
John
John Stansfield, Vice-President
Wild Connections
PO Box 588, Monument, CO 80132 303-660-5849; jorcstan@juno.com

Major omission by BLM: BLM RGFO did not include Trail Gulch, major tributary of Beaver Creek, in the Major Streams Review list.
River and Location--Beaver Creek watershed, Fremont County

Attributes--Free Flowing, est. 5+ miles all in BLM
ORV Comment--Shares similar/same ORVs as Beaver Creek, East Beaver Creek, West Turkey Creek
Recommended Preliminary Classification--Wild

Additions to conservationists comments and recommendations on BLM's Major Streams List:

East Fork of Millsap Creek
River and Location--Millsap Creek, Fremont County
Attributes--Free Flowing, 2.89 miles
ORV Comment--Shares similar/same ORVs to North Fork Millsap Creek; **Recommended Preliminary Classification**-- Wild

Five Point Gulch,
River and Location--Five Point Gulch-Arkansas River
Attributes--Free Flowing, 6.9 miles
ORV Comment--Shares similar/same ORVs to Texas Creek.
Recommended Preliminary Classification--Wild.

McIntyre Gulch
River and Location--Copper Gulch, Fremont County
Attributes--Free Flowing, 4.48 miles
ORV Comment--Shares similar/same ORVs as Tallahassee Creek
Recommended Preliminary Classification--Scenic

Spike Buck Gulch
River and Location--Five Point Gulch-Arkansas River, Fremont County
Attributes--Free Flowing, 6.06 miles
ORV Comment--Shares similar/same ORVs to Arkansas River, segment 3, and Echo Canyon
Recommended Preliminary Classification--Wild.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/vb/442/u/0/?ui=2&ik=5c7c795de5&view=pt&e.ear.ch=inbox&th=14fd72cdc73db8c6&siml=14fd72cdc73db8c6> 1/2

G.2.1. Response to Comments from John Stansfield, Wild Connections

The BLM reviewed all of the stream segments in this letter and found the flow regime to be ephemeral. BLM Manual 6400 (BLM 2012) specifies that ephemeral stream segments are not to be evaluated for eligibility.

G.3. General Comments from The Wilderness Society et al.

[Includes comments from Juli Slivka, The Wilderness Society; James E. Lockhart, Wild Connections; Tehri Parker, Rocky Mountain Wild; John Stansfield, Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition; Tom Sobal, Quiet Use Coalition; Alan Apt, Sierra Club; Scott Braden, Conservation Colorado; Misi N. Ballard, Great Old Broads for Wilderness; and Vanessa Mazal, National Parks Conservation Association].

Rivers deemed eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System must be managed to protect their values until the suitability determination is made, and suitable rivers must be managed so as to protect their qualities until Congress has an opportunity to designate the river as part of the System. Given the value of rivers and streams as public lands resources, each stream is of tremendous value, and BLM should fully protect these priceless resources via the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Eastern Colorado RMP.

1. Protect all eligible segments

Whether found suitable or not, all segments found eligible must, under the provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and accompanying regulations, be given a tentative classification (wild, scenic or recreation) and managed in order to preserve the outstandingly remarkable values that make those segments eligible. 16 U.S.C. § 1273(b); 12 BLM Manual 8351.32C.

2. Protective measures must be specific to wild and scenic eligibility and suitability

Protective management prescriptions and requirements—specific to segments’ values that prompt findings of wild and scenic eligibility and suitability—must be included in the final RMP and so must be carefully analyzed in preparation of the draft plan. Management of other resources or designations that could, by coincidence, help protect features that contribute to the segments’ eligibility and suitability are helpful (such as wilderness study areas, areas of critical environmental concern, visual resource management classes, mineral withdrawals, etc.). However, those coincidental protections and designations must, in the final RMP and in its implementation, specifically supplement wild and scenic river purposes, or similar measures must be provided in the final plan specifically for wild and scenic river purposes.

3. Apply all available protections specific to wild and scenic

Whatever the ultimate collection of stream segments found to be suitable, all those segments should be subject to all available protective measures. Such measures include (but are not limited to) managing all suitable segments:

- closed to off-highway vehicle use;
- withdrawn from mineral entry;
- as VRM Class I or Class II areas;
- as right-of-way exclusion areas;
- subject to remedial actions to ensure sensitive species habitat is maintained or enhanced;
- subject to extensive and reliable no-surface-occupancy stipulations for all activities;
- with related ACECs closed to off-highway vehicle use;
- with related ACECs closed to oil and gas exploration and development;

- among other appropriate measures.

4. Eligibility determinations

In a broader context, the criteria for eligibility evaluation are clear. BLM Manual 6400 states:

The inventory criteria are: the river must be free flowing and, with its adjacent land area, possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values. **No other factors are considered in determining the eligibility of a river...** Jurisdictional and management constraints are not considered when determining a river's eligibility for designation as a WSR.

BLM Manual 6400 at 3.1 (emphasis added). Since more detailed management decisions about stream segments would be made later in the suitability determination phase, as part of the current RMP revision or in subsequent amendments, it makes sense to list as eligible *all* segments that have any variation of the primary eligibility criteria, including even one outstandingly remarkable value. When in doubt, include them as eligible.

Further, BLM must disclose the scope of the outstandingly remarkable values (OHV) inventory process used in the draft eligibility report, and BLM must extend that analysis to include all stream-related OHVs and study corridors wide enough to incorporate those OHVs. We note that some past wild and scenic inventories have relied too heavily and arbitrarily on a one-quarter-mile "buffer" around identified segments in the initial identification of OHVs. BLM guidance is clear that such a "buffer" is not the appropriate measure for an OHV's association with a river. For example, OHVs can "owe their location or existence to the presence of the river" (IM 04-196), a standard on which it would be arbitrary for BLM to place a numerical value. We are concerned that if BLM uses this arbitrary buffer, the agency will overlook significant OHVs that are tied to a segment.

Geologic and scenic OHVs, as examples, could easily extend or originate from distances greater than one-quarter-mile from a segment. In an arid western slope climate, important cultural and historic values that are directly tied to segments used as water sources and migration routes for historic human populations are likely to exist at a variety of distances from a segment yet "owe their location or existence to the presence of the river." *Id.* With vast amount of BLM land having never undergone a formal cultural survey, it is important that the BLM employ generous and inclusive boundaries in the inventory.

Recommendation: The Eastern Colorado RMP must carefully study *all* potentially eligible stream segments, adopt requirements to ensure eligible and suitable rivers are protected pending decisions on their designation, and ensure any designated rivers and river corridors are managed to preserve their values.

G.3.1. Response to General Comments from The Wilderness Society et al.

This letter does not require a specific response in this report, because it does not specifically address individual stream segments. It simply recommends procedures to be used for the eligibility and suitability analysis.

G.4. Site-Specific Comments from The Wilderness Society et al.

[Includes comments from Juli Slivka, The Wilderness Society; John Sztukowski, Wild Connections; Scott Braden, Conservation Colorado; and Steve Smith].

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Badger Creek Headwaters Badger Creek Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 9.31 miles	<p>Recreation – popular regional backpacking, hunting, and angling destination.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands)</p> <p>Fish Population and Habitat – Brown trout</p> <p>Wildlife – Badger Creek supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area and summer concentration area. The Badger Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle. This is also a very important north-south migration corridor for large game mammals, specifically Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, and black bear.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Badger Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity for the globally imperiled plant, Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), a BLM sensitive plant found only in Chaffee and Fremont counties. As the BLM notes in their report, “<i>N. densa</i> may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes” (10.5.1).</p> <p>Cultural – Badger Creek provided an important route for prehistoric and protohistoric populations between South Park and the Arkansas River Canyon. Evidence of aboriginal sites and artifacts exist along the creek corridor.</p> <p>Historical – This route was also used by early Spanish and American explorers and miners. The old wagon route is now a non-motorized recreational trail along the creek. A bunker-like historic structure and remnants of the former wagon road bridge structures can be observed along the creek.</p> <p>Hydrologic – Badger Creek is a rare regional perennial stream in the Arkansas River Canyonlands</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Barnard Creek Barnard Creek Watershed Teller County	No ORVs Free Flowing 4.71 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Barnard Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, and black bear. The Barnard Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found Barnard Creek in Box Canyon to be a Potential Conservation Area for B4 – moderate biodiversity significance. This site has a fair occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) plant association, thinleaf alder (<i>Alnus incana</i>) / mesic graminoids shrubland. “This riparian community has fluctuated in viability over the years. In 1997 it was ranked as historically degraded but it has since recovered. The alders that were then thought to be making a come-back have for the most part stayed in a tenuous state of resprouting but not thriving.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
Bernard Creek Falls Gulch Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 3.82 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Bernard Creek corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area, summer concentration area, and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Bernard Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Bernard Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity for excellent occurrences of the globally imperiled plant, Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), a BLM sensitive plant found only in Chaffee and Fremont counties. As the BLM notes in their report, “<i>N. densa</i> may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes” (10.5.1).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Bull Gulch</p> <p>East Gulch Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>4.31 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Bull Gulch corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Bull Gulch corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, American peregrine falcon, and scaled quail. Botany – CNHP found 1 site along East Gulch as B3 – high biodiversity significance due to excellent to good occurrence of a globally vulnerable riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood / river birch (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Betula occidentalis</i>) woodland and a good occurrence of the globally vulnerable narrowleaf cottonwood -Douglas-fir (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>) woodland. It also has an excellent to good occurrence of the apparently globally secure narrowleaf cottonwood / coyote willow (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Salix exigua</i>) woodland and a good occurrence of the globally secure coyote willow / mesic graminoids (<i>Salix exigua</i> - mesic graminoids) shrubland. These species have multiple age classes within this drainage, providing an excellent example of regeneration indicative of regular flooding.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
<p>Cache Creek</p> <p>Cache Creek – Arkansas River Watershed</p> <p>Chaffee County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>2.71 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Sawatch and Mosquito Ranges)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Cache Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, and black bear. It also provides potential habitat and a critical linkage for a threatened species, Canada lynx.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Cache Creek for B3 – high biodiversity significance for a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3G4/S3) <i>Betula nana</i> / mesic forbs - mesic graminoids shrubland and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a state rare (G4/S3) <i>Carex simulata</i> wet meadow.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Carrol Creek</p> <p>Carrol Creek Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>10.09 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Carrol Creek corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Carrol Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – The Carrol Creek corridor supports the globally imperiled plant, Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), a BLM sensitive plant found only in Chaffee and Fremont counties. As the BLM notes in their report, “<i>N. densa</i> may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes” (10.5.1).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Cottonwood Creek</p> <p>Lower Cottonwood Creek Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>7.09 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, horseback riding and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Cottonwood Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. It also provides potential habitat and a critical linkage for a threatened species, Canada lynx. The Cottonwood Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle and Mexican spotted owl.</p> <p>Botany – CHNP found 1 site along Cottonwood Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity significance. CHNP recognizes a 3,500 acre Potential Conservation Area (PCA), which encompasses Cottonwood Creek with an approximate one kilometer buffer of the riparian corridor to ensure complete watershed protection. This area possesses a good occurrence of a globally and state imperiled natural riparian community: narrowleaf cottonwood (<i>Populus angustifolia</i>) and Rocky Mountain juniper (<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>). CHNP also documented a good occurrence of the globally secure riparian natural community of narrowleaf cottonwood (<i>Populus angustifolia</i>) and coyote willow (<i>Salix exigua</i>) woodlands.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Cucharas River</p> <p>Turkey Ridge Watershed</p> <p>Huerfano County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>7.01 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Cucharas and Huerfano Rivers)</p> <p>Fish Population and Habitat – Brown trout</p> <p>Wildlife – The Cucharas River corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for many valued species, specifically swift fox, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion and pronghorn. The swift fox is a threatened species listed as BLM sensitive. The Cucharas River corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle and scaled quail.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site containing Cucharas Canyon and River to have B3 – high biodiversity significance for native grassland prairies, with wetland and riparian drainages, due to the inclusion of globally vulnerable plant communities, plant species such as the state critically imperiled Elton's lip fern (<i>Cheilanthes eatonii</i>) and vulnerable Simius roadside skipper (<i>Amblyscirtes simius</i>), and BLM sensitive species, swift fox and black-tailed prairie dog.</p> <p>Cultural – Cucharas Canyon provided an important route and hunting grounds for prehistoric and protohistoric populations on Colorado's eastern plains. Evidence of aboriginal sites and artifacts exist along the canyon corridor.</p> <p>Historical – This canyon and river was also used by early Spanish and American explorers, ranchers, and settlers. The Cucharas Canyon ACEC was designated for its important cultural and historical sites and context.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Carrant Creek Middle Carrant Creek Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 11.69 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Carrant Creek corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area, summer concentration area, and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Carrant Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, American peregrine falcon, and scaled quail.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
East Fork Arkansas River East Fork Arkansas River Watershed Lake County	No ORVs Free Flowing 4.53 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Sawatch and Mosquito Ranges)</p> <p>Wildlife – The East Fork Arkansas River corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, and black bear. It also provides potential habitat and a critical linkage for a threatened species, Canada lynx.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along East Fork Arkansas River for B2 – very high biodiversity significance as it contains a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) montane willow carr plant community (<i>Salix ligulifolia</i>). It also contains two globally secure (G4 and G5) wetland plant communities. As per CNHP, the riparian community is dominated by <i>Portula grandulosa</i> and subalpine <i>Salix</i> species. This stand is on a flat to moderately sloped stream bank that is moist and spongy.</p> <p>Hydrologic – The East Fork Arkansas River drains Mount Arkansas, forming the headwaters of the Arkansas River</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Scenic</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>East Fork Eightmile Creek</p> <p>Eightmile Creek Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>5.85 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Garden Park and Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The East Fork Eightmile Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox.</p> <p>The East Fork Eightmile Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the East Fork Eightmile Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along East Fork Eightmile Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity significance due to “good occurrences of a globally imperiled riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood - Rocky Mountain juniper (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>) woodland. It also encompasses a good occurrence of thinleaf alder (<i>Alnus incana</i>) / mesic graminoids shrubland and a good and an excellent occurrence of narrowleaf cottonwood - Douglas-fir (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>) woodland. The globally imperiled plant, Degener’s beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), is also present in good condition.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>East Fork Turkey Creek</p> <p>Headwaters Turkey Creek Watershed</p> <p>Teller and El Paso Counties</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>2.27 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range).</p> <p>Wildlife – The East Fork Turkey Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The East Fork Turkey Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the East Fork Turkey Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>East Gulch</p> <p>East Gulch Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>6.82 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The East Gulch corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The East Gulch corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, American peregrine falcon, and scaled quail.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 2 sites along East Gulch as B2 and B3 – very high biodiversity and high biodiversity significance due to the inclusion of many globally imperiled and vulnerable plant species, including the Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), Degener beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrochosma fendleri</i>), and jeweled blazingstar (<i>Nuttallia speciosa</i>). The Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf is endemic to this region, with this conservation area representing the largest known concentration in the world. CNHP found East Gulch at Gull Ridge to have high biodiversity significance for an excellent to good occurrence of a globally vulnerable riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood / river birch (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Betula occidentalis</i>) woodland and a good occurrence of the globally vulnerable narrowleaf cottonwood - Douglas-fir (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>) woodland. It also has an excellent to good occurrence of the apparently globally secure narrowleaf cottonwood / coyote willow (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Salix exigua</i>) woodland and a good occurrence of the globally secure coyote willow / mesic graminoids (<i>Salix exigua</i> - mesic graminoids) shrubland.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Echo Canyon</p> <p>Texas Creek – Arkansas River Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>4.46 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Echo Canyon corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area, summer concentration area, and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Echo Canyon corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, American peregrine falcon, and scaled quail.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Echo Canyon as B2 – very high biodiversity due to the inclusion of many globally imperiled and vulnerable plant species, including the Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), Degener beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrochosma fendleri</i>), and jeweled blazingstar (<i>Nuttallia speciosa</i>). The Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf is endemic to this region, with this conservation area representing the largest known concentration in the world.</p> <p>Cultural – Echo Canyon provided an important route and hunting grounds for prehistoric and protohistoric populations between South Park and the Arkansas River Canyon. Evidence of aboriginal sites and artifacts exist along the canyon corridor.</p> <p>Historical – This route was also used by early Spanish and American explorers, miners, and ranchers. Remnants of historical ranching buildings can be observed in Echo Canyon.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Falls Gulch</p> <p>Falls Gulch Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>2.55 and 1.40 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands). Falls Gulch has a scenic 100-foot waterfall, a rare feature in the Arkansas River Canyonlands</p> <p>Wildlife – The Falls Gulch corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Falls Gulch corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Falls Gulch as B3 –high biodiversity significance due to good occurrence of a globally vulnerable riparian shrubland, water birch / mesic graminoids (<i>Betula occidentalis / mesic graminoids</i>) natural community. Additionally, there is an excellent occurrence of an apparently globally secure, but state vulnerable wetland natural community, analogue sedge (<i>Carex simulata</i>) herbaceous vegetation.</p> <p>Hydrologic – CNHP states that Falls Gulch is made up of “a spring-fed wetland occurring in a narrow hanging valley above a travertine cliff... A perennial stream is formed by several seepage areas that feed a network of rivulets that course through the fen-like sedge wetland perched behind the cliff.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Felch Creek</p> <p>Garden Park – Four Mile Creek</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>6.62 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Garden Park and Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Felch Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The Felch Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. Botany – CNHP found 2 sites along Felch Creek for B2 – very high biodiversity significance. CNHP identifies 4,000 acres of the Felch Creek riparian corridor, predominantly on BLM land, as a Potential Conservation Area for an excellent occurrence of the globally imperiled riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood - Rocky Mountain juniper (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> – <i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>) woodland. The Felch Creek corridor overlaps with the Garden Park Fossil Area, which has excellent to good occurrences of two globally imperiled plant species: Brandegee wild buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum brandegeei</i>) and golden blazing star (<i>Nuttallia chrysantha</i>). This site also supports a good occurrence of a shortgrass prairie endemic, dwarf milkweed (<i>Asclepias uncialis</i> ssp. <i>uncialis</i>).</p> <p>Paleontologic – The Garden Park Fossil Area is a very significant national paleoecological site, in which five type specimens of dinosaur species were collected.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
<p>Green Creek</p> <p>Green Creek Watershed</p> <p>Chaffee County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>0.67 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – popular regional angling and camping destination.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Poncha Pass/Maysville)</p> <p>Fish Population and Habitat – Brown trout</p> <p>Wildlife – The Green Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for many valued species, specifically elk, mule deer, mountain lion and black bear. It also provides potential habitat and a critical linkage for a threatened species, Canada lynx.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site containing Green Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity. CNHP states that this site supports high quality examples of montane riparian forests dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood (<i>Populus Angustifolia</i>) and Rocky Mountain juniper (<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Scenic</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>High Creek</p> <p>High Creek Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>5.16 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The High Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, and black bear. The High Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 3 sites, 1 for B2 – very high biodiversity significance, and 2 for B3 – high biodiversity significance. Little High Creek at Booger Red Hill has high biodiversity significance for a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood / bluestem willow (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Salix irrorata</i>) woodland. This plant association has been documented only from the Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico and along the Colorado Front Range. Additionally, there is a good (B-ranked) occurrence of narrowleaf cottonwood - Douglas-fir (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>) woodland, a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) riparian natural community. This association is reported in Utah, Nevada, and Colorado. Although it is relatively widespread, occurrences are small and patchy, and it is easily degraded and exists only where accessibility limits anthropogenic alteration. The High Creek corridor along Booger Red Hill also has an excellent occurrence of the globally vulnerable Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrosma fendleri</i>), an excellent occurrence of the state imperiled birdbill dayflower (<i>Commelina dianthifolia</i>) and a good occurrence of the state rare Eaton's lipfern (<i>Cheilanthes eatonii</i>). Additionally, there is an excellent occurrence of the globally vulnerable Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrosma fendleri</i>). In the High Park area of the High Creek corridor, there is a good occurrence of the globally vulnerable Parry's oatgrass (<i>Danthonia parryi</i>) grassland. This association has a limited distribution in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and southern Wyoming</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Huerfano River</p> <p>Headwaters Huerfano River Watershed</p> <p>Huerfano County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>0.27 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, angling and photography. Fish Population and Habitat – Brown trout</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Sangre de Cristo Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Huerfano River corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and wolverine. This area has also been identified as potential habitat for a threatened species, Canada lynx. This is an important wildlife and riparian area, connecting the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness and San Isabel National Forest to the Huerfano State Wildlife area in the eastern foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.</p> <p>Botany/Other – BLM recently acquired land adjacent to the Huerfano River riparian area in 2003 via a land exchange known as the Stanley Creek parcel. This land was acquired to consolidate public land ownership and provide the public an increased opportunity for recreation, including hunting opportunities. The BLM also states that it “brings important natural resource values into federal ownership, including significant wildlife habitat, wetlands, and riparian resources.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Scenic</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Little Badger Creek</p> <p>Little Badger Creek – Badger Creek Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>2.89 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Little Badger Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for many valued species, specifically Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion and black bear. The Little Badger Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle and Mexican spotted owl.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Little Badger Creek as B3 – high biodiversity significance for a good occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S2) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood / river birch (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Betula occidentalis</i>) woodland. Additional elements include a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) riparian natural community, narrowleaf cottonwood / thinleaf alder (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i>) woodland and good (B-ranked) occurrences of two globally secure riparian natural communities, coyote willow / mesic graminoids (<i>Salix exigua</i> / mesic graminoids) shrubland (G5/S5) and water sedge (<i>Carex aquatilis</i>) herbaceous vegetation (G5/S4).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Monument Creek Monument Creek Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 3.16 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography. A primitive trail leads along the creek to the scenic Monument Falls, rare regional water falls in the Arkansas River Canyonlands.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Monument Creek corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Monument Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – The Monument Creek corridor supports the globally imperiled plant, Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), a BLM sensitive plant found only in Chaffee and Fremont counties. As the BLM notes in their report, “<i>N. densa</i> may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes” (10.5.1).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
North Fork Millsap Creek Millsap Creek Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 4.03 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Garden Park and Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The North Fork Millsap Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The North Fork Millsap Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the North Fork Millsap Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Pass Creek Little Cochetopa Creek Watershed Chaffee County	No ORVs Free Flowing 1.53 miles	<p>Recreation – popular regional angling and camping destination.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Poncha Pass/Maysville)</p> <p>Fish Population and Habitat – Brown trout</p> <p>Wildlife – The Pass Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for many valued species, specifically elk, mule deer, mountain lion and black bear. It also provides potential habitat and a critical linkage for a threatened species, Canada lynx. BLM manages this corridor as the Pass Creek Wildlife Management Area</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 2 site containing Pass Creek as B2 – both for very high biodiversity. CNHP states that this site (Pahlone Slopes) supports high quality examples of montane riparian forests dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood (<i>Populus Angustifolia</i>) and Rocky Mountain juniper (<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>). CNHP found Pass Creek specifically to support a good occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) montane riparian forest (<i>Populus Angustifolia - Juniperus scopulorum</i>).</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Scenic</p>
Red Creek Red Creek Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 1.57 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Red Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The Red Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Sand Gulch as B3 – high biodiversity significance due to an excellent occurrence of the globally vulnerable riparian natural community, Douglas fir - river birch (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii - Betula occidentalis</i>) woodland.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Sand Gulch</p> <p>Sand Gulch – Arkansas River Watershed and Sand Gulch Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>5.81 and 3.31 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Sand Gulch corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for many valued species, specifically Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion and black bear. The Sand Gulch corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle and Mexican spotted owl.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Sand Gulch as B3 – high biodiversity significance due to good occurrences of the global riparian natural communities: narrowleaf cottonwood - Douglas-fir (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>) woodland and narrowleaf cottonwood / river birch (<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Betula occidentalis</i>) woodland.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
<p>Sixmile Creek</p> <p>Sixmile Creek – Arkansas River Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>5.54 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Sixmile Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The Sixmile Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the Sixmile Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Stanley Creek Headwaters Huerfano River Watershed Huerfano County	No ORVs Free Flowing 2.70 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, horseback riding and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Sangre de Cristo Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Stanley Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and wolverine. This area has also been identified as potential habitat for a threatened species, Canada lynx. This is an important wildlife and riparian area, connecting the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness and San Isabel National Forest to the Huerfano State Wildlife area in the eastern foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.</p> <p>Botany/Other – BLM recently acquired the Stanley Creek riparian area in 2003 via a land exchange known as the Stanley Creek parcel. This land was acquired to consolidate public land ownership and provide the public an increased opportunity for recreation, including hunting opportunities. The BLM also states that it “brings important natural resource values into federal ownership, including significant wildlife habitat, wetlands, and riparian resources.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
Stanton Creek Headwaters Huerfano River Watershed Huerfano County	No ORVs Free Flowing 1.63 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, horseback riding and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Sangre de Cristo Range)</p> <p>Wildlife – The Stanton Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and wolverine. This area has also been identified as potential habitat for a threatened species, Canada lynx. This is an important wildlife and riparian area, connecting the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness and San Isabel National Forest to the Huerfano State Wildlife area in the eastern foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.</p> <p>Botany/Other – BLM recently acquired the Stanton Creek riparian area in 2003 via a land exchange known as the Stanley Creek parcel. This land was acquired to consolidate public land ownership and provide the public an increased opportunity for recreation, including hunting opportunities. The BLM also states that it “brings important natural resource values into federal ownership, including significant wildlife habitat, wetlands, and riparian resources.”</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
Tallahassee Creek Tallahassee Creek Watershed Fremont County	No ORVs Free Flowing 6.30 miles	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Tallahassee Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Tallahassee Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, American peregrine falcon, and scaled quail.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Texas Creek</p> <p>Lower Texas Creek</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>3.73 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, and photography. Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Texas Creek corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area, summer concentration area, and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Texas Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Texas Creek as B2 – very high biodiversity due to the inclusion of many globally imperiled and vulnerable plant species, including the Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), Degener beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrochosma fendleri</i>), and jeweled blazingstar (<i>Nuttallia speciosa</i>). The Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf is endemic to this region, with this conservation area representing the largest known concentration in the world.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Texas Creek Gulch</p> <p>Texas Creek – Arkansas River Watershed</p> <p>Fremont County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>4.27 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Upper Arkansas River Valley) and Class B (Arkansas River Canyon Highlands).</p> <p>Wildlife – The Texas Creek Gulch corridor supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area, summer concentration area, and winter concentration area. It also provides habitat and migration corridor for elk, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive Gunnison’s prairie-dog. The Texas Creek Gulch corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 1 site along Texas Creek Gulch as B2 – very high biodiversity due to the inclusion of many globally imperiled and vulnerable plant species, including the Arkansas Canyon Stickleleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), Degener beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), Fendler cloak-fern (<i>Argyrochosma fendleri</i>), and jeweled blazingstar (<i>Nuttallia speciosa</i>). The Arkansas Canyon Stickleleaf is endemic to this region, with this conservation area representing the largest known concentration in the world.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Turkey Creek</p> <p>Headwaters Turkey Creek Watershed</p> <p>El Paso County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>0.42 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range). There are a number of spectacularly scenic water falls in Turkey Creek.</p> <p>Wildlife – The Turkey Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The Turkey Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the Turkey Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Historical – The Turkey Creek riparian area was used by early explorers, ranchers, and settlers. Remnants of historical buildings can be observed near Turkey Creek.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>Ute Creek</p> <p>Ute Creek – Arkansas River Watershed</p> <p>Chaffee County</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>3.85 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Poncha Pass/Maysville)</p> <p>Wildlife – Ute Creek supports a regionally significant population of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, which provides bighorn production area and summer concentration area. The Badger Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle. This is also a very important north-south migration corridor for large game mammals, specifically Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, and black bear.</p> <p>Botany – This site supports the globally imperiled plant, Arkansas Canyon Stickleleaf (<i>Nuttallia densa</i>), a BLM sensitive plant found only in Chaffee and Fremont counties. As the BLM notes in their report, “<i>N. densa</i> may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes” (10.5.1).</p> <p>Cultural – Ute Creek provided an important route for prehistoric and protohistoric populations between South Park and the Upper Arkansas River Valley. Evidence of aboriginal sites and artifacts exist along the creek corridor.</p> <p>Historical – This route was also used by early Spanish and American explorers, settlers, and miners. The old wagon route is now a motorized road along the creek.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Scenic</p>

River and Location	BLM Eligibility Report Finding	ORV Comment
<p>West Fork Turkey Creek</p> <p>Headwaters Turkey Creek Watershed</p> <p>Teller, Fremont, and El Paso Counties</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>3.16 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Springs Area Front Range).</p> <p>Wildlife – The West Fork Turkey Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The West Fork Turkey Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon. CNHP recognizes the West Fork Turkey Creek site as a Potential Conservation Area for a good occurrence of the globally and vulnerable (G3T3) and state critically imperiled (S1B) Mexican Spotted Owl, as well as occurrences of the globally and state vulnerable (G4T3/SB3) American Peregrine Falcon, a federally endangered species.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>
<p>Wilson Creek</p> <p>Cripple Creek – Fourmile Creek Watershed</p> <p>Teller and Fremont Counties</p>	<p>No ORVs</p> <p>Free Flowing</p> <p>11.79 miles</p>	<p>Recreation – excellent river-related opportunities including sightseeing, wildlife observation, camping, hiking, hunting, and photography.</p> <p>Scenery – VRI Class A (Garden Park and Springs Area Front Range) Wildlife – The Wilson Creek corridor provides habitat and migration corridor for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, and BLM sensitive swift fox. The Wilson Creek corridor is occupied by river-dependent federally protected or BLM species: bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl, and American peregrine falcon.</p> <p>Botany – CNHP found 2 sites for B3 – high biodiversity significance. CNHP supports Wilson Creek as a Potential Conservation Area for a fair (C- ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) plant association, narrowleaf cottonwood (<i>Populus angustifolia</i>) / bluestem willow (<i>Salix irrorata</i>) woodland. This plant association is endemic to the southern Rocky Mountains. The site also contains a fair (C-ranked) population of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) plant, Degener beardtongue (<i>Penstemon degeneri</i>), a species endemic to south-central Colorado.</p> <p>Recommended Preliminary Classification: Wild</p>

Grape Creek

The stream segment contemplated in the draft eligibility report (DeWeese Reservoir to Arkansas River) should be separated into two (or possibly three) segments: Segment 1 – southern boundary of Grape Creek Wilderness Study Area to northern boundary of WSA; Segment 2 – northern boundary of Grape Creek WSA to DeWeese Reservoir. Segment 1 should be classified as Wild; Segment 2 as scenic.

The BLM's 1980 Intensive Wilderness Inventory, Final Wilderness Study Areas report, along with subsequent agency management plan prescriptions, confirm the unique wilderness values and characteristics of Grape Creek WSA, including extensive recreational values and a very limited amount of (historical and fading) human imprints.

The BLM also recognized the unique values of Grape Creek's riparian zone (botany ORV) and fishery (recreation and fish ORVs) by designating the stream corridor as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern in its 1994 Royal Gorge Resource Management Plan.

These recognized values and confirmed state of naturalness correspondingly qualify the portions of Grape Creek flowing through the WSA for a wild and scenic rivers eligibility classification of Wild.

Badger Creek

In cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, the BLM should find the segment of Badger Creek from its source to the BLM boundary just upstream from the confluence with Little Badger Creek eligible, with a classification of Wild.

Badger Creek flows year-round through a wide, deep, substantially forested valley (unique geography and vegetation among BLM lands). This segment of Badger Creek is one of the few spring-fed streams in the region. Extensive meadows, interspersed with patches of forest are found along and just upland from the creek. Near the stream, rare plant communities of narrow-leaf cottonwood and coyote willow are found (botany ORV). Opportunities for recreation are extensive along the creek and in the surrounding lands; these include hiking, bird-watching, horseback riding, and cold-water fishery (recreation ORV) – these along with the recreational, scenic, fish, and geology ORVs noted by the BLM in the draft eligibility report.

Arkansas River, Segments 1-3

We support BLM's finding that Arkansas River Segments 1-3 are eligible with a recreational classification. As noted in the draft eligibility report, this stretch of the Arkansas River provides a remarkable diversity of river recreation environments because of the changing and dramatic scenic beauty, the biological productivity of the river and its associated riparian zone, steep river gradients, and a mix of natural and agricultural settings. The newly designated Browns Canyon National Monument is a testament to the extraordinary ORVs present in this area and the importance of recreation values in particular.

G.4.1. Responses to Site-Specific Comments from The Wilderness Society et al.

Grape Creek

The Grape Creek classification has been modified. It is now scenic from the outlet of DeWeese Reservoir to the wilderness study area boundary, wild within the two wilderness study areas, and recreational from the northern wilderness study area boundary to the confluence with the Arkansas River.

Beaver Creek

In response to the comment regarding Grape Creek, and as a result of internal review, the following changes were also made to the Beaver Creek segment:

- From the confluence of East and West Beaver Creek to the southern boundary of the WSA was classified as “wild.”
- The remainder of the segment below the southern boundary of the WSA was removed from further consideration.

Badger Creek

The BLM re-evaluated Badger Creek relative to other streams within the Southern Rocky Mountain ecoregion, and the agency determined that while the stream does have extensive river-related values, the hydrological, vegetation, botanical, recreational, scenic, and geological values are not regionally significant and therefore do not qualify as ORVs. No change was made to the Badger Creek evaluation in this eligibility report.

Arkansas River

These comments are suitability comments and outside the scope of this report.

Identification of ORVs

To clarify the BLM’s criteria for identifying ORVs, the following language has been added to sections 3.4.5 and 3.4.8:

3.4.5

To apply the BLM manual criteria for wildlife habitat to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used the following:

- *To be considered as a potential ORV, the habitat must be clearly river-related. The focus of analysis is wildlife use of the riparian zone associated with the stream.*
- *The wildlife habitat must be of sufficient acreage and quality to play a major role in the life stages of the wildlife populations that use the riparian habitat.*

To apply the BLM manual criteria for wildlife species to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used the following:

- *The wildlife species in question must make significant and recurring usage of the stream and its associated riparian habitats. Occasional usage of the stream corridor by wildlife species within the river corridor would not qualify, even if those species are sensitive, threatened, or endangered.*
- *The stream in question must support regionally significant populations of wildlife.*

3.4.8

To apply the BLM manual criteria for botany to the Eastern Colorado planning area, the BLM used all of the following:

- *To be considered as a potential ORV, the plant species or plant associations must be clearly be river-related. Plants and plant communities must be associated with the riparian zone associated with a stream channel. Plants and plant communities that are typically found in upland habitats will not be considered, even if representatives of those plants and plant communities happen to occur within stream corridors.*
- *The plant or plant community must be ranked by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) as critically imperiled or imperiled at the global or national level. These rankings are labeled as G1, G2, N1, or N2 in reports published by the CNHP. Alternatively, the plant species or plant association must be ranked by the CNHP as an “A” (excellent) occurrence of a vulnerable (ranked G3 or N3) plant species or plant community*
- *Excellent or good (A or B) ranked occurrences of plant species or plant communities that CNHP identifies as “apparently secure” (G4, N4) or secure (G5, N5) will not qualify alone as an outstandingly remarkable value; however, such occurrences may be included in the eligibility report as further documentation of botanical values found in a stream corridor that has already been identified as eligible based upon the criteria described above.*

Responses to Comments on Individual ORVs

Recreation

The comment letter did not provide any specific evidence that recreation values were regionally significant on any of the streams listed in the comment letter. Rather, the comment letter just asserted that the recreational values were regionally significant.

Scenery

The comment letter did not recognize that a VRI Class A or VRI Class B alone is insufficient to make an ORV determination. The comment letter did not provide any specific evidence that scenic values were regionally significant on any of the listed streams.

Fish

The comment letter did not provide any specific evidence that fish values were regionally significant on any of the listed streams; rather, the comment letter just asserted that fish values were present.

Wildlife

The comment letter did not provide any specific evidence to substantiate that wildlife populations were regionally significant. However, BLM staff reviewed wildlife data again concerning bald eagle habitat areas, peregrine falcon habitat areas, bighorn sheep populations, and significant wildlife migration corridors. After this review, it was determined that none of the suggested wildlife ORVs are regionally significant. Additionally, it was determined that the following species are not river-related: Mexican spotted owl, elk, white tailed deer, mule deer, mountain lion, black bear, swift fox, scaled quail, wolverine, Canada lynx, Gunnison's prairie dog, and pronghorn. The review did however reveal that the bighorn sheep population along Grape Creek should be added as an ORV. The following ORV and language was added to section E.8:

Wildlife

The herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep that utilizes Grape Creek Canyon is considered to be part of the Temple Canyon S49 herd, which also makes use of the Arkansas River Canyon. The S49 is highly affiliated with the Arkansas River and Grape Creek, making extensive use of the cover, forage, and water provided by these streams. Since Temple Canyon S49 is a native herd, it is considered a Tier 1 conservation priority herd by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Tier 1 herds are considered essential for maintaining viable populations with high genetic diversity within Colorado and the Southern Rocky Mountain region.

Cultural

The comment letter did not provide any specific evidence to substantiate that cultural resources were regionally significant. However, BLM staff reviewed cultural resource surveys again for streams that provide routes between South Park and the Arkansas River, including Badger Creek and Ute Creek. BLM staff also reviewed cultural resource surveys for Cucharas River, Texas Creek, and Turkey Creek. After this review, it was determined that none of the suggested cultural values are regionally significant.

Paleontological

Although the Garden Park ACEC includes 0.25 mile of Felch Creek, BLM staff determined that no regionally significant paleontological resources occur with the creek corridor. In addition, the staff determined Felch Creek to be ephemeral. BLM Manual 6400 (BLM 2012) specifies that ephemeral stream segments are not to be evaluated for eligibility.

Botanical

BLM staff conducted an extensive review of the botany comments, because the comments were made with supporting evidence from the CNHP suggesting that some botany values may be regionally significant.

The comment letter suggested that many creeks should be determined as eligible because of the presence of Arkansas Canyon Stickleaf (*Nuttallia densa*) within the stream corridor. After a review of the habitat and life history of this species, the BLM determined that this species is not river-related. Even though its existence may be closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, this dependency is related to soil moisture regimes within disturbed areas. The species is noted to occur in dry open sites, steep rocky slopes, and disturbed sites. It often occurs in dry stream washes, because those sites have been disturbed and provide the requisite well-drained soils. As such, the species is not river-dependent or river-related.

Accordingly, the following references to *Nuttallia densa* in the draft eligibility report were removed from section E.1:

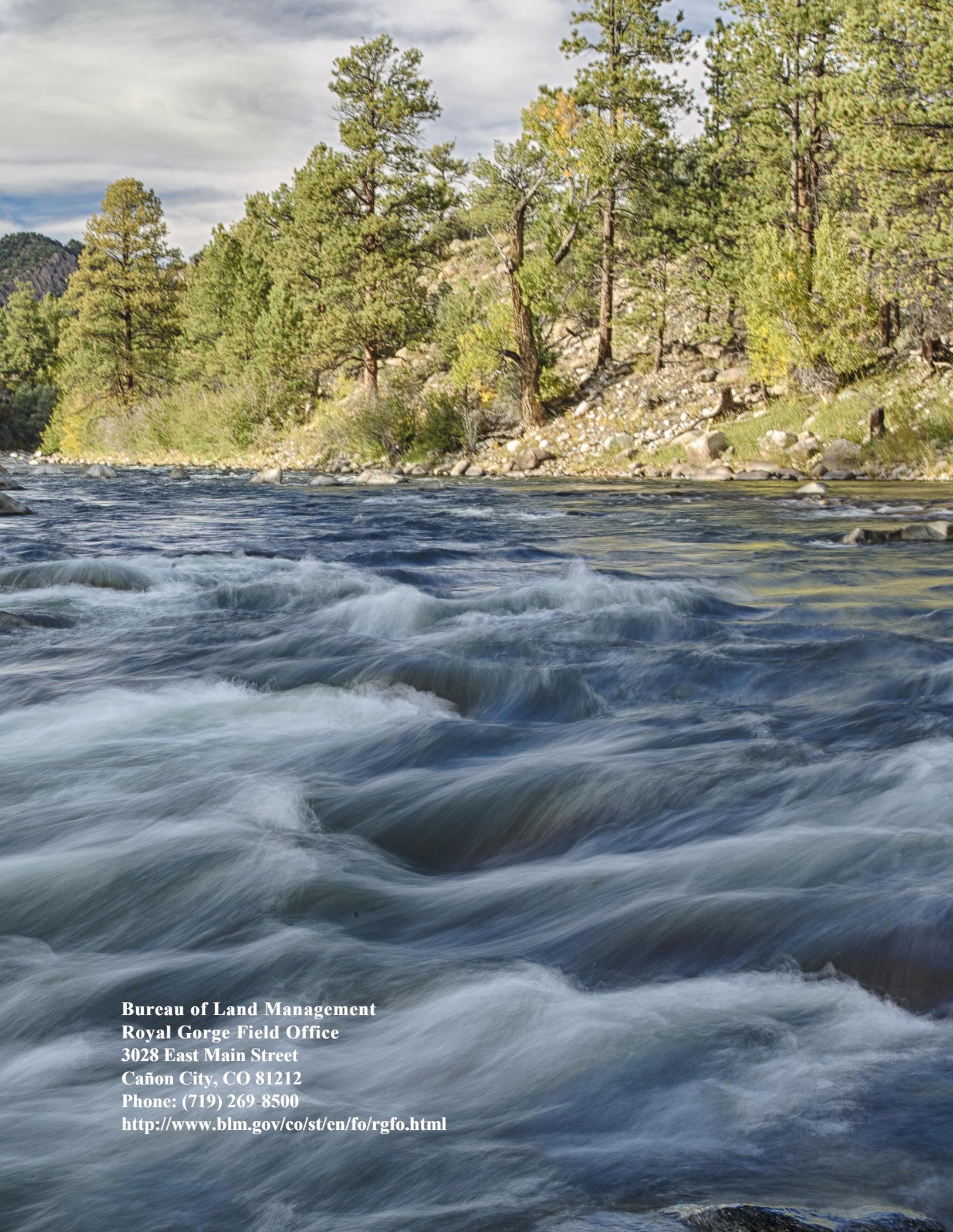
The Arkansas River corridor also contains the endemic Mentzelia densa (Nuttallia densa), a BLM sensitive plant known only along the Arkansas River in Fremont and Chaffee Counties. M. densa may be a disturbance-dependent species closely associated with hydrologic cycle fluctuations, as it is found in dry open washes. It is not, however, listed as a wetland indicator species by CNHP.

Responses to Comments Regarding Additional Stream Segments

The comment letter suggested that a high number of streams be identified as eligible based upon botanical information from the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. After a careful review of potential conservation area descriptions from the CNHP, the BLM determined that seven streams should be added to the eligibility report. Detailed information on these streams can be found in the sections and maps in this document that pertain to each stream:

- East Gulch (section E.9)
- Cottonwood Creek (section E.10)
- East Fork Arkansas River (section E.11)
- Falls Gulch (section E.12)
- Little High Creek (section E.13)
- Pass Creek (section E.14)
- Red Creek (section E.15)

In addition, the BLM determined that this comment letter appears to have erroneously interpreted the extent of two potential conservation areas. Specifically, the Pass Creek Potential Conservation Area does not appear to include Green Creek, and the Phantom Canyon Potential Conservation Area does not include the East Fork of Eightmile Creek.



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