
CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter presents alternatives for management of lands and mineral estate administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Little Snake Resource Management Plan Planning Area (RMPPA). An interdisciplinary (ID) team developed the alternatives to present a reasonable range of management options to guide resource management and activities. These management decisions were developed to minimize adverse impacts on cultural and natural resources while providing for compatible resource use and development opportunities consistent with current laws, regulations, and policies. The alternatives discussed in this chapter include the No Action Alternative (labeled Alternative A) and three other alternatives (labeled Alternative B, Alternative C, and Alternative D).

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the development and consideration of a reasonable range of management alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, to analyze and disclose impacts and guide decisionmakers in selecting the Preferred Alternative, which will be presented in the proposed resource management plan (RMP) and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Alternatives must be viable and reasonable. They must reflect a mix of resource protections, management use, and development; be responsive to issues identified during the scoping period; and meet established planning criteria (outlined in Chapter 1) as well as applicable federal and State laws, regulations, and BLM policies. The alternatives are not management decisions; the alternatives represent reasonable approaches to managing resources and activities.

As part of the planning process, the public was invited to comment on the Draft RMP/EIS alternatives. BLM took these comments into account and has prepared and analyzed the Proposed RMP (Alternative C of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS). When the decisions in the Proposed RMP are presented to the public in this Final EIS, they can be protested to the BLM Director. They are not appealable to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (from *BLM Land Use Planning Handbook*, H-1601-1). Implementation-level decisions are decisions that take action to implement land use plan (LUP) decisions and are generally appealable to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR 4.410 (from *BLM Land Use Planning Handbook*, H-1601-1). There are no implementation-level decisions in this plan. Upon resolution of the protests, BLM will present the Final RMP and record of decision (ROD) containing the decisions that will guide future management of the Little Snake Field Office (LSFO).

Text and decisions that have been changed between the Draft RMP/EIS and this Proposed RMP/Final EIS are highlighted using light gray shading. It is important to note that shading in Chapter 2 has only been applied to new text and decisions that are conceptually new to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Though new, these changes do not represent a significant change in decisions, but rather build on the concepts that were analyzed in the Draft RMP/EIS and public comments on that document. Changes made to clarify existing decisions or to correct management inconsistencies identified in the Draft RMP/EIS were not shaded gray, as the decision(s) in question were contained in the Draft RMP/EIS and any changes in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are for clarification purposes only.

2.1 FORMULATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Development of management alternatives for the Little Snake RMPPA was guided by NEPA and BLM land use planning policies. The purpose of developing alternatives is to prepare different combinations of management processes for resources and resource uses, to address issues identified by the public and stakeholders as well as BLM management concerns, and to resolve conflicts among resource uses. In developing the alternatives, BLM used a variety of management methods and tools, including the identification of allowable uses, temporal, spatial, and/or methodological restrictions on uses, where specific uses would be prohibited, and specific actions that are needed to achieve the goals and objectives.

Restrictions on uses include seasonal closures, limitations on surface disturbance, application of best management practices (BMP), or the use of performance objectives. BMPs are the most effective and practical means of maximizing beneficial results and minimizing conflicts and negative environmental impacts. BMPs can include structural and nonstructural controls, specific operations, and maintenance procedures. BMPs are dynamic and are not one-size-fits-all solutions. BMPs are selected and adapted through interdisciplinary analysis to determine which management practices are necessary to meet the goals and objectives of the RMP. The best practices and mitigation measures for a particular site are evaluated through the site-specific NEPA process and vary to accommodate unique, site-specific conditions and local resource conditions. The alternatives do not contain an exhaustive list of BMPs. Additional BMPs may be identified during an interdisciplinary process when evaluating site-specific management actions. Implementation and effectiveness of BMPs need to be monitored to determine whether they are achieving RMP goals and objectives. Adjustments to BMPs can be made as necessary to ensure that RMP goals and objectives are being met. In addition, project proponents can suggest alternate conditions that could accomplish the same result. The various management methods and tools, including BMPs, were applied as appropriate and applicable to meet the RMP goals and objectives while ensuring consistency with the management strategies of each alternative.

To provide a foundation to guide development of management alternatives, an ID team developed a set of overall RMP goals (Section 2.3) listing the outcomes BLM would like to achieve through the RMP. BLM then developed specific goals and objectives for each resource and resource use (presented under each header in Sections 2.5 and 2.6). These goals and objectives identify specific desired outcomes for each program area. Following the goals and objectives, key decisions were identified that were based on the scoping report, comments on the analysis of the management situation, meeting minutes from a cooperator/neighbor agency issues meeting, planning guidance, BLM staff knowledge, and the 1989 RMP and amendments. To formulate the alternatives an alternatives shell was created to develop the range of options (including those from the outermost ends of the spectrum to those in the middle) for each resource and resource use. The alternatives shell used the goals and objectives, the existing decisions from the 1989 RMP and amendments, and previously identified key decisions. The management actions presented in Sections 2.5 and 2.6, and summarized in Section 2.7, are the results of this process.

In developing alternatives for this RMP, BLM undertook a highly collaborative, community-based planning process. BLM complied with the letter and the spirit of NEPA requirements in developing alternatives for this EIS, including seeking public input and analyzing an adequate range of reasonable alternatives that included a No Action Alternative. All alternatives meet the management goals and objectives for the RMP as well as for each BLM resource and resource use program. The four alternatives addressed in this EIS are described in Section 2.4.

2.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS

The following alternatives and management options were considered as possible resolutions for issues but were eliminated from detailed analysis as either unreasonable or impractical because of technical, legal, or policy considerations.

2.2.1 No Grazing Alternative

Removing all livestock without proven need could be considered arbitrary and would not meet BLM's principle of multiple use and sustained yield; see Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) Sec. 302 (a) and Sec. 102(7). FLPMA Sec. 302(a) states that public lands shall be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, in accordance with the land use plans (when available)

developed under Section 202 of the act, except where a tract of public land has been dedicated to specific uses according to any other provisions of law. FLPMA Sec. 102(7) directs that goals and objectives can be established by law as guidelines for public land use planning and that management can be based on multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law. BLM's management priority is to maintain functioning ecosystems, meeting the needs of the land. To achieve this, BLM developed the *Fundamentals of Rangeland Health* and their companion requirements, the *Colorado Standards for Public Land Health* and *Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management*. Where lands are meeting the fundamentals as indicated by the *Standards for Public Land Health*, there is a presumption that current grazing use may continue.

A No Grazing Alternative is inconsistent with the Taylor Grazing Act (1934): a regional closure to grazing would not comply with the intent of the act, which directs BLM to provide for livestock use of BLM lands. The purpose of the Taylor Grazing Act is "to stop injury to the public grazing lands by preventing overgrazing and soil deterioration; to provide for their orderly use, improvement, and development; to stabilize the livestock industry dependent upon the public range; and for other purposes." BLM has the authority to control the grazing use to ensure resource objectives are met, and FLPMA provides authority through land use planning to allocate uses. The livestock grazing alternatives in the Proposed RMP/EIS range from emphasizing using Standards and Guidelines processes, vegetation treatments, and Desired Plant Communities to increase forage production for livestock (Alternative B) to improving habitat for other resources, such as wildlife and watershed protection (Alternative D).

2.2.2 No Leasing Alternative

Closing the RMPPA to new federal mineral leasing was considered a possible method to resolve conflicts with other resource uses. Because the federal leasable minerals in much of the planning area have already been leased and portions of the area are already developed, this option would not help resolve any conflicts that involve those leased parcels. In addition, because resource conflicts tend to be located in specific areas and not across the entire RMPPA, it is not considered reasonable to close the entire area to leasing on the basis of a localized resource conflict. Further, in dealing with many of the concerns identified during the planning process, it is considered a more reasonable approach to develop leasing stipulations that can be applied selectively to areas in the RMPPA. Closing the entire RMPPA to new mineral leasing would also eliminate the opportunity for mineral development and production at a time when national policy is encouraging such development to reduce reliance on foreign sources of energy.

In addition, based on the reasonably foreseeable oil and gas development scenario, BLM does not anticipate a large amount of new development that would lead to unacceptably adverse effects in all areas of the RMPPA. The analysis of impacts indicated that effects are not anticipated on every acre and that not all acres where development would occur are so sensitive as to preclude all new development. Therefore, because the planning area in its entirety does not have conflicts with fluid mineral leasing, it is unreasonable to close the entire planning area to new leasing of federal oil and gas resources.

Because development is likely to be limited in scope and effect, it was concluded that it would not be reasonable to analyze this option in detail. However, not issuing new mineral leases in portions of the planning area in response to other identified resource needs is addressed in the alternatives analyzed in detail. These alternatives include various considerations for maximizing individual resource values and uses in specific areas where conflicts exist and closing these areas to mineral leasing and development.

2.2.3 Douglas Mountain Herd Area

BLM received a request from the public to consider reopening the Douglas Mountain herd area (HA) to wild horse management. The Douglas Mountain HA is discussed in the 1977 Vermillion Planning Area

Management Framework Plan (MFP). The MFP is available to the public at the LSFO. The document recognized that wild horses inhabited two locations within the Vermillion Planning Unit: Douglas Mountain and Sand Wash Basin. The document outlined avenues through which the public was encouraged to participate in the planning process to determine where wild horse herds could be managed in the spirit of the 1971 Wild and Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. The MFP documented the interagency coordination pursued during the MFP wild horse management planning process. The MFP specified that wild horses be managed in Sand Wash Basin and that all horses be removed from the Douglas Mountain HA. The decision to remove the Douglas Mountain HA from active wild horse management was based on the following conflicts:

- ❑ A total of 31,000 acres of the 108,000 acres encompassing the Douglas Mountain HA were part of the Dinosaur National Monument administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS considered wild horses as feral animals and therefore not part of the natural ecosystem. The NPS therefore requested removal of all wild (feral) horses from the Monument.
- ❑ A total of 11,000 acres of the Douglas Mountain HA were owned by private landowners, who repeatedly requested removal of the wild horses from their lands.
- ❑ These private lands contained the majority of dependable water sources on which the wild horse herd relied.
- ❑ Fencing the private land in from wild horse use would negatively impact the wild horse habitat by limiting water and forage availability.
- ❑ Managing a herd of wild horses on the Douglas Mountain HA would require substantial animal unit month (AUM) reductions by the livestock permittees, adversely affecting the operators.

The MFP (page 12) determined that further analysis of the 1971 Act reveals that “all management activities shall be at the minimal feasible level and shall be carried out in consultation with the wildlife agency of the State...” The Douglas Mountain HA does not lend itself to minimal management because of the complications from Dinosaur National Monument policy, landownership patterns, access, topography, available water, wildlife planning (State agency), and present range conditions. The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) has been consulted regarding the wild horse population, and it has recommended removing all horses from Douglas Mountain in an effort to reestablish the vanishing deer herd and to encourage expansion of bighorn sheep back onto their historical range.

This alternative was eliminated from further consideration because the information leading to the decision reached in the 1977 Vermillion MFP and the reason for the original closure of Douglas Mountain to wild horse management remain valid.

2.3 RMP GOALS

The planning process included developing broad goals to guide alternative development for the RMP. Management goals were also defined for each resource and resource use to guide management actions considered for those programs. Specific goals pertaining to resource and to resource use are presented under the respective headings in following sections of this document. The RMP’s goals are presented below:

- ❑ Maintain the rural, open landscape, recognizing the resources—including but not limited to agriculture, hunting, ranching, diverse recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, scenic landscapes, and air and water quality—that are integral to the value of such landscapes.
- ❑ Improve understanding of ecosystem functioning and how to maintain long-term ecosystem health.
- ❑ Maintain, improve, and restore (where needed) healthy ecosystems and habitat to support viable populations of native fish, plants, and wildlife species, while reducing habitat loss and fragmentation.

- ❑ Protect cultural and natural resources, using the diversity of tools available to BLM, including the use of special designations as appropriate.
- ❑ Reduce conflicts between uses and user groups, as feasible.
- ❑ Provide management flexibility, where possible and appropriate, to improve management outcomes while protecting natural and cultural resources.
- ❑ Recognize the value of commodity and noncommodity resources, providing a diversity of uses and settings that support a variety of economic opportunities.
- ❑ Provide a clear analysis of the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of land use decisions.
- ❑ Work collaboratively with stakeholders and the public in achieving the RMP's goals and solicit public participation throughout ongoing planning.
- ❑ Provide community and visitor education that would include local history and prehistoric cultures.
- ❑ Use adaptive management where appropriate, including best available science, and identify and monitor indicators of acceptable landscape or resource health.

2.4 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF EACH ALTERNATIVE

The 2007 Draft RMP/EIS described and analyzed four alternatives, including Alternative A (the No Action Alternative) and Alternatives B, C (Preferred Alternative), and D, each of which represents varying management actions for each resource and resource use for achieving the stated goals and objectives. The alternatives vary based on how fast the objectives would be met, the degree to which the objectives would be met, the priorities within the objective, the emphasis placed on different management activities, and what society would be willing to forego within the limitations of current policy. Integrated resource management was emphasized in formulating the alternatives. BLM has the discretion to select an alternative in its entirety, to combine aspects of the various alternatives that were presented in the Draft RMP/EIS, or to consider management approaches that were presented during the comment period that do not result in significant changes from what the Draft RMP/EIS considered. In the Final EIS, Alternative C has been revised and is now the Proposed RMP. The Proposed RMP uses Alternative C from the Draft RMP/EIS as a foundation with adjustments made in response to public comments, internal comments, and coordination with cooperating agencies. The Proposed RMP was developed based on examination of the following factors:

- ❑ Balance of use and protection of resources
- ❑ Extent of the environmental impacts
- ❑ Consideration of formal recommendations from the cooperating agencies
- ❑ Public comments on the Draft RMP/EIS.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP) was chosen because it resolves the major issues while providing for common ground among conflicting opinions and multiple uses of public lands in a sustainable fashion. It provides the best balance of resource protection and use within legal constraints. The following sections provide a general description of the alternatives. The descriptions are organized by alternative, starting with Alternative A (the No Action Alternative), followed by Alternatives B, C (Proposed RMP), and D.

2.4.1 Alternative A (No Action Alternative)

NEPA mandates consideration of a No Action Alternative. This alternative provides a basis for comparing the impacts of the other alternatives. The No Action Alternative involves continuing the management activities that already occur in the planning area and is based on reasonably foreseeable actions, available inventory data, existing planning decisions and policies, and existing land use allocations and programs. These activities are now governed by the existing LSFO RMP and ROD (1989) and by amendments that include the Oil and Gas Amendment (1991), the Black-Footed Ferret

Reintroduction Amendment (1995), and the Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado Amendment (1996). These amendments are described in Table 2-1. Some actions have been determined to be unnecessary to carry forward into the RMP revision because the action is not a land use planning decision, the action reiterates existing policy, or the action is a repeat of a similar management action. Ongoing programs initiated under existing legislation and regulations would continue, even as new plans are developed or new planning efforts are conducted within the RMP area.

Alternative A would maintain present uses by continuing present management direction and activities. Mineral and energy development would be allowed throughout most of the planning area. The level of resource functionality to meet the *Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado* and seasonal protections for wildlife would be maintained. Existing special management areas and special recreation management areas (SRMA) would also be maintained. Minimal limitations on motorized travel would provide an enhanced motorized recreational experience.

Table 2-1. Relevant Plans and Amendments

Document Title	Year	Description
LSFO RMP and ROD	1989	Current RMP for the LSFO
Oil and Gas Amendment, Little Snake RMP/EIS	1991	Amendment/EIS for compliance with the <i>Supplemental Planning Guidance for Fluid Minerals</i> released in 1987
Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction Amendment, Little Snake RMP/EIS	1996	Amendment/environmental assessment (EA) for proposed reintroduction of black-footed ferret as a nonessential experimental population into the Little Snake black-footed ferret management area
<i>Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management</i> in Colorado (Colorado standards and guidelines)	1997	Amendment/EA for adoption of the Colorado standards and guidelines
Emerald Mountain Land Exchange Environmental Assessment/Plan Amendment	2007	Amendment/EA associated with a land exchange and amendment to the Little Snake RMP to allow for such an action, resulting in the acquisition of a parcel on Emerald Mountain and the conveyance of 123 federal parcels into non-federal ownership.

2.4.2 Alternative B

This alternative would allow the greatest extent of resource use within the planning area, while maintaining the basic protection needed to sustain resources. Under this alternative, constraints on commodity production for the protection of sensitive resources would be the least restrictive possible within the limits defined by law, regulation, and BLM policy. However, BLM would apply conditions of approval (COA), as needed, through site-specific analysis before authorization. Potential impacts on sensitive resource values would be mitigated on a case-by-case basis. The level of resource functionality to meet the Colorado standards and guidelines would be maintained. Area protections, such as designations as areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) would be removed from areas so designated currently, and no new such areas would be recommended. No wild and scenic river (WSR) segments would be recommended as suitable for designation. Current SRMA designations would also be removed, and the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be designated jointly with community partners. Opportunities for “unmanaged” motorized recreational experiences would increase where fewer off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas are limited or closed. With this alternative, unlike Alternative A, areas

designated as no surface occupancy (NSO) for oil and gas would also be designated as no ground disturbance (NGD) for other uses (Map 2-1).

2.4.3 Alternative C (Proposed RMP)

This alternative would emphasize multiple resource use in the planning area by protecting sensitive resources and applying the most current information to allow BLM to set priorities for flexible, proactive management of public lands. Commodity production would be balanced against wildlife and vegetation protection; however, exceptions would be granted according to established criteria (Appendix E). Protection of greater sage-grouse and other wildlife habitat characteristics would be increased through the application of 1 percent and 5 percent disturbance ceilings in high and medium priority sagebrush habitats, respectively. Area protections, such as designation as ACECs and WSRs, would be limited to those areas where such designations are necessary to protect sensitive resources, and specific management prescriptions would be applied to areas that do not receive such designations. Vermillion Basin would be managed to protect its wilderness characteristics. Existing SRMAs would remain in place, and additional SRMAs and backcountry areas would be identified to provide diverse recreational experiences. There would be an increase in the areas closed to or with limitations on OHV use, but there would also be some open OHV areas. Areas considered NSO for oil and gas would not be designated as NGD for other uses. Alternative C would be implemented by using the principles of adaptive management. Appendix M explains the adaptive management approach to be employed in the implementation of this alternative.

2.4.4 Alternative D

This alternative would allow the greatest extent of resource protection within the planning area, while still allowing resource uses. Commodity production would be constrained to protect natural resource values or to accelerate improvement in their condition. However, exceptions would be granted according to established criteria (Appendix E). Protection of greater sage-grouse and other wildlife habitat characteristics would increase. Management would focus on restoring vegetation communities to ecologically desirable levels. Area protections such as designation as ACECs and WSRs would be maximized, and more restrictions on uses would apply in designated areas to protect sensitive resources and values. Existing SRMAs would remain in place, and additional SRMAs and backcountry areas would be identified to provide diverse recreational experiences. There would be an increase in the areas closed to or with limitations on OHV use. With this alternative, as in Alternative B, areas considered NSO for oil and gas would also be designated as NGD for other uses (Map 2-2).

2.5 RESOURCE DESCRIPTIONS AND MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Resources are considered to be those natural, biological, and/or cultural components found in the Little Snake RMPPA. The requirements of the *Standards for Public Land Health* and *Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management* (Appendix A) apply to all resource uses on public lands. Administrative access is made available on a case-by-case basis for emergency purposes, BLM access to managing resources, and for persons engaged in valid uses such as mining claims, mineral leases, livestock grazing, recreation, and other uses. The following sections present the goals, objectives, and management actions, categorized by resource.

2.5.1 Air Quality

Management of air quality is through compliance with federal, State, and local regulations. The Federal Government has established ambient air quality standards for criteria pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment, and the State of Colorado has developed an implementation plan to

comply with those standards. Regional haze regulations have been developed to maintain visibility on the least-impaired days and to improve visibility on the most-impaired days in mandatory federal Class I areas across the United States, which are defined as national parks larger than 6,000 acres, wilderness areas larger than 5,000 acres, national memorial parks larger than 5,000 acres, and international parks that existed as of August 1977. Actions authorized on BLM-administered lands and federal mineral estates would need to be conducted so as to comply with Clean Air Act requirements, including the applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standards (Section 109); the State Air Quality Implementation Plan (SIP) (Section 110); control of pollution from federal facilities (Section 118); prevention of significant deterioration, including visibility impacts on mandatory federal Class I areas (Section 160 et seq.); and conformity analyses and determinations (Section 176(c)). Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires federal agencies to comply with all federal, State, and local air pollution requirements. Section 176(c) prohibits federal agencies from taking any actions within a nonattainment or maintenance area that contribute to a new violation of ambient air quality standards, that increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation, or that delay the attainment of a standard. It also requires federal agencies to conform to SIPs. BLM policy states that BLM recognizes air as a valuable natural and public resource that needs to be protected through prudent management and appropriate mitigation. For example, prescribed burns must comply with BLM Manual 7723 for air quality maintenance requirements to minimize air quality impacts from particulates such as smoke. Management actions for air quality included in this RMP include strategies to achieve desired air quality conditions.

2.5.1.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for air quality are to comply with all applicable local, State, tribal, and federal laws, regulations, standards, and implementation plans. All applicable State, tribal and federal air quality standards will be met or exceeded. BLM will collaborate, as necessary, with federal and State partners to achieve standards and address air quality.

2.5.1.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: Air quality was not specifically addressed in the 1989 RMP or in any RMP amendments.

Alternative B: The use of best management practices (BMP) to mitigate air quality impacts from oil and gas operations would be encouraged.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

2.5.2 Soil Resources

Standards and goals under the Clean Water Act and the Colorado standards and guidelines require measures to minimize soil erosion. BLM complies through evaluation of management actions and implementation of BMPs on a site-specific basis. Fragile soils areas and steep slopes are more susceptible to accelerated erosion, and these require specific management consideration. Management actions for soil resources included in this RMP include strategies to achieve desired conditions.

2.5.2.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Soils Goal:** Maintain or restore soil conditions. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Mitigate negative impacts on soil productivity from accelerated erosion or physical or chemical degradation.

- Stabilize and rehabilitate areas where accelerated erosion, runoff, and physical or chemical degradation have resulted in unacceptable resource conditions.
- Prevent disturbance to fragile soil areas where resulting erosion could not be controlled.
- Collaborate with National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), watershed groups, or local conservation district on soil-related issues, such as soil surveys, impacts, mapping, and other projects.

2.5.2.2 Management Actions

Fragile Soils

Alternative A: Surface disturbing activities would be allowed on isolated sites that meet fragile soil criteria, but only when performance standards and objectives can be met. Fragile soil criteria areas are rated as highly or severely erodible by wind or water as described by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the *Area Soil Survey Report* or as described by onsite inspection. Fragile soil criteria are also slopes greater than or equal to 35 percent if they have one of the other following soil characteristics: surface texture that is sand, loamy sand, very fine sandy loam, silty clay, or clay; a depth to bedrock of less than 20 inches; an erosion condition rated as “poor”; or a K-factor greater than 0.32.

Surface occupancy on public land would be permitted only where adherence to performance objectives for surface disturbing activities within fragile-soil areas is assured. Performance objectives for fragile soils include—

- Maintain soil productivity both by reducing soil loss from erosion and through proper handling of the soil material.
- Reduce the impact to offsite areas by controlling erosion and/or overland flow from these areas.
- Protect water quality and quantity of adjacent surface and ground water sources.
- Reduce accelerated erosion caused by surface disturbing activities.
- Select the best possible site for development to reduce impacts on soil and water resources.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative A.

Surface Use

Alternative A: For new oil and gas leases and all surface disturbing activities permitted under the 1989 RMP,¹ ensure that applicants would demonstrate compliance with performance objectives through a Plan of Development (POD) that uses either alternative measures or the following mitigation measures:

- Retain all sediments generated from the surface disturbing activity onsite.
- Do not allow construction or other surface disturbing activities when the soils are saturated to a depth of more than 3 inches.
- Limit vehicle use to existing roads and trails.

¹ The requirements of the 1989 RMP do not supersede valid existing rights on approved applications for permits to drill, developing leases, or entry under the general mining laws. Construction or maintenance within the ROWs of Moffat County Roads 4, 67, and 126 would be allowed on a case-by-case basis. BLM would work with operators/permittees/county engineers to develop appropriate compliance measures.

- ❑ Build all new permanent roads to meet BLM primary road standards in locations approved by the authorized officer (for oil and gas purposes, permanent roads are those used for production). Conduct all geophysical and geochemical exploration by helicopter, horseback, on foot, or from existing roads.
- ❑ Design any sediment-control structures, reserve pits, or disposal pits so that these can contain precipitation from a 100-year, 6-hour storm event, and provide storage volumes within these structures that have a design life of 25 years.
- ❑ Before reserve pits, production pits, or emergency pits can be reclaimed all residue will be removed and trucked offsite to an approved disposal site.
- ❑ Initiate reclamation of disturbed surfaces before November 1 each year.
- ❑ Approve all reclamation plans by the authorized officer in advance and require a bond, if necessary, or if one has not been previously posted.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM would apply COAs and BMPs as appropriate on a case-by-case basis at the implementation-level to protect soil resources.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

2.5.3 Water Resources

The Clean Water Act (§ 101[a]) was passed in 1948, with amendments in 1977, 1981, and 1987. It is intended to maintain and restore the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division is responsible for regulating the Clean Water Act by developing water quality standards, determining the stream or river segments not meeting these standards, meet EPA reporting requirements, implement permit program for discharges into waters of the United States, and implement provisions of the Act. Section 1342 of the Clean Water Act directs the States (through EPA) to regulate any discharge of pollutants to waters. BLM management is to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Act, by implementing best management practices, best available technology, and other project design features to maintain and protect water quality. The 1976 FLPMA directs and requires BLM to comply with State water quality standards and manage public land so as to preserve and protect certain lands in their natural condition. BLM is required to maintain water quality where it presently meets EPA-approved State of Colorado water quality standards and to improve water quality on public lands where it does not meet standards as defined by Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Any water discharged on the surface by industry is controlled through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits. Actions authorized on BLM lands must also comply with the mitigation requirements defined by the Office of Surface Mining regulations for coal leasing and by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit requirements.

Management actions would be conducted in conformance with the various regulations in the Clean Water Act, the Colorado Water Quality Control Act, FLPMA, and the Colorado standards and guidelines to achieve the water quality classifications and standards for surface and ground waters developed by the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission. Management actions for water quality included in this RMP include strategies to achieve desired water quality conditions.

2.5.3.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Water Goal A:** Protect and maintain present ground water quality. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Ensure that actions that could potentially affect ground water quality are conducted by using BMPs.

- ❑ **Water Goal B:** Maintain or improve the surface water quality and quantity and the integrity of streams and their associated riparian values on public lands. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Use BMPs to limit disturbances in and near streams or riparian/wetland systems.
 - Maintain watershed integrity, stream stability, and functioning hydrology.
 - Achieve proper functioning condition (PFC) in existing riparian/wetland systems that do not meet land health and water quality standards.
 - Identify and, where possible, remove existing sources of degradation.
 - Prevent, where possible, accelerated erosion and physical or chemical degradation in upland areas.
 - Ensure that land use employs BMPs to protect surface water resources.
 - Strive for sufficient quantity, quality, and timing of water to support water-dependent resource values, including fisheries, riparian communities, wetland communities, aquatic insects, terrestrial wildlife, and migratory/nonmigratory birds.
 - Strive for sufficient quantity, quality, and timing of water to support human and economic uses of water on public lands, including livestock grazing, recreation, forestry, and mineral development.
 - Minimize, through BMPs, sedimentation and erosion of water bodies.

2.5.3.2 Management Actions

In addition to the management actions listed below, the management actions for soil resources (summarized in Section 2.5.2.2) would also achieve water quality goals and objectives.

Alternative A: Establish NSO stipulations from within 500 feet to 0.25 mile of perennial water sources, depending on type and use of the water source, soil type, and slope steepness. Also see Alternative A decisions for soil resources management.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Establish NSO stipulations for up to 0.25 mile from perennial water sources, if necessary, depending on type and use of the water source, soil type, and slope steepness. Exceptions would be granted according to Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

2.5.4 Vegetation

The FLPMA and the Public Rangeland Improvement Act (PRIA) of 1978 clearly define the objectives and priorities for management of public land vegetation resources. Guidance contained in the Department of Interior regulations for *Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration* (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 4180) directs public land management toward the maintenance or restoration of the physical function and biological health of rangeland ecosystems. Regional standards of rangeland health and guidelines for livestock grazing management were developed for public land administered by BLM. The Colorado Standards and Guidelines (Appendix A) are the minimal acceptable conditions for addressing the health, productivity, and sustainability of rangelands. These standards describe healthy rangelands rather than rangeland byproducts. Achievement of a standard is accomplished through observing, measuring, and monitoring appropriate indicators, followed by the evaluation of that data. An indicator is a component of a system whose characteristics (e.g., presence, absence, quantity, and distribution) can be observed, measured, or monitored by sound scientific

principles. The standards would direct the management of public lands and focus the implementation of this activity plan on the maintenance or attainment of healthy rangelands.

The Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990s (BLM 1991a) establishes goals and objectives for managing riparian/wetland resources. Riparian areas would be managed to attain or maintain PFC. The PFC for different types of riparian/wetland systems is fully defined in BLM Technical Reference 1737-15, *A User Guide to Assessing Proper Functioning Condition and the Supporting Science for Lotic Areas*, and in BLM Technical Reference 1737-16, *A User Guide to Assessing Proper Functioning Condition and the Supporting Science for Lentic Areas*. PFC can be summarized as the minimum acceptable level of ecological status in which vegetation, landform, and/or large woody debris create a level of inherent resiliency that allows the stream or wetland system to be protected from erosive forces, capture sediment, provide for infiltration, and create appropriate habitat. Riparian areas would be maintained, improved, or restored to enhance forage conditions, provide wildlife habitat, and improve stream and water quality. To achieve PFC, riparian areas would be managed to maintain dominance by those species capable of stabilizing soils and stream banks. All riparian areas would be assessed, as needed, to determine their existing condition and whether specific management actions are needed for improvement.

2.5.4.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Vegetation Goal:** Collaborate with stakeholders and resource users in providing an array of habitats, suitably distributed across the landscape, that support biodiversity and viable populations of native plant and animal species. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Manage for a diversity of seral stages within plant communities.
 - Manage for connections between varieties of plant communities on a landscape scale.
 - Manage for juniper and other large woody species within their historic range of natural variability.
 - Restore natural disturbance regimes, such as fire, and use vegetation treatments to accomplish biodiversity objectives.
 - Establish desired plant communities (DPC), in coordination with stakeholders across the LSFO, in a way that focuses on native communities and intact ecosystems while allowing non-native species, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.
- ❑ **Sagebrush Goal A:** Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats, consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Maintain connections between sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale, as allowed by the range site condition.
- ❑ **Sagebrush Goal B:** Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat, consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Reduce the encroachment of juniper and other large woody species into the sagebrush habitat.
 - Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities.
 - Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories.
- ❑ **Forestry Goal:** Manage for healthy forest and woodland communities. Objectives for achieving this goal include—

- Manage forests and woodlands to improve forest resiliency to disturbances from insects, disease, and wildfires; restore habitats for special status species; and produce a sustainable supply of forest products.
 - Maintain the appropriate species diversity and age-class distribution for forest and woodland communities that are resilient to disturbances.
 - Recognize and manage aspen as a unique and limited high-value forest type for a wide variety of resources.
- **Riparian and Wetlands Goal A:** Maintain or improve the integrity of streams and their associated riparian values on public lands that meet land health and water quality standards. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Manage human-caused disturbances in and near riparian/wetland systems.
 - Maintain or improve watershed integrity and functioning hydrology.
 - Recognize and manage riparian/wetland communities as a limited and high-value vegetation type.
- **Riparian and Wetlands Goal B:** Achieve PFC in existing riparian/wetland systems that do not meet land health and water quality standards. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Identify and, if possible, remove existing sources of degradation.
 - Protect riparian/wetland systems from new sources of degradation.
 - Work with users to identify ways to improve riparian areas and to minimize degradation from existing uses.
- **Weeds Goal A:** Reduce the occurrence of noxious and undesirable plant species. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Ensure all land use actions that could potentially increase the occurrence of noxious weeds are conducted by using BMPs.
 - Apply principles of integrated pest management.
- **Weeds Goal B:** Integrate weed management across landscape and ownership boundaries. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Pursue, wherever possible, the use of cooperative agreements to coordinate weed management actions.
 - Identify ways of partnering with resource users and other stakeholders to reduce the occurrence of noxious weeds.

2.5.4.2 Management Actions

Desired Plant Communities

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Upland and riparian vegetation would be managed to achieve DPC objectives that have been established for a localized area to meet the Colorado standards and guidelines and the objectives for the Little Snake Planning Area. The DPC objectives would be determined through consulting various references including the NRCS's *Range Site Guides* and ecological site inventory data, which are targeted to the specific objectives for the area. The DPC objectives would emphasize commodity uses while complying with existing regulations pertaining to sensitive resources.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B. The DPC objectives would emphasize wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, watershed, and biodiversity values while maintaining or enhancing habitat for special status species.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B. The DPC objectives would emphasize wildlife habitat, watershed, and biodiversity values. There would be particular emphasis on maintaining or enhancing habitat for special status species.

Vegetation Treatments

Alternative A: No similar action. Vegetation treatments would be conducted on a case-by-case basis, as needed.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, vegetation treatments to increase forage production would be emphasized when consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Vegetation treatments would be applied to an average of 4,110 acres per year over the life of the plan to improve diversity of seral stages and species, as appropriate. Work with the Northwest Colorado Sage-Grouse Working Group to identify, maintain, and treat where necessary an average of 530 acres of sagebrush per year. Creation of functional blocks of sagebrush as sage-grouse habitat would be emphasized. In addition, vegetation treatments would be applied to an average of 1,600 acres per year to reduce expansion of juniper and other large woody species to mimic natural conditions. Further, an average of 100 acres per year of mountain shrub would be treated. Vegetation treatments may be one of the tools used where land health assessments (LHA) indicate a standard is not being met for reasons other than existing livestock management (such as areas where reclamation efforts have not been successful or areas with heavy OHV use) to improve conditions.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C, with the exception that vegetation treatments would be applied to an average of 8,750 acres per year over the life of the plan to improve diversity of seral stages and species, as appropriate. Work with the Northwest Colorado Sage-Grouse Working Group to identify, maintain, and treat where necessary an average of 2,000 acres of sagebrush per year. Creation of functional blocks of sagebrush would be emphasized. Further, vegetation treatments would be applied to an average of 3,500 acres per year to reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species so as to mimic natural conditions. In addition, an average of 1,000 acres of per year of mountain shrub would be treated.

Forestry

Alternative A: Restoration, treatment, improvement, and maintenance would be done on a case-by-case basis as needed.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): An average of 200 acres per year of Ponderosa pine, primarily in the Douglas Mountain area, would be treated. Ponderosa pine restoration projects would likely be nonharvest methods such as prescribed fire and mechanical understory reduction. An average of 50 acres per year of lodgepole pine, primarily in, but not limited to, the Cold Spring landscape, would be treated. Treatments would likely be a mix of commercial forest product sales and fuels-related treatments aimed at maintaining an overall viable stand and reducing the threat of large fires in the area. There would be improvement or maintenance of aspen community health on an average of 50 acres of stands per year, especially in the Cold Spring landscape and in Routt County. Aspen improvement would likely entail using nonharvest methods such as prescribed fire, chainsaw thinning, and other mechanical means aimed at promoting aspen regeneration. An average of 500 acres per year of pinyon-juniper woodland would be treated. The aim of pinyon-juniper restoration would be to maintain a mosaic of age classes and to balance the amount of treatment against natural pinyon-juniper expansion. Pinyon-juniper restoration

could be treated through a combination of prescribed burning, biomass removal, mechanical mastication, and designated firewood gathering areas.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C, with the exception of treating an average of 400 acres per year of Ponderosa pine, primarily in the Douglas Mountain area; treating an average of 100 acres per year of lodgepole pine, primarily in the Cold Spring landscape; and improving or maintaining aspen community health on an average of 200 acres of stands per year, especially in the Cold Spring landscape and in Routt County.

Noxious Weeds

Alternative A: Noxious weeds would be identified and eliminated on a case-by-case basis, consistent with current policy.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The spread of noxious weeds would be prevented. Invasive species would be eliminated by focusing on areas of new infestations and, where possible, on extirpating existing populations wherever they exist within the planning area. The occurrence of noxious weeds could be reduced through partnering with resource users and other stakeholders. Maximize utilization of cooperative agreements for control of invasive species would be encouraged.

Continue implementation of noxious weed and invasive species control actions as per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State, federal, affected counties, adjoining private land owners, and other partners or interests directly affected.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

2.5.5 Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Section 102.8 of FLPMA requires that public land be managed to protect the quality of multiple resources and to provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic animals. PRIA also directs BLM to improve rangeland conditions with due consideration of the needs of wildlife and their habitats. Rangeland health regulations identify the need to foster productive and diverse populations and communities of plants and animals. The Sikes Act of 1974 is a congressional mandate for BLM to “plan, develop, maintain, and coordinate programs for the conservation and rehabilitation of wildlife, fish, and game.” In addition, executive orders for floodplain management and protection of wetlands provide further direction for protection and management of fisheries habitat.

BLM’s role is to provide habitat that supports desired aquatic plants and animals. Species manipulations, such as introductions and population management, are under the authority of CDOW.

Wildlife depends on riparian/wetland areas for vital habitat components. In managing riparian/wetland areas, BLM should consider the consequences and relationships of its management to the life history needs of wildlife. The character of upland vegetation (arrangements, densities, age classes, etc.) greatly influences wildlife habitat quality and productivity. Because characteristics of upland vegetation can have varied responses to different land uses, BLM considers the consequences of land uses and treatments to the health of wildlife habitat. Proper range or forest management may not necessarily result in satisfactory wildlife habitat due to habitat disturbance or displacement by humans. In such instances, wildlife habitat must also have a reasonable amount of protection from such human-caused impacts. This is especially

true during breeding periods and during use of winter ranges, where most human activity may result in displacement impacts.

2.5.5.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- **Fish and Wildlife Goal A:** Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species, consistent with local conservation plans. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Maintain connections between sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale.
- **Fish and Wildlife Goal B:** Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species into sagebrush habitat.
 - Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities.
 - Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories.
- **Fish and Wildlife Goal C:** Manage habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species endemic to key vegetation types by maintaining adequate habitat quantity, quality, and continuity. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Improve and/or maintain those areas that are key wildlife habitats and their desired plant communities.
 - Maintain or restore connectivity between habitat use areas.
 - Maintain, restore, or enhance the habitat of migratory bird species (i.e., neotropicals, waterfowl, and raptors).
 - Promote conservation and minimize the take of migratory birds.
 - Maintain and promote high-quality habitat for big game populations.
 - Provide habitat to support sufficient raptor prey populations.
 - Provide sufficient nesting and fledging habitat to ensure sustainable raptor populations.
- **Fish and Wildlife Goal D:** Manage disturbances to wildlife populations. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Manage access to seasonal use areas during crucial time frames.
 - Manage access in crucial habitats.
- **Fish and Wildlife Goal E:** Provide an array of aquatic habitats that support biodiversity and viable populations of species. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Promote improvement and recovery of current, historic, and potential habitats of aquatic species.
 - Maintain or improve riparian conditions to provide for forage, habitat, and biodiversity.
 - Encourage sport fisheries where these would not be detrimental to native fish populations.
- **Fish and Wildlife Goal F:** Cooperate with CDOW. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - In collaboration with key agencies, provide input to CDOW on establishing fish and wildlife populations that can be sustained by the available habitat.
 - Seek input from CDOW on managing fish and wildlife habitat on public lands.

2.5.5.2 Management Actions

Improving and Maintaining Sagebrush Habitat Functionality by Limiting Fragmentation

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Same as Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Within the planning area, BLM and Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) evaluated sagebrush habitats and placed them within high, medium and low priority categories (Map 2-3). The lowest priority category is composed of parts of the landscape that are least important to wildlife. The medium category includes areas wildlife are highly dependent upon, and the high category includes those areas which are critical to wildlife due to high range fidelity or areas that are irreplaceable. It is important to note that these importance categories are relative. Nearly all portions of the LSFO are highly valuable to wildlife, but some habitat types and locations are clearly more valuable than others.

The lowest priority habitats in the RMPPA consist of overall big game winter range and summer range. The medium priority habitats consist of big game winter concentration areas, severe winter range, migration corridors, sage-grouse winter range, sage-grouse breeding habitat, and areas within the 4 mile radius of leks located outside of the sage-grouse core areas. The highest priority habitats consist of sage-grouse core areas (Map 2-3), which include 4 mile lek radii around the largest leks, portions of sage-grouse winter range, and portions of big game winter range.

These areas were defined based on known sage-grouse lek sites and other information, but are intended to be flexible in the RMP so that new sites discovered during the life of the RMP would also be included. Like other oil and gas stipulations, these apply to both federal surface and federal mineral estates.

The appropriate wildlife habitat stipulations would be determined by the priority of sagebrush habitat the lease is located in and whether a lease is new or existing. If a lease straddles two or more levels of habitat priority, the higher priority stipulation would apply.

Low Priority Habitats: In these identified areas, oil and gas development would proceed as described in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS, with all appropriate stipulations applying, subject to the exception, modification, and waiver criteria described in Appendix E. No additional mitigation beyond the stipulations described in the other sections of the Proposed RMP would be required.

Medium Priority Habitats, Existing Leases: For existing oil and gas leases at the time of the ROD, participation in this approach would be voluntary. A valid existing lease conveys certain rights of development to the leaseholder. A stipulation cannot be added to an existing lease after the lease is issued. Oil and gas operators could opt into an agreement to limit surface disturbance to 5 percent of the project area and submit a POD which illustrates a strategy to keep large blocks of habitat undeveloped. In return, BLM would grant exceptions to big game and sage-grouse timing limitation stipulations, allowing larger windows for development (drilling, completions and construction). If a proposal and/or operator meets both criteria, BLM would grant an exception to big game winter range and sage-grouse nesting and critical winter range timing stipulations for all APDs in the project area (as described below), allowing a larger window for development. Until these criteria are met, timing limitation stipulations would apply as stated on leases. This agreement does not pertain to the NSO stipulation around sage-grouse leks or timing stipulations for raptors and other species, which would remain in effect. For these stipulations, as well as stipulations on leases which are not subject to this voluntary agreement, BLM could grant exceptions, modifications, or waivers through normal procedures as described in Appendix E. The agreement must be adhered to for the life of the leases in the project area.

Approval of exceptions to big game and sage-grouse timing limitation stipulations for year-round drilling would require active monitoring for compliance with the conditions of approval outlined in the voluntary agreement. Operators must continually meet these criteria throughout development of the project area, or the authorization for the exception of timing stipulations would terminate. Compliance history would be a factor in approving this tradeoff for future development. If an operator were to breach the agreement, BLM would not allow the same operator to enter into this agreement again.

For operators who choose not to opt into this voluntary approach in medium potential habitats, BLM would require habitat protection Best Management Practices (BMPs). Appropriate BMPs would be required as Conditions of Approval (COAs) on drilling applications on existing leases within medium priority habitats not enrolled in a voluntary surface disturbance limiting agreement. BMPs could include, but would not be limited to, the practices listed in Section 2.5.6.2 of the special status species alternatives.

Medium Priority Habitats, New Leases: For any new leases which overlie a medium priority habitat, a stipulation would be attached to the lease to comply with the two criteria described in more detail later: a 5 percent disturbance limitation and a POD illustrating a strategy to leave large blocks of undisturbed habitat. These criteria would be mandatory and BLM would not be obligated to grant an operator an exception to timing limitation stipulations. Operators would have to apply for an exception to this stipulation, which BLM would consider on a case-by-case basis.

Non-oil and gas related projects may also be held to a higher standard in medium priority habitats. BLM may require additional mitigation for rights-of-way, recreation facilities, range improvements, commercial forest harvest and other projects within these areas.

Defining the project area boundary

Where the surface disturbance stipulation is voluntary, the operator would define the project boundary. An operator is allowed a lot of flexibility in defining the project area. The only requirement is that they control the oil and gas development within the area so that they are able to meet the necessary criteria without interference from other operators. A project boundary could be composed of as little as one lease, or as much as several leases under different operators, or even a federal oil and gas unit. The leases within the project area could either be connected or not contiguous. The project area could be composed of a mixture of federal and private surface.

The total allowable surface disturbance would be calculated for the entire project area. For example, a project boundary of 1,000 acres would allow 50 acres of disturbance regardless of the size of the leases in the project area. A project area could be composed of medium and high priority habitats. In this case, allowable disturbance in the two different types would be calculated separately. For example, in a 1,000 acre project area containing 500 acres medium priority habitat and 500 acres high priority habitat, no more than 25 acres of medium priority habitat and no more than 5 acres of high priority habitat could be disturbed at one time. When calculating total acres in a project area, all leased lands would be included, including areas with NSO stipulations. For example, if there are 200 acres covered by an NSO stipulation for sage-grouse in a 1,000 acre project area, the total project area would be 1,000 acres, not 800.

It is not necessary for one leaseholder to hold all leases in a project area. In the case of the project area being defined by a federal oil and gas unit, the lead operator would be responsible for coordinating the oil and gas development so the criteria are met. Outside of established units, but within landscapes with multiple leaseholders, multiple operators could enter into this approach together, coordinating development together to ensure meeting the criteria within the project area. Development would have to be organized so that one operator was not using all (“hogging”) the allowable disturbance for the project area.

Larger project areas would benefit both the operator and the wildlife resource. Large project areas would allow operators more flexibility in remaining below the disturbance threshold, as there would be more acres available to disturb. Likewise, larger project areas would facilitate larger sage-grouse sanctuaries and better create habitat protection on a landscape scale.

For new leases where this approach is mandatory, the operator could suggest a project area boundary to BLM for approval, which could include existing leases. If the operator does not have a specific project area in mind, compliance with established criteria would be required for the boundary of the new lease.

Below are the two criteria that an operator must meet when entering into a voluntary agreement or complying with a mandatory stipulation in medium priority habitats.

Criterion #1 for Medium Priority Habitats:

No more than 5 percent of the surface area of the project area would be disturbed at any time. In this context, surface disturbance pertains to only oil and gas actions. Other BLM permitted activities, nonpermitted activities, and non-oil and gas related rights-of-way (ROW) do not count toward the 5 percent maximum. Oil and gas related ROW that are owned by a third party also do not count toward the 5 percent limit; only actions that the leaseholder is responsible for are included in the total. All disturbances associated with oil and gas operations performed by the leaseholder, however, do count toward this limitation, including well pads, roads, pipelines, exploration and production facilities, and all other infrastructure. In addition, existing oil and gas disturbance also counts toward the 5 percent threshold. In this context, “existing disturbance” means areas where vegetation has been stripped or otherwise removed or destroyed, and for which revegetation has not been initiated, or has not achieved reclamation success standards. For project areas already exceeding 5 percent oil and gas-related disturbance, a no-net-gain principle would go into effect, which is described below.

Although the 5 percent surface disturbance threshold is the guiding factor, spacing of oil and gas facilities on the surface is also an important concept in limiting habitat fragmentation. If it is assumed that each facility occupies 8 acres, this is equivalent to disturbing 5 percent of a 160-acre block. The intent is not to require 160-acre spacing but to average no more than one facility for each 160 acres within a project area while leaving large blocks of habitat undisturbed. Therefore, operators are encouraged to develop proposals that leave larger blocks of sagebrush habitat undisturbed within project areas, by clustering facilities, carefully designing road and pipeline systems to minimize disturbance, or other means.

Disturbed areas can be recovered on a rolling-reclamation basis. Upon successful reclamation, reclaimed areas would no longer be counted toward the 5 percent limit, and the total area disturbed in the project area would be decreased by that amount. Successful reclamation is defined in the Reclamation Performance Standard described in Appendix O. The criteria used to evaluate whether the reclamation performance standard is met would depend on whether the reclamation is interim or final.

In areas where existing oil and gas infrastructure already exceeds the 5 percent disturbance threshold, a no-net-gain principle would be employed. A leaseholder could satisfy this criterion if it can show in a POD that it would reclaim areas equal to the area proposed for new development and meet the performance standard for successful reclamation in those areas. In-kind offsite or compensatory mitigation could also count toward recuperating disturbed areas, if approved by BLM, although it may not necessarily be on a one-acre per one-acre basis. Reclamation and offsite mitigation would be required to meet the same reclamation performance standard as described above. If mitigation is not performed as agreed upon, or any aspect of the POD is not followed, BLM would no longer grant exceptions to timing stipulations and would issue noncompliance to the leaseholder.

Criterion #2 for Medium Priority Habitats:

Development and approval of a POD, which contains a strategy for reducing habitat fragmentation and maintaining large blocks of sagebrush habitat, is an important requirement in this approach. The operator needs to have some level of confidence and certainty in their POD. PODs may be developed in stages and updated annually (see the discussion on *Maintaining the Project Record* below). The area of the project described in the POD could include multiple leases or units, either connected or not contiguous. However, BLM or the operator may determine that separate PODs are needed for areas that are not connected.

A complete POD consists of the following components, if applicable:

- ❑ Cover letter containing operator name, project name, list of wells (name and number by lease, with legal description including quarter-quarter)
- ❑ Master drilling plan
- ❑ Master surface use plan, including plans for surface reclamation, a baseline calculation of total surface area currently disturbed by oil and gas activity in the project area, and the total area to be disturbed through the proposed development
- ❑ A strategy for limiting and/or mitigating sagebrush habitat fragmentation with the goal of maintaining large, unfragmented blocks of sagebrush habitat. The plan would demonstrate significant control of fragmentation in a number of ways, including—
 - Reducing surface density of facilities, roads, pipelines, and other ROWs
 - Focusing development near existing ROWs
 - Clustering facilities, including the use of directional drilling where feasible and utilizing closed drilling systems (no reserve pits)
 - Minimizing oil- and gas-related activity in sagebrush habitats, including reducing traffic through field road management, closing roads to public use, remote telemetry of wells, piping of produced fluids rather than trucking, etc.
 - Using new technologies, including surface mats, self-contained rigs, limited impact drilling (e.g., small roads and small pads)
 - Being sensitive to different habitat types within the project area and developing a strategy that protects important habitat types. Operators should consider seasonal habitats and guide development away from important breeding, summer, fall and winter habitats. Mitigation plans, compensatory mitigation proposals
 - Acceptance of applicable BMPs
- ❑ Water management plan
- ❑ Cultural resource inventory plan
- ❑ Wildlife monitoring plan
- ❑ Project maps, including—
 - Surface ownership with project boundary
 - Mineral ownership with project boundary
 - Existing and proposed well sites
 - Compressor sites
 - Flow line routes
 - Utility line routes
 - Transportation routes
- ❑ List of all permitting agencies involved
- ❑ Surface owner agreements
- ❑ Water mitigation agreements
- ❑ Any additional information.

High Priority Habitats, Existing Leases: The approach would be the same as medium priority habitats. For existing oil and gas leases at the time of the ROD, participation in this approach would be voluntary. If an operator chose to opt into an agreement, they would have to develop a plan which keeps surface disturbance below 5 percent and creates large refuges of undeveloped habitat. As an incentive to enter into this approach, BLM would grant an exception to big game and sage-grouse timing stipulations if the operator complies with the two criteria described below.

For operators who choose not to opt into this voluntary approach in high potential habitats, BLM would require habitat protection Best Management Practices (BMPs). Appropriate BMPs would be required as Conditions of Approval (COAs) on drilling applications on existing leases within high priority habitats not enrolled in a voluntary surface disturbance limiting agreement. BMPs could include, but would not be limited to, the practices listed in Section 2.5.6.2 of the special status species alternatives.

High Priority Habitats, New Leases: For any new leases which overlie a high priority habitat, a stipulation would be attached to the lease to comply with the two criteria: a 1 percent disturbance limitation and a POD illustrating a strategy to leave large blocks of undisturbed habitat. These criteria would be mandatory and BLM would not be obligated to grant an operator an exception to timing limitation stipulations. Operators would have to apply for an exception to this stipulation, which BLM would consider on a case-by-case basis. To grant an exception to the 1 percent disturbance threshold, the operator would have to prove that it went to extraordinary means to mitigate or improve high priority habitats. This could include enlisting surrounding leaseholders into a plan to protect even larger blocks of habitat, or performing BLM-approved compensatory mitigation.

Non-oil and gas related projects would be held to a higher standard in high priority habitats. BLM may require additional mitigation for rights-of-way, recreation facilities, range improvements, and other projects within these areas. BLM would make an attempt to site projects outside of high potential habitats, if possible. Depending on other possible locations and alternatives, as well as conditions on the ground, BLM may not approve such projects in high potential habitats. BLM would consider these projects on a case-by-case basis to ensure management intent with respect to sagebrush obligate species within these habitats can be achieved.

The two criteria that an operator must meet when entering into a voluntary agreement or complying with a mandatory stipulation in high priority habitats are similar to those for medium potential habitats.

Criterion #1 for High Priority Habitats:

No more than 1 percent of the surface area of the project area would be disturbed at any time. This requirement would be exactly the same as for medium priority habitats, except the surface disturbance threshold would be 1 percent of the project area or lease. Existing oil and gas related disturbance would still count towards the total. Areas over 1 percent existing disturbance would be subject to the no-net-gain rule. The principles of rolling reclamation and compensatory mitigation would also apply to high priority habitats.

Criterion #2 for High Priority Habitats:

A POD which puts forward a strategy for limiting and/or mitigating sagebrush habitat fragmentation with the goal of maintaining large, unfragmented blocks of sagebrush habitat would also be a requirement for high priority habitats. This requirement would be exactly the same as described for medium potential habitats, except that BLM would look for a more measures to protect these critical communities.

Maintaining the Project Record: Baseline Measurements, Monitoring, and Updating PODs

This approach requires a baseline measurement of existing disturbance as well as monitoring to determine when the 5 percent or 1 percent threshold is reached. Before a leaseholder enters into the agreement, a geographic information system (GIS) analysis of existing disturbance in the project area would be performed by the operator as part of the POD. Operators would provide BLM with Federal Geographic Data Committee-compliant metadata and GIS data for all existing oil and gas related disturbance. Using global positioning system (GPS) on the ground or digitizing disturbance from satellite imagery are two possible methods to compile baseline disturbance map. The total number of acres of existing disturbance in the project area would be calculated by the operator. Portions of the project area would be ground-truthed by BLM to ensure accuracy.

A running total of surface disturbance in the project area would be performed by the operator and updated in the POD at least annually. Annual meetings between BLM and the operator would be required to maintain a record of the project. A draft POD would be required to be submitted for review prior to annual planning meetings. A final POD, based on comments and discussion during the annual planning meeting, would be submitted within a reasonable timeframe thereafter.

During an annual meeting or in another forum, the proposed POD would be reviewed and recommendations would be made to ensure that the measures laid out would effectively protect sagebrush and big game habitat. Additionally, a running total of surface disturbance in the project area, including anticipated development for that year, would be performed by the operator and included in the POD. The operator would be required to supply an annual reclamation status report and plan for all disturbance in the project area so that BLM could assess reclamation success. BLM and the operator could take the following day, or another time, to ground-truth the scope of the proposed development and review reclaimed areas to see if they have met the reclamation requirements described in Appendix O. Proposals for compensatory mitigation could also be discussed.

Alternative D: Same as Alternative A

Raptors (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], buteos, and owls, and not including special status species raptors)

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed within a 0.125 mile radius of raptor nest sites. The NSO area could be altered depending upon the active status of the nest site or upon the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the nest site. Raptor nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to August 15 within a 0.25 mile buffer zone around the nest site. However, during years when a nest site is unoccupied, or unoccupied by or after May 15, these seasonal limitations may be excepted; they may also be excepted once the young have fledged and dispersed from the nest.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis as determined by site-specific analysis before authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: NSO would be applied within a 0.25 mile radius of raptor nest sites. Raptor nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to August 15 within a 0.25 mile buffer zone around the nest site. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Peregrine Falcon

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed within a 0.25 mile radius of cliff nesting complexes. There are no exceptions. Peregrine falcon cliff nesting complexes would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 16 to July 31 within a 0.5 mile buffer area around the nesting complex to prevent abandonment and desertion of established territories. However, during years when a nest is unoccupied, or unoccupied by or after May 15, the seasonal stipulation may be excepted. The stipulations may also be excepted once the young have fledged and dispersed from the nest.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A, except NSO areas may be altered depending upon the active status of the nesting complex or upon the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Waterfowl and Shorebird

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed on significant production areas, such as waterfowl habitat management areas and rookeries. There are no exceptions.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, NSO areas may be altered depending upon the active status of the production areas or upon the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. Exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Big Game Species (mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep)

Alternative A: The crucial winter habitat of big game species would be closed to surface disturbing activities from December 1 to April 30. However, under mild winter conditions, the last 60 days of the seasonal limitation period may be excepted. The severity of winter would be determined based on snow depth, snow crusting, daily mean temperatures, and concentration of animals on winter range during winter months. Big game birthing areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities for the following species and during the following periods: elk calving (April 16 to June 30), pronghorn antelope fawning (May 1 to July 15), Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep lambing (May 1 to July 15), and desert bighorn sheep lambing (March 16 to May 30). However, if it is determined through a site-specific environmental analysis that specific activities would not interfere with critical habitat function or compromise animal conditions within the vicinity of those activities, these restrictions may be altered or removed.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Crucial winter habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from December 1 to April 30, with the intent that this stipulation apply after the big game hunting season. In the case that hunting season extends later, exceptions would be applied according to Appendix E. Big game birthing areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities for the following species and during the following periods: elk calving (April 16 to June 30), pronghorn antelope fawning (May 1 to July 15), and bighorn sheep lambing (May 1 to July 15). In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Closures in crucial winter habitat would be the same as those described in Alternative A. Closures in big game birthing areas would be the same as those described in Alternative C. Exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Greater Sandhill Crane

Alternative A: Nesting and staging habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 1 to October 16. There are no exceptions.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Osprey

Alternative A: Osprey nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from April 1 to August 31. This closure would apply to a 0.5 mile buffer zone around the habitat to avoid nest abandonment.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Wildlife Use Adjustments

Alternative A: Wildlife use adjustments would be recommended to CDOW if monitoring data indicates such adjustments are necessary. No similar actions for controlled surface use (CSU), site-specific relocation (SSR), and timing stipulations.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative A.

White-Tailed Prairie Dogs

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Controlled surface use and timing stipulations would be as follows: Surface disturbing activities occurring over more than 1 acre would not be permitted in active prairie dog towns less than 10 acres in size. These activities would be relocated to the edge of the active prairie dog town. To protect prairie dog pups, surface disturbing activities occurring over less than 1 acre or within active prairie dog towns larger than 10 acres would not be permitted between April 1 and June 15. However, if a company has a well pad in place but for whatever reason is unable to complete the well before April 1, these timing restrictions would be granted an exception. Exceptions may also be considered on a case by case basis following Appendix E guidelines.

Alternative D: No similar action. The White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC, discussed in Special Management Areas, Section 2.5.11, would provide species management.

2.5.6 Special Status Species

Special status species include those species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended, as well as those designated by BLM as “Bureau sensitive”. Bureau sensitive species are designated by BLM State Directors in accordance with the criteria provided in the revised 6840 *Manual for Management of Special Status Species*. Section 102.8 of FLPMA requires that public land be managed to protect the quality of ecological and environmental values and, where appropriate, to protect their natural condition. The ESA mandates that management take the lead in the conservation or recovery of federally listed threatened or endangered species. The ESA, as well as BLM Special Status Species/6840 Manual, also encourages management to protect special status species that are not currently listed as threatened or endangered. Federal agencies are required to ensure that the actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of species listed as threatened or endangered or that adversely modify or destroy their critical habitat under the ESA. BLM would avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of any federally listed, State listed, or proposed for listing species; would actively promote species recovery; and would work to improve the status of candidate and sensitive species. If a federally listed species might be affected by a proposed land use allocation or management action, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) pursuant to Section 7 of ESA would occur.

Most special status species are limited in their distributions, populations, or habitats and may be at risk over various geographic areas. Where evidence suggests that land uses are adversely affecting special status species that are not currently listed as threatened or endangered, it is in the public interest to prevent having to federally list those species under ESA. Listing a species as threatened or endangered may lead to restrictions on land uses, and under some circumstances, commodity users may experience adverse socioeconomic impacts because of such listings. In most cases, therefore, there are both socioeconomic and biological benefits associated with conserving species so that these can avoid being federally listed species in the future.

Maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of populations or habitat may each represent an appropriate BLM management decision, depending on the habitat needs or specific circumstances of a species. Restoration or enhancement may not always be the only clear choices for BLM actions regarding special status species. One potential limitation that could delay restoration or enhancement actions is that

biological mechanisms adversely affecting a species may not be understood well enough to identify needed management changes.

2.5.6.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- **Special Status Species Goal A:** Preserve and protect special status species. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain the populations of BLM sensitive species at levels that would avoid having to list these species in the future as threatened or endangered.
 - Maintain, restore, or enhance the habitat of special status species, including designated critical habitats for listed species.
 - Maintain or restore the populations of special status species to the extent possible.
 - Prioritize inventories, monitoring, and other scientific studies to better understand the ecology of special status species to improve their management.

- **Special Status Species Goal B:** Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species, consistent with local conservation plans. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Maintain connections between sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale.

- **Special Status Species Goal C:** Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.
 - Reduce the encroachment of juniper and other large woody species onto sagebrush habitat.
 - Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities.
 - Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories.

2.5.6.2 Management Actions

Colorado BLM Sensitive Species

Alternative A: Before any surface disturbance activity, surveys would be conducted of potential habitat for Colorado BLM Sensitive Species, including plants and wildlife. Should any such species be found, all disruptive activities would be halted until species-specific protective measures were developed and implemented. There would be NSO stipulations on habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate species. NSO stipulations may be altered after important factors are considered in the impact analysis, such as the type and amount of surface disturbance, plant frequency and density, and the relocation of disturbances.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except CSU stipulations would apply to habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate. Exception criteria detailed in Appendix E would apply.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): In addition to the measures described in Alternative B, BLM would survey for rare plant species, and if any such communities were found, all disruptive activities would be delayed until specific protective measures were developed and implemented, if appropriate.

Alternative D: In addition to the measures described in Alternative C, BLM would review the Colorado Natural Heritage Database for sensitive plant species not listed on BLM's Sensitive Species List and would determine the appropriate management for species on a case-by-case basis.

Ferruginous Hawk

Alternative A: From February 1 to August 15, a 1 mile buffer around nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities to avoid nest abandonment.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed within a 0.25 mile radius of a lek site. The NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. Nesting habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 1 to June 30. Crucial winter habitat would be closed from December 16 to March 15. There would be no exceptions.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Colorado River Fishes

Alternative A: Require NSO stipulations within critical or occupied habitat of Colorado pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*), razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*), humpback chub (*Gila cypha*), and bonytail (*Gila elegans*). Exceptions that could adversely affect listed fish (such as bridge abutments) would require site-specific consultation with the USFWS.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative A.

Greater Sage-Grouse

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed within a 0.25 mile radius of a lek site. The NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. Nesting habitat would be closed to surface disturbing

activities from March 1 to June 30. Crucial winter habitat would be closed from December 16 to March 15. There would be no exceptions.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): To reduce potential impacts on greater sage-grouse lek integrity, NSO would be applied within a 0.6 mile radius of a lek site. The NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the lek, habitat characteristics, or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

To prevent disturbing up to 75 percent of nesting birds, between March 1 and June 30, greater sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat (as defined in Chapter 3) would be stipulated as CSU for oil and gas operations and avoidance areas for other surface disturbing activities within a 4 mile radius of the perimeter of a lek. All surface disturbing activities would avoid only nesting and early brood-rearing habitat within the 4 mile radius of the lek during this time period. Exceptions, modification, or waivers would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E. The actual area to be avoided would be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on applicable scientific research and site-specific analysis and in coordination with commodity users and other appropriate entities.

The use of the following list of BMPs would be encouraged for all surface disturbing activities, and BLM may require implementation of some of these BMPs. Use of these BMPs becomes even more important once a disturbance affects 10 percent of the nesting habitat within a 4 mile radius of an active lek. As new BMPs are developed, they may be added to this list of BMPs or may replace some of those now listed.

- Habitat Reclamation—
 - Use early and effective reclamation techniques, including interim reclamation, to allow sage-grouse habitat to be reestablished as soon as possible. This may require multiple reclamation efforts.
 - Use reclamation seed mixes, consisting of native bunchgrasses, forbs, and subspecies of big sagebrush, that are appropriate for the disturbed site and its potential.
 - Practice reclamation techniques that speed recovery of preexisting vegetation.
 - Avoid the use of aggressive, non-native grasses (e.g., intermediate wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, crested wheatgrass, and smooth brome) in reclamation seed mixes.
 - Cooperate with county weed programs to control noxious weed infestations associated with oil and gas development disturbances.

- Footprint Reduction—
 - Reduce the long-term footprint of facilities to the smallest practical space.
 - Design and construct roads to minimize duplication of them.
 - Cluster development of roads, pipelines, electric lines, and other facilities, and use existing, combined corridors where possible.
 - Use directional drilling where biologically significant habitats are involved so as to minimize impact to grouse habitat, if such techniques are technically feasible.
 - Minimize pad size and other facilities to the extent possible consistent with safety. Where directional drilling is occurring, larger pads are needed for multiple wells.
 - Minimize width of field surface roads. Avoid engineered and graveled roads when possible to reduce the footprint.

- Reduce Disturbance to Birds—
 - Limit non-surface disturbing activities during the breeding season, March 1–May 1, near active sage-grouse leks to portions of the day after 9:00 a.m. and before 4:00 p.m.
 - Reduce noise impacts from compressor stations by locating stations at least 2,500 feet away from leks and by using decibel reduction equipment.
 - Require field development plans if exploration or wildcat wells indicate that substantial drilling may occur.
 - Reduce daily visits to well pads and road travel to the extent possible in sage-grouse habitat.
 - Use remote telemetry to monitor wells, when practical, to reduce daily visits to wells.
 - Erect gates on, or otherwise limit regular public access to, field service roads. This should be consistent with landowner wishes and direction for split-estate wells or ROW access across private lands.

Management for crucial winter habitat would be the same as described in Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

BLM would work with other agencies and interested parties to achieve the goals and objectives, including CDOW's population targets, included in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan. BLM would support monitoring and evaluation efforts as outlined in the Northwest Colorado and Colorado statewide conservation plans to detect changes in sage-grouse trends due to land use activities. If it is determined that any Management Zone or the whole population is in a downward trend, BLM would assist in development and implementation of strategies to reverse this trend through the management of seasonal sagebrush habitats. If populations were to drop into the "evaluation zone," as defined in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan, action would be taken within one year to reverse declining sage-grouse trends, return populations to the levels above the "evaluation zone" and prevent declines of sage-grouse populations below the target range.

Alternative D: To further reduce potential impacts on greater sage-grouse lek integrity, NSO/NGD would be applied within a 0.6 mile radius of a lek site. The NSO/NGD area may be altered depending upon the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. In addition, exceptions may be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.

To prevent disturbing greater than 75 percent of nesting birds, between March 1 to June 30, greater sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat (as defined in Chapter 3) would be stipulated as CSU for oil and gas operations and avoidance areas (including SSR) for other surface disturbing and disruptive activities. Exceptions, modification, or waivers would be granted according to the criteria established in Appendix E. The actual area to be avoided would be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on applicable scientific research and site-specific analysis and in coordination with commodity users and other appropriate entities.

The use of BMPs, including habitat reclamation, footprint reduction, and reducing disturbance to birds, would be the same as described in Alternative C.

To reduce disturbance to the animals, greater sage-grouse winter habitat (Map 3-19) would be closed to surface disturbing and other disruptive activities from December 16 to March 15. In addition, to protect greater sage-grouse winter habitat, these areas would be CSU for oil and gas operations and avoidance areas (including SSR) for other surface disturbing and disruptive activities. Exceptions would be granted according to the criteria established in Appendix E.

Black-Footed Ferret

Alternative A: No surface disturbing activities would be allowed that might significantly alter the prairie dog complex and make it unsuitable for reintroduction of the black-footed ferret. Per the 1995 Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction Amendment, deterrent devices designed to prevent raptors from perching on powerline structures are required on all new construction to discourage predation on ferrets. Rangeland improvement projects (fences, water developments, etc.) within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites would not be allowed, to prevent disturbance or damage during the 3- to 4- month release period.

Compensation and operational plans would be developed for oil and gas field development in the Little Snake black-footed ferret management area. BLM would develop offsite mitigation plans for replacement of lost habitat, if necessary. New mineral material sales (sand and gravel) proposed in prairie dog towns within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release sites may be required to have their operations delayed or excepted for 3 to 4 months during the release period. There would be no restrictions on mineral material sales operations that were ongoing at the time of selection of release sites. Sales within the common use areas within 0.25 miles of release sites would also be excepted during the 3- to 4-month release period.

OHV use would not be allowed within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period. Administrative OHV use would be allowed as necessary for implementation and monitoring of ferret releases. Target shooting, plinking, or any type of sport hunting would be prohibited within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period. ROWs on public land with the potential to disturb occupied black-footed ferret habitat would be rerouted to avoid those prairie dog towns.

Alternative B: No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Surface disturbing activities would be minimized to the extent reasonable to reduce landscape disturbance to prairie dog habitat for the black-footed ferret. Rangeland improvement projects (such as fences and water developments) would not be allowed within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release sites, to prevent disturbance or damage during the 3- to 4-month release period. There would be no similar action for compensation and operational plans. Management actions for new mineral material sales proposed in prairie dog habitat would be the same as those described in Alternative A.

OHV use would not be allowed within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period. Target shooting, plinking, or any type of sport hunting would be prohibited within 0.25 miles of black-footed ferret release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period. Management of ROWs in occupied black-footed ferret habitat would be the same as that described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Restrictions on surface disturbing activities and requirements for deterrent devices would be the same as those described in Alternative A. For more information, see White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC management under Special Management Areas, Section 2.5.11. Restrictions on rangeland improvement projects near black-footed ferret release sites would be the same as those described in Alternative C. Compensation and operational plans would be developed for oil and gas field development in the Little Snake black-footed ferret management area. A plan for onsite or offsite mitigation, consistent with BLM policy, would be developed to replace lost habitat, if necessary. Management actions for new mineral material sales proposed in prairie dog habitat would be the same as those described in Alternative A.

Restrictions on OHV use and target shooting, plinking, or any type of sport hunting would be the same as those described in Alternative C. Management of ROWs in occupied black-footed ferret habitat would be the same as that described in Alternative A.

Mexican Spotted Owl

Alternative A: Mexican spotted owl nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to July 31. This applies to territories where an owl (or owls) has been spotted but no nests or roosts have been confirmed and to territories where there has been confirmed nesting, feeding, and roosting activity. There would be no exceptions. NSO would be allowed within a 0.25 mile radius of the confirmed roost site and nesting site. There would be no exceptions.

Alternative B: NSO would be applied to all protected activity centers (PAC). Other surface disturbing activities within protected or restricted habitats, such as prescribed fires and fuels reduction, may occur in specific cases, but these would require separate Section 7 consultation. Activities in PACs that are not surface disturbing would avoid the Mexican spotted owl breeding season, which runs from March 1 through August 31.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Bald Eagle

Alternative A: NSO would be allowed within a 0.25 mile radius of roost or nest sites. The NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the roost or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. There would be no exceptions for nest sites. The bald eagle nesting habitat is from December 15 to June 15. During this period, a 0.5 mile buffer zone would apply around the nest site, to prevent disruption of nesting. However, during years when a nest site is unoccupied by or after May 15, this timing limitation may be excepted, and it may also be excepted once the young have fledged and dispersed from the nest. From November 16 to April 15, a 0.5 mile buffer zone would apply around bald eagle winter roost sites, to avoid the eagles' relocating to less suitable areas. However, if there is a partial or complete visual screening of the area of activity, the primary zone around the roost site may be reduced to 0.25 miles.

Alternative B: Year-round NSO/NGD would be applied within a 0.25 mile radius of roost sites and both occupied and unoccupied nests. The definition of an "occupied nest" (from the Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan 1983, page D4) includes (a) young were observed, (b) eggs were laid (eggs or eggshell fragments observed), (c) one adult was observed in incubating ("sitting low") posture on the nest during the incubation period, (d) two adults were observed at an empty nest or within the breeding area, or (e) one adult eagle and one eagle in immature plumage were observed at or near a nest, especially if mating or reproductive behavior (display flights, copulation, nest repair, etc.) was observed.

No human activity or surface disturbance would be allowed within a 0.5 mile radius of occupied nests from November 15 through July 31. Human activity within 0.25 miles of known winter hunting perches and within 0.5 miles of critical night roosts on BLM land should be restricted from November 15 to March 15. Buffers can be reduced to 0.25 miles for night roosts and 0.125 miles for hunting perches if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. Development may be permitted at other periods. If periodic visits, such as those that occur with oil well maintenance work, are required within the buffer zone after development, such activity should be restricted to between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. during the period November 15 to March 15.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Prohibit permanent surface disturbing activities (NSO) within 0.25 mile of any suitable yellow-billed cuckoo habitat. Exceptions should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to avoid adverse impact.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Mountain Plover

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Establish 0.125 mile NSO stipulations around all plover nest sites. Prohibit surface use from April 1 to July 15 within 0.25 mile of all plover nest sites. This stipulation does not apply to the operation and maintenance of production facilities (see Appendix E for exception, modification, or waiver criteria).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Special Status Species Conservation Measures and Recommendations

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: BLM would apply special status species conservation measures at the implementation level to streamline Section 7 consultation, as outlined in Appendix J. The goal of these measures is to provide common expectations regarding how to reduce or minimize adverse effects to endangered, threatened, proposed, candidate and other sensitive species resulting from BLM actions.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B. In addition to the conservation measures, BLM would also implement the conservation recommendations contained in Appendix J.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

2.5.7 Wild Horses

The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971 requires BLM to manage wild horses according to multiple use management principles so as to achieve and maintain a thriving, natural ecological balance on public lands. The color, type, conformation, size, and weight of members of various horse herds are historic characteristics that are desirable to maintain.

2.5.7.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- **Wild Horses Goal:** Manage the Sand Wash wild horse herd and its habitat so as to encourage herd health while maintaining a thriving, natural ecological balance of rangeland resources. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Manage the Sand Wash wild horse herd as an integral part of the public lands ecosystem at an appropriate management level (AML). Periodically reevaluate the existing AML to ensure herd size remains compatible with other resources.
 - Recognize and proactively respond to potential conflicts, as they occur, between the wild horse herd and other resources.
 - Expediently remove wild horses that relocate outside of Herd Management Areas (HMA).

2.5.7.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: Manage habitat condition in the Sand Wash Basin HMA to maintain a herd range of between 163 and 362 wild horses on a 4-year schedule, with an AML of 362. In addition, continue to manage wild horses in the Sand Wash Basin HMA.

No helicopter or motor vehicle use would be allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season, which runs from March 1 to June 30. There would be no exceptions. No drilling or development operations would be permitted between March 1 and December 1 within a 1 mile radius of Wild Horse Spring, Sheepherder Spring, Coffee Pot Spring, Two Bar Spring, and Dugout Draw Spring. Exceptions would include provision by the operator, before the authorized activity, of an alternate dependable water source at a suitable location outside the 1 mile radius of the spring in question.

Alternative B: Maintain the current HMA status and manage at an AML, which is currently identified as a range of between 163 and 362 wild horses. The AML is a dynamic number that is adjusted as range conditions warrant. The guidelines and criteria for adjusting AML include current monitoring data, rate of herd increase, competing uses, frequency of gathering cycle, other population management options, and herd genetics. Management of wild horses in the Sand Wash Basin HMA would be the same as that described in Alternative A.

No similar timing stipulations would be applied to oil and gas drilling or development operations within the wild horse HMA.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Management of the AML according to guidelines and criteria would be the same as that described in Alternative B. Management of wild horses in the Sand Wash Basin HMA would be the same as that described in Alternative A, with gathers occurring as necessary to maintain the established herd population range.

No drilling or development operations would be permitted within a 1 mile radius from wild horse water sources from March 1 to December 1. Exceptions would be granted according to established criteria (Appendix E). No oil- and gas-related helicopter or motor vehicle use would be allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season, which runs from March 1 to June 30. Exceptions would be granted according to established criteria (Appendix E) and wild horse outcomes as described in wild horse goals and objectives section and the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act.

Alternative D: Management of the AML according to guidelines and criteria would be the same as that described in Alternative B. In addition, designate the Sand Wash Basin HMA as the Sand Wash Basin wild horse range and manage principally, though not exclusively, for the Sand Wash wild horse herd.

The wild horse HMA would be closed to motor vehicle use and to all permitted activities during the wild horse foaling period from March 1 to June 30.

2.5.8 Wildland Fire Management

According to the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, updated in 2001, fire, as a critical natural process would be integrated into land and resource management plans and activities on a landscape scale and across agency boundaries and such integration would be based upon the best available science. All uses of fire for resource management require a formal prescription. Management actions on wildland fire would be consistent with approved fire management plans. Wildland fire would be used to protect, maintain, and enhance resources and would be, to the extent possible, allowed to function in its natural ecological role. The 2008 Northwest Colorado Fire Program Area Fire Management Plan defines a strategy for managing and prioritizing wildland fires and prescribing vegetation treatments for fuel hazard reduction and resource benefit. Management actions in this RMP for fire include landscape-level strategies to achieve the resource objectives and goals. Management actions for the forestry resource as well as fuels treatment actions are in Vegetation, Section 2.5.4.

2.5.8.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Wildland Fire Management Goal A:** Give first priority to protection of life or property. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Identify and reduce hazardous fuels, with an emphasis on urban interface areas.
- ❑ **Wildland Fire Management Goal B:** Create an integrated approach to fire and resource management to meet land health standards. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Reduce fire hazards in ecosystems and restore ecological community functions.
 - Use fire and allow it to protect, maintain, and enhance resources.
 - Use fire and allow it to function in its ecological role when appropriate for the site and situation.
 - Use mechanical or other vegetation treatments to reduce fire hazards, when appropriate.
- ❑ **Wildland Fire Management Goal C:** Integrate fire and fuels management across landscape, agency, and government boundaries. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Use cooperative agreements to coordinate fire and fuels management action.

2.5.8.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: Maximum suppression would be used in areas that have high resource values as well as with structures, commercial forests, oil and gas developments, cultural values, and improvements. It would also be used to prevent fire from spreading to adjacent private property and structures and to provide full protection to buffer areas near or adjacent to critical management areas for threatened, endangered, and candidate species, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, and research natural areas.

Conditional fire suppression would be used in areas that have resources of low value or that do not warrant full suppression actions and/or would have high suppression costs; these would include the Douglas Mountain area, the five wilderness study areas (WSA) adjacent to the Dinosaur National Monument, the Diamond Breaks WSA, the West Cold Spring WSA, and the Cross Mountain WSA.

Both planned and unplanned prescribed fire would be used to improve resource habitat and conditions. No similar action would be taken in areas where fire is desired.

Alternative B: Appropriate fire management response would be used in areas where fire is not desired at all or specifically wildfire is not desired, such as in ecosystems where fire does not play a significant positive role in that ecosystem's function; in areas where fire suppression is required to prevent direct threats to life or property; in private lands and at urban interfaces; around important cultural resources; in areas with unnatural fuel buildups; and in areas where a seed bank does not exist for natural reseeding.

Conditional fire suppression would be used in areas where fire is desired but where there may be mitigating social, political, or ecological constraints to fire such as air quality or habitat considerations, proximity to Class I air sheds or nonattainment areas, the presence of threatened or endangered species.

Minimal to no fire suppression would be used in areas where fire is desired. Both prescribed fire and wildfire would be used to improve resource habitat and conditions, where appropriate.

Prescribed fire would be used to meet identified resource management or hazard fuel reduction objectives. Use of prescribed fire would be guided by agency planning documents and consultation with appropriate agency staff.

Wildland fire management strategies have been categorized into A, B, C, or D polygons and associated objective tables, representing a continuum of appropriate management responses, from full suppression, in A polygons, through wildland fire use, in D polygons. Fire management units are described in Table 2-2 below and shown on Map 2-4.

Table 2-2. Fire Management Units

Fire Management Unit	Appropriate Management Response Strategy	Fire Use
A: Wildfire and prescribed fire not desired.	Full suppression response using direct strategy.	No
B: Wildfire not desired because of social, political, and resource value protection. Prescribed fire desired.	Suppression-oriented response using direct or perimeter strategy. Prescribed fire used to reduce fuels and to maintain ecosystem health.	No
C: Wildland fire desired, but some constraints limit fire use potential. Limited prescription.	Conditional response using direct, perimeter, or prescriptive strategy.	Yes, limited prescription
D: Wildland fire desired, with few constraints to limit fire use.	Unconditional response with emphasis on prescriptive strategy	Yes

In most cases, the fire management units may have in common fuel types, major fire regime groups, and topography. It is also possible that they may cross political boundaries. Fire Management Unit A polygons encompass campgrounds, communication sites, compressor stations, and other structures. The fire management unit polygons are evaluated each year and may be altered. Following are some of the major evaluation criteria:

- Acres burned in 1 year
- Acres burned in 10 years
- New residential and commercial development
- Changes in special status wildlife and plant species
- Other vegetation treatments that may alter the fire regime and condition class
- Social/political changes.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

2.5.9 Cultural and Heritage Resources

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] 470), mandates that federal agencies protect and preserve both prehistoric and historic cultural properties that are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). FLPMA charges BLM to (1) manage public land so as to protect the quality of scientific and other values and (2) ensure land and resources are periodically and systematically inventoried. Section 106 of the NHPA requires that federal agencies take into account the effect of an undertaking on historic properties in the area of potential effect (APE).

BLM would identify and take into consideration Native American concerns when actions might affect cultural or religious values and areas of traditional use. Consultation with federally recognized tribes would take place on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with Executive Order 13175 *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* and Section 106 of NHPA. Such consultation would occur prior to planned excavations or undertakings on BLM-administered lands, in compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. BLM would protect and preserve Native American religious and cultural rights and practices on federal lands, in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

Section 110 of NHPA requires that federal agencies manage and protect the cultural resources located on their lands. BLM would follow the process identified in the National Programmatic Agreement (1998) agreed to with the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Colorado Protocol (1998). The LSFO would implement a proactive cultural resource program required under Section 110 of the NHPA. A reasonable amount of outreach/customer service work, Native American consultation, interpretation and environmental education, cultural resource inventories, data recovery and recordation efforts, restoration and protection of "at-risk" site efforts, and systematic monitoring of cultural sites treatments are to be completed annually. The level of proactive cultural resource program work would be determined annually within constraints of available funds and staff.

2.5.9.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Cultural Resources Program Goal A:** Develop an in-depth understanding of archeological and historical resources, in accordance with Section 110 of the NHPA. Objectives for achieving these goals include—
 - Identify areas for development of cultural resource management plans and sites appropriate for interpretation.
 - Identify research and partnership opportunities for site excavation, stabilization, rehabilitation, and monitoring.
 - Complete site nominations to the NRHP.

- ❑ **Cultural Resources Program Goal B:** Determine cultural use allocations and desired outcomes for all cultural properties located in the RMP area. Cultural use allocations include scientific use, conservation for future use, traditional use, public use, experimental use, or discharge from management. Objectives for achieving these goals include—
 - Enhance understanding of past human settlement by studying the physical presence of cultural resources and artifacts in the planning area. Identify cultural study needs by using sound archeological methods and practices.

- Partner with universities, research facilities, and other institutions to encourage research and publish findings or cultural studies.
 - Expand regional interpretation activities through recreation programs and contributions from local partners.
- **Cultural Resources Support Services Goal A:** Seek to reduce threats and to resolve potential conflicts from either natural or human-caused deterioration or other program uses, in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Pursue partnerships to facilitate a better understanding of Native American cultural resources, thereby providing a more meaningful tribal consultation process as required by Section 106.
 - Pursue programmatic agreements with tribal governments to streamline consultation procedures.
- **Cultural Resources Support Services Goal B:** Preserve and protect significant cultural resources and ensure these remain available for appropriate uses by both present and future generations in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Identify priority areas for new field surveys on the basis of a probability for consumptive use conflicts on significant resources.
 - Improve law enforcement.

2.5.9.2 Management Actions

Cultural Resources Program

Alternative A: An overall cultural management plan would be developed to address both prehistoric and historic cultural presences. Separate plans, on a smaller scale, would be developed to include site-specific or region-specific areas of the RMPPA. Developed plans would address the existing data gaps and research questions identified in the Little Snake RMPPA Class I Overview (La Point 1987; McDonald and Metcalf 2006). Future plans would include the data orientation and collection designs needed to develop the basic knowledge of these resources that had been lacking in the past.

Alternative B: The LSFO would implement a proactive cultural resource program required under Section 110 of the NHPA. A reasonable amount of outreach/customer service work, Native American consultation, interpretation and environmental education, cultural resource inventories, data recovery and recordation efforts, restoration and protection of “at-risk” site efforts, and systematic monitoring of cultural sites treatments are to be completed annually. The level of proactive cultural resource program work would be determined annually within constraints of available funds and staff.

Priority cultural resources program projects are identified below, by project type. This list is not intended to be comprehensive or limiting and would change throughout the life of the plan as more is known about the cultural resources in the planning area. In general, priority would be given to sites eligible for nomination to the NRHP and to sites needing data.

- Priority areas for development of cultural resource management plans: Sand Wash Basin and Irish Canyon
- Priority areas for cultural resource surveys: Irish Canyon, Sand Wash Basin, Diamond Breaks, Cold Spring, and Vermillion Basin
- Priority “at risk” sites: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, Lower Vermillion Creek Archaeological District, and Cross Mountain rock shelter

- ❑ Priority site monitoring: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, and Cross Mountain rock shelter
- ❑ Priority nomination sites: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, Lower Vermillion Creek Archaeological District, and Cross Mountain rock shelter
- ❑ Priority interpretation sites: Sand Wash and Vermillion Rim.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as Alternative B.

Cultural Site Use Allocations

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Manage cultural site types on a site-specific basis, according to the allocations identified in Appendix K.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Mitigation of Potential Adverse Effects to Historic Properties in Open OHV Areas

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: The following process would be followed to mitigate potential adverse effects to historic properties within areas open to cross-country OHV travel.

In areas open to OHV travel, known cultural resources evaluated as potentially eligible (but need additional data to make a final determination) and eligible for the NRHP would be identified. Cultural resource site areas located within or immediately adjacent to existing roads and trails would be protected by road/trail or area closures to the types of travel that may cause adverse effects. The closure would remain in effect until the cultural resources are field-visited and documented and the needed mitigation measures are completed. The avoidance of cultural resources would be the primary mitigation measure, where possible. Significant cultural resource sites and areas may be mitigated through long-term road/trail or area closure, rerouting and new construction, limitations on vehicle type and time or season of travel, excavation of archaeological resources, or other less common approaches.

Class III inventory, site evaluation, site mitigation, and reporting would be completed within 5 years following the signing of the ROD. A Class II inventory could be employed as part of this process. Identified cultural resources evaluated as potentially eligible (but need additional data to make a final determination) and eligible for the NRHP would be protected, and any adverse effects would be mitigated. Protection would follow the approach identified above for known cultural resources.

In addition, a monitoring program would be established to assess OHV impacts on cultural resources. The BLM cultural resource specialist, as part of the monitoring team, would identify an appropriate monitoring schedule for cultural resources. On the basis of the results of monitoring, BLM would take any actions necessary to fulfill its obligations under existing law to protect cultural resources. This may

include changing certain aspects of management of the area, such as allowable use, or implementing mitigation measures, such as fencing or closing areas.

Consultation with the SHPO and affected tribes is required for all planning efforts and, as necessary, with other consulting parties.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Transportation planning would be performed in Sand Wash Basin following the signing of the ROD, as described in Appendix F. Protecting cultural resources in Sand Wash Basin would be an important aspect in the development of the transportation plan and designation of roads and trails in the area. The same process as outlined for Alternative B would be employed for the area open to OHV travel in south Sand Wash Basin. If these processes were not completed after five years of the signing of the ROD, BLM would close those areas within the open area not yet surveyed to OHV use until the necessary actions were taken.

Alternative D: No similar action.

2.5.10 Paleontological Resources

Significant paleontological sites are protected under FLPMA. FLPMA charges BLM to (1) manage public land so as to protect the quality of scientific and other values and (2) ensure that land and resources are periodically and systematically inventoried. Paleontological resources would be managed according to the BLM 8270 *Handbook* and the BLM *Manual for the Management of Paleontological Resources*.

2.5.10.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- **Paleontology Goal:** To identify and protect the paleontological resources within the LSFO. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Expand paleontological support activities, such as data gathering, GIS integration, and Class I surveys.
 - Provide opportunities for education about and interpretation of paleontological resources.
 - Improve law enforcement.

2.5.10.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: All proposed surface disturbing actions would be evaluated to determine inventory needs and identify sites that would be potentially impacted by such activities. A qualified paleontologist approved by the authorized officer would inventory surface disturbing activities in Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) Class 4 and 5 paleontological areas. Mitigation measures for specific locations would be identified on a case-by-case basis.

An overall paleontological management plan would be developed to address the fossil presence in the RMPPA. Separate plans, on a smaller scale, would be developed to include site-specific or region-specific areas of the RMPPA. Developed plans would address the existing data gaps and research questions identified in the *Little Snake Resource Area Paleontological Overview* (Armstrong and Wolny 1989). Future plans would be the data orientation and collection designs needed to develop the basic knowledge of these resources that had been lacking in the past.

There would be no similar action for the standard discovery stipulation.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, but surface disturbing activities in PFYC Class 4 and 5 paleontological areas devoid of thick soils and vegetation and with steep, unsafe cliffs would be

inventoried by a qualified paleontologist with a valid Colorado BLM paleontology permit who is approved by the authorized officer.

There would be no similar action for the paleontological management plans.

If paleontological resources are discovered during exploration operations, the licensee shall immediately notify the LSFO Manager and shall not disturb such discovered resources until the LSFO Manager issues specific instructions. Within 5 working days after notification, the LSFO Manager shall have a qualified paleontologist evaluate any paleontological resources discovered and shall determine whether any action may be required to protect or to preserve such discoveries. The cost of data recovery for paleontological resources discovered during exploration operations shall be borne by the licensee if the licensee had been ordered to take any protective measures. Ownership of paleontological resources discovered shall be determined in accordance with applicable law.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B, except that management actions to develop a paleontological management plan would be the same as those described in Alternative A.

2.5.11 Special Management Areas

Special management areas are those requiring special management considerations to ensure that public land and resources are protected from irreparable damage. These areas include ACECs, WSAs, WSRs, and other special management areas such as lands with wilderness characteristics that are outside existing WSAs. Management of these areas would comply with the applicable regulations (43 CFR 1610, 6300, 8350) for activities that could occur within these areas. All management actions and recreation and resource uses would focus on protecting sensitive resources and the health and safety of the user.

Section 202(c)(3) of FLPMA mandates giving priority to the designation and protection of ACECs. These areas are defined in Section 103(a) as areas where special management attention is required to protect, and to prevent irreparable damage to, important values, resources, systems, or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. Further guidance and evaluation criteria are found at 43 CFR Part 1610.7-2.

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers (NWSR) Act (PL 90-542 and amendments) Section 1(b) states that “certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.” Section 5(d) requires federal agencies to consider potential wild, scenic, and recreational river areas in all planning for the use and development of water and related land resources. Section 10(a) describes the basic management requirement of protecting and enhancing the values that were the reasons for originally including the river in the NWSR System. In accordance with BLM policy, all eligible rivers were evaluated for suitability.

BLM’s findings in this land use planning process should not be considered as “proposed designation” of the studied segments. BLM is simply analyzing the segments to identify outstandingly remarkable values and to identify whether or not a WSR designation by Congress would be a feasible method for enduring protection of those values. BLM is not making a proactive recommendation to the U.S. Congress and the President that these segments be immediately designated.

Instead, BLM acknowledges that information and consensus building about preferred water supply options and identification of streams important for recreation, fisheries, and ecologic values is occurring in State and local planning processes. Specifically, BLM intends to acknowledge the outcomes of the Colorado Statewide Water Supply Initiative, Basin Roundtables, and the Interbasin Compact Process. The outcome of these processes would significantly affect whether or not BLM may choose to actively recommend the suitable segments in the future. It is also conceivable that, as a result of these processes, stakeholders in the basin may make recommendations to the Colorado congressional delegation about how to protect the outstandingly remarkable values identified by BLM while minimizing the impact on water management. If and when Congress chooses to consider these river segments, it can consider a wide range of legislative approaches other than WSR designation or it can decide to take no action at all.

A BLM WSR suitability determination does not remain in effect indefinitely. The land use prescriptions that implement the suitability determination remain in effect only as long as the land use plan that made that determination is in effect. BLM has the authority to change the determination through a land use plan amendment or during its next revision of the plan.

If, in the future, plans and funding are in place for a water project that requires BLM land use authorization, the project proponents can ask BLM to reconsider its suitability determination in a land use plan amendment. Alternatively, the project proponents could ask BLM to change its suitability finding during the next plan revision on the basis of new information and expanded public demand for development of additional water supplies. If stakeholders in the Yampa River Basin and statewide have developed a consensus about which water projects should proceed to best meet the State's water supply and environmental needs, this consensus would greatly facilitate the process of amending the land use plan or changing BLM's suitability determination.

Under FLPMA, wilderness preservation is part of BLM's multiple use mandate and wilderness characteristics are recognized as part of the spectrum of resource values considered during land use planning. Under the wilderness program, existing designated Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are managed in accordance with BLM's Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (IMP). BLM's management policy is to continue resource uses on lands under wilderness review in a manner that maintains the area's suitability for preservation as wilderness. Wilderness characteristics and values, described in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-577), must be protected, ensuring Congress's prerogative to designate the WSA as wilderness is maintained in all WSAs. In addition, the RMP process is open to new information, including public proposals for wilderness. According to BLM policy, BLM may consider information on wilderness characteristics, along with information on other uses and values, when preparing land use plans. This includes determining if BLM wilderness inventories or public wilderness proposals contain significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns that has bearing on the proposed action or to impacts that have not previously been analyzed. BLM policy states: "During the planning process and concluding with the actions after the planning process, BLM would not manage those lands under a designated nonimpairment standard, nor manage them as if they are or may become congressionally designated wilderness areas, but through the planning process BLM may manage them using special protections to protect wilderness characteristics."

2.5.11.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- **Special Management Areas Goal:** Provide special management attention to those areas where special management is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important natural, cultural, recreational, wilderness characteristics, or scenic resources and values. Objectives for achieving this goal include—

- Manage WSAs to protect wilderness characteristics until those WSAs are either designated or released from wilderness study by Congress.
- Manage to protect the values of areas where special management prescriptions are identified.
- Complete motorized road/trail designations for special management areas that are not closed to motorized vehicle use.

2.5.11.2 Management Actions

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Alternative A: The following sites, totaling 20,910 acres, would be designated to protect and enhance the associated values that are listed with the site (Table 2-3; Map 2-5). The Limestone Ridge ACEC/Research Natural Area (RNA) includes 1,400 acres with remnant plant associations, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, and scenic quality. The Irish Canyon ACEC, including the Ink Springs area, includes 11,910 acres with remnant plant associations, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, geologic values, cultural resources, and scenic quality. The Lookout Mountain ACEC includes 6,950 acres with Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species and scenic quality. The Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC includes 650 acres with threatened and endangered species, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, and scenic quality.

Alternative B: No additional ACECs would be designated, and ACEC designations would be removed from all existing ACECs. No areas would be managed as ACECs.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Retain designation of the Irish Canyon ACEC (11,910 acres) (Table 2-3; Map 2-7). The following areas would not be retained as ACECs: Limestone Ridge (1,400 acres), Lookout Mountain (6,950 acres), and Cross Mountain Canyon (650 acres). Management of these areas would be as described below.

Alternative D: Retain the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Irish Canyon ACEC, the Lookout Mountain ACEC, and the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC. In addition, designate the White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC (271,730 acres), the Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC (1,210 acres), the Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC (5,500 acres), the Bull Canyon ACEC (3,390 acres), the G Gap ACEC (2,230 acres), the Little Juniper Canyon ACEC (20 acres), the Bassett Spring ACEC (110 acres), the No Name Spring ACEC (80 acres), the Pot Creek ACEC (2,240 acres), the Whiskey Springs ACEC (2,760 acres), the Willow Spring ACEC (100 acres), and the Deception Creek ACEC (110 acres) (Table 2-3; Map 2-8).

Table 2-3. ACECs Designated by Alternative

Area of Environmental Concern	Area (Acres)	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Limestone Ridge	1,400	X			X
Irish Canyon	11,910	X		X	X
Lookout Mountain	6,950	X			X
Cross Mt. Canyon	650	X			X
White-tailed Prairie Dog	271,730				X
Cold Desert Shrublands	1,210				X
Gibben's Beardtongue	5,500				X
Bull Canyon	3,390				X
G Gap	2,230				X
Little Juniper Canyon	20				X

Area of Environmental Concern	Area (Acres)	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Bassett Spring	110				X
No Name Spring	80				X
Pot Creek	2,240				X
Whiskey Springs	2,760				X
Willow Spring	100				X
Deception Creek	110				X
Total area (in acres)	310,390	20,910	0	11,910	310,390

Limestone Ridge ACEC

Alternative A: The existing ACEC designation would remain. There would be NSO for oil and gas operations. The ACEC would be closed to mineral material sales, but would be available for mineral location. Leasing of nonenergy leasable minerals for underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. Leasing for surface mining would not be allowed. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have no visual resource management (VRM) designation. Limestone Ridge would be an exclusion area for ROWs unless they were associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative B: The ACEC designation would be removed because there is no need for special management attention. There would be no stipulations or prescriptions designed to protect relevant and important values. Limestone Ridge would be open to all oil and gas operations. The area would be open to OHV use. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. There would be no restrictions on ROWs.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The ACEC designation would be removed because special management attention would not be required to protect the relevant and important values. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality. Sensitive plants and remnant plant communities would be avoided through a CSU stipulation. The area would be closed to OHV use. Scenic values would be protected through a VRM Class II designation. The area would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would be an exclusion area for ROWs unless they were associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative D: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. The area would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Irish Canyon ACEC

Alternative A: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area would be CSU for oil and gas operations and open to locatable and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. There would be no VRM designation. The area would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative B: The ACEC designation would be removed because there is no need for special management attention. There would be no stipulations or prescriptions designed to protect relevant and

important values. Irish Canyon would be open to oil and gas operations and to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables. The area would be open to OHV use. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. There would be no lands and realty restrictions.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The existing ACEC designation would remain because special management attention would be needed to protect the multiple relevant and important values in the area, including rare plants, rare plant communities, and scenic, geologic, and cultural values. The presence of all these overlapping values in one area makes it suitable for special management attention through an ACEC designation. The objective for the ACEC would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, cultural and geologic values, and scenic quality. Management of the area would be the same as that described in Alternative A, except that the area would be closed to oil and gas operations, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would be designated VRM Class II. The area would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location.

Alternative D: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, cultural and geologic values, and scenic quality. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. The area would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Lookout Mountain ACEC

Alternative A: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area would be CSU for oil and gas operations and open to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. There would be no VRM designation. The area would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative B: The ACEC designation would be removed because there is no need for special management attention. There would be no stipulations or prescriptions designed to protect relevant and important values. Lookout Mountain would be open to oil and gas operations and to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables. The area would be open to OHV use. The area would have Class III VRM designations. There would be no lands and realty limitations.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The ACEC designation would be removed because special management attention would not be required to protect the relevant and important values. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality. Sensitive plants and remnant plant communities would be avoided through a CSU stipulation. With the exception of the area immediately surrounding the existing communication site on Lookout Mountain, which would have a VRM Class III designation, the Lookout Mountain area would have a VRM Class II designation to protect the scenic values. The area would be available for mineral location, and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have Class II and III VRM designations. Renewal of existing and authorization of future ROWs would be allowed upon approval of a site-specific development plan consistent with area resource objectives.

Alternative D: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality. The area would be NSO for oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Communication sites and existing communication ROWs could be renewed at

the end of their terms in accordance with area objectives and current regulations. No new communication sites would be authorized. The area would be a ROW exclusion area.

Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC

Alternative A: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area would continue to receive protection by virtue of its location within the Cross Mountain WSA. The area would be NSO for oil and gas operations, and closed to mineral material sales, but would be available for mineral location. Leasing of nonenergy leasable minerals for underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. Leasing for surface mining would not be allowed. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class I VRM designation. Cross Mountain Canyon would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative B: The ACEC designation would be removed because there is no need for special management attention. This area lies completely within the Cross Mountain Canyon WSA. Therefore, all relevant and important values are fully protected by the area's WSA status. The Cross Mountain Canyon area would continue to be managed consistent with WSA requirements.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: The existing ACEC designation would remain. The area objective would be to protect sensitive plants, threatened and endangered species, and scenic quality. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class I VRM designation. Cross Mountain Canyon would be an exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

White-Tailed Prairie Dog ACEC

Alternative A: No ACEC would be designated for the white-tailed prairie dog habitat area because there is no need for special management attention. Active white-tailed prairie dog colonies would continue to be avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities only within the black-footed ferret reintroduction area.

Alternative B: No ACEC would be designated for the white-tailed prairie dog habitat area because there is no need for special management attention. There would be no stipulations or prescriptions designed to protect relevant and important values.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative A. In addition, a CSU stipulation would protect towns less than 10 acres in size and timing limitation stipulations would apply to towns greater than 10 acres in size (see Section 2.5.5.2).

Alternative D: The area would be designated as an ACEC. The area objective would be to protect white-tailed prairie dog habitat. The following management would apply only to areas indicated on Map 2-8, which contains active/inactive white-tailed prairie dog colonies. The area would be NSO for oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. There would be no VRM classifications specific to prairie dog colonies. The White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC would be a ROW exclusion area.

Natural Systems ACEC

Alternative A: No ACECs would be designated because there is no need for special management attention. Rare plant occurrences would be avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities.

Alternative B: No ACECs would be designated because there is no need for special management attention. Rare plant and rare plant community occurrences would be avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: The following ACECs would be designated to compose the Natural Systems ACECs: Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC (1,210 acres), Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC (5,500 acres), Bull Canyon ACEC (3,390 acres), G Gap ACEC (2,230 acres), Little Juniper Canyon ACEC (20 acres), Bassett Spring ACEC (110 acres), No Name Spring ACEC (80 acres), Pot Creek ACEC (2,240 acres), Whiskey Springs ACEC (2,760 acres), Willow Spring ACEC (100 acres), and Deception Creek ACEC (110 acres). The objective of these ACECs would be to protect sensitive plants and plant communities. The following management would apply only to areas indicated on Map 2-8. SSR would be used for all surface disturbances. The area would be CSU for oil and gas development, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. There would be no VRM classifications specific to these ACECs. The ACECs would be ROW avoidance areas.

Wilderness Study Areas

Alternative A: WSAs (Map 2-5) would continue to be managed in compliance with BLM's IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) until they are reviewed and acted upon by Congress. Public land designated as wilderness would be managed in compliance with BLM's Wilderness Management Policy and the Wilderness Act of 1964. Site-specific wilderness management plans would be developed for areas designated by Congress as wilderness. The Cross Mountain, Diamond Breaks, West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would not be leased for mineral development. This would represent 78,250 acres of BLM-administered mineral estate within the Little Snake RMPPA.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A. Public lands designated as wilderness would be managed in compliance with BLM's Wilderness Management Policy and the Wilderness Act of 1964 (Map 2-6). If any or all of the WSAs are released by Congress from wilderness study, the released lands would be managed in accordance with multiple use direction and land allocations established in the RMP, including special designations such as SRMAs, suitable WSRs, and ACECs.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B (Map 2-7).

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B (Map 2-8).

Cross Mountain WSA

Alternative A: The Cross Mountain WSA, which includes the proposed Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, would be recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation. BLM would recommend to Congress that the proposed Cross Mountain wilderness remain open to oil and gas leasing with NSO stipulations. Until Congress either designates the Cross Mountain WSA as wilderness or releases it for other uses, it would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1). While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be

closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress does not designate Cross Mountain as a wilderness, the area would be managed as a special recreation management area (13,620 acres), including the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC (650 acres).

Alternative B: The Cross Mountain WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress releases Cross Mountain from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use, consistent with resource goals and objectives.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Cross Mountain WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress releases Cross Mountain from wilderness study, the following management would apply: the objective would be to protect sensitive plants, threatened and endangered species, and scenic values. Cross Mountain would also be closed to oil and gas leasing and development, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to nonenergy leasables, and it would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use and would have a Class II VRM designation. Cross Mountain would be a ROW exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Diamond Breaks WSA

Alternative A: The Diamond Breaks WSA would be recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation (BLM 1989b, page 22). The Diamond Breaks WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress does not designate Diamond Breaks as wilderness, the Colorado portion of the WSA (31,810 acres) would be managed as a recreation management unit. The area would still be closed to OHV use.

Alternative B: The Diamond Breaks WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to

OHV use. If Congress releases Diamond Breaks from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use, consistent with resource goals and objectives. The area would still be closed to OHV use.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative B, except if Congress releases Diamond Breaks from wilderness study, the following management would apply: the area would remain closed to OHV use. It would also be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to nonenergy leasables, and it would not be available for coal leasing. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. ROWs would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C, except the area would be excluded from ROWs if the area were released from wilderness study.

West Cold Spring WSA

Alternative A: The West Cold Spring WSA would be recommended as not suitable for wilderness designation. However, while still a WSA, the West Cold Spring WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. If Congress does not designate the area as wilderness, the Colorado portion of West Cold Spring would be managed as the Cold Spring and Little Snake River management unit (14,660 acres).

Alternative B: The West Cold Spring WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed that way until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use, consistent with resource goals and objectives.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The West Cold Spring WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, the area would be managed in the same way as the adjacent wilderness characteristics area. The area would be closed to oil and gas leasing and development, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to nonenergy leasables, and it would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. West Cold Spring would be a ROW avoidance area, and wind energy applications would be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: The West Cold Spring WSA would be managed to preserve its wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as a WSA, the area would

be managed with a VRM Class I designation. It would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. It would be managed as a ROW exclusion area, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, the area would be managed in the same way as the adjacent SRMA. West Cold Spring would be identified as a backcountry SRMA. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and it would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class I VRM designation. West Cold Spring would be a ROW exclusion area, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs

Alternative A: Four WSAs evaluated under Section 202 of FLPMA—Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears—would be recommended as not suitable for wilderness designation but would be recommended to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior for forwarding to Congress for the final decision. However, while still WSAs, these areas would be managed to preserve their wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates it as wilderness or releases it for other uses. While managed as WSAs, the areas would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. They would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. They would be managed as ROW exclusion areas, and OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. If Congress does not designate these areas as wilderness, they would be managed as follows. The northwest corner of Ant Hills would be managed as the Douglas Mountain management unit and the remainder as the Scattered Sands management unit. Chew Winter Camp would be managed as the Scattered Sands management unit. The north third of Peterson Draw would be managed as the Scattered Sands management unit and the remainder as the Douglas Mountain management unit. Most of the Vale of Tears would be managed as the Little Snake River management unit, and the other portions in the northwest corner would be managed as either the Douglas Mountain or the Scattered Sands management units (BLM 1989b).

Alternative B: The Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would be managed to preserve their wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them for other uses. While still WSAs, these areas would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. They would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. They would be managed as ROW exclusion areas, and OHV use would be limited to existing roads and trails. If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, the areas would be managed as multiple use, consistent with resource goals and objectives.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would be managed to preserve their wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them for other uses. While still WSAs, these areas would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. They would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. They would be managed as ROW exclusion areas, and OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, they would be managed in the same way as the adjacent wilderness characteristics area. Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would be closed to oil and

gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The areas would have Class II VRM designations. The areas would be ROW avoidance areas, and wind energy development would not be accepted.

Alternative D: The Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would be managed to preserve their wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them for other uses. While still WSAs, these areas would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. They would be closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. They would be managed as ROW exclusion areas, and would be closed to OHV use. If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, they would be managed in the same way as the adjacent SRMA. Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would be identified as backcountry SRMAs. The areas would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The areas would have Class I VRM designations. The areas would be ROW exclusion areas, and wind energy development would not be accepted.

Lands With Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs

Vermillion Basin

Alternative A: Vermillion Basin would be open to new oil and gas leasing and to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables, but it would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be mostly open, but some use would be limited to existing roads and trails. There would be no VRM designation. ROWs would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: The objective for Vermillion Basin would be to allow for coordinated and organized oil and gas development while protecting cultural resources and natural and scenic values. For all leases in the area, BLM would stipulate that any oil- and gas-related activity or development must take place within a federal oil and gas unit. All leases would be limited to 2,560 acres in size; a unit must include at least four leases, for a minimum of 10,240 total acres. The leases to be included in the unit as well as all the details of the unit agreement would be left to the discretion of leaseholders.

Surface disturbance would be limited to 1 percent of Vermillion Basin at any one time. This rule would be enforced on a unit basis, meaning that no more than 1 percent of the surface of a unit would be disturbed, except for situations described below.

A unit is composed of the area under exploration and development and could also include a “mitigation area.” A mitigation area would be composed of any other participating leases that the operator chooses to include in the unit. These leases do not have to be directly adjacent to the area of the unit under production but would still have to lie within Vermillion Basin. Mitigation leases could also be added to the unit at a later time as the operators begin to approach the 1 percent disturbance limit in the area of the unit being developed. Therefore, to increase the amount of acres they would be able to disturb within the unit without exceeding the 1 percent limit, operators could add more acres to the total unit by increasing the mitigation area.

For example, an operator leases four contiguous 2,560-acre leases in the northern portion of Vermillion Basin and also leases two 2,560-acre leases in the southern portion of Vermillion as a mitigation area. A

unit is formed containing all six leases, totaling 15,360 acres. Once a POD is approved by BLM, the operator would be allowed to disturb a total of 153.6 acres in the unit. After 5 years of development and 140 acres of surface disturbance, the operator finds an encouraging play. However, with only 13.6 more acres remaining to be disturbed, the operator cannot develop that play. Therefore, to increase the amount of surface the operator is able to disturb, the operator then leases another two 2,560-acre leases in southern Vermillion Basin. These leases would be included in the existing unit, which would now total 20,480 acres. This would allow for 204.8 acres of total surface disturbance, or 64.8 more acres in addition to the 140 already disturbed. If there were no additional areas within Vermillion Basin available to lease, the operator would be able to recover disturbance by reclaiming disturbed areas or by purchasing disturbance credits from other leaseholders.

Existing oil and gas-related surface disturbance would count towards the 1 percent limitation. However, there is currently no existing oil and gas related surface disturbance in Vermillion Basin. Therefore, the first time areas within Vermillion Basin are leased, existing oil and gas related disturbance would be zero acres. If leases were ever re-issued after any amount oil and gas development had taken place, however, any existing disturbance would count towards the 1 percent limitation. Disturbed areas can be recovered on a rolling-reclamation basis. Upon successful reclamation, reclaimed areas would no longer be counted toward the 1 percent limit and the total area disturbed in the unit would be decreased by that amount. Successful reclamation is defined in the Reclamation Performance Standard described in Appendix O.

All of Vermillion Basin would be offered for lease simultaneously. However, if only portions of the basin were leased in the first lease sale, development could begin as long as a unit is formed and a POD is approved. Offered parcels within Vermillion Basin that are not nominated in the initial lease sale would be available for a 2-year period for noncompetitive leasing. If they were not picked up during this period, they would be available to be nominated for competitive leasing at a later time. These new leases could be added to a unit, thereby increasing the amount of surface that could be disturbed without exceeding the 1 percent limit. Alternatively, if they are sufficient in size, they could form a new unit.

BLM would also stipulate that a POD must be developed for the unit before development would be authorized. (This POD is not the same document referenced in 43 CFR 3183.6.) BLM recognizes that in the early stage of development of the unit, the POD may not contain more than a few exploratory wells. The POD would be updated annually by the lead operator.

A complete POD consists of the following components, if applicable:

- ❑ Cover letter containing operator name, project name, list of wells (name and number by lease, with legal description including quarter-quarter)
- ❑ Master drilling plan
- ❑ Master surface use plan, including plans for surface reclamation, a baseline calculation of total surface area currently disturbed by oil and gas activity in the project area, and the total area to be disturbed through the proposed development
- ❑ A strategy for limiting surface disturbance and impacts on the natural values of the area. The plan would demonstrate significant control of surface disturbance in a number of ways, including—
 - Reducing surface spacing/density of facilities
 - Reducing road density/pipeline density
 - Focusing development near existing ROWs
 - Clustering facilities, including the use of directional drilling, where feasible
 - Reducing traffic through field road management, closing roads and trails to public use, remote telemetry of wells, piping of produced fluids rather than trucking, etc.
 - Use of new technologies, including surface mats, self-contained rigs, limited impact drilling (e.g., small roads and small pads)

- Employment of appropriate BMPs
- A reclamation report, to be updated annually, detailing a reclamation plan and the condition of all areas currently being reclaimed in the unit
- Visual resource contrast rating evaluation, VRM mitigation strategy, and VRM monitoring and compliance plan
- Water management plan
- Cultural resource inventory plan
- Wildlife monitoring plan
- Project maps, including—
 - Surface ownership with project boundary
 - Mineral ownership with project boundary
 - Existing and proposed well sites
 - Compressor sites
 - Flow line routes
 - Utility line routes
 - Transportation routes
- Applications for permit to drill for each federal well
- List of all permitting agencies involved
- Surface owner agreements
- Water mitigation agreements
- Any additional information.

This approach requires a baseline measurement of existing disturbance (if any) as well as monitoring to determine when the 1 percent threshold is reached. Before development begins in a unit, a GIS analysis of existing oil and gas related disturbance in the project area would be calculated by the operator and included in the POD. When the first phase of development is planned for the unit, the operator would calculate the amount of disturbance the development would entail and provide the details in the POD. Therefore, a running total of surface disturbance in the unit would be kept by the operator, checked by BLM, and updated in the POD at least annually. BLM would review the proposals to ensure the disturbance estimates are realistic. If any changes to the development plan are needed during construction, the operator would notify BLM immediately and reflect the changes in the POD. Of course, no changes would be permitted if they would exceed the 1 percent threshold. After that year's development is completed, monitoring would be performed by BLM to ensure compliance with the terms agreed upon in the POD. Any deviations from the proposed development plan would be reflected in the POD. The operator would be required to supply an annual reclamation status report and plan for all disturbance in the unit so that BLM could assess reclamation success. BLM would ground-truth the scope of the proposed development and review reclaimed areas to see if they have met the reclamation requirements described in Appendix O. If development is not performed as agreed upon, or any aspect of the POD is not followed, BLM would issue noncompliance to the leaseholders.

Vermillion Basin would be open to new oil and gas leasing, although a CSU stipulation would be attached to all leases/units. The stipulation language would reference the requirements noted above. The area would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. The area would be an avoidance area for new ROWs.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The objective for Vermillion Basin would be to manage to protect naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude. The Vermillion Basin Protective Management Area would be created and the following prescriptions would be applied. Vermillion Basin would be closed to new oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral

location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Vermillion Basin would be a ROW exclusion area.

OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails in some areas and closed in other areas. Three roads are cherry-stemmed out of the closed area in western Vermillion Basin and are not subject to the OHV closure: the Blue Hill road running through T10N R100W Section 30 to T10N R101W Section 36; the Vermillion Basin bench road running from Moffat County Road 169 in T9N R101W Section 3 northeast then east to T10N R101W Section 35; and the road from Irish Lake in T10N R101W Section 10 southwest to Section 14.

Alternative D: The objective for Vermillion Basin would be to provide quality primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting. The area would be identified as a backcountry SRMA. Vermillion Basin would be closed to new oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Vermillion Basin would be a ROW exclusion area.

Dinosaur North

Alternative A: Dinosaur North would be open to minerals and energy, locatable minerals, and nonenergy leasables, but it would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be open to OHV use. The Wild Mountain Management Unit portion would have a VRM Class II designation. The remainder would have no VRM designations. There would be no lands and realty restrictions, and ROWs would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for wilderness characteristics.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The area objective would be to manage to protect naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude. There would be no special area designation, however the following prescriptions would be applied. Dinosaur North would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Dinosaur North would be a ROW avoidance area, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Alternative D: The area objective would be to provide quality primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting. Dinosaur North would be identified as a backcountry SRMA. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Dinosaur North would be a ROW exclusion area, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Cold Spring Mountain

Alternative A: Cold Spring Mountain would be open to minerals and energy and to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables, and it would not be available for coal leasing. The majority of Cold Spring Mountain would be limited to existing roads and trails, and the remainder would be open to OHV use. The Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit portion would have a VRM Class II designation. There

would be no lands and realty restrictions, and ROW decisions would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for wilderness characteristics.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The area objective would be to manage to protect naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude. There would be no special area designation, however the following prescriptions would be applied. Cold Spring Mountain would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. Cold Spring would be a ROW avoidance area, and wind energy applications would be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: The area objective would be to provide quality primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting. Cold Spring Mountain would be identified as a backcountry SRMA. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. Cold Spring Mountain would be a ROW exclusion area, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain

Alternative A: The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area (19,290 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide unrestricted flatwater river floatboating in the region. Management specific to this area is discussed in Recreation, Section 2.6.3.

Alternative B: The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area would be managed as an extensive recreation management area (ERMA). Management specific to this area is discussed in Recreation, Section 2.6.3.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 27,310 acres (Map 2-36) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide quality camping experiences related to river boating and big game hunting in the region. Management specific to this area is discussed in Recreation, Section 2.6.3.

Alternative D: The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 29,380 acres (Map 2-37) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide quality camping experiences related to river boating and big game hunting in the region. Management specific to this area is discussed in Recreation, Section 2.6.3.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Alternative A: BLM would undertake no actions nor permit any activities that could adversely affect or impact any outstandingly remarkable values of the Yampa River segment in Cross Mountain, which is listed in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory List, making it eligible for inclusion in the NWSR System. Free-flowing characteristics of identified river segments cannot be modified, to the extent BLM is authorized under law to control stream impoundments, diversions, or other development.

As directed by BLM Instruction Memorandum (IM)-2004-196, all of the eligible river segments would be managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable values, free-flowing natures, and tentative classifications. In keeping with BLM Manual 8351, .32C and .33C, there would not be suitability determinations made for any of the eligible river segments. They would remain eligible and would be managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable values, free-flowing natures, and tentative classifications to the degree that BLM has the authority to do so (i.e., BLM lands within the corridor) and within the parameters of decisions made in the previous planning documents, until such time as suitability determinations are made.

Alternative B: None of the eligible segments would be recommended as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 would be determined and managed as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System (Table 2-4, Map 2-7). Management actions would only apply to those portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM. For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.

Alternative D: All eligible segments and tentative classifications would be determined and managed as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System (Table 2-4, Map 2-8): Beaver Creek segment 1 (wild), Vermillion Creek segment 1 (Lower Vermillion Creek, scenic), Yampa River segment 1 (River Mile 126 to Milk Creek, recreational), Yampa River segment 2 (Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel, scenic), and Yampa River segment 3 (Cross Mountain Canyon, wild). Management actions would apply only to those portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.

Table 2-4. WSR Segments Managed as Suitable, by Alternative

Stream Segment	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Beaver Creek segment 1				X
Vermillion Creek segment 1				X
Yampa River segment 1			X	X
Yampa River segment 2			X	X
Yampa River segment 3			X	X
Total area (in acres)	0	0	6,260	8,480

Beaver Creek Segment 1 (wild)

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): No similar action.

Alternative D: Manage Beaver Creek segment 1 as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “wild.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV, closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, and not available for coal leasing.

Vermillion Creek Segment 1 (lower Vermillion Creek, scenic)

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): No similar action.

Alternative D: Manage Vermillion Creek segment 1 as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “scenic.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including cultural and geologic. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV, closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, and not available for coal leasing.

Yampa Segment 1 (River Mile 126 to Milk Creek, recreational)

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Manage Yampa River segment 1 (2.8 miles from River Mile #126 to Milk Creek area) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “recreational.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include OHV limited to designated roads and trails, NSO for oil and gas leasing, recommending withdrawal from mineral entry, and would not be available for coal leasing.

Alternative D: Manage Yampa River segment 1 (2.8 miles from River Mile #126 to Milk Creek area) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “recreational.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV, closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, and not available for coal leasing. For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.

Yampa Segment 2 (Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel, scenic)

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Manage Yampa River segment 2 (15.9 miles from Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “scenic.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include OHV limited to designated roads and trails, NSO for oil and gas leasing, recommending withdrawal from mineral entry, and would not be available for coal leasing.

Alternative D: Manage Yampa River segment 2 (15.9 miles from Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “scenic.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including recreation and fish. Specific management

prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV, closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, not available for coal leasing, and being closed to livestock grazing during the months of June and July. For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.

Yampa Segment 3 (Cross Mountain Canyon, wild)

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Manage Yampa River segment 3 (3.3 miles through Cross Mountain Canyon) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “wild.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including scenic, recreational, geologic, and fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV use, closed to oil and gas leasing recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, and not available for coal leasing.

Alternative D: Manage Yampa River segment 3 (3.3 miles through Cross Mountain Canyon) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System, with the tentative classification of “wild.” Manage to protect the outstandingly remarkable values, including scenic, recreational, geologic, and fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 miles of each side of the river include being closed to OHV, closed to oil and gas leasing, recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry, and not available for coal leasing.

2.5.12 Visual Resource Management

Section 102 (8) of FLPMA declares that public land would be managed to protect the quality of scenic values and, where appropriate, to preserve and protect certain public land in its natural condition. Section 101(b) of NEPA requires federal agencies to “assure for all Americans...aesthetically pleasing surroundings.” Section 102 of NEPA requires agencies to “utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which would ensure the integrated use of...Environmental Design Acts in the planning and decision making” process. Guidelines for the identification of VRM classes on public land are contained in BLM Manual Handbook 8410-1, *Visual Resource Inventory*. The establishment of VRM classes on public land is based on management decisions that consider the values defined within the VRI classes, land uses, and desirable outcomes.

The four VRM classes (I, II, III, and IV) set standards for planning, designing, and evaluating projects by identifying various permissible levels of landscape modification. The VRM class objectives range from very limited management activity (Class I) to activities allowing major landscape modifications (Class IV). Visual resource classes would be established, retained, or modified to enhance objectives regarding other resources such as cultural, recreation uses, wild horse viewing, and special management areas. Projects would be designed to meet the objectives of established visual classifications, and appropriate mitigation would be applied.

2.5.12.1 Resource Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **VRM Goal:** Recognize and manage visual resources for overall multiple use and quality of life for local communities and visitors to public lands. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain visual characteristics/values as designated by management classes.

- Ensure land management projects and uses meet VRM objectives within the boundaries of the designated VRM management class.

2.5.12.2 Management Actions

VRM Class I

Alternative A: Visual resources for WSAs would be managed as VRM Class I in accordance with the IMP, as would the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, which is wholly contained within the Cross Mountain WSA (Table 2-5; Map 2-9).

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC would not be designated (Table 2-5; Map 2-10).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B (Table 2-5; Map 2-11).

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative A (Table 2-5; Map 2-12).

Table 2-5. Areas Managed as VRM Class I, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC (within the Cross Mountain WSA)	X			X
Total area (in acres)	78,250	78,250	78,250	78,250

VRM Class II

Alternative A: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II for the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, the Wild Mountain Management Unit, and the Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit (Table 2-6; Map 2-9).

Alternative B: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II for the Emerald Mountain SRMA (Table 2-6; Map 2-10).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II for the Limestone Ridge area, the Irish Canyon ACEC, a portion of the Lookout Mountain area, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, Vermillion Basin, the Dinosaur North wilderness characteristic area, and the areas of Little Yampa Canyon SRMA and Juniper Mountain SRMA for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs (Table 2-6; Map 2-11).

Alternative D: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class II for the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Irish Canyon ACEC, the Lookout Mountain ACEC, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Vermillion Basin SRMA, the Dinosaur North SRMA, the Cold Spring Mountain SRMA, the Pinyon Ridge, Cross Mountain and Diamond Breaks backcountry areas, and the areas of Little Yampa Canyon SRMA and Juniper Mountain SRMA for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs (Table 2-6; Map 2-12).

Table 2-6. Areas Managed as VRM Class II, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Limestone Ridge area			X	X ¹
Irish Canyon ACEC			X	X
Lookout Mountain ACEC				X
Portion of Lookout Mountain			X	
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Vermillion Basin			X	X ²
Dinosaur North Area			X	X ³
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Portion of Little Yampa Canyon SRMA (within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs)			X	X
Portion of Juniper Mountain SRMA (within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs)			X	X
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Cross Mountain backcountry area (outside the WSA)				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area (outside the WSA)				X
Wild Mountain Management Unit	X			
Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit	X			
Total area (in acres)	73,950	4,140	150,790	184,630
Notes:	¹ The Limestone Ridge area would remain an ACEC under Alternative D. ² Vermillion Basin would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ³ Dinosaur North would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D.			

VRM Class III

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class III for Limestone Ridge area, the Irish Canyon area, and a portion of Vermillion Basin (Table 2-7; Map 2-10).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class III for the Cold Spring Mountain area, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, the South Sand Wash SRMA Zone 2, the Serviceberry SRMA, the Fly Creek area, portions of the Lookout Mountain area, Little Yampa Canyon SRMA and Juniper Mountain SRMA and areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II, or IV (Table 2-7; Map 2-11).

Alternative D: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class III for portions of the Little Yampa Canyon and Juniper Mountain SRMAs, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, the South Sand Wash SRMA Zone

2, the Serviceberry SRMA, the Fly Creek SRMA, and areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II, or IV (Table 2-7; Map 2-12).

Table 2-7. Areas Managed as VRM Class III, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Limestone Ridge area		X		
Irish Canyon area		X		
Portion of Lookout Mountain			X	
Portion of Vermillion Basin		X		
Portion of Little Yampa Canyon SRMA			X	X
Portion of Juniper Mountain SRMA			X	X
Cold Spring Mountain			X	
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	X
South Sand Wash SRMA Zone 2			X	X
Serviceberry SRMA			X	X
Fly Creek area			X ¹	X ¹
All areas not designated as VRM Class I, II, or IV			X	X
Total area (in acres)	0	82,820	929,270	897,030
Notes: ¹ The Fly Creek area would be administered as a backcountry area under Alternative C and as a SRMA under Alternative D.				

VRM Class IV

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class IV for areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II, or III (Table 2-8; Map 2-10).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class IV for the open OHV area in the South Sand Wash SRMA (Zone 1), for the Hiawatha and Powder Wash areas, for regions of Sand Wash Basin, and for areas suitable for coal leasing (Table 2-8; Map 2-11).

Alternative D: Visual resources would be managed as VRM Class IV for the South Sand Wash SRMA (Zone 1) and areas suitable for coal leasing (Table 2-8; Map 2-12).

Table 2-8. Areas Managed as VRM Class IV, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Hiawatha and Powder Wash areas			X	
Regions of Sand Wash Basin			X	
South Sand Wash SRMA, Zone 1			X	X
Areas suitable for coal mining			X	X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
All areas not designated as VRM Class I, II, or III	X	X		
Total area (in acres)	1,184,700	1,171,690	178,590	176,990

2.6 DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE USE DECISIONS

Resource uses involve activities that use the natural, biological, and/or cultural components of the RMPPA, such as livestock grazing, recreation, and mineral development. The following sections present the goals, objectives, allowable uses, and management actions, broken out by resource use.

2.6.1 Energy and Minerals

All minerals and energy resource management actions would recognize all valid existing mineral rights and would ensure compliance with existing legal and regulatory requirements. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (as amended), the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (as amended), and the Mining and Mineral Policy Act of 1970 declare that it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government to foster and encourage private enterprise in the development of domestic mineral resources. Section 102 of FLPMA directs management of the public land in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of minerals and other resources. Transmitted by Information Bulletin 2008-107, the BLM mineral policy states, among other items, that "...land use planning and multiple use management decisions will recognize that energy and mineral development can occur concurrently or sequentially with other resource uses, providing that appropriate stipulations or conditions of approval are incorporated into authorizations to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation, reduce environmental impacts, and prevent a jeopardy opinion.

BLM would apply lease stipulations to new leases as necessary. These stipulations would notify the leaseholder that development activities might be limited, prohibited, or implemented with mitigation measures to protect specific resources. The stipulations would condition the leaseholder's development activities and would provide BLM with the authority to require mitigation or to deny some proposed exploration and development methods. The general types of resource protections in the land use plan include areas closed to oil and gas leasing, areas open to oil and gas leasing with standard terms and conditions, NSO, CSU, and timing limitations. Leasing of solid minerals would comply with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, and coal regulations and coal planning requirements.

The General Mining Law of 1872 gives miners the right to locate and develop mining claims on public lands that are open to mineral entry. In areas open to mineral location, mining claims can be filed, which allow the claims to be held and developed in accordance with applicable regulations (39 CFR 3809). Mining activities would also comply with other regulatory requirements, including limitations on air and water discharges, waste management, spill prevention, and endangered species. Mining of mineral materials would comply with applicable regulatory requirements (43 CFR 3600) and air and water quality protection regulations. A site-specific analysis would be performed before any exploration or extraction activity to identify and locate resource elements that require protection or mitigation measures.

2.6.1.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Oil and Gas Goal:** Allow for the availability of the federal oil and gas estate (including coalbed natural gas) for exploration and development. Objectives for achieving this goal include—

- Identify and make available the federal oil and gas estate (including coalbed natural gas) for exploration and development.
 - Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources (including coalbed natural gas).
 - Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards.
- **Locatable Minerals, Mineral Materials, and Nonenergy Leasable Minerals Goal:** Allow for the availability of federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and nonenergy leasable minerals, for exploration and development consistent with national policy. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Identify and make available federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and nonenergy leasable minerals, for exploration and development.
 - Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and nonenergy leasable minerals.
 - Provide mineral materials needed for community and economic purposes.
 - Minimize and eliminate fraudulent claims.
 - Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards.
- **Coal and Oil Shale Goal:** Allow for the availability of the federal coal and oil shale estate for exploration and development. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Identify and make available the federal coal and oil shale estate for exploration and development, consistent with appropriate suitability studies, to increase energy supplies.
 - Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of the federal coal and oil shale estate.
 - Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards.

2.6.1.2 Management Actions

Oil and Gas Leasing Decisions

Alternative A: BLM-administered mineral estate within the Little Snake RMPPA would be open to oil and gas leasing and development, subject to standard lease terms and conditions in addition to specified stipulations (as applicable) and lease stipulations noted in Appendix A of the amendment. Areas have been designated for leasing with standard stipulations, seasonal restrictions, avoidance stipulations, performance objectives, or NSO stipulations; areas where no new leasing would be allowed have also been identified (Table 2-9; Map 2-13).

Alternative B: Lease with standard lease terms and conditions and with nondiscretionary stipulations. Resources would be protected and impacts mitigated through site-specific analysis. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization. See Appendix H for explanation of BLM's oil and gas leasing and development process. Areas have been designated for leasing with standard stipulations, CSU and NSO, closed to leasing, and timing limitations (Table 2-9; Map 2-14). BLM has the discretion to modify surface operations to change or add specific mitigation measures when supported by scientific analysis. All mitigation/conservation measures not already required as stipulations would be analyzed in a site-specific NEPA document, and be incorporated, as appropriate, into conditions of approval of the permit, plan of development, and/or other use authorizations.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Lease with standard lease terms and conditions in addition to specified stipulations. Areas have been designated for leasing with standard stipulations, CSU and NSO, closed to leasing, and timing limitations (Table 2-9; Map 2-15). Exceptions, modifications, and waivers could be

provided as detailed in Appendix E. BLM’s ability to add or change mitigation measures would be the same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: Lease with standard lease terms and conditions in addition to specified stipulations. Areas have been designated for leasing with standard stipulations, CSU and NSO, closed to leasing, and timing limitations (Table 2-9; Map 2-16). Exceptions, modifications, and waivers could be provided as detailed in Appendix E. BLM’s ability to add or change mitigation measures would be the same as Alternative B.

Table 2-9. Summary of Oil and Gas Leasing Decisions, by Alternative (acres)

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Open to leasing, subject to standard terms and conditions	533,800	1,625,350	168,180	360,220
Timing limitations	1,181,140	148,430	1,189,210	1,135,900
Controlled surface use (CSU)	122,350	78,090	1,236,810	457,950
No surface occupancy (NSO)	178,710	28,690	201,890	443,350
Closed to leasing	82,370	82,370	242,560	283,510

Closed to Oil and Gas Leasing

Closing an area to oil and gas leasing is not a permanent mineral withdrawal, but rather, is a discretionary deferral of leasing for the life of the plan.

Alternative A: The WSAs and the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be closed to oil and gas leasing (Table 2-10).

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A (Table 2-10).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The WSAs, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Dinosaur North and Cold Spring areas outside the WSAs, Vermillion Basin, the Irish Canyon ACEC, and WSR Yampa segment 3 would be closed to oil and gas leasing (Table 2-10).

Alternative D: The WSAs, Emerald Mountain SRMA, Vermillion Basin, Limestone Ridge ACEC, Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, Irish Canyon ACEC, all suitable WSR segments, Cross Mountain backcountry area, Diamond Breaks backcountry area, Pinyon Ridge backcountry area, Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Juniper Mountain SRMA, Cedar Mountain SRMA, Dinosaur North SRMA, and the Cold Spring Area SRMA would be closed to oil and gas leasing (Table 2-10).

Table 2-10. Areas Designated as Closed to Oil and Gas Leasing, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Vermillion Basin			X	X
Limestone Ridge ACEC				X
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC				X
Irish Canyon ACEC			X	X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Suitable WSR corridors				X
WSR Yampa segment 3			X	
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA				X
Juniper Mountain SRMA				X
Cedar Mountain SRMA				X
Dinosaur North area (outside the WSA)			X	X ¹
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Cold Spring Mountain (outside the WSA)			X	
Total area (in acres)	82,370	82,370	242,560	283,510
Notes: ¹ Dinosaur North would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D.				

No Surface Occupancy Stipulations

Alternative A: NSO areas would include leases for surface coal mines within the area of federally leased coal lands where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. There would be NSO stipulations on habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate species. NSO stipulations may be altered after important factors are considered in the impact analysis, such as the type and amount of surface disturbance, plant frequency and density, and the relocation of disturbances. NSO areas would include the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Cedar Mountain area, Steamboat Lake State Park, and Pearl Lake State Park. There would be no exceptions. Additional NSO areas would be as identified in Table 2-11.

Alternative B: NSO areas would include leases within the area of federally leased coal lands for surface coal mines where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. There would be no similar action for special status plant species habitats (see CSU stipulations). The remaining NSO areas would be limited to those required by law, regulation, or policy (Table 2-11).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): NSO areas would include leases within the area of federally leased coal lands for surface coal mines where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. There would be no similar action for special status plant species habitats (see CSU stipulations). NSO stipulations would apply to the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1, the Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, and within the WSR Yampa segments 1 & 2.

Developed recreation sites with established campgrounds, boat ramps, or other developed recreation facilities would be protected by a 40-acre NSO stipulation. Exceptions would be granted on a case-by-case basis consistent with the criteria identified in Appendix E. The list below shows recreation sites currently identified and is not comprehensive. The sites are shown on Map 2-17.

- ❑ West Cross Mountain campground
- ❑ East Cross Mountain campground
- ❑ Rocky Reservoir campground
- ❑ Duffy Mountain campground
- ❑ Irish Canyon campground
- ❑ Irish Canyon interpretive site
- ❑ Elkhead Reservoir development
- ❑ Cedar Mountain recreation site.

Additional NSO areas would be as identified in Table 2-11.

Alternative D: NSO areas would include leases within the area of federally leased coal lands for surface coal mines where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. There would be no similar action for special status plant species habitats (see CSU stipulations), but all CDOW State Wildlife Areas would be NSO. NSO stipulations would apply to the Lookout Mountain ACEC and the White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC (Table 2-11).

Same as Alternative C for developed recreation sites.

Table 2-11. Areas Designated as NSO to Oil and Gas Leasing, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Within 0.25 mile of raptor (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], buteos, and owls) nest sites				X
Within 0.125 mile of raptor (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], buteos, and owls) nest sites	X		X	
Within 0.25 mile of peregrine falcon cliff nesting complex	X		X ¹	X ¹
Waterfowl and shorebird significant production areas (waterfowl habitat management areas and rookeries)	X		X ²	X ²
Within 0.25 mile of Colombian sharp-tailed grouse lek	X ³		X ³	X ³
Within 0.25 mile of greater sage-grouse lek	X ³			
Within 0.6 mile of greater sage-grouse lek			X ³	X ³
Within critical or occupied habitat of Colorado pikeminnow (<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>), razorback sucker (<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>), humpback chub (<i>Gila cypha</i>), and bonytail (<i>Gila elegans</i>)	X	X	X	X
Within 0.25 mile of suitable yellow-billed cuckoo habitat		X	X	X
Within 0.125 mile of occupied mountain plover nesting habitat		X ⁴	X ⁴	X ⁴
Within 0.25 mile of both occupied and unoccupied bald eagle nests		X	X	X
Within 0.25 mile of bald eagle roost or nest	X ⁵			

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
sites				
Within 0.25 mile of known bald eagle roosts		X	X	X
Mexican spotted owl PAC		X	X	X
Within 0.25 mile of Mexican spotted owl confirmed roost sites and nesting sites	X			
Federally leased surface coal mines ⁷	X	X	X	X
Special status plant species habitat	X ⁶			
CDO State Wildlife Areas				X
Limestone Ridge ACEC	X			
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1			X	
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, Zone 1	X			
Juniper Mountain SRMA			X	
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC	X			
Lookout Mountain ACEC				X
WSR Yampa segments 1 & 2			X	
Cedar Mountain area	X			
Within 0.25 mile of perennial water sources	X		X	X
Developed recreation sites (40-acre blocks)			X	X
Steamboat Lake State Park	X			
Pearl Lake State Park	X			
Total area (in acres)	178,710	28,690	201,890	443,350
Notes:	¹ NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the nesting complex or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. ² NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the production areas or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. ³ NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. ⁴ The boundaries of the stipulated area may be modified if the authorized officer determines that surface occupancy would not harm the integrity of the nest or nest location. ⁵ NSO area may be altered depending upon the active status of the roost or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. No exceptions for nest sites. ⁶ NSO may be altered after important factors are considered in the impact analysis such as the type and amount of surface disturbance, plant frequency and density, and the relocation of disturbances. ⁷ Data for locations of current surface or underground mines is not available, and area is not included in calculations or mapping.			

Controlled Surface Use Stipulations

Alternative A: CSU stipulations would be attached to leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. CSU stipulations may be waived subject to outlined conditions.

For fragile soil areas, performance objectives must be met before surface disturbance. Before surface disturbance on slopes of, or greater than, 40 percent, an engineering/reclamation plan must be approved by the authorized officer. CSU stipulations may be accepted subject to an onsite impact analysis. CSU stipulations would not be applied when the authorized officer determines that relocation up to 200 meters can be applied to protect the riparian system during well siting.

In the Irish Canyon ACEC, an inventory of sensitive plant and remnant vegetation associations would be required. Sensitive plants and associations identified would be avoided. Known geologic values and cultural resources would be avoided. There would be no exceptions. In the Lookout Mountain ACEC, an inventory for sensitive plant and remnant vegetation associations would be required. Sensitive plants and associations identified would be avoided. There would be no exceptions. Additional CSU areas would be as identified in (Table 2-12).

Alternative B: As in Alternative A, CSU stipulations would be attached to leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. CSU stipulations may be waived subject to outlined conditions. CSU stipulations would be on habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate. Exception criteria detailed in Appendix E would apply. CSU stipulations would also apply to the Vermillion Basin (See Section 2.5.11.2 [Lands With Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs] for a detailed description of this stipulation – Table 2-12).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): As in Alternative A, CSU stipulations would be attached to leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. CSU stipulations may be waived subject to outlined conditions. As in Alternative B, CSU stipulations would be on habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate. Exception criteria detailed in Appendix E would apply. To protect the viewshed of the Thornburgh/Battle of Milk Creek, a CSU stipulation would be attached to leases in the area. For fragile soil areas, see Soils, Section 2.5.2, for performance objectives and fragile soil criteria. Before surface disturbance on slopes of, or greater than, 35 percent, an engineering/reclamation plan must be approved by the authorized officer. CSU stipulations may be accepted subject to an onsite impact analysis. CSU stipulations would not be applied when the authorized officer determines that relocation up to 200 meters can be applied to protect the riparian system during well siting. CSU stipulations would also apply to medium and high priority sagebrush habitats (See Section 2.5.5.2 [Improving and Maintaining Sagebrush Habitat Functionality by Limiting Fragmentation] for a detailed description of this stipulation) (Map 2-3), the Limestone Ridge area, the Lookout Mountain area, active white-tailed prairie dog towns less than 10 acres, and active white-tailed prairie dog colonies within black-footed ferret reintroduction areas (Table 2-12).

Alternative D: As in Alternative A, CSU stipulations would be attached to leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. CSU stipulations may be waived subject to outlined conditions. As in Alternative B, CSU stipulations would be on habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate. Exception criteria detailed in Appendix E would apply. As in Alternative C, CSU stipulations would be on the Thornburgh/Battle of Milk Creek area. CSU stipulations for fragile soil areas would be the same as Alternative C. CSU stipulations would also apply to the Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC and the Natural Systems ACECs (Table 2-12).

Table 2-12. Areas Designated as Controlled Surface Use (CSU) to Oil and Gas Leasing, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Medium and high priority sagebrush habitats			X	
Special status plant species habitat		X	X	X
Approved underground coal mine ¹	X	X	X	X
Fragile soil areas	X		X	X
Greater sage-grouse crucial winter habitat				X
Vermillion Basin		X		
Slopes equal to or greater than 40 percent	X			
Slopes equal to or greater than 35 percent			X	X
Limestone Ridge area			X	
Irish Canyon ACEC	X			
Lookout Mountain area			X	
Lookout Mountain ACEC	X			
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Active white-tailed prairie dog colonies within black-footed ferret reintroduction areas	X		X	
Active white-tailed prairie dog towns less than 10 acres			X	
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Viewshed of the Thornburgh/ Battle of Milk Creek area			X	X
Total area (in acres)	122,350	78,090	1,236,810	457,950
Note:	¹ Data for locations of current surface or underground mines is not available, and area is not included in calculations or mapping.			

Timing Limit Stipulations

Alternative A: No helicopter or motor vehicle use would be allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season, which runs from March 1 to June 30. There would be no exceptions. No drilling or

development operations would be permitted between March 1 and December 1 within a 1 mile radius of Wild Horse Spring, Shepherd Spring, Coffee Pot Spring, Two Bar Spring, and Dugout Draw Spring. Exceptions would include provision by the operator, before the authorized activity, of an alternate dependable water source at a suitable location outside the 1 mile radius of the spring in question. Other timing stipulations would be applied as noted in Table 2-13.

Alternative B: No similar action. Timing limitation stipulations required by law, regulation, and policy would continue to be applied (Table 2-13).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): No drilling or development operations would be permitted within a 1 mile radius from wild horse water sources from March 1 to December 1. Exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (Appendix E). No oil- and gas-related helicopter or motor vehicle use would be allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season, which runs from March 1 to June 30. Exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (Appendix E) and wild horse outcomes as described in wild horse goals and objectives section and the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. Other timing stipulations would be applied as noted in Table 2-13.

Alternative D: The wild horse HMA would be closed to motor vehicle use and to all permitted activities during the wild horse foaling period from March 1 to June 30. Other timing stipulations would be applied as noted in Table 2-13.

Table 2-13. Timing Stipulations for Oil and Gas Leasing, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Within 0.25 mile of raptor nesting and fledgling habitat (golden eagle and all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], all buteos, and owls)	X		X	X
Within 0.5 mile of the cliff nesting complex of peregrine falcons	X		X	X
Mule deer crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Elk crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Pronghorn crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Bighorn sheep crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Elk calving areas	X		X	X
Pronghorn fawning areas	X		X	X
Bighorn sheep lambing area	X		X	X
Greater sandhill crane nesting and staging habitat areas	X		X	X
Osprey nesting and fledgling habitat (applies to 0.5 mile buffer)	X		X	X
Active white-tailed prairie dog towns larger than 10 acres			X	
Ferruginous hawk nesting and fledgling habitat (applies to 1 mile buffer)	X		X	X
Mexican spotted owl nesting and fledgling habitat	X			

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat	X		X	X
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat	X			X
Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat (nesting and early brood-rearing habitat within 4 miles of the perimeter of lek)			X	
Greater sage-grouse crucial winter habitat	X		X	X
Within 0.5 mile of bald eagle nest sites	X			
Within 0.5 mile of occupied bald eagle nest sites		X	X	X
Within 0.5 mile of bald eagle winter roost sites	X ¹			
Within 0.25 mile of known bald eagle winter hunting perches		X ²	X ²	X ²
Within 0.5 mile of bald eagle critical night roosts		X ³	X ³	X ³
Within 0.25 mile of occupied mountain plover nesting habitat		X ⁴	X ⁴	X ⁴
Wild horse HMA	X		X	X
Within 1 mile of Wild Horse Spring	X		X	
Within 1 mile of Sheepherder Spring	X		X	
Within 1 mile of Coffee Pot Spring	X		X	
Within 1 mile of Two Bar Spring	X		X	
Within 1 mile of Dugout Draw Spring	X		X	
Domestic sheep lambing grounds	X		X	
Total area (in acres)	1,181,140	148,430	1,189,210	1,135,900
Notes:	¹ If there is partial or complete visual screening of the area of activity, the primary zone around the roost site may be reduced to 0.25 mile. ² Buffers can be reduced to 0.125 mile if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. ³ Buffers can be reduced to 0.25 mile for night roosts if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. ⁴ The boundaries of the stipulated area may be modified if the authorized officer determines that portions of the area are not critical to the mountain plover.			

Open to Oil and Gas Leasing

Alternative A: A total of 533,800 acres would be subject to existing standard terms and conditions, consistent with applicable law.

Alternative B: A total of 1,625,350 acres would be subject to existing standard terms and conditions, consistent with applicable law.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): A total of 168,180 acres would be subject to existing standard terms and conditions, consistent with applicable law.

Alternative D: A total of 360,220 acres would be subject to existing standard terms and conditions, consistent with applicable law.

Best Management Practices for Development

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: The use of a variety of BMPs would be encouraged, as defined by *Best Management Practices for Oil and Gas Development on Public Lands*, which can be found at <http://www.blm.gov/bmp/>. These BMPs may be changed over time.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

Exception, Waiver, and/or Modification

Alternative A: Stipulations or restrictions may be waived or reduced if resource conditions change and the protections are no longer necessary or if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts. COAs would be applied to operational approvals as determined to be necessary by the authorized officer so as to protect other resources and values within the terms, conditions, and stipulations of the lease.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Exceptions would be case-by-case and temporary, waivers would have permanent exemptions, and modification (change stipulation) criteria would be applied on a case-by-case basis consistent with the process identified in Appendix E. COAs would be applied in the same way as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Geophysical Exploration

Alternative A: Lease stipulations for oil and gas development do not necessarily apply to geophysical exploration activities. Using oil and gas stipulations as a reference point, restrictions would be determined at the permitting stage on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative A.

Surface Reclamation

Alternative A: All disturbed areas not needed for lease operations would be revegetated as soon as possible. The operator would reestablish perennial vegetation that is compatible with surrounding undisturbed vegetation. The plant species to be seeded and the seeding rate would be approved by the authorized officer prior to seeding. Successful revegetation would be considered completed when the percent canopy cover is equal to surrounding undisturbed vegetation. The species considered in measuring percent cover would be those seeded as well as desirable preexisting species. Undesirable

weedy species, such as kuchia, cheatgrass, and other noxious weeds, would not be included unless otherwise directed by the authorized officer. The operator would continue revegetation efforts with any and all cultural methods available until this standard is met.

Noxious weeds that may be introduced during soil disturbance and reclamation would be treated by methods to be approved by the authorized officer. These methods may include biological, mechanical, or chemical. Should chemical methods be approved, the lessee must submit a pesticide use proposal to the authorized officer 60 days before the planned application date.

In the event a producing well is developed, the unused disturbed areas surrounding the well location would be recontoured to appropriate confirmation (one that allows lease operations and avoids steep cut and fill slopes) as soon as possible. Some or all of the stockpiled topsoil would be evenly disturbed over these recontoured areas. Brush cleared before construction of the well site shall be scattered back over the recontoured area.

Mulching of the seedbed following seeding may be required under certain conditions (i.e., expected severe erosion), as determined by the surface owner/manager.

Surface soil material, if available, would be stripped from all areas where surface disturbance is necessary and stockpiled in a manner and location that would allow easy replacement. These stockpiles shall be protected from loss. After reshaping the site, soil material should be distributed to a uniform depth that would allow the establishment of desirable vegetation. The disturbed areas shall be scarified before replacement of surface soil material.

All disturbed areas would be recontoured to blend as nearly as possible with the natural topography. This includes removing all berms and refilling all cuts. All compacted portions of the pad would be ripped to a depth of 12 inches unless in solid rock.

After revegetation is complete, the stockpiled trees would be scattered evenly over the disturbed areas. The access would be blocked to prevent vehicular access.

Seed certification tags would be submitted to the authorized officer for seed used in reclamation.

Before abandoning the facilities authorized by this grant, the holder shall contact the authorized officer to arrange a joint inspection of the ROW. The inspection would be held to agree on an acceptable abandonment and rehabilitation plan. The authorized officer must approve the plan in writing before the holder commences any abandonment and/or rehabilitation activities. The plan may include activities such as removal of surfacing material from the road, recontouring, replacement of topsoil, seeding, or mulching.

Cut and fill slopes shall be reduced and graded to conform the site to the adjacent terrain. The disturbed sites would be prepared to provide a seedbed for reestablishment of desirable vegetation and reshaped to blend with the natural contour. Such practices may include contouring, terracing, gouging, scarifying, mulching, fertilizing, seeding, and planting.

Should additional site-specific environmental analyses at the time of exploration or development reveal the need for additional restrictions or the continuance of existing lease stipulations, these restrictions would become part of the development or operational plan.

Alternative B: A Plan for Surface Reclamation is required with every APD or POD and is subject to approval by the authorized officer. The Surface Reclamation Standard described in Appendix O would be

attached as a COA to APDs and associated ROWs. The Surface Reclamation Standard could be modified on the basis of new information or to meet specific needs, but the protection level envisioned in the COAs would be maintained.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as Alternative B.

Locatable Minerals, Mineral Materials, and Nonenergy Leasable Minerals

Alternative A: All public land is open to mineral entry and development under the General Mining Law of 1872 unless it is proposed for administrative withdrawal or wilderness designation. Locatable mineral exploration and development on public land would be regulated under 43 CFR 3800. All areas would be open to locatable minerals, mineral materials, and nonenergy leasable mineral activity, except for the WSAs (Table 2-14, Table 2-15, and Table 2-16; Maps 2-18, 2-22, and 2-26). In addition, the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry.

Applications for removing common-variety mineral materials, including sand and gravel, would continue to be processed as these are received. An ID review of each proposal would determine stipulations to protect important surface values. Mineral material sales would not be allowed in WSAs, the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA, the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, and the Cedar Mountain area. BLM would consider leasing geothermal energy resources or other leasable minerals as each application is received. The Geothermal Resources Leasing Programmatic EIS evaluates issues associated with the exploration and development of geothermal resources on high priority areas on BLM- and FS-administered lands. Minerals leasable only on lands acquired under the Bankhead Jones Act would be treated as other leasable minerals. In the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA, the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, and the Cedar Mountain area, leasing of nonenergy leasable minerals for underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations; leasing for surface mining, however, would not be allowed in these four areas. Existing decisions would apply. Specific areas would be leased consistent with oil and gas leasing categories, by alternative. New leases and mineral material sales within fragile soil and water areas such as the Vermillion management unit would be subject to the performance objectives described in Soil Resources, Section 2.5.2.2.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except Vermillion Basin would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables (Table 2-14, Table 2-15, and Table 2-16; Maps 2-19, 2-23, and 2-27). In addition, specific areas would be leased consistent with the oil and gas leasing categories above. Underground mining would be allowed throughout the RMPPA except where limited by applicable law.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The WSAs; WSR suitable segments 1, 2, and 3; Dinosaur North; Cold Spring Mountain; Limestone Ridge; Irish Canyon ACEC; Vermillion Basin; and Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1; the Cedar Mountain SRMA; and the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location. The WSAs; the Limestone Ridge Area; the Lookout Mountain Area; Vermillion Basin; the Irish Canyon ACEC; the Dinosaur North area (outside the WSA); the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1; and the Cold Spring Mountain area (outside the WSA) would be closed to mineral material sales. Specific areas would be leased consistent with oil and gas leasing categories above. Underground mining would be allowed throughout the RMPPA except where limited by applicable law. As in Alternative A, new leases and mineral material sales within fragile soil and water areas, such as the Vermillion management unit, would be subject to the performance objectives described

under Soil Resources, Section 2.5.2.2 (Table 2-14, Table 2-15, and Table 2-16; Maps 2-20, 2-24, and 2-28).

Alternative D: The WSAs, ACECs, suitable WSR segments, Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North, the Cross Mountain backcountry area, the Diamond Breaks backcountry area, the Pinyon Ridge backcountry area, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, the Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, the South Sand Wash SRMA, the Serviceberry SRMA, the Fly Creek SRMA, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Natural Systems ACEC, and the Cold Spring Mountain SRMA would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location. The WSAs, all ACECs, Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North, Lookout Mountain Area, Limestone Ridge Area, Cross Mountain area, the Diamond Breaks backcountry area, the Pinyon Ridge backcountry area, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, the Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, and the Cold Spring Mountain SRMA would be closed to mineral material sales. Specific areas would be leased consistent with oil and gas leasing categories above. Underground mining would be allowed throughout the RMPPA except where limited by applicable law. As in Alternative A, new leases and mineral material sales within fragile soil and water areas such as the Vermillion management unit would be subject to the performance objectives described under Soil Resources, Section 2.5.2.2 (Table 2-14, Table 2-15, and Table 2-16; Maps 2-21, 2-25, and 2-29).

Table 2-14. Areas Recommended for Withdrawal From Mineral Location, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Vermillion Basin		X	X	X
Lookout Mountain ACEC				X
Cross Mountain Canyon area				X ¹
Suitable WSR corridors			X	X
Dinosaur North Area (outside WSA)			X	X ²
Cold Spring Mountain area (outside the WSA)			X	X ³
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	X
South Sand Wash SRMA				X
Serviceberry SRMA				X
Fly Creek SRMA				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1			X	
Juniper Mountain SRMA				X
Limestone Ridge area			X	X ⁴
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Irish Canyon ACEC			X	X
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Total Area (in acres)	82,350	159,430	259,970	616,100
Notes: ¹ Cross Mountain Canyon would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D. ² Dinosaur North would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ³ Cold Spring would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ⁴ Limestone Ridge would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D.				

Table 2-15. Areas Closed to Mineral Material Sales, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Vermillion Basin		X	X	X
Cedar Mountain area	X	X	X ¹	X ¹
All ACECs				X
Irish Canyon ACEC			X	X
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Dinosaur North SRMA				X
Dinosaur North area (outside the WSA)			X	X
Lookout Mountain area			X	X ²
Limestone Ridge area	X ³		X	X ³
Cross Mountain Canyon area	X ⁴			X ⁴
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Little Yampa Canyon area				X ⁵
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1			X	
Juniper Mountain SRMA				X ⁶
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Cold Spring Mountain area (Outside the WSA)			X	X
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Total area (in acres)	99,740	156,420	257,080	544,640
Notes:	¹ Cedar Mountain would be administered as a SRMA under Alternatives C and D. ² Lookout Mountain would be designated as an ACEC under Alternative D. ³ Limestone Ridge would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D. ⁴ Cross Mountain Canyon would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D. ⁵ Little Yampa Canyon would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ⁶ Juniper Canyon would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D.			

Table 2-16. Areas Closed to Nonenergy Leasable Minerals, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Vermillion Basin		X	X	X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1			X	
Juniper Mountain SRMA				X
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	X
Dinosaur North area (outside the WSA)			X	X ¹
Cold Spring Mountain area			X	X ²
Limestone Ridge area			X	X ³
Irish Canyon ACEC			X	X
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC				X
Lookout Mountain area			X	X ⁴
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Total area (in acres)	78,240	155,530	257,630	544,640
Notes:	¹ Dinosaur North would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ² Cold Spring Mountain would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ³ Limestone Ridge would be designated as an ACEC under Alternative D. ⁴ Lookout Mountain would be designated as an ACEC under Alternative D.			

Coal

Alternative A: Approximately 638,800 acres, containing an estimated 5.8 billion tons of coal, are acceptable for further consideration for federal coal leasing (Table 2-17; Map 2-30). Of this total, approximately 457,090 acres, containing an estimated 4.2 billion tons of coal, are acceptable for further consideration for leasing for surface or underground development. Approximately 181,670 acres, containing an estimated 1.3 billion tons of coal, are acceptable for further consideration for leasing for underground development only (BLM 1989b, pages 7–8). Approximately 266 million tons of coal throughout the region are not available for surface mining. Site-specific activity planning, including additional environmental analysis, would be needed before a decision to lease specific tracts can be made. Exploratory drilling would be allowed to obtain sufficient data for resource management decisions and to make fair market value determinations.

CSU stipulations would be attached to oil and gas leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. There would be NSO on oil and gas leases in areas that include leases for surface coal mines within the area of federally leased coal lands where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. NSO stipulations would be used to protect the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA and the Cedar Mountain area; raptor nest and roost sites and concentration areas, migratory bird habitats, floodplains, alluvial valley floors, and federally designated critical habitats for threatened or endangered plant and animal species. CSU stipulations would be used to protect coal mines from oil and gas development where the mining method or location is such that subsequent wells can avoid significant conflicts, including fragile soil areas, steep slopes, and riparian/wetland vegetation.

Alternative B: Lands found acceptable in this RMP would be available for further consideration for leasing and/or exchange. However, all lands determined to be suitable, unsuitable, or unacceptable for further consideration for leasing and/or exchange may be reviewed and suitability determinations may be modified on the basis of new data discovered during activity planning efforts. Unsuitability criteria would apply only to surface coal mining but not to underground mining. The lands with coal resource development potential in the Little Snake coal planning area are located in the Yampa and Dansforth Hills coal fields. The coal planning includes federal coal within the following townships: Sixth Principal Meridian; T. 3 N., R. 85 W.; T. 3 N., R. 86 W.; T. 3 N., R. 90 W. - R. 95 W.; T. 4 N., R. 86 W. - R. 95 W.; T. 5 N., R. 85 W. - R. 93 W.; T. 6 N., R. 86 W. - R. 93 W.; T. 7 N., R. 87 W. - R. 94 W.; T. 8 N., R. 86 W. - R. 94 W.; and T. 9 N., R. 86 W.

The coal planning area contains approximately 675,550 acres of federal coal lands or BLM surface estate. This entire area is available for underground coal mining. Unsuitability criteria have been applied to these lands to determine the areas unsuitable for surface mining. Results are shown in Appendix C. After applying unsuitability criteria and exceptions, approximately 639,550 acres were deemed acceptable for further consideration for leasing for either surface or underground development (Table 2-17; Map 2-31).

As in Alternative A, CSU stipulations would be attached to oil and gas leases where operations proposed within the area of an approved underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. There would be NSO/NGD on oil and gas leases in areas of federally leased coal lands for surface coal mines where oil and gas development would likely be incompatible with coal extraction; the NSO/NGD stipulation may be waived if the lessee agrees to the outlined conditions. Other restrictions on coal development are the same as described in Alternative A, except the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would not contain NSO/NGD stipulations for coal. Site-specific activity planning, including additional environmental analysis, would be needed before a decision to lease specific tracts can be made. Exploratory drilling would be allowed to obtain sufficient data for resource management decisions and to make fair market value determinations.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B, except NGD stipulations (not NSO) would be removed and Juniper Mountain SRMA, Zone 1 of the Little Yampa SRMA would be acceptable for further consideration only for underground coal mining (no surface occupancy stipulation), and the Cedar Mountain SRMA would not be available for coal leasing, resulting in 623,860 acres for further leasing consideration of either surface or underground development (Table 2-17; Map 2-32).

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B, but only 615,770 acres would be suitable for surface mining after the no-lease decision for Little Yampa Canyon SRMA and Cedar Mountain SRMA (Table 2-17; Map 2-33).

Table 2-17. Areas of NSO for Coal Leasing, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Raptor nest and roost sites, and concentration areas ¹	X	X	X	X
Migratory bird habitats ¹	X	X	X	X
Floodplains ¹	X	X	X	X
Alluvial Valley Floors ¹	X	X	X	X
Federally designated critical habitats for threatened or endangered plant and animal species ¹	X	X	X	X
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1			X ²	
Juniper Mountain SRMA			X ³	
Cedar Mountain area	X	X		
Total area in the area managed for coal resources (in acres)⁴	51,350	36,000	47,910	29,880
Notes:	¹ These stipulations are contained in the Coal Suitability Review (Appendix C). ² Little Yampa Canyon would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative C. ³ Juniper Mountain would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative C. ⁴ Acreages are limited to the area with coal potential located in the southeastern portion of the LSFO.			

Oil Shale

Alternative A: BLM would consider leasing other leasable minerals as each application is received (1989 ROD, p. 10).

Alternative B: BLM would consider leasing oil shale as each application is received. Lands available for leasing are consistent with lands available for oil and gas leasing or coal leasing, depending on the extraction method, i.e., in situ or mined.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): BLM would consider leasing oil shale as each application is received. Future oil shale leasing would require additional NEPA analysis, as well as a Plan Amendment. This additional NEPA analysis could preclude development.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B, while recognizing that different areas would be open to leasing because of consistency with oil, gas, and coal decisions in this alternative.

2.6.2 Livestock Grazing

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 is the legislative authority that provides for livestock grazing on, and protection of, public land. FLPMA (passed in 1976) and PRIA (passed in 1978) also provide legislative authority for the management of livestock grazing on public land. FLPMA directs the management of public land for multiple use and sustained yield. PRIA directs improvement of rangeland conditions and provides for rangeland improvements including establishing habitat for wildlife. The Colorado *Standards for Public Land Health* apply to all resource uses on public lands and the *Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management* apply specifically to livestock grazing (Appendix A). These standards and guidelines address management practices at the grazing allotment management plan and watershed levels and are intended to maintain desirable conditions or to improve undesirable rangeland conditions within reasonable time frames. If it were determined that existing livestock grazing management was a factor in not meeting the standards, appropriate management actions would be implemented, as determined through cooperation among BLM, livestock operators, stakeholders, interested members of the public, and in conformance with 43 CFR 4180.2(c). In areas where livestock grazing would not be compatible with other uses, grazing would not be permitted. Public land found not to be suitable for livestock grazing, or public land found to contain resource values that cannot be adequately protected from livestock impacts through mitigating measures, would not be allocated to livestock grazing.

2.6.2.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- **Livestock Grazing Goal A:** Manage resources, vegetation, and watersheds to sustain a variety of uses, including livestock grazing, and to maintain the long-term health of the rangelands. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Maintain and improve forage species diversity and abundance by managing to meet plant reproductive and physiological needs.
 - Minimize conflicts between livestock and other grazing animals in areas of increased pressure on forage and riparian zones.
 - Manage plant utilization by all foraging species at a level that maintains plant health and protects watersheds.
- **Livestock Grazing Goal B:** Provide for efficient management of livestock grazing allotments. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - To sustain flexible and viable agriculture operations and provide the opportunity to create Reserve Conservation Allotments (RCA) by partnering with State, federal, or private landowners

when lands or permits become available, without requiring involuntary AUM relinquishments or transfers. An RCA is an allotment with no associated grazing permit, whose purpose is to provide alternative forage for BLM permittees/lessees during the rest requirement while their customary allotment is undergoing an approved rangeland restoration/recovery project.

- **Livestock Grazing Goal C:** Contribute to the stability and sustainability of the livestock industry.

2.6.2.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: Appropriate actions for improving allotments that do not meet the standards and guidelines could include, but would not be limited to, adjustment of permitted AUMs, modified turnout dates, livestock water developments, range improvements, modified grazing periods and grazing systems, resting areas during the growing season, closing areas, riparian pastures, enclosures, implementation of forage utilization levels, and livestock conversions. Livestock grazing utilizing federal preferences would be allowed (141,403 AUMs) until monitoring studies and land health evaluations are completed. Appropriate action would be taken where existing livestock grazing management is determined to be a significant causal factor for not meeting land health standards. Rangelands would be monitored on M and I category allotments to yield the information needed to make decisions on livestock stocking rates, which would proceed, as funding and staff allow, from worst to better forage conditions as established by the 1981–1983 rangeland inventories and including 13 conflict allotments (Numbers 4203, 4206, 4207, 4209, 4210, 4219, 4225, 4302, 4431, 4332, 4520, 4521, and 4522). BLM would work closely with CDOW to reduce livestock/big game conflicts, which would improve vegetative and forage conditions. Vegetation land treatments would be implemented on 68 allotments according to the following guidelines:

- Use such treatments as interseeding, burning and reseeded, spraying, and plowing and reseeded.
- Adhere to established procedures and design specifications to protect all resource uses and values.
- Complete a benefit/cost analysis and environmental analysis before any treatments are implemented.

Range improvement projects would be constructed on 69 allotments according to the following guidelines:

- Use improvements that would control livestock use, improve distribution, and improve riparian/wetland habitat.
- Complete a benefit/cost analysis and environmental analysis before any projects are implemented.

The two existing RCAs (Experiment Station and College Station) would remain and continue to be used for emergency situations.

Exploration (including seismic exploration, drilling, or other development or production activity) would generally not be allowed on domestic sheep lambing grounds during lambing activity. Lambing activities usually fall between April 10 and June 30 and last for approximately six weeks. Dates for the six week closure would be determined for each operation as local conditions dictate.

Alternative B: Same actions as those described in Alternative A for improving allotments that do not meet the Colorado standards and guidelines. Livestock grazing would be managed by using standards and guidelines processes, while working closely with permittees to increase livestock forage. Rangelands would be monitored, focusing on allotments where land health standards have not been met and/or riparian assessments are “functioning at risk”, “non-functional”, or are in a “downward trend.” BLM would work closely with CDOW to reduce livestock/big game conflicts and would focus on decreasing big game populations. When consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to increase forage production. Range improvement developments would be considered to

increase livestock forage where such improvements are economically feasible and consistent with other resources.

Criteria in Appendix F would be used to establish RCAs. Management plans would be developed for all allotments to be used as an RCA. Criteria for permittee/lessee use include—

- Priority would be given to those permittees/lessees whose customary allotments are under an approved rangeland restoration/recovery project.
- Emergency conditions, such as wildfire.
- NOT to be used for drought or for overuse of customary allotment.

All lands that have been acquired through exchanges since the completion of the last RMP and all lands that will be acquired in the future, unless noted specifically otherwise, would be open to grazing.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same actions as those described in Alternative A for improving allotments that do not meet the Colorado standards and guidelines. Livestock grazing would be managed by using standards and guidelines processes, while working closely with permittees to develop sustainable ranching operations. As described in Alternative B, rangelands would be monitored, focusing on allotments where land health standards have not been met and/or riparian assessments are “functioning at risk”, “non-functional”, or are in a “downward trend.” As described in Alternative A, BLM would work closely with CDOW to reduce livestock/big game conflicts so as to improve vegetative and forage conditions. Land Health Assessments and determinations of whether standards are being met would set the criteria for where vegetation treatments are needed and if treatments should be implemented (see Vegetation, Section 2.5.4, for more information on treatment targets). Range improvements would be considered to improve rangeland diversity, condition, and sustainability by actions that may include, but are not limited to, the control of pinyon-juniper encroachment and decadent sagebrush. RCAs would be established on the basis of the criteria described in Alternative B. Livestock grazing on acquired lands would be the same as described in Alternative B. Restrictions on energy and mineral exploration on domestic sheep lambing grounds during lambing activity would be the same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative D: Same actions as those described in Alternative A for improving allotments that do not meet Colorado standards and guidelines. Livestock grazing would be managed utilizing standards and guidelines processes to improve habitat for other resources. As described in Alternative B, rangelands would be monitored, focusing on allotments where land health standards have not been met and/or riparian assessments are “functioning at risk”, “non-functional”, or are in a “downward trend.” Livestock/big game conflicts would be reduced by focusing on decreasing livestock use, which would decrease competition for forage resources by livestock. When consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to help maintain or increase a variety of habitats for wildlife species (see Vegetation, Section 2.5.4, for more information on treatment targets). Range improvements would be allowed only to maintain sustainable natural diversity of plant communities and only when identified through the rangeland health assessment process. RCAs would be established based on the criteria described in Alternative B. Livestock grazing on acquired lands would be the same as described in Alternative B.

2.6.3 Recreation

FLPMA provides for recreational use of public land as an integral part of multiple use management. Dispersed, unstructured activities typify the recreational uses occurring on most public land. Policy guidelines in BLM Manual 8320 direct BLM to identify administrative units known as SRMAs when there is a distinct, primary recreation-tourism market as well as a corresponding and distinguishing

recreation management strategy. The remaining public land is identified as an ERMA, where there is only a limited commitment of resources required to provide extensive, unstructured recreation activities.

A national recreation and visitor service work plan entitled “The BLM’s Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services” was adopted in 2004 (Washington Office [WO] Information Bulletin [IB] 2004-072). A Unified Strategy was subsequently developed and adopted as policy in 2007 (WO IM 2007-043) affirming BLM’s commitment to a collaborative recreation and visitor services planning and management framework, providing a *“a logical, structured framework for analyzing recreation-tourism market demand for recreational activities, experiences, and benefit opportunities. It also provides long-term sustainability of the character of recreation settings and services and the infrastructure that support them.”* The Unified Strategy unified the work plan’s seven program objectives. The three primary unifiers are to (1) manage public lands for enhanced recreation experiences and quality of life, (2) encourage sustainable travel and tourism development with gateway communities and provide community-based conservation support for visitor services, and (3) provide fair value and return for recreation through fee collection and commercial services.

2.6.3.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- **Recreation Goal A:** Provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, activities, and experiences for various user groups, unorganized visitors and affected communities, their residences, economies, and the environment. Objectives for achieving this goal include the following:
 - Increase managed motorized and non-motorized use trails.
 - Focus the development of non-motorized and non-mechanized trails in backcountry areas or where public demand warrants.
 - Provide legal public access opportunities for recreational uses.
 - Manage for special recreation permit services.
 - Identify strategies and decisions that may be applied to protect or preserve primitive and semiprimitive areas so as to provide solitude and backcountry opportunities.
 - Manage motorized recreation to reduce impacts on big game hunt quality and harvest success on BLM lands.

- **Recreation Goal B:** Provide visitor services including interpretive and educational information. Objectives for achieving this goal include the following:
 - Provide developed facilities in heavy-use areas where such use is impacting resources and experiences.
 - Use education as a means to further resource protection.
 - Enhance recreational experiences by such actions as providing boundary signing and information and managing campsites and access.
 - Continue coordination with organized interpretive associations.

- **Recreation Goal C:** Support tourism efforts for local economic diversification associated with public land resources. Objectives for achieving this goal include the following:
 - Maintain cooperative agreements with Colorado State Parks, Moffat County, and the Moffat County Sheriff for management of the Yampa River.
 - Continue coordination with local and regional recreation economic development organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce and community organizations.
 - Pursue cooperative agreements with other agencies and governments.

2.6.3.2 Management Actions

Special Recreation Management Areas

SRMAs are identified where demands for specific structured recreation opportunities (activities, experiences, and benefits) have been determined from identifiable recreation-tourism markets. Each SRMA has a distinct, primary recreation-tourism market as well as a corresponding and distinguishing recreation management strategy. SRMAs identified by alternative are displayed in Table 2-18. Management of the SRMAs is described in the following sections.

Table 2-18. Special Recreation Management Areas, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA			X	X
Juniper Mountain SRMA			X	X
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	X
South Sand Wash SRMA			X	X
Serviceberry SRMA			X	X
Fly Creek SRMA				X
Dinosaur North SRMA				X
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Vermillion Basin SRMA				X
Total area (in acres)	23,430	4,140	82,020	249,600

Emerald Mountain

Alternative A: Emerald Mountain (4,140 acres) would be managed as a SRMA to provide opportunities close to the City of Steamboat Springs for strenuous activities and nature experiences on primitive trails. Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-19 (Map 2-34).

Emerald Mountain would be a day use only area. Hunting would be permitted in both zones. Continued management of grazing leases and permits in accordance with current BLM policy would be allowed and collaboration between BLM and grazing permittees to manage grazing for sustainability and conservation would be promoted. Biological diversity and ecosystem health would be maintained in order to contribute to healthy wildlife populations, and important elk habitat may be enhanced to improve habitat conditions. The area would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and closed to oil and gas leasing, but would be available for common-variety mineral material and nonenergy leasables on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. The area would be closed to OHVs and over-the-snow vehicle use and would have a Class II VRM designation. ROW proposals would be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to constraints to protect sensitive resource value. No major wind energy, geothermal, or solar sites would be allowed. Additional communication sites would be considered if the proposed use was located adjacent to the existing communication towers on Emerald Mountain. No additional communication sites would be considered at other areas.

Trailhead, parking, and facilities would be provided. Overnight camping and the discharge of firearms not associated with hunting would be prohibited, and non-working dogs must be on a leash. Marketing would be coordinated with BLM's community partners to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information that targets the experience and benefit opportunities, the character of recreation settings, and the service environment that exists for each Zone. There is a possibility of BLM instituting user fees in the future if necessary criteria are met. Monitoring would occur to ensure user experiences are met, to ensure compliance with restrictions, and to track trail, trailhead, and facility maintenance and conditions.

Zone 1 would be managed for strenuous activities. The niche would be destination. Objectives would include strenuous mountain biking and Nordic skiing on primitive trails. Experiences would include enjoying access to close-to-home outdoor activities, enjoying strenuous outdoor physical exercise and developing skills and abilities. Benefits would include improved physical fitness, greater competence and confidence, enhanced outdoor oriented lifestyle, and improved understanding of the community's dependence and impact on public lands and adjoining private lands. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be middle country. Under the activity-planning framework, management would be geared towards enhancing recreation opportunities for visitors to the Steamboat Springs area. A designated trail system would be developed for mountain bikers and Nordic skiers and similar activities. Mechanized travel would be limited to designated roads and trails all year. Non-mechanized muscle-powered travel (i.e., foot, ski, horse, stock) would be permitted anywhere within the zone all year. Additional travel restrictions could be applied by BLM during activity-level planning.

Zone 2 would be managed for a nature experience. The niche would be community/backcountry. The objectives would include wildlife viewing, hiking and horseback riding. Experiences would include enjoying natural aesthetics and wildlife, escaping from crowds and enjoying tranquility and peacefulness. Benefits would include a closer relationship and appreciation of nature, reduced stress and positive change in mood and emotion, sense of well-being, enhanced awareness of community dependence on public lands and greater community involvement in recreation and land use decisions. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Under the activity-planning framework, management would be geared towards enhancing recreation activity opportunities for residents of the Steamboat Springs area. Informational signing and materials would be provided for wildlife viewing, hunting, and other targeted activities. Mechanized travel would be prohibited in Zone 2. Muscle-powered travel (e.g., foot, ski, horse, stock) would be permitted anywhere in the zone all year.

Table 2-19. Table 2-. Emerald Mountain SRMA—Alternative A

SRMA Name	Emerald Mountain SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Destination	Community
Activities	Mountain Biking Nordic Skiing	Wildlife Viewing Hiking Horseback Riding Hunting
OHV designation	Closed	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class II	VRM Class II

Alternative B: Same as Alternative A (Map 2-35).

Alternative C (Proposed Plan): Same as Alternative A (Map 2-36).

Alternative D: Same as Alternative A (Map 2-37).

Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain

Alternative A: The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area (19,290 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide unrestricted flatwater river floatboating in the region (Map 2-34).

Access would be negotiated for parking areas at entrance and exit points. Other facilities would be constructed as needed for public sanitation and safety. For marketing, a map/brochure would be developed to promote visitor health and safety, provide resource protection, and inform the public of available opportunities. BLM would involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach programs. Motorized river boating would be monitored to gauge if management actions and the resulting use create the targeted recreational opportunities and facilitate their attainment as outcomes. Campsite conditions and use would also be monitored. The area would be administered as closed to mineral material sales and NSO for oil and gas operations and leasing of coal and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. There would be no major rights-of-way unless compatible with objectives of SRMA.

Zone 1 is the Yampa River corridor. The niche would be community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objectives would include facilitating flatwater boating (which includes non-motorized and motorized boating) and camping activities. Experiences would include savoring canyon and river aesthetics, enjoying easy access to diverse backcountry recreation, enjoying the closeness of family and friends, enjoying exploration, and escaping everyday responsibilities for a while. Benefits would include improved outdoor knowledge, skills, self-confidence, and for enjoyment with others, a heightened sense of satisfaction with the community, a greater sense of adventure, and renewed human spirit. The physical prescribed setting character would be middle country east of Milk Creek, in which the landscape is natural in appearance although there are some modifications, such as roads and trails. West of Milk Creek, the setting is backcountry in which the landscape is more natural with limited signs of human presence. The social prescribed setting character would be middle country east of Milk Creek and backcountry west of Milk Creek. Group size would be anywhere from 4 to 6 people for the backcountry setting and up to 12 people per group for middle country setting. The administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Brochures are available and information is posted at launch sites. Agency personnel would seldom be available to provide on-site assistance. Under the activity-planning framework for management, management of this zone would be geared towards providing opportunities for tourists and Yampa Valley residents to engage in overnight flat-water boating for social group and family-oriented recreation in a naturally-appearing river canyon atmosphere. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through the Little Yampa Canyon Recreation Area Management Plan Decision Record/Finding of No Significant Impacts dated October 1996.

Zone 2, north of county road (CR) 17, would not be included in the SRMA.

Alternative B: The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area would be identified as an ERMA (see the ERMA objectives under the associated heading below).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded by 8,020 acres (Map 2-36) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide river boating, big game hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education opportunities for local communities and visitors to the area. The Juniper Mountain portion of the existing Little Yampa Canyon SRMA would be identified as the Juniper Mountain SRMA. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. VRM Class II designation would apply to areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA, and a VRM Class III designation would apply everywhere else within the SRMA. Management of the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA is summarized in Table 2-20.

The niche, objectives, and prescribed setting character for Zone 1, the Yampa River corridor, would be the same as those described in Alternative A. Under the activity planning framework for management, management of this zone would be geared towards providing opportunities for tourists and Yampa Valley residents to engage in overnight flat-water boating for social groups and families in a natural river canyon atmosphere. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through a site-specific Recreation Area Management Plan. Roads and trails would be modified as needed to mitigate impacts. For marketing, BLM would continue to partner with Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach programs. In conjunction with State Parks, motorized river boating would be monitored to gauge if management actions and the resulting use create the targeted recreational opportunities and facilitate their attainment as outcomes. Campsite conditions and use would also be monitored by agency staff. The development of a volunteer program with gateway communities/river users to assist with monitoring needs would be explored. The area would be administered as NSO for coal and oil and gas operations, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and recommended for withdrawal from locatable minerals. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

For Zone 2, north of CR 17, the niche would be destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objectives would be to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in motorized and some non-motorized big game hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, and savoring the sight and sound of wildlife. Benefits would include greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, an increased awareness and knowledge of wildlife, historical, and natural landscapes to reduce negative human impact, improved opportunity to view wildlife close-up, positive contributions to local and regional economic stability, and an increased desirability as a place to live or retire. The physical prescribed setting character would be middle country, in which the landscape is natural appearing except for obvious primitive and maintained roads. Rules and regulations are posted and trails are clearly marked. The social prescribed setting would be middle to front country. During hunting season, users would expect other visitors with anywhere from 7 to 25 people per group. There would be a variety of traditional camper trailers, pop-up tents, and conventional tents in concentrated areas. Areas of landscape alteration would be prevalent, including disturbed vegetation and trampled soils. Administrative prescribed setting character would be middle country. Area brochures and maps would be available and rules would be clearly posted. BLM personnel and law enforcement would be present to provide on-site assistance mainly during hunting season. Four-wheel drive, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes are commonly encountered during hunting season. Under the activity-planning framework for management, management would be geared towards providing visitors and residents of the Yampa Valley, hunting-related wildlife viewing, interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. Dispersed camping sites would not be designated unless monitoring shows unacceptable impacts. Camping facilities would be provided in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. For marketing, in partnership with the CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, there would be increased education and interpretation programs to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Visitor use would be monitored through a sign-in box and road counter at the main BLM access road. The area would be administered as open for oil and gas operations and as open to locatable minerals, mineral material sales, and nonenergy leasables and would be available to coal leasing.

Table 2-20. Little Yampa Canyon SRMA—Alternative C

SRMA Name	Little Yampa Canyon SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Destination
Activities	Non-motorized boating Motorized boating Camping	Motorized big game hunting Some non-motorized hunting Camping Wildlife watching Interpretation/education
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere

Alternative D: The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 29,380 acres (Map 2-37) to include roadless areas to the north as part of Zone 1 and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide camping experiences related to river boating and big game hunting in the region. Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-21.

For Zone 1, Yampa River corridor, the niche would be the same as that for Alternative A. Objectives would be the same as those for Alternative A, except that motorized boating activities would be limited. Experiences would also include feeling good about solitude and isolation from other people and services, and benefits would also include establishing closer relationships with the natural world and conserving entire ecosystems in a natural state. The physical prescribed setting character would be middle country east of Milk Creek and backcountry west of Milk Creek. The social prescribed setting character would be backcountry. The administrative prescribed setting character would be primitive. Under the activity-planning framework for management, roads with no administrative benefit would be closed and restored to pristine condition and motorized access to the river would be restricted. For marketing, BLM would involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach programs. Motorized river boating would be monitored to gauge if management actions and the resulting use create the targeted recreational opportunities and facilitate their attainment as outcomes. Campsite conditions and use would also be monitored. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be closed on 11,850 acres and limited to designated roads and trails on 17,530 acres. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

For Zone 2, north of CR 17, the niche would be the same as that with Alternative C. Objectives would be the same as those with Alternative C, except experiences would also include feeling good about solitude and isolation from other people and services, and benefits would also include establishing closer relationships with the natural world and conserving entire ecosystems in a natural state. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Under the activity-planning framework for management, camping facilities would be provided in high-impact areas related to hunting season use. For marketing, in partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, there would be increased education and interpretation programs during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. User experience and satisfaction, as well as campsite conditions and use, would be monitored. Monitoring would also occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. The area would be

closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

Table 2-21. Little Yampa Canyon SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Little Yampa Canyon SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Destination
Activities	Non-motorized boating Limited motorized boating Camping	Non-motorized big game hunting Some motorized hunting Camping Wildlife watching Interpretation/education
OHV designation	Closed Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere

Juniper Mountain

Alternative A: Juniper Mountain would continue to be managed within the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA (see Little Yampa Canyon SRMA).

Alternative B: Juniper Mountain would be identified as an ERMA (see the ERMA objectives under the associated heading below).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Juniper Canyon portion of the existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be identified as the Juniper Mountain SRMA to provide opportunities for boating, hunting, camping, and hiking for visitors and Yampa Valley residents (Map 2-36). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-22.

The area would be administered as NSO for coal and oil and gas operations and as open to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails and a managed and maintained motorized trail system would be developed. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight of the river within the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

Zone 1 is the Yampa River corridor. The niche would be community where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objectives would include day-use motorized and non-motorized boating activities. Experiences would include enjoying canyon and river aesthetics, testing endurance, enjoying risk-taking adventure, easy access to diverse backcountry recreation, and temporarily escaping everyday responsibilities. Benefits would include improved outdoor knowledge, skills, and self-confidence for outdoor enjoyment with others, a heightened sense of satisfaction with the community, a greater sense of adventure, and renewed human spirit. The physical prescribed setting character would be middle country in which the landscape is natural in appearance

although there are some modifications, such as roads and trails. The social prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Group size would be anywhere from 4 to 6 people. The administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Brochures are available and information is posted at launch sites. Agency personnel would seldom be available to provide on-site assistance. Marketing, in partnership with Colorado State Parks, would include development of education, interpretation, and public outreach programs. In conjunction with State Parks, motorized river boating would be monitored to gauge if that use is changing the desired recreation experience. Under the activity-planning framework, management of this zone would be geared to providing opportunities for visitors and Yampa Valley residents to engage in a challenging boating experience in a naturally-appearing river canyon atmosphere. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan.

Zone 2 is outside the river corridor. The niche would be destination where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objectives would be to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in big game hunting, camping, hiking, and horseback riding activities. Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, enjoying strenuous outdoor physical exercise, and enjoying easy access to diverse backcountry recreation. Benefits would include greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, improved physical fitness, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. The prescribed physical setting character would be middle country. There would be a natural landscape with some primitive and maintained roads and trails, a marked trail system, and simple trailhead developments. The prescribed social and administrative setting character would be backcountry, where encounters with other people would be from 3 to 6 people and landscape alterations are uncommon. Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use would be the modes of travel. Maps of the area would be available, and staff would occasionally be present to provide on-site assistance. Marketing would involve collaboration with Chambers of Commerce, adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide access and hunting experiences. For monitoring, campsite conditions and use would be monitored as well as user experiences and satisfaction. Under the activity-planning framework, management would be geared towards providing visitors and residents of the Yampa Valley, hunting-related, hiking, and horseback riding opportunities. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through an approved Recreation Area Management Plan.

The area would be administered as NSO for coal and oil and gas operations and as open to locatable minerals, and nonenergy leasables. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight from the river in the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

Table 2-22. Juniper Mountain SRMA—Alternative C

SRMA Name	Juniper Mountain SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Destination
Activities	Day use Motorized and non-motorized boating	Hunting Camping Hiking & Horseback Riding
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere

Alternative D: The Juniper Canyon portion of the existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be identified as the Juniper Mountain SRMA (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-23.

For Zone 1, the Yampa River corridor, the niche would be the same as that for Alternative C. Objectives would be the same as those for Alternative C except that motorized boating activities would be limited. Experiences would also include feeling good about solitude and isolation from other people and services, and benefits would also include establishing a closer relationship with the natural world. The physical prescribed setting character would be middle country. The social and administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. Under the activity-planning framework for management, roads with no administrative benefit would be closed and restored. Marketing would involve partnership with Colorado State Parks to develop interpretation, education, and public outreach programs. For monitoring, user experience and satisfaction would be monitored. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

For Zone 2, the Outside River Corridor, the niche, objectives, and prescribed setting character would be the same as those for Alternative C. Under the activity-planning framework for management, camping facilities would be provided in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. A managed and maintained non-motorized trail system would be developed within the area during hunting season. For marketing, there would be work with Chambers of Commerce, adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide access and hunting experiences. For monitoring, campsite conditions and use would be monitored as well as user experience and satisfaction. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA and a Class III designation elsewhere. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.

Table 2-23. Juniper Mountain SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Juniper Mountain SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Destination
Activities	Day use Non-motorized boating Limited motorized boating	Hunting Camping
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere	VRM Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA VRM Class III elsewhere

Cedar Mountain

Alternative A: The Cedar Mountain area would continue to be managed as part of the ERMA. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would be administered as NSO for oil and gas operations and closed to mineral material sales, but available for mineral location.

Alternative B: Cedar Mountain would be managed as an ERMA. See the ERMA objectives under the associated heading below.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Cedar Mountain area (900 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide opportunities primarily to residents of Craig for hiking, nature interpretation, and picnicking (Map 2-36). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-24.

Cedar Mountain would be a day use only area. Vehicle parking, facilities, interpretation, and a trail system would be provided. Overnight camping and the discharge of firearms not associated with hunting would be prohibited. Marketing would be coordinated with the City of Craig, Chambers of Commerce, communication site providers, and local sport shops to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information. Administrative and monitoring actions would be implemented through an approved Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitoring would occur to ensure user experiences are met, to ensure compliance with restrictions, and to keep track of trail maintenance and conditions. The area would be administered as NSO for oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. A seasonal closure to motorized vehicles of the portion of the Cedar Mountain road above day use parking area would be implemented when necessary to reduce disturbance to nesting raptors and prevent nest abandonment. Administrative access to facilities above the day use area would be permitted. The area would have a Class III VRM designation and would be an avoidance area for additional ROWs.

Zone 1 is the picnic area. The niche would be community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town. Objectives would include day-use picnicking, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Experiences would include enjoying access to close-to-home outdoor activities, easy access to natural landscapes, the closeness of family, and savoring the sights and sounds of wildlife. Benefits would include improved physical fitness, better maintenance of physical facilities, an increased awareness of wildlife and natural landscapes, stronger ties to family and friends, and an enhanced appreciation for the Yampa Valley and surrounding areas through the use of vantage points. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be rural. The natural landscape is substantially modified by communication towers and modern facilities. Contact with other people is eminent and encounters with others tend to be impersonal. Under the activity-planning framework for management, management would be geared towards providing family-oriented activities for residents of Craig.

Zone 2 is the trail system. The niche would be community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town. Objectives would include hiking, jogging, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. Experiences would include enjoying access to close-to-home outdoor activities, enjoying easy access to natural landscapes, enjoying the closeness of family, and seeing visitors getting excited about the area. Benefits would include improved physical fitness and better health maintenance, improved understanding of rural-urban interface, and increased awareness, knowledge, and stewardship of wildlife and natural landscapes. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be rural. The natural landscape is substantially modified by communication towers and modern facilities. Contact with other people is intermittent, but human use is evident. Under the activity-planning framework for management, a managed, non-motorized trail system would be provided and maintained to enhance recreation and interpretive/education activity opportunities for residents of Craig.

Table 2-24. Cedar Mountain SRMA—Alternative C

SRMA Name	Cedar Mountain SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Community
Activities	Day use Picnicking Hiking Wildlife viewing	Hiking Jogging Horseback riding Wildlife viewing Interpretation/Education
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class III	VRM Class III

Alternative D: The Cedar Mountain area (900 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide opportunities close to the City of Craig for hiking, nature interpretation, and picnicking (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-25.

For Zone 1, the picnic area, the niche, objectives, and prescribed setting character would be the same as those for Alternative C. The activity-planning framework would be the same as for Alternative C; in addition, recreational use of the area would be restricted to day use (between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.). Marketing and monitoring would be the same as those for Alternative C. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. The area would be an exclusion area for additional ROWs, and the collocation of communication facilities would be required.

For Zone 2, the trail system, the niche, objectives, and prescribed setting character would be the same as those for Alternative C. The activity-planning framework would be the same as that for Alternative C; in addition, the trail system would be non-mechanized as well as non-motorized. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. The area would be an exclusion area for additional ROWs, and communication facilities would be collocated.

Table 2-25. Cedar Mountain SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Cedar Mountain SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Community
Activities	Day use Picnicking Hiking Wildlife viewing	Hiking Jogging Horseback riding Wildlife viewing Interpretation/Education
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class III	VRM Class III

South Sand Wash

Alternative A: The south Sand Wash area would continue to be managed as an OHV open area for cross-country use within the ERMA.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The south Sand Wash area (35,510 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide OHV experiences in the Yampa Valley (Map 2-36). Marketing would be coordinated with local OHV groups, commercial motorized vehicle suppliers, Chambers of Commerce, and Moffat County to provide maps, brochures, interpretation opportunities, and road/trail planning and development. The area would be available for mineral location, oil and gas leasing, and nonenergy leaseables. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-26.

Zone 1 is the open play area. The niche would be community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation. Objectives would include off-road motorized vehicle recreational experiences. Experiences would include enjoying risk-taking adventure, enjoying the closeness of family, and developing riding skills and abilities. Benefits would include an enhanced sense of personal freedom, a restoration of mind from unwanted stress, a greater sense of adventure, improved maintenance of physical facilities, and positive contributions to the local economy. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be rural. The area would be on or near improved country roads and a highway. Group sizes would range from 26 to 50 people and people would seem to be everywhere. There is conspicuous and large-scale landscape alteration from OHV use. Area maps and brochures, and occasional regulatory signing would be present. Enforcement and staff presence would be routine. Under the activity-planning framework for management, a comprehensive management plan would be developed. Management would be geared towards providing family-oriented and skill-developing activities for visitors to the area. Main access roads and trails through the area would be identified and signed. Monitoring would determine if or when open recreation use approaches or exceeds resource capacity. OHV use would be open. Developed recreation sites would be closed to all mineral actions. The area would have a Class IV VRM designation.

Zone 2 is the designated roads and trails area. The niche would be community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation. Objectives would include single-track and double-track OHV riding, from novice to expert levels. Experiences would include enjoying risk-taking adventure and new challenges and temporarily escaping from everyday responsibilities. Benefits would include greater retention of desired recreational experience; a reduction in the negative impacts from such things as litter, trampling of vegetation, and unplanned trails; positive contributions to the local economy; and an enhanced sense of personal freedom. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be middle to front country. Recreation would be on or near improved country roads and contact with people would be eminent, but still intermittent. There would be from 7 to 29 encounters expected a day during peak season and users may be unnerved but may not necessarily move off routes, areas, or sites to accommodate others. Area maps and brochures, occasional regulatory signing, and a designated marked trail system would be present. Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes and some two-wheel drive vehicles would be predominant. Enforcement and staff presence would be routine. Under the activity-planning framework for management, a comprehensive management plan would be developed. Management would be geared towards enhancing OHV trail riding activities for visitors to the area. Together with user groups and local government, there would be a system of designated trails identified and signed to accommodate a wide range of vehicle types and riding levels. Crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities. Monitoring would ensure that user experiences and expectations are being met and that resources are being protected. The area would be available for mineral location, but it would not be

available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation.

Table 2-26. South Sand Wash SRMA—Alternative C

SRMA Name	South Sand Wash SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Community
Activities	Off-road motorized recreation	Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels
OHV designation	Open	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class IV	VRM Class III

Alternative D: The south Sand Wash area (35,510 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide OHV experiences (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-27.

The niche, objectives, prescribed setting character, activity-planning framework, and area administration would be the same as those for Alternative C except that both zones would be limited to designated roads and trails and would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable minerals under this alternative.

Table 2-27. South Sand Wash SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	South Sand Wash SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Community	Community
Activities	Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels	Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Limited to designated roads and trails
VRM Class	VRM Class IV	VRM Class III

Serviceberry

Alternative A: The Serviceberry area would be open to OHV use under the current RMP; however, the area would be temporarily closed to OHV use. This area would continue to be managed as part of the ERMA.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except that temporary OHV closures would be removed and would be managed as open to OHV use.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Serviceberry area (12,380 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide backcountry, non-motorized hunting, and heritage interpretation/education experiences for Yampa Valley residents and visitors to the area (Map 2-36). Marketing, in partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, would increase educational and interpretation programs during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. The area would be administered as open to oil and gas leasing and development and also open to nonenergy leasables and mineral location, but not open to coal leasing. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. ROWs would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-28.

Zone 1 is the Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access. The niche would be destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors and other constituents value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objectives would be to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in big game hunting and associated camping activities, and heritage interpretation/education. Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, and enjoying easy access to recreation. Benefits would include a reduction in wildlife disturbance from recreation users, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, self-confidence, improved physical fitness, positive contributions to local and regional economic stability, and a greater understanding of the area's heritage. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be middle country. The landscape would be naturally-appearing except for obvious primitive and maintained roads. Expected encounters would range from 7 to 14 people per day, with group sizes approximately the same size. Occasional regulatory signing, trail marking, and interpretation would be present, along with staff and law enforcement to provide on-site assistance mainly during hunting season. Under the activity-planning framework, management would be geared towards providing visitors and residents of the Yampa Valley, hunting-related, heritage interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. Camping facilities would be provided, and there would be improvements to the roads to these facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. A managed and maintained trail system would be developed within the area. User experience and satisfaction, as well as campsite and historic homestead conditions and use, would be monitored. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

Zone 2 is the Serviceberry backcountry. The niche would be backcountry, where national and/or local recreation-tourism visitors and communities would value the area for its dispersed, open, and undeveloped character. Objectives would be to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in non-motorized big game hunting and undeveloped camping, hiking, and other primitive recreation activities. Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, feeling good about solitude and being isolated, enjoying primitive and unconfined outdoor recreation environments, and enjoying exploration. Benefits would include a greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, improved physical fitness, closer relationship with the natural world, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. The landscape would be naturally-appearing with any modifications not readily noticeable and some trails primitive. Encounters with other people would range from 3 to 6 per day because of the open spaces and non-motorized mode of travel. Basic maps for the area would be available, but staff would seldom be available to provide on-site assistance if needed. Under the activity-planning framework, management would be geared towards providing opportunities for visitors and the Yampa Valley residents to engage in primitive hunting and other recreation activities. Some managed and maintained non-motorized trails would be developed within the area. User experience and satisfaction would be monitored. Monitoring would also occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. The area would be closed to OHV use.

Table 2-28. Serviceberry SRMA—Alternative C

SRMA Name	Serviceberry SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Destination	Backcountry
Activities	Non-motorized big game hunting Camping Heritage Interpretation/Education	Non-motorized big game hunting Undeveloped camping
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class III	VRM Class III

Alternative D: The Serviceberry area (12,380 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide backcountry, non-motorized hunting experiences (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-29.

For Zone 1 (the Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access), the niche, objectives, prescribed setting character, activity-planning framework, and area administration would be the same as those for Alternative C, except the area would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable minerals.

For Zone 2 (the Serviceberry backcountry), the niche, objectives, prescribed setting character, activity planning framework, and area administration would be the same as those for Alternative C except that the trail system would be non-motorized and minimally managed, and the area would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable minerals.

Table 2-29. Serviceberry SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Serviceberry SRMA	
Zones	Zone 1	Zone 2
Niche	Destination	Backcountry
Activities	Non-motorized big game hunting Camping	Non-motorized big game hunting Undeveloped camping
OHV designation	Limited to designated roads and trails	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class III	VRM Class III

Fly Creek

Alternative A: The Fly Creek area would be open to OHV use under the current RMP; however, it is now temporarily closed to OHV use. This area would continue to be managed as part of the ERMA.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except that temporary OHV closures would be removed and the area would be managed as open to OHV use.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Fly Creek area (12,340 acres) would be administered as a backcountry non-motorized hunting area and continue to be managed as part of the ERMA. Educational and interpretation activities would be increased during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. A managed and maintained non-motorized trail system would be developed within the area. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would be open to oil and gas operations and open to nonenergy leasables. The area would be available for mineral location but would not be available for coal leasing. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. ROWs would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: The Fly Creek area (12,340 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide backcountry non-motorized hunting experiences (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-30.

The area would be one recreation management zone. The niche would be destination. Objectives would include non-motorized big game hunting and associated undeveloped camping activities. Experiences would include developing skills and abilities and gaining a greater sense of achievement. Benefits would include a reduction in wildlife disturbance from recreation users, a reduction in hunter conflicts, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved self-confidence, enhanced outdoor knowledge, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. The physical and administrative prescribed setting character would be backcountry. The social prescribed setting character would be primitive. Under the

activity-planning framework for management, a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system would be developed within the area. Educational and interpretation activities would be increased during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. Property boundary signing would be maintained. Marketing would be coordinated with CDOW, local Chambers of Commerce, local adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide hunting and recreation information. Monitoring would occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. User experiences and satisfaction would also be monitored. The area would be administered as open to oil and gas operations and also open to nonenergy leasables. The area would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. ROWs would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Table 2-30. Fly Creek SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Fly Creek SRMA
Zones	One zone
Niche	Destination
Activities	Non-motorized big game hunting Undeveloped camping
OHV designation	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class III

Dinosaur North Area

Alternative A: The area is multiple use outside existing WSAs. The area would be open to minerals and energy, open to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables, but would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be open to OHV use. The Wild Mountain Management Unit portion would have a VRM Class II designation. The remainder would have no VRM designations. There would be no lands and realty restrictions and ROWs would be authorized on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for the Wild Mountain Management Unit.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The area objective would be to manage to protect the area's natural condition and to enhance opportunities for solitude and semiprimitive recreation. There would be no special area designation. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. The area would be an avoidance area for ROWs, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Alternative D: The Dinosaur North area (45,620 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-31.

The area would be one recreation management zone. The niche would be community. Objectives would include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. Experiences would include feeling good about solitude and isolation, experiencing a greater sense of independence, and enjoying some physical exercise. Benefits would include a closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of entire ecosystems in their natural state. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be primitive.

Under the activity-planning framework for management, there would be minimally developed trailhead parking, and also interpretive information provided adjacent to roads that lead to the edges of access points. Marketing would be coordinated with Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations, and adjacent landowners to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information. Monitoring would occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. User experience and satisfaction would also be monitored. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. The area would be an exclusion area for ROWs, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Table 2-31. Dinosaur North SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Dinosaur North SRMA
Zones	One zone
Niche	Community
Activities	Hiking Backpacking Horseback riding Camping Hunting
OHV designation	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class II

Cold Spring Area

Alternative A: The area is multiple use outside existing WSAs. The area would be open to minerals and energy and to locatable minerals and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be mostly limited to existing roads and trails, and the remainder would be open to OHV use. The Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit portion would have a VRM Class II designation. The remainder would have no VRM designations. There would be no lands and realty restrictions and ROWs would be authorized on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for the Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The objective would be to manage to protect the area's natural condition and to enhance opportunities for solitude and semiprimitive recreation. There would be no special area designation. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. The area would be an avoidance area for ROWs, and wind energy applications would be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: The Cold Spring Mountain area (30,470 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-32.

The area would be one recreation management zone. The niche would be community. Objectives would include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. Experiences would include feeling good about solitude and isolation, experiencing a greater sense of independence, and enjoying some physical exercise. Benefits would include a closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of entire ecosystems in their natural state. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be primitive. Under the activity-planning framework for management, there would be minimally developed trailhead parking, as well as interpretive information provided adjacent to roads that lead to the edges of access points. A minimally managed and signed trail system would be provided. Marketing would be coordinated with the Browns Park Wildlife Refuge, Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations, and adjacent landowners to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information. Monitoring would occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. User experience and satisfaction would also be monitored. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation. The area would be an exclusion area for ROWs, and wind energy development would not be allowed.

Table 2-32. Cold Spring SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Cold Spring SRMA
Zones	One zone
Niche	Community
Activities	Hiking Backpacking Horseback riding Camping Hunting
OHV designation	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class II

Vermillion Basin

Alternative A: No SRMA would be designated. The area would be managed as described in the Lands With Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section (page 2-50).

Alternative B: No SRMA would be designated. The area would be managed as described in the Lands With Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section (page 2-50).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): No SRMA would be designated. The area would be managed as described in the Lands With Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section (page 2-50).

Alternative D: The Vermillion Basin area (77,080 acres) would be identified as a backcountry SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in a largely natural setting (Map 2-37). Management of the SRMA is summarized in Table 2-33.

The area would be one recreation management zone. The niche would be community. Activities would include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. Experiences would include feeling good about solitude and isolation, experiencing a greater sense of independence, and enjoying physical

exercise. Benefits would include a closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of entire ecosystems in their natural state. The physical, social, and administrative prescribed setting character would be primitive. Under the activity-planning framework for management, there would be minimally developed trailhead parking, as well as interpretive information provided adjacent to roads that lead to the edges of access points. A minimally managed and signed trail system would be provided. Marketing would be coordinated with Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations, and adjacent landowners to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information. Monitoring would occur to ensure compliance with motor vehicle road closures. User experience and satisfaction would also be monitored. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would have a Class II VRM designation and be an exclusion area for ROWs.

Table 2-33. Vermillion Basin SRMA—Alternative D

SRMA Name	Vermillion Basin SRMA
Zones	One zone
Niche	Community
Activities	Hiking Backpacking Horseback riding Camping Hunting
OHV designation	Closed
VRM Class	VRM Class II

Extensive Recreation Management Area

Alternative A: The remainder of the RMPPA would receive limited management as an ERMA where recreational use is dispersed and would require only minimal management. BLM would provide basic information on public safety and recreational opportunities within the RMPPA and would provide access and minimal facilities as demand warrants.

Alternative B: All BLM-managed lands within the planning area that are not identified as a SRMA would be considered as an ERMA. Objectives for the ERMA are as follows. For visitor health and safety, provide direction and destination signing for public safety and service and foster better understanding of the safety hazards and risks associated with recreation activities. For user conflicts, focus public land boundary signing on fragmented lands to reduce trespassing onto private lands and monitor user conflicts to determine if changes are needed in transportation or other activity planning. For resource protection, monitor resource conditions to determine if changes are needed in transportation or other activity planning and use education to further enhance resource protection.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): All BLM-managed lands within the planning area that are not identified as a SRMA would be considered as ERMA. Objectives for the ERMA would be the same as those listed in Alternative B except that criteria in Appendix F would be used to determine if activity planning should be triggered.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Lands With Backcountry Characteristics

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Fly Creek area (12,340 acres) would be administered as a backcountry non-motorized hunting area (see Map 2-38). Educational and interpretation activities would be increased during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. A managed and maintained non-motorized trail system would be developed within the area. The area would be closed to OHV use. The area would be open to oil and gas operations and open to nonenergy leasables, including being available to mineral location. The area would not be available for coal leasing. The area would have a Class III VRM designation. ROWs would be considered on a case-by-case basis. No other areas with backcountry characteristics outside existing WSAs would be designated.

Alternative D: Three backcountry areas would be designated (see Map 2-39): the Cross Mountain area (3,040 acres adjacent to the Cross Mountain WSA), the Diamond Breaks area (1,750 acres adjacent to the Diamond Breaks WSA), and the Pinyon Ridge area (4,870 acres). These areas would be administered as backcountry areas to provide a recreation experience in predominantly natural settings. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. These areas would be closed to OHV use. They would also have a Class II VRM designation. These areas would be exclusion areas for ROWs.

Developed Recreation Sites

Alternative A: The existing developed recreation sites would remain. These include the Duffy Mountain River Access, campgrounds at Irish Canyon and Rocky Reservoir, and picnic sites at Irish Canyon and Cedar Mountain.

No similar action for disposal of game carcasses or carcass parts.

Alternative B: No additional recreation sites would be developed and current sites would remain at the same service and use levels.

No similar action for disposal of game carcasses or carcass parts.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The number of interpretive sites and roadside pullouts for viewing would increase as the need and opportunities arise. Developed recreation sites (campgrounds, boat launches, and picnic sites) would be provided in association with SRMAs.

For the purposes of ensuring public health and safety and preserving quality recreation experiences, the following restriction would apply to BLM lands within the RMPPA: Disposal or abandonment of game carcasses or carcass parts would be prohibited within 300 feet of any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or developed day-use area.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Management of the Yampa River Corridor

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Within the Yampa River corridor, the quality of the following indicators of recreational experience would be monitored and the use of sites and access points regulated accordingly: site disturbance, user conflict, public health and safety, and other resource impacts.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Special Recreation Permits

Alternative A: Special recreation permits would be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on applications received. Commercial outfitter camps would be considered on a case-by-case basis. Commercial use permits that provide recreational opportunities, enhance recreational experiences, and protect resources would be authorized. There would continue to be no guidance on competitive events or vending per current plans. Cooperative agreements with Colorado State Parks for the management of the Yampa River would be maintained. Coordination with local and regional recreation and economic development organizations, such as the Moffat County Chamber of Commerce and the Yampa Valley Alliance, would continue.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A for special recreation permits, commercial outfitters camps, and commercial use permits. No competitive events would be permitted in WSAs. Motorized and non-motorized competitive events would be authorized consistent with OHV area and road/trail designations. Permission for commercial events in the ERMA would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Vending in conjunction with organized events or when the vending is necessary to support protection of resources or recreation use would be authorized. Cooperative agreements and coordination would be the same as described in Alternative A; in addition, BLM would work proactively with local communities and governments to identify opportunities for establishing heritage tourism (scenic backcountry byways such as Godiva Rim and Lookout Mountain), sites for watching wildlife, and cultural tours.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B; in addition, permitted commercial events in backcountry SRMAs (the Serviceberry SRMA and portions of the Emerald Mountain SRMA) would be limited to 50 participants and to non-motorized events. Permission for commercial events in the ERMA and non-backcountry SRMAs (portions of the Emerald Mountain SRMA, Cedar Mountain SRMA, South Sand Wash SRMA, Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, and Juniper Mountain SRMA) would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C except that commercial outfitter camps would be discouraged on BLM-administered land. In addition, permitted commercial events in backcountry SRMAs (Emerald Mountain SRMA, Serviceberry SRMA, Fly Creek SRMA, Cold Spring Mountain SRMA, and Dinosaur North SRMA) would be limited to 25 participants and to non-motorized events. Vending would not be allowed in conjunction with organized events.

2.6.4 Forestry

The Materials Act of 1947 authorized disposal of timber on public land. Section 102 of the FLPMA requires that public land be managed for multiple use and sustained yield in a manner that would protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values. Section 102 also states that public land would be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber.

2.6.4.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- **Forestry Goal:** Management of forest and woodland communities that are resilient to disturbances from insects, disease, and wildfires. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Provide forest and woodland products on a sustainable basis.
 - Manage forest stands to maintain appropriate species composition and stand density.

2.6.4.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: BLM would manage 6,330 acres of commercial forest lands to produce a variety of forest products on a sustained-yield basis and would manage the remaining commercial forest lands with the use of such limited techniques as natural revegetation and minimal cultural treatments. Approximately 37,600 acres of woodland would be managed to produce a variety of woodland products on a sustained-yield basis, and limited management would be applied to the remaining woodland acreage.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Forest communities would be managed for forest health with fire and other treatments, and product sales would be allowed. Harvesting forest products killed by wildfires and bark beetle attacks may be warranted when consistent with resource goals/objectives. Woodland communities would be managed for woodland health with fire and other treatments, and product sales would be allowed.

Authorization to harvest forest or woodland products, commercially or non-commercially, would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Commercial forest and woodland product harvest, personal use firewood gathering, and Christmas tree harvest would not be permitted in the following areas: Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Juniper Mountain SRMA, Cedar Mountain SRMA, and Irish Canyon ACEC. Restrictions on personal use firewood gathering do not apply to campfire wood. However, only dead material can be harvested for campfire wood.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

2.6.5 Lands and Realty

Section 102 of FLPMA requires that public land be retained in federal ownership unless disposal of a particular parcel would serve the national interest. Guidance provided by Sections 203 and 206 of FLPMA applies to all surface land tracts identified as available for disposal under the land use allocations. Retention and acquisition of land containing significant resource values would provide for long-term protection and management of those values. Any acquired land or acquired interest in land would be managed for the purposes for which the land was acquired or in the same manner as adjacent or comparable public land.

Section 503 of FLPMA provides for the designation of ROW corridors and encourages use of in-common ROWs to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs. BLM policy, as described in BLM Manual 2801.13B1, is to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors.

2.6.5.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- **Lands and Realty Goal A:** Consolidate BLM's landownership patterns in Routt County and in Moffat County. Objectives for achieving this goal include—

- Identify all the lands for exchange, sale, or disposal within the LSFO by zone.
 - Through exchange or sale, look for opportunities for consolidation of BLM lands and/or for acquiring additional lands.
- **Lands and Realty Goal B:** Increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of public land management. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Identify criteria for the disposal of public land through sale or exchange.
- **Lands and Realty Goal C:** Allow for appropriate ROW routes and development sites (e.g., renewable energy, communication), while identifying areas that would not be compatible with such use. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
- Provide access for the development of renewable energy resources, in an environmentally responsible manner.
 - Provide access for the development of roads and trails, utilities, transmission lines, communication sites, and other uses, in an environmentally responsible manner.
 - Provide access for the development of oil and gas pipeline routes and other uses associated with oil and gas development in an environmentally responsible manner.
 - Identify and establish major utility and transportation corridors within the planning area.

2.6.5.2 Management Actions

Land Tenure Adjustments

Alternative A: BLM-administered lands in the RMPPA are divided into general retention and disposal areas. The retention area is the existing land base to be managed under multiple use concepts. All land tenure adjustment actions (including recreation and public purposes' actions and exchanges), except sales, under Section 203 of FLPMA would be considered on a case-by-case basis if the public interest would be served. Section 302 leases and permits would be allowed. Conveyance actions would be precluded in wilderness and other special management areas.

Disposal land tenure adjustment actions would be allowed on approximately 6,670 acres of public land that meet the criteria for disposal under applicable authority. Section 302 leases and permits would also be allowed. Acquisition of land would be pursued based on identified resource values and needs (RMP/ROD, pp. 30–31).

Alternative B: Disposal land tenure adjustment actions (both exchanges and sales) would be allowed on lands that meet the following criteria:

- Lands suitable for public purposes adjacent to or of special importance to local communities and to State and/or federal agencies for purposes including, but not limited to, community expansion, extended community services, or economic development
- Lands without legal public access
- Lands that have facilities that are in trespass and predate the RMP
- Isolated lands with public access by foot or horseback only
- Lands that are irregularly shaped, or lands that are narrow parcels or small parcels, or lands of any other configuration that makes the land difficult to manage and that increases the occurrence of trespass
- Lands with public road access that are so small that they cannot be proactively managed for a variety of resource values
- Lands that would be better suited to private or other agency ownership.

Acquisition land tenure adjustment actions would be allowed on lands that meet the following criteria:

- ❑ Lands that would help consolidate existing BLM land
- ❑ Lands near communities, which provide open spaces and which preserve agriculture, protect wildlife, protect the environment, enhance recreational opportunities, and generally serve the public good
- ❑ Lands that would provide public access to public lands or other public assets such as, but not limited to, river access.

Retain lands that are consolidated, have public access, have significant public value, and are efficient to manage. Other land tenure adjustments would be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): BLM-administered lands in the RMPPA would be divided into three retention and disposal zones: the East Zone, Central Zone, and West Zone (Map 2-40). Disposal and exchange criteria specific to each zone are the same as in Alternative B, with the additional criteria for each zone described as follows:

- ❑ East Zone—
 - Actively seek opportunities to exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of nonfederal lands within the LSFO, as appropriate and in the public's interest.
 - Look to exchange lands with the appropriate local and State agencies to facilitate one-agency management in particular areas, including, but not limited, to Stagecoach State Park, Steamboat Lake State Park, Indian Run State Wildlife Area, Steamboat Springs Mountain Park, and the Jimmy Dun Gulch CDOW/State Land Board (SLB) lease area.
 - Retain and seek acquisition of additional lands within identified acquisition areas, including, but not limited to, Sleeping Giant, West Gibraltar Peak, Copper Ridge, Pagoda/Hamilton, Dry Fork/Bull Gulch, Sage Creek, Bear Gulch, Little Middle Creek, Rattle Snake Butte (near Oak Creek), and Watson Creek (near Yampa) areas.
 - Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the public good.
- ❑ Central Zone—
 - When the opportunity arises, exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of non-federal lands within the LSFO, as appropriate and in the public's interest.
 - Land Utilization (LU)² lands should be retained as much as possible, and acquisition of additional lands in the area should be actively sought to protect wildlife habitat, especially sage-grouse.
 - Look to exchange lands with the appropriate State agencies to facilitate one-agency management in particular areas, including, but not limited to, the Little Snake State wildlife area.
 - Retain and seek acquisition of additional lands within identified acquisition areas, including, but not limited to, the Thornburg Mountain and Serviceberry Mountain areas, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, and the Juniper Mountain SRMA.
 - Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the public good.
- ❑ West Zone—
 - In rare cases, exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of nonfederal lands within LSFO, as appropriate and in the public's interest.

² Lands acquired under Title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of July 22, 1937, that are administered by BLM.

- Look to exchange lands with the appropriate parties to facilitate one-agency management in particular areas, including, but not limited to, Sand Wash Basin and Vermillion Basin.
- Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the public good.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Rights-Of-Way

Alternative A: No ROW corridors are formally designated in the RMP/ROD. However, the West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS evaluates issues associated with the designation of energy corridors on federal lands in eleven Western states, including Colorado. The existing and potential corridors identified as suitable on page 29 of the RMP/ROD and displayed on pages 32 and 33 of the RMP/ROD are considered open and are preferred roads and trails. Minor ROWs would be processed on a case-by-case basis, generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs. ROWs would be allowed in all areas if these are needed to develop valid existing rights.

Specific areas unsuitable for major ROWs are the WSAs, the Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA, the Lookout Mountain ACEC, and the Irish Canyon ACEC, and the Cross Mountain ACEC. Specific areas that are sensitive for siting major ROWs are the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, and occupied black-footed ferret habitat (Table 2-34 and Table 2-35; Map 2-41).

Alternative B: ROWs would be allowed on a case-by-case basis. ROW exclusions would be limited to the WSAs. ROW avoidance areas would include the Vermillion Basin, occupied black-footed ferret habitat areas, and the Emerald Mountain SRMA (Table 2-34 and Table 2-35; Map 2-42).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Encourage ROWs in the following existing corridors: major roads including county roads (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, and 57), power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines. ROW exclusions would include the WSAs, the Limestone Ridge area, Vermillion Basin, and the Irish Canyon ACEC. ROW avoidance areas would include areas designated as Class II VRM, as well as Cold Spring Mountain, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1, the Juniper Mountain SRMA, Dinosaur North, and occupied black-footed ferret habitat (Table 2-34 and Table 2-35; Map 2-43).

Alternative D: ROWs would be encouraged in the following existing corridors: major roads including CRs (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, and 57), power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines. ROW exclusions would include the WSAs, the Lookout Mountain ACEC, the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Irish Canyon ACEC, the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC, Vermillion Basin, the Dinosaur North SRMA, the Cold Spring Mountain SRMA, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, and Cross Mountain, Diamond Breaks, Pinyon Ridge backcountry areas; in addition, if these are released by Congress from wilderness study, WSAs recommended as nonsuitable would be Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears. ROW avoidance areas would include—

- Emerald Mountain SRMA
- Little Yampa Canyon SRMA
- Juniper Mountain SRMA
- Occupied black-footed ferret habitat
- The Natural Systems ACECs: the Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC (1,210 acres), the Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC (5,500 acres), the Bull Canyon ACEC (3,390 acres), the G Gap ACEC (2,230 acres), the Little Juniper Canyon ACEC (20 acres), the Bassett Spring ACEC (110 acres), the No Name Spring ACEC (80 acres), the Pot Creek ACEC (2,240 acres), the Whiskey Springs ACEC

(2,760 acres), the Willow Spring ACEC (100 acres), and the Deception Creek ACEC (110 acres) — (Table 2-34 and Table 2-35; Map 2-44).

Table 2-34. Right-Of-Way Exclusion Area, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
WSAs	X	X	X	X
Lookout Mountain ACEC	X			X
Limestone Ridge area	X ¹		X	X ¹
Irish Canyon ACEC	X		X	X
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC	X			X
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Vermillion Basin			X	X
Dinosaur North SRMA				X
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Cedar Mountain SRMA				X
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Total Area (in acres)	98,500	78,220	161,040	499,810

Note: ¹ Limestone Ridge would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D.

Table 2-35. Right-Of-Way Avoidance Areas, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Occupied black-footed ferret habitat	X	X	X	X
VRM Class II areas			X	
Cold Spring Mountain			X	
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA (Zone 1)			X	
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA				X
Juniper Mountain SRMA			X	X
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Dinosaur North (outside the WSA)			X	
Vermillion Basin		X		
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Total area (in acres)	21,700	81,200	106,840	50,990

Easements

Alternative A: Easements for access to public lands would be pursued on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Actively pursue easements through specific parcels to improve access to public lands for recreational use such as hunting and fishing. In addition, actively pursue easements for access to develop identified transportation and utility corridors.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Communication Sites

Alternative A: Communication site proposals would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Alternative B: All sites would be open except in ROW exclusion areas. Priority would go to collocation of facilities and use of existing sites to minimize number of total sites. Use, where possible, best available technologies, such as tower guy wires, to reduce migratory bird mortality.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: All new facilities would be located on existing sites. Best available technologies, such as tower guy wires, would be required to reduce migratory bird mortality.

Renewable Energy

Alternative A: Wind energy development is processed on a case-by-case basis as a ROW action and generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs. Solar energy development is processed on a case-by-case basis as a ROW action and generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs.

Alternative B: There would be no access restrictions. Wind energy development would be encouraged in areas rated excellent and above (Map 3-36). Use, where possible, best available technologies to reduce migratory bird mortality. Solar energy development would be encouraged in the RMPPA.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): See ROW actions for more information on wind energy development. Wind energy development would be encouraged in areas rated excellent and above (Map 3-36) as long as they are consistent with resource objectives. Use, where possible, best available technologies to reduce

migratory bird mortality. Solar energy development would be encouraged in the RMPPA as long as it is consistent with resource objectives.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C. See ROW actions for more information on wind energy and solar energy development.

2.6.6 Transportation and Access and Travel Management

Access would be provided across public lands to landlocked private and State lands consistent with FLPMA. Management of OHV activities would be in accordance with Executive Order 11644, as amended by Executive Order 11989, and with applicable regulations (43 CFR 8340) that address OHV use on public lands. Designation and authorization of OHV use would be designed to provide a quality recreation experience, protect resource values, promote safety of users, and minimize conflict among various uses of public lands. Federal regulations (43 CFR Part 8340) and BLM planning guidance require BLM to designate all BLM-administered land as either open, limited, or closed in regard to OHV use. Areas designated as limited to designated roads and trails would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails until transportation planning and road/trail designation occurs. Vehicle closures do not apply to BLM ROWs, county or State roads, or other valid existing rights. Permitted uses may be allowed under special authorization on a case-by-case basis.

2.6.6.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- ❑ **Transportation and Access Goal A:** Provide a transportation system that is manageable and maintainable, meets management needs, and minimizes impacts on resources and habitats. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Use collaborative transportation planning to identify and designate roads and trails and to manage the levels of road construction and habitat fragmentation.
 - County and local governments and affected interests would be invited to participate in transportation planning.
 - The transportation plan would identify both the kind of road construction and the maintenance standards needed to protect resources and accommodate anticipated traffic types and use levels.
- ❑ **Transportation and Access Goal B:** Provide a mix of motorized, non-motorized, and non-mechanized legal public access to public lands. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Work with county and local governments and affected interests to identify priority access needs.
- ❑ **Travel Management Goal:** Provide for types or modes of access and travel that would balance resource protection with use. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - County and local governments and affected interests would be invited to participate in travel management.
 - Design a road and trail system within the planning area that can be well managed and provides quality recreation opportunities.
 - Reduce the number of unmanaged roads and trails.

2.6.6.2 Management Actions

Transportation and Access

Alternative A: An access/transportation plan would be prepared, listing areas needing attention, types of access to be acquired, preferred and alternate roads and trails to be closed or constructed, survey and support needs, and construction or maintenance guidelines. This would be based on other resource

program needs to meet their program objectives. Access to public lands would be acquired as funding and time permit in the areas identified.

Alternative B: Transportation planning would be conducted and access pursued on a case-by-case basis. See Lands and Realty, Section 2.6.5, for more information.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Develop an access/transportation plan that—

- Enables access where needed
- Limits points of access to reduce the number of redundant roads and trails
- Reroutes, rehabilitates, or eliminates existing roads and trails that are causing damage to cultural or natural resources
- Reroutes roads and trails that are landlocked by private parcels
- Restricts access to meet resource objectives (seasonal road closures, gating, etc.)
- Concentrates stream and riparian crossings
- Reduces habitat fragmentation
- Considers new construction and reconstruction of roads and trails.

Actively pursue access to specific parcels to improve access to public lands for land management purposes. See Lands and Realty, Section 2.6.5, for more information.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative C.

Travel Management

Alternative A: Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use (RMP/ROD, p. 28). Table 2-36 and Map 2-45 show the areas listed in the table of the 1989 RMP/ROD. A vehicle-use implementation plan would be completed within 1 year of RMP approval.

Alternative B: Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Table 2-36 and Map 2-46).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Table 2-36 and Map 2-47).

Alternative D: Areas have been designated as limited or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Table 2-36 and Map 2-48).

Table 2-36. Summary of OHV Use Designations, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Open to OHV use	974,420	1,154,570	19,710	0
Seasonal closures	0	0	0	161,740
Limited to existing roads and trails	229,640	54,810	992,780 ¹	0
Limited to designated roads and trails	56,500	77,080	231,970	1,053,610
Closed to OHV use	76,340	50,440	92,440	283,290
Note:	¹ Area designations where OHV use is limited to existing routes would only apply until comprehensive transportation planning occurs, at which point OHV use would be limited to designated routes.			

Closed

Alternative A: The following areas would be closed to OHV use: the Diamond Breaks WSA, the Cross Mountain WSA, the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the Serviceberry and Fly Creek areas, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, and the Maybell uranium pit (Table 2-37).

Alternative B: The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use: the Diamond Breaks WSA, the Cross Mountain WSA, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, and the Maybell uranium pit (Table 2-37).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use: the Diamond Breaks WSA, the Cross Mountain WSA (including the WSR segment), portions of the Vermillion Basin, the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Serviceberry SRMA Zone 2, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Fly Creek area, and the Maybell uranium pit (Table 2-37).

Alternative D: The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use: all WSAs, suitable wild and scenic river corridors, Vermillion Basin, the Limestone Ridge ACEC, the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, the Serviceberry SRMA Zone 2, the Emerald Mountain SRMA, the Fly Creek SRMA, the Dinosaur North SRMA, the Maybell uranium pit, a portion of the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1, the Cold Spring Mountain SRMA, the Cross Mountain, Diamond Breaks, and Pinyon Ridge backcountry areas, and the water impoundments within the Sand Wash Basin HMA (year-round) and within the high water mark when dry, except where a designated road crosses an impoundment (Table 2-37).

Table 2-37. Areas Closed to OHV Use, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
All WSAs				X
Diamond Breaks WSA	X	X	X	X
Cross Mountain WSA	X	X	X	X
Suitable WSR corridors				X
WSR Yampa segment 3			X	
Vermillion Basin				X
Portion of Vermillion Basin			X	
Limestone Ridge ACEC	X ¹		X	X ¹
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC	X			X
Serviceberry area	X			
Serviceberry SRMA, Zone 2			X	X
Emerald Mountain SRMA	X	X	X	X
Dinosaur North SRMA				X
Maybell uranium pit	X	X	X	X
Fly Creek area	X		X	X ²
Portion of Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1				X
Cold Spring Mountain SRMA				X
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Water impoundments within the Sand Wash Basin HMA (year-round) and within the high water mark when dry, except where a designated road crosses an impoundment				X
Total area (in acres)	76,340	50,440	92,440	283,290
Notes:	¹ Limestone Ridge would be designated as an ACEC under Alternatives A and D. ² Fly Creek would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D.			

Limited to Designated Roads and Trails

Alternative A: The following areas would be managed as limited to designated roads and trails: the Lookout Mountain ACEC, the Irish Canyon ACEC, sections of the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Cottonwood Creek area, Cedar Mountain, the Browns Park cellular site, the Wild Mountain area, and the Hoy Mountain area (Table 2-38).

The designated roads system would be as shown on the transportation plan maps in the 1989 ROD.

No similar action for driving off designated roads and trails.

Alternative B: Vermillion Basin would be managed as limited to designated roads and trails (Table 2-38).

No similar action for driving off designated roads and trails.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Designate roads and trails determined through comprehensive transportation planning as described in Appendix F. The following areas would be immediately managed as limited to designated roads and trails for OHV use: all WSAs except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain, the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, the Cedar Mountain SRMA, the Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Serviceberry SRMA Zone 1, the Cold Spring Mountain area, Dinosaur North (outside the WSA), the Cottonwood Creek area, the Irish Canyon ACEC, the Lookout Mountain ACEC, a portion of Vermillion Basin, the WSR Yampa segments 1 and 2, the Browns Park cellular site, the Wild Mountain area, the Hoy Mountain area, and zones within the South Sand Wash SRMA (Table 2-38).

The initial designated roads and trails system for the Little Snake Field Office is shown on Map 3-42. This system is based on previous implementation-level decisions and provides the primary framework of key road, primitive road, and trails needed for future access throughout the LSFO. Subsequent transportation planning, as described in Appendix F, would identify additional roads and trails needed for designation to provide continued access needs.

Driving off designated roads and trails would be allowed for camping, firewood collecting and picnicking within 300 feet from a designated roads and trail. This would also apply to existing routes before routes are designated.

Alternative D: All areas not managed as open or closed would be managed as limited to designated roads and trails. Transportation planning would occur for the entire field office by 5 years after the signing of the ROD. Criteria in Appendix F would be used to prioritize areas for transportation planning (Table 2-38).

The initial designated roads system would be the same as described under Alternative C.

Same as Alternative C for driving off designated roads and trails.

Table 2-38. OHV Areas Limited to Designated Roads and Trails, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
All WSAs except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain			X	
Lookout Mountain area	X		X	X
Irish Canyon ACEC	X		X	X
WSR Yampa segments 1 and 2			X	
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, Zone 1	X			
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA			X	
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 2 and Portions of Zone 1				X
Juniper Mountain SRMA			X	X
Cedar Mountain SRMA			X	X
South Sand Wash SRMA, Zone 2			X	
South Sand Wash SRMA, both zones				X
Serviceberry SRMA, Zone 1			X	X
Cottonwood Creek area	X		X	
Dinosaur North (outside the WSA)			X	
Cedar Mountain	X			
Cold Spring Mountain			X	
Browns Park cellular site	X		X	
Wild Mountain area	X		X	
Hoy Mountain area	X		X	
Vermillion Basin		X		
Portion of Vermillion Basin			X	
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
All areas not designated as open or closed				X
Total area (in acres)	56,500	77,080	231,970	1,053,610

Limited to Existing Roads and Trails

Alternative A: The following areas would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails: fragile soil areas, all WSAs except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain, lands adjacent to the Cross Mountain WSA, areas surrounding the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, the Pole Gulch area, the Big Hole Gulch area, portion of Cold Spring Mountain, sections of Axial Basin, the Willow Creek area, and the South Nipple area (Table 2-39).

Alternative B: The following areas would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails: all WSAs except Diamond Breaks, a portion of Cold Spring Mountain, and Cross Mountain and areas that meet fragile soil criteria (Table 2-39). Fragile soil criteria areas are rated as highly or severely erodible by wind or water, as described by the NRCS in the *Area Soil Survey Report*, or as described by an onsite inspection, and have slopes greater than or equal to 35 percent. They also have one of the following soil characteristics: surface texture that is sand, loamy sand, very fine sandy loam, silty clay or clay; a depth to bedrock of less than 20 inches; an erosion condition rated as "poor"; or a K-factor greater than 0.32.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): All areas not managed as open, closed, or limited to designated roads and trails would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails until road/trail designation is initiated through the transportation planning process (Table 2-39). Areas limited to existing roads and trails would be prioritized for transportation planning, eventually leading to designation of roads and trails across the entire field office (Appendix F). BLM would continue to sign and maintain the existing road system.

Alternative D: No areas would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails (Table 2-39).

Table 2-39. OHV Areas Limited to Existing Roads and Trails, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Fragile soil areas	X	X		
All WSAs except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain	X	X		
Lands adjacent to Cross Mountain WSA	X			
Areas surrounding Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA	X			
Pole Gulch area	X			
Big Hole Gulch area	X			
Portion of Cold Spring Mountain	X	X		
Sections of Axial Basin	X			
Willow Creek area	X			
South Nipple area	X			
Portion of Vermillion Basin	X			
All areas not designated as open, closed, or limited to designated roads and trails			X	
Total area (in acres)	229,640	54,810	992,780¹	0
Note: ¹ Area designations where OHV use is limited to existing routes would only apply until comprehensive transportation planning occurs, at which point OHV use would be limited to designated routes.				

Seasonal Closures

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: No similar action.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Seasonal OHV closures in big game crucial winter range and production areas, as well as wild horse foaling areas, would be considered on the basis of site-specific transportation planning results.

Alternative D: The wild horse HMA would be closed to motor vehicle use during the wild horse foaling period from March 1 to June 30.

Open

Alternative A: Approximately 73 percent of the LSFO would be managed as open to OHV use (Table 2-40).

Alternative B: All areas of the LSFO would be open that would not be managed as limited or closed to OHV use (Table 2-40).

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Manage Zone 1 of the South Sand Wash SRMA (area on south edge and Clay Buttes area) as open to cross country OHV use (Table 2-40). On the basis of the results of monitoring, BLM would take any actions necessary to fulfill its obligations to protect natural resources in the open area. This may include changing certain aspects of management of the area, such as allowable use, or implementing mitigation measures, such as fencing or closing areas.

Alternative D: No areas would be managed as open to OHV use (Table 2-40).

Table 2-40. Areas Open to OHV Use, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
South Sand Wash	X	X		
South Sand Wash SRMA, Zone 1 (area on south edge and Clay Buttes area)			X	
All areas not designated as limited or closed to OHV use	X	X		
Total area (in acres)	974,420	1,154,570	19,710	0

Over-the-Snow Vehicles

Alternative A: All areas within the LSFO, except for the Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain WSAs, would be open to over-the-snow vehicles.

Alternative B: Same as described in Alternative A.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): The Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain WSAs and the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be closed to over-the-snow vehicles. Over-the-snow vehicles would only be allowed on designated roads and trails in West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson

Draw and Vale of Tears WSAs. In all other areas of the field office, over-the-snow vehicles would be allowed if snow depth is equal to or greater than 2 feet. Over-the-snow vehicles would not be permitted in areas of snow depth less than 2 feet. If winter conditions warrant, BLM would temporarily close areas to over-the-snow vehicles in order to reduce stress to wildlife. BLM over-the-snow restrictions do not apply to county roads, permitted uses and administrative uses.

Alternative D: All WSAs and crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to over-the-snow vehicles.

2.6.7 Social and Economic Values

As part of any undertaking of a community-based planning effort, social and economic values are at the heart of the community. Management actions integrate the community values as part of the RMP.

2.6.7.1 Resource Use Goals and Objectives

- **Social and Economic Goal:** Manage public lands to provide social and economic benefits to residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations. Objectives for achieving this goal include—
 - Work cooperatively with private and community groups and local government to provide for customary uses consistent with other resource objectives and to sustain or improve local, regional, and national economies.
 - Maintain and promote the cultural, economic, ecological, and social health of northwest Colorado.

2.6.7.2 Management Actions

Alternative A: No similar action.

Alternative B: Provide for predictable and sustainable levels of commodity outputs. Provide natural resource amenities on public lands which promote local communities as places to live, work, or visit. Protect natural and cultural values for the enjoyment of future generations. Target local economies for BLM business activities and contracts associated with public land management to the extent permitted by the existing authorities.

Alternative C (Proposed RMP): Same as described in Alternative B.

Alternative D: Same as described in Alternative B.

2.7 SUMMARY OF SURFACE DISTURBANCE RESTRICTIONS

Alternatives B and D would apply restrictions to all permitted surface disturbing activities, which does not include OHV use. These restrictions would be applied as NGD, SSR, or seasonal limitations, as determined through the management actions for resources and resource uses as specified under the alternatives. Under alternatives B and D, any area that is managed as closed to oil and gas leasing or with an NSO stipulation would also have a NGD restriction on other surface disturbing activities. Likewise, areas with a CSU or timing stipulation for oil and gas would have SSR and timing restrictions on other surface disturbing activities, respectively. Maps 2-1 and 2-2 indicate areas where these restrictions would apply. Table 2-41, Table 2-42, and Table 2-43 below provide a summary of, respectively, the NGD restrictions, the SSR restrictions, and seasonal limitations, broken out by alternative.

Table 2-41. No Ground Disturbance Restrictions for Surface Disturbing Activities, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Within 0.25 mile of raptor (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], buteos, and owls) nest sites				X
Within 0.125 mile of raptor (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except the kestrel], buteos, and owls) nest sites				
Within 0.25 mile of peregrine falcon cliff nesting complex				X ¹
Waterfowl and shorebird significant production areas (waterfowl habitat management areas and rookeries)				X ²
Within 0.25 mile of Colombian sharp-tailed grouse lek				X ³
Within 0.25 mile of greater sage-grouse lek				
Within 0.6 mile of greater sage-grouse lek				X ³
Within critical or occupied habitat of Colorado pikeminnow (<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>), razorback sucker (<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>), humpback chub (<i>Gila cypha</i>), and bonytail (<i>Gila elegans</i>)		X		X
Within 0.25 mile of suitable yellow-billed cuckoo habitat		X		X
Within 0.125 mile of occupied mountain plover nesting habitat		X ⁴		X ⁴
Within 0.25 mile of both occupied and unoccupied bald eagle nests		X		X
Within 0.25 mile of known bald eagle roosts		X		X
Mexican spotted owl PAC		X		X
Within 0.25 mile of perennial water sources				X
WSAs		X		X
Emerald Mountain SRMA		X		X
CDOW State Wildlife Areas				X
Limestone Ridge ACEC				X
Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC				X
Irish Canyon ACEC				X
Lookout Mountain area				X ⁵
Suitable WSR segments				X
Little Yampa Canyon SRMA				X
Juniper Mountain SRMA				X
Cedar Mountain SRMA				X
Dinosaur North area (outside the WSA)				X ⁶
Cold Spring Mountain area				X ⁷
White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC				X

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Cross Mountain backcountry area				X
Diamond Breaks backcountry area				X
Pinyon Ridge backcountry area				X
Total affected area (in acres)	N/A	93,360	N/A	559,770
Notes:	¹ NGD area may be altered depending on the active status of the nesting complex or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. ² NGD area may be altered depending on the active status of the production areas or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. ³ NGD area may be altered depending on the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. ⁴ The boundaries of the stipulated area may be modified if the authorized officer determines that surface occupancy would not harm the integrity of the nest or nest location. ⁵ Lookout Mountain would be designated as an ACEC under Alternative D. ⁶ Dinosaur North would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D. ⁷ Cold Spring Mountain would be administered as a SRMA under Alternative D.			

Table 2-42. SSR Restrictions for Surface Disturbing Activities, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Special status plant species habitat		X		X
Fragile soil areas				X
Slopes equal to or greater than 35 percent				X
Greater sage-grouse crucial winter habitat				X
Vermillion Basin		X		
Limestone Ridge area				
Lookout Mountain area				
Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC				X
Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC				X
Bull Canyon ACEC				X
G Gap ACEC				X
Little Juniper Canyon ACEC				X
Bassett Spring ACEC				X
No Name Spring ACEC				X
Pot Creek ACEC				X
Whiskey Springs ACEC				X
Willow Spring ACEC				X
Deception Creek ACEC				X
Viewshed of the Thornburgh/Battle of Milk Creek area				X
Total area (in acres)	N/A	80,100	N/A	324,900

Table 2-43. Seasonal Limitations on Surface Disturbing Activities, by Alternative

Area	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Within 0.5 mile of the cliff nesting complex of peregrine falcon				X
Mule deer crucial winter habitat				X
Elk crucial winter habitat				X
Pronghorn crucial winter habitat				X
Bighorn sheep crucial winter habitat				X
Elk calving areas				X
Pronghorn fawning areas				X
Bighorn sheep lambing area				X
Greater sandhill crane nesting and staging habitat areas				X
Osprey nesting and fledgling habitat <i>(applies 0.5 mile buffer)</i>				X
Ferruginous hawk nesting and fledgling habitat <i>(applies to 1 mile buffer)</i>				X
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat				X
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse crucial winter habitat				X
Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat				X
Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat (nesting and early brood-rearing habitat within 4 miles of the perimeter of the lek)				
Greater sage-grouse crucial winter habitat				X
Within 0.5 mile of occupied bald eagle nest sites		X		X
Within 0.25 mile of known bald eagle winter hunting perches		X ¹		X ¹
Within 0.5 mile of bald eagle critical night roosts		X ²		X ²
Within 0.25 mile of occupied mountain plover nesting habitat		X ³		X ³
Wild horse HMA				X
Total affected area (in acres)	N/A	79,940	N/A	881,030
Notes:	¹ Buffers can be reduced to 0.125 mile if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. ² Buffers can be reduced to 0.25 mile for night roosts if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. ³ The boundaries of the stipulated area may be modified if the authorized officer determines that portions of the area are not critical to the mountain plover.			

2.8 DETAILED TABLE OF ALTERNATIVES

A comparison of the alternatives considered is presented in Table 2-44. Summary of Alternatives.

Table 2-44. Summary of Alternatives

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
AIR QUALITY			
Goals and objectives for air quality are to comply with all applicable local, State, tribal, and federal laws, regulations, standards, and implementation plans. All applicable State, tribal and federal air quality standards will be met or exceeded. BLM will collaborate, as necessary, with federal and State partners to achieve standards and address air quality.			
Air quality was not specifically addressed in the 1989 RMP or in any RMP amendments.	Encourage the use BMPs to mitigate air quality impacts from oil and gas operations.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
SOIL RESOURCES			
Goal A: Maintain or restore soil conditions.			
Goal A Objectives:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mitigate negative impacts on soil productivity from accelerated erosion, or physical or chemical degradation. 2. Stabilize and rehabilitate areas where accelerated erosion, runoff, and physical or chemical degradation have resulted in unacceptable resource conditions. 3. Prevent disturbance to fragile soil areas where resulting erosion could not be controlled. 4. Collaborate with National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), watershed groups, or local conservation district on soil-related issues, such as soil survey, impacts, mapping, and other projects. 			
FRAGILE SOILS			
Allow surface disturbing activities on isolated sites that meet fragile soil criteria only where performance standards and objectives can be met. Fragile soil criteria areas— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are rated as highly or severely erodible by wind or water, as described by the NRCS in the <i>Area Soil Survey Report</i> or as described by onsite inspection • Have slopes greater than or equal to 35%, if they also have one of the following soil characteristics: 	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surface texture that is sand, loamy sand, very fine sandy loam, silty clay, or clay. - Depth to bedrock less than 20 inches - Erosion condition rated as "poor" - K factor greater than 0.32. 			
<p>Permit surface occupancy on federal surface only where adherence to performance objectives for surface disturbing activities within fragile-soil areas is assured. Performance objectives for fragile soils are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the soil productivity by reducing soil loss from erosion and through proper handling of the soil material • Reduce impact on offsite areas by controlling erosion and overland flow from these areas • Protect water quality and quantity of adjacent surface and ground water sources • Reduce accelerated erosion caused by surface disturbing activities • Select best possible site for development to reduce the impacts on the soil and water resources. 	<p>No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
SURFACE USE			
<p>For new oil and gas leases and all surface disturbing activities permitted under the 1989 RMP³ ensure that applicants demonstrate compliance with performance objectives through a POD, using alternative measures, or use of</p>	<p>No similar action. BLM would apply COAs and BMPs as appropriate on a case-by-case basis at the implementation-level to protect soil resources.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

³ These requirements do not supersede valid existing rights on approved applications for permits to drill, developing leases, or entry under the general mining laws. ROW construction will be allowed along Moffat County Roads 4, 67, and 126 on a case-by-case basis. BLM will work with operators/permittees/county engineers to develop appropriate compliance measures.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>the following mitigative measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain all sediments generated from the surface disturbing activity onsite • Do not allow construction or other surface disturbing activities when the soils are saturated to a depth of more than 3 inches • Limit vehicle use to existing roads and trails • Build all new permanent roads to meet BLM primary road standards in locations approved by the authorized officer (for oil and gas purposes, permanent roads are those used for production) • Conduct all geophysical and geochemical exploration by helicopter, horseback, on foot, or from existing roads • Design any sediment-control structures, reserve pits, or disposal pits to contain a 100-year, 6-hour storm event, and provide storage volumes within these structures that have a design life of 25 years • Before reserve, production, or emergency pits are reclaimed, remove all residue and truck it offsite to an approved disposal site • Initiate reclamation of disturbed surfaces before November 1 each year • Approve all reclamation plans by the authorized officer in advance, and require a bond if necessary, if one has not been previously posted. 			
WATER RESOURCES			
<p>Goal A: Protect and maintain present ground water quality.</p> <p>Goal B: Maintain or improve the surface water quality and quantity, the integrity of streams, and their associated riparian values on public lands.</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure actions that could potentially affect ground water quality are conducted using BMPs. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use BMPs to limit disturbance in and near streams or riparian/wetland systems. 2. Maintain watershed integrity, stream stability, and functioning hydrology. 3. Achieve PFC in existing riparian/wetland systems that do not meet land health and water quality standards. 4. Identify and, where possible, remove existing sources of degradation. 5. Prevent, where possible, accelerated erosion, physical degradation, or chemical degradation in upland areas. 6. Ensure that land uses use BMPs to protect surface water resources. 7. Strive for sufficient quantity, quality, and timing of water to support water-dependent resource values, including fisheries, riparian communities, wetland communities, aquatic insects, terrestrial wildlife, and migratory/nonmigratory birds. 8. Strive for sufficient quantity, quality, and timing of water to support human and economic uses of water public lands, including livestock grazing, recreation, forestry, and mineral development. 9. Minimize, through BMPs, sedimentation and erosion of water bodies. 			
See also decisions for Soil Resources.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Establish NSO stipulations from within 500 feet to 0.25 mile of perennial water sources, depending on type and use of source, soil type, and slope steepness.	No similar action. BLM may apply COAs on a case-by-case basis based on site-specific analysis prior to authorization.	Establish NSO stipulations up to 0.25 mile from perennial water sources, if necessary, depending on type and use of source, soil type, and slope steepness. Exceptions granted according to Appendix E.	Same as Alternative C.
VEGETATION			
<p>Overall Goal: Collaborate with stakeholders and resource users in providing an array of habitats, suitably distributed across the landscape, which supports biodiversity and viable populations of native plant and animal species.</p> <p>Sagebrush Goal A: Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush-obligate species.</p> <p>Sagebrush Goal B: Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages.</p> <p>Forestry Goal: Manage for healthy forest and woodland communities.</p> <p>Riparian and Wetlands Goal A: Maintain or improve the integrity of streams and their associated riparian values on public lands that meet land health and water quality standards.</p> <p>Riparian and Wetlands Goal B: Achieve PFC in existing riparian/wetland systems that do not meet land health and water quality standards.</p> <p>Weeds Goal A: Reduce the occurrence of noxious and undesirable plant species.</p> <p>Weeds Goal B: Integrate weed management across landscape and ownership boundaries.</p>			
<p>Overall Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage for a diversity of seral stages within plant communities. 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>2. Manage for connections among a variety of plant communities on a landscape scale.</p> <p>3. Manage for juniper and other large woody species within their historic range of natural variability.</p> <p>4. Restore natural disturbance regimes, such as fire, and use vegetation treatments in accomplishing biodiversity objectives.</p> <p>5. Establish DPCs in coordination with stakeholders across the LSFO, focusing on native communities and intact biosystems while allowing non-native species, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Sagebrush Goal A Objectives:</p> <p>1. Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.</p> <p>2. Maintain connections among sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale, as allowed by range site condition.</p> <p>Sagebrush Goal B Objectives:</p> <p>1. Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado.</p> <p>2. Reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species into sagebrush habitat.</p> <p>3. Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities.</p> <p>4. Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories.</p> <p>Forest and Woodland Goal Objectives:</p> <p>1. Manage forests and woodlands to improve forest resiliency to disturbances from insects, disease, and wildfires; restore habitats for special status species; and produce a sustainable supply of timber and other forest products.</p> <p>2. Maintain the appropriate species diversity and age-class distribution for forest and woodland communities that are resilient to disturbances.</p> <p>3. Recognize and manage aspen as a unique and limited high-value forest type for a wide variety of resources.</p> <p>Riparian and Wetlands Goal A Objectives:</p> <p>1. Manage human-caused disturbance in and near riparian/wetland systems.</p> <p>2. Maintain or improve watershed integrity and functioning hydrology.</p> <p>3. Recognize and manage riparian/wetland communities as a limited and high-value vegetation type.</p> <p>Riparian and Wetlands Goal B Objectives:</p> <p>1. Identify and, if possible, remove existing sources of degradation.</p> <p>2. Protect riparian/wetland systems from new sources of degradation.</p> <p>3. Work with users to identify ways to improve riparian areas and to minimize degradation from current uses.</p> <p>Weeds Goal A Objectives:</p> <p>1. Ensure all land use actions that could potentially increase the occurrence of noxious weeds are conducted using BMPs.</p> <p>2. Apply principles of integrated pest management.</p> <p>Weeds Goal B Objectives:</p> <p>1. Pursue, wherever possible, the use of cooperative agreements to coordinate weed management actions.</p> <p>2. Identify ways to partner with resource users and other stakeholders to reduce the occurrence of noxious weeds.</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
DESIRED PLANT COMMUNITIES			
No similar action.	Upland and riparian vegetation would be managed to achieve DPC objectives established for a localized area to meet the Colorado Standards for Public Land Health and objectives for the planning area. DPC objectives would be determined through use of various reference information, including NRCS range site guides and ecological site inventory data in conjunction with the specific objectives for the area.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
No similar action.	DPC objectives would emphasize commodity uses while complying with existing regulations pertaining to sensitive resources.	DPC objectives would emphasize wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, watershed, and biodiversity values while maintaining or enhancing habitat for special status species.	DPC objectives would emphasize wildlife habitat, watershed, and biodiversity values. Emphasis would be placed on maintaining or enhancing habitat for special status species.
VEGETATION TREATMENTS			
Conducted on case-by-case basis, as needed.	Same as Alternative A. In addition, when consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to increase forage production.	Use vegetation treatments on an average of 4,110 acres per year over the life of the plan to improve diversity of seral stages and species, as appropriate. Work with the Northwest Colorado Sage-Grouse Working Group to identify, maintain, and treat where necessary an average of 530 acres of sagebrush per year. Emphasize creation of functional blocks of sagebrush as sage-grouse habitat. Use vegetation treatments on an average of 1,600 acres per year to reduce expansion of juniper and other large woody species to mimic natural conditions. Treat an average of 100 acres per year of mountain shrub.	Use vegetation treatments on an average of 8,750 acres per year over the life of the plan to improve diversity of seral stages and species, as appropriate. Work with the Northwest Colorado Sage-Grouse Working Group to identify, maintain, and treat where necessary an average of 2,000 acres of sagebrush per year. Emphasize creation of functional blocks of sagebrush as sage-grouse habitat. Use vegetation treatments on an average of 3,500 acres per year to reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species to mimic natural conditions. Treat an average of 1,000 acres of per year mountain shrub.
No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	Use vegetation treatments where land health assessments indicate a standard	Same as Alternative C.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		is not being met for reasons other than existing livestock management (e.g., areas where reclamation efforts have not been successful, or heavy-use OHV areas) to improve conditions.	
FORESTS AND WOODLANDS			
Conducted on case-by-case basis, as needed.	Same as Alternative A.	Treat an average of 200 acres per year of Ponderosa pine, primarily in the Douglas Mountain area, using primarily non-harvest methods such as prescribed fire and mechanical understory reduction.	Treat an average of 400 acres per year of Ponderosa pine, primarily in the Douglas Mountain area, using primarily non-harvest methods such as prescribed fire and mechanical understory reduction.
Conducted on case-by-case basis, as needed.	Same as Alternative A.	Treat an average of 50 acres per year of lodgepole pine, primarily in, but not limited to, the Cold Spring landscape, using a mix of commercial timber sales and fuels-related treatments aimed at maintaining an overall viable stand and reducing the threat of large fires in the area.	Treat an average of 100 acres per year of lodgepole pine, primarily in the Cold Spring landscape, using a mix of commercial timber sales and fuels-related treatments aimed at maintaining an overall viable stand and reducing the threat of large fires in the area.
Conducted on case-by-case basis, as needed.	Same as Alternative A.	Improve/maintain aspen community health on an average of 50 acres per year of the stands, especially in Cold Spring landscape and in Routt County, using primarily non-harvest methods such as prescribed fire, chainsaw thinning, and other mechanical means aimed at promoting aspen regeneration.	Improve/maintain aspen community health on an average of 200 acres per year of the stands, especially in Cold Spring landscape and in Routt County, using primarily non-harvest methods such as prescribed fire, chainsaw thinning, and other mechanical means aimed at promoting aspen regeneration.
Conducted on case-by-case basis, as needed.	Same as Alternative A.	Treat an average of 500 acres per year of pinyon-juniper woodland, with the aim to maintain a mosaic of age classes and to balance the amount of treatment against natural pinyon-juniper expansion, using a combination of prescribed burning, biomass removal, mechanical mastication, and designated firewood-gathering areas.	Same as Alternative C.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
NOXIOUS WEEDS			
Identify and eliminate noxious weeds on a case-by-case basis consistent with current policy.	Same as Alternative A.	<p>Prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Eliminate invasive species, focusing on areas of new infestations, and, where possible, extirpate existing populations wherever they exist within the planning area.</p> <p>Partner with resource users and other stakeholders to reduce the occurrence of noxious weeds. Maximize use of cooperative agreements to control invasive species.</p> <p>Continue implementation of noxious weed and invasive species control actions as per national guidance and local weed management plans in cooperation with State, federal, affected counties, adjoining private land owners, and other partners or interests directly affected.</p>	Same as Alternative C.
FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT			
<p>Goal A: Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush-obligate species, consistent with local conservation plans.</p> <p>Goal B: Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages.</p> <p>Goal C: Manage habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species endemic to key vegetation types by maintaining adequate habitat quantity, quality, and continuity.</p> <p>Goal D: Manage disturbance to wildlife populations.</p> <p>Goal E: Provide an array of aquatic habitats that support biodiversity and viable populations of species.</p> <p>Goal F: Cooperate with the CDOW.</p>			
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado. Maintain connections among sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado. Reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species into sagebrush habitat. Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities. Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories. 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Goal C Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve and/or maintain those areas that are key wildlife habitats and their desired plant communities. 2. Maintain or restore connectivity among habitat use areas. 3. Maintain, restore, or enhance the habitat of migratory bird species (e.g., neotropicals, waterfowl, and raptors). 4. Promote conservation and minimize the take of migratory birds. 5. Maintain and promote high-quality habitat for big game populations. 6. Provide habitat to support sufficient raptor prey populations. 7. Provide sufficient nesting and fledging habitat to ensure sustainable raptor populations. <p>Goal D Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage access to seasonal use areas during crucial time frames. 2. Manage access in crucial habitats. <p>Goal E Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote improvement and recovery of current, historic, and potential habitats of aquatic species. 2. Maintain or improve riparian condition to provide for forage, habitat, and biodiversity. 3. Encourage sport fisheries in areas where they would not be detrimental to native fish populations. <p>Goal F Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In collaboration with key agencies, provide CDOW input on establishing fish and wildlife populations that can be sustained by available habitat. 2. Seek input from CDOW on managing fish and wildlife habitat on public lands. 			
<p>IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING SAGEBRUSH HABITAT FUNCTIONALITY BY LIMITING FRAGMENTATION</p>			
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Within the planning area, BLM and CDOW evaluated sagebrush habitats and placed them within high, medium and low priority categories (Map 2-3). The lowest priority habitats in the RMPPA consist of overall big game winter range and summer range. The medium priority habitats consist of big game winter concentration areas, severe winter range, migration corridors, sage-grouse winter range, sage-grouse breeding habitat, and areas within the 4 mile radius of leks located outside of the sage-grouse core areas. The highest priority habitats consist of sage-grouse core areas (Map 2-3), which include 4 mile lek radii around the largest leks, portions of</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>sage-grouse winter range, and portions of big game winter range. Like other oil and gas stipulations, these apply to both federal surface and federal mineral estates.</p> <p>The appropriate wildlife habitat stipulations would be determined by the priority of sagebrush habitat the lease is located in and whether a lease is new or existing. If a lease straddles two or more levels of habitat priority, the higher priority stipulation would apply.</p> <p>Low Priority Habitats: No additional restrictions beyond those specific stipulations described in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Medium Priority Habitats, Existing Leases: For existing oil and gas leases at the time of the ROD, participation in this approach would be voluntary. Oil and gas operators could opt into an agreement to limit surface disturbance to 5% of the project area and submit a POD which illustrates a strategy to keep large blocks of habitat undeveloped. If a proposal and/or operator meets both criteria, BLM would grant an exception to big game winter range and sage-grouse nesting and critical winter range timing stipulations for all APDs in the project area (as described below), allowing a larger window for development. For operators who choose not to opt into this voluntary approach in medium potential habitats, BLM would require habitat protection BMPs.</p> <p>Medium Priority Habitats, New Leases: Any new leases which overlie a medium priority habitat would be required to comply with the two voluntary criteria described above and</p>	

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>BLM would not be obligated to grant an operator an exception to timing limitation stipulations. Non-oil and gas related projects may also be held to a higher standard in medium priority habitats. BLM may require additional mitigation for rights-of-way, recreation facilities, range improvements, commercial forest harvest and other projects within these areas.</p> <p><u>High Priority Habitats, Existing Leases:</u> The approach would be the same as medium priority habitats.</p> <p><u>High Priority Habitats, New Leases:</u> Any new leases which overlie a high priority habitat, a stipulation would be attached to the lease to comply with the two criteria: a 1% disturbance limitation and a POD illustrating a strategy to leave large blocks of undisturbed habitat. These criteria would be mandatory and BLM would not be obligated to grant an operator an exception to timing limitation stipulations. To grant an exception to the 1% disturbance threshold, the operator would have to prove that it went to extraordinary means to mitigate or improve high priority habitats. Non-oil and gas related projects would be held to a higher standard in high priority habitats. BLM may require additional mitigation for rights-of-way, recreation facilities, range improvements, and other projects within these areas.</p> <p><u>Maintaining the Project Record: Baseline Measurements, Monitoring, and Updating PODs</u></p> <p>Before a leaseholder enters into the agreement, a GIS analysis of existing disturbance in the project area would be performed by the operator as part of the</p>	

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>POD. The total number of acres of existing disturbance in the project area would be calculated by the operator. Portions of the project area would be ground-truthed by BLM to ensure accuracy. A running total of surface disturbance in the project area would be performed by the operator and updated in the POD at least annually.</p>	
<p>RAPTORS (GOLDEN EAGLE, OSPREY, ALL ACCIPITERS, FALCONS [EXCEPT KESTREL], BUTEOS, AND OWLS, AND NOT INCLUDING SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES RAPTORS)</p>			
<p>Raptors (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except kestrel], buteos, and owls): NSO within 0.125 mile radius of nest site. NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the nest site or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the nest site.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Raptors (golden eagle, osprey, all accipiters, falcons [except kestrel], buteos, and owls): NSO within 0.25 mile radius of nest site. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>
<p>Raptor nesting and fledgling habitat (golden eagle, and all accipiters, falcons [except kestrel], buteos, and owls) would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to August 15. Applies to 0.25 mile buffer zone around the nest site. Exceptions—During years when a nest site is unoccupied or unoccupied by or after May 15, the seasonal limitation could be excepted. It could also be excepted after the young have fledged and dispersed from the nest.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>PEREGRINE FALCON</p>			
<p>Peregrine falcon—NSO within 0.25 mile radius of cliff nesting complexes. No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, except NSO areas could be altered depending on the active status of nesting complexes or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers, and vegetation</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Peregrine falcon cliff nesting complexes would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 16 to July 31 within a 0.5 mile buffer area around the nesting complex to prevent abandonment and desertion of established territories</p> <p>Exceptions—During years when a nest is unoccupied or unoccupied by or after May 15, the seasonal stipulation could be excepted. It could also be excepted after the young have fledged and dispersed from the nest.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>screening.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
WATERFOWL AND SHOREBIRD			
<p>Waterfowl and shorebird—NSO on significant production areas (Waterfowl Habitat Management Areas and rookeries).</p> <p>No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the production areas or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening.</p> <p>Exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
BIG GAME SPECIES (MULE DEER, ELK, PRONGHORN ANTELOPE, AND BIGHORN SHEEP)			
<p>Big game species (mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep) crucial winter habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from December 1 to April 30.</p> <p>Exceptions—Under mild winter conditions, the last 60 days of the seasonal limitation period could be excepted. Severity of winter determined on basis of snow depth, snow crusting, daily mean temperatures, and concentration of animals on winter range during winter months.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Big game species (mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep) crucial winter habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from December 1 to April 30, with the intent that this stipulation apply after the big game hunting season. In the case that hunting season would extend later, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p>Big game birthing areas would be</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Big game birthing areas would be</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>closed to surface disturbing activities for the following species and dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elk calving—April 16 to June 30 • Pronghorn Antelope fawning—May 1 to July 15 • Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep lambing—May 1 to July 15 • Desert Bighorn Sheep lambing—March 16 to May 30. <p>Exceptions—When it is determined through a site-specific environmental analysis that specific actions would not interfere with critical habitat function, or compromise animal conditions within the project vicinity, the restriction may be altered or removed.</p>		<p>closed to surface disturbing activities for the following species and dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elk calving—April 16 to June 30 • Pronghorn Antelope fawning—May 1 to July 15 • Bighorn Sheep lambing—May 1 to July 15. <p>Exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	
GREATER SANDHILL CRANE			
<p>Greater Sandhill crane nesting and staging habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 1 to October 16.</p> <p>No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
OSPREY			
<p>Osprey nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from April 1 to August 31. Applies to a 0.5 mile buffer zone to avoid nest abandonment.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
WILDLIFE USE ADJUSTMENTS			
<p>Recommend wildlife use adjustments to CDOW if monitoring data indicate that adjustments are necessary.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
WHITE-TAILED PRAIRIE DOGS			
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>CSU and Timing Stipulations—Surface disturbing activities that are larger than 1 acre would not be permitted in active</p>	<p>No similar action.</p> <p>See White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC management under Special</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>prairie dog towns less than 10 acres in size. These activities would be relocated to the edge of the active prairie dog town. Surface disturbing activities smaller than 1 acre or within towns that are larger than 10 acres would not be permitted between April 1 and June 15 to protect prairie dog pups.</p> <p>Exception Criteria—If a company has a well pad in place, but for whatever reason is not able to complete the well before April 1, this timing restriction would be granted an exception. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis following Appendix E guidelines.</p>	Designations section.
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES			
<p>Goal A: Preserve and protect special status species.</p> <p>Goal B: Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush-obligate species, consistent with local conservation plans.</p> <p>Goal C: Identify and initiate restoration and rehabilitation of sagebrush habitat while maintaining a mosaic of canopy cover and seral stages.</p>			
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain the populations of BLM sensitive species at a level that would avoid the need to list these species. 2. Maintain, restore, or enhance the habitat of special status species, including designated critical habitats for listed species. 3. Maintain or restore the populations of special status species to the extent possible. 4. Prioritize inventories, monitoring, and other scientific studies to better understand the ecology of special status species in order to improve their management. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain large patches of high-quality sagebrush habitats consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado. 2. Maintain connections among sagebrush habitats on a landscape scale. <p>Goal C Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconnect large patches of sagebrush habitat consistent with the natural range of variability for sagebrush communities in northwest Colorado. 2. Reduce encroachment of juniper and other large woody species into sagebrush habitat. 3. Restore a diversity of seral stages within sagebrush communities. 4. Restore the quantity, species composition, and species diversity of sagebrush understories. 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
COLORADO BLM SENSITIVE SPECIES			
<p>Colorado BLM Sensitive Species (plant and wildlife)—Surveys of potential habitat for Colorado BLM Sensitive Species would be conducted before any surface disturbance. Should any such species be found, all disruptive activities would be halted until species-specific protective measures were developed and implemented. There would be NSO stipulations on habitat areas containing special status species. NSO stipulations may be altered after important factors are considered in the impact analysis, such as the type and amount of surface disturbance, plant frequency and density, and the relocation of disturbances.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, except CSU stipulations would apply to habitat areas containing special status species, such as federally listed, proposed, and candidate. Exception criteria detailed in Appendix E would apply.</p>	<p>In addition to Alternative B, BLM would survey for rare plant species, and if any such communities are found, all disruptive activities would be delayed until specific protective measures were developed and implemented, if appropriate.</p>	<p>In addition to Alternative C, review Colorado Natural Heritage Database for sensitive plant species not listed on BLM Sensitive Species list and determine appropriate management for species on a case-by-case basis.</p>
FERRUGINOUS HAWK			
<p>Ferruginous hawk nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to August 15 within a 1 mile buffer zone to avoid nest abandonment.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
COLOMBIAN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE			
<p>Colombian sharp-tailed grouse—NSO within 0.25 mile radius of a lek site. NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>Nesting habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 1 to June 30. Crucial winter habitat would be closed from December 16 to March 15. There would be no exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
COLORADO RIVER FISHES			
Require NSO stipulations within critical or occupied habitat of Colorado pikeminnow (<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>), razorback sucker (<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>), humpback chub (<i>Gila cypha</i>), and bonytail (<i>Gila elegans</i>). Exceptions that could adversely affect listed fish (such as bridge abutments) would require site-specific consultation with the USFWS.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE			
Greater sage-grouse—NSO within 0.25 mile radius of a lek site. NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site.	No similar action.	For the purpose of reducing potential impacts on greater sage-grouse lek integrity, NSO within 0.6 mile radius of a lek site. NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the lek, habitat characteristics, or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers, and vegetation screening to the lek site. In addition, exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.	For the purpose of further reducing potential impacts on greater sage-grouse lek integrity, NSO/NGD within a 0.6 mile radius of a lek site. NSO/NGD area could be altered depending on the active status of the lek or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening to the lek site. Exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.
Greater sage-grouse nesting habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from March 1 through June 30.	No similar action.	For the purpose of preventing disturbing up to 75% of nesting birds, from March 1 through June 30, greater sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat (as defined in Chapter 3) would be CSU for oil and gas operations, and avoidance areas for other surface disturbing activities within a 4 mile radius of the perimeter of a lek. All surface disturbing activities would avoid only nesting and early brood-rearing habitat within the 4 mile radius of the lek during this time period. Exceptions, modification, or waivers granted according to criteria in	For the purpose of preventing disturbing greater than 75% of nesting birds, from March 1 through June 30, greater sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat (as defined in Chapter 3) would be CSU for oil and gas operations, and avoidance areas (SSR) for other surface disturbing and disruptive activities. Exceptions, modification, or waivers granted according to criteria in Appendix E. The actual area to be avoided would be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on applicable scientific

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>Appendix E.</p> <p>The actual area to be avoided would be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on applicable scientific research and site-specific analysis, and in coordination with commodity users and other appropriate entities.</p> <p>The use of the BMPs cited below would be encouraged for all surface disturbing activities. BLM may require implementation of some of these BMPs. Use of these BMPs becomes even more important once disturbance reaches 10% of nesting habitat within a 4 mile radius of an active lek. As new BMPs are developed, they could be added to or replace BMPs on the list.</p> <p>Habitat Reclamation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use early and effective reclamation techniques, including interim reclamation, to allow sage-grouse habitat to be reestablished as soon as possible, which could require multiple reclamation efforts • Use reclamation seed mixes consisting of native bunchgrasses, forbs, and subspecies of big sagebrush that are appropriate for the disturbed site and its potential • Practice reclamation techniques that speed recovery of preexisting vegetation • Avoid aggressive, non-native grasses (e.g., intermediate wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, crested wheatgrass, and smooth brome) in reclamation seed mixes • Cooperate with county weed programs to control noxious weed infestations associated with oil and 	<p>research and site-specific analysis, and in coordination with commodity users and other appropriate entities.</p> <p>BMPs would be the same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>gas development disturbances.</p> <p>Footprint Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce long-term footprint of facilities to the smallest practical space • Design and construct roads to minimize duplication • Cluster development of roads, pipelines, electric lines, and other facilities, and use existing, combined corridors, where possible • Use directional drilling where biologically significant habitats are involved to minimize impact on grouse habitat, if such techniques are technically feasible • Minimize pad size and other facilities to the extent possible, consistent with safety (where directional drilling is used, larger pads are needed for multiple wells) • Minimize width of field surface roads. Avoid engineered and graveled roads, when possible, to reduce the footprint. <p>Bird Disturbance Reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit non-surface disturbing activities during the breeding season (March 1–May 1) near active sage-grouse leks to portions of the day after 9 a.m. and before 4 p.m. • Reduce noise impacts from compressor stations by locating stations at least 2,500 feet away from leks and by using decibel reduction equipment • Require field development plans if exploration or wildcat wells indicate that substantial drilling might occur • Reduce number of daily visits to well pads and road travel to the extent possible in sage-grouse habitat 	

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use remote telemetry to monitor wells, when practical, to reduce number of daily visits to wells • Gate field service roads or otherwise limit regular public access on field service roads (consistent with landowner wishes and direction for split-estate wells or ROW access across private lands). 	
<p>Crucial winter habitat would be closed from December 16 to March 15. No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, exceptions would be granted according to criteria established in Appendix E. BLM would work with other agencies and interested parties to achieve the goals and objectives, including CDOW's population targets, included in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan. BLM would support monitoring and evaluation efforts as outlined in the Northwest Colorado and Colorado statewide conservation plans to detect changes in sage-grouse trends due to land use activities. If it is determined that any Management Zone or the whole population is in a downward trend, BLM would assist in development and implementation of strategies to reverse this trend through the management of seasonal sagebrush habitats. If populations were to drop into the "evaluation zone," as defined in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan, action would be taken within one year to reverse declining sage-grouse trends, return populations to the levels above the "evaluation zone" and prevent declines of sage-grouse populations below the target range.</p>	<p>To reduce disturbance to the animals, greater sage-grouse winter habitat (Map 3-19) would be closed to surface disturbing and disruptive activities from December 16 to March 15. In addition, for the purpose of protecting greater sage-grouse winter habitat, these areas would be CSU for oil and gas operations, and avoidance areas (SSR) for other surface disturbing and disruptive activities. Exceptions granted according to criteria established in Appendix E.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
BLACK-FOOTED FERRET			
No surface disturbing activities would be allowed that could significantly alter the prairie dog complex in a way that makes it unsuitable for reintroduction of the black-footed ferret.	No similar action.	Surface disturbing activities would be minimized to the extent reasonable in order to reduce landscape disturbance to prairie dog habitat for black-footed ferret.	Same as Alternative A. In addition, see White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC management under Special Designations section.
Per the 1995 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Amendment 1995, require the use of deterrent devices designed to prevent raptors from perching on powerline structures on all new construction to discourage predation on ferrets.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Do not allow rangeland improvement projects (e.g., fences, water developments) within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites to prevent disturbance or damage during the 3 to 4 month release period.	No similar action.	Do not allow rangeland improvement projects (e.g., fences, water developments) within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release sites to prevent disturbance or damage during the 3 to 4 month release period.	Same as Alternative C
Compensation plans and plans of operation would be developed for oil and gas field development in the Little Snake Black-Footed Ferret Management Area. BLM would develop offsite mitigation plans for replacement of lost habitat, if necessary.	No similar action.	No similar action.	Compensation plans and plans of operation would be developed for oil and gas field development in the Little Snake Black-Footed Ferret Management Area. A plan for onsite or offsite mitigation, consistent with BLM policy, would be developed for the purpose of replacing lost habitat, if necessary.
New mineral material sales (sand and gravel) proposed in prairie dog towns within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release sites could be required to delay or except operations for 3 to 4 months during the release period. Mineral material sales operations existing at the time of release site selection would not be restricted. Sales within the common use areas within 0.25 mile of release sites would also be excepted during the 3 to 4 month release period.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
OHV use would be closed within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period.	No similar action.	OHV use would be closed within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period. Administrative OHV use would be allowed as necessary for implementation and monitoring of black-footed ferret releases.	Same as Alternative C.
Target shooting, plinking, or any type of sport hunting would be prohibited within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release cages or release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period.	No similar action.	Target shooting, plinking, or any type of sport hunting would be prohibited within 0.25 mile of black-footed ferret release sites for 3 to 4 months during the release period.	Same as Alternative C.
ROWS on public land that have the potential to disturb occupied black-footed ferret habitat would be rerouted to avoid those prairie dog towns.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
MEXICAN SPOTTED OWL			
Mexican spotted owl nesting and fledgling habitat would be closed to surface disturbing activities from February 1 to July 31. Applied to territories where an owl(s) has been spotted, but no nests or roosts have been confirmed, and in territories where there is confirmed nesting, feeding, and roosting activity. No exceptions.	NSO would be applied to all PACs. Other surface disturbing activities within protected or restricted habitats such as prescribed fires and fuels reduction could occur in specific cases, but would require separate Section 7 consultation.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
Mexican spotted owl—NSO within 0.25 mile radius of confirmed roost site and nesting site. No exceptions.	Non-surface disturbing activities in PACs would avoid the Mexican spotted owl breeding season (March 1 through August 31).	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
BALD EAGLE			
Bald eagle—NSO within a 0.25 mile radius of roost or nest site. NSO area could be altered depending on the active status of the roost or the geographical relationship of topographical barriers and vegetation screening. No exceptions for nest sites.	Year-round NSO/NGD within a 0.25 mile radius of roost sites and both occupied and unoccupied nests. Definition of “occupied nest” from <i>Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan 1983</i> , page D4: (a) young were observed, (b) eggs were laid (eggs or eggshell fragments observed), (c) one	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<p>adult observed in incubating (“sitting low”) posture on the nest during the incubation period, (d) two adults observed at an empty nest or within the breeding area, and (e) one adult and one eagle in immature plumage at or near a nest, especially if mating or reproductive behavior (e.g., display flights, copulation, nest repair) was observed.</p>		
<p>Bald eagle nesting habitat—Apply 0.5 mile buffer zone around the nest site to prevent disruption of nesting from December 15 to June 15. Exceptions—During years when a nest site is unoccupied by or after May 15, timing limitation could be excepted. Timing limitation could also be excepted after the young have fledged and dispersed from nest.</p>	<p>No human activity or other surface disturbance within 0.5 mile radius of occupied nests from November 15 through July 31.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
<p>Bald eagle winter roost site—Apply 0.5 mile buffer area around the roost site from November 16 to April 15 to avoid relocation to less suitable areas. Exceptions—If there is partial or complete visual screening of the area of activity, the primary zone around the roost site may be reduced to 0.25 mile.</p>	<p>Human activities within 0.25 mile of known winter hunting perches and 0.5 mile of critical night roosts on BLM land should be restricted from November 15 to March 15. Buffers can be reduced to 0.25 mile for night roosts and 0.125 mile for hunting perches if the activity is visually screened by vegetation or topography. Development may be permitted at other periods. If periodic visits (e.g., oil well maintenance work) are required within the buffer zone after development, activity should be restricted to the hours between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. from November 15 to March 15.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO			
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Prohibit permanent surface disturbing activities (NSO) within 0.25 mile of any suitable yellow-billed cuckoo habitat. Exceptions should be evaluated on a</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	case-by-case basis to avoid adverse impact.		
MOUNTAIN PLOVER			
No similar action.	Establish 0.125 mile NSO stipulations around all plover nest sites. Prohibit surface use from April 1 to July 15 within 0.25 mile of occupied nesting habitat for mountain plovers. This stipulation does not apply to the operation and maintenance of production facilities (see Appendix E for exception, modification, or waiver criteria).	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES CONSERVATION MEASURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS			
No similar action.	BLM would apply special status species Conservation Measures at the implementation level to streamline Section 7 consultation, as outlined in Appendix J. The goal of these measures is to provide common expectations regarding how to reduce or minimize adverse effects to endangered, threatened, proposed, candidate and other sensitive species resulting from BLM actions.	Same as Alternative B. In addition to the conservation measures, BLM would also implement the conservation recommendations contained in Appendix J.	Same as Alternative C.
WILD HORSES			
Goal: Manage the Sand Wash Basin wild horse herd and the herd's habitat in a manner that encourages herd health while maintaining a thriving, natural, ecological balance of rangeland resources.			
Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage the Sand Wash wild horse herd at an AML as an integral part of the public lands ecosystem. Periodically reevaluate the existing AML to ensure herd size remains compatible with the other resources. 2. Recognize and proactively respond to potential conflicts among wild horses and other resources as conflicts occur. 3. Remove wild horses that relocate outside of HMAs expeditiously. 			
Manage habitat condition in Sand Wash Basin HMA to maintain a herd ranging from 163 to 362 wild horses on a 4-year schedule with an AML of 362.	Maintain current HMA status. Manage at AML, currently identified as a range of 163 to 362 wild horses. The AML is a dynamic number that would be adjusted	Management of the AML according to guidelines and criteria would be the same as that described in Alternative B. Management of wild horses in the Sand	Same as Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	as range conditions warrant. Guidelines and criteria for adjusting AML include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current monitoring data • Rate of herd increase • Competing uses • Frequency of gather cycle • Other population management options • Herd genetics. 	Wash Basin HMA would be the same as that described in Alternative A, with gathers occurring as necessary to maintain the established herd population range.	
Continue to manage wild horses in the Sand Wash Basin HMA.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Designate the Sand Wash Basin HMA as the Sand Wash Basin Wild Horse Range, and manage principally, though not exclusively, for the Sand Wash wild horse herd.
No helicopter or motor vehicle use allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season (from March 1 to June 30). No exceptions.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A, except that exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (see Appendix E) and wild horse outcomes as described in wild horse goals and objectives section and the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act.	The wild horse HMA would be closed to motor vehicle use and all permitted activities during the wild horse foaling period (from March 1 to June 30).
No drilling or development operations permitted within 1 mile radius from March 1 to December 1 from Wild Horse Spring, Sheepherder Spring, Coffee Pot Spring, Two Bar Spring, and Dugout Draw Spring. Exceptions would include provision by the operator of an alternate dependable water source at a suitable location outside the 1 mile radius of the spring before authorized activity.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A, except that exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (see Appendix E).	Same as Alternative A.
WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT			
<p>Goal A: Give first priority to protection of life or property.</p> <p>Goal B: Create an integrated approach to fire and resource management to meet land health standards.</p> <p>Goal C: Integrate fire and fuels management across landscape, agency, and government boundaries.</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and reduce hazardous fuels with emphasis on wildland-urban interface areas. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce fire hazards in ecosystems and restore ecological community functions. 2. Use and allow fire to protect, maintain, and enhance resources. 3. Use and allow fire to function in its ecological role when appropriate for the site and situation. 4. Use mechanical or other vegetation treatments to reduce fire hazards when appropriate. <p>Goal C Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use cooperative agreements to coordinate fire and fuels management action. 			
<p>Use maximum suppression on areas with high resource values, structures, commercial forest, oil and gas developments, cultural values, or improvements to prevent fire from spreading to adjacent private property/structures and provide full protection to buffer areas near or adjacent to critical management areas for threatened, endangered, and candidate species, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, and RNA.</p>	<p>Use appropriate fire management response in areas where fire or wildfire is not desired such as in ecosystems where fire never played a significant positive role in its function; areas where suppression is required to prevent direct threats to life or property; private lands and wildland-urban interfaces; important cultural resources; areas with unnatural fuel buildups; and areas in which a seed bank to use for natural reseeding does not exist.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
<p>Use conditional fire suppression in areas with resources of low value or that do not warrant full suppression actions or high suppression costs, including fires in the Douglas Mountain area (the five WSAs adjacent to Dinosaur National Monument, Diamond Breaks WSA, West Cold Spring WSA, and Cross Mountain WSA).</p>	<p>Use conditional fire suppression in areas where fire is desired, but where there might be social, political, or ecological constraints such as air quality considerations (near Class I airsheds, sensitive populations, or nonattainment areas), threatened or endangered species, or habitat considerations.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Use minimal to no fire suppression in areas where fire is desired.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
<p>Use planned and unplanned prescribed fire to improve resource habitat and condition.</p>	<p>Use prescribed fire and wildfire to improve resource habitat and condition, where appropriate. Prescribed fire would be used to meet identified resource management or hazard fuel reduction objectives. Use of</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<p>prescribed fire would be guided by agency planning documents and consultation with appropriate agency staff.</p> <p>Wildland fire management strategies have been categorized into A, B, C, or D polygons and associated objective tables, representing a continuum of appropriate management responses, from full suppression in A polygons through wildland fire use in D polygons. Fire Management Units are described in Table 2-2 and shown on Map 2-4.</p> <p>In most cases, the Fire Management Units may have in common fuel types, major fire regime groups, and topography. It is also possible they cross political boundaries. Fire Management Unit A polygons encompass campgrounds, communication sites, compressor stations, and other structures. The Fire Management Unit polygons are evaluated each year and may be altered. Following are some of the major evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acres burned in 1 year • Acres burned in 10 years • New residential and commercial development • Changes in wildlife and plant special status species • Other vegetation treatments that may alter the fire regime and condition class • Social/political changes. 		
CULTURAL AND HERITAGE RESOURCES			
<p>Cultural Resources Program Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an in-depth understanding of archeological and historical resources in accordance with NHPA Section 110. 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>2. Determine cultural use allocations and desired outcomes for all cultural properties in the RMPPA. Cultural use allocations include scientific use, conservation for future use, traditional use, public use, experimental use, or discharge from management.</p> <p>Support Services Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek to reduce threats and to resolve potential conflicts from either natural or human-caused deterioration or potential conflict by other program uses in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA. 2. Preserve and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA. 			
<p>Cultural Resource Program Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify areas for development of cultural RMPs and sites appropriate for interpretation. 2. Identify research and partnership opportunities for site excavation, stabilization, rehabilitation, and monitoring. 3. Complete site nominations to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). 4. Enhance the understanding of past human occupation by studying the physical presence of cultural resources in the planning area. Identify cultural study needs based on sound archeological methods and practices. 5. Partner with universities, research facilities, and other institutions to encourage research and publish findings or cultural studies. 6. Expand regional interpretation activities through the recreation programs and contributions from local partners. <p>Support Services Objectives:</p> <p>Goal 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pursue partnerships to facilitate a better understanding of Native American cultural resources, thereby providing a more meaningful tribal consultation process as required by Section 106. 2. Pursue programmatic agreements with tribal governments to streamline consultation procedures. <p>Goal 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify priority areas for new field surveys, based on a probability for consumptive use conflicts on significant resources. 2. Improve legal enforcement. 			
<p>CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAM</p>			
<p>An overall cultural RMP would be developed to address the prehistoric and historic cultural presence in the RMPPA. Separate plans, on a smaller scale, would be developed to include site-specific or region-specific areas of the RMPPA. These plans would address the existing data gaps and research questions that have been developed in the <i>Little Snake RMPPA Class I Overview</i> (La Point 1987). These future plans would include the</p>	<p>The LSFO would implement a proactive cultural resource program required under Section 110 of the NHPA. A reasonable amount of outreach/customer service work, Native American consultation, interpretation and environmental education, cultural resource inventories, data recovery and recordation efforts, restoration and protection of "at-risk" site efforts, and systematic monitoring of cultural sites treatments are to be completed</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>data orientation and collection designs needed to develop basic knowledge about these resources, which has been lacking in the past.</p>	<p>annually. The level of proactive cultural resource program work would be determined annually and within the constraints of available funds and staff.</p> <p>Priority cultural resources program projects are identified below by project type. This list is not intended to be comprehensive or limiting and would change throughout the life of the plan as more becomes known about the cultural resources in the planning area. In general, priority would be given to sites eligible for nomination to the NRHP and sites for which data are needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority areas for development of cultural RMPs: Sand Wash Basin and Irish Canyon • Priority areas for cultural resource surveys: Irish Canyon, Sand Wash Basin, Diamond Breaks, Cold Spring, and Vermillion Basin • Priority “at-risk” sites: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, Lower Vermillion Creek Archaeological District, and Cross Mountain rock shelter • Priority site monitoring: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, and Cross Mountain rock shelter • Priority nomination sites: Vermillion Buffalo Trap, Sand Wash wickiup and other known wickiup sites, known tree stands, Irish Canyon shelter, Red Army rock shelter, Lower Vermillion Creek Archaeological District, and 		

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<p>Cross Mountain rock shelter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority interpretation sites: Sand Wash and Vermillion Rim. 		
MITIGATION OF POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN OPEN OHV AREAS			
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>The process below would be followed to mitigate potential adverse effects to historic properties within areas open to cross-country OHV travel.</p> <p>In areas open to OHV travel, known cultural resources evaluated as potentially eligible (need data) and eligible for the NRHP would be identified. Cultural resource site areas located within or immediately adjacent to existing roads and trails would be protected by road/trail or area closures to the types of travel that may cause adverse effects. The closure would remain in effect until the cultural resources are field-visited, documented, and needed mitigation measures are completed. The avoidance of cultural resources would be the primary mitigation measure, where possible. Significant cultural resource sites and areas may be mitigated through long-term road/trail or area closure, rerouting and new construction, limitations on vehicle type and time or season of travel, excavation of archaeological resources, or other less common approaches.</p> <p>Class III inventory, site evaluation, site mitigation and reporting would be completed within 5 years following the signing of the ROD. A Class II inventory could be part of this process. Identified cultural resources evaluated as potentially eligible (need data) and eligible for the NRHP would be protected and any adverse effects</p>	<p>Transportation planning would be performed in Sand Wash Basin following the signing of the ROD, as described in Appendix F. Protecting cultural resources in Sand Wash Basin would be an important aspect in the development of the transportation plan and designation of roads and trails in the area. The same process as outlined for Alternative B would be used for the area open to OHV travel in south Sand Wash Basin. If these processes were not completed after five years of the signing of the ROD, BLM would close those areas within the open area not yet surveyed to OHV use until the necessary actions were taken.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<p>would be mitigated. Protection would follow the approach identified above for known cultural resources.</p> <p>In addition, a monitoring program would be established to assess OHV impacts to cultural resources. The BLM cultural resource specialist, as part of the monitoring team, would identify an appropriate monitoring schedule for cultural resources. Based on the results of monitoring, BLM would take any actions necessary to fulfill its obligations under existing law to protect cultural resources. This may include changing certain aspects of management of the area (e.g., allowable use) or implementing mitigation measures (e.g., fencing or closing areas).</p> <p>Consultation with the SHPO and affected tribes is required for all planning efforts and, as necessary, with other consulting parties.</p>		
CULTURAL SITE USE ALLOCATIONS			
No similar action.	Manage cultural sites types on a site-specific basis according to allocations identified in Appendix K.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Paleontological Resources Program Goal: Identify and protect the paleontological resources within the LSFO.			
<p>Paleontological Resource Program Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand paleontological support activity such as data gathering, GIS integration, and Class I surveys. 2. Provide educational and interpretation opportunities for paleontological resources. 3. Improve law enforcement. 			
Evaluate all proposed surface disturbing actions to determine inventory needs and sites potentially affected by such activities. Surface disturbing activities in PFYC Class 4 and 5 Paleontological Areas	Same as Alternative A, except— Surface disturbing activities in PFYC Class 4 and 5 Paleontological Areas devoid of thick soils, vegetation, and steep unsafe cliffs would have an inventory performed by a qualified	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>would have an inventory performed by a qualified paleontologist with a valid Colorado BLM paleontology permit approved by the authorized officer.</p> <p>Mitigation measures for specific locations would be identified on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>paleontologist with a valid Colorado BLM paleontology permit.</p>		
<p>An overall paleontological management plan would be developed that addresses the fossil presence in the RMPPA. Separate plans on a smaller scale would be developed to include site-specific or region-specific areas of the RMPPA. These developed plans would address the existing data gaps and research questions that have been developed in the <i>Little Snake Resource Area Paleontological Overview</i> (Armstrong and Wolny 1989). These future plans would include the data orientation and collection designs needed to develop the basic knowledge about these resources, which has been lacking in the past.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Standard Discovery Stipulation:</p> <p>If paleontological resources are discovered during exploration operations, the licensee shall immediately notify the Field Office Manager and should not disturb such discovered resources until the Field Office Manager issues specific instructions.</p> <p>Within 5 working days after notification, the Field Office Manager shall have a qualified paleontologist evaluate any paleontological resources discovered, and determine whether any action would be required to protect or preserve such discoveries.</p> <p>The cost of data recovery for</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	paleontological resources discovered during exploration operations would be borne by the licensee, if the licensee is ordered to take any protective measures. Ownership of paleontological resources discovered would be determined in accordance with applicable law.		
SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS			
<p>Goal: Provide special management attention to those areas where it is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important natural, cultural, recreational, wilderness, or scenic resources and values.</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage WSAs to protect wilderness characteristics until designated or released by Congress. 2. Manage to protect the values of areas where special management prescriptions are identified. 3. Complete motorized road/trail designations for special management areas that are not closed to motorized vehicle use. 			
AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN			
<p>The following sites, totaling 20,910 acres, are designated to protect and enhance the values noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA (1,400 acres, remnant plant associations, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, scenic quality) • Irish Canyon ACEC, including the Ink Springs area (11,910 acres, remnant plant associations, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, geologic values, cultural resources, scenic quality) • Lookout Mountain ACEC (6,950 acres, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, scenic quality) • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC (650 acres, threatened and endangered species, Colorado BLM Sensitive Plant Species, scenic quality). 	<p>Designate no additional ACECs, and remove ACEC designation from all existing ACECs (manage 0 acres as ACEC).</p>	<p>Retain designation of the Irish Canyon ACEC (11,910 acres). The below-listed areas would not be retained as ACECs. Management of these areas would be as described in the rows below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge (1,400 acres) • Lookout Mountain (6,950 acres) • Cross Mountain Canyon (650 acres). 	<p>Retain Irish Canyon ACEC, Limestone Ridge ACEC, Lookout Mountain ACEC, and Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC. In addition, designate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC (271,730 acres) • Natural Systems ACECs, which include— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC (1,210 acres) – Gibben’s Beardtongue ACEC (5,500 acres) – Bull Canyon ACEC (3,390 acres) – G Gap ACEC (2,230 acres) – Little Juniper Canyon ACEC (20 acres) – Bassett Spring ACEC (110 acres) – No Name Spring ACEC (80 acres) – Pot Creek ACEC (2,240 acres) – Whiskey Springs ACEC (2,760 acres) – Willow Spring ACEC (100 acres)

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			– Deception Creek ACEC (110 acres).
Limestone Ridge			
<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Mineral Material Sales—Closed – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—NSO – Available for mineral location • OHV—Closed • VRM—Not applicable • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>No ACEC designated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy—Open to all exploration and development. • OHV—Open • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—No restrictions. 	<p>No ACEC designated.</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality. Special management attention would not be required to protect the relevant and important values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CSU for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.
Irish Canyon			
<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CSU for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Open – Nonenergy Leasables—Open • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Not applicable • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>No ACEC designated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy—Open to all exploration and development; however, not available for coal leasing. • OHV—Open • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—No restrictions. 	<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plant, remnant plant communities, scenic, cultural, and geologic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations. – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plant, remnant plant communities, scenic, cultural, and geologic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations. – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
Lookout Mountain			
<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CSU for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Open – Nonenergy Leasables—Open • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Not applicable • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>No ACEC designated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy—Open to all exploration and development; however, not available for coal leasing • OHV—Open • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—No limitations. 	<p>No ACEC designated.</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, and scenic quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CSU for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Open – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Class II and III • Lands and Realty—Renewal of existing and authorization of future ROWs would be allowed on approval of a site-specific development plan consistent with area resource objectives. 	<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plant, remnant plant communities, and scenic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Existing communication sites may be renewed at the end of their term in accordance with area objectives and current regulations. No new communication sites would be authorized. – Exclusion area for ROWs.
Cross Mountain Canyon (Area is currently within Cross Mountain WSA)			
<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Mineral Material Sales—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—NSO • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class I • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>No ACEC designated, but management would be consistent with WSA requirements.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Retain existing ACEC with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plants, threatened and endangered species, and scenic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class I • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			unless associated with valid existing rights.
White-Tailed Prairie Dog			
No ACEC designated. Active white-tailed prairie dog colonies are avoidance areas for surface disturbing activities only within black-footed ferret reintroduction area.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A. In addition, a CSU stipulation would protect towns less than 10 acres in size and timing limitation stipulations would apply to towns greater than 10 acres in size (see Section 2.5.5.2).	<p>ACEC would be designated.</p> <p>Objective—Protect white-tailed prairie dog habitat.</p> <p>The following management applies only to areas indicated on Map 2-8 containing active/inactive white-tailed prairie dog colonies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—No classification related to prairie dog colonies • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area.
Natural Systems ACECs			
No ACEC designated.	No ACEC designated.	No ACEC designated.	<p>ACEC would be designated, which would include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC (1,210 acres) • Gibben’s Beardtongue ACEC (5,500 acres) • Bull Canyon ACEC (3,390 acres) • G Gap ACEC (2,230 acres) • Little Juniper Canyon ACEC (20 acres) • Bassett Spring ACEC (110 acres) • No Name Spring ACEC (80 acres) • Pot Creek ACEC (2,240 acres) • Whiskey Springs ACEC (2,760 acres)

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willow Spring ACEC (100 acres) • Deception Creek ACEC (110 acres). <p>The objective of these ACECs is to protect sensitive plants and plant communities.</p> <p>The following management applies only to areas indicated on Map 2-8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Disturbance—SSR • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CSU for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails • VRM—No classification related to ACECs • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance area.
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS			
<p>WSAs would be managed to preserve their wilderness values according to the IMP (BLM-H-8550-1) and would continue to be managed in that manner until Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them for other uses. While managed as WSAs, these areas would be managed with a VRM Class I designation. The area would be closed to oil and gas operations, recommended for withdrawal from mineral location, closed to mineral material sales and nonenergy leasables, and would not be available for coal leasing. They would be managed as a ROW exclusion areas, and would be closed to OHV use.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A. In addition, if any or all of the WSAs are released by Congress, the released lands would be managed in accordance with multiple use direction and land allocations established in the RMP, including special designations such as SRMAs, suitable WSRs, and ACECs. Resource allocations restricted because of WSA management policies such as oil and gas leasing, coal unsuitability, lands and realty actions, and wood cutting would be reviewed to determine if changes in management are needed. If such changes are needed, a revision of the RMP would be initiated.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>The Diamond Breaks WSA would be recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation (RMP/ROD page 22). If Congress does not designate Diamond Breaks as wilderness, the Colorado portion of the WSA (31,810 acres) would be managed as a recreation management unit. The area would still be closed to OHV use.</p>	<p>If Congress releases Diamond Breaks from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use consistent with resource goals and objectives. The area would still be closed to OHV use.</p>	<p>If Congress releases Diamond Breaks from wilderness study, it would be managed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis. 	<p>If Congress releases Diamond Breaks from wilderness study, it would be managed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area.
<p>The Cross Mountain WSA (including the proposed Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC) would be recommended as preliminarily suitable for wilderness designation. BLM would recommend that the proposed Cross Mountain wilderness remain open to oil and gas leasing with NSO stipulations. If Congress does not designate Cross Mountain as wilderness, the area would be identified as a SRMA (13,620 acres), including the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC (650 acres).</p>	<p>If Congress releases Cross Mountain from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use consistent with resource goals and objectives.</p>	<p>If Congress releases Cross Mountain from wilderness study, it would be managed as an ACEC as follows:</p> <p>Objective—Protect sensitive plants, threatened and endangered species, and scenic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area unless associated with valid existing rights. 	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>The West Cold Spring WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. If Congress does not designate the area as wilderness, the Colorado portion of West Cold Spring would be managed as the Cold Spring and Little Snake River Management Units (total of 14,660 acres).</p>	<p>If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, it would be managed as multiple use consistent with resource goals and objectives.</p>	<p>If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, it would be managed the same as the adjacent wilderness characteristics area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed 	<p>If Congress releases West Cold Spring from wilderness study, it would be managed the same as the adjacent SRMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify as a backcountry SRMA • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to existing roads and trails • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance area; accept wind energy applications on case-by-case basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails • VRM—Class I • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area; no wind energy.
<p>Four WSAs evaluated under Section 202 of FLPMA (Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears) would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation, but would be recommended to the secretary for forwarding to Congress for the final decision. If Congress does not designate these areas as wilderness, they would be managed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The northwest corner of Ant Hills would be managed as the Douglas Mountain Management Unit and the remainder as the Scattered Sands Management Unit. • Chew Winter Camp would be managed as the Scattered Sands Management Unit. • The northern third of Peterson Draw would be managed as the Scattered Sands Management Unit and the remainder as the Douglas Mountain Management Unit. • Most of the Vale of Tears would be managed as the Little Snake River Management Unit and the other portions in the northwest corner would be managed as the Douglas Mountain and Scattered Sands Management Units (<i>Little Snake Resource Management Plan</i> [1989]). • The Cross Mountain, Diamond Breaks, West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, 	<p>If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, they would be managed as multiple use consistent with resource goals and objectives.</p>	<p>If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, they would be managed the same as the adjacent wilderness characteristics area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed • Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to existing roads and trails • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance area; no wind energy. 	<p>If Congress releases Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears from wilderness study, they would be managed the same as the adjacent SRMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify as a backcountry SRMA • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated • VRM—Class I • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area; no wind energy.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
and Vale of Tears WSAs would not be leased. These are 78,250 acres of BLM-administered mineral estate within the Little Snake RMPPA.			
The Cross Mountain, Diamond Breaks, West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and Vale of Tears WSAs would not be leased. These are 78,250 acres of BLM-administered mineral estate within the Little Snake RMPPA.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Public land designated as wilderness would be managed in compliance with BLM's Wilderness Management Policy and the Wilderness Act of 1964. Site-specific wilderness management plans would be developed for areas designated by Congress as wilderness.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS OUTSIDE EXISTING WSAs			
Vermillion Basin			
<p>The following management would apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to new oil and gas leasing - Locatable—Open - Nonenergy Leasables—Open - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Open, some limited to existing • VRM—Not applicable • Lands and Realty—Considered on a case-by-case basis. 	<p>Allow coordinated and organized oil and gas development while protecting cultural resources and natural and scenic values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all leases in the area, BLM would stipulate that any oil- and gas-related activity or development must take place within a federal oil and gas unit. • All leases would be limited to 2,560 acres in size, and a unit must include at least four leases, for a minimum of 10,240 total acres. • The leases to be included in the unit as well as all the details of the unit agreement would be left to the discretion of leaseholders. • A unit is composed of the area under exploration and development and could also include a "mitigation area." 	<p>Manage to protect naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude.</p> <p>The Vermillion Basin Protective Management Area would be created and the following prescriptions would be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to new oil and gas leasing - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails in some areas and closed in other areas. Three roads are cherry-stemmed out of the closed area in western Vermillion Basin and are not 	<p>Identify as a backcountry SRMA with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Provide quality primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to new oil and gas leasing - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface disturbance would be limited to 1% of Vermillion Basin at any one time. Existing oil and gas-related surface disturbance would count towards the 1% limitation. However, there is currently no existing oil and gas related surface disturbance in Vermillion Basin. Therefore, the first time areas within Vermillion Basin are leased, existing oil and gas related disturbance would be zero acres. If leases were ever re-issued after any amount oil and gas development had taken place, however, any existing disturbance would count towards the 1% limitation. Disturbed areas can be recovered on a rolling-reclamation basis. Upon successful reclamation, reclaimed areas would no longer be counted toward the 1% limit, and the total area disturbed in the unit would be decreased by that amount. Successful reclamation is defined in the Reclamation Performance Standard described in Appendix O. • All of Vermillion Basin would be offered for lease simultaneously. However, if only portions of the basin were leased in the first lease sale, development could begin as long as a unit is formed and a POD is approved. Offered parcels within Vermillion Basin that are not nominated in the initial lease sale would be available for a 2-year period for non-competitive leasing. If they were not picked up during this period, they would be available to be nominated for competitive leasing at a later time. These new leases could be added to a unit, thereby increasing the amount of surface that could be disturbed 	<p>subject to the OHV closure: The Blue Hill road running through T10N R100W Section 30 to T10N R101W Section 36; the Vermillion Basin bench road running from Moffat County Road 169 in T9N R101W Section 3 northeast then east to T10N R101W Section 35; and the road from Irish Lake in T10N R101W Section 10 southwest to Section 14.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty— Exclusion area. 	

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<p>without exceeding the 1% limit. Alternatively, if they are sufficient in size, they could form a new unit. Further explanation is provided in Section 2.5.11.2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BLM would also stipulate that a POD must be developed for the unit before development would be authorized. BLM recognizes that in the early stage of development of the unit, the POD may not contain more than a few exploratory wells. The POD would be updated annually by the lead operator. A list of POD components is included in Section 2.5.11.2. <p>The following management would apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to new oil and gas leasing with a CSU stipulation attached to all leases/units in Vermillion Basin - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails in some areas and closed in other areas. • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—Avoidance area. 		
Dinosaur North			
<p>The area would have the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to oil and gas leasing with standard stipulations - Locatable—Open - Nonenergy Leasables—Open - Coal—Not available for leasing 	<p>Same as Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for wilderness characteristics.</p>	<p>No designation, with the following prescriptions:</p> <p>Objective—Manage to protect naturalness, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and solitude.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for 	<p>Identify as a backcountry SRMA with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Provide quality primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHV—Open • VRM—VRM II in the Wild Mountain Management Unit, The remainder would have no VRM designations. • Lands and Realty—No restrictions, case-by-case basis. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – withdrawal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance area; no wind energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – withdrawal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area; no wind energy.
Cold Spring Mountain			
<p>The area would have the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas leasing with standard stipulations – Locatable—Open – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Majority limited to existing, remainder is open • VRM—Class II in the Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit • Lands and Realty—No restrictions, case-by-case basis. 	<p>Same as Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for wilderness characteristics.</p>	<p>No designation, with the following prescriptions:</p> <p>Objective—Manage to protect naturalness, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and solitude.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails • VRM—Class III • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance area; accept wind energy applications on case-by-case basis. 	<p>Identify as a backcountry SRMA with the following management:</p> <p>Objective—Provide quality primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing • OHV—Closed • VRM—Class II • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area; no wind energy.
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain			
<p>The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area (19,290 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide unrestricted flatwater river floatboating in the region.</p> <p>See management highlighted under Recreation.</p>	<p>Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area would be identified as an ERMA.</p> <p>See management highlighted under Recreation.</p>	<p>The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 27,310 acres (Map 2-36) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide quality camping experiences related to river boating in the region and big game hunting.</p> <p>See management highlighted under</p>	<p>The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 29,380 acres (Map 2-37) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide quality camping experiences related to river boating in the region and big game hunting.</p> <p>See management highlighted under</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		Recreation.	Recreation.
WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS			
<p>BLM would undertake no actions nor permit any activities that could adversely affect or impact any outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) of the Yampa River segment in Cross Mountain (Yampa River segment 3). Yampa River segment 3 is listed in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory List, which makes it eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS. Free-flowing characteristics of identified river segments cannot be modified; to the extent BLM is authorized under law to control stream impoundments, diversions, or other development.</p> <p>As directed by BLM IM-2004-196, manage all of "eligible" river segments to protect their ORVs, free-flowing nature, and tentative classification.</p> <p>In keeping with BLM Manual 8351, .32C and .33C, suitability determinations would not be made for any of the eligible river segments. They would remain eligible and would be managed to protect their ORVs, free-flowing nature, and tentative classification to the degree that BLM has authority (i.e., BLM lands within the corridor) and within the parameters of decisions made in the previous planning documents until such time as suitability determinations are made.</p>	<p>No recommendations as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS.</p>	<p>Determine and manage Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS.</p>	<p>Determine and manage all eligible segments and tentative classifications (listed below) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaver Creek segment 1 (wild) • Vermillion Creek segment 1 (Lower Vermillion Creek, scenic) • Yampa River segment 1 (River Mile 126 to Milk Creek, recreational) • Yampa River segment 2 (Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel, scenic) • Yampa River segment 3 (Cross Mountain Canyon, wild).
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Beaver Creek segment 1 (4.2 miles) as suitable for inclusion in the</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			<p>NWSRS with the tentative classification of “wild.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including fish. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry.
No similar action.	No similar action.	No similar action.	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Vermillion Creek segment 1 (2.9 miles) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of “scenic.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including cultural and geology. Specific management prescriptions within 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry.
No similar action.	No similar action.	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Yampa River segment 1 (2.8 miles from River Mile 126 to Milk Creek area) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of “recreational.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including</p>	<p>The following management actions would only apply to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage segment 1 of the Yampa River (2.8 miles from River Mile #126 to Milk Creek area) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS with the tentative classification of “recreational.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails • Oil and Gas Leasing—NSO • Coal—Closed • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry. <p>For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.</p>	<p>recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Coal—Closed • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry. <p>For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Yampa River segment 2 (15.9 miles from Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of “scenic.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHV limited to designated roads and trails • Oil and gas leasing would be NSO • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry. <p>For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.</p>	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Yampa River segment 2 (15.9 miles from Milk Creek to Duffy Tunnel) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of “scenic.”</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including recreation and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry • Closed to livestock grazing during the months of June and July. <p>For sites within the segment where habitat loss is a risk, remedial actions would be implemented to ensure that the suitability of the spawning habitat is maintained or enhanced.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
No similar action.	No similar action.	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Yampa River segment 3 (3.3 miles through Cross Mountain Canyon) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of "wild."</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including scenic, recreation, geologic, and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry. 	<p>The following management actions would apply only to the portions of the river segments where the river corridor is managed by BLM.</p> <p>Manage Yampa River segment 3 (3.3 miles through Cross Mountain Canyon) as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, with the tentative classification of "wild."</p> <p>Manage to protect the ORVs, including scenic, recreation, geologic, and fish. Specific management prescriptions within a 0.25 mile of each side of the river include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to OHV • Closed to oil and gas leasing • Not available to coal leasing • Recommended withdrawal from mineral entry.
VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (VRM)			
<p>VRM Goals: Recognize and manage visual resources for overall multiple use and quality of life for local communities and visitors to public lands.</p>			
<p>VRM Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain visual characteristics and values as designated by management classes. 2. Land management projects and uses would meet VRM objectives within the boundaries of the designated VRM management class. 			
VRM CLASS I			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs (manage in accordance with the IMP) • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC 	Same as Alternative A, except the Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC would not be designated.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative A.
VRM CLASS II			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Wild Mountain Management Unit • Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerald Mountain SRMA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge area • Irish Canyon ACEC • Portions of Lookout Mountain area • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Vermillion Basin • Dinosaur North wilderness characteristics area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Irish Canyon ACEC • Lookout Mountain ACEC • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Vermillion Basin SRMA • Dinosaur North SRMA • Cold Spring Mountain SRMA

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA (within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs) • Juniper Mountain SRMA (within line-of-sight from the river within the SRMAs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pinyon Ridge backcountry area • Cross Mountain backcountry area (outside the WSA) • Diamond Breaks backcountry area (outside the WSA) • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA (within line-of-sight from the river within the SRMAs) • Juniper Mountain SRMA (within line of sight from the river within the SRMAs)
VRM CLASS III			
No similar action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge area • Irish Canyon area • Portion of Vermillion Basin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold Spring Mountain area • Cedar Mountain SRMA • South Sand Wash SRMA, Zone 2 • Serviceberry SRMA • Fly Creek area • Portion of Lookout Mountain area • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • All areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II or IV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portion of the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Portion of the Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • South Sand Wash SRMA, Zone 2 • Serviceberry SRMA • Fly Creek SRMA • All areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II, or IV
VRM CLASS IV			
No similar action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas not specifically designated as VRM Class I, II, or III 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open OHV area in South Sand Wash SRMA (Zone 1) • Hiawatha and Powder Wash areas • Regions of Sand Wash Basin • Areas suitable for coal mining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Sand Wash SRMA (Zone 1) • Areas suitable for coal mining
ENERGY AND MINERALS			
Oil and Gas			
Goal: Allow for the availability of the federal oil and gas estate (including coalbed natural gas [CBNG]) for exploration and development.			
Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and make available the federal oil and gas estate (including CBNG) for exploration and development. 2. Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources (including CBNG). 3. Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
Leasing Decisions			
<p>Lease with standard lease terms and conditions and specified stipulations. The RMPPA is available for oil and gas leasing. Areas have been designated for leasing with standard stipulations, seasonal restrictions, avoidance stipulations, performance objectives, or NSO stipulations. Areas where no new leasing is allowed have also been identified.</p> <p>BLM-administered mineral estate within the Little Snake RMPPA is open to oil and gas leasing and development, subject to the lease terms and (as applicable) lease stipulations noted in Appendix A of the Amendment.</p>	<p>Lease with standard lease terms and conditions, and non-discretionary stipulations. Resources would be protected and impacts mitigated through site-specific NEPA documents. See Appendix H for explanation of BLM's oil and gas leasing and development process.</p>	<p>Lease with standard lease terms and conditions, and specified stipulations. Exceptions, modifications, and waivers could be provided as detailed in Appendix E.</p>	<p>Lease with standard lease terms and conditions, and specified stipulations. Exceptions, modifications, and waivers could be provided as detailed in Appendix E.</p>
CLOSED TO OIL AND GAS LEASING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Emerald Mountain SRMA 	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Dinosaur North (outside WSA) • Cold Spring Area (outside WSA) • Irish Canyon ACEC • Vermillion Basin • WSR Yampa River segment 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Vermillion Basin • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • Irish Canyon ACEC • All suitable WSR segments • Cross Mountain backcountry area • Diamond Breaks backcountry area • Pinyon Ridge backcountry area • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Dinosaur North SRMA • Cold Spring Area SRMA
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY STIPULATIONS			
<p>Leases within the area of federally leased coal lands where oil and gas development would likely be</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
incompatible with coal extraction. Stipulation may be waived if lessee agrees to outlined conditions.			
Special status plant species—NSO on habitat areas containing special status species (federally listed, proposed, or candidate). NSO may be altered after important factors are considered in the impact analysis, such as the type and amount of surface disturbance, plant frequency and density, and the relocation of disturbances.	No similar action.	No similar action.	No similar action.
<p>NSO areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Steamboat Lake State Park • Pearl Lake State Park. <p>No exceptions.</p> <p>A complete list of NSO areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-11.</p>	NSO areas would be limited to those required by law, regulation, or policy (Table 2-11).	<p>NSO areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1 • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • WSR Yampa segments 1 & 2 • Developed recreation sites with established campgrounds, boat ramps, or other developed recreation facilities would be protected by a 40-acre NSO stipulation • Exceptions would be granted on a case-by-case basis consistent with the criteria identified in Appendix E • A complete list of NSO areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-11. 	<p>NSO areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lookout Mountain ACEC • White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC • All CDOW State Wildlife Areas • Developed recreation sites with established campgrounds, boat ramps, or other developed recreation facilities would be protected by a 40-acre NSO stipulation • Exceptions would be granted on a case-by-case basis consistent with the criteria identified in Appendix E • A complete list of NSO areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-11.
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE STIPULATIONS			
No similar action.	Special status plant species—CSU on habitat areas containing special status species (federally listed, proposed, or candidate). Exception criteria in Appendix E apply.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
Attached to leases where operations proposed within the area of an	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>approved surface or underground coal mine would be relocated outside the area to be mined or to accommodate room and pillar mining operations. Stipulations may be waived subject to outlined conditions.</p>			
<p>Fragile Soil Areas—Performance objectives must be met before surface disturbance.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Fragile Soil Areas (see Soils section for performance objectives and fragile soil criteria).</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>Before surface disturbance on slopes of 40% or greater, an engineering or reclamation plan must be approved by the authorized officer. Stipulations may be accepted subject to an onsite impact analysis. Stipulation not applied where the authorized officer determines that relocation up to 200 meters can be applied to protect the riparian system during well siting.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>Before surface disturbance on slopes of 35% or greater, an engineering or reclamation plan must be approved by the authorized officer. Stipulations may be accepted subject to an onsite impact analysis. Stipulation not applied where the authorized officer determines that relocation up to 200 meters can be applied to protect the riparian system during well siting.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>Irish Canyon ACEC—Inventory for sensitive plant and remnant vegetation associations would be required. Sensitive plants and associations identified would be avoided. Known geologic values and cultural resources would be avoided. No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>
<p>Lookout Mountain ACEC—Inventory for sensitive plant and remnant vegetation associations would be required. Sensitive plants and associations identified would be avoided. No exceptions.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>
<p>No similar action. A complete list of CSU areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-12.</p>	<p>CSU areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special status plant species habitat • Approved underground coal mine • Vermillion Basin. 	<p>CSU areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limestone Ridge area • Lookout Mountain area • Medium and high priority sagebrush habitats (Map 2-3) • Thornburgh/Battle of Milk Creek • Active white-tailed prairie dog towns 	<p>CSU areas—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thornburgh/Battle of Milk Creek • Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC • Natural Systems ACECs • A complete list of CSU areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		less than 10 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active white-tailed prairie dog towns within black-footed ferret reintroduction areas • A complete list of CSU areas, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-12. 	designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-12.
TIMING LIMITATIONS STIPULATIONS			
No helicopter or motor vehicle use allowed in the wild horse HMA during foaling season (from March 1 to June 30). No exceptions.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A, except that exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (see Appendix E) and wild horse outcomes as described in wild horse goals and objectives section and the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act.	The wild horse HMA would be closed to motor vehicle use and all permitted activities during the wild horse foaling period (from March 1 to June 30).
No drilling or development operations permitted within 1 mile radius from March 1 to December 1 from Wild Horse Spring, Sheepherder Spring, Coffee Pot Spring, Two Bar Spring, and Dugout Draw Spring. Exceptions would include provision by the operator of an alternate dependable water source at a suitable location outside the 1 mile radius of the spring before authorized activity.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A, except that exceptions would be granted according to criteria established (see Appendix E).	Same as Alternative A.
A complete list of timing stipulations, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-13.	A complete list of timing stipulations, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-13.	A complete list of timing stipulations, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-13.	A complete list of timing stipulations, including those established through protection of wildlife habitat or designation of special management areas, is provided in Table 2-13.
OPEN			
All remaining areas subject to existing standard terms and conditions consistent with applicable law.	All remaining areas subject to existing standard terms and conditions consistent with applicable law.	All remaining areas subject to existing standard terms and conditions consistent with applicable law.	All remaining areas subject to existing standard terms and conditions consistent with applicable law.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPMENT			
No similar action.	Encourage the use of a variety of BMPs, as defined by “Best Management Practices for Oil and Gas Development on Public Lands,” http://www.blm.gov/bmp/ . (These BMPs may be changed over time).	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
EXCEPTION, WAIVER, AND/OR MODIFICATION			
Stipulations or restrictions may be waived or reduced if resource conditions change, the protection is no longer necessary, or if the lessee can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts.	Same as Alternative A.	Exception (case-by-case temporary), waiver (permanent exemption), and modification (change stipulation) criteria would be applied on a case-by-case basis consistent with the process identified in Appendix E.	Same as Alternative C.
COAs would be applied to operational approvals as determined necessary by the authorized officer to protect other resources and values within the terms, conditions, and stipulations of the lease contract.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
GEOPHYSICAL EXPLORATION			
Lease stipulations for oil and gas development do not necessarily apply to geophysical exploration activities. Using oil and gas stipulations as a reference point, restrictions would be determined at the permitting stage on a case-by-case basis.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
SURFACE RECLAMATION			
Disturbed areas not needed for lease operations would be revegetated as soon as possible. The operator would reestablish perennial vegetation that is compatible with surrounding undisturbed vegetation. The plant species to be seeded and the seeding rate would be approved by the	A Plan for Surface Reclamation is required with every APD or POD and is subject to approval by the authorized officer. The Surface Reclamation Standard described in Appendix O would be attached as a COA to APDs and associated ROWs. The Surface Reclamation Standard could be	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>authorized officer prior to seeding. Successful revegetation would be considered completed when the percent canopy cover is equal to surrounding undisturbed vegetation. The species considered in measuring percent cover would be those seeded as well as desirable preexisting species. Undesirable weedy species (e.g., kuchia, cheatgrass, and other noxious weeds) would not be included unless otherwise directed by the authorized officer. The operator would continue revegetation efforts using any and all cultural methods available until this standard is met.</p> <p>Noxious weeds, which may be introduced due to soil disturbance and reclamation, would be treated by methods to be approved by the authorized officer. These methods may include biological, mechanical, or chemical methods. If chemical methods are approved, the lessee must submit a Pesticide Use Proposal to the authorized officer 60 days prior to the planned application date. Further detail is provided in Section 2.6.1.2.</p>	<p>modified based on new information or to meet specific needs, but the protection level envisioned in the COAs would be maintained.</p>		
<p>LOCATABLE MINERALS, MINERAL MATERIALS, AND NON-ENERGY LEASABLE MINERALS</p>			
<p>Goal: Allow for the availability of federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and non-energy leasable minerals for exploration and development consistent with national policy.</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and make available federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and non-energy leasable minerals for exploration and development. 2. Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, and non-energy leasable minerals. 3. Provide mineral materials needed for community and economic purposes. 4. Minimize and eliminate fraudulent claims. 5. Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. 			
<p>All public land is open to mineral entry</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, except that</p>	<p>All areas open, except that the following</p>	<p>All areas open, except that the following</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>and development under the General Mining Law of 1872 unless it is proposed for administrative withdrawal or wilderness designation. Locatable mineral exploration and development on public land would be regulated under 43 CFR 3800.</p> <p>All areas open except—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Emerald Mountain SRMA. 	<p>Vermillion Basin would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location.</p>	<p>would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • WSR suitable segments • Dinosaur North • Cold Spring Mountain • Limestone Ridge • Irish Canyon ACEC • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1 • Vermillion Basin • Emerald Mountain SRMA. 	<p>would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • All ACECs • All suitable WSR segments • Vermillion Basin • Dinosaur North • Cross Mountain backcountry area • Diamond Breaks backcountry area • Pinyon Ridge backcountry area • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • South Sand Wash SRMA • Serviceberry SRMA • Fly Creek SRMA • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Natural Systems ACEC • Cold Spring Mountain SRMA.
<p>Applications for removing common variety mineral materials, including sand and gravel, would continue to be processed as they are received. Interdisciplinary review of each proposal would determine stipulations to protect important surface values. Mineral material sales would not be allowed in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA • Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain area. 	<p>Same as Alternative A, except mineral material sales would not be allowed in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Vermillion Basin • Cedar Mountain area. 	<p>The following areas would be closed to mineral material sales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Limestone Ridge area • Lookout Mountain area • Vermillion Basin • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Irish Canyon ACEC • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1 • Dinosaur North area (outside WSA) • Cold Spring Mountain area (outside WSA). 	<p>The following areas would be closed to mineral material sales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • All ACECs • Vermillion Basin • Dinosaur North • Lookout Mountain area • Limestone Ridge area • Cross Mountain backcountry area • Diamond Breaks backcountry area • Pinyon Ridge backcountry area • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Cold Spring Mountain SRMA.
<p>BLM would consider leasing geothermal energy resources or other leasable</p>	<p>Lease specific areas consistent with oil and gas leasing categories above.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>minerals as each application is received. Minerals that are leasable only on lands acquired under the Bankhead Jones Act would be treated as other leasable minerals. In Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC, Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA, Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA, and Cedar Mountain area, leasing of nonenergy leasable minerals for underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. Leasing for surface mining would not be allowed in these four areas.</p> <p>Existing decisions apply. Specific areas to be consistent with oil and gas leasing categories by alternative (surface only).</p>	<p>Underground mining would be allowed throughout the RMPPA, except where limited by applicable law.</p>		
<p>New leases and mineral material sales within fragile soil and water areas (e.g., Vermillion Management Unit) would be subject to the performance objectives described under Soil Resources.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p>COAL AND OIL SHALE</p>			
<p>Goal: Allow for the availability of the federal coal and oil shale estate for exploration and development.</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and make available the federal coal and oil shale estate for exploration and development consistent with appropriate suitability studies to increase energy supplies. 2. Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of federal coal and oil shale estate. 3. Promote the use of BMPs, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. 			
<p>Coal</p>			
<p>Approximately 638,800 acres (containing an estimated 5.8 billion tons of coal) are acceptable for further consideration for federal coal leasing. Of this total, approximately 457,090 acres (an estimated 4.2 billion tons of coal) are acceptable for further consideration for leasing for surface or</p>	<p>Lands found acceptable in RMP would be available for further consideration for leasing and exchange; however, all lands determined to be suitable, unsuitable, or unacceptable for further consideration for leasing and exchange may be reviewed, and suitability determinations modified based on new</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B, except 623,860 acres deemed acceptable for further consideration for leasing for either surface or underground development.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B, but only 615,770 acres are suitable for surface mining after no lease decision for Little Yampa Canyon SRMA.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>underground development.</p>	<p>data during activity planning efforts. Unsuitability criteria apply only to surface coal mining, not underground mining.</p> <p>The lands with coal resource development potential in the Little Snake coal planning area are located in the Yampa and Dansforth Hills Coal Fields. The coal planning includes federal coal within the following townships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth Principal Meridian • T. 3 N., R. 85 W. • T. 3 N., R. 86 W. • T. 3 N., R. 90 W. - R. 95 W. • T. 4 N., R. 86 W. - R. 95 W. • T. 5 N., R. 85 W. - R. 93 W. • T. 6 N., R. 86 W. - R. 93 W. • T. 7 N., R. 87 W. - R. 94 W. • T. 8 N., R. 86 W. - R. 94 W. • T. 9 N., R. 86 W. <p>The coal planning area contains approximately 675,550 acres of federal coal lands that are available for underground coal mining.</p> <p>Unsuitability criteria were applied to these lands to determine areas unsuitable for surface mining. Results are shown in Appendix C.</p> <p>After applying unsuitability criteria and exceptions, approximately 639,550 acres are acceptable for further consideration for leasing for surface or underground development.</p>		
<p>Approximately 181,670 acres (an estimated 1.3 billion tons of coal) are acceptable for further consideration for leasing for underground development only (RMP/ROD pages 7–8).</p>	<p>No similar action (see above).</p>	<p>No similar action (see above).</p>	<p>No similar action (see above).</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
Approximately 266 million tons of coal throughout the region are not available for surface mining.			
Site-specific activity planning, including additional environmental analysis, is needed before a decision to lease specific tracts can be made.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Exploratory drilling would be allowed to obtain sufficient data for resource management decisions and fair market value determinations.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
NSO stipulations would be used to protect Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain, Cedar Mountain SRMAs, raptor and roost sites and concentration areas, migratory bird habitats, floodplains, alluvial valley floors, and federally designated critical habitats for threatened or endangered plant and animal species.	Same as Alternative A, except the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would not contain NSO stipulations for coal.	Same as Alternative B, except NGD stipulations (not NSO) would be removed and Juniper Mountain SRMA, Zone 1 of the Little Yampa SRMA would be acceptable for further consideration only for underground coal mining, with a no surface occupancy stipulation, and the Cedar Mountain SRMA would not be available to coal leasing.	Same as Alternative B, but the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA and Cedar Mountain SRMA would be closed.
CSU stipulations would be used to protect coal mines from oil and gas development where the mining method or location is such that location of subsequent wells can avoid significant conflicts, fragile soil areas, steep slopes, and riparian/wetland vegetation.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Oil Shale			
BLM would consider leasing other leasable minerals as each application is received (ROD page 10).	BLM would consider leasing oil shale as each application is received. Lands available for leasing are consistent with lands available for oil and gas leasing or coal leasing, depending on the extraction method (e.g., in situ or mined).	BLM would consider leasing oil shale as each application is received. Future oil shale leasing would require additional NEPA analysis, as well as a Plan Amendment. This additional NEPA analysis could preclude development.	Same as Alternative B; recognizing that different areas would be open to leasing because of consistency with oil and gas and coal decisions under this alternative.
LIVESTOCK GRAZING			
Goal A: Manage resources, vegetation, and watersheds to sustain a variety of uses, including livestock grazing, and to maintain the long-term health of the rangelands.			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Goal B: Provide for efficient management of livestock grazing allotments. Goal C: Contribute to the stability and sustainability of the livestock industry.</p>			
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and improve forage species diversity and abundance by managing to meet plant reproductive and physiological needs. Minimize conflicts between livestock and other grazing animals in areas of increased pressure on forage and riparian zones. Manage plant use by all foraging species at a level that maintains plant health and protects watersheds. <p>Goal B Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To sustain flexible and viable agriculture operations, allow the opportunity to create reserve conservation allotment (RCA) by partnering with State, federal, or private landowners when lands or permits become available without requiring involuntary AUM relinquishments or transfers. An RCA is an allotment with no associated grazing permit, whose purpose is to provide alternative forage for BLM permittees/lessees during the rest requirement while their customary allotment is undergoing an approved rangeland restoration/recovery project. 			
<p>Appropriate actions for improving allotments that do not meet <i>Standards and Guides</i> could include, but would not be limited to, adjustment of permitted AUMs, modified turnout dates, livestock water developments, range improvements, modified grazing periods, growing season rest, modified grazing systems, closing areas, riparian pastures, exclosures, implementation of forage utilization levels, and livestock conversions.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p>Allow livestock grazing using federal preference (141,403 AUMs) until monitoring studies and land health evaluations are completed. Appropriate action would be taken where existing livestock grazing management is determined to be a significant causal factor for not meeting land health standards.</p>	<p>Manage livestock grazing using <i>Standards and Guides</i> process while working closely with permittees to increase livestock forage.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Manage livestock grazing using <i>Standards and Guides</i> process to improve habitat for other resources.</p>
<p>Monitor rangelands on M and I category allotments to yield information needed to make decisions on livestock stocking rates, proceeding as funding and staff allow from worst to better forage conditions as established by 1981–1983 rangeland inventories, and including 13</p>	<p>Monitor rangelands focusing on allotments where land health standards have not been met or riparian assessments are “functioning at risk”, “non-functional”, or show a “downward trend.”</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>conflict allotments (numbers 4203, 4206, 4207, 4209, 4210, 4219, 4225, 4302, 4431, 4332, 4520, 4521, 4522).</p>			
<p>Work closely with CDOW to reduce livestock/big game conflicts that would improve vegetative and forage conditions.</p>	<p>Work closely with CDOW to reduce livestock/big game conflicts, focusing on decreasing big game populations.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Reduce livestock/big game conflicts, which would improve vegetative and forage conditions, by focusing on decreasing livestock use.</p>
<p>Implement vegetation land treatments on 68 allotments. Use such treatments as interseeding, burning and reseeding, spraying, and plowing and reseeding. Adhere to established procedures and design specifications to protect all resource uses and values. Complete a benefit/cost analysis and environmental analysis before any treatments are implemented.</p>	<p>When consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to increase forage production.</p>	<p>When consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to maintain a variety of habitats and sustainable livestock grazing. See Vegetation section for treatment targets.</p>	<p>When consistent with healthy rangeland ecosystems, emphasize vegetation treatments to maintain or increase a variety of habitats for wildlife species. See Vegetation section for treatment targets.</p>
<p>Construct range improvement projects on 69 allotments. Use improvements that would control livestock use, improve distribution, and improve riparian/wetland habitat. Complete a benefit/cost analysis and environmental analysis before any projects are implemented.</p>	<p>Consider range improvement developments for the purpose of increasing livestock forage where they are economically feasible and consistent with other resources.</p>	<p>Consider range improvement developments for the purpose of improving rangeland diversity, condition, and sustainability, by such actions as control of pinyon-juniper encroachment and decadent sagebrush.</p>	<p>Range improvements would be allowed only to maintain sustainable natural diversity of plant communities, and only when identified through the Rangeland Health assessment process.</p>
<p>The two existing RCAs (Experiment Station and College Station) would remain and continue to be used for emergency situations.</p>	<p>Criteria in Appendix F would be used to establish RCAs. Management plans would be developed for all allotments to be used as an RCA. Criteria for Permittee/Lessee Use—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority would be given to those permittees/lessees whose customary allotments are under an approved rangeland restoration/ recovery project. • Emergency conditions, such as wildfire. 	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT to be used for drought or for overuse of customary allotment. 		
No similar action.	All lands that have been acquired through exchanges since completion of the last RMP, and all lands that would be acquired in the future, unless noted specifically otherwise, would be open to grazing.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
Exploration (including seismic exploration, drilling, or other development or production activity) would generally not be allowed on domestic sheep lambing grounds during lambing activity. Lambing activities usually fall between April 10 and June 30 and last for approximately six weeks. Dates for the six week closure would be determined for each operation as local conditions dictate.	No similar action.	Same as Alternative A.	No similar action.
RECREATION			
<p>Goal A: Provide a diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities, activities, and experiences for various user groups, unorganized visitors and affected communities, their residences, economies, and the environment.</p>			
<p>Goal B: Provide visitor services including interpretive and educational information.</p>			
<p>Goal C: Support tourism efforts for local economic diversification associated with public land resources.</p>			
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p>			
<p>1. Increase managed motorized and non-motorized use trails.</p>			
<p>2. Focus development of non-motorized/non-mechanized trails in backcountry areas or where public demand warrants.</p>			
<p>3. Provide legal public access opportunities for recreational uses.</p>			
<p>4. Manage for special recreation permit (SRP) services.</p>			
<p>5. Identify strategies and decisions that could be applied to protect or preserve primitive and semi-primitive areas to provide solitude and backcountry opportunities.</p>			
<p>6. Manage motorized recreation to reduce impacts on big game hunt quality and to promote successful big game harvest on BLM lands.</p>			
<p>Goal B Objectives:</p>			
<p>1. Provide developed facilities in heavy-use areas where use is affecting resources and experiences.</p>			
<p>2. Use education as a means to further resource protection.</p>			
<p>3. Enhance recreational experiences by providing boundary signing and information, and managing campsites and access.</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>4. Continue to coordinate with organized interpretive associations.</p> <p>Goal C Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain cooperative agreements with Colorado State Parks, Moffat County, and Moffat County Sheriff for management of the Yampa River. 2. Continue to coordinate with local and regional recreation economic development organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce and community organizations. 3. Pursue cooperative agreements with other agencies and governments. 			
<p>SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS</p>			
<p>Emerald Mountain</p>			
<p>Emerald Mountain (4,140 acres) would be managed as a SRMA to provide opportunities close to the City of Steamboat Springs for strenuous activities and nature experiences on primitive trails.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>
<p><u>Zone 1—Strenuous Activities</u> Niche—Destination Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Strenuous mountain biking and Nordic skiing on primitive trails. • Experiences—Enjoying access to close-to-home outdoor activities, enjoying strenuous outdoor physical exercise and developing skills and abilities. • Benefits—improved physical fitness, greater competence and confidence, enhanced outdoor oriented lifestyle, and improved understanding of the community’s dependence and impact on public lands and adjoining private lands. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country. • Social—Middle country. • Administrative—Middle country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Management would be geared towards enhancing recreation activity opportunities for visitors to the Steamboat Springs area. A designated trail system would be developed for mountain bikers and Nordic skiers and similar activities. Mechanized travel would be limited to designated roads and trails all year. Non-mechanized muscle-powered travel (i.e., foot, ski, horse, stock) would be permitted anywhere within the zone all year. Additional travel restrictions could be applied by BLM during activity-level planning. • Marketing—Coordinated with BLM’s community partners to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information that targets the experience and benefit opportunities, the character of recreation settings, and the service environment that exists for each Management Zone. • Monitoring—Monitoring would occur to ensure user experiences are met, to ensure compliance with restrictions, and to keep track of trail, trailhead, and facility maintenance and conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Mineral Material Sales—Open, subject to SRMA objectives – Nonenergy Leasables—Open, subject to SRMA objectives – Locatable minerals—Recommended for withdrawal – Coal—Underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. • OHV—Closed (including over-the- 			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>snow vehicles).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VRM—Class II. Lands and Realty—Proposals would be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to constraints to protect sensitive resource value. 			
<p>Zone 2—Nature Experience Niche—Community/Backcountry</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Wildlife viewing, hiking and horseback riding. Experiences—Enjoying natural aesthetics and wildlife, escaping from crowds and enjoying tranquility and peacefulness. Benefits—Includes a closer relationship and appreciation of nature, reduced stress and positive change in mood and emotion, sense of well-being, enhanced awareness of community dependence on public lands and greater community involvement in recreation and land use decisions. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Backcountry. Social—Backcountry. Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Management would be geared towards enhancing recreation activity opportunities for residents of the Steamboat Springs area. Informational signing and materials would be provided for wildlife viewing, hunting, and other targeted activities. Mechanized travel would be prohibited in Zone 2. Muscle-powered 	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>travel (i.e., foot, ski, horse, stock) travel would be permitted anywhere within the zone all year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing—Coordinated with BLM’s community partners to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information that targets the experience and benefit opportunities, the character of recreation settings, and the service environment that exists for each Management Zone. • Monitoring—Monitoring would occur to ensure user experiences are met, to ensure compliance with restrictions, and to keep track of trail, trailhead, and facility maintenance and conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Mineral Material Sales—Open, subject to SRMA objectives – Nonenergy Leasables—Open, subject to SRMA objectives – Locatable minerals—Recommended for withdrawal – Coal—Underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. • OHV—Closed (including over-the-snow vehicles). • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—Proposals would be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to constraints to protect sensitive resource value. 			
Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain			
The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area (19,290 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide	Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area would be identified as an ERMA. See ERMA objectives under the header	The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded by 8,020 acres (Map 2-36)	The existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be expanded to 29,380 acres (Map 2-

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>unrestricted flatwater river float-boating in the region.</p>	<p>below.</p>	<p>and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide camping experiences related to river boating, big game hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education opportunities for local communities and visitors to the area. Juniper Mountain would be identified as a separate SRMA.</p>	<p>37) and identified as the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA to provide camping experiences related to river boating and big game hunting in the region.</p>
<p><u>Zone 1—Yampa River corridor</u> Niche—Community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Flatwater boating (including non-motorized and motorized boating) and camping • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy canyon and river aesthetics, enjoy easy access to diverse recreation, closeness of family and friends, exploration, and escaping everyday responsibilities. • Benefits—Improved outdoor knowledge skills, self-confidence for enjoyment with others, heightened sense of satisfaction with community, sense of adventure, and renewed human spirit. Prescribed Setting Character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country east of Milk Creek, backcountry west of Milk Creek. • Social—Middle country east of Milk Creek, backcountry west of Milk Creek. • Administrative—Backcountry. Activity Planning Framework:</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Yampa River corridor</u> Niche—Community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Non-motorized boating, motorized boating, camping. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy canyon and river aesthetics, enjoy easy access to diverse recreation, closeness of family and friends, exploration, and escaping everyday responsibilities. • Benefits—Improved outdoor knowledge skills, self-confidence for enjoyment with others, heightened sense of satisfaction with community, sense of adventure, and renewed human spirit. Prescribed Setting Character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country east of Milk Creek, backcountry west of Milk Creek. • Social—Middle country east of Milk Creek, backcountry west of Milk Creek. • Administrative—Backcountry. Activity Planning Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide overnight flat- </p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Yampa River corridor</u> Niche—Community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Non-motorized boating, limited motorized boating, camping. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy canyon and river aesthetics, enjoy easy access to diverse recreation, closeness of family and friends, exploration, escaping everyday responsibilities and solitude/isolation from others and services. • Benefits—Improved outdoor knowledge skills, self-confidence for enjoyment with others, heightened sense of satisfaction with community, sense of adventure, renewed human spirit, close relationship with the natural world, and conservation of entire ecosystems in natural state. Prescribed Setting Character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country east of Milk Creek, backcountry west of Milk Creek. • Social—Backcountry. • Administrative—Primitive. Activity Planning Framework:</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Access would be negotiated for parking areas at put-in and take-out points. Other facilities would be constructed as needed for public sanitation and safety. Marketing—Develop a map/brochure to promote visitor health and safety, provide resource protection, and inform the public of available opportunities. Involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach. Monitoring— Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor motorized river boating to gauge if management actions and resulting use are producing targeted recreation opportunities and facilitating their attainment as outcomes. Monitor campsite conditions and use. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Mineral Material Sales—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—NSO – Coal—Underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II. Lands and Realty—No major rights-of-way unless compatible with objectives of SRMA. 		<p>water boating for social groups and families in a natural river canyon atmosphere. Modify roads and trails as needed to mitigate impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing—Involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach. Monitoring—In conjunction with State Parks, monitor motorized river boating to gauge if management actions and resulting use are producing targeted recreation opportunities and facilitating their attainment as outcomes. Monitor campsite conditions and use. A volunteer program with gateway communities/river users to assist with monitoring needs would be explored. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Material Sales—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Underground mining would be allowed with NSO stipulations. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Close and restore roads that have no administrative benefit. Restrict motorized access to the river. Marketing—Involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach. Monitoring—Monitor motorized river boating to gauge if management actions and resulting use are producing targeted recreation opportunities and facilitating their attainment as outcomes. Monitor campsite conditions and use. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Closed. OHV—8,820 acres Closed; 20,560 acres limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
<p><u>Zone 2—North of CR 17</u> No similar action. This area would not be included in the SRMA.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 2—North of CR 17</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting.</p>	<p><u>Zone 2—North of CR 17</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Opportunities for motorized and some non-motorized big game hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. • Experiences—Develop skills and abilities, gain greater sense of achievement, and savor the sight and sound of wildlife. • Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting; improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence; an increased awareness and knowledge of wildlife, historical, and natural landscapes to reduce negative human impact; improved opportunity to view wildlife close-up; positive contributions to local and regional economic stability; and an increased desirability as a place to live or retire. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country. • Social—Middle to front country. • Administrative—Middle country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management— Provide hunting-related wildlife viewing, interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. Dispersed camping designated only if monitoring showed unacceptable impacts; provide camping facilities and improved roads to these facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. • Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. 	<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Opportunities for motorized and some non-motorized big game hunting, camping, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. • Experiences—Develop skills and abilities, gain greater sense of achievement, savor the sight and sound of wildlife; feel good about solitude and isolation from other people and from services. • Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting; improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence; an increased awareness and knowledge of wildlife, historical, and natural landscapes to reduce negative human impact; improved opportunity to view wildlife close-up; positive contributions to local and regional economic stability; an increased desirability as a place to live or retire; closer relationship with the natural world; and conservation of entire ecosystems in natural state. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Backcountry. • Social—Backcountry. • Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide camping facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. • Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. • Monitoring—Monitor user experience

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor user experience and satisfaction, campsite conditions, and use through a sign-in box and road counter. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to oil and gas operations Locatable—Open Mineral Materials—Open Nonenergy Leasables—Open Coal—Open. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<p>and satisfaction, campsite conditions, and use. Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures.</p> <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed to oil and gas operations Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal Mineral Materials—Closed Nonenergy Leasables—Closed Coal—Closed. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA, Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
Juniper Mountain			
<p>Juniper Mountain is currently managed within the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA. See Little Yampa Canyon SRMA.</p>	<p>Juniper Mountain would be identified as an ERMA. See ERMA objectives under the header below.</p>	<p>The Juniper Canyon portion of the existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be identified as the Juniper Mountain SRMA to provide opportunities for boating, hunting, camping, and hiking for visitors and Yampa Valley residents.</p>	<p>The Juniper Canyon portion of the existing Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA would be identified as the Juniper Mountain SRMA.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Yampa River corridor</u> Niche—Community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Day use motorized and non-motorized boating. Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy 	<p><u>Zone 1—Yampa River corridor</u> Niche—Community, where visitors and Yampa Valley residents depend on public lands for recreation and related tourism use. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Day use non-motorized boating and limited motorized boating. Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>canyon and river aesthetics, test endurance, enjoy risk-taking adventure, access diverse backcountry recreation, and escape everyday responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits—Improved outdoor knowledge, skills, and self-confidence for outdoor enjoyment with others, heightened sense of satisfaction with community, greater sense of adventure, and renewed human spirit. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country. • Social—Backcountry. • Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide an opportunity for visitors to engage in a challenging boating experience in a naturally-appearing river canyon atmosphere • Marketing—Involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach. • Monitoring—Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. In conjunction with Colorado State Parks, monitor motorized river boating to gauge if the use is changing the desired recreation experience. <p>Administration :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Open – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—NSO • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails and a managed and maintained motorized trail system. 	<p>canyon and river aesthetics, feel good about solitude and isolation from others and from services, test endurance, enjoy risk-taking adventure, access diverse backcountry recreation, and escape everyday responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits—Improved outdoor knowledge, skills, and self-confidence for outdoor enjoyment with others, heightened sense of satisfaction with community, greater sense of adventure, renewed human spirit, and closer relationship with the natural world. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle country. • Social—Backcountry. • Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Close and restore roads that have no administrative benefit. • Marketing—Involve Colorado State Parks in developing interpretation, education, and public outreach. • Monitoring—Monitor user experience and satisfaction. <p>Administration :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Closed • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. • VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA;

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<p>Class III in all other areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 2—Outside river corridor</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Big game hunting, camping, hiking, and horseback riding. Experiences—Opportunity to develop skills and abilities, to gain a greater sense of achievement, enjoy outdoor physical exercise, and access diverse backcountry recreation. Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, improved physical fitness, improved self-reliance, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Middle country. Social—Backcountry. Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide hunting-related hiking and horseback riding opportunities. Marketing—Work with Chambers of Commerce, adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide access and hunting experiences. 	<p><u>Zone 2—Outside river corridor</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Big game hunting, camping, hiking, and horseback riding. Experiences—Opportunity to develop skills and abilities, to gain a greater sense of achievement, enjoy outdoor physical exercise, and access diverse backcountry recreation. Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, improved physical fitness, improved self-reliance, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Middle country. Social—Backcountry. Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide camping facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. Develop a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system within the area during hunting season. Marketing—Work with Chambers of

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor campsite conditions and use as well as user experience and satisfaction. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas operations – Locatable—Open – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—NSO. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails and a managed and maintained motorized trail system. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<p>Commerce, adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide access and hunting experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Monitor campsite conditions and use, user experience and satisfaction. Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Closed. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class II for areas within line of sight from the river within the SRMA; Class III in all other areas. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
Cedar Mountain			
<p>Cedar Mountain would continue to be managed as part of the ERMA. See ERMA objectives under the header below.</p>	<p>Cedar Mountain would be managed as an ERMA. See ERMA objectives under the header below.</p>	<p>The Cedar Mountain area (900 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide opportunities primarily to residents of Craig for hiking, nature interpretation, and picnicking.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Picnic area</u> Niche—Community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Day use picnicking, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy access to close-to-home outdoor activities, easy access to natural 	<p><u>Zone 1—Picnic area</u> Niche—Community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town. Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Day use picnicking, hiking, and wildlife viewing. Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy access to close-to-home outdoor activities, easy access to natural

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>landscapes, the closeness of family, and savoring the sights and sounds of wildlife.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits—Improved physical fitness, improved maintenance of physical facilities, increased awareness of wildlife and natural landscapes, and stronger ties with family and friends. Improved appreciation for the Yampa Valley and surrounding areas by vantage points. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Rural. Social—Rural. Administrative—Rural. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide family-oriented activities for residents of Craig. Day use only area. Vehicle parking, facilities, interpretation, and a trail system would be provided. Overnight camping and discharging of firearms not associated with hunting would be prohibited. Marketing—Coordinate with City of Craig, Chambers of Commerce, communication site providers, and local sport shops to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information. Monitoring—Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended. Monitor compliance with restrictions and trail maintenance conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas leasing – Locatable—Recommended for 	<p>landscapes, the closeness of family, and savoring the sights and sounds of wildlife.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits—Improved physical fitness, improved maintenance of physical facilities, increased awareness of wildlife and natural landscapes, and stronger ties with family and friends. Improved appreciation for the Yampa Valley and surrounding areas by vantage points. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Rural. Social—Rural. Administrative—Rural. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide family-oriented activities for residents of Craig. Day use only area. Vehicle parking, facilities, interpretation, and a trail system would be provided. Overnight camping and discharging of firearms would be prohibited. Recreational use of area would be restricted to day use (6 a.m. to 10 p.m.). Marketing—Coordinate with City of Craig, Chambers of Commerce, communication site providers, and local sport shops to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information. Monitoring—Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended. Monitor compliance with restrictions and trail maintenance conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy:

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>withdrawal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Closed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A seasonal closure of Cedar Mountain road above the day use area to motorized vehicles would be implemented when necessary to reduce disturbance to nesting raptors and prevent nest abandonment. Administrative access would be permitted. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoidance area for additional ROW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas leasing - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Closed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A seasonal closure of Cedar Mountain road above the day use area to motorized vehicles would be implemented when necessary to reduce disturbance to nesting raptors and prevent nest abandonment. Administrative access would be permitted. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require collocation of communication facilities - Exclusion area for additional ROW.
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 2—Trail system</u></p> <p>Niche—Community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Hiking, jogging, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy access to close-to-home outdoor activities, easy access to natural landscapes, the closeness of family, and seeing visitors getting excited about the area. • Benefits—Improved physical fitness and better health maintenance, improved understanding of rural-urban interface, and increased awareness, knowledge, and 	<p><u>Zone 2—Trail system</u></p> <p>Niche—Community, where Craig residents look to recreate on public lands close to town.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Hiking, jogging, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, and interpretation/education. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy access to close-to-home outdoor activities, easy access to natural landscapes, the closeness of family, and seeing visitors getting excited about the area. • Benefits—Improved physical fitness and better health maintenance, improved understanding of rural-urban interface, and increased awareness, knowledge, and

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>stewardship of wildlife and natural landscapes.</p> <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Rural. • Social—Rural. • Administrative—Rural. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—A managed, non-motorized trail system would be provided and maintained to enhance recreation and interpretive/education activity opportunities for residents of Craig. Day use only area. Vehicle parking, facilities, interpretation, and a trail system would be provided. Overnight camping and discharging of firearms not associated with hunting would be prohibited. • Marketing—Coordinate with City of Craig, Chambers of Commerce, communication site providers, and local sport shops to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information. • Monitoring— Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended. Monitor compliance with restrictions and trail maintenance conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – NSO for oil and gas leasing – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Closed. • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails 	<p>stewardship of wildlife and natural landscapes.</p> <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Rural. • Social—Rural. • Administrative—Rural. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management— A managed, non-motorized and non-mechanized trail system would be provided and maintained to enhance recreation and interpretive/education activity opportunities for residents of Craig. Day use only area. Vehicle parking, facilities, interpretation, and a trail system would be provided. Overnight camping and discharging of firearms not associated with hunting would be prohibited. • Marketing—Coordinate with City of Craig, Chambers of Commerce, communication site providers, local sport shops, and CDOW to provide maps, brochures, and other recreation information. • Monitoring— Actions implemented through a Recreation Area Management Plan. Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended. Monitor compliance with restrictions and trail maintenance conditions. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas leasing – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Closed. • OHV—Limited to designated roads

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A seasonal closure of Cedar Mountain road above the day use area to motorized vehicles would be implemented when necessary to reduce disturbance to nesting raptors and prevent nest abandonment. Administrative access would be permitted. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoidance area for additional ROW. 	and trails. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require collocation of communication facilities - Exclusion area for additional ROW.
South Sand Wash			
Currently, the south Sand Wash area is managed as open to cross-country OHV use within the ERMA.	Same as Alternative A.	The south Sand Wash area (35,510 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide OHV experiences in the Yampa Valley.	Same as Alternative C.
No similar action.	No similar action.	<u>Zone 1—Open play area</u> Market—Community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Off-road motorized recreation experiences. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy risk-taking adventure, the closeness of family, and developing riding skills and abilities. • Benefits—Enhanced sense of personal freedom, reduced mental stress, greater sense of adventure, improved maintenance of physical facilities, and positive contribution to local economy. Prescribed Setting Character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Rural. • Social—Rural. 	<u>Zone 1—Designated roads and trails area</u> Niche—Community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation. Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy risk-taking adventure and new challenges, and temporarily escape everyday responsibilities. • Benefits—Greater retention of desired recreation experience, reduced negative impacts (e.g., litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails), positive contribution to local economy, and enhanced sense of personal freedom. Prescribed Setting Character:

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative—Rural. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Develop a comprehensive management plan, provide family-oriented and skill-developing activities, and identify and sign main access roads and trails through the area. • Marketing—Coordinate with local OHV groups, commercial motorized vehicle suppliers, Chambers of Commerce, and Moffat County to provide maps, brochures, interpretation information, and road/trail planning and development. • Monitoring—Monitor to determine if or when this use approaches or exceeds resource capacity. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Oil and gas leasing—Open – Locatable—Available for mineral location – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Open. • VRM—Class IV. • Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Front country. • Social—Front country. • Administrative—Front country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Develop a comprehensive management plan, provide family-oriented and skill-developing activities, and identify and sign a system of trails to accommodate a wide range of vehicle types and difficulty levels. Crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities. • Marketing—Coordinate with local OHV groups, commercial motorized vehicle suppliers, Chambers of Commerce, and Moffat County to provide maps, brochures, interpretation information, and road/trail planning and development. • Monitoring—Monitor to ensure user experiences and expectations are being met and to ensure that resources are protected. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Oil and gas leasing—Open – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. • VRM—Class IV. • Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
No similar action.	No similar action.	<u>Zone 2—Designated roads and trails</u>	<u>Zone 2—Designated roads and trails</u>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p><u>area</u> Niche—Community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy risk-taking adventure and new challenges and to temporarily escape everyday responsibilities. • Benefits—Greater retention of desired recreation experience, reduced negative impacts (e.g., litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails), positive contribution to local economy, and enhanced sense of personal freedom. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle to front country. • Social—Middle to front country. • Administrative—Middle to front country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Develop a comprehensive management plan, enhance OHV trail riding activities. Together with user groups and local government, identify and sign a system of designated trails to accommodate a wide range of vehicle types and difficulty levels. Crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities. • Marketing—Coordinate with local OHV groups, commercial motorized 	<p><u>area</u> Niche—Community, where Yampa Valley residents would depend on public lands primarily for OHV recreation.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Single-track and double-track OHV riding, novice to expert levels. • Experiences—Opportunity to enjoy risk-taking adventure and new challenges and to temporarily escape everyday responsibilities. • Benefits—Greater retention of desired recreation experience, reduced negative impacts (e.g., litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails), positive contribution to local economy, and enhanced sense of personal freedom. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Middle to front country. • Social—Middle to front country. • Administrative—Middle to front country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management— Develop a comprehensive management plan, enhance OHV trail riding activities. Together with user groups and local government, identify and sign a system of designated trails to accommodate a wide range of vehicle types and difficulty levels. Crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to surface disturbing activities. • Marketing—Coordinate with local OHV groups, commercial motorized

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>vehicle suppliers, Chambers of Commerce, and Moffat County to provide maps, brochures, interpretation information, and road/trail planning and development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended and expectations are being met, and to ensure that resources are protected. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil and gas leasing—Open Locatable—Available for mineral location Nonenergy Leasables—Open Coal—Not available for leasing. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class III. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<p>vehicle suppliers, Chambers of Commerce, and Moffat County to provide maps, brochures, interpretation information, and road/trail planning and development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Monitor to ensure user experiences are as intended and expectations are being met, and to ensure that resources are protected. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil and gas leasing—Open Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal Nonenergy Leasables—Open Coal—Not available for leasing. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class III. Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
Serviceberry			
<p>The Serviceberry area is open to OHV use under the current RMP; however, it is temporarily closed to OHV use. This area is currently managed as part of the ERMA.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, except that temporary OHV closures would be removed and managed as open to OHV use.</p>	<p>The Serviceberry area (12,380 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide backcountry, non-motorized hunting, and heritage interpretation/education experiences for Yampa Valley residents and visitors to the area.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors and other constituents value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objective: • Activities—Big game hunting,</p>	<p><u>Zone 1—Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access</u> Niche—Destination, where national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors and other constituents value the area primarily for big game hunting. Objective: • Activities— Big game hunting,</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>associated camping, and heritage interpretation/education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences—Developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, and enjoying easy access to recreation. Benefits—Reduced wildlife disturbance from recreation users, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, improved physical fitness, positive contributions to local and regional economic stability, and a greater understanding of the area’s heritage. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Middle country. Social—Middle country. Administrative—Middle country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide hunting-related, heritage interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. Provide camping facilities and improved roads to these facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. Develop a managed and maintained trail system within the area. Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. Monitoring—Monitor user experience and satisfaction, campsite, and historic homestead conditions and use. <p>Administration:</p>	<p>associated camping, and heritage interpretation/education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences—Developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, and enjoying easy access to recreation. Benefits—Reduced wildlife disturbance from recreation users, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, improved physical fitness, positive contributions to local and regional economic stability, and a greater understanding of the area’s heritage. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical—Middle country. Social—Middle country. Administrative—Middle country. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management—Provide hunting-related, heritage interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. Provide camping facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. Develop a managed and maintained trail system within the area. Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. Monitoring—Monitor user experience and satisfaction, campsite, and historic homestead conditions and use. <p>Administration:</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Available for mineral location – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—Determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with SRMA objectives.
<p>No similar action.</p>	<p>No similar action.</p>	<p><u>Zone 2—Serviceberry Backcountry Niche</u>—Backcountry, where national and/or local recreation-tourism visitors and communities would value the area for its dispersed, open, and undeveloped character.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Non-motorized big game hunting and associated undeveloped camping, hiking, and other primitive recreation activities. • Experiences—Opportunity to develop skills and abilities, gain a greater sense of achievement, feel good about solitude and isolation, enjoy primitive and unconfined outdoor recreation, and exploration. • Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, improved physical fitness, improved self-confidence, closer relationship with the natural world, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Backcountry. • Social—Backcountry. 	<p><u>Zone 2—Serviceberry Backcountry Niche</u>—Backcountry, where national and/or local recreation-tourism visitors and communities would value the area for its dispersed, open, and undeveloped character.</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Non-motorized big game hunting and associated undeveloped camping, hiking, and other primitive recreation activities. • Experiences—Opportunity to develop skills and abilities, gain a greater sense of achievement, feel good about solitude and isolation, enjoy primitive and unconfined outdoor recreation, and exploration. • Benefits—Greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, improved physical fitness, improved self-confidence, closer relationship with the natural world, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Backcountry. • Social—Backcountry.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative—Backcountry. Activity Planning Framework: • Management—Provide opportunities for primitive hunting and other recreation activities. Develop some managed and maintained non-motorized trails within the area. • Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. • Monitoring—Monitor user experience and satisfaction, and campsite conditions and use. Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Available for mineral location – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative—Backcountry. Activity Planning Framework: • Management—Provide opportunities for primitive hunting and other recreation activities. Develop some minimally managed and maintained non-motorized trails within the area. • Marketing—In partnership with CDOW and local Chambers of Commerce, increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. • Monitoring—Monitor user experience and satisfaction, and campsite conditions and use. Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Fly Creek			
<p>The Fly Creek area is open to OHV use under the current RMP; however, it is temporarily closed to OHV use. This area is currently managed as part of the ERMA.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, except that temporary OHV closures would be removed and managed as open to OHV use.</p>	<p>The Fly Creek area (12,340 acres) would be administered as a backcountry, non-motorized hunting area, as part of the ERMA.</p> <p>Increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts.</p> <p>Develop a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system within the</p>	<p>The Fly Creek area (12,340 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide backcountry, non-motorized hunting experiences.</p> <p><u>All one zone</u></p> <p>Niche—Destination</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Non-motorized big game

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>area.</p> <p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Available for mineral location - Nonenergy Leasables—Open - Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis. 	<p>hunting and associated undeveloped camping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences—Opportunity to develop skills and abilities and to gain a greater sense of achievement. • Benefits—Reduced wildlife disturbance from recreational users, reduced hunter conflicts, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Backcountry. • Social—Primitive. • Administrative—Backcountry. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Develop a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system within the area. Increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts. Maintain property boundary signing. • Marketing—Coordinate with CDOW, local adjacent landowners, and permitted outfitters to provide hunting and recreation information. • Monitoring—Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. Monitor user experience and satisfaction. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Nonenergy Leasables—Open

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Dinosaur North Area (outside of WSA)			
<p>Multiple use outside existing WSAs, with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open to minerals and energy - Locatable—Open - Nonenergy Leasables—Open - Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Open. • VRM—Wild Mountain Management Unit would be VRM Class II. No other specific VRM designations. • Lands and Realty—No restrictions, case-by-case basis. 	<p>Same as Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for the Wild Mountain Management Unit.</p>	<p>No designation, with the following prescriptions:</p> <p>Objective—Manage to protect naturalness, opportunities for semi-primitive recreation, and solitude.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed to oil and gas operations - Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal - Mineral Materials—Closed - Nonenergy Leasables—Closed - Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance; no wind energy. 	<p>The Dinosaur North area (45,620 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <p><u>All one zone</u></p> <p>Niche—Community</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. • Experiences—Solitude and isolation, sense of independence, and physical exercise. • Benefits—Closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of entire ecosystems in natural state. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Primitive. • Social—Primitive. • Administrative—Primitive. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide minimally developed trailhead parking and interpretive information adjacent to roads that provide access to the edges of access points. • Marketing—Coordinate with Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations,

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			<p>and adjacent landowners to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring—Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. Monitor user experience and satisfaction. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed to oil and gas operations Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal Mineral Materials—Closed Nonenergy Leasables—Closed Coal—Not available for leasing. OHV—Closed. VRM—Class II. Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion; no wind energy.
Cold Spring Area (outside of WSA)			
<p>Multiple use outside existing WSAs, with the following management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to minerals and energy Locatable—Open Nonenergy Leasables—Open Coal—Not available for leasing. OHV—Majority limited to existing, remainder is open. VRM—Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit would be VRM Class II. No other specific VRM designations. Lands and Realty—No restrictions, case-by-case basis. 	<p>Same as Alternative A, except there would be no specific VRM designation for the Cold Spring Mountain Management Unit.</p>	<p>No designation, with the following prescriptions:</p> <p>Objective—Manage to protect naturalness, provide opportunities for semi-primitive recreation and solitude.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed to oil and gas operations Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal Mineral Materials—Closed Nonenergy Leasables—Closed Coal—Not available for leasing. OHV—Limited to designated roads and trails. VRM—Class III. Lands and Realty—ROW avoidance; accept wind energy applications on case-by-case basis. 	<p>The Cold Spring Mountain area (30,470 acres) would be identified as a SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <p><u>All one zone</u></p> <p>Niche—Community</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities—Hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. Experiences—Solitude and isolation, greater sense of independence, and physical exercise. Benefits—Closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of functioning ecosystems in natural

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			<p>state.</p> <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Primitive. • Social—Primitive. • Administrative—Primitive. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide minimally developed trailhead parking and interpretive information adjacent to roads that provide access to the edges of access points. Provide minimally managed and signed trail system. • Marketing—Coordinate with Browns Park Wildlife Refuge, Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations, and adjacent landowners to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information. • Monitoring—Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. Monitor user experience and satisfaction. <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion; no wind energy.
Vermillion Basin Area			
No SRMA would be designated. Area would be managed as described in the	No SRMA would be designated. Area would be managed as described in the	No SRMA would be designated. Area would be managed as described in the	The Vermillion Basin area (77,080 acres) would be identified as a

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section.</p>	<p>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section.</p>	<p>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Outside Existing WSAs section.</p>	<p>SRMA to provide primitive recreational experiences in largely natural settings.</p> <p><u>All one zone</u></p> <p>Niche—Community</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities—Hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, and hunting. • Experiences—Solitude and isolation, greater sense of independence, and physical exercise. • Benefits—Closer relationship with the natural world, improved physical fitness, greater retention of distinctive natural landscapes, and conservation of functioning ecosystems in natural state. <p>Prescribed Setting Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical—Primitive. • Social—Primitive. • Administrative—Primitive. <p>Activity Planning Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management—Provide minimally developed trailhead parking and interpretive information adjacent to roads that provide access to the edges of access points. Provide minimally managed and signed trail system. • Marketing—Coordinate with Chambers of Commerce, non-motorized recreation organizations, and adjacent landowners in to provide maps, brochures, and recreation information. • Monitoring—Monitor to ensure compliance with motor vehicle closures. Monitor user experience and satisfaction.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
			Administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to new oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—Exclusion area.
EXTENSIVE RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS			
The remainder of the RMPPA would receive limited management as an ERMA where recreation use is dispersed and requires only minimal management. BLM would provide basic information on public safety and recreation opportunities within the RMPPA, and provide access and minimal facilities as demand warrants.	All BLM-managed lands within the planning area that are not identified as a SRMA would be in the ERMA. Objectives for the ERMA are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Health and Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide direction and destination signing for public safety and service. – Achieve greater understanding of safety hazards and risks associated with recreation activities. • User Conflicts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus public land boundary signing in fragmented lands to reduce trespass onto private lands. – Monitor user conflicts to determine if changes in transportation planning or other activity planning are needed. • Resource Protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitor resource conditions to determine if changes in transportation planning or other activity planning are needed. – Use education as a means to 	All BLM-managed lands within the planning area that are not identified as a SRMA would be in the ERMA. Objectives for the ERMA are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Health and Safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide direction and destination signing for public safety and service. – Achieve greater understanding of safety hazards and risks associated with recreation activities. • User Conflicts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus public land boundary signing in fragmented lands to reduce trespass onto private lands. – Monitor user conflicts and apply criteria in Appendix F to determine if transportation planning or other activity planning is triggered. • Resource Protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitor resource conditions and apply criteria in Appendix F to determine if transportation planning or other activity planning is triggered. 	Same as Alternative C.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	further resource protection.	– Use education as a means to further resource protection.	
LANDS WITH BACKCOUNTRY CHARACTERISTICS			
No similar action.	No similar action.	No similar action.	<p><u>Cross Mountain Area</u> 3,040 acres adjacent to Cross Mountain WSA. See Map 2-39. Objective—Provide backcountry recreation experience in predominantly natural settings. Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area.
No similar action.	No similar action.	No similar action.	<p><u>Diamond Breaks Area</u> 1,750 acres adjacent to Diamond Breaks WSA. See Map 2-39. Objective—Provide backcountry recreation experience in predominantly natural settings. Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
No similar action.	No similar action.	No similar action.	<p>area.</p> <p><u>Pinyon Ridge Area</u> 4,870 acres. See Map 2-39. Objective—Provide backcountry recreation experience in predominantly natural settings. Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals and Energy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closed to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Recommended for withdrawal – Mineral Materials—Closed – Nonenergy Leasables—Closed – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class II. • Lands and Realty—ROW exclusion area.
No similar action.	No similar action.	<p>The Flycreek area (12,340 acres) would be administered as a backcountry, non-motorized hunting area.</p> <p>Increase education and interpretation during hunting season to reduce resource impacts and conflicts.</p> <p>Develop a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system within the area.</p> <p>Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minerals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open to oil and gas operations – Locatable—Available to mineral location – Nonenergy Leasables—Open – Coal—Not available for leasing. • OHV—Closed. • VRM—Class III. • Lands and Realty—ROW would be considered on a case-by-case basis. 	No similar action.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
DEVELOPED RECREATION SITES			
No similar action.	No similar action.	Increase number of interpretive sites and viewing pullouts as the need and opportunities arise.	Same as Alternative C.
The following current sites would remain at the same service and use levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duffy Mountain River Access • Campgrounds at Irish Canyon and Rocky Reservoir • Picnic Sites at Irish Canyon and Cedar Mountain. 	No additional recreation sites would be developed and current sites would remain at the same service and use levels.	Current sites would remain at the same service and use levels. Provide additional developed recreation sites in association with SRMAs (campgrounds, boat launch, picnic sites).	Same as Alternative C.
No similar action for disposal of game carcasses or carcass parts.	No similar action for disposal of game carcasses or carcass parts.	For the purposes of ensuring public health and safety and preserving quality recreation experiences, the following restriction would apply to BLM lands within the RMPPA: Disposal or abandonment of game carcasses or carcass parts would be prohibited within 300 feet of any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or developed day-use area.	Same as Alternative C.
MANAGEMENT OF THE YAMPA RIVER CORRIDOR			
No similar action.	No similar action.	Within the Yampa River corridor, monitor the quality of the following indicators of recreation experience, and regulate the use of sites and access points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site disturbance • User conflict • Public health and safety • Other resource impacts. 	Same as Alternative C.
SPECIAL RECREATION PERMITS			
Consider SRPs on a case-by-case basis depending on applications received.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
Consider commercial outfitter camps on a case-by-case basis.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Discourage commercial outfitter camps on BLM-administered land.
Authorize commercial use permits that provide recreational opportunities, enhance recreational experiences, and protect resources.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
<p>Current plans provide no guidance on competitive events.</p> <p>There would continue to be no guidance on competitive events or vending per current plans.</p>	<p>Permit no competitive events in WSAs.</p> <p>Authorize motorized and non-motorized competitive events consistent with OHV area and road/trail designations.</p> <p>No similar action.</p> <p>Permitted commercial events in the ERMA would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Permitted commercial events in backcountry SRMAs (Serviceberry SRMA and Emerald Mountain SRMA) would be limited to 50 participants and non-motorized events.</p> <p>Permitted commercial events in the ERMA and non-backcountry SRMAs (Emerald Mountain SRMA, Cedar Mountain SRMA, South Sand Wash SRMA, Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, and Juniper Mountain SRMA) would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Permitted commercial events in backcountry SRMAs (Emerald Mountain SRMA, Serviceberry SRMA, Fly Creek SRMA, Cold Spring Mountain SRMA, Dinosaur North SRMA) would be limited to 25 participants and non-motorized events.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
Current plans provide no guidance on vending.	Authorize vending in conjunction with organized events or when the vending is necessary to support protection of resources or recreation use.	Same as Alternative B.	Do not allow vending in conjunction with organized events.
<p>Maintain cooperative agreements with Colorado State Parks for management of the Yampa River.</p> <p>Continue coordination with local and regional recreation economic development organizations such as Moffat County Chamber of Commerce and the Yampa Valley Alliance.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A, but in addition work proactively with local communities and governments to identify opportunities for—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage tourism (scenic backcountry byways [e.g., Godiva Rim and Lookout Mountain]). • Watchable wildlife sites. • Cultural resources tours. 	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
FORESTRY			
<p>Goal: Management of forest and woodland communities that are resilient to disturbances from insects, disease, and wildfires.</p>			
<p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide forest and woodland products on a sustainable basis. 2. Manage forest stands to maintain appropriate species composition and stand density. 			
<p>Manage 6,330 acres of commercial forest lands to produce a variety of forest products on a sustained yield basis, and manage the remaining commercial forest lands using limited techniques such as natural revegetation and minimal cultural treatments.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Manage forest communities for forest health using fire and other treatments (see Vegetation section), and allowing product sales. Harvesting forest products killed by wildfires and bark beetle attacks may be warranted when consistent with resource goals/objectives.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
<p>Manage approximately 37,600 acres of woodland to produce a variety of woodland products on a sustained-yield basis and apply limited management to the remaining woodland acreage.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Manage woodland communities for woodland health using fire and other treatments (see Vegetation section) and allowing product sales. Authorization to harvest forest or woodland products, commercially or non-commercially, would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Commercial forest and woodland product harvest, personal use firewood gathering, and Christmas tree harvest would not be permitted in the following areas: Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Juniper Mountain SRMA, Cedar Mountain SRMA, and Irish Canyon ACEC. Restrictions on personal use firewood gathering do not apply to campfire wood. However, only dead material can be harvested for campfire wood.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
LANDS AND REALTY			
<p>Goal A: Consolidate BLM's land ownership pattern in Routt and Moffat Counties. Goal B: Increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of public land management. Goal C: Allow for appropriate ROW routes and development sites (e.g., renewable energy, communication, and other uses) while identifying areas that would not be compatible with such use.</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify all the lands for exchange, sale, or disposal within the LSFO by zone. 2. Through either exchange or sale, look for opportunities to consolidate BLM lands and/or acquire additional lands. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify criteria for the disposal of public land through sale or exchange. <p>Goal C Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide access for the development of renewable energy resources in an environmentally responsible manner. 2. Provide access for the development of roads and trails, utilities, transmission lines, communication sites, and other uses in an environmentally responsible manner. 3. Provide access for the development of oil and gas pipeline routes and other uses associated with oil and gas development in an environmentally responsible manner. 4. Identify and establish major utility and transportation corridors within the planning area. 			
<p>LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENTS</p>			
<p>BLM-administered lands in the RMPPA are divided into general retention and disposal areas.</p> <p>The retention area is the existing land base to be managed under multiple use concepts. All land tenure adjustment actions (including recreation and public purposes [R&PP] actions and exchanges), except sales under Section 203 of FLPMA, would be considered on a case-by-case basis if the public interest would be served. Section 302 leases and permits would be allowed. Conveyance actions would be precluded in wilderness and other special management areas.</p> <p>Disposal land tenure adjustment actions would be allowed on approximately 6,670 acres of public land that meet the criteria for disposal under applicable authority. Section 302 leases and permits would also be allowed.</p> <p>Acquisition of land would be pursued based on identified resource values and needs (RMP/ROD pages 30–31).</p>	<p>Disposal land tenure adjustment actions (both exchanges and sales) would be allowed on lands that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands suitable for public purposes adjacent to or of special importance to local communities, State, and federal agencies for purposes including, but not limited to, community expansion, extended community services, or economic development • Lands without legal public access • Lands that have facilities that are in trespass and pre-date the RMP • Isolated lands with public access by foot or horseback only • Lands with irregular shapes, narrow parcels, small parcels, or any configuration that makes the land difficult to manage and increases trespass situations • Lands with public road accesses that are so small that they cannot be proactively managed for a variety of resource values 	<p>BLM-administered lands in the RMPPA would be divided into three retention and disposal zones—the East, Central, and West Zones (Map 2-40). Disposal and exchange criteria specific to each zone are the same as under Alternative B, with the additional criteria for each zone described as follows:</p> <p>East Zone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek opportunities to exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of non-federal lands within LSFO, as appropriate, and in the public interest. • Look for opportunities to exchange lands with the appropriate local, and State agencies to facilitate one-agency management in particular areas, including Stagecoach State Park, Steamboat Lake State Park, Indian Run State Wildlife, Steamboat Springs Mountain Park, and the 	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands that would be better suited in private or other agency ownership. <p>Acquisition land tenure adjustment actions would be allowed on lands that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lands that would help block up existing BLM land • Lands near communities that provide open space, preserve agriculture, protect wildlife and the environment, enhance recreational opportunities, and generally serve the public well • Lands that would provide public access to public lands or other public assets, including, but not limited to, river access • Retain lands that are blocked up, have public access and significant public value, and can be efficiently managed. • Other land tenure adjustments would be processed on a case-by-case basis. 	<p>Jimmy Dun Gulch CDOW/SLB lease area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and seek acquisition of additional lands within identified acquisition areas, including Sleeping Giant, West Gibraltar Peak, Copper Ridge, Pagoda/Hamilton, Dry Fork/Bull Gulch, Sage Creek, Bear Gulch, Little Middle Creek, Rattle Snake Butte (near Oak Creek), and Watson Creek (near Yampa) areas. • Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the benefit of the public. <p>Central Zone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the opportunity arises, exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of non-federal lands within LSFO, as appropriate, and in the public interest. • LU lands should be retained as much as possible, and acquisition of additional lands in the area should be actively sought to protect wildlife habitat, especially sage-grouse habitat. • Look to exchange lands with the appropriate State agencies to facilitate one agency management in particular areas, including Little Snake State Wildlife area. • Retain and seek acquisition of additional lands within identified acquisition areas, including Thornburg Mountain, Yampa Canyon SRMA, Juniper Mountain SRMA, and 	

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		<p>Serviceberry Mountain areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the benefit of the public. <p>West Zone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In rare cases, exchange or sell lands (surface and/or mineral estate) to facilitate better management of BLM lands and to benefit the public. Sales should be tied to identification of the purchase of non-federal lands within LSFO, as appropriate, and in the public interest. • Look for opportunities to exchange lands with the appropriate parties to facilitate one-agency management in particular areas, including the Sand Wash Basin and Vermillion Basin areas. • Additional retention or acquisition areas can be identified during the life of the plan for the benefit of the public. 	
RIGHTS-OF-WAY			
<p>No ROW corridors are formally designated in the RMP/ROD. However, the West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS evaluates issues associated with the designation of energy corridors on federal lands in eleven Western states, including Colorado.</p> <p>The existing and potential corridors identified as suitable on page 29 of the RMP/ROD and shown on pages 32 and 33 of the RMP/ROD are considered open and are preferred roads and trails. Minor ROWs would be processed on a</p>	<p>ROWs allowed on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>Encourage ROW in the following existing corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major roads, including county roads (e.g., CR 20, 4, 7, 57) • Power transmission lines • Oil and gas pipelines. 	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>case-by-case basis, generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs. ROWs would be allowed in all areas, if needed, to develop valid existing rights.</p>			
<p>Specific areas unsuitable for major ROWs are—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Limestone Ridge ACEC/RNA • Lookout Mountain ACEC • Irish Canyon ACEC • Cross Mountain ACEC. 	<p>ROW Exclusion Areas would be limited to the WSAs.</p>	<p>ROW Exclusion Areas include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Limestone Ridge area • Vermillion Basin • Irish Canyon ACEC. 	<p>ROW Exclusion Areas include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs • Lookout Mountain ACEC • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Irish Canyon ACEC • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC • Vermillion Basin • Dinosaur North SRMA • Cold Spring Mountain SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Cross Mountain backcountry area • Diamond Breaks backcountry area • Pinyon Ridge Backcountry area.
<p>Specific areas that are sensitive for siting major ROWs include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Occupied black-footed ferret habitat. 	<p>ROW Avoidance Areas include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupied black-footed ferret habitat • Vermillion Basin • Emerald Mountain SRMA. 	<p>ROW Avoidance Areas include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VRM II areas • West Cold Spring WSA • Cold Spring Mountain • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA Zone 1 • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Dinosaur North • Occupied black-footed ferret habitat. 	<p>ROW Avoidance Areas include—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Systems ACECs (Cold Desert Shrublands ACEC, Gibben's Beardtongue ACEC, Bull Canyon ACEC, G Gap ACEC, Little Juniper Canyon ACEC, Bassett Spring ACEC, No Name Spring ACEC, Pot Creek ACEC, Whiskey Springs ACEC, Willow Spring ACEC, Deception Creek ACEC) • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Occupied black-footed ferret habitat.
EASEMENTS			
<p>Pursue easements for access to public lands on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Actively pursue easements through specific parcels to improve access to public lands for recreation use, such as</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
		hunting and fishing areas. Actively pursue easements for access to develop identified transportation and utility corridors.	
COMMUNICATION SITES			
Review communication site proposals on a case-by-case basis.	All sites open except in ROW exclusion areas. Priority goes to collocation of facilities and use of existing sites to minimize total number of sites. Where possible, use best available technologies (e.g., tower guy wires) to reduce migratory bird mortality.	Same as Alternative B.	All new facilities would be located on existing sites. Require best available technologies (e.g., tower guy wires) to reduce migratory bird mortality.
RENEWABLE ENERGY			
Wind energy development is processed on a case-by-case basis as a ROW action generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs.	No access restrictions. Encourage wind energy development in areas rated Excellent and above (Map 3-36). Where possible, use best available technologies to reduce migratory bird mortality.	See ROW actions. Encourage wind energy development in areas rated Excellent and above (Map 3-36) as long as it is consistent with resource objectives. Where possible, use best available technologies to reduce migratory bird mortality.	See ROW actions. Same as Alternative C.
Solar energy development is processed on a case-by-case basis as a ROW action generally guided by the criteria identified for major ROWs.	No access restrictions. Encourage solar energy development in the RMPPA.	See ROW actions. Encourage solar energy development in the RMPPA as long as it is consistent with resource objectives.	See ROW actions. Same as Alternative C.
TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS, AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT			
<p>Access and Transportation</p> <p>Goal A: Provide a transportation system that is manageable and maintainable, meets management needs, and minimizes impacts on resources and habitats.</p> <p>Goal B: Provide a mix of motorized, non-motorized, and non-mechanized legal public access to public lands.</p> <p>Goal A Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a collaborative transportation planning process to identify and designate roads and trails, and to manage the levels of road construction and habitat fragmentation. 2. County and local governments and affected interests would be invited to participate in transportation planning. 3. The transportation plan would identify road construction and specify maintenance standards needed to protect resources and accommodate anticipated traffic types and levels of use. <p>Goal B Objectives:</p>			

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
1. Work with county and local governments and affected interests to identify priority access needs.			
<p>Travel Management Goal: Provide for types or modes of access and travel that would balance resource protection with use. Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> County and local governments and affected interests would be invited to participate in travel management. Design a road and trail system within the planning area that can be well managed and provides quality recreation opportunities. Reduce amount of unmanaged roads and trails. 			
<p>ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION</p>			
An access and transportation plan would be prepared that lists areas needing attention, types of access to be acquired, preferred and alternate roads and trails to be closed or constructed, survey and support needs, and construction or maintenance guidelines. This plan would be based on other resource program needs to meet their program objectives.	Transportation planning would be conducted on a case-by-case basis.	Develop an access and transportation plan that accomplishes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables access where needed Limits points of access to reduce the amount of redundant roads and trails Reroutes, rehabilitates, or eliminates existing roads and trails causing damage to cultural or natural resources Reroutes roads and trails where landlocked by private parcels Restricts access to meet resource objectives (e.g., seasonal road closures and gating) Concentrates stream and riparian crossings Reduces habitat fragmentation Considers new construction and reconstruction of roads and trails. 	Same as Alternative C.
Access to public lands would be acquired as funding and time permit in the areas identified.	Pursue access on a case-by-case basis (see Lands and Realty section).	Actively pursue access to specific parcels to improve access to public lands for land management purposes (see Lands and Realty section).	Same as Alternative C.
<p>TRAVEL MANAGEMENT</p>			
Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use (RMP/ROD page 28). Map 2-45 shows the areas listed in Table 2-36. A vehicle	Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Map 2-46).	Areas have been designated as open, limited, or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Map 2-47).	Areas have been designated as limited or closed to vehicle use as detailed below (Map 2-48).

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>use implementation plan would be completed within 1 year of the RMP approval.</p>			
Closed			
<p>The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Breaks WSA • Cross Mountain WSA • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Serviceberry area • Fly Creek area • Maybell Uranium pit. 	<p>The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Breaks WSA • Cross Mountain WSA • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Maybell Uranium pit. 	<p>The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Breaks WSA • Cross Mountain WSA (including WSR segment) • Limestone Ridge area • Portions of the Vermillion Basin • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Serviceberry SRMA Zone 2 • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Fly Creek area • Maybell Uranium pit. 	<p>The following areas would be managed as closed to OHV use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All WSAs • Suitable wild and scenic river corridors • Vermillion Basin • Limestone Ridge ACEC • Cross Mountain Canyon ACEC • Serviceberry SRMA Zone 2 • Emerald Mountain SRMA • Fly Creek SRMA • Dinosaur North SRMA • Maybell Uranium pit • Portion of the Little Yampa Canyon SRMA, Zone 1 • Cold Spring Mountain SRMA • Cross Mountain backcountry area • Diamond Breaks backcountry area • Pinyon Ridge backcountry area • Water impoundments within the Sand Wash Basin HMA (year-round) and within the high-water mark when dry, except where a designated road crosses impoundment.
Limited to Designated Roads and Trails			
<p>The designated roads system would be as shown on the transportation plan maps in the 1989 ROD.</p> <p>No similar action for driving off designated roads and trails.</p> <p>The following areas would be managed as limited to designated roads and</p>	<p>Vermillion Basin would be managed as limited to designated roads and trails.</p> <p>No similar action for driving off designated roads and trails.</p>	<p>Designate roads and trails as determined through comprehensive transportation planning described in Appendix F.</p> <p>The initial designated roads and trails system for the Little Snake Field Office is shown on Map 3-42. This system is based on previous implementation-level</p>	<p>All areas not managed as open or closed would be managed as limited to designated roads and trails.</p> <p>Transportation planning would occur for the entire field office by 5 years after the signing of the ROD.</p> <p>Criteria in Appendix F would be used to prioritize areas for transportation</p>

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
<p>trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lookout Mountain ACEC • Irish Canyon ACEC • Sections of Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Cottonwood Creek area • Cedar Mountain • Browns Park cellular site • Wild Mountain area • Hoy Mountain area. 		<p>decisions and provides the primary framework of key road, primitive road, and trails needed for future access throughout the LSFO. Subsequent transportation planning, as described in Appendix F, would identify additional roads and trails needed for designation to provide continued access needs.</p> <p>Driving off designated roads and trails would be allowed for camping, firewood collecting and picnicking within 300 feet from a designated road/trail. This would also apply to existing routes before routes are designated.</p> <p>The following areas would be immediately managed as limited to designated roads and trails for OHV use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All WSA except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain • Little Yampa Canyon SRMA • Cedar Mountain SRMA • Juniper Mountain SRMA • Serviceberry SRMA Zone 1 • Cold Spring Mountain area • Dinosaur North (outside WSA) • Cottonwood Creek area • Irish Canyon ACEC • Lookout Mountain area • A portion of Vermillion Basin • WSR Yampa segments 1 & 2 • Browns Park cellular site • Wild Mountain area • Hoy Mountain area • Zones within South Sand Wash SRMA. 	<p>planning.</p> <p>The initial designated roads system would be the same as described under Alternative C.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C for driving off designated roads and trails.</p>
Limited to Existing Roads and Trails			
The following areas would be managed	The following areas would be managed	All areas not managed as open, closed,	No areas would be managed as limited

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
as limited to existing roads and trails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragile soil areas • WSAs (all except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain) • Lands adjacent to Cross Mountain WSA • Areas surrounding the Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain SRMA • Pole Gulch area • Big Hole Gulch area • Portion of Cold Spring Mountain • Sections of Axial Basin • Willow Creek area • South Nipple area. 	as limited to existing roads and trails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSAs (all except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain) • A portion of Cold Spring Mountain • Cross Mountain • Areas that meet fragile soil criteria. 	or limited to designated roads and trails would be managed as limited to existing roads and trails until road/trail designation is initiated through the transportation planning process. Areas limited to existing roads and trails would be prioritized for transportation planning, eventually leading to designation of roads and trails across the entire field office (Appendix F). BLM would continue to sign and maintain the existing road system.	to existing roads and trails.
Seasonal Closure			
No similar action.	No similar action.	Seasonal OHV closures in big game crucial winter range and production areas, as well as wild horse foaling areas, would be considered on the basis of site-specific transportation planning results.	The Wild Horse HMA would be closed seasonally from March 1 to June 30.
Open			
Approximately 73% of the LSFO would be managed as open to OHV use.	All areas of the LSFO that would not be managed as limited or closed to OHV use would be open to OHV use.	Manage Zone 1 of the South Sand Wash SRMA (area on south edge and Clay Buttes area) as open to cross country OHV use. Based on monitoring, BLM would take any actions necessary to protect natural resources in the open area, including changing management, such as allowable use, or implementing mitigation, such as fencing or closing areas.	No areas would be managed as open to OHV use.
OVER-THE-SNOW VEHICLES			
All areas within the LSFO, except Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain WSAs, would be open to over-the-snow	Same as Alternative A.	The Diamond Breaks and Cross Mountain WSAs and the Emerald Mountain SRMA would be closed to	All WSAs, crucial winter range and other seasonally limited wildlife habitat areas would be closed to over-the-snow

ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PROPOSED RMP)	ALTERNATIVE D
vehicles.		over-the-snow vehicles. Over-the-snow vehicles would only be allowed on designated roads and trails in West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw and Vale of Tears WSAs. In all other areas of the field office, over-the-snow vehicles would be allowed if snow depth is equal to or greater than 2 feet. Over-the-snow vehicles would not be permitted in areas of snow depth less than 2 feet. If winter conditions warrant, BLM would temporarily close areas to over-the-snow vehicles in order to reduce stress to wildlife. BLM over-the-snow restrictions do not apply to county roads, permitted uses and administrative uses.	vehicles.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES			
Goal: Manage public lands to provide social and economic benefits to residents, businesses, visitors, and future generations.			
Objectives:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work cooperatively with private and community groups and local government to provide for customary uses consistent with other resource objectives and to sustain or improve local, regional, and national economies. 2. Maintain and promote the cultural, economic, ecological, and social health of the northwest Colorado area. 			
No similar action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for predictable and sustainable levels of commodity outputs. • Provide natural resource amenities on public lands that promote local communities as places to live, work, or visit. • Protect natural and cultural values for the enjoyment of future generations. • Target local economies for BLM business activities and contracts associated with public land management to the extent permitted by the existing authorities. 	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.

2.9 COMPARISON OF IMPACTS

Table 2-45 presents a comparison of impacts that would result from implementing the alternatives as described in Chapter 2. Further details associated with the impacts analysis are presented in Chapter 4.

Table 2-45. Impacts Summary Table

Topic	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
Air Quality— Ambient Air Quality	Emissions of pollutants would increase over the baseline, but not to the extent that standards would be exceeded.	The amount of emissions increase expected would be equivalent to Alternative A; however, the emission increase would not cause standards to be exceeded.	The amount of emissions expected would be equivalent to Alternative A; however, the emission increase would not cause standards to be exceeded.	Among the alternatives, the lowest amount of emissions increase would be expected. The emission increase would not cause standards to be exceeded.
Air Quality— Visibility Levels of Concern (LOC)	Emissions of pollutants that degrade visibility would increase from the baseline, but not to the extent that LOCs would be exceeded.	Emissions of pollutants that degrade visibility would increase from the baseline, but not to the extent that LOCs would be exceeded.	Emissions of pollutants that degrade visibility would increase from the baseline, but not to the extent that LOCs would be exceeded.	Emissions of pollutants that degrade visibility would increase from the baseline, but not to the extent that LOCs would be exceeded.
Soils— Cross-Country Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Use	974,420 acres would be open to cross-country OHV use, which would maintain the potential for significant erosion over natural erosion rates. No acres of fragile soils would be open to cross-country OHV use.	1,154,570 acres would be open to cross-country OHV use, which would increase the potential for significant erosion over Alternative A. No acres of fragile soils would be open to cross-country OHV use.	19,710 acres would be open to cross-country OHV use, which would decrease the potential for significant erosion under Alternative A. No acres of fragile soils would be open to cross-country OHV use.	No acres would be open to cross-country OHV use, which would decrease the potential for significant erosion under all other alternatives. No acres of fragile soils would be open to cross-country OHV use.
Soils— Vegetation Treatments	Vegetation treatments and wildland fires would result in short-term erosion. In the long term, vegetation condition would improve and decrease erosion. Treatments, however, would be on a case-by-case basis.	Vegetation treatments and wildland fires would result in short-term erosion. In the long term, vegetation condition would improve and decrease erosion. Treatments, however, would be on a case-by-case basis.	Wildland fires and specific acres of vegetation treatments would result in short-term erosion. In the long term, vegetation condition would improve and would decrease erosion.	Wildland fires and specific acres of vegetation treatments would result in short-term erosion. In the long term, vegetation condition would improve and would decrease erosion. More acres would be treated than under Alternative C.
Soils— Mineral Development	Mineral development would result in localized site-specific surface disturbance on 49,216 acres, of which 23,030 acres	Mineral development would result in localized site-specific surface disturbance on 49,216 acres, of which 23,030 acres	Mineral development would result in localized site-specific surface disturbance on 49,216 acres, of which 23,030 acres	Mineral development would result in localized site-specific surface disturbance on 36,915 acres, of which 17,272 acres

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	would experience long-term erosion from wind and water, resulting in soil loss greater than natural levels.	would experience long-term erosion from wind and water, resulting in soil loss greater than natural levels.	would experience long-term erosion from wind and water, resulting in soil loss greater than natural levels.	would experience long-term erosion from wind and water, resulting in soil loss greater than natural levels.
Water Resources	Fire suppression could result in uncharacteristically large or intense wildfire resulting in significant impacts if water quality degrades beyond the designated use of the stream.	Compared with the other alternatives, management actions to limit surface disturbing activities are the least restrictive, which would provide the least amount of protection to water resources. Fewer surface disturbance restrictions could increase localized erosion and sediment loading, and decrease water quality.	Management actions that restrict surface disturbance and implement performance measures in areas with fragile soils reduce impacts on water resources. Managing fire would result in the same impacts as under Alternative B.	Increasing restrictions to surface disturbing activities could reduce impacts on water quality by increasing the area where erosion would remain at natural rates. Managing fire would result in the same impacts as under Alternative B.
Vegetation	Surface disturbance from energy and mineral exploration and development, and open OHV use could increase the amount of vegetation in early seral succession, which could increase opportunities for noxious weeds and invasive species to become established.	Increasing the areas where surface disturbance from energy and mineral exploration and development, and open OHV use could increase the amount of vegetation in early seral succession. Not implementing BMPs could significantly increase opportunities for noxious weeds and invasive species to become established.	Restrictions on surface disturbing activities and implementing BMPs for surface disturbing activities could decrease impacts on vegetation, and reduce opportunities for noxious weeds and invasive species to become established. Preserving seed banks and mycorrhizal species would increase vegetation diversity.	Increasing restrictions on surface disturbing activities and implementing BMPs for surface disturbing activities could decrease impacts on vegetation, and reduce opportunities for noxious weeds and invasive species to become established. Preserving seed banks and mycorrhizal species would increase vegetation diversity.
Ecological Health of Rangelands and Forest and Woodlands	Monitoring rangelands and vegetation, as staffing and funding permit, could decrease the ability to detect changes in vegetation, which could reduce the ecological health of rangelands, forest, and woodlands.	Managing vegetation to increase forage production could decrease vegetation diversity and the ecological health of rangelands, forest, and woodlands.	Managing vegetation for a variety of habitats would increase vegetation diversity and the ecological health of rangelands, forest, and woodlands.	Managing to improve other resources and implementing vegetation treatments would increase vegetation diversity and the ecological health of rangelands, forest, and woodlands.
Riparian/Wetland Areas	Significant impacts could occur on riparian/wetland areas from open OHV use and surface disturbing activities. These management actions could	Significant impacts could occur on riparian/wetland areas from open OHV use and surface disturbing activities. These management actions could	Impacts could occur on riparian/wetland areas from open OHV use and surface disturbing activities. These management actions could	Managing OHV use in riparian/wetland areas as limited to designated or existing roads and trails would reduce the potential for

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	increase erosion and alter physical characteristics of riparian/wetland areas.	increase erosion and alter physical characteristics of riparian/wetland areas.	increase erosion and alter physical characteristics of riparian/wetland areas.	decreasing functioning conditions.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat— Energy and Mineral Leasing and Development	Surface disturbing activities from oil and gas development could disturb 49,216 acres of wildlife habitat during the planning period. Big game, raptors, grouse, mountain plover, prairie dogs, and other sagebrush-obligate species are the principal wildlife species affected; however, impacts occur primarily in sagebrush and saltbush habitats that are common in the RMPPA.	Increasing the areas open to oil and gas development would result in more severe impacts on fish and wildlife. Not protecting raptor nesting sites, waterfowl, and shorebird significant production areas from the potential removal of nest sites and/or disturbance during nesting could reduce breeding sites and vital habitat components and could be a significant impact on raptors, waterfowl, and shorebirds.	Decreasing the areas open to oil and gas development would reduce impacts on fish and wildlife. Providing more intensive management of oil and gas development and other surface disturbing activities through the use of closures, NSO and CSU stipulations would result in maintaining or preserving fish and wildlife habitat characteristics and migratory corridors throughout the RMPPA. Specifically, disturbance from oil and gas developments in high and medium priority sagebrush habitats would be limited to a ceiling of 1 and 5 %, respectively, and would require a POD that concentrates disturbance and leaves large blocks of habitat unfragmented.	Surface disturbing activities from oil and gas development could disturb 39,913 acres of surface disturbance during the planning period, reducing impacts on wildlife habitat.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat— OHV Use	The majority (974,420 acres, 73%) of the RMPPA and big game habitat would be open to OHV use. Impacts on big game species would be moderate if activity occurs during critical time periods. Areas closed to OHV use or limited to designated roads and trails would avoid impacts associated with the disruption of wintering big game, and preserve habitat characteristics.	Increasing the area managed as open OHV use by 180,150 acres could result in decreased effects on wildlife from habitat degradation, species displacement, and increased stress, if activity in these areas occurs during critical time periods.	Impacts of OHV use would be reduced as a result of managing 1,224,750 acres as limited to existing roads and trails or designated roads and trails. Travel management planning on a site-specific basis would allow BLM to concentrate management in those areas needing special attention to ensure resource damage from OHV use has minimal effect on fish and wildlife habitat.	Impacts of OHV use would be less as a result of managing the RMPPA as limited to designated roads and trails or closed under this alternative. Limiting the majority of the RMPPA OHV use to designated roads and trails would reduce surface disturbances and minimize disturbance to wildlife from human presence.

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<p>Special Status Species— Changes from Casual Use</p>	<p>Potential for slight to significant changes to habitat in areas that receive frequent and/or intense recreation use, including critical habitat for the federally endangered Colorado pikeminnow.</p> <p>Depending on the extent and timing of OHV use, the resulting degradation to vegetation communities could cause slight to significant changes to habitats that might be occupied by special status species or provide necessary habitat components.</p>	<p>Impacts from recreation and OHV use would be the same as under Alternative A; however, implementing the RMP conservation measures (Appendix J), monitoring resource conditions, and educating users on resource protection could minimize the potential for impacts from casual use.</p>	<p>Impacts from recreation and OHV use would be the same as under Alternative A; however, implementing the RMP conservation measures and recommendations (Appendix J), monitoring resource conditions, and educating users on resource protection could minimize the potential for impacts from casual use. In addition, taking measures to ensure protection of special status species when impacts meet the criteria outlined in Appendix F would reduce the extent of potential habitat damage and minimize the potential for impacts.</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative C, except management of SRMAs would provide additional measures to minimize effects on special status species.</p>
<p>Special Status Species— Changes from Permitted Activity</p>	<p>Population function for some special status species, including greater sage-grouse, might decline over time as development increases that could become significant. Stipulations to protect special status species would apply to oil and gas activities, but not to other types of ground disturbing activity.</p>	<p>Removal of NSO stipulations specific to protect special status species during sensitive periods and habitats could lead to segmented management of special status species and to isolated instances of nest abandonment and disturbance during breeding. However, applying NGD and SSR to all permitted activities and COAs to oil and gas leases would protect any habitat that may benefit special status species.</p>	<p>Stipulations would be similar to those identified in Alternative A. In addition, stipulations to restrict ground disturbing activity in prairie dog complexes and sage-grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat would protect habitat integrity and provide greater protection to these species that have expansive habitat requirements. In addition, applying COAs to oil and gas leases would protect any habitat that may benefit special status species.</p>	<p>Stipulations would be similar to those identified in Alternative C; however, there would be increased protections for raptor nest sites and sage-grouse leks and crucial winter range.</p>
<p>Special Status Species— Changes to Habitat Condition</p>	<p>Continuing to address vegetation treatments only as needed would not yield as many benefits to special status species that may be necessary as recreation and permitted activity increase.</p>	<p>Managing vegetation to increase forage would likely convert habitats to early seral stages, resulting in habitat that is less desirable to special status species, including sage-grouse.</p>	<p>Managing vegetation to emphasize wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, watershed, and biodiversity values while maintaining or enhancing habitat for special status species could achieve a</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetation management would be the same as under Alternative C, but would be applied to a greater area.</p>

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			healthy mosaic of communities beneficial to a variety of species, including necessary habitat components for special status species.	
Wild Horses— Impacts from OHV Use	96% of the HMA would be open to cross-county OHV use, resulting in losses of forage and in spatial displacement. Spring OHV closure in foaling areas would eliminate displacement during the critical season.	Same as under Alternative A, except removal of the spring OHV closure would result in displacement of wild horses at the end of winter, when energy levels are low and while foaling is occurring.	OHV use would be limited to designated or existing roads and trails on 90% of the HMA, maintaining forage and reducing disturbance, when compared with Alternatives A and B.	Same as Alternative C, except OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails in the entire HMA. In addition, there would be a seasonal closure to OHV use during foaling period.
Wild Horses— Impacts from Oil and Gas Development	No areas of the HMA would be open to oil and gas leasing with standard stipulations.	96% of the HMA would be open to oil and gas leasing, with standard stipulations. The main impact from mineral development would be physical and spatial disturbance, which removes forage and decreases the wild and free-roaming nature of wild horses.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A. In addition, closing the HMA to all permitted activities during foaling period and closing mineral development at critical wild horse water sources would protect critical areas and seasons, maintaining wild horse health; however, the extent of NSO stipulations could restrict new water developments.
Fire	Recreational activities, development of mineral resources, general use of the RMPPA, and other land management practices would introduce additional ignition sources into the RMPPA and alter the composition and structure of vegetation communities in some areas, which would increase the probability of wildland fire occurrence and increase the potential for high-intensity wildland fires. Efforts to enhance vegetation cover and wildlife habitat through	Impacts would be the same as under Alternative A, except the emphasis on forage production could result in vegetation communities that are more susceptible to fire and more likely to fuel high-intensity fires; however, this would likely represent a minor change in the overall impacts on fire management.	Impacts would be the same as under Alternative A, except increased vegetation treatments designed to enhance vegetation health and wildlife habitat, increased restrictions on surface disturbing activities, and substantial limitations on cross-country OHV use would decrease the probability of wildland fire occurrence and the potential for high-intensity wildland fires. However, greater emphasis on dispersed recreational opportunities could increase use of the RMPPA,	Impacts would be the same as under Alternative C, except additional increases in vegetation treatments, restrictions on surface disturbing activities, and not allowing cross-country OHV use would further reduce related effects on fire management. In addition, a greater emphasis on dispersed recreational opportunities could further increase the number of potential ignition sources in the RMPPA.

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	<p>vegetation treatments and surface disturbance restrictions would help mitigate these effects.</p>		<p>thereby increasing the number of potential ignition sources.</p>	
<p>Cultural Resources— Impacts from Cultural Resource Management</p>	<p>Regulatory compliance eliminates impacts from surface disturbing activities on a site-by-site basis. Cultural resource management would provide programmatic guidance at the implementation level.</p>	<p>Regulatory compliance eliminates impacts from surface disturbing activities. Proactive cultural site management through site use allocations provides management before discovery. Expanding interpretive program increases public knowledge and decreases inadvertent vandalism. Prioritized non-compliance field inventories would improve information and management in the Sand Wash and Vermillion Basins.</p>	<p>Regulatory compliance eliminates impacts from surface disturbing activities. Proactive cultural site management through site use allocations provides management before discovery. Expanding interpretive program increases public knowledge and decreases inadvertent vandalism. Prioritized non-compliance field inventories would improve information and management in the Sand Wash and Vermillion Basins.</p>	<p>Regulatory compliance eliminates impacts from surface disturbing activities. Proactive cultural site management through site use allocations provides management before discovery. Emphasizing conservation and scientific study would protect scientific values from potentially damaging uses. Prioritized non-compliance field inventories would improve information and management in the Sand Wash and Vermillion Basins. Cultural resource management would provide programmatic guidance at the implementation level.</p>
<p>Cultural Resources— Impacts from OHV Management</p>	<p>Cross-country OHV travel on 974,420 acres could result in significant impacts on up to 7,765 sites eligible for NRHP listing. Significant impacts would occur as a result of OHV use in uninventoried areas of current cultural high-sensitivity areas open to cross-country OHV use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (76%) • Prehistoric (75%). Damage to uninventoried cultural sites adjacent to existing or designated roads</p>	<p>The increase in acres open to OHV use, especially open to cross-country OHV use, could result in damage to or destruction of up to 9,200 cultural resource sites eligible for NRHP listing, which would be a significant impact. Significant impacts would occur as a result of OHV use in uninventoried areas of current cultural high-sensitivity areas open to cross-country OHV use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (84%) • Prehistoric (91%). </p>	<p>Managing 7,970 acres as open to OHV use could result in damage or destruction of up to 157 cultural resource sites eligible for the NRHP, which would be a significant impact. Significant impacts would occur as a result of OHV use in uninventoried areas of current cultural high-sensitivity areas open to cross-country OHV use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (2%) • Prehistoric (2%). Damage would occur to uninventoried cultural sites</p>	<p>No areas would be open to cross-country OHV use and potential impacts would be eliminated. Damage to uninventoried cultural sites adjacent to existing or designated roads and trails in current cultural high-sensitivity areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (82%) • Prehistoric (87%). </p>

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	and trails in current cultural high-sensitivity areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (20%) • Prehistoric (22%). 	Damage would occur to uninventoried cultural sites adjacent to existing or designated roads and trails in current cultural high-sensitivity areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (15%) • Prehistoric (9%). 	adjacent to existing or designated roads and trails in current cultural high-sensitivity areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic (93%) • Prehistoric (95%). 	
Paleontological Resources	Surface disturbing activities could result in identification of paleontological resources. The significance of this impact would depend on the significance of the fossil. Unmitigated impacts from cross-country OHV use could occur on 974,420 acres.	Surface disturbing activities could result in identification of paleontological resources. The significance of this impact would depend on the significance of the fossil. Unmitigated impacts from cross-country OHV use could occur on 1,154,570 acres.	Surface disturbing activities could result in identification of paleontological resources. The significance of this impact would depend on the significance of the fossil. Unmitigated impacts from cross-country OHV use could occur on 19,710 acres.	Surface disturbing activities could result in identification of paleontological resources. The significance of this impact would depend on the significance of the fossil. No areas would be open to cross-country OHV use and potential impacts would be eliminated.
Wilderness Study Areas	Minor impacts would occur on the wilderness characteristics in the West Cold Spring, Ant Hills, Chew Winter Camp, Peterson Draw, and/or Vale of Tears WSAs by allowing OHV use on existing roads and trails. If released from wilderness study, impacts on these WSAs would increase because there is no special management. If released, the Diamond Breaks WSA would receive minimal protection, although there would be no impacts from OHV use due to a closure. If released, wilderness characteristics of the Cross Mountain WSA would be protected through management restrictions.	Impacts would be similar to those identified in Alternative A; however, these impacts would likely become significant because there is a lack of restriction on surface disturbance, and lack of protections, if any, for the WSAs that were released from wilderness study.	Impacts would be similar to those identified in Alternative A, except that if any of the WSAs were released from wilderness study, protective management actions would reduce impacts on the wilderness characteristics in these areas.	All WSAs would be closed to OHV use, even if released from wilderness study. Surface disturbance would be restricted and would not result in impacts on these areas.
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Outside	Significant impacts would occur on the wilderness	Impacts on the wilderness characteristics in the Dinosaur	Impacts would be reduced in the Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur	Restrictions on surface disturbance and OHV

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<p>Existing WSAs</p>	<p>characteristics in the Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North, Cold Spring Mountain, and Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain areas because of surface disturbance and OHV use that would be allowed in these areas.</p>	<p>North, Cold Spring Mountain, and Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain areas would be the same as under Alternative A.</p> <p>Vermillion Basin would receive special management protection for wilderness characteristics, with a 1% ceiling on surface disturbance associated with oil and gas development. Naturalness and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would be lost within site of well-pads; however, wilderness characteristics in the remainder of the area would receive protection.</p>	<p>North, Cold Spring Mountain, and Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain when compared with those under Alternative A because of mineral leasing stipulations, surface disturbance restrictions, and OHV limitations.</p> <p>Vermillion Basin would be managed for its wilderness characteristics, with management to preclude activities that would result in long-term loss of wilderness characteristics.</p>	<p>limitations would protect wilderness characteristics in the Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North, Cold Spring Mountain, and Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain areas.</p>
<p>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern</p>	<p>Relevant and important values would be protected in the four existing ACECs through protections afforded through special management; however, the relevant and important values in the proposed White-tailed Prairie Dog and Natural Systems ACECs could occur from management actions that would impair prairie dog habitat and surface disturbance that would result in impacts on sensitive and remnant plants and plant associations.</p>	<p>All existing ACEC designations would be removed and none of the proposed ACECs would be designated.</p> <p>The scenic relevant and important values in the Limestone Ridge and Lookout Mountain areas could be significantly affected if development were to occur, because of surface disturbance that would be allowed in this area. The geologic, cultural, and scenic relevant and important values in the Irish Canyon area could be significantly affected if development were to occur because of surface disturbance that would be allowed in this area. Special status plant Species would be protected through conservation measures.</p>	<p>ACEC designation would be removed from the Limestone Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and Cross Mountain Canyon areas, and no new ACECs would be designated; however, relevant and important values would be protected through management prescriptions that would restrict activities that could potentially impair these values in the Limestone Ridge, Lookout Mountain, Cross Mountain Canyon, White-tailed Prairie Dog, and sensitive plant (Natural Systems ACEC) areas.</p> <p>The Irish Canyon ACEC would be retained, and relevant and important values would be protected.</p>	<p>ACEC designation for all four existing ACECs would be retained, and the White-tailed Prairie Dog and Natural Systems ACECs would be designated. Special management that would restrict surface disturbance would protect relevant and important values in all of these areas.</p>

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		<p>The Cross Mountain ACEC would be protected through WSA management; however, if the WSA were released, these impacts would also occur in this area.</p> <p>Impacts on the potential White-tailed Prairie Dog ACEC could occur as a result of the removal of surface disturbance restrictions and protections for black-footed ferret habitat.</p> <p>Impacts on the potential Natural Systems ACEC would be the same as those under Alternative A.</p>		
Wild and Scenic Rivers	<p>The Beaver Creek, Vermillion Creek, and Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 would be managed as eligible for inclusion into the NWSRS, which would protect the free-flowing nature, associated outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs), and tentative classifications as wild, scenic, or recreational until suitability is determined.</p>	<p>No eligible WSR segments would be managed as suitable under this alternative. Scenic ORVs would be affected by surface disturbing activities. WSA management would protect ORVs in Yampa River segment 3 (Cross Mountain WSA), and part of the Beaver Creek segment (West Cold Spring). If these WSAs were released from wilderness study, these ORVs would not receive any protection and would likely be affected.</p> <p>Fish ORVs in the Beaver Creek segment and Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 would receive some protection through conservation measures.</p>	<p>Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 would be managed as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, which would protect all ORVs associated with these segments.</p> <p>ORVs in the Beaver Creek and Vermillion Creek segments would receive some protection through special management areas (WSA and ACEC designations, respectively) and conservation measures for sensitive species. Scenic ORVs could be affected if surface disturbance occurred in these areas.</p>	<p>The Beaver Creek, Vermillion Creek, and Yampa River segments 1, 2, and 3 would be managed as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS, and ORVs would be protected through special management. In addition, most of these areas would fall within other special management areas and the surrounding area would also be protected from surface disturbance and OHV use, which would increase the protection of the suitability of these segments.</p>
Visual Resources—VRM Categories	<p>In accordance with BLM Policy (IM 2000-096), WSAs would be managed as VRM Class I, which would preserve the existing character of the landscape on 78,250 acres under all alternatives.</p>			
	<p>Visual resources outside of WSAs would have the following</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative A, with</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative B,</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative C,</p>

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	<p>designations—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class II: 73,950 acres • Class III: 0 acres • Class IV: 1,184,700 acres. <p>VRM Class IV designation applied to 87% of the RMPPA would not protect characteristic viewsheds from visual obstructions.</p>	<p>some additional visual protection provided by Class II and III areas as follows—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class II: 4,140 acres • Class III: 82,820 acres • Class IV: 1,171,690 acres. <p>Class II areas would retain visual characteristics of the landscape, allowing only a low level of change to the characteristic landscape.</p> <p>Class III would partially retain visual characteristics of the landscape, allowing a moderate level of change to the characteristic landscape.</p>	<p>except that most of the RMPPA would become VRM Class III—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class II: 150,790 acres • Class III: 929,270 acres • Class IV: 178,590 acres. 	<p>except for a greater focus on VRM Class II—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class II: 184,630 acres • Class III: 897,030 acres • Class IV: 176,990 acres.
<p>Visual Resources— Minerals Extraction</p>	<p>Open oil and gas leasing on 533,800 acres could allow visible surface disturbance and structures, which would contrast with the existing character of the landscape.</p> <p>NSO stipulations on 178,710 acres would reduce most impacts of minor temporary changes to visual characteristics.</p> <p>CSU stipulations, such as screening, color matching, burying powerlines, and reclamation, on 122,350 acres could reduce some impacts from oil and gas development.</p>	<p>The impact on visual resources from oil and gas leasing under Alternative B would be greater than under Alternative A because Alternative B allows more open leasing and has less area with NSO stipulations—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 1,625,350 acres • NSO: 28,690 acres • CSU: 78,090 acres. 	<p>The impact on visual resources from oil and gas leasing under Alternative C would be less than under Alternative A because Alternative C allows less open leasing area and has more area with NSO stipulations—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 168,180 acres • NSO: 201,890 acres • CSU: 1,236,810 acres. 	<p>Alternative D would have the least impact on visual resources from oil and gas leasing of any alternative—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 360,220 acres • NSO: 443,350 acres • CSU: 457,950 acres.
	<p>Mineral entry, mineral material sales, coal leasing, and oil shale development could disturb ground surfaces, or have surface structures that would change the visual character of the landscape.</p>	<p>More area would be available for mineral entry, mineral material sales, coal leasing, and oil shale development than under Alternative A.</p>	<p>Less area would be available for mineral entry, mineral material sales, coal leasing, and oil shale development than under Alternative A.</p>	<p>Less area would be available for mineral entry, mineral material sales, coal leasing, and oil shale development than under Alternative C.</p>

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<p>Visual Resources— OHV Use</p>	<p>Designating open OHV use could cause road proliferation and vegetation loss through cross-country OHV travel, which would alter existing visual characteristics of the landscape.</p> <p>Limited OHV areas would eliminate cross-country travel, which would limit visual impacts on existing or designated roads and trails.</p> <p>Closing areas to OHV use would eliminate all impacts on visual resources. The following acreages illustrate the area impacted by the above descriptions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 974,420 acres • Limited: 286,140 acres • Closed: 76,340 acres. 	<p>Alternative B allows more open and fewer closed areas; thus, impacts would be greater than under Alternative A—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 1,154,570 acres • Limited: 131,890 acres • Closed: 50,440 acres. 	<p>Alternative C allows fewer open and more closed areas, and most of the area would limit OHV use to existing or designated roads and trails; thus, impacts would be less than those under Alternative A—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 19,710 acres • Limited: 1,224,750 acres • Closed: 92,440 acres. 	<p>Alternative D allows no open areas and has more closed areas; thus, impacts would be less than under Alternative C and the least of all alternatives—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 0 acres • Limited: 1,053,610 acres • Closed: 283,290 acres.
<p>Visual Resources— Vegetation Management</p>	<p>Fire and vegetation treatments, fire-suppression activities, and harvesting of commercial forest and woodland products alter the existing visual character of the landscape through removal, thinning, burning, or onsite alteration of vegetation.</p> <p>These impacts would be most noticeable in the short term, decreasing over the long term as vegetation grows back.</p>	<p>Impacts would be the same as those under Alternative A, except that vegetation treatments would be applied only to increase forage production and the use of appropriate management response and lack of fire suppression in areas where fire is desired would likely decrease short-term impacts.</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetation treatments described under Alternative A would occur on an average of 4,110 acres per year. Harvesting of commercial forest and woodland products would not affect visual resources as under Alternatives A and B. Impacts from fire management activities would be the same as under Alternative B.</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetation treatments would occur on an average of 8,750 acres per year. Harvesting of commercial forest and woodland products would have the same impacts as Alternative C. Impacts from fire management activities would be the same as those under Alternative B.</p>
<p>Oil and Gas Resources</p>	<p>Approximately 533,800 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing, with standard stipulations. Restrictions and stipulations on oil and gas leasing could limit oil and gas leasing.</p>	<p>Approximately 1,625,350 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing, with standard stipulations. Alternative B would have the fewest restrictions and stipulations on oil and gas leasing.</p>	<p>Approximately 168,180 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing, with standard stipulations. Restrictions and stipulations on oil and gas leasing could limit oil and gas leasing. There would be more restrictions and stipulations</p>	<p>Approximately 360,220 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing, with standard stipulations. Alternative D would have the most restrictions and stipulations on oil and gas leasing.</p>

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			than under Alternative A.	
Locatable Minerals	Approximately 82,350 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry, which could preclude locatable mineral development in these areas.	Approximately 159,430 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry, which could preclude locatable mineral development in these areas.	Approximately 259,970 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry, which could preclude locatable mineral development in these areas.	Approximately 616,100 acres would be recommended for withdrawal from locatable mineral entry, which could preclude locatable mineral development in these areas.
Mineral Materials	Approximately 99,740 acres would be closed to mineral material sales, which would preclude development of mineral materials in these areas.	Approximately 156,420 acres would be closed to mineral material sales, which would preclude development of mineral materials in these areas.	Approximately 257,080 acres would be closed to mineral material sales, which would preclude development of mineral materials in these areas.	Approximately 544,640 acres would be closed to mineral material sales, which would preclude development of mineral materials in these areas.
Renewable Energy	ROW exclusion areas (98,500 acres) and avoidance areas (21,700 acres) could restrict the placement of renewable energy facilities.	No ground disturbance (93,360 acres), site-specific relocation (80,100 acres), or seasonal limitations (79,940 acres) and ROW exclusion areas (78,220 acres) and ROW avoidance areas (81,200 acres) could restrict the placement of renewable energy facilities.	ROW exclusion areas (161,040 acres) and ROW avoidance areas (106,840 acres) could restrict the placement of renewable energy facilities.	No ground disturbance (559,770 acres), site-specific relocation (324,900 acres), or seasonal limitations (881,030 acres) and ROW exclusion areas (499,810 acres) and ROW avoidance areas (50,990 acres) could restrict the placement of renewable energy facilities.
Livestock Grazing	Forage production would decrease by 8,344 AUMs as a result of oil and gas development activities. Because it is estimated that half of the forage in the RMPPA is allocated for livestock, this would result in a 4,172-AUM net decrease of actual livestock use. Given that current actual livestock use is estimated at 78,963 AUMs, the loss of 4,172 AUMs is relatively minor.	Same as under Alternative A, except that forage production would increase by 44,087 AUMs as a result of vegetation treatments. Assuming that all of this forage would be available for livestock, and oil and gas activities would decrease livestock forage by 4,172 AUMs, there would be a net gain of 39,925 AUMs.	Same as under Alternative A, except that forage production would increase by 7,454 AUMs as a result of vegetation treatments. Assuming that all of this forage would be available for livestock, and oil and gas activities would decrease livestock forage by 4,172 AUMs, there would be a net gain of 3,282 AUMs.	Same as under Alternative A, except that forage production would increase by 21,814 AUMs as a result of vegetation treatments. Assuming that all of this forage would be available for livestock, and oil and gas activities would decrease livestock forage by 3,129 AUMs, there would be a net gain of 18,685 AUMs.
Recreation	Recreation opportunities in the Vermillion Basin area would be affected because of user and resource conflicts from mineral	Similar to Alternative A, except that impacts on recreation opportunities in the Vermillion Basin would be reduced by	Restrictions on surface disturbing activities would reduce impacts on recreation and provide opportunities for	Alternative D would provide the greatest protection for primitive and dispersed recreation as a result of restrictions on surface

Topic	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
	<p>development potential and OHV designations.</p> <p>User conflicts between motorized users and recreation users seeking primitive/unconfined recreation opportunities would occur from managing approximately 73% of the RMPPA as open to OHV use. These impacts would increase if any of the existing WSAs were released from wilderness study. These conflicts could be greater in the South Sand Wash and Cedar Mountain areas because of a lack of special recreation management to address the intense recreation use in these areas.</p> <p>The potential for surface disturbance from mineral exploration and development under this alternative could affect recreation opportunities and experiences because of health and safety issues and displacement of recreational users.</p>	<p>limiting OHV use to designated roads and trails; however, impacts would remain significant because of the degradation to the natural character from the high potential of new mineral leasing.</p> <p>User conflicts between motorized users and recreational users seeking primitive/unconfined recreation opportunities would be increased from managing approximately 86% of the LSFO as open to OHV use. These impacts would further increase if any of the existing WSAs were released from wilderness study.</p> <p>One SRMA would be identified (Emerald Mountain SRMA – 4,140 acres), and the lack of additional special recreation management would not meet the anticipated increase in recreation demand and use throughout the RMPPA.</p> <p>The potential for surface disturbance from mineral exploration and development would increase and could result in increased impacts on recreation opportunities and experiences as compared with the impacts Alternative A because of fewer restrictions on surface disturbing activities. Alternative B would have the greatest level of impact on recreation.</p>	<p>motorized, developed, and primitive/unconfined recreation opportunities; however, significant impacts would still occur on non-motorized recreation and recreational users seeking solitude and primitive/unconfined recreation opportunities because of degradation to the natural character from the high potential of new mineral leasing and user conflicts from allowing OHV use on designated roads and trails and trails in the Vermilion Basin area.</p> <p>User conflicts between motorized users and recreational users seeking primitive/unconfined recreation opportunities would be reduced from considerably reducing open areas, and managing OHV use on the majority of the RMPPA as limited to designated roads and trails. These actions would continue to provide motorized recreation opportunities, and closing other areas to preserve primitive recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Identification of six SRMAs would provide for focused recreation management and protect recreation opportunities and experiences in these areas.</p> <p>Impacts on recreation would be reduced by managing high-value recreation areas with NSO stipulations; however, impacts would still occur from</p>	<p>disturbing activities, limiting the majority of OHV use to designated roads and trails, restrictions on mineral development, and intensive recreation management through identification of ten SRMAs and SMA management. However, cross-country motorized recreation experiences would be eliminated under this alternative, which would be a loss of opportunity to this user group.</p>

Topic	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C (Proposed RMP)	Alternative D
			<p>surface disturbance because of mineral development activities that could reduce the quality of recreational experiences, displace recreational users to other less developed areas, or eliminate some recreation opportunities. These impacts would be less than those under Alternatives A or B.</p>	
<p>Forest and Woodlands</p>	<p>Management actions to limit surface disturbing activities could decrease the areas where forest and woodland harvest could occur.</p>	<p>Management actions to limit surface disturbing activities are the least restrictive of all the alternatives, which could increase the areas where forest and woodland harvest occurs, when compared with the other alternatives.</p>	<p>Management actions to limit surface disturbing activities are more protective than under Alternative A, and could increase the areas where forest and woodland harvest occurs.</p>	<p>Management actions to limit surface disturbing activities are the most restrictive of all the alternatives, and thus could decrease the areas where forest and woodland harvest occur.</p>
<p>Lands and Realty</p>	<p>Areas Open to ROWs: 1,216,700 acres (91% of RMPPA). Avoidance Areas: 21,700 acres (2% of RMPPA). Exclusion Areas: 98,500 acres (7% of RMPPA).</p>	<p>Areas Open to ROWs: 1,177,480 acres (88% of RMPPA). Avoidance Areas: 81,200 acres (6% of RMPPA). Exclusion Areas: 78,220 acres (6% of RMPPA). NGD: 93,360 acres (7% of RMPPA). Seasonal Limitations: 79,940 acres (6% of RMPPA).</p>	<p>Areas Open to ROWs: 1,069,020 acres (80% of RMPPA). Avoidance Areas: 106,840 acres (8% of RMPPA). Exclusion Areas: 161,040 acres (12% of RMPPA).</p>	<p>Many of the areas previously designated as Avoidance Areas would become Exclusion Areas under Alternative D. Such restrictions could hinder the ability to meet future demand as existing sites reach capacity, which could become significant. Restricting communication site authorizations to existing sites could impose greater standards for development at existing sites, potentially resulting in requests for new or amended ROWs at existing sites to be denied over time. Such restrictions could hinder the ability to meet future demand as existing sites reach capacity, which could become significant. Areas Open to ROWs: 786,100 acres (59% of RMPPA).</p>

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				Avoidance Areas: 50,990 acres (4% of RMPPA). Exclusion Areas: 499,810 acres (37% of RMPPA). NGD: 559,770 acres (42% of RMPPA). Seasonal Limitations: 881,030 acres (66% of RMPPA).
Transportation and Access— OHV Categories	Closed OHV designations eliminate any opportunity for public motorized travel. Limited designations eliminate cross-country OHV travel. Open designations provide the most opportunities for OHV use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 974,420 acres • Limited: 286,140 acres • Closed: 76,340 acres. 	Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative A, except there would be fewer closed and limited areas and more open areas, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 1,154,570 acres • Limited: 131,9890 acres • Closed: 50,440 acres. 	Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative A, except there would be more closed and limited areas and fewer open areas, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 19,710 acres • Limited: 1,224,750 acres • Closed: 92,440 acres. 	Impacts would be similar to those under Alternative A, except that Alternative D has more closed areas and fewer open areas than any of the alternatives, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open: 0 acres • Limited: 1,053,610 acres • Closed: 283,290 acres.
Transportation and Access— Over-the-Snow Vehicles	Over-the-snow vehicles would be allowed on 96% of the RMPPA.	Same as Alternative A.	Over-the-snow vehicles would be allowed on 96% with 2% of the RMPPA limited to designated routes.	Over-the-snow vehicles would be allowed on 35% of the RMPPA.
Transportation and Access— Non-Motorized Transportation and Access	The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain area would enhance river access opportunities by providing access control, development, and management of river access areas.	The Little Yampa Canyon/Juniper Mountain would not benefit from the extended protection and planning of SRMA designation.	Impacts would be the same as those under Alternative A for river transportation opportunities on the Little Yampa River. Additionally, the Cedar Mountain SRMA would enhance non-motorized hiking opportunities near the city of Craig.	Impacts on river transportation on the Little Yampa, and hiking opportunities in the Cedar Mountain SRMAs would be the same as those under Alternative C.
Transportation and Access— Transportation Planning	Transportation planning would provide better management of transportation systems, which would contribute to better road maintenance and access, and which could alleviate access	Transportation planning, on a case-by-case basis, would become reactionary in dealing with road maintenance, access issues, and user conflicts, which may not be responsive	An access and transportation plan that restricts access to meet resource objectives, reduces habitat fragmentation, and limits access points and stream crossings would provide	Transportation planning would have the same impacts as Alternative C.

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	issues and user conflicts.	enough to meet the diverse needs of the transportation and access system.	better management of transportation systems, which would contribute to better road maintenance and could alleviate access issues and user conflicts.	
Social and Economic Conditions	Total forecasted industry income and employment by 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moffat County: \$620,815,000 and 8,578 employees • Routt County: \$1,568,722,000 and 30,833 employees. 	Total forecasted industry income and employment by 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moffat County: \$625,640,000 and 8,648 employees • Routt County: \$1,569,187,000 and 30,841 employees. 	Total forecasted industry income and employment by 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moffat County: \$609,283,000 and 8,488 employees • Routt County: \$1,567,973,000 and 30,828 employees. 	Total forecasted industry income and employment by 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moffat County: \$597,754,000 and 8,381 employees • Routt County: \$1,567,097,000 and 30,818 employees.