CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Moab, Utah Field Office (Moab FO) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has begun the process of revising its current Resource Management Plan (RMP)—referred to throughout as the Grand Resource Area RMP (1985), the 1985 Grand RMP, or the current RMP (1985)—which directs the use, protection, and enhancement of resources on public lands under jurisdiction of the Moab FO. The 1985 Grand RMP failed to anticipate issues related to population growth and changes in land use, which are now occurring; these circumstances, along with new information, have driven the need for a revision of the current RMP (1985). A Special Evaluation Report, completed in May 2002, determined that the current RMP (1985) is no longer providing effective guidance for the management issues now facing the Moab FO. Results from the evaluation report were incorporated into a Preparation Plan that outlined preliminary planning criteria and specific resource issues of concern. These planning criteria and issues of concern will be used in the process of developing a new RMP.

During the RMP planning process, the Moab FO will coordinate with the local Grand County government, the State of Utah, Native American Tribes (including the Ute, Navajo, Paiute, Hopi, and Puebloan Tribal groups), the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and participating adjacent counties, municipalities, and private entities. The Moab FO will also coordinate with adjacent BLM offices in Utah and Colorado.

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directs the BLM to develop and periodically update the RMPs that guide land management on BLM administered public lands. The first step in the process to prepare a new RMP is to conduct an Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS). The purpose of the AMS is to summarize the existing management situation, explain the need for change, propose a range of management opportunities, and describe any management limitations.

As mentioned above, the resource and socioeconomic conditions within the Moab FO area have changed since the approval of the 1985 RMP: the population in and visitation to the region has grown, and population demographics have changed, as has public awareness and use of the public lands. As a result, land-use priorities on public lands are changing. The ecological and socioeconomic effects of these changes in priority need to be examined in order to determine management objectives and plans within the Moab FO area.

In order to make the most accurate determination of the current state of resource use, the AMS will incorporate land management issues and environmental data that have been considered from after the approval of the current 1985 RMP to the present. The AMS will describe the physical, biological, and socioeconomic components of the environment that would be affected by the management decisions incorporated into the proposed RMP. The physical, biological, and socioeconomic descriptions in the AMS will also provide the analytical base for the proposed RMP's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

1.2 MANDATES AND AUTHORITIES FOR RMP AND EIS PREPARATION

The management of resource programs is governed by a series of laws and regulations that provide objectives and procedures for resource management. Specific resource-related mandates and authorities are listed within each AMS resource chapter. Besides these, there are several broad authorities that pertain to management of public lands and resources. These broad authorities include (but are not limited to):

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) – NEPA requires the use of a "systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and decisionmaking which may have an impact on man's environment" (42 USC § 4332, Sec. 102a) and "include in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, a detailed statement … on the environmental impact of the proposed action" (42 USC § 4332, Sec. 102c). Significant impacts to the environment could result from the implementation of the revised RMP, and NEPA requires the analysis and disclosure of potential environmental impacts in an Environmental Impact Statement.

- The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended – FLPMA requires that "the Secretary shall, with public involvement…develop, maintain, and, when appropriate, revise land use plans." The Act sets forth the policy concerning the management of public lands and provides for the management of public lands under the principle of multiple use and sustained yield. The Act specifically calls for the periodic and systematic inventory of public land resources; the development, maintenance, and revision of public land use plans (using an interdisciplinary approach); and compliance with various state and federal standards. The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to take any action necessary to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation of the environment.
- The Clean Air Act of 1970 – This Act establishes the mechanism for control of air pollution for public health and welfare. It requires federal agencies to comply with all federal, state, and local requirements regarding the control and abatement of air pollution, including the requirements of State Implementation Plans (SIPs).
- The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended – This Act requires the BLM to ensure that proposed actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species and do not cause its critical habitat to be adversely modified or destroyed. The Act provides a means of conserving ecosystems upon which endangered and threatened species depend; provides a program for conservation of these species; and requires all federal agencies to seek to conserve these species and use applicable authorities to further the purpose the Act. The Act also requires federal agencies to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of any species listed (or proposed for listing) as threatened or endangered, and the Act requires (in Section 7) all federal agencies to consult (or confer) with the Secretary of the Interior through the Fish and Wildlife Service, to ensure that any federal action (including land use plans) or activity is not likely to produce the destruction or adverse modification of designated or proposed habitat.

- Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) of 1987, as amended – The mandate of this Act is to ensure the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of the nation's waters at a quality sufficient to protect fish and wildlife, as well as for recreational use.
- The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (P.L. 94-199), as amended – This Act requires federal land management agencies to identify potential river systems and then study them for potential designation as wild, scenic, or recreational rivers.
- The Federal Water Pollution Control Act – This Act requires federal land managers to comply with all federal, state, and local requirements, administrative authorities, processes, and sanctions regarding the control and abatement of water pollution in the same manner and to the same extent as any nongovernmental entity.
- The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (43 USC 1593) – This Act requires a comprehensive program for minimizing salt contributions to the Colorado River from BLM-administered lands.
- The Safe Drinking Water Act – As amended in 1996, this Act is intended to make the nation's water safe for drinking and swimming. Amendments in 1996 establish a direct connection between safe drinking water and watershed protection and management.
- The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 – This Act requires that public rangelands be managed so that they become as productive as possible, in accordance with management objectives and land use planning processes established pursuant to 43 USC 1712.
- The Antiquities Act of 1906 – This Act protects cultural resources on federal lands and authorizes the President to designate National Monuments on federal lands.
- The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended – This Act expands protection of historic and archaeological properties to include those of national, state, and local significance and directs federal agencies to consider the effects of proposed actions on properties eligible for or included in the National Register of Historic Places.
- 43 CFR 1600 – This federal regulation establishes the process by which the BLM develops, maintains, amends, and revises resource management plans.

1.3 GEOGRAPHIC AND RESOURCE SETTING

1.3.1 Geographic Setting

Located primarily in Grand and San Juan Counties, in southeastern Utah, the Moab FO area includes lands around Arches National Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, the Moab-Monticello Ranger District of the Manti-LaSal National Forest, and the Uintah/Ouray Indian Reservation. Public lands are found throughout this area, notably in Castle Valley, Lisbon Valley, the Book Cliffs, the Cisco desert, on the flanks of the LaSal Mountains, along the Colorado, Green and Dolores Rivers, on the Canyon Rims, and on the Labyrinth Rims, north of Canyonlands National Park. A very small portion of the Moab FO is in Emery County, on the east side of the Green River. The planning area is bordered by the BLM Vernal Field Office area to the north, the Monticello Field Office area to the south, the Price Field Office area to the west, and the Grand Junction (Colorado) Field Office area to the east. Portions of the Uncompaghre Field Office area

(Montrose, Colorado BLM) and the San Juan Field Office area (Durango, Colorado BLM)also touch the eastern border of the Moab FO area.

The Colorado Plateau physiographic province characterizes the geology of the area, which is extraordinarily diverse and internationally renowned for its scenic quality and recreational opportunities. The town of Moab is the largest population center in the area. Other towns within the Field Office area include Castle Valley, LaSal, Thompson Springs, and Cisco (Figure 1-1).

Approximately 2,855,775 acres of land lie within the planning area's boundary, of which the BLM Moab FO administers 1,850,243 acres. The northeastern portion of the planning area is more accessible from the Vernal Field Office and is presently managed by the Vernal Field Office through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Moab FO. The MOU reduces the Moab FO area to 2,759,272 acres, of which 1,821,374 acres are administered by the BLM, Moab FO. Similarly, the Moab FO manages grazing on 40,653 acres of BLM-administered public land in Colorado under agreements with the Grand Junction, Uncompaghre (Montrose) and San Juan (Dolores/Durango) Field Offices. In turn, the Grand Junction Field Office and the Manti-La Sal National Forest administer approximately 79,581 acres of grazing land within the Moab FO.

Oil and gas exploration and production occurs within the planning area; most of these activities take place in the eastern Cisco Desert, eastern Book Cliffs, in Lisbon Valley, and on Big Flat. The entire Moab FO area is open to mining claims, except for areas of mineral withdrawals; at present, there are 1,850 acres of scattered mineral withdrawals, and an additional 65,000 acres are pending withdrawal as part of the Three Rivers Mineral Withdrawal. Most placer gold deposits are found along the Colorado and Dolores Rivers; uranium is found throughout the southern two-thirds of the Moab FO area, and potash deposits are mined on state and private lands near Moab.

Other agencies that manage resources (i.e., non-mineral resources) in the area include the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Utah State Parks, and the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. Land ownership within the planning area consists primarily of large blocks of BLM-administered lands interspersed with smaller, privately owned tracts as well as land administered by the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA). Land ownership and acreages within the Moab FO area are shown in Table 1-1, below.

Table 1-1. Land Ownership within the Moab FO Area

Land Ownership	Acres Including Lands Managed by the Vernal Field Office	Acres Excluding Lands Managed by the Vernal Field Office
BLM	1,850,243	1,821,374
Indian Lands	198,106	198,106
Military	1,632	1,632
National Park Service	76,397	76,397
Private	158,077	156,199

Table 1-1. Land Ownership within the Moab FO Area		
Land Ownership	**Acres Including Lands Managed by the Vernal Field Office**	**Acres Excluding Lands Managed by the Vernal Field Office**
State	411,588	346,542
State, County, City, Wildlife Park, and Outdoor Recreation Areas	18,167	17,457
US Forest Service	141,241	141,241
Water	324	324
Total	**2,855,775**	**2,759,272**
Source: BLM 2004.		

1.3.2 Resource Setting and Management Issues

The major land uses and economic resources include recreation, oil and natural gas exploration and development, land use leases and permits, rights-of-way (ROWs), livestock grazing, mining, and woodland products. Recreational resources provide many opportunities for public enjoyment and provide the bulk of the revenue to local Moab businesses. Nearly 2 million people visit public lands within the Moab FO area each year (see Chapter 10, Recreation).

Geographic features within the planning area include the Green and Colorado Rivers, the Book Cliffs, Castle Valley, and the LaSal Mountains. Habitat for deer, elk, bighorn sheep (both desert and Rocky Mountain), and pronghorn antelope is also within the Moab FO area. Threatened, endangered, or sensitive wildlife species that can be found in the area include Mexican spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, bonytail chub, bald eagle, and peregrine falcon. Prehistoric archaeological sites of Anasazi and Fremont cultures are known to be in the planning area, as are later historic sites of cultural significance.

The identification of resource planning issues is one of the first steps in the planning process. These issues are best cast as resource management *problems* and *opportunities* that the given agency needs to address to ensure that it is fulfilling its mission of multiple-use and sustained yield resource management, as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The issues are further refined in the AMS.

Preliminary issues for the Moab FO RMP have been identified in the RMP Preparation Plan and are presented below. Additional issues were identified during the RMP public scoping period from June 4, 2003 through December 30, 2003. The issues identified by the public during this period can be found in the Moab RMP Scoping Report.

1.3.2.1 Wildlife and Fisheries, and Special Status Species

The new RMP needs to address habitat allocations and conflicts (livestock vs. wildlife), habitat fragmentation and degradation, drought and the competition for water between livestock and wildlife, and disease transmission. Wildlife habitat needs to be characterized and include measurable objectives for important wildlife species and habitats, with priority species and habitats identified by UDWR and USFWS. Forage allocations for big game need to be reviewed

and modified to provide for big game species. The objectives of the Big Horn Sheep and Pronghorn Amendments of the 1985 Grand RMP should be considered for incorporation into the new RMP and should resolve big game and rangeland forage issues. There are no stipulations for deer fawning, elk calving, and bighorn sheep lambing.

There is currently insufficient habitat for small mammals and amphibians and insufficient protection of raptors. The RMP should consider adopting the USFWS guidelines for raptor protection. Strategies need to be formulated for protecting threatened and endangered species, particularly the Mexican spotted owl, the southwestern willow flycatcher, the Gunnison sage grouse, and the yellow-billed cuckoo. The restoration of prairie dog habitat should be considered in the RMP.

The RMP should consider the creation of wildlife stipulations for oil and gas programs, recreation, OHV use, and ROWs. Permitted versus non-permitted recreation activities, including the level of control of access to wildlife habitat, need to be considered in the context of wildlife protection. The RMP needs to consider the impacts of road development on wildlife resources.

1.3.2.2 Vegetation and Special Status Plants

Noxious weed controls should be incorporated into the RMP as standard operating procedures. A goal of the RMP should be to maintain and restore sagebrush, grasslands, and pinyon-juniper vegetation communities (and special status vegetation species) impacted by drought, insect and noxious weed infestations, fire, grazing, seed collection, and encroachment by other vegetation communities. The loss (and protection) of relic vegetation communities needs to be considered.

1.3.2.3 Wetland and Riparian Areas

The new RMP may need to include Proper Functioning Condition assessments, protocols, mitigation, best management practices, rehabilitation techniques, and Rangeland Health regulations.

It may need to include specific analyses of surface-disturbing activities authorized in wetland/riparian areas and recognize the susceptibility of riparian areas to fire and fuelwood collection. The RMP would need to consider and address the impacts of OHV use, invasive species, minerals exploration and development, motion-picture photography, recreational activity, drought, habitat loss, and ROWs on wetland and riparian areas.

It needs to identify special status species and conservation strategies. It also needs to establish an objective to maintain adequate vegetation growth for food storage, seed dissemination, and plant survival.

1.3.2.4 Livestock Grazing and Rangeland

The new RMP needs to consider the impacts of livestock trampling, improper season of use, low productivity, disease transmission from domesticated sheep to Bighorn sheep, drought, fire, and recreational activities upon rangeland health. It needs to address the impacts of grazing on critical watersheds and soils, OHV-produced forage losses, and losses of forage from mineral

development. The RMP needs to consider the impacts of improper season of use on grazing allotments and the impacts of ecological conversions and shifts of vegetation communities.

The RMP needs to resolve rangeland access and maintenance problems associated with Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). The RMP needs to determine if livestock grazing is in compliance with rangeland standards and guidelines, identify and resolve forage allocation issues, and resolve sheep to cattle AUM conversions where damage is occurring.

The RMP needs to consider opportunities for permittees to assume more range maintenance projects. The RMP needs to address, coordinate, and resolve common rangeland issues with the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation. The RMP needs to consider the desired future conditions of the rangeland resource.

1.3.2.5 Recreation

The new RMP needs to address the lack of recreational facilities and the ability to maintain them. It needs to consider how to meet public demands while protecting sustainable opportunities and natural resource values. It needs to address resource conflicts and the impacts from recreational activities, user conflicts and displacement, the increase in OHV use, the increase in visitors, and the dependence of local economies on public land use. The connection between OHV damage to natural resources and unregulated camping needs to be addressed. There is a need to address the impacts of the dispersion or displacement of visitors from the National Parks onto BLM lands. The plan needs to consider where horses would be allowed. The new plan needs to address the allowable kinds and levels of recreational use to sustain other resource values. The recreation program needs to be reviewed, and the increased use and types of use need to be addressed. Where appropriate, Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) and Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMA) need to be designated, and management guidance provided. Consider the establishment of additional Recreation Management Areas (RMA) within the FO, with management objectives for each area. The new plan should identify Recreational Activity Emphasis Areas/ROS management zones. There is a need to consider health and safety, such as human waste and flooding.

Management and guidance for organized groups, special events, commercial recreational use, river programs, special management area camping, and woodcutting and gathering should be addressed in the new plan.

1.3.2.6 Water Quality, Watersheds, and Soils

Sensitive and critical soils are being impacted in the Moab FO area. The RMP needs to protect crytobiotic soil crusts and riparian and 100-year floodplain areas and needs to coordinate watershed restoration. Salinity and other water quality concerns need to be assessed. Water quality standards need to be described in the new RMP. The RMP needs to discuss protective measures and restrictions for riparian areas, ephemeral systems, and other areas not mentioned in the current RMP (1985). Best management practices need to be determined, as do the effects of surface-disturbing activities on Utah's TMDL water quality program. Opportunities and needs to identify priority watersheds and watersheds in need of special protection should be part of the planning process. Information on critical watersheds needs to be updated, and a water inventory

needs to be conducted to support water right adjudication and watershed condition assessments. Restrictions, protective measures, and water quality requirements need to be described.

1.3.2.7 Wilderness

OHV use within WSAs needs to be addressed in the RMP, and minor WSA boundary adjustments need to be addressed. The new RMP needs to incorporate the Black Ridge Wilderness Area, and management objectives need to be identified for WSAs. The role of prescribed fire in WSAs needs to be addressed.

1.3.2.8 Wild and Scenic Rivers

A process has been developed for the systematic review and inventory of all rivers in the area, and is being coordinated with adjacent BLM FOs and other agencies. The wording of interim management measures needs to be more specific for non-studied areas, and apply to new areas as they are identified. There is a need to complete stream studies prior to the development of the new RMP.

1.3.2.9 Mineral Resources

The oil and gas resources in the Moab FO area need to be reviewed, and an analysis and updated reasonable foreseeable development (RFD) projection needs to be included in the new plan. Other minerals programs should be similarly considered. A process needs to be developed for maintaining and updating the RFD. The development of coal and coal bed natural gas will be considered in areas presently within WSAs (e.g., the Book Cliffs), in the event that Congress drops these areas from further consideration for designation as wilderness areas. The RMP needs to consider the socioeconomic impacts of minerals development. It needs to integrate new guidelines and policies into future planning efforts, which includes integrating the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) into the BLM's land use planning and use authorization programs.

1.3.2.10 Cultural and Paleontological Resources

The new RMP needs to generate cultural resource inventory data within the FO. It needs to address cultural site disturbances caused by vandalism, website-posted information, OHV use, dispersed recreation, road construction and maintenance, fire, and grazing. The new plan needs to incorporate new directives of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and ensure compatibility with State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) objectives. A method for ensuring early notification of upcoming projects that will need cultural assistance needs to be devised in the RMP. Law enforcement, mitigation, and protection of cultural and paleontological resources need to be addressed in the new plan. Developing GIS data on cultural resources, considering public outreach and education programs, and developing a process for conducting and documenting cultural and paleontological resource inventories within the FO should occur.

1.3.2.11 Fire

Hazardous fuel loading is becoming a concern in wilderness areas and in wildland urban interface (WUI) areas. Insect infestations of woodland and timber resources are contributing to

excessive fuel loading. The fire policies presented in the 2001 Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, with the new terminology, needs to be included in the new RMP planning effort.

As required by the 2001 Wildland Fire Management Policy, the RMP needs to delineate appropriate fire management actions in areas where fire is not desired, areas where fire could be used as a resource management tool, and areas where fuel reductions are necessary. The 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy also needs to be considered in formulating fire management planning. The management direction in the Fire Management Plan needs to be reviewed and analyzed in the next planning effort and revised as needed. The 2001 hazardous fuels policy and guidance needs to be included in the new RMP, and WUI issues, including adjacent at-risk communities, need to be addressed. Safety measures need to be incorporated into the new RMP.

By the same token, the impacts of fire on air quality need to be considered in the RMP. The RMP also needs to consider the impacts of widespread pinyon pine losses from drought, disease, and infestation on wildland fire potential.

1.3.2.12 Lands

The new RMP may need to identify new utility corridors and be consistent in the designation of corridors for US-191, I-70, and major powerlines and pipelines. An amendment to the 1985 Grand RMP for the proposed withdrawal of land presently open to mining claims along the Colorado, Dolores, and Green River corridors needs to be in conformance with the new RMP. The new plan should identify lands that will be made available for disposal via sale, and it may need to identify additional areas that would be considered for withdrawal from mineral entry to protect resources. Maintenance of natural landscapes for filming exchanges, acquisitions, withdrawals, and disposals needs to occur. The RMP also needs to target SITLA land parcels for land exchanges and define the boundaries of existing utility corridors.

1.3.2.13 Woodlands

The Moab FO lacks a woodlands resource inventory plan. The RMP should identify areas where woodland resources should be restricted versus areas that can be permitted for harvesting. It needs to look at fuel modification for future woodland manipulation, and large areas in the FO area are not being harvested because of emergency closures; thus, the new RMP needs to address the correlation of insufficient harvesting and fuels buildup. The new RMP needs to address the impacts of insect infestations, hazardous fuel loading, the interruption of natural fire regimes, tamarisk encroachment, overland travel, and wood collection on woodland resources.

The RMP needs to examine OHV access to and impacts on areas open to woodland harvests and address possible commercial pinyon/juniper fuel wood harvests on public lands.

1.3.2.14 Visual Resource Management

A visual resource management (VRM) section should be included in the new plan to establish VRM management objectives and classes. Visual issues such as the management of scenic byways and backways need to be addressed. Visual management objectives need to be established in each Wilderness Study Area.

1.4 PLANNING

1.4.1 Planning Process

Planning process regulations are found in 43 CFR 1600 and planning program guidance is found in BLM Manual 1600. The AMS is one step in the RMP planning process. The AMS's role in the RMP process is to describe the current land and resource management within the planning area, analyze the effectiveness of current management, and identify opportunities for more effective resource use and protection and any management limitations that could inhibit effective resource use and protection. Documents produced during the RMP preparation process include:

- the preplanning analysis;
- the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS);
- the Draft RMP Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS);
- the Final RMP EIS (FEIS), which includes the Preferred Management Alternative (i.e., the Proposed RMP); and
- the Record of Decision (ROD) and Final RMP.

1.4.2 Preplanning Analysis

The preplanning analysis comprises the first two steps of the planning process: 1) issues identification and 2) development of planning criteria. Issues are identified during the scoping process. For the Moab FO RMP, scoping occurred during 2003. Six public meetings were held to solicit public input. These meetings were held in October and November 2003 in Green River, Grand Junction, Moab, Monticello, Blanding, and Salt Lake City. Agencies, interested organizations, stakeholders, and the general public were able to voice their concerns, identify issues, and nominate Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

1.4.3 Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS)

Development of the AMS incorporates the next two planning steps: 1) the collection of existing data and 2) an analysis of the resource management programs within the Moab FO. The AMS also assesses whether the resources will be able to meet current and future demands under the current management programs. Those management programs found to have no conflicts or concerns may be carried through to the Final RMP. Any identified problems are further scrutinized to see if they can be resolved administratively. If they cannot, various ways to adjust the land use or reallocate the resource are proposed and carried through the EIS process.

1.4.4 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Resource Management Plan (RMP)

The preparation of the EIS and development of the RMP are steps in the planning process, whereby the alternatives for the EIS are formulated, impacts are analyzed and disclosed, and a preferred alternative is chosen. The existing management conditions, management actions, and management objectives of the current RMP (1985) compose the No Action Alternative, which is the basis for comparison of the action alternatives.

The action alternatives are formulated from the resource planning issues and concerns raised during scoping. The Draft EIS, which analyzes and discloses the relative environmental impacts of the alternatives and presents the BLM's preferred alternative, is distributed for public review and comment. Comments received by the agency regarding the Draft EIS are then analyzed, given a response, and, as appropriate, incorporated into the proposed RMP and Final EIS. To ensure consistency between the proposed RMP and state and local land-use plans, the Governor of the State of Utah will also review the RMP. During the comment process, the proposed RMP and Final EIS are open to public protest through a formal procedure described in 43 CFR 1610.5-2.

1.4.5 Final Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Record of Decision (ROD)

The publication of the Final RMP and the ROD completes the planning process. The ROD is usually not substantially different from the proposed RMP and is therefore not subject to public review. The Final RMP provides resource management guidance, either taken directly from those existing management programs evaluated as being sufficient, or from resolved planning issues analyzed in the EIS. Monitoring and evaluation of the RMP will follow a set schedule and will be documented through plan supplements, amendments, or addenda.

1.4.6 Data and the Geographic Information System (GIS)

Data management and the acquisition, development, use, and sharing of geospatial information for this planning process will be integrated into and coordinated with other federal and BLM data management initiatives. Most of the data gathered and used in this planning effort will be used during RMP implementation and by other resource programs to conduct day-to-day resource management. As the jurisdictional boundaries of the Moab FO are contiguous with other BLM Field Offices, data development and data management will be coordinated with other BLM planning efforts to ensure that the data remain consistent.

Inventory data are used to provide a basis for preparing and monitoring the RMP. Existing information is often combined with new data to analyze alternatives and make planning decisions. The BLM has compiled a database that has been supplemented by private contractors and other government agencies. The database sources and data collected are documented in this AMS.

A geographic information system (GIS) is used to display, analyze, and store the resource data. GIS allows land planners to integrate data, such as resource locations and acreage calculations, from many types of resources and identify potential conflicting uses. GIS is a useful tool in the formulation of alternatives. It is also used for ongoing resource management following completion of the RMP development process. Data gaps and the means to acquire the information are identified in this AMS.

1.5 REFERENCES

U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 1985. The Grand Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP). Moab, Utah: Bureau of Land Management, Moab Field Office.

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