



United States Department of the Interior

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Uncompahgre Field Office  
2505 South Townsend Avenue  
Montrose, Colorado 81401



In Reply Refer to:  
CO-154-1610

Dear Reader:

November 12, 2004

Enclosed for your review are the Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA), which contains the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness. The Proposed RMP/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (PRMP), published in January 2004, was a refinement of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) from the Draft RMP/EIS (DRMP) published in March 2003. The DRMP was available for a 90-day comment period between March and June 2003, and the PRMP was subject to protest during a 30-day period in January and February 2004, in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1610.5.2. In addition, the Governor of Colorado was provided a 60-day review period to determine that the proposed plan conformed to existing state policy and plans. The attached RMP is essentially the same as the PRMP.

Thirty-two protest letters were received on the PRMP. Twenty-nine of the protests were determined to represent valid protests. After consideration of all points raised in the 32 letters, the BLM Director concluded that the NCA planning team and decision-makers, including the Colorado State Director, followed all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and pertinent process and resource considerations in developing the proposed plan. All protesting parties and those submitting comments received a response from the BLM Director.

The RMP contains both proposed Land Use Planning decisions and Implementation decisions. Land Use Planning decisions were subject to protest during a 30-day period following publication of the PRMP (discussed above). No further administrative remedies are available for Land Use Planning decisions. The attached Record of Decision serves as the final decision for Land Use Planning decisions contained in the attached RMP and becomes effective the day the Notice of Availability of the RMP is published in the *Federal Register*. Please note that some Land Use Planning decisions will require the preparation of detailed, project-level National Environmental Policy Act analyses prior to on-the-ground implementation.

Table 2-2 of Chapter 2 of the RMP identifies both Land Use Planning and Implementation decisions. Implementation decisions are subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals during the 30-day period following the publication of the Notice of Availability of the RMP in the *Federal Register*, or until December 12, 2004. This appeal period also will be announced via local news releases, advertisements, newsletter mailings, and other means.

Any party adversely affected by an Implementation decision in Table 2-2 of the RMP may appeal within 30 days of the effective date of the Record of Decision or in accordance with the provisions of 43 CFR 4.4. The appeal must include a statement of reasons or the person(s) appealing must file a separate statement of reasons within 30 days of filing the appeal. The appeal must state if a stay of the decision is being requested in accordance with 43 CFR 4.21 and must be filed with the Field Manager at the following address: Gunnison Gorge NCA, C/o Uncompahgre Field Office, 2465 South Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401.

A copy of the appeal, statement of reasons, and all other supporting documents must be sent to: Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, US Department of the Interior, 755 Parfet Street, Suite 151, Lakewood, Colorado 80215.

If the statement of reasons is filed separately, it must be sent to: Interior Board of Land Appeal, Office of Hearings and Appeals, 4015 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22203.

It is suggested that any appeal be sent certified US mail, return receipt requested.

Should you wish to file a motion for stay pending the outcome of an appeal of these implementation decisions, you must show sufficient justification based on the following standards under 43 CFR 4.21:

- 1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied.
- 2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
- 3) The likelihood of immediate or irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
- 4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

As noted above, the motion for stay must be filed in the office of the authorized officer.

The RMP, PRMP, and DRMP are available on the project Web site, [www.gunnison-gorge-eis.com](http://www.gunnison-gorge-eis.com). A limited number of paper and CD-ROM copies of the documents are available from the Gunnison Gorge NCA, C/o Uncompahgre Field Office, 2465 South Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401; phone (970) 240-5337.

#### **Freedom of Information Act Considerations/Confidentiality**

Public comments submitted for this planning review, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Gunnison Gorge NCA, Uncompahgre Field Office, in Montrose, Colorado, during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be retained on file in the same office as part of the public record for this planning effort. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public inspection or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

We greatly appreciate your valuable assistance, input, and help in this planning effort, and look forward to your continued participation as the plan is implemented. For additional information or clarification regarding the attached document or the planning process, please contact Bill Bottomly at (970) 240-5337 (email [bill\\_bottomly@co.blm.gov](mailto:bill_bottomly@co.blm.gov)) or Karen Tucker, NCA Manager, at (970) 240-5309 (email [karen\\_tucker@co.blm.gov](mailto:karen_tucker@co.blm.gov)).

Sincerely yours,



Barbara Sharrow, Manager  
Uncompahgre Field Office