Proposed RMP and Alternatives – Recreational Resources

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

• Ensure the continued availability of quality outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences that are not readily available from other sources; protect the health and safety of visitors; protect natural, cultural, and other resources; encourage public enjoyment of public lands; and enhance recreational opportunities.

• Work collaboratively with affected user groups and organizations, state and local officials, and other interested parties to provide for site-specific or area-specific comprehensive integrated activity level planning.

• Assure there is a spectrum of recreation opportunities and settings through comprehensive integrated activity level planning. Such plans would include, but are not limited to the following:
  o Recreation use allocations
  o Group size or seasonal limitations
  o Opportunities for dispersed or organized camping, including large events
  o Facility development
  o Opportunities for interpretation or educational signage
  o Campfire restrictions
  o Establish limits of acceptable change or other environmental indicators in order to provide for adaptive management

Management Common to the Proposed RMP and All Alternatives

• Continue to implement public education and environmental awareness programs such as Tread Lightly and the Leave No Trace.

• Manage 24,259 acres in Red Mountain-Dry Fork as a SRMA to provide for maintenance and development of OHV or non-OHV trails, minimal facilities necessary for human health and safety, watershed values, relict vegetation communities, and crucial deer and elk winter habitat. An activity plan for the SRMA would be developed to determine what areas are appropriate for day use only.

• BLM lands within Dry Fork Canyon would be closed to the shooting of firearms.

• Areas not managed as SRMAs would be managed for dispersed recreational uses that require minimum facility development.

• Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) would continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis. All proposed applications for permits would be evaluated to determine compliance with the goals and objectives of this plan.

• Motorized camping vehicles would be allowed to travel off designated routes on a single path up to 300 feet to access an existing disturbed dispersed campsite, except in non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics and WSA lands. In designated travel route areas, an activity level plan would be used to identify areas suitable for camping that would allow motorized vehicles to travel from those designated routes. The BLM would monitor dispersed camping activities and would work with user groups to address adverse environmental conditions if warranted. If use is such that undue environmental impacts are taking place, the BLM would close and rehabilitate damaged areas. If monitoring indicates that developed camping is needed, the BLM would evaluate the viability of developed campsites.

• Where routes would remain available for motorized use within, such use could continue on a conditional basis. Use of the existing routes in the WSAs ("ways" when located within WSAs — see Glossary) could continue as long as the use of these routes does not impair wilderness suitability, as provided by the IMP (BLM 1995). Congress designates the area as wilderness, the routes will be closed. In the interim, if use and/or non-compliance are found through monitoring efforts to impair the area’s suitability for wilderness designation, the BLM would take further action to limit use of the routes, or close them. The continued use of these routes, therefore, is based on user groups and area compliance with use standards and non-impairment of wilderness values.

• Establish signed pull-off wildlife viewing areas along the Book Cliffs Divide Ridge Road.

• Establish comprehensive activity plans for Blue Mountain, Fantasy Divide, and Pelican Lake. These plans would address appropriate levels of use and facility development.

• Continue to implement the 1979 Green River Management Plan for Desolation and Gray Canyons to protect the Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark within VFO and the Upper Green Recreation Management Plan to provide appropriate use levels while protecting other resources.

• The Upper Green River from Little Hole to the Colorado state line would limit all surface-disturbing activities within line of sight up to one-half mile, except within established corridors or unless related to recreational infrastructure support.

• All developed recreation sites within VFO would be closed to the shooting of firearms, closed to grazing, and all forms of surface-disturbing activities not directly related to recreation development.

• Special recreation permit holders using horses in connection with their operation within Herd Management Areas would be required to have them tested for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) until all wild horses have been gathered and removed from the area.

• Special recreation permit holders using horses from out of state would be required to test them for EIA per state law.

• If cave resources are identified on public lands, then the VFO would develop a cave management plan that results in appropriate management to protect them from damage.

• Maintain or expand infrastructure of all recreational sites, including, but not limited to, cabins, restrooms, campsites, and trail head development and ensure their safety for public use.

• Stabilize and preserve Chipeta, Moonshine, Rat Hole, and Trujillo cabins.

• Mountain bike use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

BLM Recreation Guidelines

The following recreation management guidelines were developed to help achieve and maintain healthy public lands as defined by the Rangeland Health Standards. They are listed below with the standard that they apply to.

Light and Sound

BLM-contracted fixed wing and helicopter aircraft would not be authorized to fly over Dinosaur National Monument unless warranted by an emergency situation or approved in advance.
Rangeland Health Standard 1

- Upland soils exhibit permeability and infiltration rates that sustain or improve site productivity, considering the soil type, climate, and landform.
- Designate areas for intensive recreational use or cross-country motorized travel where disturbance of soil and vegetation is acceptable, either because impacts are insignificant and/or temporary or because the value of intensive use of the land outweighs whatever ecological changes may occur. Decisions on such designation should take into account conflicts with other users as well as adverse effects on archaeological or historical sites, T&E species habitat, wildlife habitat, or social values such as beauty, solitude, and quiet.
- In all other areas, travel routes and other disturbances should be kept to the minimum necessary to provide access and visitor facilities appropriate to the area. Through blocking, signing, and public education, unneeded travel routes should be eliminated and rehabilitated and unplanned development of new ones discouraged.
- It may be necessary to manage some areas to be entirely free of planned travel routes.

Rangeland Health Standard 2

- Riparian and wetland areas are in properly functioning condition. Stream channel morphology and functions are appropriate to soil type, climate, and landform.
- Where feasible, and consistent with user safety, developed travel routes should be located/relocated away from sensitive riparian and wetland areas.
- Camping in riparian areas should be avoided and must be managed, monitored, and modified as conditions dictate to reduce vegetation disturbance and sedimentation.
- Stream crossings would be limited to the number dictated by the topography, geology, and soil type. Design any necessary stream crossings to minimize sedimentation, soil erosion, and compaction.

Rangeland Health Standard 3

- Desired species, including native, T&E and special status species, are maintained at a level appropriate for the site and species involved.
- Protect against the establishment and/or spread of noxious or other weeds from intensive recreation, including the use of riding and pack animals, hiking, motorized, or other mechanized vehicles.
- Conduct an educational campaign to inform recreational users about the damage caused by noxious weeds and how their spread can be minimized.
- Where necessary, control recreational use by changing location or kind of activity, season, intensity, distribution, and/or duration in order to protect plant and animal communities, especially those containing special status species, including listed T&E or candidate species.

Rangeland Health Standard 4

- The BLM would apply and comply with water quality standards established by the State of Utah (R. 317-2) and the federal Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts. Activities on BLM lands would fully support the designated beneficial uses described in the Utah Water Quality Standards (R. 317-2) for surface water and groundwater.
- Manage recreational uses in coordination with other uses on public lands to comply with applicable water quality standards by:
  - Identifying areas where recreational activities may seriously impair water quality.
  - Establishing thresholds for numbers, types, and duration of visitor use, and when those thresholds are reached, by developing facilities and/or possibly limiting or relocating use.
  - Monitor and control disposal of human or domestic animal waste, trash, and other pollutants to prevent serious impairment of water quality.

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<tr>
<th>PROPOSED RMP</th>
<th>Alternative A (Draft RMP/EIS Preferred Alternative)</th>
<th>Alternative B</th>
<th>Alternative C</th>
<th>Alternative D</th>
<th>Alternative E</th>
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<td>REMARKS</td>
<td>Same as the Proposed RMP.</td>
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<td>Seep Ridge, Book Cliff Divide, and Atchee Ridge Routes would not be designated as Back Country Byways.</td>
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| Additional cabins for permitted/ administrative use could be constructed at or near the existing Chipeta, Trujillo, Moonshine, Rat Hole, and Wolf Den cabins and at Westwater Point, Dick Canyon, and other locations. | Same as the Proposed RMP. | Same as the Proposed RMP. | Additional cabins in the Book Cliffs would not be constructed. | Unspecified in the current management plans. | Same as Alternative C. |

| Permit construction of minimal recreation facilities in non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, when | Unspecified in the Draft EIS. | Unspecified in the Draft EIS. | Unspecified in the Draft EIS. | Unspecified in the current management plans. | Same as the Proposed RMP. |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Vernal RMP  | RECREATION RESOURCES — MAP FIGURES 27 AND 28        |              |              |              |                               |              |

compatible with the goals and objectives for management of the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics.