

Appendix U

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

1. AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) are lands where special management attention is needed to prevent irreparable damage to important, unique, and significant historic, cultural, and scenic values; fish or wildlife resources; and natural systems or processes; or to protect life and safety from natural hazards (Bureau of Land Management [BLM] Manual 1613 - .02). The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs the BLM to give priority to the identification and potential designation of ACECs through the revision of resource management plans.

1.2. AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN ANALYSIS AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

The process and procedural requirements for the designation of ACECs through Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions is established in BLM planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1610.7-2), which state that ACEC protection and designation shall be considered throughout the planning process. Specific guidance for ACEC analysis and designation includes the nomination of ACECs; the evaluation of nominated ACECs to determine whether they have values, resources, systems, or processes that meet relevance and importance criteria; the development of management prescriptions for potential ACECs; the determination of whether “special management attention” is required to protect the relevance values, resources, systems, or processes; and the incorporation of potential ACECs into plan alternatives. Lands proposed for ACEC designation must meet the relevance and importance criteria, and they must require “special management attention” to protect their relevance values, resources, systems, or processes.

1.2.1. RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE CRITERIA

Nominations for ACECs must be evaluated in order to determine whether they meet the required relevance and importance criteria. A nomination must meet one or more of the relevance and importance criteria in order to be considered as a potential ACEC.

Relevance Criteria: An area meets the relevance criteria if it contains one or more of the following:

- 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);
- a fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity);
- a natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities that are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features); and/or
- natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the RMP process that it has become part of a natural process.

For Tres Rios Field Office (TRFO) Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the evaluation of whether a resource or system meets the relevance criteria for plant, fish, and wildlife species and for plant communities was linked to NatureServe Conservation Status ranks.

NatureServe and its member natural heritage programs have developed a consistent method for evaluating the relative imperilment of both species and ecological communities based on the best available science. These assessments lead to the designation of a conservation status rank. The three

broad categories that factor into these rankings include rarity, trends, and threats. Conservation status rankings include secure (G5), apparently secure (G4), vulnerable (G3), imperiled (G2), critically imperiled (G1), possibly extinct or eliminated (GH), and presumed extinct or eliminated (GX). The Colorado Natural Heritage Program provides a similar statewide conservation status rank (reported as “S” rankings). The BLM has a long history of partnership with NatureServe, and have collaborated on a broad range of projects in such areas as planning, sensitive species inventory and assessments, ecological classification and mapping, and data sharing and technology development.

Nominated ACECs in the TRFO meet the relevance criteria for fish and wildlife resources and for natural systems if they contain plant species, fish species, wildlife species, or plant communities that have a NatureServe Conservation Status rank of G1, G2, S1, or S2, or are federally listed species, proposed or candidate species for federal listing, BLM State Director’s sensitive species, or are endemic species to TRFO lands. The conservation concerns and vulnerability of species and plant communities that have a NatureServe Conservation Status rank of G3 or S3 are acknowledged, but because of their relative abundance compared to the other classes of species, G3/S3 or higher ranked species or plant communities do not meet the relevance criteria unless they meet one of the other criteria listed above.

Importance Criteria: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard that meets the relevance criteria must have substantial significance to meet the importance criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

- has more than locally significant qualities that give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource;
- has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or 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;
- has qualities that warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare; and/or
- poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.

1.2.2. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

“Special management” refers to management prescriptions expressly developed to protect the relevance values, resources, systems, or processes of ACECs from the potential adverse effects of management actions (BLM Manual 1613). The TRFO developed the following criteria to determine if a potential ACEC requires special management attention:

- Threats from ground-disturbing management activities, including those that increase the establishment and spread of invasive plants. ACECs with more management activities and more lands affected by those management activities have more potential for adverse effects to their relevance values, resources, systems, or processes.
- Potential ACECs with species or plant communities that have a G1 or S1 NatureServe Conservation Status rank are highly vulnerable to disturbance and extinction and need special management attention.
- Potential ACECs with three or more occurrences of species and/or plant communities that meet the relevance criteria (which includes those with a NatureServe Conservation Status rank of G1, G2, S1, or S2)
- Potential ACECs with resources that have a biodiversity rank of B1 (see definition for this ranking under Section 1.3 below) have outstanding biodiversity significance worthy of special management attention.
- Significance of the habitat for species or plant communities that meet the relevance criteria, or significance of the archeology resources. ACECs that contain much of the total known habitat or many of the total documented occurrences of species or plant communities that meet the relevance criteria, and ACECs that contain world-renowned archeology resources and/or lands with very high densities of archeology resources

- need special management attention.
- Potential ACECs that occur in remote locations have few roads within and adjacent to them or are associated with steep slopes and/or rugged topography are less likely to be disturbed by management actions, so they are less likely to need special management attention to protect their relevance values, resources, systems, or processes. ACECs that are easily accessible by roads and that have relatively flat and gentle topography are more likely to be disturbed by management actions so they are more likely to need special management attention to protect their relevance values, resources, systems, or processes.
- Potential ACECs that occur in the Dolores River Canyon wilderness study area (WSA), the Dolores River Canyon area, or other special designations receive additional management prescriptions that protect relevance values, including NSO stipulations, so they are less likely to need special management attention.

1.3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR NOMINATED ACECs

In the Draft LRMP, 22 sites were evaluated by the LRMP interdisciplinary planning team to determine whether they meet the relevance and importance criteria as set forth in BLM Manual 1613 and should be considered for ACEC designation (see Table U.1 and Figure U-1). Eight sites were jointly nominated by the San Juan Citizens Alliance and Center for Native Ecosystems, and 14 were nominated by the LRMP interdisciplinary planning team. Most of the nominated ACECs are associated with potential conservation areas (PCAs) that were developed by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. A PCA represents the primary area needed to support the long-term survival of a rare species or plant community within it. PCAs were nominated for consideration as ACECs through an assessment conducted for the TRFO by the Nature Conservancy called *San Juan Planning for Biodiversity Model Project Phase 1 and 2* (Kram et al. 2005 and Oliver et al. 2006). Colorado Natural Heritage Program PCA Biodiversity Significance Ranks were used to identify which PCAs had the highest levels of biodiversity significance.

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program has developed a consistent method for evaluating biodiversity significance of PCAs based on the best available science. These assessments lead to the designation of a biodiversity significance rank. The three broad categories that factor into these rankings include size, quality, and landscape integrity. Biodiversity significance rankings include general biodiversity interest (B5), moderate biodiversity significance (B4), high biodiversity significance (B3), very high biodiversity significance (B2), and outstanding biodiversity significance (B1).

BLM Manual 1613, which provides direction for the designation and management of ACECs, states, “All areas which meet the relevance and importance criteria must be identified as potential ACECs and fully considered for designation and management in resource management planning.” Of the 22 sites evaluated for the LRMP, 19 sites were found to meet both the relevance and importance criteria, as shown in Table U.1.

Table U.1: Areas Nominated for Area of Critical Environmental Concern Designation

Area	Meets Relevance and Importance Criteria?	Considered in LRMP Alternatives for ACEC Designation?
Anasazi Culture ¹	X	X
Cement Creek	X	
Cinnamon Pass	X	
Coyote Wash	X	
Disappointment Valley	X	
Dry Creek Basin	X	
Dolores River Canyon: Slick Rock to Bedrock	X	
Grassy Hills	X	X
Gypsum Valley ²	X	X
Horse Range Mesa		
Lake Como	X	

Area	Meets Relevance and Importance Criteria?	Considered in LRMP Alternatives for ACEC Designation?
McIntyre Canyon	X	
Mesa Verde Entrance	X	
Muleshoe Bench	X	
Northdale	X	
Picayune Gulch		
Silvey's Pocket	X	X
Slick Rock ³	X	
Snaggletooth	X	
Spring Creek	X	

¹ Anasazi Culture is the new name for the area identified as Mud Springs in the Draft LRMP/EIS.
² Big Gypsum Valley and Little Gypsum Valley, as identified in the Draft LRMP /EIS, have been combined into one area known as Gypsum Valley.
³ The Slick Rock area also includes the Slick Rock Hill nominated ACEC.

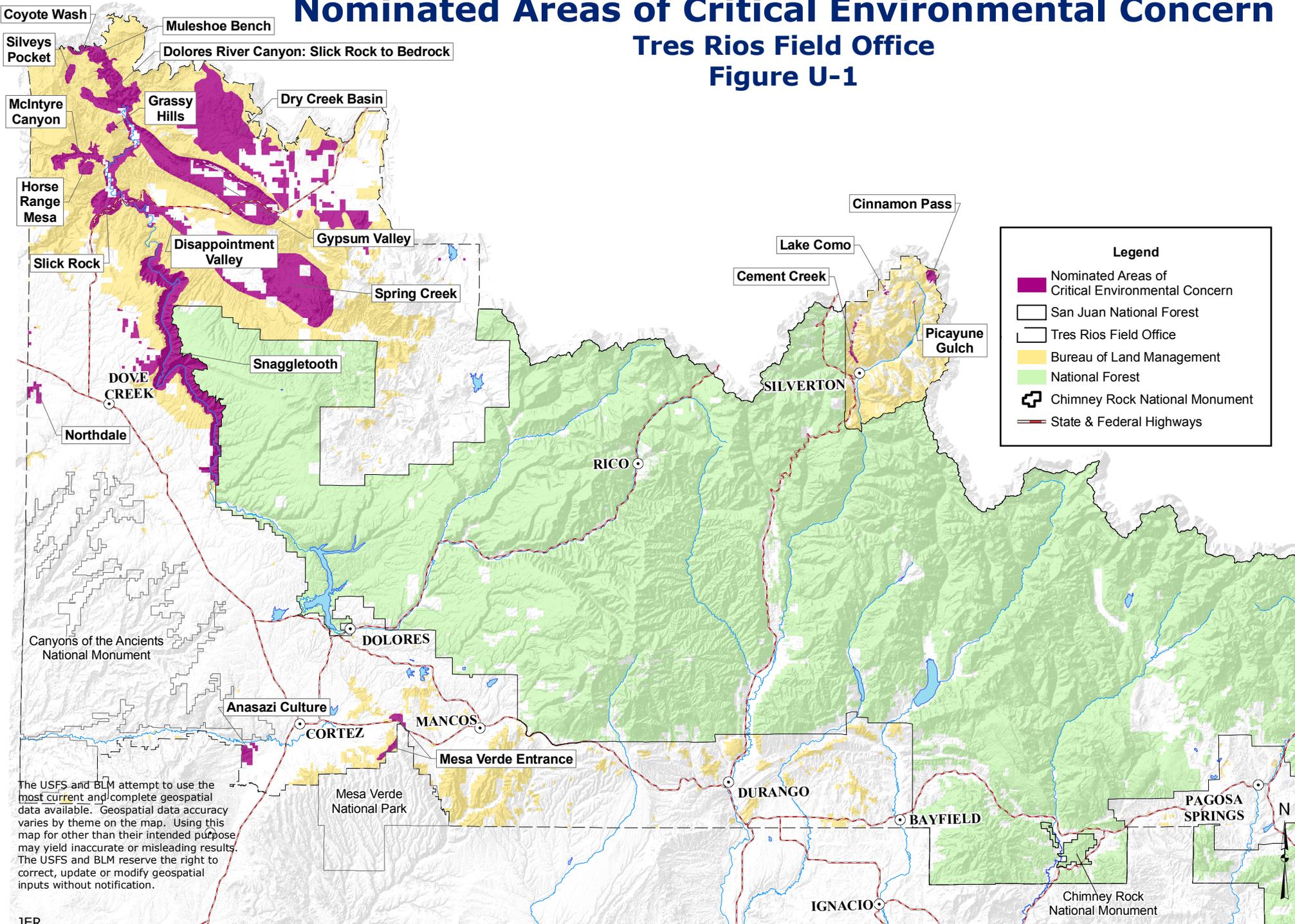
Only four proposed ACECs were brought forward in the Draft LRMP alternatives and listed in the *Federal Register* Notice, dated December 14, 2007. In the Proposed LRMP, the Anasazi Culture and Gypsum Valley areas are analyzed for ACEC designation in Alternatives B and C, while Grassy Hills and Silvey's Pocket are only analyzed in Alternative C. The remaining 15 areas that meet both relevance and importance criteria were not included in the alternatives to be analyzed as potential ACECs. To correct this oversight, the BLM will consider these potential ACECs in a future plan amendment.

In the interim, the relevance and importance values identified within these 15 areas are largely protected through specific direction in the LRMP. While not exhaustive, a description of management actions, allocations, oil and gas leasing stipulations and other prescriptions proposed in the LRMP under Alternative B that will provide protection for the relevance and importance criteria in these 15 areas is included with evaluations below. The protective actions listed are principally those that specifically address the relevance and importance values of each nominated area; there are other LRMP management prescriptions that provide additional protection but may not be listed below because of their broad application across the planning area. In addition, protection of identified relevance and importance values will be considered during project-level analysis of any management actions or project proposals.

Nominated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Tres Rios Field Office

Figure U-1



The USFS and BLM attempt to use the most current and complete geospatial data available. Geospatial data accuracy varies by theme on the map. Using this map for other than their intended purpose may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The USFS and BLM reserve the right to correct, update or modify geospatial inputs without notification.

JER
 NAD 83, Polyconic Projection
 June 27, 2013

0 3.5 7 14 Miles

San Juan National Forest and Tres Rios Field Office
 LRMP and FEIS

1.4. EVALUATIONS OF NOMINATED ACECs

Anasazi Culture

Nominator	Existing ACEC; re-nominated by LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	Montezuma County about 1 mile west of Cortez
Description	This ACEC contains BLM lands within the Mud Springs PCA. In 1985, the San Juan/San Miguel RMP designated 156,000 acres of BLM land as the Anasazi Culture Multiple Use Area ACEC due to significant cultural resources. In 2000, President Clinton issued a proclamation designating most of this ACEC as the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. The Anasazi Culture potential ACEC, which is currently an ACEC under the name Mud Springs/Remnant Anasazi ACEC, contains what is left of the original Anasazi Culture Multiple Use Area ACEC. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration as ACECs when resource management plans are revised (BLM Manual 1613 - .21A1)
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains significant cultural values in the form of rare and sensitive archeological, religious, and cultural resources important to Native Americans. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked short-stem penstemon (<i>Penstemon breviculus</i>) and G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch (<i>Astragalus naturitensis</i>), which are natural systems in the form of rare (G2 and S2 ranked) terrestrial plant species. Naturita milkvetch is a BLM State Director's sensitive species and therefore qualifies as a relevance value under the natural process or system criteria.
Importance criteria	The rare and sensitive archeological, religious, and cultural resources meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities which give them special worth, consequence, meaning, and distinctiveness, and because they have qualities that make them fragile, rare, irreplaceable, unique, and vulnerable to adverse change. Short-stem penstemon and Naturita milkvetch meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 and S2 ranks) which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Naturita milkvetch also meets the importance criteria because of its designation on the BLM State Director's sensitive species list which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Anasazi Culture nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria so it was identified as a potential ACEC and further analyzed in the planning process. Special management attention is expressly required to protect this potential ACEC and its relevance values and systems because this area has the highest density of Ancestral Puebloan architectural sites on the TRFO, and because it occurs in a location where threats (particularly recreational activities) to its cultural values and rare plants are very likely. The Anasazi Culture nominated ACEC is considered for ACEC designation in Alternatives B and C of the LRMP.

Cement Creek

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Juan County, northwest of the town of Silverton
Description	This nominated ACEC includes all BLM lands within the Cement Creek Iron Fen PCA. Colorado's iron fens are unique because their water pH is similar to acid poor fens, while the ionic strength of their water is similar to rich fens. Elevation is 10,200 to 11,300 feet and size is about 455 acres.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Engelmann spruce/resin birch/water sedge/sphagnum (<i>Picea engelmannii/Betula glandulosa/Carex aquatilis/Sphagnum angustifolium</i>) woodlands, which is a natural system in the form of a rare and relic terrestrial plant community.
Importance criteria	The Engelmann spruce/resin birch/water sedge/sphagnum plant community meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (G2 rank) and relic status (fens take thousands of years to develop), which gives it special worth, distinctiveness, and cause for concern; and this plant community meets the importance criteria

	because its rarity and relic status gives it qualities that make it irreplaceable, unique, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Cement Creek nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Cement Creek	
Engelmann spruce/ resin birch/ water sedge/ sphagnum Woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.

Cinnamon Pass

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Juan County, about 10 air miles northeast of Silverton
Description	This nominated ACEC contains alpine BLM lands within the Cinnamon Pass PCA. Size is about 562 acres of BLM land and elevation is 12,000 to 13,328 feet.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains S1 ranked native sedge (<i>Carex vernacula</i>) herbaceous vegetation which is a natural system in the form of a rare riparian plant community.
Importance criteria	Native sedge herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S1 rank) which gives it special worth, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Cinnamon Pass nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, and because it occurs in a relatively remote location where management actions are unlikely to occur.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Cinnamon Pass	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Native sedge herbaceous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities.

Coyote Wash

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	Southwest Montrose County, about 9.5 air miles south of Paradox
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Coyote Wash PCA. Coyote Wash is a steep-sided canyon that joins the Dolores River Canyon between Slick Rock and Bedrock. It is 840 acres of BLM land and occurs at 5,100 to 5,800 feet. This site is in the Dolores River Canyon WSA.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Kachina daisy (<i>Erigeron</i>

	<p><i>kachinensis</i>), S1 ranked Eastwood’s monkeyflower (<i>Mimulus eastwoodiae</i>), and S2 ranked stream orchid (<i>Epipactis gigantea</i>), which are natural systems in the form of rare terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains Kachina daisy and Eastwood’s monkeyflower and stream orchid, which are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked spotted bat (<i>Euderma maculatum</i>) (and its habitat), which is a rare (S2 rank) wildlife resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked needle-and-thread (<i>Hesperostipa comata</i>) Great Basin herbaceous vegetation which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community.</p>
Importance criteria	<p>Kachina daisy, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, stream orchid, and spotted bat meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2, S1, S2 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and these species meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Kachina daisy, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, stream orchid, and spotted bat also meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Kachina daisy, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, stream orchid, and spotted bat also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S2 rank), which gives it special worth and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change.</p>
Determination	<p>The Coyote Wash nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance resources and systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, because it occurs in a remote location where management actions are unlikely, because of its topographic inaccessibility, and through its inclusion in the Dolores River Canyon WSA (which includes management prescriptions that protect rare plant and animal species, and rare plant communities including an NSO stipulation).</p>
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Coyote Wash	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominated ACEC is within Dolores River WSA. • 2.2.73 Agency actions should be designed to avoid or minimize impacts in canyon escarpments, unless the activity is designed to maintain or restore the composition, structure, or function of the terrestrial ecosystems within those escarpments.
Kachina daisy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Stream orchid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Eastwood monkeyflower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Spotted bat and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.3.38 Bats: Human access at occupied caves or abandoned mines will be restricted as necessary during the following periods to maintain essential life cycle processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Maternity sites - April 15 through September 1 o Swarming sites - August 15 through October 15 (30 minutes before sunset to 30 minutes after sunrise) o Winter hibernacula - October 15 through May • NSO stipulation: Major river corridors. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • NSO stipulation: Bats. • Lease notice: Bats.
Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities.

Disappointment Valley

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems
Location	San Miguel County about 20 miles southwest of Naturita
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Disappointment Valley Northwest PCA. Elevation is 5,600 to 5,800 feet and size is about 2,720 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Gypsum Valley cat-eye (<i>Cryptantha gypsophila</i>) and G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch, which are natural systems in the form of rare (G2 ranks) terrestrial plant species. It also meets the relevance criteria because Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list.
Importance criteria	Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and these species meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Disappointment Valley nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, because ground-disturbing

	management activities will affect a small number of acres, because its biodiversity rank is B2, because the threat from invasive plants is minor, and because the habitat within this ACEC for Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch has no special significance.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Disappointment Valley	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants. • CSU: Lands with biological soil crusts.
Gypsum Valley cat-eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.68 Projects or activities that occur in shale and gypsum soils that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the soil characteristics necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.77 Management activities in areas with biological soil crusts should be designed to minimize adverse impacts to the soil crusts. • 2.2.80 Ground disturbance should be limited or otherwise mitigated on gypsum soils and organic soils (histosols) in order to protect the ecological integrity of these rare and unique soils and the rare plants associated with these soils. • CSU: Lands with gypsum soils.
Naturita milkvetch	See protections common to all values.

Dolores River Canyon

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Miguel County and southwestern Montrose County between Slick Rock and Bedrock
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Dolores River Canyon – Slick Rock to Bedrock PCA. It includes Dolores River Canyon lands for approximately 50 miles. Most of this area is roadless and accessible only by raft, canoe, or kayak. This site is included in the Dolores River Canyon area (see Volume II, Section 3.23) and part of it occurs in the Dolores River Canyon WSA. Elevation is 4,966 to 6,200 feet and size is 18,083 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G1 ranked wild privet shrublands, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Mancos columbine (<i>Aquilegia micrantha</i>) - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch, and S1 ranked Eastwood’s monkeyflower and G2 ranked stream orchid <i>Epipactis gigantea</i>),, which are natural systems in the form of rare (G2 and S1 ranks) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Naturita milkvetch and Eastwood’s monkeyflower are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains canyon tree frog (<i>Hyla arenicolor</i>) and G2 ranked peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>) (and their habitat), which are wildlife resources that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains flannel-mouthed sucker (<i>Catostomas latipinnis</i>) (and its habitat), which is a fish resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, and because the site contains habitat for G2 ranked roundtail chub (<i>Gila robusta</i>), which is a fish resource that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked Yuma skipper (<i>Ochlodes yuma</i>) (and its habitat), which is a rare wildlife resource. This site also meets the relevance criteria because of its significant scenic value in the form of diverse and extreme topography, and diverse and colorful sedimentary geology.
Importance criteria	The wild privet Shrublands, Mancos columbine - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation, Naturita milkvetch, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, stream orchid, Yuma skipper, and peregrine falcon meet the importance criteria due to their rarity (G1, G2, S1, S2 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and these fish and wildlife resources and natural systems meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, and vulnerable to adverse change. Naturita milkvetch, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, canyon tree frog, peregrine falcon, and flannelmouth sucker also meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive

	species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Naturita milkvetch, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, stream orchid, canyon tree frog, flannelmouth sucker, peregrine falcon, wild privet, and Mancos milkvetch (<i>Astragalus humillimus</i>) - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species or plant communities in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. The scenic value also meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to the large size and extreme depth of the canyon and the diverse colorful geology of the canyon, which gives it special worth and distinctiveness.
Determination	The Dolores River Canyon nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance resources and systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, because it occurs in a remote location where management actions are unlikely, because of its topographic inaccessibility, and through its inclusion in both the Dolores River Canyon area and the Dolores River Canyon WSA that protect rare plant and animal species, rare plant communities, and scenic values.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Dolores River Canyon	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Dolores River Canyon Unique Area. • 2.2.73 Agency actions should be designed to avoid or minimize impacts in canyon escarpments, unless the activity is designed to maintain or restore the composition, structure, or function of the terrestrial ecosystems within those escarpments. • NSO: Major river corridors. • NSO: Dolores River Canyon.
Wild privet shrublands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Mancos columbine-Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and

	<p>hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet shrublands and boxelder/river birch woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Naturita milkvetch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Stream orchid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Eastwood’s monkeyflower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Canyon tree frog and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.3.50 In order to determine site occupation, pre-implementation surveys may be required for projects occurring in habitats that may support populations of sensitive species and species listed or proposed under the ESA, as determined by an agency biologist. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Peregrine falcon and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.25 Protection of nests from new structures and human encroachment (see LRMP Table 2.3.2). • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens
Flannelmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are

sucker and its habitat	<p>occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Roundtail chub habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Yuma skipper and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.43 Butterflies: Management actions that could adversely impact occupied habitat used by special status butterfly species for reproduction must be designed to sustain host plant species. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Significant scenic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSO stipulation: High scenic integrity objective and Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II areas.

Dry Creek Basin

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems (nominated under name “San Miguel Basin”)
Location	San Miguel County, Colorado
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the San Miguel Basin PCA. Elevation is about 5,300 to 6,700 feet. This nominated ACEC contains the Dry Creek Basin subpopulation of the San Miguel population of the Gunnison sage-grouse (<i>Centrocercus minimus</i>), which is a species that is restricted to a small area in western Colorado and eastern Utah. Its range has diminished due to the loss, fragmentation, and degradation of sagebrush shrublands caused by agricultural development, mining and energy development, reservoirs, power lines, roads, urban development, and treatments to control sagebrush (including burning, mechanical methods, and herbicides). Livestock overgrazing, the spread of non-native grasses and forbs, and the accelerating increase in the size and extent of wildfires due to the widespread invasion by cheatgrass (Braun 1998) have also affected habitat quality. Management of the San Miguel Basin population of the Gunnison sage-grouse is a cooperative effort with the BLM, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), State Wildlife Areas, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and private landowners, and management is guided by the Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G1 ranked Gunnison sage-grouse (and its habitat), which is a rare (G1 rank) wildlife resource, and this site meets the relevance criteria because the Gunnison sage-grouse is a wildlife resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Gypsum Valley cat-eye, which is a natural system in the form of a rare (G2 rank) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Gypsum Valley cat-eye is a natural system that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list.
Importance criteria	Gunnison sage-grouse meet the importance criteria because its rarity (G1 rank) gives it more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and it meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities or circumstances that make it sensitive, rare, unique, threatened, and vulnerable to adverse change. Gunnison sage-grouse and Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meet the importance criteria because of their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Gunnison sage-grouse and Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Dry Creek Basin nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria

	(Gunnison sage-grouse and its habitat). It does not however expressly require additional “special management attention” to protect its relevance and importance values because this potential ACEC and its relevance and importance values can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general management prescriptions in the LRMP, and by guidance described in the Gunnison Sage Grouse Rangelwide Conservation Plan.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Dry Creek Basin	
Gunnison sage-grouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.45 Gunnison sage-grouse: Management activities must not occur from March 1 to June 30 within occupied habitat suitable for nesting to allow for breeding and December 1 to March 15 for known winter habitat. • 2.3.46 Gunnison sage-grouse: New structural improvements or surface disturbance must not occur within known winter concentration area or within a 0.6-mile radius of known Gunnison sage-grouse leks. • 2.3.47 Gunnison sage-grouse: In occupied habitat fuels treatments must be designed and implemented with an emphasis on protecting and enhancing existing sagebrush ecosystems • 2.3.48 Gunnison sage-grouse: Invasive vegetation must be monitored and controlled post-treatment. • 2.3.70 Structures in sage-grouse habitat should be constructed to limit risk of collision and predation. • 2.3.71 New noise sources resulting from management activities should not contribute to noise levels that negatively impact sage-grouse leks during the active lek season (March 1 to June 30) based on best available science. • 2.3.72 Projects in occupied Gunnison sage-grouse habitat should be designed to mitigate or avoid the direct or indirect loss of habitat necessary for maintenance of the local population or reduce to acceptable levels the direct or indirect loss of important habitat necessary for sustainable local populations. Projects will incorporate special reclamation measures or design features that accelerate recovery and/or re-establishment of affected sage-grouse habitat as much as possible. • 2.3.73 Applicable BMPs should be applied to all mineral proposals as Conditions of Approval within occupied sage-grouse habitat to provide for adequate effective habitat and breeding, nesting, and wintering habitat. • 2.3.74 Remote methodologies for monitoring, transporting fluids to centralized collection tanks, etc., should be utilized to minimize human disturbance in Gunnison sage-grouse habitat. • 2.3.75 Fuels treatments should be designed to meet strategic protection of identified occupied sage-grouse habitat. • 2.3.76 Use of native seeds should be used for revegetation following fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives • 2.3.77 Within occupied Gunnison sage-grouse critical habitat the Rangelwide Conservation Plan grazing guidelines should be incorporated when appropriate. • 2.3.78 Within occupied habitat, grazing in treatment areas should be deferred for 2 growing season after treatment, unless needed for seedbed preparation or desired understory and overstory are established. • 2.3.79 When developing or modifying water developments, BMPs (see Appendix N) should be used to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus on sage-grouse within occupied habitat. • NSO stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse occupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse occupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse proposed unoccupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse noise restrictions, occupied and unoccupied critical habitat.
Gypsum Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive

cat-eye	<p>plants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSU stipulation: Lands with gypsum soils. ● CSU stipulation: Lands with 25% to 35% slopes and lands with shale soils.
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Grassy Hills

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Miguel County, Colorado
Description	This nominated ACEC includes all BLM lands within the Grassy Hills PCA. It is located on a sandstone bench southwest of the confluence of Gypsum Creek and the Dolores River. Elevation is 6,700 feet and size is 420 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community
Importance criteria	Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S2 rank), which gives it special worth and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it rare and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Grassy Hills nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it may not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance system can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions. This potential ACEC is considered for ACEC designation in Alternative C.

Gypsum Valley

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems (nominated as two separate areas: Big Gypsum Valley and Little Gypsum Valley)
Location	San Miguel County about 14 miles southwest of Naturita, Colorado
Description	The Gypsum Valley nominated ACEC includes all BLM lands within the Big and Little Gypsum Valley PCAs. The Big Gypsum Valley and Little Gypsum Valley nominated ACECs were combined due to their close proximity and because of the similar relevance values they contain (BLM Manual 1613 - .22A5). This nominated ACEC contains gypsum outcrops of the Hermosa geologic formation that are the habitat of rare plants. Elevation is 6,100 to 6,500 feet and size is about 18,931 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Gypsum Valley cat-eye, G1 ranked <i>Lecanora gypsicola</i> , S1 ranked nodule cracked lichen (<i>Acarospora nodulosa</i> var. <i>nodulosa</i>), S2 ranked flex-stemmed mariposa lily (<i>Calochortus uniflorus</i>), S1 ranked Nealley’s dropseed (<i>Sporobolus nealleyi</i>), G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch, and S2 ranked short-stem penstemon, which are all natural systems in the form of rare terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains unique gypsum outcrops, which are a natural system in the form of a rare geological feature.
Importance criteria	Gypsum Valley cat-eye, <i>Lecanora gypsicola</i> , nodule cracked lichen, flex-stemmed mariposa lily, Naturita milkvetch, Short-stem penstemon, and Nealley’s dropseed meet the importance criteria because their rarity (G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe Conservation Status ranks) gives them more than locally significant qualities, which gives them special worth and cause for concern (they are at a high risk of global extinction or state extirpation because they have such few occurrences), and these species meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meets the importance criteria because a large portion of its entire range and most of the documented occurrences of the species are on the TRFO, which gives it more than locally significant qualities that are of special worth and cause for concern. Gypsum Valley cat-eye and Naturita milkvetch also meet the importance criteria because of their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species lists, which gives them special worth, meaning,

	distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Gypsum Valley cat-eye, <i>Lecanora gypsicola</i> , nodule cracked lichen, Naturita milkvetch, short-stem penstemon, and flex-stemmed mariposa lily also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. The gypsum outcrops also meet the importance criteria because they have qualities or circumstances that make them sensitive, rare, unique, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Gypsum Valley nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria so it was identified as a potential ACEC and further analyzed in the BLM planning process. In addition to the general management prescriptions, special management attention (in the form of additional management prescriptions specific to this ACEC, as described above) is needed to protect the outstanding and vulnerable relevance values within this ACEC because this ACEC is subject to many ground-disturbing management activities (including off-road-vehicle use, livestock grazing, and oil and gas development) that could disturb many acres; because the relevance values are subject to competition from invasive plants (brought in on the extensive road network within this ACEC), which could quickly become established on the many acres affected by the many ground-disturbing management activities associated with this ACEC; because this ACEC contains three occurrences of a G1 ranked species (<i>Lecanora gypsicola</i>), five occurrences of a G2 ranked species Gypsum Valley cat-eye), three occurrences of an S1 ranked species (nodule cracked lichen <i>Acarospora nodulosa</i> var. <i>nodulosa</i> , and an occurrence of S1 ranked Nealley’s dropseed, all of which are highly vulnerable to disturbance and extinction; because of the significance of the habitat within this ACEC since the ACEC contains such a large portion of the entire range, much of the total known habitat, and many of the total documented occurrences of Gypsum Valley cat-eye, which means that management actions within this ACEC could have a significant effect on the long-term viability of that species; because the gypsum soils habitat for Gypsum Valley cat-eye, and the gypsum rim lichen is easily disturbed and highly erosive; because this site has a biodiversity rank of B1 for outstanding biodiversity significance; and because this area is easily accessible (highly roaded and relatively flat topography). This potential ACEC is considered for ACEC designation in Alternatives B and C.

Horse Range Mesa

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Miguel County, Colorado
Description	This nominated ACEC occurs in the Morrison geologic formation. Brigham Young University excavated vertebrae of a Camasaurus dinosaur specimen from this site and wrote a report on its findings. Elevation is 6,700 feet and size is 160 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains a Camasaurus dinosaur specimen, which is a natural system in the form of a rare geological feature.
Importance criteria	The Camasaurus dinosaur specimen does not meet the importance criteria because according to the associated BYU report, the dinosaur specimen does not have more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, and the dinosaur specimen does not have qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Horse Range Mesa nominated ACEC meets the relevance criteria but does not meet the importance criteria so it was not identified as a potential ACEC.

Lake Como

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Juan County, about 7 air miles north-northeast of Silverton
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Lake Como PCA. It is a turquoise lake at the headwaters of the Uncompahgre River. Elevation is 12,000 to 13,447 feet and size is 100 acres of BLM land.

Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Rocky Mountain draba (<i>Draba graminea</i>), which is a natural system in the form of a rare (G2 rank) terrestrial plant species.
Importance criteria	Rocky Mountain draba meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (G2 rank), which gives it special worth and cause for concern, and Rocky Mountain draba meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Rocky Mountain draba also meets the importance criteria because of its designation as a high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Lake Como nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance and importance values can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions and because it occurs in a relatively remote location at high elevations in the alpine zone where management actions are unlikely and threats are minimal.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Lake Como	
Rocky Mountain draba	Protection of this value will be considered during project-level analysis of any management actions or project proposals.

McIntyre Canyon

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems
Location	5 air miles northwest of Slick Rock, in northwest San Miguel County
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the McIntyre Canyon PCA. McIntyre Canyon is connected to the Dolores River Canyon. Elevation is 5,400 to 6,200 feet and size is 2,980 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch and S1 ranked Eastwood’s monkeyflower, which are natural systems in the form of rare (G2 and S1 ranks) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Naturita milkvetch and Eastwood’s monkeyflower are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked pinyon-/needle-and-thread woodlands, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Mancos milkvetch - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community. This site also meets the relevance criteria because of its significant scenic value.
Importance criteria	Naturita milkvetch, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, pinyon-juniper/needle-and-thread woodlands, and Mancos columbine - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 and S1 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and they meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Naturita milkvetch and Eastwood’s monkeyflower also meet the importance criteria because of their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Naturita milkvetch, Eastwood’s monkeyflower, and Mancos columbine - Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species or plant communities in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. The scenic value also meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to the size and depth of the canyon, which gives it special worth and distinctiveness.
Determination	The McIntyre Canyon nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and

	threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions; because it occurs in a remote location in a steep canyon where management actions are unlikely; because of its topographic inaccessibility; and through its inclusion in the Dolores River Canyon area, which includes LRMP management prescriptions that protect rare plant and animal species, rare plant communities, and scenic values).
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within McIntyre Canyon	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Dolores River Canyon area (see Volume 1, Section 3.23). • 2.2.73 Agency actions should be designed to avoid or minimize impacts in canyon escarpments, unless the activity is designed to maintain or restore the composition, structure, or function of the terrestrial ecosystems within those escarpments. • NSO: Dolores River Canyon.
Naturita milkvetch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Eastwood’s monkeyflower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Pinyon pine/Utah juniper/Needle-and-thread Woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • G3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • CSU: Lands with biological soil crusts.
Mancos columbine-Eastwood’s monkeyflower herbaceous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.69 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities. • 2.4.19 Long-term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur. • 2.4.23 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in riparian area and wetland ecosystems that have plant communities with G1, G2, S1, or S2 NatureServe plant community conservation status ranks, including wild privet (<i>Forestiera</i>

	<p><i>pubescens</i>) shrublands and boxelder/river birch (<i>Acer negundo/Betula fontinalis</i>) woodlands, in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Significant scenic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSO stipulation: High scenic integrity objective and VRM Class II areas.

Mesa Verde Entrance

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	Montezuma County, east of Cortez near the entrance to Mesa Verde National Park.
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Mesa Verde Entrance PCA. Elevation is 6,800 to 8,427 feet and size is 1,268 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Gray’s Townsend daisy (<i>Townsendia glabella</i>), S1 ranked large-flowered wild hollyhock (<i>Iliamna grandiflora</i>), S2 ranked San Juan gilia (<i>Gilia haydenii</i>), and S2 ranked short-stem penstemon, which are all natural systems in the form of rare (G2, S1, and S2 ranks) terrestrial plant species.
Importance criteria	Gray’s Townsend daisy, large-flowered wild hollyhock, San Juan gilia, and short-stem penstemon meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2, S2, and S1 ranks), which give them special worth and cause for concern, and because they have qualities that make them sensitive, unique, and vulnerable to adverse change. Short-stem penstemon also meets the importance criteria because of its designation as a high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Mesa Verde Entrance nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Mesa Verde Entrance	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Lands with 25% to 35% slopes and lands with shale soils.
Gray’s Townsend daisy	See protections common to all values.
Large-flowered wild hollyhock	See protections common to all values.
San Juan gilia	See protections common to all values.
Short-stem penstemon	See protections common to all values.

Muleshoe Bench

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Miguel County, Colorado, southeast of the confluence of Coyote Wash and the Dolores River.
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Muleshoe Bench PCA. Its size is 663 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community.
Importance criteria	Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S2 rank), which gives it special

	worth and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Muleshoe Bench nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, because it occurs in a remote location where management actions are unlikely, because of its topographic inaccessibility, and through its inclusion in the Dolores River Canyon WSA.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Muleshoe Bench	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Dolores River WSA.
Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation	See protections common to all values.

Northdale

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	Dolores County, north and west of Dove Creek, and a small piece in San Miguel County
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Northdale/Dove Creek PCA. It contains parcels of BLM land that are occupied by the Dove Creek subpopulation of the Gunnison sage-grouse, and has been proposed as critical habitat for the grouse. Almost all habitat occupied by the sage grouse in this general area is on private lands. Elevation ranges from 6,600 to 8,100 feet. Size is 875 acres of BLM land. The Dove Creek subpopulation is threatened by habitat loss from subdivisions, poor habitat quality and quantity, low existing genetic diversity, and lack of linkages with other populations. Management is guided by the CPW through the Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G1 ranked Gunnison sage-grouse (and its habitat), which is a rare wildlife resource, and it meets the relevance criteria because the Gunnison sage-grouse is a wildlife resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list.
Importance criteria	Gunnison sage-grouse meets the importance criteria because its rarity (G1 rank) gives it more than locally significant qualities, which gives it special worth, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and it meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities or circumstances that make it sensitive, rare, unique, threatened, and vulnerable to adverse change. The Gunnison sage-grouse also meets the importance criteria because of its designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. The Gunnison sage-grouse also meets the importance criteria because of its designation as a high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Northdale nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance resources (Gunnison sage-grouse and its habitat) can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions and by guidance in the Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Northdale	
Gunnison sage-grouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.45 Gunnison sage-grouse: Management activities must not occur from March 1 to June 30 within occupied habitat suitable for nesting to allow for breeding and December 1 to March 15 for known winter habitat. • 2.3.46 Gunnison sage-grouse: New structural improvements or surface disturbance must not occur within known winter concentration area or within a 0.6-mile radius of known Gunnison sage-grouse leks. • 2.3.47 Gunnison sage-grouse: In occupied habitat fuels treatments must be designed and implemented with an emphasis on protecting and enhancing existing sagebrush ecosystems

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.48 Gunnison sage-grouse: Invasive vegetation must be monitored and controlled post-treatment. • 2.3.70 Structures in sage-grouse habitat should be constructed to limit risk of collision and predation • 2.3.71 New noise sources resulting from management activities should not contribute to noise levels that negatively impact sage-grouse leks during the active lek season (March 1 to June 30) based on best available science. • 2.3.72 Projects in occupied Gunnison sage-grouse habitat should be designed to mitigate or avoid the direct or indirect loss of habitat necessary for maintenance of the local population or reduce to acceptable levels the direct or indirect loss of important habitat necessary for sustainable local populations. Projects will incorporate special reclamation measures or design features that accelerate recovery and/or re-establishment of affected sage-grouse habitat as much as possible. • 2.3.73 Applicable BMPs should be applied to all mineral proposals as Conditions of Approval within occupied sage-grouse habitat to provide for adequate effective habitat and breeding, nesting, and wintering habitat. • 2.3.74 Remote methodologies for monitoring, transporting fluids to centralized collection tanks, etc., should be utilized to minimize human disturbance in Gunnison sage-grouse habitat. • 2.3.75 Fuels treatments should be designed to meet strategic protection of identified occupied sage-grouse habitat. • 2.3.76 Use of native seeds should be used for revegetation following fuels management treatment based on availability, adaptation (site potential), and probability of success (Richards et al. 1998). Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, non-native seeds may be used as long as they meet sage-grouse habitat objectives • 2.3.77 Within occupied Gunnison sage-grouse critical habitat the Rangewide Conservation Plan grazing guidelines should be incorporated when appropriate. • 2.3.78 Within occupied habitat, grazing in treatment areas should be deferred for two growing seasons after treatment, unless needed for seedbed preparation or desired understory and overstory are established. • 2.3.79 When developing or modifying water developments, BMPs (see Appendix N) should be used to mitigate potential impacts from West Nile virus on sage-grouse within occupied habitat. • NSO stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse occupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse occupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse proposed unoccupied critical habitat. • CSU stipulation: Gunnison sage-grouse noise restrictions, occupied and unoccupied critical habitat.
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Picayune Gulch

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Juan County, Colorado
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Picayune Gulch PCA. It is in a mountain valley with extensive wetlands. Elevation is 12,000 to 12,200 feet and size is 23 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site does not meet the relevance criteria because it does not contain appropriate historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish or wildlife resources, natural processes or systems, or natural hazards. G3S3 ranked alpine tundra draba (<i>Draba streptobrachia</i>) and G3S3 ranked thistleleaf draba (<i>D. crassa</i>) don't meet the relevance criteria because of their relative abundance (compared to G1, G2, S1, or S2 ranked species).
Importance criteria	Not applicable.
Determination	The Picayune Gulch nominated ACEC does not meet the relevance criteria so it was not identified as a potential ACEC and was not further analyzed in the BLM planning process.

Silvey’s Pocket

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems
Location	8.5 air miles southwest of Bedrock, in extreme southwestern Montrose County
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Silvey’s Pocket PCA. It includes mesa tops and a broad bench south of Coyote Wash. Elevation is 5,300 to 5,800 feet and size is 707 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch and S2 ranked aromatic Indian breadroot (<i>Pediomelum aromaticum</i>), which is natural systems in the form of rare (G2 and S2 ranks) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Naturita milkvetch and aromatic Indian breadroot are natural systems that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains S2 ranked needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community.
Importance criteria	Naturita milkvetch and aromatic Indian breadroot meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 and S2 ranks), which give them special worth and cause for concern, and these species meet because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Naturita milkvetch and aromatic Indian breadroot also meet the importance criteria because of their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Naturita milkvetch and aromatic Indian breadroot also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S2 rank), which gives it special worth and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it sensitive, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	The Silvey’s Pocket nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria so it was identified as a potential ACEC and further analyzed in the BLM planning process, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems may be adequately protected from management actions and threats by general LRMP management prescriptions; because ground-disturbing management activities will affect a small number of acres; because the threat from invasive plants is minor; because it does not contain any species or plant communities that have a G1 or S1 NatureServe Conservation Status rank; because its biodiversity rank is B3; because the habitat for its rare plant species has no special significance; and because this ACEC occurs in a relatively remote location with few roads within and adjacent to it. Silvey’s Pocket potential ACEC is considered for ACEC designation in Alternative C.

Slick Rock

Nominator	San Juan Citizens Alliance, Center for Native Ecosystems
Location	San Miguel County approximately 18 miles north of the town of Dove Creek
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Slick Rock and Slick Rock Hill PCAs. It does not include Poverty Flats or lands within the Dolores River Canyon. These nominated ACECs were combined due to their close proximity and because of the similar relevance values they contain (BLM Manual 1613 - .22A5). Elevation is 5,600 to 7,200 feet and size is 3,340 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 ranked Naturita milkvetch and S2 ranked short-stem penstemon, which are natural systems in the form of rare (G2 and S2 ranks) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Naturita milkvetch a natural system that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains canyon tree frog, which is a wildlife resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria

	because it contains S2 ranked needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation, which is a natural system in the form of a rare terrestrial plant community.
Importance criteria	Naturita milkvetch, short-stem penstemon, and canyon tree frog meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 and S2 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern, and these species meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Naturita milkvetch, short-stem penstemon, and canyon tree frog also meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their designation as BLM State Director’s sensitive species, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Naturita milkvetch, short-stem penstemon, and canyon tree frog also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to its rarity (S2 rank), which gives it special worth and cause for concern, and this plant community meets the importance criteria because its rarity gives it qualities that make it sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change.
Determination	Slick Rock nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance resources and systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Slick Rock	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Dolores River Canyon area (except for those parcels within U.S. Department of Energy lease tracts) (see Volume 2, Section 3.23).
Naturita milkvetch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Short-stem penstemon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See protections common to all values.
Canyon tree frog and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.3.50 In order to determine site occupation, pre-implementation surveys may be required for projects occurring in habitats that may support populations of sensitive species and species listed or proposed under the ESA, as determined by an agency biologist. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens.
Needle-and-thread Great Basin herbaceous vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.23.9 Management activities and recreational use should avoid or minimize impacts to rare or unique plant communities.

Snaggletooth

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	Six miles east of Dove Creek in Dolores and San Miguel Counties, Colorado
Description	This nominated ACEC includes a 30 mile stretch of the Dolores River Canyon from the Bradfield Bridge downstream to approximately river mile 125. A large part of the site is roadless and remote. It is included in the Dolores River Canyon Special Management Area. Elevation is 5,600 to 6,500 feet and size is 19,427 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 (rounded) ranked roundtail chub (and its habitat), which is a rare fish resource. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker (<i>Catostomus discobolus</i>) (and their habitat), which are fish resources that are on the BLM State Director’s sensitive

	species list. This site also meets the relevance criteria because it contains G2 peregrine falcon (and its habitat), which is a rare wildlife resource that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list. It also meets the relevance criteria because of its significant scenic value in the form of diverse and extreme topography, and diverse and colorful sedimentary geology.
Importance criteria	Roundtail chub and peregrine falcon meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G2 ranks), which gives them special worth and cause for concern. Roundtail chub and peregrine falcon also meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, peregrine falcon, and bluehead sucker also meet the importance criteria because of their designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, bluehead sucker, and peregrine falcon also meet the importance criteria because of their designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives them special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes them as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. The scenic value also meets the importance criteria because it has more than locally significant qualities due to the large size and extreme depth of the canyon and the diverse colorful geology of the canyon, which gives it special worth and distinctiveness.
Determination	The Snaggletooth nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance resources and systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions; because it occurs in a remote location in a steep canyon where management actions are unlikely; because of its topographic inaccessibility; and through its inclusion in the Dolores River Canyon Special area.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Snaggletooth	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Dolores River Canyon area (see Volume 1, Section 3.23). • Within lands with wilderness characteristics. • NSO stipulation: Dolores River Canyon.
Roundtail chub habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • NSO stipulation: Major river corridors.
Flannelmouth sucker and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • NSO stipulation: Major river corridors.
Bluehead sucker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.67 Projects or activities occurring in fens, wetlands, or hanging gardens that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the hydrologic systems necessary to support and sustain those species. • NSO: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • NSO stipulation: Major river corridors.
Peregrine falcon and its habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3.25 Protection of nests from new structures and human encroachment (see LRMP Table 2.3.2) • NSO stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • CSU stipulation: Perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and fens. • NSO stipulation: Major river corridors.
Significant scenic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSO stipulation: High scenic integrity objective and VRM Class II areas.

Spring Creek Basin

Nominator	LRMP interdisciplinary planning team
Location	San Miguel County about 20 miles north of Dove Creek near the foot of McKenna Peak
Description	This nominated ACEC contains BLM lands within the Spring Creek Basin PCA. Elevation is 6,300 feet and size is 5,589 acres of BLM land.
Relevance criteria	This site meets the relevance criteria because it contains G1 ranked Gypsum Valley cat-eye, S1 ranked pygmy sagebrush (<i>Artemisia pygmaea</i>), and S2 ranked flex-stemmed mariposa lily, which are natural systems in the form of rare (G1, S1, S2 ranks) terrestrial plant species. This site also meets the relevance criteria because Gypsum Valley cat-eye is a natural system that is on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list.
Importance criteria	Gypsum Valley cat-eye and pygmy sagebrush <i>Artemisia pygmaea</i> meet the importance criteria because they have more than locally significant qualities due to their rarity (G1 and S1 ranks), which give them special worth and cause for concern, and these species meet the importance criteria because their rarity gives them qualities that make them sensitive, unique, rare, and vulnerable to adverse change. Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meets the importance criteria because a large portion of its entire range and most of the documented occurrences of the species are on SJNF and TRFO, which gives it more than locally significant qualities that are of special worth and cause for concern. Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meets the importance criteria because of its designation on the BLM State Director’s sensitive species list, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA. Flex-stemmed mariposa lily and Gypsum Valley cat-eye also meets the importance criteria because of its designation as high-priority species in the San Juan Biodiversity Model, which gives it special worth, meaning, distinctiveness, and cause for concern, and which recognizes it as warranting protection in order to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.
Determination	The Spring Creek Basin nominated ACEC meets both the relevance and importance criteria, but it does not expressly require additional “special management attention” because this potential ACEC and its relevance systems can be adequately protected from management actions and threats by the general LRMP management prescriptions, and because a portion of it is within the McKenna Peak WSA. Some of this potential ACEC overlaps with the Spring Creek Wild Horse Herd Management Area. The horses are not grazing on the rare plants of the ACEC and do not appear to be affecting the rare plants by trampling, and the horses and rare plants have co-existed within this potential ACEC for an extended time without causing a downward trend in the populations of the rare plants.
Proposed LRMP Direction to Protect Relevance and Importance Values within Spring Creek Basin	
Common to all values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2.68 Projects or activities that occur in shale and gypsum soils that are occupied by special status plant species must be designed to maintain the soil characteristics necessary to support and sustain those species. • 2.2.77 Management activities in areas with biological soil crusts should be designed to minimize adverse impacts to the soil crusts. • 2.2.80 Ground disturbance should be limited or otherwise mitigated on gypsum soils and organic soils (histosols) in order to protect the ecological integrity of these rare and unique soils and the rare plants associated with these soils. • CSU: Lands with gypsum soils. • CSU: Lands with biological soil crusts. • Partially within McKenna Peak WSA.
Gypsum Valley cat-eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSU: Colorado BLM State Director’s sensitive plants and R2 Regional Forester’s sensitive plants.
Pygmy sagebrush	See protections common to all values.

1.5. References

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