



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Casper Field Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, Wyoming 82604-2968
August 8, 2006

In Reply Refer to:
1610/Casper RMP

Dear Stakeholder/Interested Party:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the evaluations of 23 areas nominated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) during the scoping process for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Casper Resource Management Plan revision. The evaluations assess whether nominations meet the relevance and importance criteria as provided in *BLM Manual 1613 – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern*. Seven (7) of the 23 areas meet the criteria and will move forward for further consideration. The remainder of the areas were dropped from further analysis as potential ACECs. Since the RMP is a comprehensive land use planning document, management of many if not all of the nominated values will be addressed in the RMP revision.

You submitted an area for consideration as a public nomination. This letter with attached evaluations provides the notice required in *BLM Manual 1613 – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern* as to whether your nomination met the relevance and importance criteria to move forward as a potential ACEC. The opportunity to comment on areas dropped from further consideration runs concurrent with the 90 review and comment period on the Draft RMP/EIS or from July 21 to October 19, 2006. During this 90-day comment period, the public may comment on any aspect of the ACEC evaluation, including the relevance and importance evaluations, the projected need for special management attention, the analysis of impacts of allowable resource uses on the values of proposed ACECs, and the impact of ACEC management prescriptions or limitations on other resource uses.

Thank you for your participation in this phase of the planning process. We look forward to your continued involvement in the Casper RMP revision.

Sincerely,

James K. Murkin
Field Manager, Casper

Attachment
- ACEC Evaluations

LIST OF NOMINATORS

Biodiversity Conservation Alliance

Joe D. Reddick

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Sierra Club

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Alcova Fossil Area
General Location	South of Alcova Reservoir, western Natrona County
General Description	Contains rare pterodactyl track ways and additional dinosaur fossils from two geologic periods
Acreage	Approximately 6,000 acres
Values Considered	Scientific Paleontological

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	The Alcova Fossil Area contains the Alcova Pterodactyl Track Way site (originally proposed as an ACEC in the 1985 RMP), one of only four such sites known world-wide. In addition, exposed outcrops of the Morrison and Sundance Formations in the area contain fossilized remains of numerous aquatic and terrestrial species from the Triassic and Jurassic Periods, including plesiosaurs, ichthyosaurs, Allosaurus and Camarosasaurus. The area is an invaluable educational and research resource.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	Pterosaur tracks are extremely rare world-wide, giving the Alcova Track Way high importance in the paleontological community. Dinosaur and marine reptile fossils are relatively rare and this area presents an opportunity to protect this resource in situ.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	Fossil materials of value to scientific research, education, and public interpretation are fragile and deteriorate readily on exposure to the elements. Surface disturbance from other land uses can have a serious adverse impact on fossil deposits.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	Satisfies the FLMPMA mandate to protect scientific values.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	Not a safety or public welfare concern.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	Not a threat to human life and safety or property.

Findings: This nomination meets the relevance and importance criteria for a significant historic, cultural (paleontological), or scenic value and is carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	All Big Game Crucial Areas
General Location	In Western and Southern Natrona County, Southern Converse County, and Western Platte County
General Description	Shrub habitats which provide forage and cover for big game herds during severe winter periods.
Acreage	Approximately 1 million acres
Values Considered	Wildlife (big game) habitat; specific habitats include Winter Crucial Range and Winter/Yearlong Crucial Range for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	Specialized habitats which provide for the herd during most winters. The areas are “crucial” because the habitat is the limiting factor for the population. That is to say, that the population can be maintained at a given level only if this habitat remains available and in sufficiently good condition. This habitat must be available to provide for the herd in an average of 8 out of 10 years. It is recognized these habitats are important to maintaining big game populations. However, the scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas does not meet the relevance criterion for a fish and wildlife resource <i>within the public lands</i> .
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	A sagebrush (or combination of shrubs) vegetative type on appropriate topography must contain the needed vegetation and cover attributes for the herd. The ecological process of vegetation succession must be maintained to provide a variety of age and form classes. A minimum level of disturbance is required so that animals may conserve body energy reserves. Due to the scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas, this nomination does not meet the relevance criterion for a natural process or system <i>within the public lands</i> .
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	Crucial habitats are determined to be “Vital” under the WGFD’s Mitigation Policy (April 1998). “Vital” is defined as habitat which directly limits a community, population, subpopulation, and restoration or replacement may not be possible. The Department is directed by the Commission to recommend no loss of habitat function. Some modification of habitat characteristics may occur, provided habitat function is maintained (i.e., the location, essential features, and species supported are unchanged). The scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas limits the effectiveness of managing the wildlife resource.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria for fish and wildlife resources or a natural process or system *within public lands* given the scattered public land ownership. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	All Sage Grouse Lek Complexes
General Location	Scattered throughout Natrona and Converse Counties
General Description	Sagebrush/ grasslands habitats which provide breeding and nesting habitats for sage grouse.
Acreage	Approximately 1 million acres
Values Considered	Wildlife (sage grouse) habitat, which is also habitat for other species

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	Specialized habitats which provide for sage grouse during the breeding and nesting season. The areas are important to manage so that sage grouse populations may be maintained or recovered. This recovery of populations may preclude the need for listing of the species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The sage grouse is a BLM Sensitive Species, and a number of petitions are pending which call for listing the species under the ESA. This habitat must remain available and in sufficiently good condition to provide for successful nesting. Due to the scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas, this nomination does not meet the relevance criterion for a fish and wildlife resource <i>within the public lands</i> .
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	A sagebrush/ grassland vegetative type must contain the needed vegetation and topography for leks (courtship/ breeding sites) and vegetative structure and conditions for successful nesting. The ecological process of vegetation succession must be maintained to provide a variety of age and form classes of sagebrush, forbs and grasses. Due to the scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas, this nomination does not meet the relevance criterion for a natural process or system <i>within the public lands</i> .
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	It is unclear just which category under the WGFD’s Mitigation Policy (April 1998) is assigned to sage grouse leks and nesting habitats. The category probably has been raised in level of importance due to the WGFD’s desire to implement protections which may avoid listing the species under the Endangered Species Act. Sage grouse habitats are listed as being of moderate importance under the WGFD’s Mitigation Policy (August 1994). However, Vern Stelter of the Cheyenne WGFD Habitat Protection office said the species should have a higher classification, and that a change to the Mitigation Policy may be needed to provide this. The scattered public land ownership pattern in these areas limits the effectiveness of managing the wildlife resource.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria for a fish and wildlife resource or as a natural process or system *within public lands* given the scattered public land ownership. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Bates Hole – Shirley Rim
General Location	Southeast Natrona, Northeast Carbon Counties, WY. Roughly corresponds to Platte River RMP – RMU 9: Bates Hole. Portion of Northeast Carbon County seems to be included in the area defined by The Nature Conservancy - Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe.
General Description	Diverse area ranging from high elevation coniferous forest/woodland in the higher elevations of Shirley Rim, to sage/shrublands at lower elevations.
Acreege	In excess of 500,000 acres of mixed ownership.
Values Considered	Livestock grazing, wildlife, mining and oil and gas development. Sensitive watersheds and soils identified in the area

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural resources are present in the area, but none have been identified which are rare or sensitive. The VRM classification places this area in Class B, which would not warrant special scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Bates Hole/Shirley Rim area as having a high biodiversity rating, and a low threat of impact from poor grazing management and oil and gas habitat conversion.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	Sensitive watersheds including Washout Creek, Ledge Creek, Bear Creek, Bolton Creek, and others have the potential to impact water quality and sediment concentrations in the North Platte River.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC. Since the area contains sensitive watersheds with the potential to impact water and sediment concentrations in the North Platte River, the portion of the nomination within the planning area is being considered for establishment of a Special Management Area in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Black-tailed Prairie Dog Complex
General Location	T. 37 N., R. 74 W., Northwestern Converse County, Wyoming
General Description	Concentration area of black-tailed prairie dog colonies.
Acreage	Approximately 3,100 acres BLM-administered surface and 14,800 acres federal mineral estate.
Values Considered	Black-tailed prairie dog habitat

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	The black-tailed prairie dog was petitioned for listing as a threatened species in July 1998. The species has a 99 percent reduction in its historical range and is considered a "keystone species."
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	Yes	Prairie dog colonies provide habitat for the endangered black-footed ferret, mountain plover, prairie rattlesnakes, and burrowing owls. Black-tailed prairie dogs also are an important source of food for ferruginous hawks, golden eagles, swift fox, coyotes, black-footed ferrets, and badgers. Their presence promotes biological diversity on public lands.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	The species has a 99 percent reduction in its historical range and is considered a “keystone species.” As such, the species plays an important role in the ecosystem.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	The black-tailed prairie dog was petitioned for listing as a threatened species in July 1998.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: Based on the status and current threats to the species, the black-tailed prairie dog complex meets the relevance and importance criteria for a fish and wildlife resource and as a natural process or system. This nomination is carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Casper Sand Dunes
General Location	T35-36N R76-78W
General Description	Primarily stabilized dunes with some active dune movement.
Acreage	30,000 acres of BLM administered surface.
Values Considered	Variety of natural sand dune communities.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural resources are present in the area, but none have been identified which are rare or sensitive. The VRM classification places this area in Class B, which would not warrant special scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	Potential habitat for blowout penstemon (<i>Penstemon haydenii</i>). An inventory conducted on public lands did not locate any populations of blowout penstemon.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	Sand hills/sand dunes occur in many areas of Wyoming and the rocky mountain region.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process	No	Soils have a high wind erosion potential when disturbed.

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	Similar deposits of windblown sands occur in a band extending across most of central Natrona and Northern Converse Counties. Sand dune areas are also present in other parts of Wyoming, and the Rocky Mountain region.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	Soils in the area are highly susceptible to wind erosion. Surface disturbing activities could result in adverse change.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Casper Sandhills as having only a medium biodiversity rating, and a low threat of impact from grazing and oil and gas development.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision. The area is being considered for establishment of a Special Management Area to maintain the integrity of soils and vegetation and to protect highly erosive soils.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Cedar Ridge Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) and Periphery
General Location	Northwestern Natrona County
General Description	Traditional ceremonial site used by the Eastern Shoshone and other tribal groups
Acreage	Approximately 4,500 acres (TCP) and 32,700 acres (Periphery)
Values Considered	Prehistoric and historic cultural resources

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	Eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, the Cedar Ridge Site is both an extensive prehistoric site containing hundreds, if not thousands, of ceremonial structures (vision quest structures, for example) as well as a TCP of high importance to the Eastern Shoshone in terms of on-going religious observance.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	Contains archaeological data important in inter-and intra site spatial analysis and prehistoric land use which is extremely valuable on a local and regional basis. Cedar Ridge is the only identified Native American sacred site in the Casper Field Office, and may be the only such site in Wyoming.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	Consultation with the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone indicate that any disturbance within the TCP would serve to diminish its value and make it unusable as a ceremonial site.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	Meets the FLPMA mandate to protect cultural and scientific values.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	Not a safety and public welfare concern.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	Yes	According to the Eastern Shoshone, Cedar Ridge is the residence of numerous spirit entities. If the site is disturbed, those spirit entities can cause harm to the individuals involved, Indian and non-Indian alike.

Findings: This nomination meets the relevance and importance criteria for significant historic, cultural, or scenic value and is carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Hartville Uplift
General Location	Irregular area from approximately T27N R67W to T32N R63W.
General Description	Rugged limestone uplift with numerous canyons, valleys, and limestone plateaus.
Acreage	In excess of 500,000 acres of mixed ownership. Limited, scattered BLM administered surface.
Values Considered	Important vegetation resources including Mountain Mahogany, Little Bluestem grasslands and Alpine Feverfew, a rare plant.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural resources are present in the area, but none have been identified which are rare or sensitive. The VRM classification places this area in Class B, which would not warrant special scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	The Alpine Feverfew is not recognized as a sensitive plant species by the BLM.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Hartville Uplift area as having only a medium biodiversity rating, and a medium threat of impact from mining, oil and gas development, and loss of fire regime.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance and importance criteria and will not be carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Jackson Canyon ACEC
General Location	10 miles SW of Casper
General Description	Southwest portion of Casper Mountain
Acreage	Approximately 14,000 acres
Values Considered	Bald eagle winter communal night roosts. Also has scenic, cultural, recreational values.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	The (similar) area was determined to be a “Rare and Uncommon Area”.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	Contains two bald eagle winter communal night roosts, one of which has the greatest number of bald eagles (average during the winter season) within the Rocky Mountain area (BLM-PRRA 1992). Also sheep, elk, deer, and a wide variety of other animals are present within the ACEC.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	Yes	Contains two bald eagle winter communal night roosts, one of which has the greatest number of bald eagles (average during the winter season) within the Rocky Mountain area (BLM-PRRA 1992).
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	Contains two bald eagle winter communal night roosts, one of which has the greatest number of bald eagles (average during the winter season) within the Rocky Mountain area (BLM-PRRA 1992).
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	The (similar) area was determined to be a “Rare and Uncommon Area”.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	Maintaining winter roost habitat is a component of the Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, Pacific Region (USFWS 19).
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: The existing Jackson Canyon ACEC designation is carried forward for reconsideration in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Laramie Range Foothills
General Location	Extreme Southeast Natrona, West Converse, and Extreme Northwest Platte Counties, WY. Roughly corresponds to Platte River RMP- RMU 10: Laramie Range Foothills. Portions of North Albany County seem to be included in the area defined by The Nature Conservancy - Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe.
General Description	Located on the eastward slopes off of the Laramie Range. Broad surfaces dominated by Needlegrass and Mountain Mahogany shrubland on steep slopes.
Acreage	In excess of 300,000 acres of mixed ownership.
Values Considered	Wildlife, recreation and forestry.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural resources are present in the area, but none have been identified which are rare or sensitive. The VRM classification places this area in Class B, which would not warrant special scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Laramie Range Foothills area as having only a medium biodiversity rating, and a medium threat of impact from the loss of fire regime and residential development.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance and importance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Little Medicine Falls
General Location	T.29 N., R.76 W., sec. 30 SW 1/4 , 31 W 1/2, SW 1/4
General Description	Little Medicine Falls including upstream portion necessary for water quality protection
Acreage	224 acres (Core area), 1000 acres (public land area).
Values Considered	Fisheries (recreation), Scenic Values

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject o reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	This area has high scenic value, Scenic Quality Class A. Spectacular view shed two 20" waterfalls separated by a 15' bench. The area has emotional appeal. Diverging lines created by trees which fade into the Laramies; large vistas, and diverse landscapes, including steep canyons with vertical sides. Little Medicine Falls is an important local fishing area. The area is a local, historic landmark.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	Identified as being locally significant
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	While the area is valued for its natural landscapes and lush habitat, other such waterfalls are found within the local area and throughout the Laramie Range.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	The area required to protect the water quality is in excess of 12 square miles most of which is not administered by the BLM.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	None have been identified
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	None have been identified

Findings: This nomination met the relevance criteria for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value but did not meet the importance criteria. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Muddy Mountain Environmental Education Area (EEA)
General Location	Muddy Mountain-18 miles South of Casper T31N Ranges 78 and 79W
General Description	Established in 1971. Area set aside under the C&MU classification and is to be managed for recreation, wildlife, forest resources, and environmental education. The EEA contains various trails, campgrounds, and provides for a variety of recreation pursuits.
Acreage	1260
Values Considered	Recreation and environmental education

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	One possible historic site, old cabin, identified to date (SESW, Sec. 12). No determination has been made relative to significance. There have been several cultural inventories conducted on various projects within the EEA. No other cultural features have been identified. The EEA has no known religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans. The north rim escarpment provides a quality panoramic view northerly to Casper Mountain. The eastern boundary of the EEA provides a quality view toward the Hat Six area, Banner Mountain and Otter Creek. The visual quality is high and is similar in character to scenery offered along the Laramie Range.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	The area in general provides elk, mule and white tail deer habitat. The habitat condition is good. Crucial winter ranges for elk and mule deer border the East end of the EEA. Black bear and mountain lion have been observed within the EEA boundary. Quality habitat is available for a variety of smaller mammals, birds, upland game birds, and some raptors. The habitats within the EEA are not unusual, rare or stand apart from other habitats along the Laramie Range. The EEA does not contain habitat associated with any threatened, endangered or sensitive specie. It does not provide habitat essential for species diversity. There are no waters that carry fish within the confines of the EEA.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	There are no rare or relic plant species. There are no plant species within the EEA identified as endangered, sensitive, or threatened. The rim, while interesting geologically, is not a rare or unique geologic feature.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	None.

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The EEA is locally significant. It receives intense local recreation use during the summer and early fall. A wide variety of recreation pursuits are offered. Some visitors are from out-of state but the area is not a planned destination to see a special unique natural feature (s).
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	The EEA is distinct in that there is a nationally designated handicap trail system within the EEA boundary. The trail was the first national recreation trail on BLM land in Wyoming. This trail certainly adds a unique feature to the EEA. Considering the partnerships involved with trail planning, placement and construction, it is unlikely that these could be duplicated in a reasonable time frame. The EEA is about 18 road miles from Casper and is contained within one block of public land in a forest setting. There are no other BLM-administered public land configurations within any reasonable distance of Casper that could replace the EEA. In that sense, it is irreplaceable.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	The EEA is recognized as requiring special management to address recreation, wildlife habitat, and forests within the EEA. A Recreation Management Plan and a Forest Management Plan are in place and operational. The plans were developed to satisfy local recreation needs and provide a setting that could be and is used as a site for environmental education.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	The EEA does possess qualities that are important to various users. It is a quality recreation area. There are no safety or public welfare concerns.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	There are no private structures adjacent to the boundary of the EEA. Wildland fire does pose a threat to infrastructure within the EEA (campgrounds and trails). A wildland fire inside the EEA (depending on intensity) might pose some threat to visitors in campgrounds or using the trails. The threat is not considered significant.

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision. The area is exemplary in that it contains a nationally designated handicap trail system and is managed as a Special Recreation Management Area, providing adequate protection of these important resource values.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Oregon/Mormon Pioneer/California/Pony Express National Historic Trail System
General Location	Central Wyoming, North Platte River Corridor
General Description	Emigrant Trail Route and Ruts
Acreage	Approximately 250,000 acres of mixed ownership
Values Considered	Historic Significance

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	The National Historic Trails corridor served as a travel route for thousands of pioneers, gold seekers, and others seeking a new life in the west during the mid 19th century. It is a critical cultural resource exemplifying westward expansion, settling of the west, the initiation of communication from coast to coast, and represents some of the core values that define the American experience. A comprehensive summary of the historic values imbued in the Trail can be found in <i>The Oregon/Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails Management Plan</i> (USDI 1985:45). The significance of the National Historic Trail System is recognized. However, the scattered public land ownership pattern along the system does not meet the relevance criterion for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value <i>within the public lands</i> .
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: e value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	The Oregon Trail has national historic significance in terms of the National Historic Preservation Act. Moreover, Congressional recognition is indicated by passage of an amendment (P.L. 95-625) to the National Trails System Act (P.L. 90-543) which designated the Trail as part of the system.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	Existing trail ruts are fragile and irreplaceable cultural resources; the setting (or view shed) as a significant component of National Register of Historic Places eligibility is also vulnerable to adverse change.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	As a significant cultural resource enrolled on the National Register of Historic Places, the Trail warrants protection under the National Historic Preservation Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act. The FLPMA mandate to protect cultural and scientific values applies to the Trail. Managing the Trail by RMP prescription, the Oregon/Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails Management Plan or the Wyoming state-wide trails management plan (in prep) may be more suitable vehicles for safeguarding the trail.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	Not a safety issue
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	Not a threat to human life and safety or to property.

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value *within the public lands* given the scattered public land ownership pattern. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision. The *Oregon/Mormon/Pioneer National Historic Trails Management Plan* and NHPA adequately protect this important resource.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	North Platte River Corridor
General Location	One nomination is from Pathfinder Dam to Dave Johnston Power Plant in Natrona County. Another is for the entire length of the river in Natrona, Converse, Platte, and Goshen counties.
General Description	¼ mile from the high water mark both sides of the river.
Acreage	Pathfinder Dam to Dave Johnston Power Plant: 2,387 acres BLM-administered surface and 7,840 acres federal mineral estate. Entire river: 3,488 acres BLM-administered surface and 15,286 acres federal mineral estate.
Values Considered	Fisheries (recreation), Vital habitat (as defined by WGFD) for fish, amphibian, and reptile species within the North Platte River.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	The North Platte River has significant historical and pre-historical values. The Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails followed the natural contour of the North Platte River valley more than a century ago. Additionally, the potential for pre-historic artifacts is considered to be highly significant. Moreover, the North Platte Corridor has been given a Scenic Quality Class A due to the changing topography, diverse vegetation community types, and wide range of color throughout its landscapes and for the dominance of flowing water. Modern cultural values relate to exemplary outdoor recreation opportunities.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	The North Platte River is the only large river within the boundaries of the planning area. It supports at least 18 species of fish, including the flathead chub which is listed as a status 3 species by the WGFD (common native species; habitat declining or vulnerable). In addition, 14 species of amphibians and reptiles may occur within the proposed ACEC. The area has also been defined as important winter feeding grounds for a number of raptors, including bald and golden eagles.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	Yes	The river is an important part of a natural system providing water to central Wyoming while transferring sediment loads downstream and supporting a high diversity of plant species. The relatively large riparian areas associated with the North Platte River are uncommon in Wyoming. Native cottonwood stands along the river are critical to a wintering bald eagle population. Bank stabilization along the North Platte River has caused the decline of this cottonwood seedling establishment.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	The river is considered to be a “Blue Ribbon” fishery having significant recreational values on a national level. The area from Gray Reef to Miles Landing has been designated as a fishery of National Importance. The area from Miles Landing to Dave Johnston Power Plant has been designated as a fishery of Statewide Importance. Fisheries at the Cadwell area and between Alcova Dam and Gray Reef have not been designated by the WGFD due to lack of population estimates. The economic value related to fishing this section of the North Platte River has been estimated by the WGFD to be \$3.8 million.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	There are only 12 “Blue Ribbon” fisheries in Wyoming. Historical estimates have placed the stretch of river from Gray Reef to Goose Egg Bridge second only to Miracle Mile. Recent estimates rank the Gray Reef section as having the largest trout population in the state; the Bessemer section ranks fourth. The area is considered by the WGFD as Vital Habitat; defined as habitat which directly limits a community, population, or subpopulation and restoration or replacement may not be possible. A spot creel survey resulted in an increase from 408 fishing boats in 1995 to 2,439 in 2001. Demonstrating recreational pressure along the North Platte River in 2001 to be nearly 6 times what it was only a few years earlier. Dramatic increases in recreation can result in long term and irreversible impacts to the natural environment making this area vulnerable to adverse change. Recreational impacts include but are not limited to increased soil erosion, bank degradation, changes in vegetation communities (including losses in biomass, cover, diversity), and dissection or total loss of important habitats. Woody species are often used for campfires and the spread of weeds is common in areas heavily used for recreational purposes.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	While portions of the area contain important winter feeding grounds for bald eagles, the Bald Eagle Habitat Management Plan adequately protects these important resources.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: These nominations meet the relevance and importance criteria for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value, a fish and wildlife resource, and as a natural process or system. The nominations are carried forward as potential ACECs in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Black-tailed and White-tailed Prairie Dog Complexes over 3,000 Acres
General Location	Field Office Wide
General Description	Prairie Dog Complexes over 3,000 Acres
Acreage	Black-tailed: 384 scattered acres on BLM-administered surface, White-tailed: 3,360 scattered acres on BLM-administered surface
Values Considered	Prairie Dog Habitat

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	The black-tailed prairie dog was petitioned for listing as a threatened species in July 1998. On July 15, 2002, the white-tailed prairie dog was petitioned for listing as threatened or endangered. Both species have a 99 percent reduction in historical range and are considered a “keystone species. The nomination for white-tailed prairie dogs was for 25 identified <i>large</i> white-tailed prairie dog complexes, none of are located in the planning area. BLM reviewed all white-tailed prairie dog complexes in the planning area. No complex is located on BLM-administered surface of 3,000 acres or more. This criterion is not met
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	Prairie dog colonies provide habitat for the endangered black-footed ferret, mountain plover, prairie rattlesnakes, and burrowing owls. Prairie dogs also are an important source of food for ferruginous hawks, golden eagles, swift fox, coyotes, black-footed ferrets, and badgers. Their presence promotes biological diversity on public lands. As discussed above, no complex in the planning area is located on BLM-administered surface in excess of 3,000 acres. This criterion is not met.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	The species has a 99 percent reduction in its historical range and is considered a “keystone species.” As such, these species play an important role in the ecosystem.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	Yes	Currently, black-tailed prairie dogs are a candidate species. The white-tailed prairie dog petition is pending review by US Fish and Wildlife Service
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance criteria for fish and wildlife resources or as a natural process or system *within public lands* given the size of prairie dog complexes on BLM-administered surface. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Rattlesnake Foothills
General Location	Irregular area from approximately T33N R89W to T32N R86W.
General Description	North and East of the Rattlesnake Mountains, the area is comprised of broad flats vegetated primarily by natural communities of big and black sagebrush.
Acreage	In excess of 200,000 acres of mixed ownership.
Values Considered	Natural vegetative communities.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural values are most likely present in the area, but none have been identified of significant or unique value. The VRM analysis identifies this area as Class B, which does not indicate special scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Rattlesnake Foothills area as having only a low biodiversity rating, and a low threat of impact from oil and gas habitat conversion and poor grazing management.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance and importance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Rawhide Buttes
General Location	Irregular area from approximately T29N R63W to T30N R64W.
General Description	An area of low mountains, vegetated by a mosaic of ponderosa pine communities and little bluestem grasslands.
Acreage	In excess of 300,000 acres of mixed ownership. Only scattered BLM administered surface.
Values Considered	Wildlife.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the "relevance" criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Cultural values are present in the area, but not of significance which would warrant special attention. The VRM process has not identified unique scenic values in the area.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Rawhide Buttes area as having only a low biodiversity rating, and a low threat of impact from the loss of fire regime.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance and importance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	South Bighorns/Red Wall
General Location	Northwestern Natrona County, Wyoming
General Description	Crucial wildlife habitat along the southern extent of the Big Horn Mountain range in North Central Wyoming (WGFD nomination). Cultural resources, intact vegetation communities, outstanding scenery, former Hole-in-the Wall ACEC area (Sierra Club nomination)
Acreage	168,102 acres (WGFD nomination); 153,808 (Sierra Club nomination)
Values Considered	Crucial Wildlife Habitat, Important (Rare) Vegetative Communities, Cultural Resources, Visual Resources

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	The South Bighorns/Red Wall area has a very high density and variety of cultural resources rivaling that found anywhere within Wyoming. The proposed area encompasses the traditional cultural property (TCP) at Cedar Ridge and falls within the Hole-in-the-Wall region. While the Hole-in-the-Wall and its western history association with the Wild Bunch is significant, the portion of the proposed ACEC in closest proximity to the hideout is some 9.6 km to the North in BLM’s Buffalo planning area. The outlaws were almost certainly present from time to time in the proposed area; this in and of itself does not raise the level of significance high enough to warrant the area as a significant cultural value. However when incorporated with all the other cultural resources in the proposed areas, the significance criterion is met. The area also lies within a view shed that is classified as Scenic Quality A under the latest VRM analysis. The Red Wall is a prominent escarpment of the Chugwater Formation. Its size, color, and lack of man-made intrusions make it a significant scenic value.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	The proposed area encompasses mule deer and elk crucial winter range and includes sage grouse leks. In addition to sage grouse leks, the WGFD believe sage grouse brood-rearing, nesting and wintering habitats exist within this boundary, but they do not have specific areas delineated to indicate where these habitats occur. The Red Wall/Gray Wall complex provides nesting habitat for a wide variety of raptor species.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	Yes	The area contains a rare plant community that makes up a vital component of the big game crucial winter ranges, Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany. Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany provided the greatest total digestible nutrients to mule deer in digestibility trials and is the only shrub that exceeds the protein requirements of wintering mule deer. Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany is found in Wyoming only in the Big Horn Mountain Range and on the west slope of the Teton Range. Interspersed with the mahogany, are intact Bluebunch Wheatgrass and big sagebrush communities that support a wide variety of wildlife species. Another vegetative species that is endemic only to the Bighorns is

		Williams Wafer Parsnip, a former candidate species. Although the species population is secure, its range is limited to the Big Horn Mountain Range. Two stream sections within the proposed areas (Buffalo Creek and Badwater Creek) meet the eligibility criteria but did not meet the suitability factors for Wild and Scenic River designation.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	The streams in the area are subject to occasional flash flooding, but nothing to warrant additional management actions.

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	Cultural – The proposed area contains significant prehistoric and historic cultural resources that are recognized at the national level. The Hole-in-the-Wall area 9 miles to the North in BLM’s Buffalo Field Office does have more than locally significant qualities exemplifying the end of the Frontier Period of American History. Recreation - The proposed area contain the nationally recognized South Bighorns Back Country Byway. The area also is used in the fall by big game hunters from throughout the nation, especially from the upper mid-west. Two stream sections within the proposed areas (Buffalo Creek and Badwater Creek) meet the eligibility criteria but did not meet the suitability factors for Wild and Scenic River designation.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	Yes	The Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany communities provide the backbone that supports the majority of the North Natrona mule deer herd. The Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany plants are extremely long lived and slow growing. There ability to invade a disturbed area is weak. The species appears very vulnerable to adverse change, especially from fire.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	With the exception of the TCP site at Cedar Ridge, the remainder of the area does not meet this requirement.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	None that have been identified.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	None that have been identified.

Findings: These nominations meet the relevance and importance criteria for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value; a fish and wildlife resource; and as a natural process or system. Portions of the nomination for the South Fork of the Powder River are combined with these nominations and carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Salt Creek Hazardous Area of Critical Environmental Concern
General Location	Northeastern Natrona County – a portion also extends into BLM’s Buffalo Field Office Area
General Description	In our planning area the ACEC covers Smoky Gap, Salt Creek, East Salt Creek , East Teapot, Sage Spring Creek oil and gas fields
Acreage	Approximately 235,000 acres
Values Considered	Historic Oilfield with Man-made Hazards

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	Although the Salt Creek ACEC area contains oil fields which are historically significant both to Wyoming and the country, little historical materials of any value remain.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	Area does not contain significant fish or endangered wildlife resources
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	Area does not contain significant resources which are considered endangered or sensitive.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	The Salt Creek ACEC area contains hazards which are man made such as H2S, hot water, oil spills, circulating wells, etc. There was no basis for the original designation because none of the hazards have become part of the natural process. Over the years many of the hazards have been eliminated in portions of the ACEC area while new problems have arisen in other areas. In addition, the main field in the ACEC area, Salt Creek oil field, is getting a complete face lift due to the implementation of a CO2 flood. Most of the hazards in the field will be eliminated over the next 10 – 15 years and produced water production will drop significantly.

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	Salt Creek and Teapot Dome fields are historically significant on a national basis however little historical materials of any value remain in the ACEC area.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	Area does not have any qualities to make it unique.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	Has not been recognized as warranting protection.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	Yes	There are many environmental concerns associated with all of the oil field development in the Salt Creek ACEC area. There are also concerns associated with public safety and welfare due to the presence of H ₂ S, CO ₂ , etc.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	Although there are concerns about public safety due to the H ₂ S, CO ₂ , and other hazards, the fields in the ACEC area do not pose a significant threat to human life and property.

Findings: The existing Salt Creek Hazardous ACEC designation is carried forward for reconsidered in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	South Fork Powder River
General Location	West of I-25 and North of HWY 20-26
General Description	Mixture of range and landscape types
Acreage	Approximately 550,000 acres of public land
Values Considered	Intact grasslands.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	The defined area is extremely large. Overall, the area is rather typical of Wyoming Range; however, the northwestern portion of the area (S. Bighorn/Red Wall) is known for its scenic and cultural values.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	The area contains over 30 known sage-grouse leks; largely sagebrush/grassland habitat type with mountain shrub (Curlleaf Mountain Mahogany) type in NW and scattered desert shrub (greasewood and saltbush) types; crucial big game winter ranges; whitetail prairie dogs scattered over most of area with a few blacktail prairie dog colonies to the extreme east; and potential blowout penstemon habitat in sandy areas.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	(See above) The term “rare” is subjective. Overall, there is nothing unique about the geology of the area. One might say the hydrologic/geologic interactive function of the sub-area known as the South Bighorn’s Slope is unusual, but typical of the Bighorn Slope. Aquifers are charged from streams in the area and flow is both surface and subsurface.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to) areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	Potential for H2S escaping into the atmosphere in area oilfields. There is always a chance of flash flooding in the area drainages due to summer thunderstorm activity. Some areas, especially the Mike’s Draw, Dean Springs and Anderson Draw areas have unstable soils that are subject to sluffing on rare occasions. However, one would say that “overall” the area is relatively safe.

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	Most of the area has local importance, however only the S. Bighorns/Red Wall area has national importance due to cultural, scenic and the presence of a national back country byway.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	Over all the area is rather typical. The Red Wall area and other areas with very fragile soils such as the sand dunes and erosive soils found in the Anderson Draw, Blue Hill and Camel hump areas would be considered fragile.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	Only as described as hazards on the preceding page and in specific areas such as oil fields.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	Though hazards exist, overall the threat to human life, safety or property is not significant.

Findings: This nomination does not meet the relevance and importance criteria and is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision. The South Bighorns/Red Wall portion of the South Fork of the Powder River Watershed is addressed with two other nominations specifically identifying this area.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Table Mountain Wildlife Unit
General Location	20 miles S of Torrington, WY
General Description	Cooperatively managed (BLM & WGFD) waterfowl and upland habitats
Acreage	1,540
Values Considered	Waterfowl production and hunting, upland game bird (pheasant) hunting, birding, fishing, livestock grazing

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	Probably one of the most productive areas in Southeast Wyoming for waterfowl and shorebirds. A well-known birders’ stop for Southeast Wyoming because of the wide variety of birds. The wildlife unit has a management plan and has been cooperatively managed by WGFD and BLM for 40 years.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	Yes	The unit does require input of irrigation water. With this water, the unit contains 10 ponds with wetlands, a 2-mile stream with riparian vegetation, shelterbelts, and adjacent habitats.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	Is locally significant to Southeast Wyoming, extending to Casper, Western Nebraska, and Northern Colorado.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	This is area is not exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change. While availability of water is of question for the future, waters within the planning area are managed by the State of Wyoming.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination meets the relevance criteria for a fish and wildlife resource and as a natural process or system but does not meet the importance criteria. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form –Casper Field Office – RMP Process

Area Considered	Teapot Dome
General Location	Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 3 in Northeast Natrona County, Wyoming
General Description	An active oil field nearing its production life time, the area was the subject of the Teapot Dome Scandal in the 1920s.
Acreage	Approximately 9,500 acres
Values Considered	Historic

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	No	The Teapot Dome Scandal was a decade long event that plagued and ultimately discredited the administration of President Warren G. Harding. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall wrested control of the Reserve from the Secretary of Navy. Fall received bribes of about \$400,000.00, and then secretly issued an oil lease for NPR-3 to Harry Sinclair’s Mammoth Oil Company without competition. The significance of this area is recognized. Since the area is not public land administered by the BLM, the relevance criterion for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value <i>within the public lands</i> is not met.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	No	NPR-3 provides habitat for deer and antelope as well as some fisheries and upland game bird habitat. The habitat is not essential for maintaining species diversity or existence.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	Teapot Dome is an aging oil field with declining production. It is nearing the end of its productive lifetime, and efforts are underway by the Department of Energy to sell the reserve. The Rocky Mountain Oil Field Testing Center (RMOTC) is an industry sponsored venture aimed at testing enhanced recovery techniques for similarly aging oil fields. The sale as proposed would allow for privatization of NPR-3 and continuity of RMOTC by industry and education interests.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	No	Many hazards are present in the field as a result of historic oil and gas production. A good deal of clean up effort is needed to make NPR-3 suitable for privatization. Among these clean up efforts are plugging old well bores, removal of wastes, and reclamation and reseeding of the disturbed land surface (Based on a conversation with Mark Milliken at RMOTC).

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	Yes	As noted, NPR-3 is the site of the Teapot Dome Scandal, an event of national significance.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No.	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision as none of the lands within the nomination area are under the jurisdiction of the BLM.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form -Casper Field Office - RMP Process

Area Considered	Upper Antelope Creek, WY
General Location	West Converse County, WY. Roughly corresponds to Platte River RMP – RMU 11: Ross.
General Description	Rolling uplands of sedimentary rock surrounding Upper Antelope Creek. Uplands are generally sandy and support needlegrass and prairie sandreed. Herbaceous riparian communities are located along the creek.
Acreage	In excess of 400,000 acres of mixed ownership.
Values Considered	Wildlife, cultural – Bozeman Trail, coal mining, and oil and gas development.

IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA

To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Existing ACECS are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613.2.21.A.1).

Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:

Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	Yes	Segments of the Bozeman trail occur within this identified area. The scenic qualities identified by the VRM process are low.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	Yes	Prairie dog towns, sage grouse strutting grounds.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	No	
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	No	

Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	No	The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Planning in the Northern Great Plains Steppe (1999) designated the Upper Antelope Creek area as having only a medium biodiversity rating, and a low threat of impact from oil and gas development.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	No	
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	No	
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	No	
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	No	

Findings: This nomination met the relevance criteria for a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value as well as a fish and wildlife resource. However, the importance criteria were not met. The nomination is not carried forward as a potential ACEC in the RMP revision.