

Special Designations

Commenter	Record ID & Comment Number	Resource Category	Comment Text	Response to Comment	Doc Mod
State of Utah	G-1	SD122	As part of the required analysis of the effects of the management requirements for other aspects of the proposed RMP on special designations, including ACECs, the DEIS states that the proposed plan's ACEC "management focuses on protecting specific, identified relevance and importance values." The statement is incomplete because it fails to focus on the parallel statutorily required analysis concerning effects from authorized multiple-use activities, which may cause irreparable damage to those relevant and important values. The statement should read that the plan's proposed ACEC management provisions will "protect and prevent irreparable damage to specific, identified relevance and importance values."	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD123	The discussion of ACEC management contains the general statement that ACECs would benefit from the "special management attention they would receive if designated." Special management attention is more than a coincidental benefit that flows from designation, it is a fundamental prerequisite to designation. The BLM must make a determination for each potential and proposed ACEC that special management attention is required to protect the identified relevant and important values. From the information in the DRMP, the State of Utah cannot determine the nature of the required special management attention for any of the potential or proposed ACECs.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD124	The DRMP indicates that the lack of designation of some potential ACECs may place the relevant and important values "at some risk of irreparable damage during the life of the plan." This statement is completely backward. BLM must first make a	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	

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			<p>determination that a threat of irreparable damage from some authorized multiple-use activity exists, and is directed toward the identified relevant and important value in order to complete the fundamental requirements for an ACEC. The identification of required threat of irreparable damage cannot be supported from simple hypothetical musings postulating that the lack of the very management structure (ACEC) BLM is trying to justify may result in damage to the resources.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD125	<p>The State of Utah cannot find in the DRMP/DEIS any analysis for ACECs of the differentiation between special management and standard multiple-use management, the level and type of multiple-use an area can sustain without risk or threat of irreparable damage to relevant and important values, what measures can be taken to protect the relevant and important values without placing restrictions on other resource uses, and whether or not designations other than ACEC will afford the protection determined necessary through the evaluation process. BLM Manual Section 1613.33E allows the BLM to decline to designate an ACEC where standard or routine management practices are sufficient to protect the resource or value from risks or threats of damage/degradation.</p>	<p>The potential ACECs brought forward for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance</p>	

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				and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD126	The DEIS fails to analyze the balance between ACEC designation and the value of other multiple-uses. The potential benefits of ACEC designation versus other resource uses is not evaluated for any of the potential and proposed ACECs.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD127	The State of Utah is concerned that the BLM views potential and proposed ACECs as convenient vehicles to generally focus agency management attention on an area, rather than a very focused management tool with strict criteria for creation.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD128	The State of Utah is concerned that the discussions and analyses of potential and proposed ACECs in the DRMP/DEIS don't meet the standards required by either state or federal law. The discussion as it is fails to provide sufficient information to allow the purpose and need for each potential ACEC to be ascertained, and the impacts of its potential designation to be determined; the present discussion is merely a recitation that certain natural features or processes within the area are, a priori, important and relevant because of a simple regurgitation of the regulatory requirements, and no cogent and coordinated examination of the proposed management scheme exists. There is no discussion of the factors leading to a determination that the required important and	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	

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			<p>relevant values are, in fact, important on a regional scale, as there is no discussion of the nature of the region to which the factors within the potential and proposed ACEC can be compared. Nor is there an application of the facts to the statutory requirements, instead there is only a restatement of factors which are part of the statutory and regulatory requirements that need to be demonstrated in order to create an ACEC. Finally, the statutory requirement to determine the probability of irreparable damage to the important and relevant values is completely AWOL. See comment SD129 for an example of the superficial nature of ACEC analysis.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD129	<p>The discussions about the proposed relevance and importance of each potential and proposed ACEC contained in Appendix G contain three references to the "lush riparian vegetation" which is "rare" in the area. All of the areas to which these statements refer are located along the Green River and are part of the main watershed system of the area – the Green River drainage. In this generally arid area, all riparian areas are important and tend to look lush. What is the regional significance of these three riparian areas? How do they compare to riparian areas in the proposed and potential Bitter Creek ACEC? Further, given the BLM's general nationwide policy of protection for riparian areas because all riparian areas are important, what is the threat to these three areas that cannot be met through the protections offered by the nationwide policy, and how will the special management attention for these three riparian areas be different from the nationwide protections?</p>	<p>The differences between how the riparian areas would be managed as ACECs, and how they would be managed if not designated as ACECs, are discussed in Chapter 4.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD130	<p>The analysis indicates that ACECs may benefit from "fire resources, soil and watershed actions, and vegetation resources (including riparian areas and</p>	<p>The distinction between fire resources, soil, watershed, and vegetation management actions and minerals activity and OHV use is that changes</p>	X

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			<p>woodlands)," yet be negatively affected by mineral activities and OHV use. No explanation is given for these statements. Vegetation, fire, and soil treatments may affect the appearance of the land as much as mineral development, yet the end result is healthier vegetation. The bias against mineral development is evident, because no mention is made concerning the balance of uses which results in the extraction of resources useful to society versus the potential benefits of the ACEC, and because the analysis fails to recognize the effect of proper mineral mitigation measures upon the ultimate effect on the relevant and important values. The state requests the BLM revisit these superficial analyses, consider mitigation part of the determination of effect, and consider the balance of uses as required.</p>	<p>to the character of the landscape, including visual appearance, for the former category of actions are of far shorter duration and more consistent with the management objectives of ACECs than those of the latter category of actions.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD125-G-1.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD131	<p>As the pros and cons of each potential and proposed ACECs, and those of SRMAs or WSRs, are weighed, the BLM should avoid any recommendations which unduly restrict continued vegetation and wildlife treatment practices, uses associated with school trust lands, mineral development, and other management needs of state agencies.</p>	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD132	<p>Existing ACECs must be reviewed for sufficiency and necessity prior to being carried forward in the new RMP. The simple statement in the RMP that the existing ACEC designations have been effective is insufficient and does not meet the requirements of the BLM's own Manual. There is no discussion as to whether it is the management of certain areas as ACECs or other laws and regulations that has protected the relevant and important values of these areas.</p>	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD133	The State of Utah is concerned that none of the	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	

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			<p>Alternatives in the DRMP and EIS presented a "no ACEC" position, thereby indicating in a more detailed manner the need for all proposed and potential ACECs. The state would ask the BLM to correct this deficiency.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD134	<p>The State of Utah is concerned that this potential and proposed ACEC does not meet the statutory requirements for an ACEC as no significant information about the area, or the need for the ACEC is given. The importance criteria discussion is merely a recitation of the requirements found in the BLM Handbook for qualities the BLM should find in an area in order to determine the existence of importance criteria.</p>	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD135	<p>Alternatives A and C provide for restricted wood-cutting in the old-growth pinyon pine area of 160 acres, which is justified to protect these irreplaceable resources. But the management prescriptions for the proposed ACEC also provide for "enhancing habitat utilizing forest manipulation and tree spraying." Presumably "forest manipulation and tree spraying" would not occur in the area of the 1200 year old trees. Where would it occur? Forest manipulation and tree spraying are tools in the normal multiple-use regime for BLM lands. How does this simple statement of a proposed management requirement constitute a "detailed explanation" of special management for the resource, and what exact purpose does it serve? Because this management prescription is not for the old trees, the State of Utah is obligated to ask exactly what resource is to be protected by the BLM's management prescriptions from exactly what type of threat which may produce irreparable damage in what manner? Further, because the area of the old-growth trees is only 160 acres, why is ACEC management needed for the other acres of the proposed and potential ACEC?</p>	<p>Vegetation/habitat treatments would occur throughout the rest of the ACEC.</p> <p>More detailed management provisions meeting the overarching parameters established through the RMP would be included in an ACEC management plan prepared for this ACEC.</p> <p>See comment response SD8-G9.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD136	<p>The list of proposed management prescriptions for this area says that oil and gas leasing will be managed by timing and controlled surface use, except for the old tree area, which would be managed using no-surface occupancy provisions, and a Natural Area which would be managed as closed to leasing. Which category of leasing is this for the larger area – Category 1, 2, 3, or 4? What timing stipulations would be necessary in the ACEC? What controls on surface use? Is there a reason the Natural area is closed to leasing, as opposed to the use of no-surface occupancy? NSO provisions allow drainage of fluid resources from under the area, while no-leasing may cause the creation of an area sterilized from drainage larger than the 400 acres involved. How is oil and gas leasing, and possibly exploration and production a threat that may produce irreparable damage to the 160 acres of old growth trees, cultural resources, or the wetlands which are cited as relevant and important values for this area?</p>	<p>See Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS which describes under which alternative the Bitter Creek ACEC would be established.</p> <p>Please compare Figures 11-18 with Figures 22-24 to see the stipulations applying to the vast majority of lands within these proposed ACECs.</p> <p>Timing buffers within the ACECs would be implemented primarily for the protection of special status species and wildlife. Controls on surface use would be related to such factors as fragile soils and steep slopes, visual resources, and wildlife and special status species habitat. Please, see Appendix K for more information about the nature of proposed timing and controlled surface use stipulations within the planning area.</p> <p>See comment response SD27-G-22.</p> <p>The Natural Area is the Book Cliffs Instant Study Area and is managed under the IMP for wilderness. The area must be closed to mineral development as per regulation.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD137	<p>There is no discussion about the geographic extent of the wetlands or the perched watertable. Do the wetlands extend throughout the entire 147,000+ acres of the potential ACEC? If not, how much acreage do they cover, and what is the nature of the other lands within the proposed area? The State of Utah is</p>	<p>The wetlands do not extend throughout the entire proposed Bitter Creek ACEC but are localized in smaller areas. Other relevant and important values identified for this proposed ACEC are discussed in Chapter 3 and Appendix G includes cultural/historical resources, watersheds, and</p>	

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			concerned that the proposed ACEC is much, much larger than necessary to protect the identified important and relevant values.	ecosystems/habitat for special status species. These other relevant and important values extend throughout the area identified for this proposed ACEC. See comment response SD14-G13.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD138	The proposed management prescriptions for this area include Class 1, 2, or 3 VRM designations. The location of each proposed VRM classification, as illustrated on the maps is not tied to any of the relevant or important values discussed as the qualification reasons for the ACEC, leaving the reader to wonder what resources are being threatened by what type of threat which will cause irreparable damage in what manner?	VRM classifications are not tied specifically to ACEC values but are tied to the visual inventory for the planning area and to recreation management decisions. The relevant and important values for these ACECs include an old growth pinyon forest, cultural resources, important watersheds, and a critical ecosystem for wildlife and migratory birds. See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD139	The proposed and potential Coyote Basin ACEC is proposed solely for white-tailed prairie dog complexes. The DRMP indicates the prairie dog is relevant because it is "vulnerable to adverse change from a variety of current causes." What causes? What vulnerability? The reasoning means that the prairie dog had been petitioned for listing under the provisions of the ESA, a petition which was recently denied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	Based upon an analysis of and response to the public comments, BLM has dropped the designation of Coyote Basin in the Proposed Plan. Prairie dogs are extremely susceptible to the plague, and the white-tailed prairie dog has suffered large-scale population decline as a result.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD140	A common problem with prairie dog complexes is the plague. How will ACEC management prevent this problem?	ACEC designation will not, in and of itself, address the issue of plague in prairie dog colonies. The integrated management plan for the area as well as the research conducted under the Research Natural Area designation and in cooperation with other agencies and organizations will recognize the risk of	

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				plague and implement measures to manage it where possible.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD141	<p>Proposed management prescriptions for this ACEC include noxious weed control, restoring natural fire regime, maintaining or enhancing ferret habitat, and establishing a research and monitoring program. The analysis fails to show how the control of noxious weeds is important as a special management prescription for the prairie dog (the reason for the ACEC), independent of the BLM's stated desire to control noxious weeds everywhere. What is special about the noxious weed control in the area under discussion? Further, what does natural fire and enhancement of ferret habitat have to do with the prairie dogs?</p>	<p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD142	There is no discussion anywhere about the potential for irreparable damage requiring the creation of this ACEC. This information must be included in the document. The State of Utah believes this proposed ACEC is a solution looking for a problem and strongly opposes it. The state Division of Wildlife Resources, which has jurisdiction over prairie dogs as a wildlife species, sees no need for this proposed ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD143	The discussion of the relevant and important values of the proposed Nine Mile Canyon ACEC is inadequate in that it does not provide an actual description of said values, but rather it offers merely a recitation of the regulatory requirements for the nature of those values. How are these values significant in a regional context? What specifically are the qualities to be protected and managed through the ACEC?	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD144	This proposed ACEC is described as an extension of an ACEC designated by the Book Cliffs RMP. Do the lands within the proposed extension lands have the same qualities as the land within the existing ACEC? Where are the extension lands in relation to the existing ACEC? Figures 22-24 give some indication but not a lot of detail.	The lands within the proposed extension area contain the same relevant and important values as the existing ACEC. The proposed extension is located at the west end of the existing ACEC. The expansion area is represented by the difference between the proposed Nine Mile Canyon ACEC boundaries illustrated in Figures 22 and 24.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD145	The State of Utah does not believe the BLM has adequately justified the need for this ACEC designation to protect cultural resources given that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act already affords these resources protection and consideration such as mitigation. The BLM is also proposing an archaeological district for the cultural resources and did not analyze the need for the ACEC against the protection afforded by both Section 106 and an archaeological district. Further, the BLM has not identified any special management necessary for the	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	

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			area beyond the normal cultural resource management BLM would employ.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD146	The Main Canyon ACEC is proposed by the BLM to protect cultural resources and "natural systems." What natural systems – what does this mean?	Natural Systems are defined under 45 FR 57318 as "Living or nonliving parts of the natural environment, considered either as discrete individual elements or as group or classes of such individual elements, and the behaviors, actions, and interactions of such elements or changes to them. The central features of such a system or process may, for example, be communities of living plants, and vital components of their habitat, or such non-living structures as geological formations, which exemplify a natural process or system."	
State of Utah	G-1	SD146A	What is the threat of irreparable harm to these "systems"? Under the ACEC some activities such as OHV use would be closed or otherwise restricted and portions of the area would be managed as VRM I (which also restricts acceptable surface uses).	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD146B	Because these restrictions have the potential to close portions of the area to oil and gas development, the State of Utah is concerned that the potential to protect natural systems, without further clarification of the specific management provisions, will constitute management for non-impairment, in violation of state law and the case of Utah v. Norton.	See Response to Comment SD16A-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD147	The State of Utah requests an actual accounting and detailed description of the relevant and important values for this ACEC rather than a restatement of the regulatory requirement for the necessary quality of values in order for an ACEC to be designated.	See Response to Comment SD16A-G-22. Appendix provides specific information for each existing and nominated ACECs. Reports for Relevance and Importance may be reviewed in the Administrative Record.	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD148	Much of the area proposed for this ACEC is within the Winter Ridge WSA. What is the relationship between the two? Why is an ACEC necessary for the WSA lands?	See Response to Comment SD104-G-3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD149	The DRMP indicates that special management attention for this ACEC would include "permitting surface disturbance activities found to be complimentary or compatible with the goals and objects of the ACEC." Presumably those not found compatible would not be approved? What are the goals and objectives of the proposed and potential ACEC?	<p>The commenter is correct in the inference that surface-disturbing activities that contradicted the goals and objectives of this ACEC would not be approved. The goals and objectives of this ACEC are to manage for the maintenance and enhancement of the area's important cultural/historical/traditional resources and natural systems.</p> <p>See Appendix G and Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD150	The State of Utah does not believe the BLM has adequately justified the need for this ACEC designation to protect cultural resources given that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act already affords these resources protection and consideration such as mitigation. The BLM has not identified any special management necessary for the area beyond the normal cultural resource management BLM would employ or what the threats of irreparable harm are.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD151	The State of Utah requests that the BLM re-examine and re-justify the need for this ACEC, especially in light of the proposed SRMA for the same area.	See Response to Comment SD104-G-3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD152	The VRM classification of I or II proposed for this area could prevent necessary prescribed burns or other vegetative management necessary for range and forest health, or the economic use of any state trust lands	No VRM classification prevents necessary vegetation treatments, including prescribed burns, which are considered short-duration visual disruptions. No BLM management decisions,	

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			within the area.	including VRM classifications, apply to state trust land inholdings. The BLM cannot impose any restrictions or limitations on lands not under its jurisdiction. The BLM must also provide for reasonable access to such inholdings.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD153	The BLM has failed to provide adequate justification of the proposed ACECs as the discussions of each ACEC do not include specific details or analysis of the identified relevant and important values in a regional context, nor do they include any substantive description of the threats of irreparable harm or elucidation of specific management needs to prevent said harm. The BLM has also failed to demonstrate why the ACECs are necessary relative to other protections afforded to identified values through other designations or laws.	Threats to relevant and important values vary by alternative. Any of the alternatives may be selected, even if there are risks or threats of damage to relevant and important values resulting from that alternative. See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS. Also, see Responses to Comments SD27-G-22 and SD50-G-25.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD154	The State of Utah believes that the BLM has not sufficiently divulged the proposed management prescriptions for the river segments discussed in the DRMP/DEIS, as required by the draft document stage by BLM Manual Section 8351.32C. The information found in the document on pages 4-211 through 4-214 consists simply of general statements about concerns, rather than an evaluation of identified impacts. Further, support for the alleged concerns cannot be found in the document.	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25,G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD155	The DRMP/DEIS does not contain the information necessary to demonstrate that the values identified for each proposed WSR segment are river-related, "outstandingly remarkable," or significant on a regional basis as required by the guidance Process and Criteria (1996) adopted by the BLM and other regional federal agencies or BLM IM 2004-196. The State of Utah requests that the BLM review these eligibility	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25,G-1.	

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			determinations with the state and local governments, in order to fully explore the rationale for each.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD156	The statement on page 2-57 that river segments found to be eligible during the current RMP preparation process would continue to be managed to protect their eligibility under the "no-action" alternative (Alternative D) is not an accurate representation of federal law and does not comply with BLM policy and direction, or state law. BLM Manual 8351, Section 33 requires the BLM to assess in the RMP whether or not each river segment identified as eligible is also suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System. The Manual also states that if suitability cannot be determined as part of the RMP, a separate EIS may be required to make that determination. The projected schedule for completing the suitability evaluation should be set forth in the RMP. Alternative D, as represented on page 2-57, is therefore unacceptable and does not meet the requirements of BLM policy or state law.	See Responses to Comments SD1-I-1 and SD59-G-25,G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD157	The information under Section 3.14.3.2, page 3-84, should more fully and accurately represent the specific management requirements found in Manual Section 8351.32C, particularly regarding valid existing rights.	Chapter 3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to expand the discussion of management requirements for rivers determined eligible for the NWSRS to include the more detailed information outlined in Manual 8351, Section .32C.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD158	The meaning of the statement "to the extent that the BLM has the authority to do so" found on page 3-84 (Section 3.14.3.2) needs to be clarified.	This statement merely refers to the fact that the BLM does not have the authority to impose restrictions on non-Bureau landholders within areas found eligible and suitable for WSR designation, nor does it have the authority to usurp legal water rights or trump the requirements of other agencies with authority over certain waterways. The BLM does not believe the statement requires clarification in the document as it already, as written, acknowledges there are limits to BLM's authority with regards to	

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				waterways and water-related issues.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD159	The majority of the proposed ACECs encompass and isolate parcels of state trust lands. Management prescriptions applied to federal lands can significantly impact the land management goals of the Trust Lands Administration. The presence of trust lands within a designated ACEC can significantly impact the intent of the designation. The state, TLA, and BLM must ensure that any proposal by the BLM providing for restricted use of the public lands does not impact the economic potential of or interfere with TLA's ability to effectively manage its lands. These impacts must be analyzed and a plan of action to mitigate them proposed.	State inholdings may or may not currently have access, depending upon whether or not existing vehicle routes lead to them. Under different alternative scenarios, existing routes may be proposed for closure. The BLM's policy, as required by the Cotter decision (State of Utah v. Andrus, 10/1/79), is that "the State must be allowed access to the State school trust lands so that those lands can be developed in a manner that will provide funds for the common school" This decision confined the issue of access to situations directly involving economic revenues generated for the school trust. The recreation restrictions do not prohibit the State from reasonable access to its lands for economic purposes through separate permit authorization as specified by the Cotter decision. Routes to State sections may not have been identified for recreational purposes due to resource conflicts or actual route conditions.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD160	The vast universe of acronyms and jargon begins to overwhelm the reader of the DRMP when the reader tries to understand the difference between an ACEC, VRM management area and now, a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). This is especially true if the reader compares Figures 21 through 24, and immediately notices that ACECs and SRMAs are proposed for the same geographic areas. The DRMP/DEIS does not define the reasons for the proposed SRMAs, nor the functional difference between an ACEC and an SRMA.	Definitions of SRMAs and ACECs are provided in the Glossary. Additional description of SRMAs is provided in Section 3.10.1. Information about the specific SRMAs included in the alternatives can be found in Chapter 3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD161	What does the "integrated activity plan" that would be prepared for each SRMA according to pages 2-51 and 2-52 include besides recreation? Does this plan	Activity Plans are defined under the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 as:	

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			consider and include other resource uses?	<p>“A type of implementation plan; an activity plan usually describes multiple projects and applies best management practices to meet land use plan objectives. Examples of activity plans include interdisciplinary management plans, habitat management plans, recreation area management plans, and allotment management plans.”</p> <p>This would include SRMAs.</p> <p>Furthermore, H-1601-1 further states:</p> <p>“Upon approval of the land use plan, subsequent implementation decisions are put into effect by developing implementation (activity-level or project-specific) plans. An activity-level plan typically describes multiple projects in detail that will lead to on-the-ground action. These plans traditionally focused on single resource programs (habitat management plans, allotment management plans, recreation management plans, etc.). However, activity-level plans are increasingly interdisciplinary and are focused on multiple resource program areas to reflect the shift to a more watershed-based or landscape-based approach to management. These types of plans are sometimes referred to as “integrated or interdisciplinary plans,” “coordinated resource management plans,” “landscape management plans,” or “ecosystem management plans.” A project-specific plan is typically prepared for an individual project or several related projects.”</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD162	How does the proposed Brown's Park ACEC differ from the Brown's Park SRMA? What is the specific goal of	SRMAs are not special designations but rather are management tools for the maintenance and	

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			<p>the SRMA that is not accomplished by the ACEC? Conversely, if the ACEC is not appropriate for the area to address the management needs, what is the need for the SRMA? The State of Utah asks that the BLM respond to these issues for each proposed SRMA/ACEC combination, especially the proposed Nine Mile SRMA.</p>	<p>enhancement of recreational opportunities. ACECs are a special designation and provide for the focusing of special management attention on the maintenance and enhancement of relevant and important resource values that may not be related to recreation, and, therefore, would not be managed under a recreation management plan.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD163	<p>The discussion about the proposed Brown's Park SRMA on page 2-52 [of the DEIS] indicates that a portion of the area would be managed for primitive recreation, and closed to "surface disturbing activities, except for activities that complement recreation values." The reference to "surface disturbing activities" is unclear and vague. What exactly are "surface disturbing activities"? Movement of livestock? Movement of wildlife? Seismic survey equipment? Cadastral survey equipment? The definition is important as the total management regime proposed by the BLM for this area has strong elements of non-use or non-impairment, including VRM I classification for some portions of the area. It would appear that the BLM is trying to manage this area for non-impairment, in violation of the ruling of Utah v. Norton.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.</p> <p>The Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603's non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD164	<p>The discussion of this SRMA on page 2-51 [of the DEIS] indicates the activity plan would focus on maintaining a "frontier mystique of adventure and discovery," which is further defined to mean "unconfined recreation, limited facilities." What does this mean, especially in light of the fact that 90% of the area is leased for oil and gas?</p>	<p>Much of the area encompassed by the Book Cliffs SRMA is/would be leased under timing and controlled surface use stipulations (with standard stipulations also in place) that would provide for development options compatible with the BLM's recreation goals. Portions of the SRMA would also be closed to leasing, including the Winter Ridge WSA and an area designated for primitive recreation opportunities.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD165	<p>This SRMA is proposed to be managed for "cultural values and scenic quality." How is this different from</p>	<p>See comment response SD162 regarding the distinction between SRMAs and ACECs. The</p>	

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			the ACEC proposed for the same area?	cultural values and scenic quality of the area contribute to its recreational appeal and use. These same resources have values beyond recreational use, including scientific, experimental, educational, and traditional value.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD166	Alternative A increases the acreage of the Nine Mile SRMA from 44,181 to 81,168. How is this increase justified and why is such a large area necessary?	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD167	The White River SRMA (western part) would be managed as no surface occupancy. How is this different from the ACEC proposed for the area? The State of Utah has concerns that the establishment of an SRMA outside of the 1/2-mile wide river corridor is inappropriate due to the demonstrated lack of recreational activity beyond the corridor. Why is it necessary outside the river corridor? Is it even necessary to have an SRMA in the area in light of the proposed WSR designation on the west segment of the White River SRMA? How are the proposed WSR and SRMA designations related to each other?	<p>A review of Table 2.3, Recreation-shows those NSO stipulations are not proposed in direct correlation to the SRMA. Rather, Table 2.1 and Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction. (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS clearly indicates that management of the ACEC would include NSO for the western portion of the area.</p> <p>The SRMA and WSR designations are two separate types of management tools. SRMAs are not special designations but tools for integrated management of recreational opportunities in areas of high recreation use. WSR designations are special designations intended to recognize particular river related values, which may include recreation, that require special management consideration and action.</p> <p>WSR management would only apply to one-quarter mile from center-line on each side of the river. Recreation use occurs outside of this narrow corridor and has therefore the BLM has proposed an SRMA in two alternatives.</p>	X

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				Also, see comment response SD8-G-9.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD168	Section 3.14.2.1 on page 3-80 discusses the Coyote Basin ACEC. Black-footed ferrets were released in 1999 under 10j status designation. However, this section is vague on that point. It only mentions ferrets as being raised for release but does not mention that ferrets are already successfully reproducing in the wild. The document fails to mention that the UDWR is also cooperating with the Vernal BLM and Utah State University in continuing the research project relating to the recovery of black-footed ferrets.	Chapter 3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify 10j status of black-footed ferrets in Coyote Basin.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD169	Alternative C proposes to identify as suitable a 22-mile reach of Argyle Creek from its headwaters to the Carbon County line. Said reach would be tentatively classified as "Recreational." A reading for the rationale of such a recommendation in Chapter 4, sections 13 and 14 fails to yield any specifics. More information on the values to be protected will be helpful.	More information on the ORVs for Argyle Creek can be found in Appendix C: Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification, and Review.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD56	The discussions concerning potential recommendations for addition to the Wild and Scenic River System in the draft RMP and EIS are confusing, contradictory and incomplete, and do not meet the requirements of federal or state law or BLM policy and direction. The counties believe it is imperative that the BLM properly disclose the reasons and rationale for determinations of eligibility and suitability for proposed additions to the NWSRS, and to fully meet the requirements of state and federal law in doing so.	Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD57	The counties are concerned that the designation of stream segments as "Wild & Scenic" could jeopardize the ability of local communities, industry, farmers, Indian tribes, and other water users to appropriate and develop water and to get change applications approved in order to meet their future water needs.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			<p>Fundamentally, the counties are concerned that Wild & Scenic River designations would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. limit the ability of communities to develop water needed for future growth 2. limit additional industrial growth including oil shale development 3. limit additional agricultural growth 4. affect water right settlements with the Northern Ute Tribe 5. affect completion of the Central Utah Project 6. affect operation of Flaming Gorge Reservoir 7. reduce funding to the Colorado River Salinity Control Program, or affect agreements already in place for the Endangered Fishes Recovery Program 		
State of Utah	G-1	SD59	<p>State plans, as outlined by State law (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a) through (b)), expand upon the requirements of the WSR Act by delineating the necessary analysis which must be conducted on river segments considered for possible inclusion in the NWSRS. These state requirements are not in opposition to the federal requirements, but are designed to fully flesh out studies that the federal agencies should perform, in order to assure that the full and complete nature of the proposal is made public. State law expands upon the requirements for study by requiring that river segments proposed for inclusion in the NWSRS contain water at all times, that the river segment contain an outstandingly remarkable value which is significant within a physiographic regional context, that the rationale and justification for the determination of the outstanding value is fully disclosed, all segments</p>	<p>The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected</p>	

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			<p>considered eligible are evaluated for suitability of designation, a “suitable” or “not suitable” decision is made for each segment, and that studies of the effects of designation on uses within the river corridor, and upstream and downstream from the corridor are analyzed and disclosed.</p>	<p>partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD60	<p>State law requires the BLM to fully disclaim any rights to water in the segments recommended for inclusion in the NWSRS as a result of adoption of the final Resource Management Plan. (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a)(viii)c)). Although there is language on page 4-210 which discusses in-stream flows, this language does not address this State statutory requirement directly. Additionally, the paragraph at the top of page 2-28 which states that the BLM will develop additional and maintain existing water rights” is unsupported. We suggest that the BLM provide more detail and specifics for this statement, and more affirmative language clearly disclaiming any water rights.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD61	<p>We have concerns regarding the language at page 4-210 which passively mentions the Colorado River Compact. Under the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact, Utah is allotted a depletion of 1,369,000 acre-feet per year from the Colorado River system. Obviously, the Compact is of major significance to the state and any actions that may affect the compact are of concern. Utah Code §63-38d-401(8)(a)(x)(A)and(B) require clear demonstration that including rivers in the NWSRS and terms and conditions for managing such rivers will not impair or otherwise interfere with interstate compacts.</p>	<p>Section 13(e) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act says:</p> <p>“Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by any States which contain any portion of the national wild and scenic rivers system.”</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD62	We are concerned that the BLM is not stating, in a full and complete manner, the authority for protection of river segments while studies pursuant to Section 5(d) of the Act are underway and protection until Congress may act upon any recommendations made in planning documents pursuant to BLM planning authority.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD63	The draft RMP indicates on page 2-29 that “new river segments found suitable” would be managed in accordance with the “Wild and Scenic River Act to prevent non-impairment of outstandingly remarkable values.” We do not find the term “non-impairment” in either the Act or BLM policy direction. The Wild and Scenic Rivers guidelines of federal agencies indicate that Section 10(a) of the Act is interpreted to provide for a “nondegradation and enhancement policy for all designated river areas.” However, this provision does not apply to rivers found suitable for recommendation during planning processes. The counties are concerned the statement of management found on page 2-29 is too simplistic, doesn’t meet the intent of the statements found on page 3-84 or page 4-210, and fails to give the stakeholders or the public sufficient notice of criteria or process the BLM intends to employ as part of the proposed management for the river segments determined to be suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. We request that the BLM revise the document to address these concerns.	Actions Common to all for Wild and Scenic Rivers have been moved to Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS. The Actions Common to All have been revised to more clearly define how BLM intends to manage segments determined suitable as a result of this planning process. The correct phrasing should be “prevent impairment” instead of “prevent non-impairment.”	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD65	The discussion of Upper and Lower segments of the Green River in the draft RMP is incomplete. BLM assumes that the rationale, findings and protective management identified in the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs, completed in the 1980's still applies. Numerous significant recreation related facilities (i.e. campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, vehicle parking), and other types of development, are now	The Upper and Lower Green River Segments were identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps	

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			<p>present along the Green River corridor, particularly the Upper segment. Much of this development has occurred since the Diamond Mountain RMP was completed and the ROD was signed. This development may affect not only the determination of suitability for these segments, but the current classification of “scenic” for the segment as well. The counties oppose simply carrying over the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River as recommended additions to the NWSRS from the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs. The counties believes that the BLM must consider all new information which has developed since the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs were finalized, to determine whether the segment still qualifies and should still be recommended, and to meet the requirements of the State law.</p>	<p>undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p> <p>“In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values...”</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD66	<p>Table 5 includes “[m]anageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values” as a “Suitability Consideration.” However, in the “Consideration Applied” column which is supposed to provide the information about manageability, the document simply states “[m]anageability ... and other means of protecting values would be extrapolated from the impact analysis for the Vernal RMP/EIS.” This analysis goes nowhere as an explanation, and is inadequate to meet the requirements of Federal law and BLM Manual 8351, and further, is not supported by the impact analysis information presented on pages 4-210 through 4-215.</p>	<p>Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD67	<p>The draft RMP provides only cursory acknowledgment of the White River Dam project and fails to adequately represent its significance, and characterizes the</p>	<p>Alternatives B and D are part of the range of alternatives. There is an existing right of way for a dam on the White River in segment 1. Segment 1</p>	X

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			<p>impacts of an eligibility or suitability determination, and associated “protective management” on the proposed project in a contradictory manner. Statements found on pages 4-212 and 4-213 illustrate the cursory analysis, as follows: “...a suitable decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with the continuation of an existing permit for a dam site” and [t]he suitability decision for Segment 1 of the White River would result in the discontinuance of the existing permit for the dam site.” The White River is also described as part of Alternative D, on page 2-57, as follows: “[u]nder this alternative, suitability findings would not be made and eligibility would continue with BLM applying protective management to the free flowing nature, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classification of the river.” The discussion of Alternative D on page 4-214, reaffirms that Segment 1 of the White River “would remain eligible.” However, in a contradictory manner, the discussion also states, “Segment 1 has been identified for a potential dam site.” Subsequently, the last paragraph on page 4-214 concludes the description of Alternative D, as follows: “Under this alternative, the continued eligibility decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with continuance of the existing permit for the dam site. Because this permit would continue under this alternative, the free-flowing nature of Segment 1 would not be maintained and this segment would no longer be eligible as a Wild and Scenic River.” Further, Appendix C, Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification and Review does not include any information regarding the White River Dam Project.</p>	<p>was carried forward for analysis purposes under the wild and scenic river situation.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD69	The discussion of Alternative B on page 4-213 includes the following statement, “If acquired lands along Nine	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.	X

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			<p>Mile Creek are grazed, the outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values would be more at risk than with Alternatives A and C". Unfortunately, nowhere in the draft RMP and EIS is there other mention of this apparent concern, or other information that would enable the reviewer to grasp its relative significance. We strongly object to this unsupported assertion that grazing threatens the ORVs in the area, especially on lands that may be acquired. Grazing can be managed to protect cultural and riparian values. The BLM needs to carefully explain the potential difficulties of this area, and analyze them in terms of proper mitigation, rather than making unsupported blanket statements such as this. In addition, the discussion of Alternative A at pages 4-211 and 4-212, contains no reference to any "acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek."</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD70	<p>As a matter of clarification, the document, at page S-3, refers to sections of rivers, ranging from one to six rivers, which are recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation. Throughout the remainder of the document, the discussion of wild and scenic rivers refers to segments of rivers, rather than separate individual rivers. The confusion is immediately apparent when the reader looks to Table S.3, as directed by the text on page S-3. Clarity could be achieved by indicating the number of segments associated with the rivers, i.e., "Alternative C ... recommends 9 segments of six rivers."</p>	<p>Table S.3 of the Executive Summary in the PRMP/FEIS has been corrected and the issue clarified regarding the number of rivers and river segments.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD71	<p>The information at page 2-29 does not fully characterize proposed interim management of WSRs, because the discussion of management of eligible segments, found at page 3-84, is not presented here. We recommend that information similar to that found at page 3-84 be included at page 2-29.</p>	<p>Chapter 2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to be consistent with the information found in Section 3.14.3.2 regarding WSRs.</p>	X

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State of Utah	G-1	SD72	The information presented in Table 2.3, at page 2-57, does not include the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River. Additionally, the descriptions of the Alternatives, in Table 2.3, should reflect either a finding of "suitable," or a finding of "non-suitable," as BLM policy directs. (See BLM Manual 8351.33A).	<p>The Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are discussed in Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives, where it states:</p> <p>“Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative classifications until such time that a designation decision is made.”</p> <p>Also as stated in Appendix C, determination of whether or not each eligible segment is suitable will be made in the Record of Decision for the Vernal RMP.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD73	The RMP, at Table 2.3 and elsewhere, must include information regarding management of segments found to be "non-suitable," as directed by Manual Section 8351.53B, which states "[f]or river segments determined nonsuitable in the RMP, the river shall be managed in accordance with the management objectives as outlined in the RMP."	The management objectives for the RMP are outlined in Chapter 2 Management Common to All. All segments would be managed under riparian objectives.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD74	Table 2.5 Summary of Impacts, at page 2-99, does not adequately characterize the impacts associated with wild and scenic river recommendations. The counties suggest that the impacts be more fully described.	The impacts of special designations, including wild and scenic rivers, on each resource program are discussed in Chapter 4.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD78	Page 4-143 discusses the possibility of closing some SRMA areas to mineral leasing and establishing no-surface occupancy zones in others. It states that closing SRMAs to mineral leasing would have direct, long-term, beneficial impacts on recreation resources by preserving natural, undisturbed qualities of these	Closures of portions of SRMAs are related to one of two factors: WSA lands within SRMAs and areas to be managed for primitive recreation opportunities, including associated high scenic value. A comparison of Figures 11-14 and 21 will shown that the vast majority of proposed SRMA areas are open	

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			<p>recreation areas. Does closing the areas to leasing go beyond SRMA management prescriptions? Page 4-52 states "all SRMAs would be managed according to the philosophy of multiple-use." Can the recreation goals described here be accomplished without no-surface occupancy stipulations? Does this conflict with the policy directives of EPCA and the Presidents National Energy Policy?</p>	<p>to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy stipulations. The BLM would only enact closures or non-standard stipulations where opening an area to leasing or leasing under standard stipulations would be incompatible with other resource values and management goals for the area. The BLM believes the SRMA alternatives and accompanying stipulations are consistent with EPCA and the NEP.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9, concerning a range of reasonable alternatives.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SO25	<p>The State of Utah is concerned about the inadequacy of baseline data used in the socioeconomic analysis. The BLM Planning Handbook (Appendix D) provides specific areas to be considered when incorporating social science into the planning process. Social science information should include economic, political, cultural and social structure of not only the counties within the VFO, but also the region and the Nation as a whole. The DEIS fails to do this.</p>	<p>This information has been included in the Section 3.12 in the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO26	<p>The RMP makes broad statements about the socioeconomic profile of the planning area, broken down into discussions about each of the three counties, however, the draft seems to lack a detailed analysis of the situation on the ground. For instance, in the Socioeconomic section of Chapter 3, the draft includes only two conclusions regarding the region's history, geography, and economics; first, the majority of the planning area sustain a rural/small town lifestyle, second, the counties are economically dependent on the development of the physical resources within the VFO. According to the BLM Planning Handbook, social</p>	<p>Section 3.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the information made in the comment.</p>	X

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			values, beliefs, and attitudes; how people interact with the landscape; and sense-of-place issues should also be included. The VFO should elaborate on the socioeconomic baseline for the planning area and review it for inaccuracies.		
State of Utah	G-1	SO27	The DRMP fails to thoroughly analyze the social and economic impacts of the alternatives. The draft only analyzes the socioeconomic impacts of Lands and Realty, Forage, Minerals, and Recreation and OHV decisions. Additional resource management decisions, however, have the potential to have an impact on state and county economies, specifically special designations. Notably missing is an economic analysis of the lost shared mineral revenue from federal lands that have an economic impact on the community as well as other mineral sharing programs within the state. The development of mineral resources on federal lands and state trust lands would be negatively impacted by overly restrictive management prescriptions imposed by special designations. In its economic impact analysis, the RMP has excluded the significant state and local revenues generated through a variety of taxes paid that would be impacted by special designations.	The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include further analysis of effects on socioeconomics from proposed management actions of other resources, including special designations. Please see response to SO3 regarding state trust lands.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO28	During the scoping process, Uintah County provided the BLM with two studies related to the economic significance of mineral development, specifically oil and gas, in the Uintah Basin. These studies were Economic Impact Analysis of the Drilling and Completion of a Natural Gas Well in the Uintah Basin by the Utah Energy Group and The Uintah Basin Industry Impact Study by Pam Perlich of the University of Utah. The RMP fails to reflect the information contained in these documents. The State of Utah requests that the BLM review these studies and	The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the recent State-commissioned study on the impact of the oil and gas industry on the Uintah Basin.	X

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			incorporate their findings into the RMP.		
State of Utah	G-1	SO29	Daggett, Duchesne, and Uintah Counties have estimated that up to 80% of the local economy is dependent directly or indirectly on access to, and utilization and extraction of natural resources on the public lands. The BLM is required by its own Planning Handbook, Section H-1601-H, and IM 2002-167 to assess the degree of local dependence on public land resources, and use this information as part of the decision-making process. The state is concerned that these requirements have not been met within the draft RMP and EIS. This issue should be examined in more detail.	BLM feels that the intent of IM 2002-167 and the Planning Handbook have been implemented. See comment response SO2 regarding these same data sources. The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reference to the USU social survey on attitudes of residents on public land management.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO30	Sections of the socioeconomic impacts analysis are overly generalized to the point that social and economic impacts specific to the planning area are not apparent. For example, in the "Lands and Realty" portion of the "Impacts Common to All" section, long term beneficial effects on the social goals of communities are described by accommodating community growth and development when it is determined that accommodating social goals is in compliance with other goals and objectives of the proposed plan. The portion of the plan does not reference specific areas of the DRMP/DEIS where this occurs or direct the reader to any specific management decisions that provide for community growth. The section is vague and unspecific and should reflect specific management prescriptions in the plan rather than general statements.	Section 4.12.2.2 has been rewritten in the FEIS, and the BLM believes that this revision addresses the commenter's concerns.	X
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	SD4	Special designations which hinder access and/or economic development of Tribal or Allotted lands should be reviewed carefully. Your Preferred Alternative may warrant review within the proposed	The RMP provides access to lands administered by other surface management entities and private parties.	

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			Bitter Creek ACEC which appears to have a Tribal or Allotted in-holding.		
Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	SD180 (SD-A)	Of concern is the manner in which the Wild and Scenic River Act is implemented on segments of the Green and White Rivers in the RMP. This could prohibit further water development for a number of important uses. Additionally it could restrict development of energy resources that would have been accessible.	See Response to Comment SD37-G-22.	
Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	SO32 (O-A)	Oil and gas development will not have a long-term adverse effect, as the RMP postulates, on the tourism sector of the local economy. This is because most if not all of the tourism attractions are located outside of the exploration regions.	See comment response SO15	
Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office	G-5	SO1	The unemployment rate for Duchesne County should be closer to 7.1% rather than the 1.7% stated in the RMP.	Section 3.12.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct this number.	X
Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office	G-5	SO2	Much of the socioeconomic information included in the draft RMP does not accurately reflect data that [the Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Office] supplied during comment periods in cooperation with Uintah County Economic Development and the Uintah Basin Association of Government throughout 2004. We sincerely hope the final document will give a corrected version of these very important and pertinent facts.	The data supplied by the counties and the State of Utah has been considered and incorporated into the PRMP/FEIS.	
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SD5	There are potential adverse impacts to State Institutional and Trust Lands Administration lands surrounded by areas of special designation on BLM lands. These impacts aren't addressed in the document. For example, the Winter Ridge WSA	State inholdings may or may not currently have access, depending upon whether or not existing vehicle routes lead to them. Under different alternative scenarios, existing routes may be proposed for closure. The BLM's policy, as required	

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			contains state lands that are surrounded by BLM lands with leasing restrictions. This devalues the state's trust lands. The BLM must make the SITLA whole with restitution of some kind.	by the Cotter decision (State of Utah v. Andrus, 10/1/79), is that "the State must be allowed access to the State school trust lands so that those lands can be developed in a manner that will provide funds for the common school..." This decision confined the issue of access to situations directly involving economic revenues generated for the school trust. The recreation restrictions do not prohibit the State from reasonable access to its lands for economic purposes through separate permit authorization as specified by the Cotter decision.	
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SO3	The RMP has no analysis of the economic impacts of the decisions on Utah trust lands or on the economic impact on schools, the University of Utah, and Utah State University.	Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include an analysis of the effects on SITLA lands. An analysis of the effects of Alternative E on SITLA lands has been added to Section 4.12.3.1.5.	X
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SO4	The economic analysis of the impact of decisions on communities and then indirectly on schools and universities is sketchy. Federal law requires resource management plans to address the economic impact of each alternative. We find the analysis in the current document to be woefully unsophisticated and to inadequately address the impact of these decisions on education and communities in Utah.	The anticipated socioeconomic impacts of each alternative can be found in Section 4.12 and its subsections. Further qualitative and quantitative clarifications, including impacts to SITLA lands, have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD10	Duchesne County is opposed to the extension of the existing ACEC in Nine Mile Canyon beyond the upper rim of the canyon. On page 3-83 of the RMP/DEIS, it appears that the proposed expansion of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC covers a total of 36,987 acres. On Page 2-56, it indicates that the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC (in Alternative A) would expand from 44,181 to 48,000 acres (an increase of 3,819 acres). This leads Duchesne County to conclude that the remaining 33,168 acres of ACEC expansion in Nine Mile Canyon	See Response to Comment SD9-G-9.	

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			would occur in Carbon County. If this is true and the ACEC boundaries stay within the canyon upper rim, Duchesne County would not object to Alternative A.		
Duchesne County	G-9	SD11	<p>Duchesne County asserts that the RMP/DEIS does not address all of the five criteria listed [below] and that no additional Wild and Scenic Rivers shall be designated in Duchesne County:</p> <p>i) It is clearly demonstrated that water is present and flowing at all times; (ii) It is clearly demonstrated that the required water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of the three physiographic provinces in the state. The rationale and justification for the conclusions shall be disclosed; (iii) The effects of the addition on the local and state economies, private property rights, agricultural and industrial operations and interests, tourism, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment have been evaluated in detail by the relevant federal agency; (iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the provisions and terms of the process for review of potential additions have been applied in a consistent manner by all federal agencies; and (v) The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed. All valid existing rights, including grazing leases and permits shall not be affected.</p>	<p>The criteria the commenter is referring comes from Utah Code Section §63-38d-401.</p> <p>The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Duchesne	G-9	SD12	The Duchesne County General Plan contains the	The BLM is aware that there are specific County	

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County			<p>following policies regarding ACEC's:</p> <p>All plans and management decisions must ensure that special designations do not influence the use of resource on lands not listed. The County opposes the use of a buffer zone management philosophy that dictates land use practices and influences decisions beyond the scope and boundaries of the designations. The County also opposes the imposition of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) classifications or Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications as substitutes for former Wilderness Inventory Units or so-called Citizens' Proposed Wilderness Units, or as mean to displace formerly valid surface occupying multiple use activities. ACEC and VRM classifications are improper management tools unless narrowly drawn and tailored, both geographically and programmatically, to effect only those minimal restrictions that are actually necessary to prevent irreparable damage to valid and relevant resource values. Imposing ACEC classifications in the name of "protecting scenic values" is an improper use of the ACEC tool, which contradicts this County Policy.</p> <p>Special designations include wilderness designations, wild and scenic rivers, areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC), critical habitat, semi-primitive and non-motorized travel areas, and other designations that may result in non-use, restricted use, or environmental impacts on public and private lands. Special designations dictate practices that restrict access or use of the land that impact other resources or their use. Such designations cause resource waste, serious impacts to other important</p>	<p>and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/DRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the DRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP/FEIS with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p>	

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			<p>resources and actions, and are inconsistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. County support for the designation of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern shall be withheld until:</p> <p>(i) It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed area contains historic, cultural or scenic values, fish or wildlife resources, or natural processes, which are unique or substantially significant; (ii) The regional values, resources, processes, or hazards have been analyzed by the federal agency for impacts resulting from potential actions which are consistent with the multiple-use, sustained-yield principles, and that this analysis describes the rationale for any special management attention required to protect, or prevent irreparable damage to the values, resources, processes, or hazards;</p> <p>(iii) The difference between special management attention required for an ACEC and normal multiple-use management has been identified and justified, and that any determination of irreparable damage has been analyzed and justified for short and long-term horizons;</p> <p>(iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed designation is not a substitute for a wilderness suitability recommendation; and</p> <p>(v) The conclusions of all studies are submitted to the county for review, and the results, in support of or in opposition to, are included in all planning documents.</p> <p>(vi) Any impacts on private property rights are evaluated and mitigated.</p> <p>Based on these Duchesne County policies above, the County supports Alternative B for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.</p>		

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Duchesne County	G-9	SD13	<p>The Duchesne County General Plan contains the following policies regarding Wild and Scenic Rivers:</p> <p>County support for the addition of a river segment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System shall be withheld until:</p> <p>(i) It is clearly demonstrated that water is present and flowing at all times;</p> <p>(ii) It is clearly demonstrated that the required water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of the three physiographic provinces in the state. The rationale and justification for the conclusions shall be disclosed;</p> <p>(iii) The effects of the addition on the local and state economies, private property rights, agricultural and industrial operations and interests, tourism, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment have been evaluated in detail by the relevant federal agency;</p> <p>(iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the provisions and terms of the process for review of potential additions have been applied in a consistent manner by all federal agencies; and</p> <p>(v) The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed. All valid existing rights, including grazing</p>	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	

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			<p>leases and permits shall not be affected.</p> <p>Based on the policies listed above, Duchesne County is in support of Alternatives A or B in this section of the RMP.</p>		
Duchesne County	G-9	SD240 (SD-JJJ)	1st paragraph: It states that, under Alternative A, the upper and lower segments of the Green River would be determined suitable for WSR status. However, on pg. 4-212 and 4-214, it implies that these Green River segments have already been determined to be suitable. Has suitability been determined for these segments; and if so, when?	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the status of WSR river segments under Alternative A.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	SD241 (SD-KKK)	Does the designation of a route as a backcountry byway actually result in regulation of surface disturbing activities as implied here? Or is it the SRMA designation that provides for such regulations.	The Back Country Byway Program of the BLM is a special designation program wherein the BLM can regulate land uses in accordance with the maintenance of the resource values for which the byway was designated.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD242 (SD-LLL)	Contrary to EPCA and NEP policy, the designation of Segments 1 and 2 of the White River as suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System would result in overlapping restrictions, since the lands adjacent to these river banks are frequently wetland habitats and within the 100-year floodplain, which are under NSO stipulations or closed to mineral development. We recommend that stipulations not necessary to accomplish desired protection be modified or dropped through the planning process. NEP, pp. 5-7; IM 2003-233, p.3. Preferred actions in the DEIS/RMP must be analyzed and developed in the context of these statutory and executive policies that promote and facilitate oil and gas development.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD8	It is the position of Duchesne County that Special Recreation Management Areas are improper if they are	The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would	

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			<p>used or managed to diminish the multiple use-sustained yield mandate of FLPMA and NFMA, or provide BLM with an excuse to carry out wilderness non-impairment standards of land management. An RMP should specify the precise parameters of SRMA uses and management. SRMA's are not to be considered as strictly recreation areas to the exclusion or elimination of other uses. The RMP should specify the precise parameters of SRMA uses and management before Duchesne County will feel comfortable with Alternative A. Absent such assurances, Duchesne County supports Alternative B.</p>	<p>avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM determined that a single alternative analyzing the protection of all Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics would best provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives. Although the other alternatives do not provide specific management prescriptions to protect Non-WSA, these alternatives analyze and disclose the impacts of the proposed resource management prescriptions, uses and actions on the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This gives the public the ability to fully compare the consequences of protecting or not protecting the wilderness characteristics on these Non-WSA lands. If all alternatives contained comparable protections of the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, the alternatives would have substantially similar consequences and would not be significantly distinguishable.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and</p>	

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				create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD9	Under [Alternative B], 44,181 acres in Nine Mile Canyon would continue to be managed as a SRMA. Duchesne County does not support increasing this SRMA to 81,168 acres under Alternative A.	The BLM concurs that the Nine Mile ACEC boundary should not extend beyond the upper rim and BLM has provided that determination in the Proposed Plan. This revision is consistent with the Price FEIS boundary.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SO6	In addition to tourism impacts on law enforcement and emergency services, tourism on public lands impacts the county road systems.	There is no requirement in NEPA to do the detailed analysis that the commenter demands. This is outside the scope of the RMP and EIS. Administrative Actions by the BLM do not require a specific planning decision to implement.	
Carbon County	G-11	SO33 (SO-B)	Carbon County recommends that the final plan give the involved county governments and their citizens a land use plan that responds to the social and economic needs and supports continuation of the unique historic and cultural lifestyle that is so important to our citizens and our nation's heritage.	<p>Sections 103, 201, and 202 of FLPMA direct the BLM to take into account the national interest, as well as the local interest. In accordance with FLPMA and BLM rules, regulations, and policies, the BLM must provide for the balanced management of all resources and resource uses on public lands.</p> <p>The BLM gave strong consideration to the concerns of local governments throughout the planning process. In particular, San Juan, Duchesne and Daggett Counties are cooperating agencies and have been active cooperators, including during the development of alternatives.</p> <p>The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would</p>	

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				<p>avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p> <p>Additionally, the BLM believes its preferred alternative is consistent with the attitudes and needs of local residents as reflected in the USU survey.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD319 (JSD-59)	ACECs have been created to address protection and recovery needs for federally listed and sensitive species found within ACEC boundaries; these should not be lumped into "other natural systems or processes."	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD320 (JSD-60)	<p>Please change this section to state:</p> <p>"Manage to protect high value wetland, wildlife, and plant habitat resources,"</p>	Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to implement the suggested change.	X

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			On page 3- 79, Table 3.14.1, it is stated for Pariette Wetlands that this is "Special status bird and plant species' habitat, a wetlands ecosystem, Significant population of the federally threatened plant species Sclerocactus glaucus."		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD321 (JSD-61)	Special Designations -ACECs: FWS supports designation of these ACECs to help ensure appropriate conservation of our trust resources, including listed species and migratory birds.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD322 (JSD-62)	The section on "Currently Designated ACECs" states that the management relevance and importance criteria (which include plan fish, and wildlife resources) are detailed in Chapter 3 of the Diamond Mountain RMP and ROD. As Chapter 3 of the Diamond RMP and ROD document provides little discussion on ACECs, their management relevance and importance, this discussion needs to be fully presented and expanded within this current RMP/EIS.	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD323 (JSD-63)	<p>The section on "Currently Designated ACECs" states: "Based on a current analysis of the areas, the present designations have been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will all be carried forward as ACECs in the Vernal RMP."</p> <p>Although there may be validity to this statement, there is little discussion of these "relevant values," indicating that the degree of protection has not been analyzed, may be minimal, or actually remains unknown. Land actions continue to be allowed in ACECs that directly reduce these relevant values. An analysis of ACECs and impacts that are being permitted appears to be lacking. We also recommend an expanded discussion on this topic in Section 4.14.</p>	See Response to Comment SD7-G-13.	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD324 (JSD-64)	This table may be insufficient to address current and future actions. Part of the purpose of Section 3.14.1.1.1 states, "Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when RMPs are revised." This "reconsideration" should include updating and potential furthering of protective measures to advance protection of relevant values.	See Responses to Comments SD55-G-25, SD301-O-44. BLM Manual 1613 .21 C states: "Normally, the relevance and importance of resource or hazards associated with an existing ACEC are reevaluated only when new information or changed circumstances or the result of monitoring establish the need."	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD325 (JSD-65)	We recommend you establish and manage ACECs, whenever possible, with specific measures to preserve the natural systems and support diversity of ecological associations. Existing ACECs lack specificity and in some cases, management plans. We recommend this be remedied in the new RMP. The RMP should further emphasize protection for listed and sensitive species, especially plants and historic Uintah Basin plant communities. Management plans detailing plant specific conservation measures should be developed in coordination with FWS, TNC and UDWR.	ACEC management plans will be developed after the Final EIS and Record of Decision, if ACECs are designated.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SO61 (JSO-13)	You should provide information regarding income related to wildlife-related activities such as hunting and wildlife viewing.	See comment response SO9.	
Daggett County	G-13	SD14	[Daggett County] believes that the layering, with special designations and other management prescriptions will in many ways, limit how this area can be best managed.	"Layering" is planning tool. Under FLPMA's multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not	

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				<p>necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and uses) are consistent and compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a)(7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM’s Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made</p>	

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				<p>for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land Use Planning Handbook "H-1601-1"). Specific decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p> <p>The values protected by WSA management prescriptions do not necessarily protect those values found relevant and important in ACEC evaluation, and vice versa. The relevant and important values of ACECs within or adjacent to WSAs were noted in the ACEC Evaluation (Appendix G). The ACECs are evaluated and ranked based on the presence or absence of the stated relevant and important values. None of these values includes wilderness characteristics. Additionally, the management prescriptions for the ACECs is limited in scope to protect the relevant and important values, and the BLM maintains that the size of the ACEC areas is appropriate for protection of the relevant and important values</p>	

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				identified.	
Daggett County	G-13	SD15	Alternative B would be the preferred alternative of [Daggett County]. [T]here are 18,474 acres along the river corridor. Areas outside of this corridor are more rocky and rugged with pinions and junipers. There have been efforts made to reduce the pinion and juniper encroachment and this needs to continue. The state statute requires that potential and proposed ACEC's be limited in geographic size and that the proposed management prescriptions be limited in scope to the minimum necessary to specifically protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant and important values. [Daggett County] requests that BLM re-examine and re-justify the need for the Brown's Park ACEC. We feel that under the 18,474 SRMA the BLM could manage this area adequately.	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	
Daggett County	G-13	SD6	Recently the area along the river [the Green River?] has had many recreational facilities put in to take care of public needs such as campgrounds, restrooms, boat ramps, etc. The Division of Wildlife Resources and private land owners divert water from the green River for wildlife refuge and irrigation. Currently the county has an approved application for water that could be sued for the Taylor Flat Subdivision. New diversions and right of way easements will have to be created. The river is currently being managed mostly for recreation. [Daggett County] believes that a proposed designation of "Recreational" is most appropriate for the Green River. Consideration must be given to changes and development in use, since the analysis was done in 1980.	<p>The Upper Green River Segment was identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p>	

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				<p>“In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values...”</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SD7	<p>[Daggett County] questions if proper analysis and review were done on this in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP. It appears management of this area hasn't changed since this designation and that the area could be properly managed under normal BLM management practices.</p>	<p>The analysis and rationale for the designation of the Red Creek ACEC in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation</p>	

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				<p>because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SO7	<p>The BLM is required to incorporate social science and economic considerations into the planning process. The BLM is also required to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield and to meet the needs of present and future generations. The focus of an RMP should include a detailed analysis for each community based upon current conditions and trends, including projection of future trends.</p>	<p>The RMP is a programmatic document that considers management decisions and impacts analyses on a landscape level, not a site-specific level. As such, the BLM has conducted the socioeconomic analysis at the individual planning area level.</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SO8	<p>The economic effect on Taylor Flat Subdivision and Brown's Park residences from management decisions was not analyzed.</p>	<p>The RMP is a programmatic document that considers management decisions and impacts analyses on a landscape level, not a site-specific level. As such, the BLM has conducted the socioeconomic analysis at the individual planning area level.</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SO9	<p>The economic effect of proposed management on those outfitting and guiding was not addressed.</p>	<p>The outfitting/guiding/angling industry was included as part of the Tourism industry, which is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.4, 3.12.3.2.4, 3.12.4.2.3, 4.12.2.3, and 4.12.3.3.</p>	
Uintah County	G-15	SO57 (JPR-9)	<p>As cooperating partners, Uintah County and Duchesne County provided two socioeconomic reports for</p>	<p>See comment response SO2.</p>	

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			incorporation into the RMP. They were not included. They must be included before any alternative can be properly analyzed and the impacts disclosed. Reports were: #1 UEO Report addressing cost and related impacts of Drilling a well in Uinta and Duchesne counties, and #2 Uinta Basin Industry Impact Study		
Uintah County	G-15	SO62 (JSO-14)	Outdated insufficient or incorrect data and graphs have been used to provide socio-economic information; additional information supplied to BLM was not generally incorporated. Accurate and comprehensive analysis of impacts is not included in all sections and is not consistent throughout document (some sections, like oil/gas mention number of jobs, other areas like grazing or agriculture do not).	The PRMP/FEIS incorporates recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. This data has been used in the recent (November, 2007) study commissioned by the State of Utah: The Structure and Economic Impact of Utah's Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Industry Phase I - The Uinta Basin.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO63 (JSO-15)	We provided you with specific data source; there is no reference or indication that it was ever used. (Uinta Basin Industry Impact Study)	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been incorporated into the Final RMP/EIS.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO64 (JSO-16)	We provided you with specific data source; there is no reference or indication that it was ever used. (UEO Report addressing cost and related impacts of Drilling a well in Uintah and Duchesne counties.) The Draft RMP drilling costs differ by more than 300% from this report, making it impossible to accurately analyze and disclose impacts.	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been incorporated into the Final RMP/EIS. The BLM accepts the identified document as a valid source of information, and the socioeconomic analysis was redone based upon the information provided.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO65 (JSO-17)	You need to update data given economic changes--especially energy prices--since DEIS data was gathered. Failure to do so could constitute a flawed document.	NEPA does not require agencies to wait on studies to be completed, but if there is more current information please acknowledge or show that it does not significantly modify the impacts.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO66 (JSO-18)	RMP does not adequately disclose the degree to which BLM lands affect local economy. "...these often-conflicted uses need to be addressed in terms of how they affect local communities..." Without a full economic and fiscal analysis of each alternative, this	The socioeconomic impacts analysis can be found in Section 4.12 and its subsections. See comment response S037.	

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			objective is not met.		
Uintah County	G-15	SO67 (JSO-20)	The RFD "projects environmental impacts through the next 15-year period." RFD should address economic impacts, too.	Similar to the RFD, the life of the RMP is expected to be 15-20 years. Anticipated economic impacts from management decisions under consideration in the PRMP/FEIS are discussed in Section 4.12.3.2 and its subsections.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO68 (JSO-21)	Summary of Impacts, Discipline, Social and Economic Consideration: Mineral Development is erroneous. There is no reference as to where and how these numbers were calculated. Based on upon UEO report, these numbers need to be recalculated. It does not make sense to have \$3.8 billion in cost to recoup \$437 million in sales.	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been revised into the Final PRMP/FEIS. The BLM accepts the identified document as a valid source of information, and the socioeconomic analysis was redone based upon the information provided. See comment responses to SO31 and SO54.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO69 (JSO-22)	Recreation section. We question these numbers, are they for BLM managed land only? All 3 counties? Are oil field workers staying in local motels being counted as tourists? Again, there is not reference to check where these stats came from.	It is unclear which statistic in the Recreation Section of Table 2.5 is being questioned. Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect the impact of oil workers in local motels.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO70 (JSO-23)	The RFD is inadequate and not realistic. Estimates for new wells are extremely low. This number should be increased to a more realistic number.	See comment responses ME47 and ME70.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO71 (JSO-24)	Note that a large portion of "tourism tax dollars" come from the oil and gas industry (local motels for housing for oil field workers etc). This should be made clear in all sections of the RMP discussing tourism impacts.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the relationship between oil and gas workers and "tourism tax dollars."	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO72 (JSO-25)	This data from 2000; table needs to be updated. Should use info from Utah Division of Travel not Utah Travel Council. Also this table reflects a percentage	Table 3.10.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate information from the Utah Division of Travel Development.	X

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			change, but does not say what it is changing from.		
Uintah County	G-15	SO73 (JSO-26)	Update the population data. Although census from 2000, recognized agencies have more updated population data and this data should be used.	<p>There may be more up to date population numbers, but the commenter did not provide that information to use. Population projections for 2020 are given and updated data has been used where applicable.</p> <p>Also, an RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes.</p> <p>See comment response SO53.</p>	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO74 (JSO-27)	<p>The information in this table is at least 3 years outdated and does not reflect present employment base. The table should be updated.</p> <p>In addition, numbers shown for 2001 are incorrect. See DWS latest fact sheet.</p>	An RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO75 (JSO-28)	Table needs to be updated with FY2004 data. Old data does not accurately show present impacts.	Due to changes in recordation at the Minerals Management Service, this information is not available for more recent years. However, Table 3.12.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate new minerals revenue figures.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO76 (JSO-29)	Charts from Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining are 2002; need to be updated with 2004.	The charts following Table 3.12.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to reflect 2004 figures from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO77 (JSO-30)	Gas and oil prices per barrel in RMP need to be adjusted to reflect current conditions.	Section 3.12.2.2.3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect 2004 figures from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO78 (JSO-31)	Conflict between Tax Revenue text and Table 3.10.1 data. (\$951,000 vs. \$334,514). Use most current data.	Section 3.12.2.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect the correct tax revenue figures. See response to SO6.	X

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Uintah County	G-15	SO79 (JSO-32)	Data doesn't truly reflect actual tourism dollars (high % of industry in them).	This has been noted in Sections 3.12.2.2.4 and 4.12.3.2	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO80 (JSO-33)	ALL county revenue should be included in data. Show what portion of revenue goes to state and not county.	Sections 3.12.2.2.3 and 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to indicate what portion of county revenue goes to the state.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO81 (JSO-34)	Chapter 4 deals with environmental consequences but fails to deal with economic ones. Chapter 4 should include economic impacts within each resource section.	The socioeconomic impacts analysis is contained in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO82 (JSO-35)	Agriculture impacts to the local economy were omitted in Chapter 4.	See Sections 4.12.2.1 and 4.12.3.1 for impacts to grazing as a result of BLM management decisions.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO83 (JSO-36)	Need consistency in whether this plan is projecting for 15 or 20 years.	15 to 20 years is the planned projected life of this RMP which is reflected in the analysis. If significant changes were found, a plan amendment would be done.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO84 (JSO-37)	Table 4.2 underestimates potential for development and needs to be re-analyzed to reflect a more accurate development scenario based on today's activity.	The commenter does not provide an alternative estimate of future development or an indication of what would be a "more accurate scenario based on today's activity." As such, the BLM is unable to respond to this comment.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO85 (SO-38)	Last paragraph 2nd sentence should read "to the federal government and the State of Utah" rather than "or"	Section 4.8.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate the change suggested in the comment.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO86 (JSO-39)	Inconsistency in number of wells between various sections of RMP and Mineral Potential Report. Figure of 6,530 more accurately reflects a minimum for wells, not a maximum.	Errors in the numbers of wells between various sections will be corrected in the FEIS. The maximum number of wells predicted in the RFD was based on the best information available at the time of the report. See comment response AT29.	X
Uintah	G-15	SO87	"Tourism generates tax revenue that is used to support	Potential tourism-related tax revenue could result	

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County		(JSO-40)	the local community, which would potentially decrease". This is irrelevant. Tourism tax dollars are not applicable to Uintah County BLM lands, nor are there tourist focal points.	from a range of recreation opportunities on BLM lands including Backcountry Byways, SRMA's and trails in the planning area. See section 4.10.2.6 for recreation opportunities in the VPA.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO89 (JSO-42)	This statement does not adequately convey the layering of restrictions and their impacts on inhibiting development. Needs to be spelled out to laypeople.	<p>“Layering” is a planning tool. Under FLPMA’s multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and uses) are consistent and compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for</p>	

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				<p>BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a) (7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land Use Planning Handbook "H-1601-1"). Specific decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p>	
Uintah County	G-15	SO90 (JSO-43)	Cost of drilling as stated in RMP is incorrect and results in need for reassessment of all alternatives.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to consider the cost of drilling based upon data received by the BLM.	X
Uintah	G-15	SO91	Data on state and local revenues from wells must be	See comment responses SO2 and SO28.	

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County		(JSO-44)	included as much wages, support jobs, etc.		
Uintah County	G-15	SO92 (JSO-45)	Discrepancy in well numbers (6,312 v. 6,340) in document text vs table. Also well number from MPR of 6,530 not reflected in any alternative.	Section 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised so that the number of wells are consistent throughout the RMP. The well number of 6,530 is the maximum RFD. The maximum number of wells was adjusted by the percent of area open for development under each alternative.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO93 (JSO-46)	All of the impacts are incorrect based on the information from the UEO.	See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO94 (JSO-47)	Royalties and PILT not connected in any way and the statement that they are suggests that the preparer has no knowledge of BLM and local, or state revenue sources.	Sections 4.12.3.2.2 thru 4.12.3.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to clarify the impacts of royalties and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT).	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO96 (JSO-49)	All three of these sections have inaccurate well counts and extrapolations of impacts. Also they assume that PILT is a royalty payment, this is not correct.	See comment response SO93.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO97 (JSO-50)	Table 4.12.1 should be deleted and a new chart prepared with accurate and updated information. The table should also include additional fiscal items (state local revenues, direct/indirect jobs etc) needed for true analysis as required by FLPMA.	An RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes. See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO98 (JSO-51)	Section is inadequate and insufficiently detailed to specific locations and counties and does not tie wages to jobs. Also, references are not cited.	The document has been revised such that references used have been cited the text.	X
Town of Rangely	G-16	SD181 (SD-B)	In order to not belabor the point it is the opinion of the Town of Rangely that any designation of a Wild and Scenic River on the White River or the consideration of such without the expressed support to the Upper Basin Compact Commission, White River Water managers such as the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District, the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Colorado	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25, G-1.	

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			<p>River Water Conservation District, in the face of drought and serious compact curtailment issues that may affect both Utah and Colorado and without a full understanding of the reserved water rights impacts, is a gross negligence on part of BLM and in direct violation of the spirit and practice required to analyze impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act.</p>		
Daggett County	G-17	SD255 (ASD-11)	<p>On page 1-8 under 1.4.1.1: Identification of Issues, Wilderness Characteristics it still shows that the BLM is planning to manage for wilderness characteristics in areas outside of WSA lands, which is counter to the Utah vs. Norton settlement. An ACEC or special management areas cannot be a surrogate for a former "wilderness" inventory area. Unfortunately, many of the proposed SMAs or ACECs are exactly that and fail to meet the criteria and policy.</p> <p>There is little evidence of positive action on the part of the BLM in these areas of Special designations to meet stated objectives. The Counties have made repeated attempts to get the data used to develop the need for maintaining or expanding the areas of these Special Designations and still has not received the requested information and the RMP does not adequately document the need for maintaining or expanding the size of these special designations.</p>	See Response to Comment SD16A-G22.	
Daggett County	G-17	SD256 (ASD-12)	<p>The number, size, and frequency of special designations that limit or disallow "disturbances" illustrate our concern that the BLM is not managing these lands for multiple use. Policy is being set that constricts the economies of local areas to meet the desires of groups that do not live or in most cases even visit the area.</p>	<p>Under FLPMA's multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many</p>	

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				<p>different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and uses) are consistent and compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a)(7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM’s Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land</p>	

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				<p>Use Planning Handbook “H-1601-1”). Specific decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p> <p>The values protected by WSA management prescriptions do not necessarily protect those values found relevant and important in ACEC evaluation, and vice versa. The relevant and important values of ACECs within or adjacent to WSAs were noted in the ACEC Evaluation (Appendix G). The ACECs are evaluated and ranked based on the presence or absence of the stated relevant and important values. None of these values includes wilderness characteristics. Additionally, the management prescriptions for the ACECs is limited in scope to protect the relevant and important values, and the BLM maintains that the size of the ACEC areas is appropriate for protection of the relevant and important values identified.</p>	

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USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SD332 (LSD-7)	The table and discussion of non-WSA lands does not consider cumulative impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development.	Impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development are discussed in detail in the 2007 Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Section 4.8.	
Dept. of Agriculture and Food	G-21	SO56 (JSO-1)	Sheep ranching contributes \$31 million to the vitality of rural Utah. More significantly, this income generally stays in the county, creating a multiplier effect that produces even more income for residents and merchants. Is also a big part of the economic, historical and cultural fabric of the Uinta Basin. Given recent drought, these ranchers need your help with access to viable grazing areas so they can stay in business.	The BLM acknowledges the importance of sheep ranching to the local communities. The plan has no decisions expected to negatively impact the industry. AUMs per alternative presented in Section 4.7 include sheep in their allotments.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD16	Strike in 7th line "would not". Replace with "cannot". Strike in 8th, 9th and 10th line "would consider whether non WSA lands with or likely to have wilderness characteristics will be managed to preserve some or all of those values with other land management allocations and actions." Strike in 10th line "these allocations" and Replace with "management actions". Strike last word in 12th line "ACECs".	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD16A	As written, the RMP still fails to conform to the State of Utah v. Norton settlement or other case law. An ACEC or special management area cannot be a surrogate for a former wilderness inventory area. Unfortunately,	The BLM's authority for managing lands to protect or enhance wilderness characteristics is derived directly from FLPMA Section 202 (43 U.S.C. §1712).	

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			<p>many of the proposed SMAs or ACECs are exactly that.</p>	<p>This section of BLM’s organic statute gives the Secretary of the Interior authority to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield. Nothing in this section constrains the Secretary’s authority to manage lands as necessary to “achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences.” (FLPMA, Section 202(c)(2) (43 U.S.C. §1712(c)(2))) Further, FLPMA makes it clear that the term “multiple use” means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land, and that the Secretary can “make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . .” (FLPMA, Section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c))) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including wilderness character management, amongst the various resources in a way that provides uses for current and future generations.</p> <p>The BLM has long acknowledged that FLPMA Section 603 (43 U.S.C. §1782) requiring a one-time wilderness review has expired. All current inventory of public lands is authorized by FLPMA Section 201 (43 U.S.C. §1711). In September 2006, the Utah District Court affirmed that the BLM retained authority to protect lands it determined to have wilderness characteristics in a manner substantially similar to the manner in which such lands are protected as WSAs.</p>	

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				<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific State laws relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, BLM is bound by Federal law. As a consequence, there may be inconsistencies that cannot be reconciled. The FLPMA requires that BLM's land use plans be consistent with State and local plans "to the extent practical" where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options.</p> <p>Finally, the Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603's non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD17	Strike this bullet.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the</p>	

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				<p>current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD17A	<p>In addition to the fact that the Red Creek ACEC is a surrogate for the former WIA, it will fragment management to the detriment of land management and multiple uses.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD18	<p>Here it is proposed to continue ACEC designations on Pariette Wetlands, Redcreek Watershed and Lears Canyon. BLM planning documents provide that existing ACEC's should be analyzed to determine their continued need. It is our position that these existing ACEC's must be analyzed to determine if conditions have changed or other designations placed on these areas would provide protections equal to that of the ACEC and if the ACEC's need, importance and relevance still exist.</p> <p>RE: The first and third bullet points regarding Pariette Wetlands and Lears Canyon. The County's position is the NSO classification is not necessary to prevent unnecessary damage to the identified value. There is no analysis or documentation in the draft EIS to show otherwise. Further, the NSO classification eliminates "use or development" of the subject areas, thus by definition, taking the areas outside the scope of an ACEC management, thus making the ACEC tool nonessential and inapplicable.</p>	<p>The analysis and rationale for the designation of the Pariette Wetlands, Red Creek Watershed, and Lears Canyon ACECs in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD7-G-13.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD19	<p>The proposed wild and scenic rivers as set forth in the RMP violate the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. BLM's authority is limited to study when neither the state nor</p>	<p>The FLPMA gives the BLM broad authority to manage the public lands, including management of eligible and suitable river segments. For eligible</p>	

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			Congress support designation. 16 U.S.C. 137*.	<p>rivers, it is BLM's policy to protect certain values identified in the eligibility determination process to ensure that a decision on suitability can be made. To accomplish this objective, the BLM's management prescriptions must protect the free-flowing character, tentative classifications, and identify outstandingly remarkable values of eligible rivers according to the prescriptions and directions of the current, applicable land use plan per BLM Manual Section 8351.32C. The BLM Manual further states that should a determination on suitability not be made during the planning process, "the RMP must prescribe protective management measures to ensure protection shall be afforded the river and adjacent public land area pending the suitability determination" (Section 8351.33A).</p> <p>The NEPA specifies that while work on the EIS is in progress, BLM cannot undertake or authorize any actions in the interim that would prejudice the RMP decision or, in this case, the suitability determination (40 CFR 1505.1 (c)(3)). A case-by-case evaluation of potential impacts resulting from a proposed action must be made to ensure that all eligible rivers are not limited from being considered for suitability among the range of RMP alternatives, thus eliminating the opportunity to prejudice the decision. Implementation of the interim management to protect eligible rivers, therefore, is applied through site-specific NEPA analysis of environmental impacts on a case-by-case basis. The NEPA compliance, required for all Federal actions that could significantly affect the environment, ensures that BLM consider alternatives to the proposed action and provides BLM an opportunity to apply mitigation measures that will reduce impacts on a</p>	

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				<p>given resource such as an eligible stream. This mechanism of applying management must be in conformance with the current land use plan. Protective prescriptions would be applied to rivers determined suitable in the ROD for the Field Office RMP. Resource allocations (such as those for visual resources, OHV use, and mineral leasing) compatible with protecting river values would be prescribed for suitable river corridors as part of the decision. In addition, no special management objectives would be applied to eligible rivers determined not to be suitable in the ROD. Instead, they would be managed without additional consideration according to the provisions of the plan.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD20	Strike 2nd paragraph.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD20A	A future inventory has no place in an RMP. BLM has no additional authority to either establish new WSAs or to manage them.	<p>FLPMA Section 201 gives BLM the authority to inventory for wilderness characteristics. Section 202 of FLPMA gives BLM the authority for planning how the public lands are to be managed. Section</p>	

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				302 of FLPMA gives BLM general management authority for the public lands. It is BLM policy (as stated in its planning handbook and in Instruction Memorandums 2003-274 and 2003-275 Change 1), that through planning, the BLM has addressed non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the October 2007 Supplement to the DRMP/EIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD21	In order to comply with the FLPMA multiple-use mandate, the BLM may not use SRMA or VRM classifications to exclude mineral leasing, or mineral related and other surface activities. The SRMA and VRM tools have been used improperly to purport to exclude surface disturbing activities in the proposed White River and Browns Park SRMA's. The fact that the White River proposed SRMA, follows the old WIA boundary makes it highly suspect in this regard.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD22	In general, the ACEC's and SMRAs appear to be surrogates for the now discredited wilderness inventory areas. The Vernal office appears to be clinging to protecting these areas despite court orders and BLM direction. The Counties strongly object to these areas as reconstituted since the management criteria are quite similar to de facto wilderness.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD23	The RMP needs to recognize that current land use activities like livestock grazing are entitled to continue at today's levels and subject to meeting rangeland health standards. In general, the RMP fails to address the impacts on livestock grazing. If this is the objective, the RMP and DEIS must disclose it and the effects. If this is not the objective, then specific language recognizing that livestock grazing is compatible should be added.	The Vernal Field Office RMP determines the allowable uses of the public lands as provided for in FLPMA. FLPMA states in section 202(a) that land use planning provides for the use of the public lands "regardless of whether such lands previously have been classified, withdrawn, set aside, or otherwise designated for one or more uses". FLPMA further provides in Section 202(e) the authority to issue management decisions, which implement newly developed or revised land use plans. Such decisions, including those that exclude one or more	

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				<p>uses, are subject to reconsideration, modification and termination through revision of the land use plan.</p> <p>FLPMA indicates that it is the policy of the United States to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield. While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for and recognizing the need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law for the BLM to maximize the number of domestic livestock AUMs. The definition of multiple use in Section 103(c) of FLPMA specifically indicates that some lands can be used for "less than all of the resources" which they are capable of providing. According to FLPMA, BLM is to manage for "multiple uses" which best meets the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the productivity of the land. According to section 2 of the TGA, it is the objective of the act to regulate the occupancy and use of the Grazing Districts and to preserve these lands.</p> <p>Grazing decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401. Proposed Plan decisions on public lands would continue to promote a healthy active grazing industry. Forage allocations for livestock and wildlife are fully allocated on public lands. Numerous RMP decisions under other identified resources allow for the restoration and maintenance of rangeland and watershed health. For example, the Proposed Plan provides the umbrella to allow implementation-level actions for</p>	

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				hazardous fuel reductions, fire rehabilitation, vegetation treatments, riparian improvements, range and wildlife habitat improvements, UPCD projects – including Healthy Lands Initiative projects, seed collection, etc. Minor, if any, adjustments to current permitted livestock AUMs are made in the Proposed Plan. Prior voluntary relinquishments and/or retirements have been recognized.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD24	The acres contained in the current ACEC proposal are triple the acres proposed in the first set of alternatives. Given the fact that this area is held up as the area of highest concentration of prairie dogs in the world, and the fact that the AMS do not reflect a concern or need for protection of the prairie dogs in this area, leaves one to question the need for this alternative. Chapter 3 discussion on affected environment, northeast description, and analysis in Chapter 4 discusses the management prescriptions presented in this alternative. This is no analysis of need or impacts. The size of this should be reduced to that of Alternative B.	The RMP presents the various management strategies for achieving the desired range of alternatives. Size and management prescriptions vary between the alternatives. If the protection of the relevant and importance values “outweighs” the other resource uses then the ACEC was proposed under all the alternatives. Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9	
UBAOG	G-22	SD25	Add to Alternatives "A", "B", and "C" the statement: "All management prescriptions for the black-footed ferret will be consistent with the Black Footed Ferret Recovery Plan. None of the management prescriptions applied to this area are essential to Prairie Dog management and could be provided with existing management options."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the	

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				<p>adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives states:</p> <p>"The BLM would continue to implement the specific goals and objectives of all Recovery Plans, Conservation Plans and Strategies, and activity level plans."</p> <p>Also, Section 2.4.13.4.4.2 specifically states that under all action alternatives, the:</p> <p>" BLM would manage the black-footed ferret consistent with the 1999 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan Amendment and those portions of the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin, Uintah County, Utah that are consistent with the Black-footed ferret plan amendment."</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD26	Select Alternative B as the preferred alternative. The County is concerned about the ability of the BLM to effectively manage this section of the river as an ACEC given the fragmentation of ownership. In some areas here the BLM is a minority landowner.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9	
UBAOG	G-22	SD27	The proposal here is to manage as an ACEC for recreation and Riparian ecosystems. Recreational use of this section of the river is insignificant when compared to the reaches above and below it. Most river use ends at Split Mountain and begins again at	On August 27, 1980, BLM promulgated final ACEC guidelines (45 Federal Register 57318) that clarify that the term "protects" means:	

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			<p>Sand Wash. The subject section of the river is flat water and seldom used by anyone except the occasional day floater, duck hunters and fisherman. The use of this section for fishing is on the decline as many of the sport fish have been removed in favor of T&E species. This would indicate a decline in recreational use. It is clear that protection for recreational use of this section of the river does not meet the test for irreparable damage, relevance and importance. Alternative B should be selected.</p>	<p>“To defend or guard against damage or loss to the important environmental resources of a potential or designated ACEC. This includes damage that can be restored over time and that which is irreparable. With regard to a natural hazard, protect means to prevent the loss of life or injury to people, or loss or damage to property.”</p> <p>Thus, BLM is to consider the potential for both reparable and irreparable damage when protecting important historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish and wildlife resources; or other natural systems through ACEC designation. This interpretation is consistent with FLPMA’s legislative history and implementing policy. Section 2 of the guidelines clarifies that ACECs are special places within public lands. It states:</p> <p>“In addition to establishing in law such basic protective management policies that apply to all the public lands, Congress has said that ‘management of national resource lands [public lands] is to include giving special attention to the protection of ACECs, for the purpose of ensuring that the most environmentally important and fragile lands will be given early attention and protection’ (Senate Report 94-583, on FLPMA). Thus, the ACEC process is to be used to provide whatever special management is required to protect those environmental resources that are most important, i.e., those resources that make certain specific areas special places, endowed by nature or man with characteristics that set them apart. In addition, the ACEC process is to be used to protect human life and property from</p>	

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				<p>natural hazards.”</p> <p>See Appendix G for information concerning relevance and importance on specific, existing or nominated ACECs.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD28	<p>The riparian areas along this section of river have been designated as critical habitat for T&E species fish. There is no need to establish an ACEC to protect riparian ecosystems on this section of river as that protection is provided by Critical Habitat designation. It is difficult to identify a need for protection for this section of the river from irreparable harm when it is currently covered by very strict standards as critical habitat. This segment of river was analyzed for suitability in the Diamond Mountain Plan and was found unsuitable.</p>	<p>Critical Habitat designation is part of the special management attention focused on this area relative to the relevant and important values. Under Alternatives C and E, the ACEC would be established.</p> <p>See Appendix C regarding the consideration of the Middle Green River for WSR eligibility and suitability as part of the RMP.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD29	<p>Select Alternative "A or B." Main Canyon is not significantly different from the rest of the Book Cliffs area and does not contain values that meet the test of importance. None of the values listed under "Relevance" would be irreparably damaged by current activities under current management.</p>	<p>See Appendix G for more information on the relevant and important values identified for the Main Canyon ACEC.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD30	<p>Inadequate analysis has been made as to the relevance and importance of the approximately 160 acres of Old Growth Pine, and that failure to protect them would lead to irreparable damage. It would seem reasonable to provide protection and management for it. If it meets this test, create a new alternative establishing West Tent Canyon as an ACEC for protection of Old Growth Pinion Pine (160 acres). It should be noted that the values listed here are not</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	

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			<p>consistent with those listed in Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Appendix G. The changes in values from earlier draft and the lack of consistency in values listed could be seen as an attempt to justify a pre-determined area, as opposed to the need of the area being determined by the relevance and importance of identified values. There is no indication of analysis or a need to protect the remaining resources listed here. These resources, except for the Pinion stand, are common throughout the Book Cliffs area thus they are not unique, and other law and regulations provide for protection of cultural and historical resources. FLPMA at 1702 defines ACEC's in part as areas where special management attention is required to protect and to prevent irreparable damage to important historical cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources and other natural systems or processes. Clearly the protections for cultural resources, historical features and watershed exist or are proposed in the DEIS/RMP. Current protections exist in law regulation or policy.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	SD31	<p>Here is proposed the establishment of a research natural area. ACEC protection is not needed to do research and does not meet the criteria required to establish one. Natural area seems to be added to enhance the title. The establishment of a natural area and to limit multiple-use is not consistent with the ACEC criteria. Additionally, an ACEC is not required to establish a research and monitoring plan.</p>	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD32	<p>VRM Classes 2 and 3 are proposed here without discussion of need and what they are intended to protect. Approximately one half of the ACEC is VRM Class 2 and the other half Class 3. Given the definition of VRM Class 2 which states: "A low level of change in landscape characteristics, and activities not attracting the attention of the casual observer," it appears this</p>	Based on the analysis of and response to the public comments, BLM has changed the proposed VRM classes to be more consistent with overall management objectives.	X

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			would prevent development of existing leases and also on future leasing. The impacts to oil & gas and other permittee's was not analyzed or disclosed. The impacts of a VRM II must be analyzed in Chapter 4 and reflected in reasonable foreseeable development, and be analyzed to insure they are the least restrictive necessary. As written it implies that the area would be open to oil and gas leasing subject to standard lease terms or controlled surface use. Oil and gas leasing and development are two different things given the fact that much of this area is VRM II. Being able to develop a lease in the majority of the area described here is questionable at best and not analyzed.		
UBAOG	G-22	SD33	This alternative proposes protection for watersheds. Further investigation reveals that this protection is thought to be needed for the reintroduction of Colorado Cutthroat to insure that streams in that area meet certain sedimentation requirements. The County Plan requires that habitat quality and quantity exist prior to the introduction or reintroduction of any species. It is our concern that to achieve water quality levels in the Bitter Creek area that would provide optimum habitat for the trout may not be achievable. Indications are that the cutthroat were not present in the past due to historically high sediment in the stream.	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD34	The size of this ACEC is not supported in the text and is not supported by distribution of the reported values to be protected.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD35	Given that this area was once a proposed WSA, it is not difficult to argue that the proposed ACEC is based on unsubstantiated need and questionable qualification and is an attempt to circumvent the Wilderness Settlement agreement and create de facto wilderness.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD36	Here there appears to be a layering of special	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	

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			<p>designations in an attempt to manage this area for non-impairment. This is in conflict with the BLM's mandate for multiple use and IMs that provide for the removal of unnecessary stipulations that impact energy development, which is in conflict with EPCA and BLM instructional memorandums.</p>	<p>In accordance with BLM policy and its recognition of the National Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2000 (EPCA), as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, mineral resource development would be allowed throughout the VPA subject to standard lease terms unless precluded by other program prescriptions, as specified in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD37	<p>This section of river contains critical diversion points and water rights for the area. Development of these rights are sure to have a direct and adverse affect on the value proposed to be protected in the WSR designation. The language in Section 7 of the WSR Act prevents federal licensing or assistance to such projects. Given this, it is unlikely that development of water rights and other projects on the river could take place. To approve a WSR designation that would prevent development of property rights could be construed to be a taking of these rights.</p> <p>The WSR Handbook provides that the resources to be protected are unique or rare within the region. Such is not the case with the resources to be protected here. The FLPMA definition of an acre states "where protection is required" with respect to the T & E fish. This area of river has been designated crucial habitat providing them protection to the highest standard.</p>	<p>There is no effect on water rights or in-stream flows related to suitability findings made in a land use plan decision, barring Congressional action. Even if Congress were to designate rivers into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, any such designation would have no affect on existing, valid water rights. Section 13 (b) of the Wild and Scenic River Act states that jurisdiction over waters is determined by established principles of law. In Utah, the state has jurisdiction over water. Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act implies a federal reserved water right for designated rivers, it doesn't require or specify any amount, and instead establishes that only the minimum amount for purposes of the Act can be acquired. Because the State of Utah has jurisdiction over water, BLM would be required to adjudicate the right as would any other entity, by application through state processes. Thus, for Congressionally designated rivers, BLM may assert a federal reserved water right to appurtenant and unappropriated water with a priority date as of the date of designation (junior to all existing rights), but only in the minimum amount necessary to fulfill the primary purpose of the reservation. In practice, however, federal reserved water rights have not always been claimed if alternative means of ensuring sufficient flows are</p>	

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				adequate to sustain the outstandingly remarkable values. The BLM is fully evaluating and considering potential impacts related to these Wild and Scenic River decisions in this planning process. Congressional designation of suitable streams is evaluated in the cumulative impacts analysis of the Final EIS, and Appendix C is modified to include a more thorough discussion of how the suitability considerations are applied to each eligible river.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD38	When Alternative D includes an ACEC designation in the Lower Green River Expansion of only 1,700 acres less than Alternatives A and C, how could Alternative D "not have the benefits" described for Alternatives A and C? It should provide the same benefits but to a slightly lesser degree.	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/F EIS has been revised to indicate that Alternative D would have lesser benefit than Alternatives A, C, and E.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SD39	[The stipulations for the Pelican Lake SRMA for all alternatives are] not consistent with the County Plan. Why grant an exception to recreation and not to other multiple use activities? Surface disturbance has the same impacts regardless of the purpose.	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9. The Pelican Lake SRMA is a very heavily used recreation area where surface development unrelated to recreation would be incompatible with the BLM's goals and objectives for the area. Surface disturbance related to authorized recreational development would be subject to impacts analysis prior to implementation.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO10	The sentence needs to be expanded. Particularly in the counties, where socioeconomics would be implemented. Royalty revenues - Service revenues	Section 1.5 is a description of planning criteria development. Specific socioeconomic factors used in analysis of impacts are discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.12.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO11	The social and economic section entirely omits the role of agriculture in the region. It is the historical land use and consistently plays an important role in the custom agriculture of the community as well as the economy.	See comment response SO5.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO12	The DEIS needs to acknowledge that tourism tends to	The commenter does not provide any additional	

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			generate minimum wage and often seasonal jobs and is not consistent with local heritage and culture.	information to substantiate the assertion or relationship regarding seasonal employment and local heritage and culture.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO13	<p>The DEIS discussion of social and economic factors is very one-sided and thus inadequate. The Area historically depended on agriculture for its social and economic base. This is still the case today with energy playing an increasingly large role. Recreation by contrast plays a relatively small role in the economy. Moreover, a tourism tax base is only sales tax. There is little other tax base since the United States owns the majority of the land in the planning area. It is a misnomer to describe a sales tax base as healthy since it suffers from periodic slumps. By comparison, the State of Utah also assesses a severance tax, which is entirely omitted from the economic discussion. In addition, the counties received half of the federal mineral leasing revenues and these funds play a much greater role in funding schools and public services. The social and economic discussion also omits the fact that tourism industry jobs are typically minimum wage and non-professional. For that reason, these jobs tend to be temporary.</p>	<p>The commenter fails to indicate what is "one-sided" about the discussion. The socioeconomic considerations in section 3.10.4 are within the context of recreation, and thus the discussion is focused on that current range of activities and impacts. Section 4.12 discusses socioeconomic impacts for all resources. To address issues such as severance tax, further quantitative clarifications have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See comment response SO3.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SO14	<p>The DEIS fails to disclose and discuss the full historic grazing preference. The reference to 146,220 AUMs appears to be the average use over the last 10 years. By using this lower figure, the DEIS obscures the probable reductions in domestic grazing that will occur under this plan. This violates the obligation under NEPA to fully disclose the effects of a proposed federal action on the environment. Fails to mention economic and cultural importance of grazing, ignores affects of reducing AUMs, and directly threatens private land open space by conversion to development.</p>	<p>The socioeconomic role of agricultural in the planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1 and in the socioeconomic analysis in Section 4.12 and its subsections.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	SO15	Minerals development will not have a long-term adverse effect on the tourism sector of the economy. This is because a majority of the tourism is associated with resources that are located outside of the "oilfield" areas (High Uintah Wilderness, Starvation Reservoir, Flaming Gorge, etc...).	While a large portion of the tourism is concentrated in the northern end of the VPA, there are recreation opportunities in the proposed SRMAs, non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, special designations, and OHV travel routes in the southern portion of the VPA where the highest concentration of minerals development is likely to occur according to the RFD.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO16	This same level of analysis should be applied to oil and gas development as it has a positive effect on the same sectors of the economy. The loss of jobs and tax revenue will be made up several times over by development.	Sections 4.12.2.3 and 4.12.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to address tourism tax revenues.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO17	The impact to Daggett County discussion should be struck as the increase in wells is only 4.5. This impact is a great exaggeration as are others where mineral development is discussed.	Section 4.12.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate the suggested comment. These sentences have been deleted in the FEIS.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO18	This sentence should be changed to read "Under Alternative A 1,798,378 acres would be open in leasing categories 1 and 2 to oil and gas and coal bed methane. CBM should be added here as acres are not correct if you don't. It should be noted that categories 1 and 2 are used here with no indication of where they are in the text or on the maps. This comment applies to Alternative "C" and "D" in this section. Nowhere does this section discuss volumes of production.	1,776,782 acres would be open to Category 1 and 2 oil, gas, and Coal-bed Methane leasing categories under Alternative A. Section 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show the correct acreages for mineral development. CBM production would account for approximately 2% of the natural gas in the VPA, therefore a detailed analysis (in comparison to oil and natural gas development) of CBM development will not be provided in the PRMP/FEIS. See Section 4.12.3.1	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO19	The Counties question the findings in the last two sentences of Section 4.12.3.1 on page 4-175. If Alternative C were to be selected, Table 2.3 indicates	Sections 4.12.2.1 and 4.12.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to provide details on AUM demand.	X

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			that livestock forage would decrease from 146,161 AUMs under Alternative D to 77,294 AUMs. Such a reduction would have an impact on the livestock industry and its ability to expand in the future to serve a growing population. Such reductions ignore provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act and withdrawals.		
UBAOG	G-22	SO20	A decrease in jobs in the oil and gas sector would not decrease the dependency of the region on the oil and gas industry or make the region less susceptible to boom and bust cycles. The way to make the region less vulnerable is to create jobs in other economic sectors. In addition, the creation of more jobs in the minerals industry will attract more jobs in other sectors of the economy. This increased level of services could make the region more attractive to other forms of basic industry, which may result in less dependency on oil and gas.	It is not the BLM's role to create (or decrease) employment opportunities in any one sector of the economy. The role of the RMP is to assess the impacts planning decisions have on various affected sectors, if any.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD100	There are no management prescriptions for this segment of the river and thus no analysis or disclosure of impacts of management restrictions that are to be applied. This should be done in the DEIS/RMP.	See Response to Comment SD72-G-25, G-1.. As such, management prescriptions were included in the RMP (e.g., Appendix K) and included in the analysis of impacts from special designations decisions on other resources and uses.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD110	At page 2-29 under 2.4.13.3.1.2. It is proposed that Red Creek watershed (24,475 acres) be managed to protect the high value watershed and wildlife habitat resources by continuing the designation. The wording here is not consistent with that in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 where it provides that Browns Park, Red Mountain, Dry Fork, and Lower Green River corridor would continue to be managed as ACEC's for the protection of high value watersheds and Class I fishery Chapter 3 and historical, cultural, scenic, fish and wildlife resources.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD111	Section 1613.21 of Chapter 1 of the ACEC Handbook provides that existing ACEC's must be analyzed in RMP planning. There is no analysis in the DEIS/RMP that indicates a need for the continuation of existing ACEC's. The only attempt to justify continuing existing ACEC's is at 3.14.1.1.1. It states "based on current analysis of the areas, the present designation has been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will all be carried forward as ACEC's in the Vernal RMP." There is no reference to this analysis in the AMS, which by regulation is to drive the formation of alternatives.	See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD112	Other than brief ambiguous statements in the draft that say that relevance and importance criteria exist there is no analysis that supports the need for existing ACEC's in Brown Park and Red Creek or the need to carry them forward. To the contrary in the AMS at 5.4 Current ACEC's there is a listing of Completed or Under Consideration Work Projects in these ACEC's None of the projects would require a ACEC designation to be accomplished. In fact these projects could be accomplished on any lands not covered by an ACEC. A review of the management prescription in the Diamond Mountain RMP indicates the work project is consistent with that plan. Current activities and proposed work on this ACEC is not consistent with the values identified as relevant and important. In the DEIS/RMP BLM claims there is a need to continue the existing ACEC in Red Creek and Browns Park, but it offers no analysis of need or impacts and substantiates the need with work projects that are not ACEC management prescriptions. BLM has fallen short of substantiating the need for ACEC, in these areas.	See Response to Comment SD90-G-24.	
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-23	SD113	At Table 2.3, Page 56, Alternative A, it is proposed an ACEC to manage Browns Park to develop a	The development of a comprehensive integrated activity plan is not the basis upon which the ACEC	

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Duchesne Counties			comprehensive integrated activity plan that would address protection of scenic, wildlife, cultural and historical values. It goes on to place restriction on oil and gas development, OHV and other uses by establishing a VRM class I and II for the area. The development of an activity plan is not a basis for an ACEC designation and would not pass the relevance and importance as other protections exist for the values to be protected. In addition the restrictions listed are not supportive of the need for a plan development.	<p>would be established but would be the plan under which the ACEC, established to focus special management attention on the relevant and important scenic, wildlife, and cultural/historical values of the area, would be managed. VRM Class I and II allocations would not be enacted for the sole purpose of excluding oil and gas development and OHV use but are part of the overall strategy to manage this area, in part, for its high scenic value.</p> <p>The relevant and importance criteria for this ACEC are discussed in Chapter 3 and in Appendix G.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD114	SRMA, Table 2.3 on Page 52, Alternative A provides for an SRMA to provide for outstanding scenic vistas and enhancement of resources and associated activities such as riparian, fisheries, special status species, water quality, water based recreation, hunting, trail system for hiking, biking, horseback riding and OHV use, camping, cultural and historical interpretation and facility development that goes on to establish non-impairment standards for a portion of the area. As with the ACEC's, here again is an attempt to layer restrictions and management to circumvent multiple use requirements and manage to a non-impairment standard. Protection of scenic vistas, enhancement of resources, riparian, fisheries, special status species and water quality are not recreational use and are already protected under other proposed management prescriptions, law or regulation. They have no place in an SRMA.	Scenic vistas (including riparian corridors), fisheries, special status species, and cultural/historical sites are all resources that contribute significantly to the recreational uses of the area. As such, management for these resources is appropriate within a SRMA. While other regulations may provide a measure of protection for such resources, they do not provide a comprehensive strategy that manages the resources for the maintenance and enhancement of recreational opportunity.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD40	This area has been layered with special designations and other management prescription without consideration to manageability of these designations and current use.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	

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Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD41	The Wild and Scenic River Act give agencies no authority to manage rivers, determined to be suitable for WSR designation, to protect their outstanding remarkable characteristics. Thus BLM lacks authority to manage the Upper Green River as provided in Chapter 2.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD42	Suitability of [the Upper Green River] segment should be re-analyzed in this document. A review of the Diamond Mountain RMP and ROD indicates no analysis of suitability for WSR designation was analyzed in them. In the Diamond Mountain Plan, at SEA 08 page 2-4, it indicates that the Upper Green River suitability determination was made prior to that RMP.	The Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS Record Of Decision at SEA08 on page 2-4 reflects the Areawide Decision made concerning the two river segments. The Upper Green River and Lower Green River segments were analyzed in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and Wild and Scenic Suitability Analysis reports may be found in Appendix 7, Special Emphasis Areas, in the referenced RMP/EIS.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD43	The DEIS/RMP and the AMS are silent on the origin of the suitability designation. Research of determination history shows that suitability was determined in Wild and Scenic River Study Environmental Statement July 1980. This document addresses the Green and Yampa Rivers.	See Response to Comment SD42-G-23.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD44	The 1980 EIS [for the Wild and Scenic River Study], which is the only analysis of impacts of a suitability determination, is woefully inadequate. A review of Chapter 3 beginning on page 229 indicates that impacts to private landowners with respect to current uses, agriculture, grazing and family residential occupancy, was not analyzed. Analysis was not made based on the assumption that scenic easement and/or agreement would be purchased or made, thus impacts would be eliminated. This has not happened. In short the analysis and disclosure of impacts related to a suitability determination on this stream segment has	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			not been made.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD45	The Wild and Scenic River Review in Utah, process and criteria for interagency use pages 2 and 3, suitability states "The purpose of the suitability component is to determine whether eligible rivers are appropriate additions to the national system by considering trade-offs between corridor development and river protection." It further states "suitability considerations include the environmental and economic consequences of designation and the manageability of the river if it is designated." Appendix E lists suitability factors to be considered in analysis. This analysis required for determination of suitability has not been accomplished in this DEIS/RMP nor in previous analysis of suitability. BLM has relied on faulty analysis that is 25 years old.	Appendix C in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include additional information regarding suitability determinations.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD99	More than 25 development projects have taken place with the Browns Park/Upper Green River area since the 1980 eligibility and suitability analysis was completed. The 1980 analysis is used in the DEIS to support special designations in the area, and was not updated to account for changes in the landscape resulting from these development projects. A determination of eligibility and suitability based upon these changes of use and development and current conditions and state law must be made in the DEIS/RMP. It is clear that the majority of use and values on this segment of the river is recreational in nature as opposed to classifications of scenic that exist in the RMP. Proper analysis would show that with existing or proposed protection, a WSA designation would not be needed to protect existing values.	The Upper Green and Lower segments of the Green River were determined eligible and suitable in the Diamond Mountain RMP (1994). The findings were based on development that was in place at that time. Any development on public lands within the river corridor would have to be consistent with the Diamond Mountain RMP decision, so findings should not have changed since 1994. However; the outstandingly remarkable values and tentative classifications for these river segments were reassessed for the Vernal RMP planning effort. (Refer to Appendix C), and existing developments were taken into consideration in the suitability analysis. It is true that these river segments were brought forward as suitable in all alternatives for the Vernal RMP. This is because these river segments had been thoroughly analyzed in the EIS for the Diamond Mountain RMP, and because no objection to this approach was raised during scoping for the	

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				Vernal RMP.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD383 (SO32a)	There is no analysis of the impacts on RFD or socioeconomic impacts from the proposed Nine Mile Canyon SRMA.	There is no requirement in NEPA to do the detailed analysis that the commenter demands. This is outside the scope of the RMP and EIS. Section 4.12 of the PRMP/FEIS states: "If impacts to some aspect of the socioeconomic situation are not mentioned in this analysis, then a negligible effect should be assumed."	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD88	In Alternative A, sections of Nine Mile Creek are proposed not to be identified as suitable for inclusion in the Wild & Scenic River System. There appears to be an error in the description of the first section discussed. Nine Mile Creek between the Green River and the Duchesne County line is not in Duchesne County. The outstanding ORVs identified for this section are not dependent on the river for their existence and not directly river-related as required in IM 2004-196. There is lack of detailed analysis of the need for a WSR designation, how the ORVs meet the above analysis, what management prescription will be applied and impacts on current development leases or permits. Alternative A is the only acceptable alternative, as lack of analysis, location and need to protect the ORV fail to support designation. The ORVs used to support designation have other laws or regulations to protect them or are currently protected.	The statements in question should reference the portion of Nine Mile Creek in Duchesne and Uintah counties, from the Green River to the Duchesne-Carbon County Line. Under Alternatives C and E the river segment would be found suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. Chapter 2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify that suitable rivers/river corridors will be managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classifications, and free-flowing nature. Specific resource allocations and management prescriptions within and outside of eligible river corridors are shown on alternative maps, whether or not such information is described in the wild and scenic river section of Chapter 2.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD89	It is proposed to designate 98,000 acres in Nine Mile Canyon as an ACEC. As written the alternative proposed here fails to clearly show that the Lears Canyon ACEC is included in the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC proposed in Alternative C and D.	Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environment Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show that Lears Canyon ACEC is a separate and not part of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC for all alternatives.	X
Uintah,	G-24	SD90	There is no analysis of the need to retain the existing	The analysis and rationale for the designation of	

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Daggett, and Duchesne Counties			<p>ACECs. The requirement in BLM manual 1613.21(A)(I) for reconsideration of existing is not met by the brief comment at 3.14.1.1.1 where it states “Based on a current analysis of the areas, the present designations have been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will be carried forward as ACECs in the Vernal RMP.” This analysis, if it exists, should be presented in the draft for analysis and disclosure.</p>	<p>ACECs in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried</p>	

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				forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD91	Management decisions [for ACECs] must be disclosed in the DEIS/RMP.	ACEC management plans will be developed subsequent to the RMP and the designation of ACECs through the Record of Decision.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD92	At Section 3.14.2.9 the draft discusses the Nine Mile Canyon expansion ACEC but does not disclose the values to be protected, the impacts on existing development, leases and permits.	<p>The final sentence of Section 3.14.2.9 of the DRMP/DEIS identifies the values to be protected as "significant cultural resources, special status plant species, and high quality scenery."</p> <p>The analysis of impacts from the expansion were included in those disclosed in Chapter 4 for Alternative C, which is the only alternative under which the expansion would be implemented.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD93	The DEIS fails to analyze management decisions [for the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC] to insure they are the least restrictive yet protect identified and substantiated values as required by EPCA.	Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the relevance and importance of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD94	On page G-8, Table 1, Relevance and Importance Summary, all areas list the values needing protection as Fremont, Ute, Archaic Rock Art and Structures, and Special Status Plant Habitat. There are current laws and regulations that protect these values plus management prescriptions proposed in this DEIS/RMP. It is likely that these are the reason for the condition of existing values, not the ACEC. The fact that these values are currently protected is not analyzed in the draft as well as the threat of irreparable damage. This lack of recognition of existing protections, and analysis of impact of the proposed designation on oil and gas development and other resources, and uses, renders	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	

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			all alternatives presented here as unacceptable.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD95	ACECs proposed here must be analyzed, impacts disclosed, and an alternative not to designate proposed. Such analysis and disclosure must include management prescription carried forward from the Diamond Mountain RMP and those that will be applied in this RMP.	See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD96	The Goals and Objectives at 2.4.11.1 are proper uses of an SRMA, however, the guidelines at 2.4.11.2.1 and 2.4.11.2.2 step outside these goals and objectives, and are not proper use of an SRMA. SRMAs are not for the purpose of enforcement of rangeland standards or the management of resource development. The issues of light and sound should be addressed in NEPA analysis of a proposed project not in the RMP. It should be made clear throughout the text that all SRMA management will be limited to those presented in 2.4.11.1 and that SRMAs are for the management of recreation to protect other resources and not the protection of other resources.	The management actions related in Table 2.1 (Recreation Resources) is consistent with the BLM's policy on recreation management and are directly related to proper management of SRMAs. Although SRMA identification is not, in and of itself, an enforcement tool for rangeland standards, the BLM policy is to manage recreation on Bureau lands, both within and outside of SRMAs, within parameters consistent with Rangeland Health Standards. Establishing general parameters related to issues of light and sound intrusion around a nationally designated monument (for which recreational opportunity is a primary component) surrounded by BLM lands is consistent with the BLM's overall management goals and with SRMA identification.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD97	There is no analysis of the need to expand the size of the SRMA. It should be limited to areas that have considerable recreational use and not expanded to areas receiving casual use.	The decision to expand the size of the SRMA under two of the alternatives was made during alternative development in response to identified issues and public comment on cultural resources.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD98	The DEIS/RMP fails to address the impacts of individual and collective special designations placed on this area. The impacts to RFD was not analyzed or disclosed except for a collective listing of acres and well numbers affected. There is no discussion that this area has high potential for oil & gas. Additionally, EPCA and guidelines providing for its incorporation into	The Mineral Potential Report and Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario discuss the potential for oil and gas development in the planning area. The information in these documents was considered during alternative development.	

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			<p>an RMP provides that management restrictions must be the least restrictive while providing protections where it is documented that protection is needed. This analysis has not been done. There are areas of NSO located in VRM III & IV that are NSO for oil and gas with no apparent reason for the restriction. NSOs are proposed in Nine Mile Canyon without analysis of impacts or consideration of existing rights and existing development. The layering of special designations in the Canyon is an attempt to manage the area to a non-impairment standard and to circumvent multiple-use.</p>	<p>Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS explains how the EPCA was incorporated during the planning process of the RMP</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD48</p>	<p>The apparent loss of focus of the BLM on the statutory rationale for an ACEC becomes important because in Handbook Section 1613.1, the characteristics of an ACEC are discussed. The first subsection (Section 1613.11) discusses the need for "relevance" and "importance," and the second (Section 1613.12) discusses the requirement for special management attention. Again, however, the regulatory requirement to discuss the need for special management attention does not focus on the statutory requirement to "protect and prevent irreparable damage" to resources; rather it only speaks to the need to "protect" the important and relevant values. This loss of focus has been carried through the entire DEIS/RMP from the proposed alternative through affected environment and into analysis.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD49</p>	<p>State statute requires that the BLM analyze the required relevant and important values of an ACEC on a regional basis, analyze the need to "protect and prevent irreparable damage to those relevant and important values" from activities which may occur in the area, requires the BLM to explain the need for "special" management for the ACEC and explain how this management is different from normal BLM</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD12-G-9</p>	

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			management and authority, that the protections proposed by the required “special management” do not duplicate or constitute simple restatements of protections afforded by other federal and State laws, and contain other analytical and procedural requirements. (See Utah Code 63-38d-401(8)(c).		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD50	The discussion of ACEC management (page 4-203) contains the general statement that ACECs would benefit from the “special management attention they would receive if designated.” Special management attention is more than a coincidental benefit that flows from designation. It is a fundamental prerequisite to designation. The BLM must make a determination for each potential and proposed ACEC that special management attention is required to protect the identified relevant and important values. It has failed to do so in the DEIS/RMP.	<p>The FLPMA states that in developing land use plans the BLM shall give priority to the designation and protection ACEC. The BLM gave full consideration to the designation and preservation ACEC during this land use planning process. Nominations for ACECs from the public were specifically solicited during the scoping period. A total of 35 ACEC nominations were received and the relevance and importance of each were determined. Fourteen of the ACEC nominations were found to meet both the criteria of relevance and importance and all these were included for special management as proposed ACECs in Alternative B.</p> <p>The BLM Manual 1613.23 states that “After completing the analysis of the effects of each alternative, the manager selects the preferred plan alternative which best meets the planning criteria and the guidance applicable to the area. The preferred alternative reflects the BLM’s proposals for designation and management of ACECs.” The BLM has full discretion in the selection of ACECs for the various alternatives. In the selection of the preferred alternative, a comparison of estimated effects and trade-offs associated with the alternative leads to development and selection of the preferred alternative.</p>	

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				<p>Should BLM choose not designate potential ACECs, BLM Manual 1613 .33E provides direction in this process. Rational for not proposing designation of a potential ACEC in the preferred alternative must be provided, that is, the reasons for the decision not to provide special management attention must be clearly set forth. Such reasoning may include:</p> <p>Special management attention is not required to protect the potential ACEC because standard or routine management prescriptions are sufficient to protect the Relevance and Importance Values from risks or threats of damage/degradation.</p> <p>The area is being proposed for designation under another statutory authority such as wilderness and would require no further management attention.</p> <p>The manager has concluded that no special management attention is justified either because of exposure to risks of damage to threats to safety is greater if the area is designated or there are no reasonable special management actions which can be taken to protect the resource from irreparable damage or to restore it to a viable condition.</p> <p>BLM ACEC guidance (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; Policy and Procedures Guidelines, 45 FR 57318, 57319 (Aug. 27, 1980)) allows a manager to exercise discretion not to protect a potential ACEC through ACEC designation, but that decision has to be documented through the planning process. If the manager</p>	

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				<p>decides to provide the necessary protection through another form of special management, the documentation will include specifics of the special management proposed. Rationale for all ACEC decisions will be provided in the Record of Decision and supported by analysis in the EIS. If the decision is to allocate the resources with relevant and important values, in whole or in part, to another use which would in result in damage or loss to such resource, the authorized officer must first find that there is an overriding public need for such other use; that the public benefits of such other use outweigh the public benefits of use appropriate with ACEC designation, and that such other use will best meet the present and future needs of the American people. In addition, any allocations to such other use will include all feasible planning and management to prevent, minimize, mitigate or restore any consequent damage to the resource, and these requirements will be specified in the documentation.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD51	On page 4-203, the draft RMP indicates that the lack of designation of some potential ACECs may place the relevant and important values "at some risk of irreparable damage during the life of the plan." This statement is completely backward. BLM must make a	The BLM followed the ACEC designation process outlined in BLM Manual 1613 and analyzed the implications of designating or not designating areas as ACEC. In particular, in Chapter 4 of the DRMP/DEIS analyzes the impacts of ongoing and	

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			<p>determination that a threat of irreparable damage from some authorized multiple-use activity exists, and is directed toward the identified relevant and important value in order to complete the fundamental requirements for an ACEC. The identification of required threat of irreparable damage cannot be supported from simple hypothetical musings postulating that the lack of the very management structure (ACEC) BLM is trying to justify may result in damage to the resources.</p>	<p>future uses on the relevance and importance values associated with potential ACECs under all alternatives. Appendix G of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS provides information concerning the interdisciplinary team review.</p> <p>The rationale for designation of individual ACECs carried forward into the PRMP/FEIS will be provided in the Record of Decision (ROD). The analysis that forms the basis of the rationale for the final decision to designate or not designate an ACEC can be found in Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD52</p>	<p>BLM Manual section 1613.22 requires the BLM to consider whether the values within the proposed and potential ACEC are already afforded protection through other designations. BLM Manual Section 1613.33E allows that BLM may decline to designate an ACEC “because standard or routine management prescriptions are sufficient to protect the resource or value from risks or threats of damage/degradation,” which is clarified to mean that “the same management prescriptions would have been provided for the area in the absence of the important and relevant values.” Examples of values that have been used to justify need for protection management are the special cultural resources, riparian and wetland areas and special status species. The counties cannot find any analysis of these factors within the draft RMP and EIS. In fact the majority of the relevant and important values identified are already afforded such protection.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD53</p>	<p>BLM Manual Section 1613.22(A)(2) requires the BLM to consider the value of other resources when considering the protection of important and relevant</p>	<p>See Responses to Comment SD24-G-22 and Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	

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Counties			values of a proposed and potential ACEC. The intent is that BLM balance the various multiple-uses within the proposed RMP, and consider whether the need for other multiple-uses in the area "outweigh" the need for the ACEC. The discussions in the draft RMP and EIS do not analyze any such balancing, and do not discuss the potential benefits of ACEC designation versus other resource uses for any of the potential and proposed ACECs. The impacts on RFD are not disclosed to a level that such analysis could be made.	The projected RFD for each alternative accounts for restrictions resulting from closures associated with special designations, special status species protections, and other resource program decisions.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD54	The majority of the ACEC boundaries extend well beyond the boundaries of what is reasonable to protect the relevant and important values identified.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD55	The counties are concerned that the BLM views potential and proposed ACECs as convenient vehicles to generally focus agency management attention on an area, rather than a very focused management tool with strict criteria for creation of particular concern is that most of these areas mirror proposed WSAs.	<p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation</p>	

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				because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD56	The discussions concerning potential recommendations for addition to the Wild and Scenic River System in the draft RMP and EIS are confusing, contradictory and incomplete, and do not meet the requirements of federal or state law or BLM policy and direction. The counties believe it is imperative that the BLM properly disclose the reasons and rationale for determinations of eligibility and suitability for proposed additions to the NWSRS, and to fully meet the requirements of state and federal law in doing so.	Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD57	<p>The counties are concerned that the designation of stream segments as "Wild & Scenic" could jeopardize the ability of local communities, industry, farmers, Indian tribes, and other water users to appropriate and develop water and to get change applications approved in order to meet their future water needs. Fundamentally, the counties are concerned that Wild & Scenic River designations would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. limit the ability of communities to develop water needed for future growth 2. limit additional industrial growth including oil shale development 	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			3. limit additional agricultural growth 4. affect water right settlements with the Northern Ute Tribe 5. affect completion of the Central Utah Project 6. affect operation of Flaming Gorge Reservoir 7. reduce funding to the Colorado River Salinity Control Program, or affect agreements already in place for the Endangered Fishes Recovery Program		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD58	The counties acknowledge the VFO is required to conduct Wild and Scenic Rivers studies as part of the RMP process. However, the counties also understand and support the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's standards of classification, eligibility and suitability and the requirement for proper analysis in the assignment of such designations.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD59	State plans, as outlined by State law (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a) through (b)), expand upon the requirements of the WSR Act by delineating the necessary analysis which must be conducted on river segments considered for possible inclusion in the NWSRS. These state requirements are not in opposition to the federal requirements, but are designed to fully flesh out studies that the federal agencies should perform, in order to assure that the full and complete nature of the proposal is made public. State law expands upon the requirements for study by requiring that river segments proposed for inclusion in the NWSRS contain water at all times, that the river segment contain an outstandingly remarkable value which is significant within a physiographic regional context, that the rationale and justification for the determination of the outstanding value is fully disclosed, all segments considered eligible are evaluated for suitability of	The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary	

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			<p>designation, a “suitable” or “not suitable” decision is made for each segment, and that studies of the effects of designation on uses within the river corridor, and upstream and downstream from the corridor are analyzed and disclosed.</p>	<p>to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD60</p>	<p>State law requires the BLM to fully disclaim any rights to water in the segments recommended for inclusion in the NWSRS as a result of adoption of the final Resource Management Plan. (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a)(viii)c)). Although there is language on page 4-210 which discusses in-stream flows, this language does not address this State statutory requirement directly. Additionally, the paragraph at the top of page 2-28 which states that the BLM will develop additional and maintain existing water rights” is unsupported. We suggest that the BLM provide more detail and specifics for this statement, and more affirmative language clearly disclaiming any water rights.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD61</p>	<p>We have concerns regarding the language at page 4-210 which passively mentions the Colorado River Compact. Under the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact, Utah is allotted a depletion of 1,369,000 acre-feet per year from the Colorado River system. Obviously, the Compact is of major significance to the state and any actions that may affect the compact are of concern. Utah Code §63-38d-401(8)(a)(x)(A)and(B) require clear demonstration that including rivers in the NWSRS and terms and conditions for managing such rivers will not impair or otherwise interfere with interstate compacts.</p>	<p>Section 13(e) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act says:</p> <p>“Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by any States which contain any portion of the national wild and scenic rivers system.”</p>	

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Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD62	We are concerned that the BLM is not stating, in a full and complete manner, the authority for protection of river segments while studies pursuant to Section 5(d) of the Act are underway and protection until Congress may act upon any recommendations made in planning documents pursuant to BLM planning authority.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD63	The draft RMP indicates on page 2-29 that “new river segments found suitable” would be managed in accordance with the “Wild and Scenic River Act to prevent non-impairment of outstandingly remarkable values.” We do not find the term “non-impairment” in either the Act or BLM policy direction. The Wild and Scenic Rivers guidelines of federal agencies indicate that Section 10(a) of the Act is interpreted to provide for a “nondegradation and enhancement policy for all designated river areas.” However, this provision does not apply to rivers found suitable for recommendation during planning processes. The counties are concerned the statement of management found on page 2-29 is too simplistic, doesn’t meet the intent of the statements found on page 3-84 or page 4-210, and fails to give the stakeholders or the public sufficient notice of criteria or process the BLM intends to employ as part of the proposed management for the river segments determined to be suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. We request that the BLM revise the document to address these concerns.	Actions Common to all for Wild and Scenic Rivers have been moved to Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS. The Actions Common to All have been revised to more clearly define how BLM intends to manage segments determined suitable as a result of this planning process. The correct phrasing should be “prevent impairment” instead of “prevent non-impairment.”	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD64	Table 2.3, page 2-57, contains no information regarding the rationale related to wild and scenic river considerations, nor proposed protective management, for any of the various segments listed in the table. The counties request that the BLM revise the RMP to address these concerns.	See Response to Comment SD24-G-25,G-1.	X
Uintah,	G-25	SD65	The discussion of Upper and Lower segments of the	The Upper and Lower Green River Segments were	

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Daggett, and Duchesne Counties			<p>Green River in the draft RMP is incomplete. BLM assumes that the rationale, findings and protective management identified in the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs, completed in the 1980's still applies. Numerous significant recreation related facilities (i.e. campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, vehicle parking), and other types of development, are now present along the Green River corridor, particularly the Upper segment. Much of this development has occurred since the Diamond Mountain RMP was completed and the ROD was signed. This development may affect not only the determination of suitability for these segments, but the current classification of "scenic" for the segment as well. The counties oppose simply carrying over the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River as recommended additions to the NWSRS from the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs. The counties believes that the BLM must consider all new information which has developed since the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs were finalized, to determine whether the segment still qualifies and should still be recommended, and to meet the requirements of the State law.</p>	<p>identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p> <p>"In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values..."</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD66	<p>Table 5 includes "[m]anageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values" as a "Suitability Consideration." However, in the "Consideration Applied" column which is supposed to provide the information about manageability, the document simply states "[m]anageability ... and other means of protecting values would be extrapolated from the impact analysis for the Vernal RMP/EIS." This analysis goes nowhere as an explanation, and is</p>	<p>Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.</p>	X

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			inadequate to meet the requirements of Federal law and BLM Manual 8351, and further, is not supported by the impact analysis information presented on pages 4-210 through 4-215.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD67	<p>The draft RMP provides only cursory acknowledgment of the White River Dam project and fails to adequately represent its significance, and characterizes the impacts of an eligibility or suitability determination, and associated “protective management” on the proposed project in a contradictory manner. Statements found on pages 4-212 and 4-213 illustrate the cursory analysis, as follows: “...a suitable decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with the continuation of an existing permit for a dam site” and “[t]he suitability decision for Segment 1 of the White River would result in the discontinuance of the existing permit for the dam site.” The White River is also described as part of Alternative D, on page 2-57, as follows: “[u]nder this alternative, suitability findings would not be made and eligibility would continue with BLM applying protective management to the free flowing nature, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classification of the river.” The discussion of Alternative D on page 4-214, reaffirms that Segment 1 of the White River “would remain eligible.” However, in a contradictory manner, the discussion also states, “Segment 1 has been identified for a potential dam site.” Subsequently, the last paragraph on page 4-214 concludes the description of Alternative D, as follows: “Under this alternative, the continued eligibility decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with continuance of the existing permit for the dam site. Because this permit would continue under this alternative, the free-flowing nature of Segment 1 would not be maintained and this segment</p>	<p>Alternatives B and D are part of the range of alternatives. There is an existing right of way for a dam on the White River in segment 1. Segment 1 was carried forward for analysis purposes under the wild and scenic river situation.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	X

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			would no longer be eligible as a Wild and Scenic River.” Further, Appendix C, Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification and Review does not include any information regarding the White River Dam Project.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD68	On pages 4-211 and 4-212, the discussion of Alternative A contains contradictory statements. For example, on page 4-211, the RMP states that “where mineral leasing [is] allowed with standard stipulations or timing and controlled surface use, or where other mineral development would be allowed within the corridor of the White River (Segments 1 and 3) the outstandingly remarkable values of these rivers would be at risk.” Segment 1 of the White River is addressed again under this same alternative, at page 4-212, which states that “the White River (Segments 1 and 2) would largely be protected from disturbance related to mineral development by either being closed to mineral leasing or by no surface occupancy stipulations.” Based on this information, Segment 1 of the White River is both “at risk” and “largely protected” from mineral development under Alternative A. The same language, and thus the same apparent contradiction, exists in the discussion of Alternative C. No information, which offers any clarity, exists elsewhere in Chapters 2, 3 or 4 of the RMP. The counties request that the RMP be revised to correct these issues concerning the White River.	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD69	The discussion of Alternative B on page 4-213 includes the following statement, “If acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek are grazed, the outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values would be more at risk than with Alternatives A and C”. Unfortunately, nowhere in the draft RMP and EIS is there other mention of this apparent concern, or other information that would	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.	X

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			enable the reviewer to grasp its relative significance. We strongly object to this unsupported assertion that grazing threatens the ORVs in the area, especially on lands that may be acquired. Grazing can be managed to protect cultural and riparian values. The BLM needs to carefully explain the potential difficulties of this area, and analyze them in terms of proper mitigation, rather than making unsupported blanket statements such as this. In addition, the discussion of Alternative A at pages 4-211 and 4-212, contains no reference to any “acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek.”		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD70	As a matter of clarification, the document, at page S-3, refers to sections of rivers, ranging from one to six rivers, which are recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation. Throughout the remainder of the document, the discussion of wild and scenic rivers refers to segments of rivers, rather than separate individual rivers. The confusion is immediately apparent when the reader looks to Table S.3, as directed by the text on page S-3. Clarity could be achieved by indicating the number of segments associated with the rivers, i.e., “Alternative C ... recommends 9 segments of six rivers.”	Table S.3 of the Executive Summary in the PRMP/FEIS has been corrected and the issue clarified regarding the number of rivers and river segments.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD71	The information at page 2-29 does not fully characterize proposed interim management of WSRs, because the discussion of management of eligible segments, found at page 3-84, is not presented here. We recommend that information similar to that found at page 3-84 be included at page 2-29.	Chapter 2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to be consistent with the information found in Section 3.14.3.2 regarding WSRs.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD72	The information presented in Table 2.3, at page 2-57, does not include the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River. Additionally, the descriptions of the Alternatives, in Table 2.3, should reflect either a finding of “suitable,” or a finding of “non-suitable,” as BLM	The Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are discussed in Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives, where it states:	

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			policy directs. (See BLM Manual 8351.33A).	<p>“Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative classifications until such time that a designation decision is made.”</p> <p>Also as stated in Appendix C, determination of whether or not each eligible segment is suitable will be made in the Record of Decision for the Vernal RMP.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD73	The RMP, at Table 2.3 and elsewhere, must include information regarding management of segments found to be “non-suitable,” as directed by Manual Section 8351.53B, which states “[f]or river segments determined nonsuitable in the RMP, the river shall be managed in accordance with the management objectives as outlined in the RMP.”	The management objectives for the RMP are outlined in Chapter 2 Management Common to All. All segments would be managed under riparian objectives.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD74	Table 2.5 Summary of Impacts, at page 2-99, does not adequately characterize the impacts associated with wild and scenic river recommendations. The counties suggest that the impacts be more fully described.	The impacts of special designations, including wild and scenic rivers, on each resource program are discussed in Chapter 4.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD75	The draft correctly lists the purposes for which an SRMA designation would be used. SRMAs are for the purpose of managing recreational activities. Throughout the draft, SRMAs have been used to place restrictions on other resources and permitted uses. In Brown’s Park an SRMA was used to justify a VRM I. This has been accomplished without an analysis of need or impacts or even discussion on the specific goal of the SRMA.	The West Cold Springs and the Diamond Breaks WSAs are protected by VRM class 1. This is not associated with a SRMA identification.	
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-25	SD76	In looking at Figures 21 through 24, one immediately notices that ACECs and SRMAs are proposed for the	Definitions of SRMAs and ACECs are provided in the Glossary. Additional description of SRMAs is	

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Duchesne Counties			same geographic areas. The draft RMP and EIS does not define the reasons for the proposed SRMAs, nor the functional difference between an ACEC and an SRMA.	provided in Chapter 3.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD77	This section lists some of the things that would be included in an integrated activity plan for recreation. The draft RMP does not discuss what would constitute the remaining portion of the integrated activity plan. Does the plan only integrate recreational activities, or does the plan propose to consider other resource uses?	Table 2.1 (Recreation Resources) of the PRMP/FESI is related to recreation goals and objectives and; therefore, correctly lists possibilities, but does not limit those possibilities, for comprehensive integrated activity level planning.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD78	Page 4-143 discusses the possibility of closing some SRMA areas to mineral leasing and establishing no-surface occupancy zones in others. It states that closing SRMAs to mineral leasing would have direct, long-term, beneficial impacts on recreation resources by preserving natural, undisturbed qualities of these recreation areas. Does closing the areas to leasing go beyond SRMA management prescriptions? Page 4-52 states "all SRMAs would be managed according to the philosophy of multiple-use." Can the recreation goals described here be accomplished without no-surface occupancy stipulations? Does this conflict with the policy directives of EPCA and the Presidents National Energy Policy?	<p>Closures of portions of SRMAs are related to one of two factors: WSA lands within SRMAs and areas to be managed for primitive recreation opportunities, including associated high scenic value. A comparison of Figures 11-14 and 21 will shown that the vast majority of proposed SRMA areas are open to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy stipulations. The BLM would only enact closures or non-standard stipulations where opening an area to leasing or leasing under standard stipulations would be incompatible with other resource values and management goals for the area. The BLM believes the SRMA alternatives and accompanying stipulations are consistent with EPCA and the NEP.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9, concerning a range of reasonable alternatives.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne	G-25	SD79	The counties object to the proposed areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) when such proposals will impact forage allocations to livestock or grazing	Special designations would not alter livestock grazing. Management of livestock grazing in areas of special designations would be consistent with the	

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Counties			<p>use. First, the expansions are not documented. Second, the expansions are justified based on wildlife and/or wildlife habitat for big game species, which are numerous. These factors alone do not merit establishment or expansion of ACEC's. If the RMP were to assure current land users, especially livestock permittees that the ACEC will not be managed to the detriment of grazing, it would be less problematic.</p>	<p>management provisions outlined in Chapter 2, Table 2.3, Appendix F, and Appendix L.</p> <p>Also, see Appendix G for information on the relevant and important values considered for each proposed ACEC.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SO21	<p>The draft attempts but falls short of analyzing the socioeconomic impacts of Lands and Realty, Forage, Minerals, and Recreation and OHV decisions. Notably missing is an economic analysis of the lost shared mineral revenue from federal lands that have an economic impact on the community as well as other mineral sharing programs within the state. Socioeconomic impacts must be reanalyzed and the results used to reassess impacts of proposed management decisions and a preferred alternative selected based on this new analysis.</p>	<p>The anticipated socioeconomic impacts of each alternative can be found in Section 4.12.3 and its subsections. Further qualitative and quantitative clarifications have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	SD115	<p>The Ute Tribe is evaluating specific areas on Reservation lands for possible designation as Tribal Wilderness Areas, including but not limited to the lands south of Township 13 South, S.L.M. The RMP/EIS should include the following tribal stipulation in areas of potential surface disturbance on tribal lands:</p> <p>All lands on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation may be subject to additional future restrictions, i.e., Tribal Wilderness Designation.</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the</p>	

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				<p>adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>The Vernal RMP only addresses split estate issues such as the Hill Creek Extension, which are Tribal surface and Federal minerals.</p> <p>Discussions have been held between the BLM and Tribal representatives concerning split estate issues on the Hill Creek Extension. Maps and comments have been provided by the Tribe that illustrates surface management concerns for the leasing of the Federal mineral estate. The maps illustrating surface resource impacts were used in analyzing the appropriate category and stipulations for the leasing of the Federal mineral estate.</p> <p>Necessary information as to the area that may be proposed for additional future restrictions has not been provided, so it cannot be included in the RMP decisions at this time. In the future, should the Ute Tribe decide to provide differing surface use restrictions other than what has already been provided, that would not impact the management of existing leases. Future leases may be impacted after a plan amendment was completed to address the impacts to the mineral resources managed by BLM.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-27</p>	<p>SD80</p>	<p>Throughout the DEIS/RMP the outstanding remarkable values listed for this section of [the Lower Green] river are recreation and fish, yet the tentative classification for this segment of river is "scenic". A tentative classification of "recreational" is the only one supported by the eligibility finding and suitability analysis.</p>	<p>Recreation as a value and a recreational designation for a wild and scenic river are not necessarily synonymous. Viewing the scenery is considered a passive form of recreation. The Final EIS carries forward the decision from the Diamond Mountain RMP ROD.</p>	

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Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD81	<p>This segment of the river should be reanalyzed for suitability due to the flawed analysis and in light of recent decisions regarding management for the segment of the river south of T12S. Here it was provided that the river adjoining the Naval Oil Shale Reserve (NOSR) would not be managed as Wild & Scenic. This was done in an agreement with Department of Interior and ratified by Congress.</p> <p>It was recently agreed by the Secretary of Interior and ratified by Congress that on the river segment adjoining NOSR lands to the south of the subject segment, that 1/4 mile was adequate to protect such values as proposed by this ACEC.</p>	<p>The area to which the commenter refers is well south of the VFO's proposed ACEC/WSR for the Lower Green River.</p> <p>This area is outside the scope of the Vernal RMP as it relates to lands not managed by BLM.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD82	The attributes of both the Upper and Lower sections of the river are the same with the possibility of the Naval Oil Shale Reserve being even more remote than the area proposed suitable in the Lower Green segment.	See Response to Comment SD81-G-27, concerning the Naval Oil Shale Reserve.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD83	On page 55, Table 2.3 Alternatives, Special Designations, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - it is proposed to manage both sides of the Lower Green (line of sight) up to ½ mile as an ACEC to protect high value scenic resources and riparian ecosystems.	See Response to Comment SD81-G-27.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD84	It was recently agreed by the Secretary of Interior and ratified by Congress that on the river segment adjoining NOSR lands to the south of the subject segment, that 1/4 mile was adequate to protect such values as proposed by this ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD81-G-27.	
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-27	SD85	The DEIS/RMP contains no analysis that indicates this subject area is threatened by irreparable damage and	See Responses to Comments SD19-G-9 and SD51-G-25.	

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Duchesne Counties			that the riparian ecosystems are unique to the region, or even the immediate area. Meaningful analysis of impacts on RFD and socioeconomics are missing.	<p>The RFD scenarios described for each alternative incorporate potential reductions based upon restrictions related closing areas for minerals exploration and development, whether for ACEC designation or other allocation.</p> <p>The impacts analysis for socioeconomics has been expanded and clarified in Chapter 4 of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD86	Analyze and then rewrite these alternatives including ones not to designate.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD87	The alternatives as presented are clearly an attempt to manage this area to a non-impairment standard and circumvent multiple-use.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Dinda Evans	I-1	SD1	Areas proposed for wilderness in America's Redrock Wilderness Act should be closed to oil and gas leasing.	<p>The BLM's authority for managing lands to protect or enhance wilderness characteristics comes directly from FLPMA Section 202 (43 U.S.C. §1712). This section of BLM's organic statute gives the Secretary of the Interior authority to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield. Nothing in this section constrains the Secretary's authority to manage lands as necessary to "achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences." (FLPMA, Section 202(c)(2) (43 U.S.C. §1712(c)(2)).) Further, FLPMA makes it clear that the term "multiple use" means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land and that the Secretary can "make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of</p>	

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				<p>these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . ." (FLPMA, section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c)).) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including wilderness character management, amongst the various resources in a way that provides uses for current and future generations.</p> <p>In addition, the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) directs BLM to "identify decisions to protect or preserve wilderness characteristics (naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation). Include goals and objectives to protect the resource and management actions necessary to achieve these goals and objectives. For authorized activities, include conditions of use that would avoid or minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics."</p>	
Dinda Evans	I-1	SD2	Do not designate any roads inside proposed wilderness areas.	See above Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Donald Lintner	I-13	SD222 (SD-QQ)	The expansion of the Lower Green River ACEC is not justified. The importance criteria given in the draft RMP for the Lower Green River Expansion states that the relevant values "have substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary and unique." However, the document fails to mention which or any of the qualities that make this area qualify for a special designation.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Ross Tocher	I-22	SD189	BLM has acknowledged 328,000 acres (17% of the	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	

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		(SD-J)	planning area) have wilderness characteristics or are likely to meet that standard and they are shown as such in the draft. 2 years ago Secretary Norton dropped some of those lands from interim management protection but said BLM could use other authorities to protect them. I do not see that protection in the draft plan.		
John R. Watson	I-26	SD188 (SD-I)	I urge that the following streams be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River as they contain outstanding natural qualities: Argyle Creek, Bitter Creek, Evacuation Creek, Lower, Middle & Upper Green, Upper, Nine Mile Creek, and White River.	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-3 and SD8-G-9.	
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO108	The DEIS projects that oil and gas development under the preferred alternative would result in 215,000 new jobs being created. Given that the total employment in the planning area is about 23,000, this would represent almost a ten-fold increase in employment over the next 20 years. That would be an oil and gas boom of monumental proportions.	Based on the data available to the BLM, the socioeconomic section has been rewritten in the FEIS. See Section 4.12.3.1 for explanation of employment numbers. See also comment responses SO31 and SO54.	X
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO109	Analysis of how mineral extraction employment has actually changed with oil and gas drilling in the Uinta Basin indicates that about one annual job is associated with a new well being drilled and about one operation and maintenance job is associated with every 6 wells brought into production. The DEIS, in contrast, estimates that there are 30 jobs associated with each well drilled and 24 jobs associated with every 6 wells brought into production. The job impact estimates based on the actual experience in the Uinta Basin used in the report (Power 2005: The Economic Impact of Expanded Oil and Gas Development in Utah's Uinta Basin) used to prepare my comments are confirmed by studies elsewhere in Utah and the Mountain West. There is no evidence to support the DEIS oil and gas	Based on the data available to the BLM, the socioeconomic section has been rewritten in the FEIS. See responses to comments SO31 and SO54.	X

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			job multipliers.		
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO110	<p>What is relevant to the evaluation of the various policy alternatives that the EIS process is supposed to analyze is not the total employment that might be associated with ongoing regional oil and gas development but the incremental changes in employment that result from choosing one management alternative rather than another. Those incremental impacts are much, much smaller because substantial oil and gas development is going to take place no matter which alternative the BLM chooses. Under the "No Action" Alternative (D), for instance, oil and gas development would realize 92 percent of the oil and gas potential that the Preferred Alternative (A) and the maximum development alternative (B) would realize. Thus, the maximum employment impact of a decision coming from the alternatives being considered in the Vernal RMP is actually only about 8 percent of the total impact.</p>	See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO111	<p>Total employment growth associated with the ongoing development of the oil and gas resources in the Uinta Basin will be modest, but significant. An additional 1,430 jobs are projected over the next 20 years. This represents a gain of 5.4 percent in the projected total employment in the two counties in 2025. That is, employment growth in the two counties, instead of growing by about 255 jobs per year, would grow at 330 jobs per year, a net gain of 75 jobs per year or three-tenths of one percent.</p> <p>The incremental impact of different policy alternatives would be much smaller. The alternative that imposes the most restrictions on oil and gas development (C) would reduce the number of wells drilled only slightly,</p>	See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	

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			<p>2.6 percent. Over 20 years, that would reduce oil and gas employment by only about 30 jobs. If the Vernal FO were to protect two times as much land as envisioned in Alternative C by adopting the citizens' alternative "Greater Dinosaur/Bookcliffs Heritage Plan", the reduction in oil and gas jobs over 20 years would be only 70 jobs out of a total projected workforce of 26,000. That would be less than a one-half of one percent reduction.</p>		
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO112	<p>Although school districts in the Uinta Basin collect considerable property tax revenues from oil and gas developments, the Utah state school equalization program largely offsets those oil and gas tax revenues by reducing the payments the state government makes to those school districts. The intent of the Utah school equalization program is to assure that approximately the same resources are available to support the education of a student regardless of how rich or poor the school district's tax base is. Statistical analysis of that program confirms that it is largely successful in offsetting the "windfall" that certain school districts otherwise would receive from the oil and gas developments within their taxing jurisdictions. For that reason, expanded oil and gas development in the Uinta Basin will not dramatically improve the financial condition of local schools.</p>	<p>Contributions to local and state governments have been revised in the FEIS. As a result of the equalization program, BLM did not specifically analyze resource management impacts to local school districts.</p>	X
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO113	<p>County and municipal governments do not benefit from "equalization" program similar to those used for school districts. For that reason, expanded oil and gas development can effectively increase local government revenues. Those impacts, while significant, are quite modest because oil and gas property taxes represent a minority of total property taxes and property taxes represent a minority of local government revenue. For Uintah, Duchesne, and Daggett Counties combined, for</p>	<p>See comment response SO112.</p>	

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			<p>instance, oil and gas property taxes represent about 17 percent of total property taxes and property taxes represent only 20 percent of total local government revenues. As a result, oil and gas property taxes make up only 3.5 percent of local government revenues. Because of this limited role of oil and gas tax revenues in local government budgets, the ongoing expansion of the oil and gas industry in the Uinta Basin will have only modest impacts on local government budgets. Ten years out, the projected expansion would be local government revenues about 5.5 percent.</p>		
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO114	<p>The incremental impact of the various alternatives being considered by the DEIS on local government finance would be extremely small. The most restrictive alternative being considered would only reduce oil and gas development by 2.6 percent compared to the maximum development alternative. That would reduce the annual number of wells drilled by about 8. Instead of 316 wells being drilled each year, 308 would be drilled. Ten years into the future this would reduce county government revenues by \$47,000, about one-tenth of one percent of projected county government budgets at that time. A more balanced management alternative, such as that proposed in the "Greater Dinosaur/Bookcliffs Heritage Plan", that sought to provide more extensive protection for other resource values would have only slightly higher impacts on local government budgets, about two-tenths of one percent.</p>	<p>Regarding the "Greater Dinosaur/Bookcliffs Heritage Plan" the BLM has incorporated elements of this plan in its action alternatives, particularly Alternatives C and E. The BLM has also incorporated several elements of this alternative in its FEIS.</p>	
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO115	<p>Mineral extraction rarely brings prosperity to rural areas. The Uinta Basin is no exception. Despite its heavy commitment to the oil and gas industry, average pay and income lag the statewide averages significantly, employment, income, and population growth are unusually slow, and poverty and unemployment rates are above average. The Uinta</p>	<p>The commenter is correct in stating that average pay and income in the Uintah Basin lag behind the State of Utah as a whole. This lag, however, may not be as significant as the commenter suggests. Data from the State of Utah 2008 Economic Report to the Governor indicate that per capita personal income averaged \$29,769 for the state, \$28,024 for</p>	

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			<p>Basin is not unique in finding that specialization in mineral extraction does not bring economic vitality and prosperity. Elsewhere in eastern Utah, across the nation, and around the world mineral dependent economies perform poorly compared to more diversified economies. The Uinta Basin's own history as well as that of other mineral dependent regions makes clear that continued reliance primarily on mineral extraction will not solve the problems of a lagging economy. "More of the same" is not an economic development strategy for the Basin. Diversification of the economy has to be a crucial aspect of any successful economic development strategy. The Uinta Basin economy is not solely dependent on mineral extraction for economic vitality. The regional economy survived the oil and gas bust in the early 1980s with the non-mineral sectors returning to a significant growth path. The seeds for an ongoing diversification of the Basin's economies are already present. They need to be supported.</p>	<p>Uintah County, and \$28,457 for Duchesne County. Both counties exceeded the state averages for employment and population growth percentages. Although both counties had lower per capita income than the state as a whole, both counties were ahead of most rural counties in Utah.</p> <p>Wages in the oil and gas industry greatly exceed wages in other sectors. The FEIS includes an expanded discussion of the economic impacts of the oil and gas industry in the Uintah Basin.</p> <p>The PRMP/FEIS does not suggest that the Uintah Basin is solely dependent on mineral extraction for economic vitality. The FEIS discusses the economic contributions of other sectors, including tourism and grazing.</p>	
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO116	<p>The limited role that mineral extraction can play and the positive role that landscape amenities can play in supporting sustainable local economic development should be carefully considered by the Vernal FO as it makes its decisions about how to manage the public landscapes of the Uinta Basin. Committing almost 100 percent of the landscape to oil and gas development is highly unlikely to represent a rational economic allocation of that landscape. The principle of diminishing returns would suggest that well before a 100 percent allocation is made to oil and gas development, other landscape values would begin to justify restricting oil and gas development to protect those other important values.</p>	<p>The PRMP/FEIS presents a range of alternatives, ranging from an emphasis on conservation of natural resource and environmental protection (especially Alternative E). The BLM's preferred alternative in the PRMP/FEIS recognizes the importance of the oil and gas industry to the economy of the Uintah Basin, but it does not commit "almost 100%" of the landscape to oil and gas development. The proposed plan will add additional acreage to a more protected status than the preferred alternative.</p>	
Thomas M.	I-33	SO117	Limiting oil and gas development in or adjacent to all of	See comment response SO116.	

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Power			the unique natural landscape features of the Uinta Basin is likely to represent a rational economic strategy. It would protect the resources that are most likely to support the diversification of the local economy while costing very little in the way of lost oil and gas potential. The long-term impact of such a strategy is likely to be positive on employment, income, and local government revenues.		
Thomas M. Power	I-33	SO31	I submit the report entitled The Economic Impact of Expanded Oil and Gas Development in Utah's Uinta Basin as my comment on the draft RMP/EIS.	The most recent State-sponsored study on the impact of oil and gas development in the Uintah Basin has been incorporated.	X
John R. Swanson	I-46	SD103	I urge that each of the following streams be designated a National Wild and Scenic River: Allen Draw, Andersen Hollow, Argyle Creek, Ashley Creek, Beaver Creek, Bender Draw, Big Draw, Big Springs, Big Brush Creek, Birch Creek, Bitter Creek, Blair Draw, Bowery Draw, Castle Peak Creek, Clay Basin Creek, Collier Hole Creek, Cow Creek, Crouse Creek, Crow Creek, Crumb Canyon, Cub Creek, Deep Creek, Diamond Canyon, Dry Fork Creek, Duchesne, Dutch John Canyon, East Cottonwood Canyon, Eight Mile Flat Creek, Evacuation Creek, Ford Creek, Four Mile Creek, Galloway Creek, Garden Creek, Gorge Creek, Goslin Creek, Green River, Grindstone Wash, Halfway Hollow Creek, Jack Canyon, Jackson Creek, Jesse Ewing Canyon, Jones Hole Creek, Jones Hollow, Kettle Creek, Lake Creek, Lambson Draw, Little Davenport Creek, Little Brush Creek, Logge Canyon, Lower Water Hollow, Marshall Draw, Martin Draw, Milk Creek, Mill Canyon, Minnie Maud Creek, Mosby Creek, Nine Mile Creek, O-WI-Yu-Kuts Creek, Pariette Draw, Pigeon Creek, Pinnacle Canyon, Pot Creek, Rat Hole, Red Creek, Rock Creek, Sage Creek, Sand Wash Creek, Sears Creek, Sheep Wash Creek, Simons Creek, Smelter Creek, South Branch Diamond Gulch, Spring	<p>The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate</p>	

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			Creek, Steinaker Creek, Sweet Water Creek, Ten Mile Creek, Tolivers Creek, Twelve Mile Wash Creek, Uinta, Upper Water Hollow, Water Canyon, Wells Draw Creek, West Fork Willow Creek, White River, White Rocks, Willow Spring Draw, Willow Creek (Brown=s Park), Willow Creek (Indian Canyon), and Yellowstone		
Dale Massey	I-47	SO34 (SO-C)	The RMP does not address national security and the national economy. The products produced in the RMP area have extreme national ramifications in security and economical aspects of the US. All the jobs in the RMP area effect jobs all over the United States either in product transported out of the RMP area or necessary products and equipment transported into the RMP area.	The issues of the national economy and national security are outside the scope of this document.	
John R. Swanson	I-50	SD105	I urge that each of the following areas be designated as wilderness: Bitter Creek (77,000 acres), Bitter Creek-P.R. Springs (88,000 acres), Coyote Basin-Coyote Basin (36,000 acres), Coyote Basin-Kennedy Wash (14,000 acres), Coyote Basin-Myton Bench (42,000 acres), Coyote Basin-Shiner (26,000 acres), Coyote Basin-Snake John (33,000 acres), Four Mile Wash (58,000 acres), Middle Green River (9,000 acres), Lower Green River (13,000 acres), White River Corridor (54,000 acres), Nine Mile Canyon (92,000 acres), Main Canyon (114,000 acres), Browns Park (60,000 acres), Red Mountain-Dry Fork (29,000 acres), Lears Canyon (1,650 acres), Red Creek Watershed (30,000 acres), and Pariette Wetlands (14,000 acres).	See Response to Comment SD103-I-46.	
Scott Schew	I-51	SD190 (SD-K)	Some of the proposed actions talk about creating more wilderness areas and ACECs, but we never saw where it addresses improper OHV and other recreation uses within these areas.	The BLM is not proposing to "create" any wilderness areas through the RMP. The BLM will manage existing WSAs and manage for wilderness characteristics on non-WSA lands. Under all action alternatives, OHV use would be	

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				restricted to designated routes and open areas. Please, see Figures 21-28 for illustration of the proposed open, closed, and limited OHV areas relative to areas of special designations under each alternative.	
Scott Schew	I-51	SD191 (SD-L)	Coyote Basin should be managed as the Black-footed Ferret Amendment Plan calls for, not as an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD20-G-25.	
Steven C. Hansen	I-52	SD192 (SD-M)	I urge you to adopt Alternative Cs designation of Nine Mile and Argyle Canyons as an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Steven C. Hansen	I-52	SD193 (SD-N)	We recommend the BLM designate and manage lower Nine Mile Canyon as a "primitive" wilderness area. Alternative A is inadequate in that it leaves Nine Mile Canyon fully open to mineral extraction and disposal in an area proposed for ACEC designation under the same preferred alternative.	See Responses to Comments SD20-G-25 and SD8-G-9.	
Steven C. Hansen	I-52	SD194 (SD-O)	An unwaivable NSO policy within 9 mile canyon as well as Desolation Canyon and Diamond Mountain WSA/WIAs should be implemented.	The BLM is not proposing to "create" any wilderness areas through the RMP. The BLM will manage existing WSAs and manage for wilderness characteristics on non-WSA lands.	
Steven C. Hansen	I-52	SD195 (SD-P)	I encourage you to include Nine Mile Creek and Argyle Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22. Appendix C provides additional information concerning wild and scenic river segments.	
Steven C. Hansen	I-52	SO35 (SO-D)	It is an impediment to Duchesne, Uintah and Carbon Counties, the State of Utah and the American taxpayer in realizing the economic benefits of the fast growing and long lasting heritage tourism industry in this region.	Commenter has not provided any specifics as to where or how the plan's decisions would harm this industry.	
Wayne B. Peters	I-53	SO22	You talk about socioeconomics, and how many jobs, and the amount of revenue coming in, but I think there is a conflict. How much does Tourism bring in to the state? It appeared to me that tourism brought in more money, without all of the social conflicts and damage to	The role of tourism in the economy of the Vernal planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.4, 3.12.3.2.4, 3.12.4.2.3, 4.12.2.3, and 4.12.3.3.	

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			the environment.		
Gregory Gnesios	I-58	SO36 (SO-E)	With the benefit of nearby Dinosaur National Monument, and publicity surrounding the Dinosaur Diamond National Scenic Byway, the public lands around Vernal could be attractive to eco-tourism and could bring increased revenue to the area.	The proposed SRMAs, ACECs, existing WSAs and non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in proximity to the areas that the commenter noted could enhance the recreation experience of local residents and tourists.	
Kacy White	I-63	SD188 (SD-I)	I urge that the following streams be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River as they contain outstanding natural qualities: Argyle Creek, Bitter Creek, Evacuation Creek, Lower, Middle & Upper Green, Upper, Nine Mile Creek, and White River.	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-3 and SD8-G-9.	
Hillary Phelps	I-65	SD196 (SD-Q)	I would like to see the area around the Green River continue to be preserved as wilderness with primitive recreation activities. I support that that the Middle and Lower Green River segments be included in the Wild and Scenic River system. I also urge the protection of the Sand Wash launch area.	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9, SD19-G-22, AND SD20-G-25.	
Aaron Skipwith	I-67	SD3	Include the middle and lower segments of the Green River in the Wild and Scenic River system.	<p>The Lower Green River Segment from the public land boundary south of Ouray to the Carbon County line was identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p>	

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Fred Swanson	I-68	SD197 (SD-R)	I would like to see more of the White River and Green River corridors protected from development, including all roadless areas.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Karl Holzschuh	I-69	SD197 (SD-R)	I would like to see more of the White River and Green River corridors protected from development, including all roadless areas.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Richard Spotts	I-70	SD188 (SD-I)	I urge that the following streams be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River as they contain outstanding natural qualities: Argyle Creek, Bitter Creek, Evacuation Creek, Lower, Middle & Upper Green, Upper, Nine Mile Creek, and White River.	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-3 and SD8-G-9.	
Name Withheld at commentor's request	I-73	SO37 (SO-F)	These are the types of places that bring people like me from out state to visit Utah and spend money there. If the views, open quality of lands, or quiet are destroyed by oil and gas development or motorized vehicles, less of us will visit.	<p>The RMP is not intended to assess impacts to individuals, but to communities or groups. The commenter provides no evidence that the plan's decisions will lead to a decrease in tourism of the sort preferred by the commenter. The nature of alternative formulation in the DEIS attempts to weigh resource conflicts against resource needs, and provides a range of alternatives from an emphasis on conservation to an emphasis on commodity production.</p> <p>The term "multiple use" as defined in the FLPMA means "the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people." This direction indicates that not all uses need to be accommodated in all areas. The DRMP/DEIS includes a detailed evaluation of all options to ensure a balanced approach. This balanced approach will ensure protection of resource values and sensitive resources while allowing opportunities for mineral exploration and production. The</p>	

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				PRMP/FEIS will offer management flexibility to ensure that resource values and uses are protected while allowing for acceptable levels of mineral development.	
John R. Swanson	I-83	SD106	This area contains outstanding biological, scenic, and roadless wilderness attributes of certain national significance and should be established as a preserve to ban off-road vehicles as they destroy soil, water, and air resources and to eliminate oil and gas activities as they decimate wildlife, fish, and plant resources. I urge that each of the following areas, as located only in Utah, be designated as wilderness: Book Cliffs Mountain Browse ISA (670 acres), Bull Canyon (5,100 acres), Daniels Canyon (16,000 acres), West Cold Springs (5,500 acres), Winter Ridge (70,000 acres), Cold Spring Mountain (17,000 acres), Cripple Cowboy (27,000 acres), Desolation Canyon (380,000 acres), Moonshine Draw (6,400 acres), White River (32,000 acres), Wild Mountain (17,000 acres), Bitter Creek (55,000 acres), Bitter Creek/Rat Hole Ridge (24,000 acres), Bourdette Draw (30,000 acres), Diamond Mountain (46,000 acres), Hells Hole Canyon (42,000 acres), Lower Bitter Creek (24,000 acres), Lower Flaming Gorge (33,000 acres), Red Creek Badlands (6,100 acres), Sweetwater Canyon (16,000 acres), and Wolf Point (28,000 acres).	See Response to Comment SD103-I-46.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD214 (SD-II)	43 CFR 1610.7-2 requires potential ACECs to meet test of relevance and importance. Bitter Creek does not meet either requirement. Nothing in this area is so significant or distinctive that it requires an ACEC designation to prevent irreparable damage to important resources. Alternatives A and C do not meet the requirements of the regulation that creates ACECs and should not be considered further.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	

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J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD215 (SD-JJ)	Black-footed ferrets were introduced in Coyote Basin under 10-J status and do not require special protections. The population of prairie dogs is not being threatened by current activities. All other values listed under Alternative A, B or C can be achieved by other means. This proposed ACEC does not meet the test of Relevance under 43 CFR 1610.7-2. Drop from further consideration.	Section 3.14.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify 10j status of black-footed ferrets in Coyote Basin. See Appendix G for additional information on the relevance and importance of this proposed ACEC.	X
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD216 (SD-KK)	Select Alternative A. Alternative C does not meet the requirement of 43 CFR 1610.7-2 for relevance and importance. Resource values purposed for protection can be protected by other means other than ACEC designation.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD217 (SD-LL)	Select Alt B. Do not designate as an ACEC. It may meet the Relevance test, but not Importance.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD218 (SD-MM)	Select Alternative B. Do not designate as an ACEC; manage as an SRMA. The area may meet the Relevance test, but not importance.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD219 (SD-NN)	Select Alternative B.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD220 (SD-OO)	Select Alternative A. This ACEC may meet requirements of Relevance and Importance because damage or destruction of scenic values would be irreparable. Create activity plan now and make it a part of the RMP.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
J.C. Brewer	I-111	SD221 (SD-PP)	Select Alternative A. Main Canyon is not significantly different from the rest of the Book Cliffs area does not contain values that meet the test of importance. None of the values listed under "Relevance" would be irreparably damaged by current activities under current management.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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Mark W. Belles	I-112	SD198 (SD-S)	I wish to identify areas that the BLM has overlooked that merit WSA designation. The areas are as follows: Bull Canyon- 2470 acres north and west of existing WSA, Daniels Canyon- 3100 acres adjacent to existing WSA, Diamond Breaks-4500 acres south of current WSA, Moonshine Draw-2700 acres north of Daniels Canyon WSA	No lands are proposed to be managed as Wilderness or WSA in any alternative of the DRMP/DEIS. However, the impacts of protecting Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics is fully disclosed in Chapter 4 of the DRMP/DEIS. The FLPMA makes it clear that the term "multiple use" means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land and that the Secretary can "make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . ." (FLPMA, Section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c)).) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including wilderness character management, amongst the various resources in a way that provides uses for current and future generations	
John R. Swanson	I-139	SD104	I urge the establishment of Habitat Sanctuary Preserves to save all species, including the following: Black-footed Ferret, Canada lynx, Bald Eagle, Mexican Spotted Owl, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Bonytail, Colorado Pikeminnow, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, Horseshoe Milk Vetch, Graham's Beard Tongue, White River Beard Tongue, Burrowing Owl, Long-billed Curlew, Clay Reed Mustard, Shrubby Reed Mustard, Uintah Basin Hookless Cactus, Ute Ladies Tress, Townsends Big-eared Bat, White-tailed Prairie Dog, Ferruginous Hawk, Greater Sage Grouse, Northern Goshawk, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Roundtail Chub, Park Rockcress, Smooth Green Snake, and Flannelmouth Sucker.	See Response to Comment SD103-I-46.	
Ezra Thomas Jones	I-147	SD188 (SD-I)	I urge that the following streams be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River as they contain outstanding natural qualities: Argyle Creek, Bitter	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-3 and SD8-G-9.	

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			Creek, Evacuation Creek, Lower, Middle & Upper Green, Upper, Nine Mile Creek, and White River.		
Stephen Borton	I-154	SD186 (SD-G)	We support the following designations from Alternative A: Upper Green River-22 miles, Lower Green 30 miles. We support the following designations from Alternative C: White River- 44 mile stretch, Middle Green 36 mile stretch, Nine Mile Creek 13miles.	Comment noted.	
Stephen Borton	I-154	SD199 (SD-T)	If I understand Table 2.2 ACEC properly, then I support Alternative A designation status for Red Mtn/Dry Fork, Lower Green R., Browns Park, and Bitter Creek. I support Alternative C which designates as ACECs the White River, Nine Mile Canyon, and 4 Mile Wash.	Comment noted.	
Kenneth C. Parsons	I-155	SD201 (SD-U)	I would like to speak about the White R. corridor. Should this section (14 miles upstream from UT/CO border to Bonanza Br.) be designated as wild and scenic, it quite likely will begin attracting recreational canoeists in much larger numbers. This in turn will lead to a need to permit the access to the river just to protect it from those who would love to see it. So while I encourage protection of this fragile riparian area in the midst of the desert, I strongly discourage the wild and scenic designation. I feel that the river can be adequately protected by the ACEC designation w/ out the notoriety that would accompany a W&SR designation.	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9, SD19-G-22, AND SD20-G-25.	
Paul J. Ebbert	I-161	SD101	The proposed White River wilderness area is a unique resource in this part of the state: a river that can be canoed safely, even by families. It is a remarkable canyon that deserves protection.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Paul J. Ebbert	I-161	SD102	All the WSA's and areas identified with wilderness characteristics need to be protected until Congress decides to act. Once an area's wilderness qualities are lost, a decision is made by default; a circumstance that	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1 and SD8-G-9.	

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			does not serve the citizens well.		
Nancy Bostick	I-162	SD213 (SD-HH)	There are a number of important areas where the ACEC boundaries, closed to OHV boundaries and Oil and Gas Mineral Resources should be about the same. These areas include Four Mile Wash, White River and Main Canyon ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
Graham Stafford	I-165	SD249 (ASD-5)	BLM should take appropriate actions to protect 720,000 acres of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's (UWC) Citizen Proposed Wilderness Lands -- areas such as Upper Desolation Canyon, Desbrough Canyon, White River, Dragon Canyon, Sweetwater Canyon, Moonshine Draw, and Bull Canyon.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Bryan Wyberg	I-166	SD290 (JSD-34)	BLM should take appropriate action to completely protect the entire 720,000 acres within the Vernal District that are contained in the Utah Wilderness Coalition's Citizen Proposed Wilderness Lands. These lands include Upper Desolation Canyon, Desbrough Canyon, White River, Dragon Canyon, Sweetwater Canyon, Moonshine Draw, and Bull Canyon. BLM recognizes 275,000 acres as having or likely to have wilderness characteristics but offers no alternatives that manage these areas in ways that will effectively protect and enhance their wilderness character. This is an unconscionable abrogation of the agency's responsibilities as stewards of the lands. BLM needs to develop an improved management plan that protects both these 275,000 acres and also those additional acres contained in the Citizens' wilderness proposal.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Bryan Wyberg	I-166	SD291 (JSD-35)	BLM must maintain the wilderness character of these lands undiminished until after Congress addresses the option of wilderness designation of these lands. America's Red Rock Wilderness Act enjoys substantial support in both the House and Senate. This is an issue under congressional consideration now, therefore	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	

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			it is the BLM's responsibility to ensure that the lands under consideration are protected until congress has made its judgment and passed a wilderness act covering the Vernal District's lands.		
Martin D. McGregor	I-168	SD254 (ASD-10)	The Colorado and Green Rivers and probably others be nominated or suggested for designation example (if it's in your area) : Ruby-Horsethief of the Colorado as scenic, Westwater as wild – etc.	Ruby-Horsethief and Westwater are administered by the Moab Field Office.	
Laird Fetzer Hamblin	I-169	SD289 (JSD-33)	Many areas in the VPA have been identified as ACECs. All currently designated ACECs should be continued and all proposed ACECs should be designated. The Nine Mile Canyon ACEC is currently severely adversely affected by oil and gas exploration and extraction. Nine Mile Canyon should be designated, as proposed, to be an Archaeological district on the NRHP.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Susan Potts	I-170	SD249 (ASD-5)	BLM should take appropriate actions to protect 720,000 acres of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's (UWC) Citizen Proposed Wilderness Lands -- areas such as Upper Desolation Canyon, Desbrough Canyon, White River, Dragon Canyon, Sweetwater Canyon, Moonshine Draw, and Bull Canyon.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Bill Robinson	I-173	SD235 (SD-DDD)	The DRMP/DEIS fails to properly address wilderness issues. In the DEIS the BLM claims that they "have the authority to conduct inventories for characteristics associated with the concept of wilderness – and to consider management of these values in its land-use planning process." Pg. 3-87. Despite its claims, Section 201 of FLPMA does not provide the BLM with authority to conduct an inventory of the public lands for the single resource value of wilderness. Based upon BLM inventories and public proposals, the DEIS lists 13 non-WSA areas with wilderness characteristics. DIES pp. 3-87 to 3-88. The BLM claims that on these areas	See comment response SD234.	

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			"management prescriptions may be tailored to restrict OHV use, apply no surface occupancy, or close lands to oil and gas leasing." The BLM must follow FLPMA's mandate of multiple use and sustained yield in managing these non-WSA areas.		
Bill Robinson	I-173	SO41 (SO-L)	The DRMP/DEIS fails to conduct a proper economic analysis. The DRMP/DEIS in this case failed to properly include and assess the environmental impacts on the local economies that would be affected in particular with regard to the effect that reduced livestock grazing will have on the local economy. The alternatives of the DRMP/DEIS, besides the no action alternative, all consider reducing the number of AUMs for livestock, or calls for the reduction of only livestock use of the range. The BLM must consider the economic and historic contribution of ranching and livestock grazing to the local economy and balance that against the harm that will be caused to the economy if that grazing is reduced.	Section 4.12.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to assess the environmental impacts of the local economies. The proposed plan has no reduction in AUM's and is identical to the current situation (the No Action alternative).	X
Bill Robinson	I-173	SO42 (SO-M)	The DRMP/DEIS acknowledges the historic and economic contributions grazing and ranching has on local communities. The DRMP/ DEIS however, is devoid of discussion or analysis of the impacts that reduced or eliminated or retired grazing preferences would have on local economies or on small businesses.	Section 4.12.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to assess the historic and economic impacts of grazing and ranching on local communities.	X
A. John Davis	FLA-1	SD107	The Draft needs to provide a true justification for ACEC's and SRMA's, and limit the areas closed to oil and gas development to those areas where other resource values clearly and demonstrably outweigh the value of resource development.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
A. John Davis	FLA1-1	SO23	The economic analysis is way off the mark on the positive economic contributions of the O&G industry. For instance, companies have budgeted \$800 million in	The commenter does not indicate how the analysis is "way off the mark" or how the projected capital investments of oil and gas companies would change	

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			capital for Utah in the next 12-14 months.	the existing analyses. As such, the BLM cannot respond to this comment.	
Bill Barrett	FLA1-9	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Kaylene Gardner	FLA1-10	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Jay Orr	FLA1-13	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Christopher Jones	FLA1-14	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
John Kawcak	FLA1-15	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Form Letter 2	FL2	SD249 (ASD-5)	BLM should take appropriate actions to protect 720,000 acres of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's (UWC) Citizen Proposed Wilderness Lands -- areas such as Upper Desolation Canyon, Desbrough Canyon, White River, Dragon Canyon, Sweetwater Canyon, Moonshine Draw, and Bull Canyon.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
The Piney Valley Ranches Trust	O-3	SO5	The socioeconomic analysis fails to consider the sheep industry.	The sheep industry is included as part of the discussion of agriculture in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1 and in the socioeconomic analysis in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	
The Nature Conservancy Moab Project Office	O-6	SD173 (LVE-2)	All ACECs should have subsequent management plans prepared for them after the FRMP to detail protection	See Response to Comment SD161-G-1.	
Utah Farm	O-9	SD38	When Alternative D includes an ACEC designation in	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/F EIS has been revised to	X

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Bureau Federation			the Lower Green River Expansion of only 1,700 acres less than Alternatives A and C, how could Alternative D “not have the benefits” described for Alternatives A and C? It should provide the same benefits but to a slightly lesser degree.	indicate that Alternative D would have lesser benefit than Alternatives A, C, and E.	
Utah Farm Bureau Federation	O-9	SO15	Minerals development will not have a long-term adverse effect on the tourism sector of the economy. This is because a majority of the tourism is associated with resources that are located outside of the “oilfield” areas (High Uintah Wilderness, Starvation Reservoir, Flaming Gorge, etc...).	While a large portion of the tourism is concentrated in the northern end of the VPA, there are recreation opportunities in the proposed SRMAs, non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, special designations, and OHV travel routes in the southern portion of the VPA where the highest concentration of minerals development is likely to occur according to the RFD.	
Utah Farm Bureau Federation	O-9	SO19	The Counties question the findings in the last two sentences of Section 4.12.3.1 on page 4-175. If Alternative C were to be selected, Table 2.3 indicates that livestock forage would decrease from 146,161 AUMs under Alternative D to 77,294 AUMs. Such a reduction would have an impact on the livestock industry and its ability to expand in the future to serve a growing population. Such reductions ignore provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act and withdrawals.	Sections 4.12.2.1 and 4.12.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to provide details on AUM demand.	X
Utah Farm Bureau Federation	O-9	SO20	A decrease in jobs in the oil and gas sector would not decrease the dependency of the region on the oil and gas industry or make the region less susceptible to boom and bust cycles. The way to make the region less vulnerable is to create jobs in other economic sectors. In addition, the creation of more jobs in the minerals industry will attract more jobs in other sectors of the economy. This increased level of services could make the region more attractive to other forms of basic industry, which may result in less dependency on oil and gas.	It is not the BLM’s role to create (or decrease) employment opportunities in any one sector of the economy. The role of the RMP is to assess the impacts planning decisions have on various affected sectors, if any.	
Duchesne	O-10	SD225	In keeping with Duchesne Co General Plan policies,	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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County Water Conservancy District		(SD-TT)	DCWCD supports Alt B for ACEC. DCWCD would be opposed to the extension of the existing ACEC in Nine Mile Canyon.		
Duchesne County Water Conservancy District	O-10	SD226 (SD-UU)	<p>DCWCD strongly supports the Duchesne County Plan which contains the following policies and strongly opposes additional WSRs within the Uintah Basin, including the segments currently being proposed by the USFS:</p> <p>"Support for the addition of a river segment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System shall be withheld until:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) It is clearly demonstrated that water is present and flowing at all times; 2) It is clearly demonstrated that the required water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of the three physiographic provinces in the state. The rationale and justifications for the conclusions will be disclosed; 3) The effects of the addition of the local and state economies, private property rights, agricultural and industrial operations and interests, tourism, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment have been evaluated in detail by the relevant federal agency; 4) It is clearly demonstrated that the provisions and terms of the process for review of potential additions have been applied in a consistent manner by all federal agencies; and 5) The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results 	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9 and SD19-G-22. Duchesne County was a cooperating agency for the Vernal Plan.	

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			disclosed. All valid existing rights, including grazing leases and permits shall not be affected."		
Duchesne County Water Conservancy District	O-10	SD227 (SD-VV)	This section discusses the upper, middle, and lower segments of the Green River in regard to WSR status. DCWCD is in favor of Alt B and strongly opposes any designation that would impact the future use of the Green River and the development of this valuable water resource.	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9, SD19-G-22, SD37-G22.	
Duchesne County Water Conservancy District	O-10	SO39 (SO-I)	As the livestock industry is Duchesne County's largest and most stable economic source of revenue, DCWCD would oppose any policy that would be economically disruptive.	The BLM is aware of the importance of the livestock industry to the county. As described in section 4.12.3.1 of the PRMP/FEIS, the number of AUM's in the proposed plan is identical to current conditions (the No Action alternative), which the BLM believes will avoid the disruption concerning the commenter.	
Questar	O-12	SD214 (SD-II)	43 CFR 1610.7-2 requires potential ACECs to meet test of relevance and importance. Bitter Creek does not meet either requirement. Nothing in this area is so significant or distinctive that it requires an ACEC designation to prevent irreparable damage to important resources. Alternatives A and C do not meet the requirements of the regulation that creates ACECs and should not be considered further.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Questar	O-12	SD222 (SD-QQ)	The expansion of the Lower Green River ACEC is not justified. The importance criteria given in the draft RMP for the Lower Green River Expansion states that the relevant values "have substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary and unique." However, the document fails to mention which or any of the qualities that make this area qualify for a special designation.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Questar	O-12	SD326 (LSD-1)	We believe that many of these ACECs should be eliminated from consideration, since they do not comply with the BLM regulations under 43 CFR	Appendix G provides direction and the steps taken during ACEC evaluation.	

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			1610.7-2. There is no discussion detailing how the BLM followed these guidelines		
Questar	O-12	SD327 (LSD-2)	The new ACECs should be reexamined since there was insufficient information provided to the public about the factors that influenced these decisions.	<p>The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.</p> <p>The relevance and importance criteria can be found in Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
Questar	O-12	SD328 (LSD-3)	<p>The DEIS has embellished the regulatory definition of "importance" and added additional regulations (see bolded type below) to Section 1610.7-2 as purportedly cited in Appendix G:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has more locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource. 2. Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change. 3. Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns to carry out the mandates of the Federal Land Policy and 	The five qualities of importance criteria does not come from Section 1610.7-2, but is quoted from BLM Manual 1613 - Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.	

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			<p>Management Act.</p> <p>4. Has qualities that warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.</p> <p>5. Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.</p>		
Questar	O-12	SD329 (LSD-4)	The DEIS does not contain sufficient information to explain why the Nine Mile Canyon Expansion ACEC was created and why this area is more restricted under Alternative A than under B or D. There is no explanation of the 'importance criteria' for this area.	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
Questar	O-12	SD330 (LSD-5)	Figure 22 shows overlap in current and proposed ACECs, inconsistent with the text.	The commenter does not identify how Figure 22 is inconsistent with the text. As such, the BLM cannot respond directly to this comment.	
Questar	O-12	SO100 (LSO-2)	Land and resource restrictions limits development and affects energy prices, local economies, state and federal tax revenues and energy consumption. These impacts are not discussed in the DEIS.	The impact of management decisions in the Vernal planning area on nationally-driven energy prices is outside the scope of the PRMP/FEIS. The anticipated socioeconomic impacts for counties within the planning area are discussed in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	
Questar	O-12	SO99 (LSO-1)	Local and state revenue through oil and gas taxes is not discussed.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X
IPAMS	O-14	SD191 (SD-L)	Coyote Basin should be managed as the Black-footed Ferret Amendment Plan calls for, not as an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD20-G-25.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD20	Strike 2nd paragraph.	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not	

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				<p>limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
IPAMS	O-14	SD20A	A future inventory has no place in an RMP. BLM has no additional authority to either establish new WSAs or to manage them.	FLPMA Section 201 gives BLM the authority to inventory for wilderness characteristics. Section 202 of FLPMA gives BLM the authority for planning how the public lands are to be managed. Section 302 of FLPMA gives BLM general management authority for the public lands. It is BLM policy (as stated in its planning handbook and in Instruction Memorandums 2003-274 and 2003-275 Change 1), that through planning, the BLM has addressed non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the October 2007 Supplement to the DRMP/EIS.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD214 (SD-II)	43 CFR 1610.7-2 requires potential ACECs to meet test of relevance and importance. Bitter Creek does not meet either requirement. Nothing in this area is so significant or distinctive that it requires an ACEC designation to prevent irreparable damage to important resources. Alternatives A and C do not meet the requirements of the regulation that creates ACECs and should not be considered further.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD222	The expansion of the Lower Green River ACEC is not justified. The importance criteria given in the draft	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	

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		(SD-QQ)	RMP for the Lower Green River Expansion states that the relevant values "have substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary and unique." However, the document fails to mention which or any of the qualities that make this area qualify for a special designation.		
IPAMS	O-14	SD326 (LSD-1)	We believe that many of these ACECs should be eliminated from consideration, since they do not comply with the BLM regulations under 43 CFR 1610.7-2. There is no discussion detailing how the BLM followed these guidelines	Appendix G provides direction and the steps taken during ACEC evaluation.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD327 (LSD-2)	The new ACECs should be reexamined since there was insufficient information provided to the public about the factors that influenced these decisions.	The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period. The relevance and importance criteria can be found in Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD329 (LSD-4)	The DEIS does not contain sufficient information to explain why the Nine Mile Canyon Expansion ACEC was created and why this area is more restricted under Alternative A than under B or D. There is no explanation of the 'importance criteria' for this area.	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
IPAMS	O-14	SD330 (LSD-5)	Figure 22 shows overlap in current and proposed ACECs, inconsistent with the text.	The commenter does not identify how Figure 22 is inconsistent with the text. As such, the BLM cannot respond directly to this comment.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD331	No support is given for the statement that the Coyote Basin ACEC provides a 'crucial habitat' for special	Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS has been expanded to include more information for the rationale behind	X

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		(LSD-6)	species	proposed ACECs.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD332 (LSD-7)	The table and discussion of non-WSA lands does not consider cumulative impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development.	Impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development are discussed in detail in the 2007 Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Section 4.8.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD34	The size of this ACEC is not supported in the text and is not supported by distribution of the reported values to be protected.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD36	Here there appears to be a layering of special designations in an attempt to manage this area for non-impairment. This is in conflict with the BLM's mandate for multiple use and IMs that provide for the removal of unnecessary stipulations that impact energy development, which is in conflict with EPCA and BLM instructional memorandums.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13. In accordance with BLM policy and its recognition of the National Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2000 (EPCA), as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, mineral resource development would be allowed throughout the VPA subject to standard lease terms unless precluded by other program prescriptions, as specified in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.	
IPAMS	O-14	SD47	The cumulative effect of certain resource decisions, such as layering an SRMA over a special designation, may combine to illegally withdraw some of these proposed SRMAs from multiple-use, in violation of FLPMA's withdrawal procedures and the Settlement Agreement in State of Utah v. Norton, which prohibits de facto non-impairment management on non-Wilderness Study Area lands. An ACEC designation may not be managed as a substitute for wilderness suitability. (BLM Manual 1613.06)	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
IPAMS	O-14	SO100 (LSO-2)	Land and resource restrictions limits development and affects energy prices, local economies, state and federal tax revenues and energy consumption. These impacts are not discussed in the DEIS.	The impact of management decisions in the Vernal planning area on nationally-driven energy prices is outside the scope of the PRMP/FEIS. The anticipated socioeconomic impacts for counties within the planning area are discussed in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	

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IPAMS	O-14	SO15	Minerals development will not have a long-term adverse effect on the tourism sector of the economy. This is because a majority of the tourism is associated with resources that are located outside of the "oilfield" areas (High Uintah Wilderness, Starvation Reservoir, Flaming Gorge, etc...).	While a large portion of the tourism is concentrated in the northern end of the VPA, there are recreation opportunities in the proposed SRMAs, non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, special designations, and OHV travel routes in the southern portion of the VPA where the highest concentration of minerals development is likely to occur according to the RFD.	
IPAMS	O-14	SO16	This same level of analysis should be applied to oil and gas development as it has a positive effect on the same sectors of the economy. The loss of jobs and tax revenue will be made up several times over by development.	Sections 4.12.2.3 and 4.12.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to address tourism tax revenues.	X
IPAMS	O-14	SO99 (LSO-1)	Local and state revenue through oil and gas taxes is not discussed.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X
Western Gas Resources	O-16	SD229 (SD-XX)	The document fails to provide the reader with information as to why existing ACECs should continue and new ACECs should be established. Under Alternative A the preferred alternative, the draft RMP proposes eight new ACECs and the expansion of two existing ACECs. There is no supporting evidence that suggests these designations are needed. Alternative A is contrary to the NEPA and EPCA policy.	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9, SD27-G-22, SD90-G24.	
Western Gas Resources	O-16	SD230 (SD-YY)	The DEIS has proposed Nine Mile Canyon Expansion ACEC, which would designate an additional 48,000 acres in Nine Mile Canyon as an ACEC under Alternative A. There would be no expansion under ALT B. The "importance criteria" given in the draft RMP for the ACEC state that the relevant values "have substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary	See Table 2.1. (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) describes under which alternative the Nine Mile Canyon Expansion ACEC would be established.	

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			and unique.” There is no documentation of any relevant documents that verify these qualities.		
EOG Resources	O-17	SD200 (SD-V)	Alternative A would designate acreage along the White and Green River corridors as ACECs to protect unique geologic and high-value riparian areas. With closures in large portions of this proposed ACECs, oil and gas development would be precluded from potentially thousands of acres; however, EOG is not sure about the specifics impacts as no mapping or description of the dividing line between the western and eastern parts is presented.	Figures 22-24 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to show the boundaries of both the old and current ACECs for the different alternatives. A written description of the ACEC areas is described in Appendix G.	X
EOG Resources	O-17	SD202 (SD-W)	EOGs concerns about establishing the White River ACEC with the proposed stipulations begin with the obvious absence of the reaffirmation of previous statements in the DEIS stating all proposed ACECs would remain open to oil and gas leasing and would be subject to valid existing rights. The proposed stipulations totally conflict with previous determination of "open to leasing" and "subject to valid existing rights" presented in the analysis.	See Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) describes under which alternative the White River ACEC would be established. The ACEC would be subject to a combination of no surface occupancy and timing and controlled surface use stipulations. A portion would also be closed to oil and gas leasing. This closure would be based on factors unrelated to the ACEC designation.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD203 (SD-X)	The conditions for application of protective stipulations for the White River ACEC are ill-defined and not tied to specific locations or situations within this large 47,130-acre area [under Alternative C]. EOG cannot make any other evaluation of this mostly undefined ACEC configuration other than it would be excessively restrictive in oil and gas development and therefore, should not be designated particularly in light of the fact adequate protections are currently in place.	See Responses to Comments SD27-G-22 and SD202-O-17.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD204 (SD-Y)	Under Alternative A, the White River SRMA would be added. EOG asserts that the extent of the analysis of the SRMA in relation to impacts or limitations on mineral, particularly oil and gas development is inadequate.	No restrictions on minerals and energy development would be implemented as part of the White River SRMA. Although SRMA identification is not, in and of itself, an enforcement tool for minerals, the BLM policy is to manage recreation on Bureau lands,	

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				both within and outside of SRMAs.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD205 (SD-Z)	Specific to oil and gas, the analysis identifies only that the western portion of the White River SRMA would be managed under NSO. Review of Appendix K confirms the assignment of NSO for this lower segment of the White River in the section on River Corridors under Resource of Concern page K-8.	Comment noted.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD206 (SD-AA)	Alternatives B and D would not include a new [White River] SRMA, and the White River area would continue to be managed under current conditions, with minimal oversight for water based recreational activities. Selection of either of these alternatives would pose few restrictions; but EOG is concerned, again, by the uncertainty and lack of clarity regarding impacts resource decisions will have on existing and future oil and gas leases. The uncertainty and, therefore, the concern comes from the text on page 4-151 stating "the White River area would continue under current conditions," but a review of Appendix K indicates that the same NSO stipulations would be applied to the lower segment of the White River under Alternative B. The lack of consistency between the text above and the information in Appendix K creates uncertainty as to what is stipulated for the White River under Alternative B. A second problem between text on page 4-151 and Appendix K is that the text indicates no change in management for the White River and Appendix K indicates the NSO stipulations will be applied for an even longer segment of the river.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD207 (SD-BB)	Under Alt C, the proposed White River SRMA under Alt A would be expanded. EOG is even more concerned with the selection of this alternative due to the potentially increased number of well and facility locations that could be eliminated by the expanded	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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			NSO acreage associated with the White River corridor.		
EOG Resources	O-17	SD208 (SD-CC)	Nine Mile Canyon is proposed as an ACEC under each alternative. It is impossible to determine how EOG's leases might be affected under each alternative due to the broad range of management prescriptions listed in the DEIS. The management decisions for this ACEC have been deferred until a comprehensive integrated activity plan is developed in the future. This leaves open the question of how this ACEC would be managed until the activity plan has been completed.	Nine Mile Canyon will be managed according to the Record of Decision for the Final EIS.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD209 (SD-DD)	Alternative A & C would designate an additional 3,819 and 36,987 acres respectively to the existing 44,181-acre Nine Mile Canyon ACEC. The analysis states "the area would be open subject to standard lease terms or managed as NSO for oil and gas leasing. Based on a yet-undefined activity plan and the open ended statement concerning NSO, EOG's concerns regarding this ACEC arise from the lack of certainty regarding restrictions to be applied to oil and gas development within both ACEC configurations.	The specific details of the integrated activity plan would be consistent with the Record of Decision for the Final EIS.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD210 (SD-EE)	BLM needs to balance the cost/benefits of environmentally sound development of essential oil and gas resources and the protection of views and other resources associated with mostly recreation.	Comment noted.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD211 (SD-FF)	Under Alternative B, the Nine Mile Canyon area would continue under the current program. There are current and existing laws and procedures in place to protect cultural resource areas. Therefore, additional protection is unwarranted. The analysis needs to address the detrimental impacts that implementation of these alternatives would have on oil and gas development.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25. Chapter 4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the anticipated impacts of special designations on minerals and energy development.	X
EOG	O-17	SD212	EOG holds a substantial leasehold position in and around the Lower Green River and Four Mile Wash	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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Resources		(SD-GG)	area. The general area is poised to experience an increased level of activity as industry expands development southwest from the Greater Natural Buttes area. As such stipulated areas of concerns will be addressed under site specific COAs, adequate protection of such resource values already exist. Therefore ACEC, VRM and SRMA management prescriptions proposed under Alternatives A and C are unwarranted.		
EOG Resources	O-17	SD231 (SD-ZZ)	EOG requests that development of valid and existing leases and associated rights to access leases within a Wild and Scenic River designation would be protected. The clarity of this analysis should be improved addressing the valid existing rights issue more forthrightly and by consistently accounting for stipulations in Appendix K and Section 4.14.2 so that the source and nature of those restrictive measures proposed in the DEIS can be understood.	See Response to Comment SD174-O33. The potential impacts of restrictions included in Appendix K were incorporated into the analysis contained in Chapter 4.	X
EOG Resources	O-17	SD232 (SD-AAA)	Neither the preparation of an activity plan for Fantasy Canyon as proposed in Alt A nor designating this area as an SRMA as proposed in Alt C is necessary to preserve the unique character and tourist appeal of Fantasy Canyon or reduce perceived potential conflicts among user groups.	See Response to Comment SD161-G-1.	
EOG Resources	O-17	SD233 (SD-BBB)	BLM Manual 8351, in Section .51 Management Designated WSRs, states "reasonable mining claim and mineral lease access will be permitted" in designated scenic river corridors. Because BLM manual 8351 allows for some flexibility in how W&SRs are to be managed, and the stipulations described in Appendix K provide a broad, relatively non-specific range of management within each proposed W&SR corridor, there is no clear description of how these areas would be managed under each alternative. This	Chapter 2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify that suitable rivers/river corridors will be managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classifications, and free-flowing nature. Specific resource allocations and management prescriptions within and outside of eligible river corridors are shown on alternative maps, whether or not such information is described in the wild and scenic river section of Chapter 2.	X

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			<p>lack of proposed management prescription associated with each specially designated area makes it impossible for EOG to determine how the proposed designations would affect its current and future leases and development potential.</p>		
EOG Resources	O-17	SD234 (SD-CCC)	<p>While it can be argued that the WSAs have been documented previously, more explanation of wilderness characteristics is needed to support the proposed special management of non-WSA lands. The DEIS provides no basis to support the special management conditions applied to these areas.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.</p> <p>The BLM in October 2007 printed a supplement with a single alternative analyzing the protection of all Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics would best provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives. Although the other alternatives do not provide specific management prescriptions to protect Non-WSA, these alternatives analyze and disclose the impacts of the proposed resource management prescriptions, uses and actions on the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This gives the public the ability to fully compare the consequences of protecting or not protecting the wilderness characteristics on these Non-WSA lands. If all alternatives contained comparable protections of the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, the alternatives would have substantially similar consequences and would not be significantly distinguishable.</p>	
EOG Resources	O-17	SO40 (SO-K)	<p>The analysis of impacts on economic aspects of implementing the revised assignments of VRM classes by alternative should be expanded to more clearly describe the significant adverse impacts that would result from limiting or preventing oil and gas development on existing leases and areas likely to be leased in the future based on probable presence of recoverable oil and or gas.</p>	<p>Valid existing rights are considered Administrative Actions by the BLM and do not require a specific planning decision to implement. As noted in Chapter 1 under Planning Criteria and as outlined in the BLM's Land Use Planning Manual (Section 1601.06G), all decisions made in land use plans and subsequent implementation decision are subject to valid existing rights. The BLM will work with and subject to the agreement of holders of valid</p>	

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				existing rights to modify proposed actions or activities to reduce the effect of the actions or activities on resource values and uses. These modifications may be necessary to maintain the choice of alternatives being considered during land use plan development and implementation, and may include appropriate stipulations, relocations, redesigns, or delay of proposed actions.	
Uintah Mountain Club	O-20	SD185 (SD-F)	<p>We request that the following boundary be established for each of the areas:</p> <p>Four Mile Wash/Lower Green R. ACEC: Use the "no leasing" area for figure 13 and that boundary will simultaneously delineate the ACEC boundary, the OHV closure boundary, and the oil/gas & mineral resources closure boundary.</p> <p>Main Canyon: Use the ACEC boundary in Figure 24 and that boundary will simultaneously delineate the ACEC boundary the OHV boundary, the OHV closure, and the oil gas and mineral resources closure boundary.</p> <p>Dry Fork: Should be removed from leasing reflecting Alternative C's figure 13</p> <p>Nine Mile Canyon ACEC: OHV use and energy development should be considered secondary importance after the cultural resources.</p> <p>Blue Mountain SRMA: Monitoring of the area should occur and the camping area's existence should be contingent on the protection of the relict forest.</p>	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-3 and SD8-G-9.	
Uintah Mountain Club	O-20	SD186 (SD-G)	<p>We support the following designations from Alternative A: Upper Green River-22 miles, Lower Green 30 miles. We support the following designations from Alternative C: White River- 44 mile stretch, Middle Green 36 mile stretch, Nine Mile Creek 13miles.</p>	Comment noted.	

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Uintah Mountain Club	O-20	SD187 (SD-H)	We support the following Alternative A ACEC designations: Red Mountain, Lower Green, Bitter Creek, Browns Park, Lears Canyon, Pariette, Red Creek, White Canyon, 4 Mile Wash, Nine Mile Canyon, Middle Green, Main Canyon, Coyote Basin	Comment noted.	
American Rivers	O-22	SD182 (SD-C)	We are pleased that one of the alternatives, Alternative C, as expressed on page 4-211, found 216 miles of rivers eligible and suitable for inclusion into the National System. This clearly signifies that Utah has a number of rivers with outstandingly remarkable values that should be protected for future generations.	Comment noted.	
American Rivers	O-22	SD183 (SD-D)	Unfortunately, the preferred alternative, Alternative A only finds two segments of the White River, a total of 72 miles suitable for designation into the national system. The exclusion of the Middle Green river is particularly notable given strong support for designating the river segment from recreation and environmental communities and past congressional support.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
American Rivers	O-22	SD184 (SD-E)	Seven suitability factors were considered for each river and "notes" were provided in Appendix C for most of these factors for each river segment. But nowhere do the EIS documents indicate how BLM evaluated these factors and proceeded to a final determination. In fact, on page 4-1 the DEIS states "in most cases the exact locations of projected development and other changes are not known at this time." An eligibility/suitability determination should be based on past and current use, or planned development in a short time frame, not on theoretical development. Thus the RMP and EIS suitability determinations are not supported by substantial evidence on record. Additional important considerations were not included. This includes, among other things, the contributions of the river	See Response to Comment SD175-O-26.	

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			segment to the river system or basin integrity, reflecting the benefits of a systems approach.		
Cliffs Mining Services Company	O-25	SD228 (SD-WW)	Cliffs Synfuel's Northern Block, and Evacuation Creek runs through 10 miles of our Southern Block. A WSR designation or ACEC designation would place overwhelming restrictions on development in those areas and effectively eliminate resources utilization. There are already a variety of designations and restrictions in place that make development extremely difficult, further restrictions are unnecessary.	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9, SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD116	The Utah Rivers Council urges the VFO to protect all three Green River segments as suitable Wild and Scenic segments.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD117	The Utah Rivers Council supports the VFO's finding that the Upper Green River is eligible for Wild and Scenic designation due to the ORV's of scenic, recreational, fish, wildlife/habitat, and cultural. We recommend that this segment also be found suitable for WSR designation.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD118	The Utah Rivers Council supports the VFO's finding that the Middle Green River is eligible for Wild and Scenic designation due to the ORV's of fish. However, we recommend that the segment also be found eligible for scenic/geologic, wildlife/habitat, and recreational. We recommend that this segment also be found suitable for WSR designation.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD119	The Utah Rivers Council supports the VFO's finding that the Middle Green River is eligible for Wild and Scenic designation due to the ORV's of fish and recreation. However, we also request that it be found eligible for the values of wildlife/habitat and scenic/geologic. We recommend that this segment also be found suitable for WSR designation.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD120	The Utah Rivers Council supports the VFO's finding that the Middle Green River is eligible for Wilde and Scenic designation due to the ORV's of scenic/geologic, fish, wildlife/habitat, recreational, and historic/cultural. We recommend that this segment also be found suitable for WSR designation.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD121	The Utah Rivers Council supports the VFO's finding that the Middle Green River is eligible for Wilde and Scenic designation due to the ORV's of scenic and cultural. However, we request that it also be found eligible for the values of wildlife/habitat. We recommend that this segment also be found suitable for WSR designation.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD175 (PR-I)	Seven suitability factors for Wild and Scenic Rivers were considered, but in many cases the "notes" section was left unresolved and vague. More importantly, the basis for rejecting segments as unsuitable was not provided, except in the cases where the limited nature of federal land ownership may make management a challenge. Nowhere in the draft RMP does the Vernal BLM share how they evaluated the factors to come to a decision about suitability. Because of this disconnect, the DRMP's suitability determinations are not supported by substantial evidence on the record and so are not defensible. In addition the seven factors that were considered are incomplete. We respectfully request that the VFO conduct in depth suitability analysis of all the rivers and streams found eligible for protection using the approach recommended by the Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council and involving the public throughout the process.	The WSR suitability appendix has been expanded to address the suitability factors in more detail. However, although the factors are clearly discussed for each eligible river segment, there is no "rejecting segments as unsuitable" in this appendix or elsewhere in the RMP/EIS. The actual decision regarding suitability and the rationale for that decision will be made in the record of decision for the RMP/EIS.	X
Utah Rivers Council	O-26	SD176 (PR-J)	The Utah Rivers Council is concerned that the full range of ORVs were not identified for several of the rivers identified eligible. Specifically, the Middle Green,	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			Lower Green, and Nine-Mile Creek clearly exhibit ORVs that are not identified in the Draft RMP. We respectfully request that the BLM consider and add the following ORVs for these segments: Middle Green River—wildlife/habitat, scenic/geologic, and recreation. Lower Green River—recreation, fish, wildlife/habitat, and scenic/geologic. Nine-Mile Creek—scenic, cultural, and habitat. Our comment letter contains supporting documentation for these ORVs.		
Trout Unlimited	O-27	SD108	We ask that all 52,721 acres be included in the Browns Park ACEC and that the ACEC designation not be rolled back to 18,474 acres as per Alternative B.	See Response to Comment SD50-G25.	
Trout Unlimited	O-27	SD109	Among the areas of special designations, we ask that no gas and oil leasing take place as we feel that no stipulations or mitigation within these areas would adequately address the known adverse impacts, nor account for the lack of research on the impacts, that gas and oil development would have on this remarkable natural area and the significant hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities that it provides.	See Response to Comment SD103-I-46.	
Trout Unlimited	O-27	SD236 (SD-EEE)	We commend the BLM for recognizing the priceless nature of the Upper Green River watershed and request that all of the protections stated in Alternative C be included in the final RMP.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Trout Unlimited	O-27	SO24	We urge the BLM to consider potential impacts of gas and oil development on both the social and economic values (e.g., hunting and angling) of fish, wildlife, and wild places in the VPA.	See comment responses SO9 and SO15.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SD239 (SD-III)	The draft RMP fails to comply with its FLPMA and NEPA responsibilities in its consideration and analysis of areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and fails to propose designations necessary to protect important resource values. The DRMP also fails to	The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands	

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			<p>give priority to ACEC designation. The BLM's only significant treatment of ACEC nomination is in Appendix G. Furthermore, SUWA was not notified of the decisions regarding our nominations.</p> <p>The lack of written record and rationale is in direct violation of BLM's manual 1613.33.</p>	<p>was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.</p>	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SD242 (SD-LLL)	<p>Contrary to EPCA and NEP policy, the designation of Segments 1 and 2 of the White River as suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System would result in overlapping restrictions, since the lands adjacent to these river banks are frequently wetland habitats and within the 100-year floodplain, which are under NSO stipulations or closed to mineral development. We recommend that stipulations not necessary to accomplish desired protection be modified or dropped through the planning process. NEP, pp. 5-7; IM 2003-233, p.3. Preferred actions in the DEIS/RMP must be analyzed and developed in the context of these statutory and executive policies that promote and facilitate oil and gas development.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.</p>	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SD243 (SD-MMM)	<p>The Draft RMP/EIS fails to demonstrate that the proposed ACEC decisions meet the regulatory criteria of importance and relevance. 43 C.F.R. §1610-7-2.</p> <p>Secondly, many of the identified resource values already receive adequate protection through other management prescriptions, and the proposed overlapping ACEC designations are unwarranted and contrary to FLPMA, the NEP and BLM policy. 43 U.S.C. §1702(a) (ACECs may be designated "were special management attention is required...to protect</p>	<p>See Responses to Comments SD14-G-13, SD27-G22.</p>	

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			and prevent irreparable damage”); BLM Manual 1613.51-53 (ACECs unnecessary when other designations are adequate to protect a resource or value).		
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SD244 (SD-NNN)	<p>The DEIS, however, does not adequately analyze the extent to which proposed management for areas within non-WSA lands with or likely to have wilderness characteristics was tailored to preserve alleged wilderness values identified in the 1999 wilderness inventory and the interdisciplinary team evaluation. The only clear correlation between wilderness characteristics and preferred management is the Browns Park SRMA extension, which is to be managed for primitive recreation values. DEIS 2-52.</p> <p>A separate analysis is the only means of determining whether “wilderness characteristics [were] considered in a manner commensurate with other resource information,” as required by FLPMA’s multiple use principles. DEIS 1-9. The issue is significant given that the Vernal plan revision was originally intended to determine whether the non-WSA lands found to possess wilderness character would be managed as WSAs under the IMP. In fact, before the Settlement Agreement, several of the large areas of undisturbed wildlife were also being analyzed for “wilderness designation potential” through special designations. Vernal Administrative DEIS, pp. 1-12, 3-108.</p>	The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SD381 (ME-CCC)	Appendix K states that the 71,000-acre Bitter Creek ACEC is established to protect 71,000 acres containing pinyon pines. This acreage differs from the 68,834 acres designated as the potential Bitter Creek ACEC on page 3-81 of the draft RMP/EIS. Please correct.	The Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been revised to correct acreage amounts or rationale provided for the differences.	X
Westport Oil	O-28	SD385	Appendix K states that the 71,000-acre Bitter Creek	The Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been revised to	X

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and Gas Company		(ME-CCC)	ACEC is established to protect 71,000 acres containing pinyon pines. This acreage differs from the 68,834 acres designated as the potential Bitter Creek ACEC on page 3-81 of the draft RMP/EIS. Please correct.	correct acreage amounts or rationale provided for the differences.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO43 (SO-N)	BLM fails to disclose how the restrictions may combine to increase the consumer cost of gas, which may be disproportionately borne by low-income populations. Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, 59 Fed. Reg. 7629 (1994).	<p>Analysis of the potential impact of management decisions within the Vernal planning area on the cost of gas to consumers is outside the scope of this document. Regardless, any increase in the cost of gas for any reason would be borne equally across all consumers in that all consumers would be subject to the higher prices. As such, low-income populations would not bare a higher percentage of the increased cost. Thus, the impact on low-income populations would not be disproportionate to populations of other income levels.</p> <p>Furthermore, the BLM Planning Manual (1601-1), Appendix D, p.12, states that environmental justice issues apply to defined minority populations living within or close to the planning area, and not to the nation as a whole.</p>	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO44 (SO-O)	Tables 2.5 and 2.3 fail to adequately address the economic impacts from the decisions and stipulations in the draft RMP/EIS to oil and gas development. The number of acres eliminated from potential oil and gas development under each alternative are not specified in the tables; and, the precise area of the eliminated acres is not identified for further evaluation and consistency review. The number of acres available for oil and gas leasing under all alternatives in Table 2.5 is not consistent with the number of acres specified in Table S.1 and Table 2.3, and should be corrected.	<p>Table 2.3 of the Draft RMP contains the alternative management decisions under consideration and is not intended to be an analysis of impacts. Table 2.5 summarizes the anticipated impacts that are discussed in Chapter 4. The anticipated impacts of proposed management decisions on minerals and energy resources are outlined in Sections 4.8.1 through 4.8.6.</p> <p>Note: Table 2.3 of the Draft RMP has been renumbered as Tables 2.1.1 through 2.1.27 of the PRMP/FEIS. Table 2.5 of the Draft RMP has been</p>	

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				renumbered as Table 2.2 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO45 (SO-P) (JSO-3)	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in Chapter 3 should indicate that the “Mining” category includes oil and gas employment.	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to indicate that the “mining” category includes oil and gas employment.	X
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO46 (SO-Q)	Page 3-60, Section 3.12.2.2.3 (Mineral Resources) is confusing. It should refer to oil and gas exploration and production and related mineral exploration. Also, according to Table 3.12.4, oil production is the second largest contributor of royalties to the State at \$2.8 million, behind natural gas, which is the most significant contributor at \$30.3 million. Figure 3.12.1 appears to have been inverted or presented backwards as the charts begin in 2001 and go back in time to 1991 along the X (horizontal) axis. We suggest the chart begin in 1991 and end in 2001.	See comment response ME 200.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO47 (SO-R) (JSO-4)	The draft RMP/EIS fails to effectively address the full realm of positive economic benefits associated with current and future oil and gas activities. While Section 4.12 provides a brief comparison of wells to be drilled, industry jobs that would be created, industry sales, and federal royalties under each alternative, what appears to have been excluded is the highly significant state and local revenue generated due to a variety of taxes paid.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten. The BLM believes this revision represents the importance of this industry to the Vernal planning area.	X
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO48 (SO-S) (JSO-5)	The socioeconomic analysis contained in Section 4.12 of the draft Vernal RMP/EIS does not adequately describe the long-term incremental and cumulative differences in public sector revenues of the four alternatives. Specifically, the section fails to discuss the property tax revenues that each alternative would generate and the various community facilities and services that this significant source of revenue funds	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X

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			for residents in the Vernal planning area. As an example, according to the Uintah County Treasurer's office, fully 57.6% of that county's 2004 property tax revenue was derived from the oil and gas and mining industries. Accordingly, management decisions that influence the level of oil and gas activity have direct and significant impacts on local government fiscal conditions in the VPA and indirect impacts on the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. These impacts must be disclosed in the draft RMP/EIS.		
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO49 (SO-T) (J-SO7)	The Draft RMP/EIS does not address Utah severance taxes. Severance taxes on natural gas are assessed on a sliding scale, 3% on the first \$1.50/Mcf, and 5% percent thereafter. The draft RMP/EIS does not estimate the differences in severance taxes for each alternative. Given that oil and gas production from the Vernal planning area was a substantial portion of the state's total, it is important to understand the implications of each alternative for State of Utah severance tax revenues.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government (including severance taxes) of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO50 (SO-U) (J-SO8)	The absence of a more complete fiscal assessment will impede the ability of the public, local governments, and BLM decision-makers to assess the effects of each alternative on local government revenues and on their ability to provide public services, which directly affect the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. Moreover, the limited scope fiscal analysis in the Draft RMP/EIS does not fulfill the BLM's charge to assess the degree of local dependence on resources from public lands, or fulfill the agency's obligations outlined in Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-H) or Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-167.	Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to expand the discussion of the fiscal impacts to state and local governments. The BLM will review the Utah State University survey of rural counties conducted by the State of Utah. The BLM has received preliminary data from this study received after completion of the DEIS. The BLM has incorporated findings in the PRMP/FEIS as appropriate.	X
Westport Oil	O-28	SO51	The Draft RMP/EIS assumes development costs of	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been	X

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and Gas Company		(SO-V) (J-SO9)	<p>\$600,000 per well. This figure is dated and does not account for other types of development taking place in the Vernal planning area. The deeper formations being developed cost more than the figure used above and the analysis should reflect this fact. This number should be revised to ensure that any economic analysis accounts for the activities in the planning area. Regardless of this oversight, the impact analysis does not address the extent these expenditures would occur in the local economy, nor do they address how the economy would be impacted both locally and nationally. Indirect employment as a result of industry expenditures and the additional tax revenue this spending activity would generate are important impacts the Draft RMP/EIS should disclose. A study was prepared that estimated that eighty-one percent (81%) of the expenditures for development benefited the local economy. On that assumption, the numbers should be reworked to reflect this significant detail.</p>	<p>extensively rewritten. The PRMP/FEIS incorporates recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. This data has been used in the recent (November, 2007) study commissioned by the State of Utah: The Structure and Economic Impact of Utah's Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Industry Phase I - The Uinta Basin.</p>	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO52 (SO-W)	<p>The statement in Section 4.12.2.2, paragraphs 3 and 4 that areas open to (minerals) exploration “would have an adverse impact on the recreation and tourism industries” and that “the quality of the recreational experience would be degraded along with possible decreases to visual quality...” is incorrect. In much of the Vernal planning area, mineral exploration and development activity would occur in remote areas that are not popular for recreation or visually sensitive. At present, mineral development and recreational activities generally take place in separate geographic areas and co-exist quite successfully in the Vernal planning area. As examples, no mineral development would occur within the recreationally significant Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Dinosaur National Monument, nor along much of the Green River</p>	<p>Section 4.12.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to delete the statements as suggested in the comment.</p> <p>See also comment responses SO15 and SO37.</p>	X

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			(due to NSO and CSU stipulations intended to protect recreational, scenic, and other natural resources values of the river corridor). In addition, despite the substantial increase in oil and gas exploration and development that has occurred in the Vernal planning area over the last 15 years, tourism has increased rather than decreased. This fact directly contradicts the baseless statement that mineral development hurts the tourist economy and employment in the Vernal planning area.		
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO53 (SO-X) (JSO-11)	In paragraph 5, of Section 4.12.2.2, there is a statement that, "increasing jobs (related to mineral development) would also increase population in the region ... and this would increase the need for social services and infrastructure." Yet, under Section 4.12.2.3 — Recreation, the projected increase in tourism and recreation-related employment is not expected to have similar impacts of increased population and demand for social services and infrastructure. We contend that growth in any and all economic activities and employment sectors would generate increased population and demand for services. As the DEIS is currently written, it unfairly singles out the minerals industry as the sole source of these presumably negative impacts. Further, as stated above, there are studies that indicate that 81% of expenditures on well development. Thus, the positive impacts of job creation and "increase[d] overall prosperity in the region" could be a more significant benefit to the planning area because, as BLM correctly notes, "wages in th[e] [energy] sector. . . are typically higher than service and government related jobs."	According to data provided by the State of Utah's Utah Data Center, the population increases for the Uintah Basin was 13.1% from 2000-2007. This figure is well below the State of Utah total of 20.2%, indicating that population change has not been very high. It is possible, however, that the components of population change (age, gender, etc) may be changing, but the BLM lacks data to assess this possibility.	
Westport Oil and Gas Company	O-28	SO54 (SO-Y)	The draft RMP/EIS states that the rationale for decreasing mineral development is to increase recreation and OHV opportunities in the Vernal	The jobs created per well has been revised in the FEIS. Based on data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas	X

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		(J-SO12)	<p>Planning Area. According to the information presented in Table 4.12.1, the economic value of oil and gas sales in the Vernal planning area is currently \$189.53 million and \$248.68 million, respectively. Royalties are currently more than \$8.6 million annually. According to the draft RMP/EIS recreation currently provides a total tax benefit at approximately \$1.6 million. The revenues from royalties, alone, are more than five times the tax benefits from recreation.</p> <p>Under Alternative D (existing conditions) the total number of jobs, based on the average number of employees per well, is estimated to be 215,260 over the next 20 years, while there are 1,578 jobs attributable to recreation. We question the rationale for increasing recreational opportunities at the expense of oil and gas development, which would decrease the revenues to the state, counties, and Tribes, as well as decrease the supply of oil and gas to the public. In addition, a decrease in future oil and gas development is contrary to the President's Energy Policy.</p>	<p>and Mining, it is more reasonable to project an increase approximating 3.74 new jobs per well drilled than the approximately 14 suggested in the UEO study, which was for only one well. The impact analysis in Chapter 4 will be rewritten to reflect this lower estimate. The FEIS will continue to reflect the high economic value provided by minerals activities in the Uintah Basin.</p> <p>See also comment responses SO15 and SO37.</p>	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD239 (SD-III)	<p>The draft RMP fails to comply with its FLPMA and NEPA responsibilities in its consideration and analysis of areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and fails to propose designations necessary to protect important resource values. The DRMP also fails to give priority to ACEC designation. The BLM's only significant treatment of ACEC nomination is in Appendix G. Furthermore, SUWA was not notified of the decisions regarding our nominations.</p> <p>The lack of written record and rationale is in direct violation of BLM's manual 1613.33.</p>	<p>The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.</p>	

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KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD242 (SD-LLL)	Contrary to EPCA and NEP policy, the designation of Segments 1 and 2 of the White River as suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System would result in overlapping restrictions, since the lands adjacent to these river banks are frequently wetland habitats and within the 100-year floodplain, which are under NSO stipulations or closed to mineral development. We recommend that stipulations not necessary to accomplish desired protection be modified or dropped through the planning process. NEP, pp. 5-7; IM 2003-233, p.3. Preferred actions in the DEIS/RMP must be analyzed and developed in the context of these statutory and executive policies that promote and facilitate oil and gas development.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD243 (SD-MMM)	<p>The Draft RMP/EIS fails to demonstrate that the proposed ACEC decisions meet the regulatory criteria of importance and relevance. 43 C.F.R. §1610-7-2.</p> <p>Secondly, many of the identified resource values already receive adequate protection through other management prescriptions, and the proposed overlapping ACEC designations are unwarranted and contrary to FLPMA, the NEP and BLM policy. 43 U.S.C. §1702(a) (ACECs may be designated “were special management attention is required...to protect and prevent irreparable damage”); BLM Manual 1613.51-53 (ACECs unnecessary when other designations are adequate to protect a resource or value).</p>	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-13, SD27-G22.	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD244 (SD-NNN)	The DEIS, however, does not adequately analyze the extent to which proposed management for areas within non-WSA lands with or likely to have wilderness characteristics was tailored to preserve alleged	The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific	

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			<p>wilderness values identified in the 1999 wilderness inventory and the interdisciplinary team evaluation. The only clear correlation between wilderness characteristics and preferred management is the Browns Park SRMA extension, which is to be managed for primitive recreation values. DEIS 2-52.</p> <p>A separate analysis is the only means of determining whether “wilderness characteristics [were] considered in a manner commensurate with other resource information,” as required by FLPMA’s multiple use principles. DEIS 1-9. The issue is significant given that the Vernal plan revision was originally intended to determine whether the non-WSA lands found to possess wilderness character would be managed as WSAs under the IMP. In fact, before the Settlement Agreement, several of the large areas of undisturbed wildlife were also being analyzed for “wilderness designation potential” through special designations. Vernal Administrative DEIS, pp. 1-12, 3-108.</p>	<p>associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.</p>	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD381 (ME-CCC)	Appendix K states that the 71,000-acre Bitter Creek ACEC is established to protect 71,000 acres containing pinyon pines. This acreage differs from the 68,834 acres designated as the potential Bitter Creek ACEC on page 3-81 of the draft RMP/EIS. Please correct.	The Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been revised to correct acreage amounts or rationale provided for the differences.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SD385 (ME-CCC)	Appendix K states that the 71,000-acre Bitter Creek ACEC is established to protect 71,000 acres containing pinyon pines. This acreage differs from the 68,834 acres designated as the potential Bitter Creek ACEC on page 3-81 of the draft RMP/EIS. Please correct.	The Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been revised to correct acreage amounts or rationale provided for the differences.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO43 (SO-N)	BLM fails to disclose how the restrictions may combine to increase the consumer cost of gas, which may be disproportionately borne by low-income populations. Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address	Analysis of the potential impact of management decisions within the Vernal planning area on the cost of gas to consumers is outside the scope of this document. Regardless, any increase in the cost of	

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			Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, 59 Fed. Reg. 7629 (1994).	<p>gas for any reason would be borne equally across all consumers in that all consumers would be subject to the higher prices. As such, low-income populations would not bare a higher percentage of the increased cost. Thus, the impact on low-income populations would not be disproportionate to populations of other income levels.</p> <p>Furthermore, the BLM Planning Manual (1601-1), Appendix D, p.12, states that environmental justice issues apply to defined minority populations living within or close to the planning area, and not to the nation as a whole.</p>	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO44 (SO-O)	Tables 2.5 and 2.3 fail to adequately address the economic impacts from the decisions and stipulations in the draft RMP/EIS to oil and gas development. The number of acres eliminated from potential oil and gas development under each alternative are not specified in the tables; and, the precise area of the eliminated acres is not identified for further evaluation and consistency review. The number of acres available for oil and gas leasing under all alternatives in Table 2.5 is not consistent with the number of acres specified in Table S.1 and Table 2.3, and should be corrected.	<p>Table 2.3 of the Draft RMP contains the alternative management decisions under consideration and is not intended to be an analysis of impacts. Table 2.5 summarizes the anticipated impacts that are discussed in Chapter 4. The anticipated impacts of proposed management decisions on minerals and energy resources are outlined in Sections 4.8.1 through 4.8.6.</p> <p>Note: Table 2.3 of the Draft RMP has been renumbered as Tables 2.1.1 through 2.1.27 of the PRMP/FEIS. Table 2.5 of the Draft RMP has been renumbered as Table 2.2 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO45 (SO-P) (JSO-3)	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in Chapter 3 should indicate that the "Mining" category includes oil and gas employment.	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to indicate that the "mining" category includes oil and gas employment.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas	O-29	SO46 (SO-Q)	Page 3-60, Section 3.12.2.3 (Mineral Resources) is confusing. It should refer to oil and gas exploration	See comment response ME 200.	

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Onshore LLC			and production and related mineral exploration. Also, according to Table 3.12.4, oil production is the second largest contributor of royalties to the State at \$2.8 million, behind natural gas, which is the most significant contributor at \$30.3 million. Figure 3.12.1 appears to have been inverted or presented backwards as the charts begin in 2001 and go back in time to 1991 along the X (horizontal) axis. We suggest the chart begin in 1991 and end in 2001.		
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO47 (SO-R) (JSO-4)	The draft RMP/EIS fails to effectively address the full realm of positive economic benefits associated with current and future oil and gas activities. While Section 4.12 provides a brief comparison of wells to be drilled, industry jobs that would be created, industry sales, and federal royalties under each alternative, what appears to have been excluded is the highly significant state and local revenue generated due to a variety of taxes paid.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten. The BLM believes this revision represents the importance of this industry to the Vernal planning area.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO48 (SO-S) (JSO-5)	The socioeconomic analysis contained in Section 4.12 of the draft Vernal RMP/EIS does not adequately describe the long-term incremental and cumulative differences in public sector revenues of the four alternatives. Specifically, the section fails to discuss the property tax revenues that each alternative would generate and the various community facilities and services that this significant source of revenue funds for residents in the Vernal planning area. As an example, according to the Uintah County Treasurer's office, fully 57.6% of that county's 2004 property tax revenue was derived from the oil and gas and mining industries. Accordingly, management decisions that influence the level of oil and gas activity have direct and significant impacts on local government fiscal conditions in the VPA and indirect impacts on the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. These	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X

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			impacts must be disclosed in the draft RMP/EIS.		
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO49 (SO-T) (J-SO7)	The Draft RMP/EIS does not address Utah severance taxes. Severance taxes on natural gas are assessed on a sliding scale, 3% on the first \$1.50/Mcf, and 5% percent thereafter. The draft RMP/EIS does not estimate the differences in severance taxes for each alternative. Given that oil and gas production from the Vernal planning area was a substantial portion of the state's total, it is important to understand the implications of each alternative for State of Utah severance tax revenues.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government (including severance taxes) of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO50 (SO-U) (J-SO8)	The absence of a more complete fiscal assessment will impede the ability of the public, local governments, and BLM decision-makers to assess the effects of each alternative on local government revenues and on their ability to provide public services, which directly affect the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. Moreover, the limited scope fiscal analysis in the Draft RMP/EIS does not fulfill the BLM's charge to assess the degree of local dependence on resources from public lands, or fulfill the agency's obligations outlined in Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-H) or Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-167.	Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to expand the discussion of the fiscal impacts to state and local governments. The BLM will review the Utah State University survey of rural counties conducted by the State of Utah. The BLM has received preliminary data from this study received after completion of the DEIS. The BLM has incorporated findings in the PRMP/FEIS as appropriate.	X
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO51 (SO-V) (J-SO9)	The Draft RMP/EIS assumes development costs of \$600,000 per well. This figure is dated and does not account for other types of development taking place in the Vernal planning area. The deeper formations being developed cost more than the figure used above and the analysis should reflect this fact. This number should be revised to ensure that any economic analysis accounts for the activities in the planning area. Regardless of this oversight, the impact analysis does not address the extent these expenditures would occur	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten. The PRMP/FEIS incorporates recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. This data has been used in the recent (November, 2007) study commissioned by the State of Utah: The Structure and Economic Impact of Utah's Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Industry Phase I - The Uinta Basin.	X

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			<p>in the local economy, nor do they address how the economy would be impacted both locally and nationally. Indirect employment as a result of industry expenditures and the additional tax revenue this spending activity would generate are important impacts the Draft RMP/EIS should disclose. A study was prepared that estimated that eighty-one percent (81%) of the expenditures for development benefited the local economy. On that assumption, the numbers should be reworked to reflect this significant detail.</p>		
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO52 (SO-W)	<p>The statement in Section 4.12.2.2, paragraphs 3 and 4 that areas open to (minerals) exploration “would have an adverse impact on the recreation and tourism industries” and that “the quality of the recreational experience would be degraded along with possible decreases to visual quality...” is incorrect. In much of the Vernal planning area, mineral exploration and development activity would occur in remote areas that are not popular for recreation or visually sensitive. At present, mineral development and recreational activities generally take place in separate geographic areas and co-exist quite successfully in the Vernal planning area. As examples, no mineral development would occur within the recreationally significant Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Dinosaur National Monument, nor along much of the Green River (due to NSO and CSU stipulations intended to protect recreational, scenic, and other natural resources values of the river corridor). In addition, despite the substantial increase in oil and gas exploration and development that has occurred in the Vernal planning area over the last 15 years, tourism has increased rather than decreased. This fact directly contradicts the baseless statement that mineral development hurts the tourist economy and employment in the Vernal</p>	<p>Section 4.12.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to delete the statements as suggested in the comment.</p> <p>See also comment responses SO15 and SO37.</p>	X

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			planning area.		
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO53 (SO-X) (JSO-11)	In paragraph 5, of Section 4.12.2.2, there is a statement that, “increasing jobs (related to mineral development) would also increase population in the region ... and this would increase the need for social services and infrastructure.” Yet, under Section 4.12.2.3 — Recreation, the projected increase in tourism and recreation-related employment is not expected to have similar impacts of increased population and demand for social services and infrastructure. We contend that growth in any and all economic activities and employment sectors would generate increased population and demand for services. As the DEIS is currently written, it unfairly singles out the minerals industry as the sole source of these presumably negative impacts. Further, as stated above, there are studies that indicate that 81% of expenditures on well development. Thus, the positive impacts of job creation and “increase[d] overall prosperity in the region” could be a more significant benefit to the planning area because, as BLM correctly notes, “wages in th[e] [energy] sector. . . are typically higher than service and government related jobs.”	According to data provided by the State of Utah’s Utah Data Center, the population increases for the Uintah Basin was 13.1% from 2000-2007. This figure is well below the State of Utah total of 20.2%, indicating that population change has not been very high. It is possible, however, that the components of population change (age, gender, etc) may be changing, but the BLM lacks data to assess this possibility.	
KerrMcGee Oil and Gas Onshore LLC	O-29	SO54 (SO-Y) (J-SO12)	The draft RMP/EIS states that the rationale for decreasing mineral development is to increase recreation and OHV opportunities in the Vernal Planning Area. According to the information presented in Table 4.12.1, the economic value of oil and gas sales in the Vernal planning area is currently \$189.53 million and \$248.68 million, respectively. Royalties are currently more than \$8.6 million annually. According to the draft RMP/EIS recreation currently provides a total tax benefit at approximately \$1.6 million. The revenues from royalties, alone, are more than five times the tax benefits from recreation.	The jobs created per well has been revised in the FEIS. Based on data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, it is more reasonable to project an increase approximating 3.74 new jobs per well drilled than the approximately 14 suggested in the UEO study, which was for only one well. The impact analysis in Chapter 4 will be rewritten to reflect this lower estimate. The FEIS will continue to reflect the high economic value provided by minerals activities in the Uintah Basin.	X

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			<p>Under Alternative D (existing conditions) the total number of jobs, based on the average number of employees per well, is estimated to be 215,260 over the next 20 years, while there are 1,578 jobs attributable to recreation. We question the rationale for increasing recreational opportunities at the expense of oil and gas development, which would decrease the revenues to the state, counties, and Tribes, as well as decrease the supply of oil and gas to the public. In addition, a decrease in future oil and gas development is contrary to the President's Energy Policy.</p>	<p>See also comment responses SO15 and SO37.</p>	
Utah Environmental Congress	O-31	SD223 (SD-RR)	<p>The UEC requests that the Vernal BLM identity and inventory of all undeveloped adjacent BLM lands in your RMP revision and the associated site-specific environmental analysis. After this is completed, the UEC urges the VFO to assign management prescriptions that would preserve or enhance the undeveloped and wilderness characteristics of all of these adjacent BLM parcels. Additionally, the UEC urges the VFO to formally recommend each of these Vernal BLM parcels for wilderness designation to Congress. We understand that this may involve 'Wilderness Study Area and/or some other designation.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.</p>	
Utah Environmental Congress	O-31	SD224 (SD-SS)	<p>We would like to notify the BLM that the UEC roadless area inventory and subsequent wilderness proposal are also available on line at www.uec-utah.org.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
Western Gas Resources, Inc.	O-32	SD384 (WF110) (AWF-1)	<p>We are concerned with the preferred alternative's inclusion of a designation of an ACEC for the white-tailed prairie dog in the Coyote Basin. In November 2004 the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) denied a listing petition for a white-tailed prairie dog ACEC in the Coyote Basin. The FWS concluded in the 90-Day Finding that "there is not substantial scientific or</p>	<p>The Coyote Basin ACEC relevance and importance criteria can be found in Appendix G in the Final EIS. Additionally, the importance for this proposed ACEC is based on a specific white-tailed prairie dog complex that has had many consecutive years of population inventory collected. Prairie dog complexes have relevance in the life cycles of other</p>	

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			commercial information to indicate that listing the white-tailed prairie dog may be warranted at this time.” We would recommend that the BLM look at the FWS 90-Day Finding and the Conservation Assessment, a study completed by a consortium of affected state agencies and reconsider establishing any ACECs with regard to white-tailed prairie dogs.	sensitive species.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD170 (R-RE3)	These comments apply to Alternatives A through D. The RMP generally fails to document the need to continue the existing ACECs. Many correspond to the now abolished WIAs, and in several cases, the RMP adopts additional restrictions on the activities within the ACECs. The RMP needs to recognize that continued livestock grazing is consistent with the objectives of the ACECs.	See Response to Comment SD50G-25. Management prescriptions for Livestock Grazing can be found in Table 2.1 (Livestock and Grazing Management), Appendix F, and Appendix L of the PRMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD171 (R-RE2)	The RMP should delete this section entirely, since it does not use an up-to-date study that reflects current developments along the river segments as well as water rights.	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS. The existing inventory is sufficient for a programmatic level document. The process,	

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				<p>including suitability considerations for each eligible stream, is found in Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>In Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS, it states that:</p> <p>“All decisions made in the RMP and subsequent implementation decisions will be subject to valid existing rights”.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD172 (R-RE1)	<p>The draft RMP formulates recommendations for wild and scenic river segments and then adopts de facto designation. BLM misreads its authority. First, FLPMA does not grant BLM authority to manage river segments as wild, scenic, or recreational. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act only authorizes a study. 16 U.S.C. §1276(d)(1). Unlike the Wilderness Act, the law does not direct BLM to formulate recommendations or to manage these rivers until final action by Congress.</p> <p>Indeed, a river segment can be nominated by a state and approved by the Secretary of Interior or it must await action by Congress. 16 U.S.C. §1273(a). As it concerns the Vernal Planning Area, there is no support in Utah, let alone action, for designation, and no support in Congress. Thus, those portions of the RMP that would purport to manage segments of the Green River as either scenic or recreational are beyond BLM's authority and must be removed from the plan.</p>	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD174 (R-GC3)	The river segment proposals are problematic in light of the developments found in the corridor. Ranchers have been grazing livestock in the ½ mile corridor proposed as a scenic or recreation river. Many oil and gas companies are also producing within the same proposed corridors that the RMP would now close.	The RMP recognizes all valid existing rights within the Vernal Planning Area and would not retroactively apply management prescriptions to existing rights that would conflict with the currently allowable activities accompanying those rights.	

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			The RMP fails to address these active legal rights and land uses and does not explain how designation is appropriate, when it creates land use conflicts that currently do not exist.	In Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS, states that: "All decisions made in the RMP and subsequent implementation decisions will be subject to valid existing rights".	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD179	The proposed ACECs and SMAs do not provide for livestock grazing and would appear to drive out livestock operations.	See Response to Comment SD79-G-27.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD337 (R-SD1)	<p>Continuation of existing and the establishment of new areas of critical environmental concern ("ACEC") are poorly documented and should be dropped for several reasons. First, the DEIS and Appendix fail to adequately document the basis to continue, expand, or create new ACECs. FLPMA requires that an ACEC be based on an irreparable threat to a resource value of national, as opposed to local, significance. 43 U.S.C. §1702(a). Existing ACECs must be re-justified in the next RMP, since there is no rule or policy that provides that existing ACECs are automatically continued. 43 C.F.R. §1610.7-2; see also H-1610-1, App. C.</p> <p>In several cases, expansions of ACECs are justified based on wildlife and/or wildlife habitat for big game species, which are a plentiful resource not subject to irreparable harm or threat and not of national significance. In other cases, like Brown's Park, the ACEC is based on an historic ranch site that is already protected under the NHPA. The added land area is merely a buffer, without evidence of irreparable threat or national significance that would justify the additional land for the ACEC.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22 for ACEC authority and irreparable damage.</p> <p>The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.</p> <p>Browns Park relevance and importance criteria include high value scenery, wildlife, cultural, and historic resources and are not limited to the historic property.</p>	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD338 (R-SD2)	BLM planning policy discourages the use of special management designations because they establish ambiguous management criteria and generally avoid the more exacting criteria for ACECs. The wisdom of this direction is illustrated by the numerous ambiguous and confusing designations found in the Vernal plan. The RMP uses SRMA as a fall-back to ACEC designation, supporting the assumption that SRMA or SMA is merely an ambiguous and catch-all term to limit multiple uses. This contradicts FLPMA mandates and should be abandoned.	SRMAs are not special designations but rather are management tools for the maintenance and enhancement of recreational opportunities. ACECs are a special designation and provide for the focusing of special management attention on the maintenance and enhancement of relevant and important resource values that may not be related to recreation, and, therefore, would not be managed under a recreation management plan.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD339 (R-SD3)	The RMP misconstrues the settlement terms in State of Utah v. Norton as allowing BLM to manage public lands as if they have wilderness character based on the controversial and disputed "wilderness" inventory. The settlement provides that the inventory cannot be the basis for managing these areas as if they were wilderness study areas.	See Response to SD16A-G-22. Additionally, wilderness characteristics are specifically addressed in the 2007 Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD340 (R-SD4)	Delete the entirety of the following statement: "A plan would have to be filed for operations usually conducted under notice in: 1. areas in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and areas designated for potential addition to the system; 2. designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)"	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD340A (R-SD4)	The RMP cannot amend the Part 3809 rules to require plans of operation when notice is otherwise all that is required. 43 C.F.R. §3809.11. A rule has the effect of law and a land use plan cannot supersede a legislative rule.	See comment response ME19.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD341 (R-SD5)	Delete the entirety of the following statement: “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, unless related to recreational infrastructure support.”	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD341A (R-SD5)	The RMP does not document the basis for the ½ mile line-of-sight area. A similar designation was held to be unlawful by the Eighth Circuit. Sokol v. Kennedy, 210 F.3d 876, 880 (8th Cir. 2000). To the extent that the surface disturbance standard is part of the proposed wild and scenic river, it also violates federal law and policy. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act does not authorize management of river corridors where neither the State nor the Congress has nominated the river segment. BLM’s sole authority is to study; it cannot change management as if already designated. 16 U.S.C. §1273.	The one-half mile line of sight stipulation is associated with the proposed ACEC designation and not the Wild and Scenic River Act. ACEC values include unique geologic formations, high value scenic vistas, and a riparian ecosystem. Also, see Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD342 (R-SD6)	FLPMA states: "The term 'areas of critical environmental concern' means areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards." 43 U.S.C. §1702(a).	Comment noted.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD343 (R-SD7)	The proposed and the existing ACECs in the RMP do not meet the definition. There is no evidence that the ACEC resources are threatened by 'irreparable harm' and that they are more than locally significant resources.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD344 (R-SD8)	Delete the entirety of the following statement: "Red Creek Watershed (24,475 acres) – Manage to protect the high value watershed and wildlife habitat resources."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD344A (R-SD8)	In addition to the fact that the Red Creek ACEC is a surrogate for the former WIA, the ACEC will fragment management to the detriment of land management and multiple uses. Wildlife habitat in question is locally	The commenter has not supported the contention that designation of the ACEC will cause fragmentation of management. Only one of the importance criteria refers to more than locally	

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			rather than nationally, significant.	significant qualities, and is not the sole resource value to consider when designating ACECs.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD345 (R-SD9)	<p>Delete the entirety of the following statement:</p> <p>“Prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of certain public lands to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics.”</p> <p>A future inventory has no place in an RMP. BLM has no additional authority to either establish new WSAs or to manage the areas as wilderness. BLM also repealed its wilderness inventory guidance, so reference to a future wilderness inventory would be without any criteria.</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD20A-G-22, O-14.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD346 (R-SD10)	The proposed wild and scenic rivers in the RMP exceed BLM authority under the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. Neither the state nor Congress support designation of these rivers and, thus, BLM lacks any authority to manage these rivers as wild or scenic. 16 U.S.C. §1272(a).	The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when	

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				<p>statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD347 (R-SD11)	The following discussion [see R-SD12 to R-SD19] documents the basis that the proposed river segments fail to meet the study criteria and should be dropped.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD348 (R-SD12)	The following developments are found and are the basis for the failure of this river segment to meet the study criteria (the segment should be dropped):	All of the lands mentioned in this comment are managed by surface management agencies other	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transmission powerlines and corridors -Tail race restrooms and boat ramp that was improved in the 1990s and built in 1965 -Dripping Springs bathrooms built in the 1990s -Little Hole improvements including road, paved parking lot, restrooms, enlarged parking area, boat ramps and picnic areas all built in the 1990s -UDWR/SITLA lands have fences, irrigation ditches -Little Hole high volume gas pipeline corridor built in the 1970s 	than the BLM.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD349 (R-SD13)	<p>The following developments are found and are the basis for the failure of this river segment to meet the study criteria (the segment should be dropped):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Power lines and access roads to Brown's Park built in 1960s -Mann Bench Road east side dugway built in 1960s -About 8 developed campgrounds and improvements including restrooms -Water gap fence on Green River pasture built in 1970s and 1980s -Livestock allotments and improvements on both sides of the river -Crouse irrigation diversions structure before 1980 -Indian Crossing BLM horse corrals pasture built in 2001 -Indian Crossing improved campground built in 2001 -Indian Crossing boat ramp and improvements built in 2001 	These developments were considered in the BLM's eligibility and suitability evaluations. Please, see Appendix C in the PRMP/FEIS for more information.	
Vermillion Ranch	O-33	SD350	The following developments are found and are the basis for the failure of this river segment to meet the	These developments were considered in the BLM's eligibility and suitability evaluations. Please, see	

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Limited Partnership		(R-SD14) (R-SD15 through R-SD18)	<p>study criteria (the segment should be dropped):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Taylor Flat campground improvements ('90s) -Road to Taylor Flat subdivision ('60s-70s) -Allen Ranch irrigation pump setting and power-lines, fences and cultivated fields (~'70s) -Allen Ranch headquarters and out-buildings, corrals, cemetery, power-lines, streetlights, and fences -Multiple developed campgrounds from Taylor Flat Bridge to Colorado State line ('80s and 90s) -Pipeline corridor and access roads (70s, 80s, 90s, and 00s) -UDWR Bridgeport pump setting, irrigation canal and flume ('70s) -UDWR Parson's irrigation diversion and canal improvements ('02-04) -Multiple UDWR fences, dikes, outlet structures all associated with waterfowl management area administration from Bridgeport to Colorado state line ('70s thru 2000s) -Livestock grazing allotments on both sides of the river -River access roads (all currently used) -Large portions of old Taylor flat bridge along river ('83) -Old pump setting and associated structures ('60s) -Parson's garage and ferry structures ('50s and earlier) -Pipeline crossing and associated access roads ('70s thru '00s) -Pipeline corridor through Rye Grass Canyon within view shed ('70s thru '00s) -Power lines ('60s) 	Appendix C in the PRMP/FEIS for more information.	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Developed river access on both sides of the river below Swallow Canyon, River left improved in the '90 -Improved restroom facilities ('90s) -UDWR pump setting ('70s) -Private pump setting and associated infrastructure ('70s? with improvements in '04) -Private agricultural fields with wheel line irrigation system, electrical lines, and stack yards -Non-native invasive weed species including white-top, Russian olive, tamarisk, and phragmites throughout river corridor -River access at multiple points to the Colorado state line on both sides of the River -UDWR WMA headquarters with associated out buildings and equipment ('70s to present) -Private ranch headquarters with associated out buildings and equipment ('20s to present) -UDWR and USFWS waterfowl pond and associated dikes, fences, roads and outlet structures ('70s) 		
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD355 (R-SD19)	<p>The following developments are found and are the basis for the failure of this river segment to meet the study criteria (the segment should be dropped)::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Developed campground with associated roads, fences, and modern restroom facilities ('70s and 80s) -Swinging bridge improved in '80s -Livestock corrals on both sides of the river associated with swinging bridge improvements ('04) -Roads, fences, signs and cattle guards are all visible from the river -From the swinging bridge downstream there are more 	These developments were considered in the BLM's eligibility and suitability evaluations. Please, see Appendix C in the PRMP/FEIS for more information.	

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			dikes, fences, roads weed outcroppings, outlet structures, diversions and associated administration site associated with active livestock operations and USFWS waterfowl management activities.		
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD356 (R-SD20)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>“BLM would manage the black-footed ferret consistent with the 1999 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan Amendment and those portions of the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin, Uintah County, Utah that are consistent with this plan amendment. Any black-footed ferret introduced in Daggett County should be classified as experimental nonessential.”</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD356A (R-SD20)	Daggett County should be added to the experimental nonessential designation status for the ferret and the lands in the county.	The statement in question is specific to Uintah County and the existing reintroduction plan. Black-footed ferrets introduced outside of Uintah County or outside of the existing area covered by the plan would be managed in cooperation with the UDWR and reintroduction plans developed for that population.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD357 (R-SD21)	Delete the entirety of Alternative A in Table 2.3.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p>	

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				<p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD357A (R-SD21)	<p>The Bitter Creek ACEC is a SUWA-nominated area that corresponds to the former Desolation Canyon WIAs nominated by SUWA. The extensive use of VRM Classes I and II and closure to OHV use also mimic de facto wilderness management. This conflicts with BLM direction following the Utah v. Norton settlement, IM 2003-275 and 2003-274.</p>	<p>The FLPMA states that in developing land use plans the BLM shall give priority to the designation and protection ACEC. The BLM gave full consideration to the designation and preservation ACEC during this land use planning process. Nominations for ACECs from the public were specifically solicited during the scoping period. A total of 35 ACEC nominations were received and the relevance and importance of each were determined. Fourteen of the ACEC nominations were found to meet both the criteria of relevance and importance and all these were included for special management as proposed ACECs in Alternative B.</p> <p>The BLM Manual 1613.23 states that "After completing the analysis of the effects of each alternative, the manager selects the preferred plan alternative which best meets the planning criteria and the guidance applicable to the area. The preferred alternative reflects the BLM's proposals for designation and management of ACECs." The BLM has full discretion in the selection of ACECs for the various alternatives. In the selection of the preferred alternative, a comparison of estimated effects and trade-offs associated with the alternative leads to development and selection of the preferred</p>	

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				<p>alternative.</p> <p>Should BLM choose not designate potential ACECs, BLM Manual 1613 .33E provides direction in this process. Rational for not proposing designation of a potential ACEC in the preferred alternative must be provided, that is, the reasons for the decision not to provide special management attention must be clearly set forth. Such reasoning may include:</p> <p>Special management attention is not required to protect the potential ACEC because standard or routine management prescriptions are sufficient to protect the Relevance and Importance Values from risks or threats of damage/degradation.</p> <p>The area is being proposed for designation under another statutory authority such as wilderness and would require no further management attention.</p> <p>The manager has concluded that no special management attention is justified either because of exposure to risks of damage to threats to safety is greater if the area is designated or there are no reasonable special management actions which can be taken to protect the resource from irreparable damage or to restore it to a viable condition.</p> <p>BLM ACEC guidance (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; Policy and Procedures Guidelines, 45 FR 57318, 57319 (Aug. 27, 1980)) allows a manager to exercise discretion not to</p>	

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				<p>protect a potential ACEC through ACEC designation, but that decision has to be documented through the planning process. If the manager decides to provide the necessary protection through another form of special management, the documentation will include specifics of the special management proposed. Rationale for all ACEC decisions will be provided in the Record of Decision and supported by analysis in the EIS. If the decision is to allocate the resources with relevant and important values, in whole or in part, to another use which would in result in damage or loss to such resource, the authorized officer must first find that there is an overriding public need for such other use; that the public benefits of such other use outweigh the public benefits of use appropriate with ACEC designation, and that such other use will best meet the present and future needs of the American people. In addition, any allocations to such other use will include all feasible planning and management to prevent, minimize, mitigate or restore any consequent damage to the resource, and these requirements will be specified in the documentation.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p> <p>The Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This</p>	

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				Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603's non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD357B (R-SD21)	The RMP fails to document the threat of irreparable harm to resources of national significance to justify the ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD357C (R-SD21)	It also fails to identify the effects of the classification on other land uses, especially livestock grazing. For these reasons, it should be dropped as an ACEC or RNA.	Livestock grazing would not be altered through blanket restrictions within the ACEC. Any changes to livestock grazing would be the result of monitoring and the discovery of unintended or undue impacts from specific grazing activities. Such changes would be undertaken in consultation with the affected permittee.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD358 (R-SD22)	No designation of the Bitter Creek area is the most consistent with FLPMA objectives as well as current BLM policy and direction.	See Response to Comment SD357A-O-33.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359 (R-SD23)	Delete all of Alternative A.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the</p>	

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				<p>current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359A (R-SD23)	The proposed White River ACEC fails to conform to the ACEC criteria in FLPMA and the planning rules. First, the RMP fails to document the need.	See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS for relevance and importance criteria.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359B (R-SD23)	FLPMA definition of an ACEC requires evidence that there is a threat of "irreparable harm" to resource values of national, rather than local or regional, significance. The RMP makes no such showing.	See comment response SD27 for irreparable harm discussion.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359C (R-SD23)	The RMP also fails to recognize the right of livestock grazing to continue, which creates a conflict that is not adequately disclosed or discussed.	<p>Special designations would not alter livestock grazing. Management of livestock grazing in areas of special designations would be consistent with the management provisions outlined in Appendix F and Appendix L</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD174-O-33.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359D (R-SD23)	Where VRM Class I or II is imposed, for example, there is a legitimate concern that range improvements and vegetation treatment would be limited or not allowed. Similarly, the RMP would appear to require or lead to reductions in grazing to be more consistent with VRM I or II.	See comment responses VE\$, VI1, and VI14.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD359E (R-SD23)	This proposal corresponds to the former White River WIA. As noted above with respect to the Bitter Creek ACEC, the VRM Classes and limits on surface uses looks very much like de facto wilderness management. This violates the terms of the settlement in State of Utah v. Norton as well as the implementing direction.	The Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA § 603 and required to be managed under § 603's non-impairment standard,	

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			IM 2003-275 and 2003-274.	and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA § 202 land management process. See comment response SD20A.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD360 (R-SD24)	RE: The White River. This area should be managed as part of the public lands for multiple use.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD361 (R-SD25)	Delete Alternative C for the reasons expressed in Comment SD359.	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS. See comment response SD359.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362 (R-SD26)	All alternatives related to the management of Brown's Park as an ACEC and Alternatives A through C for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork Complex should be removed.	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not	

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				<p>substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362A (R-SD26)	The RMP fails to document the need to manage the Brown's Park area as an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD90-G-24.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362B (R-SD26)	There is no evidence of a threat of "irreparable harm" to nationally significant resource values.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362C (R-SD26)	Cultural and historic resources are already protected under the NHPA and ARPA. Scenic views and wildlife habitat abound throughout the VPA and there is no basis to conclude that the ACEC is nationally significant. Second, there is no documentation that the entire 52,721 acres are necessary. The area is adjacent to an existing wildlife refuge and presumably the best wildlife habitat was withdrawn for the refuge. Third, the RMP fails to explain why current surface use standards do not protect scenic views, wildlife habitat, or cultural and historic resources. Certainly historic sites are far less than 52,721 acres.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362D (R-SD26)	Alternatively, the RMP needs to recognize and incorporate livestock grazing and other land uses as part of the area. Certainly, ACEC status is not intended to close public lands to the other multiple uses. 43 C.F.R. §1610.51.	See Response to Comment SD174-O-33.	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362E (R-SD26)	The RMP does not document the “irreparable harm” to specific and significant national or regional resources for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork Complex, does not document the need to set aside the entire 24,285 acres to protect specific sites, such as relict vegetation, and fails to document the continued need for this ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22. See Appendix G in the Final EIS for relevance and importance criteria.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD362F (R-SD26)	Alternatively, any activity plan needs to protect and respect existing and long-standing land uses, such as livestock grazing and necessary infrastructure.	See Response to Comment SD174-O-33.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD363 (R-SD27)	Alternatives A through C should be removed.	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD363A (R-SD27)	In this case, there is so little documentation that it looks as if the proposed ACEC is a substitute for the former Nine Mile Canyon WIA in violation of the settlement terms and direction in State of Utah v. Norton.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD364 (R-SD28)	Modify the statements as indicated: "Manage lands in the WSA according to the following	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes	

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			<p>prescription:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire management category B D • Oil and Gas lease category timing and controlled surface use • As part of the Browns Park ACEC • OHVs limited to designated routes • VRM Class IV • Available for woodcutting • Livestock grazing" 	<p>necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.</p> <p>OHV use is limited to designated routes or designated areas throughout the planning area and under all alternatives.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD364A (R-SD28)	Inclusion in ACEC only shows lack of basis for ACEC as double layers of protection.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD365 (R-SD29)	<p>Modify Alternative A as follows:</p> <p>"345,850 acres of ACEC designation, 52,978 acres of WSAs, and 72 miles of W&SR recommended designations may in some cases increase would result in the second highest amount of benefits to rangeland, fire, soil, watershed, vegetation, riparian, woodland, and wildlife resources."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions</p>	

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				or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD365A (R-SD29)	The RMP incorrectly assumes that ACEC designation, WSAs or W&SR classification will benefit habitat for special status species. There are too many habitat types and too many limitations to support this generalization.	The statements as written are intended to provide a relative comparison of alternatives based upon the same set of analytical assumptions.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD365B (R-SD29)	Modify Alternative D as follows: "165,944 acres of ACEC designation, 52,978 acres of WSAs, and 52 miles of W&SR recommended designations would result in the least amount of benefits to rangeland, fire, soil, watershed, vegetation, riparian, woodland, and wildlife resources."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD365C (R-SD29)	The RMP cannot accurately equate ACEC, WSA and W&SR recommended areas as per se beneficial to all resources. The opposite is generally true since there is less management and treatment for noxious weeds. The steady migration of elk out of parks and into national forests is just one example of where wildlife does not necessarily prefer pristine areas.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited	O-33	SD366 (R-SD30)	Modify the following statement as indicated:	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:	

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Partnership			"34,640 acres of rangeland improvement and additional range improvement structures would benefit special status species where additional water sources were established and habitat were restored, though improvements could have adverse impacts if livestock move into areas that have received little grazing in the past."	<p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD366A (R-SD30)	This statement suffers from an all inclusive and thus inaccurate generalization. It also confuses the difference between vegetation treatments and water projects. It is assumed that the acreage figure refers to acres to be treated and not acres affected potentially by water projects. The RMP also omits water projects and fences, which are essential to distribution and management of grazing.	<p>The commenter is correct that the acres referred to are specific to vegetation treatments geared at range improvement under Alternative A. The same assumption was made in the description of the other alternatives in this same line of Table 2.5. The statements within the table for all alternatives have been reworded to include numbers for potential water projects. Also, clarification has been made to the Vegetation section of Table 2.5 in the Draft EIS that the acres referred to are related strictly to vegetation treatments geared toward range/forage improvement.</p> <p>Note: Table 2.5 of the Draft RMP has been renumbered as Table 2.2 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	X
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD367 (R-SD31)	FLPMA requires that BLM consider whether to continue previous ACEC designations. 43 C.F.R. §1610.7-2. The RMP must justify the ACEC by proving a threat of irreparable harm to nationally significant resource values. As discussed in the cover letter, the RMP fails to do so. The draft RMP fails to disclose the basis for continuing these ACEC designations. To the extent	See Responses to Comments SD8-G-9,SD 27-G-22, SD90-G-24, SD125-G-1.	

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			that the draft RMP imposes new criteria such as no oil and gas development that requires surface use, then BLM must publish notice in the Federal Register as well. 43 C.F.R. §1610.7-2.		
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD368 (R-SD32)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"Management of the White River area as an SRMA (which would include management of public use and limiting surface disturbance by designating the western portion VRM I and the eastern portion VRM II) under Alternative A would provide more long-term, beneficial impacts to water and soil than Alternative D – No Action. Restrictions on management tools may limit benefits and result in long-term adverse effects."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD368A (R-SD32)	The RMP fails to document the basis for VRM I, which is reserved for wilderness or WSA. Moreover, the proposal to designate the area either VRM I or VRM II is not documented. Instead it appears as if the planning team "lumped this area" into a restrictive class.	<p>The section in question reflects the analysis of impacts from management decisions addressed in Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) of the PRMP/FEIS. The identification of VRM classes in this section does not introduce new alternatives.</p> <p>Further, no VRM classification precludes necessary or desirable management activities, such as vegetation treatments, but rather it limits the manner in which said treatments can occur and the duration of their visual impacts. See comment response VI44.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch	O-33	SD368B	Since this area corresponds to the former Cripple Cowboy WIA, it appears to violate the terms of the	Classification of the area as VRM Class I and II is part of the special management of the proposed	

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Limited Partnership		(R-SD32)	settlement agreement, State of Utah v. Norton. SRMA designation will not necessarily benefit soil and water resources.	SRMA. As such, classification does place limitations on the nature and extent of surface disturbance. Establishment of the SRMA would, in general, benefit soil and water resources on a landscape level.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD369 (R-SD33)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"Management of the Blue Mountain, Fantasy Canyon, Book Cliffs, Red Mountain-Dry Fork, and Nine Mile Canyon areas as SRMAs would limit OHV use to trails and therefore provide greater direct long-term beneficial impacts to soils and water, as compared to Alternative D. Although increased public visitation would have greater indirect, long-term adverse impacts to water quality and soil productivity than Alternative D. Restrictions on management tools may limit benefits and result in long-term adverse effects."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD369A (R-SD33)	The SRMAs are not documented as necessary under Appendix C, H-1610-rel 675. The proposals should be put out for comment as a supplement to the draft or be dropped.	<p>See Response to Comment SD368A-O-33.</p> <p>BLM Manual H-1601-1 states that a SRMA is: "A public lands unit identified in land use plans to direct recreation funding and personnel to fulfill commitments made to provide specific, structured recreation opportunities (i.e., activity, experience, and benefit opportunities, both land use plan decisions and subsequent implementing actions for recreation in each SRMA area geared to a strategically identified primary market – destinations, community or undeveloped."</p>	

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				Information about the specific SRMAs included in the alternatives can be found in Sections 3.10.1.1 and 3.10.1.2 and their subsections. The SRMAs listed in these sections have been made available for public comment during the draft RMP public comment period.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD370	BLM policy does not authorize VRM I for a SRMA. The Brown's Park SRMA is not justified and should be dropped. SRMA designation also limits management tools, especially with visual restrictions to no good purpose. Designation would have significant adverse environmental impacts that the RMP omits.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD370 (R-SD34)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"Management of 52,720 acres in the Browns Park area as an SRMA, with special management attention given to enhancement of riparian and fisheries resources and limiting OHV use, would impose restrictive de facto wilderness protection for protect 34,246 more acres than Alternative D – No Action. Closing the southern portion of the Browns Park area to OHV use and managing it as VRM I would reduce recreation use. Management would reduce tools available for effective land management, reduce opportunities for livestock</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions</p>	

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			operations, and facilitate additional subdivisions in the area with less open space, recreation access, and wildlife habitat. Proposed management would result in less surface disturbance by development and recreation users; this, in turn, would have indirect, long-term benefits and adverse impacts to water quality and soil productivity."	or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD371 (R-SD35)	Delete the entirety of the following statement: "With all alternatives, the seven currently designated ACECs (Brown's Park, Nine Mile Canyon, Lears Canyon, Red Mountain-Dry Fork, Red Creek Watershed, Pariette Wetlands, and Lower Green River Corridor) would continue to be managed as designated ACECs, and their relevance and importance values, including historic, cultural, scenic, fish and wildlife resources, would continue to be protected, subject to valid existing rights."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD371A (R-SD35)	BLM planning handbook and rules require that the RMP revision justify the continuation of existing and proposed ACECs. The RMP fails to do so. The standards are relatively high, in that BLM must show that there is a risk of irreparable harm to "significant historic, cultural, or scenic value; a fish or wildlife resource or other natural system or process; or natural hazard." 43 U.S.C. §1702(a); 43 C.F.R. §1610.7-2(a). Similarly there is no discussion that the resources have "substantial significant and value" as opposed to merely local significance. §1610.7-2. The RMP discussion suggests that the resources have only local	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22 for ACEC authority and irreparable damage. The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register for on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-	

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			or regional but not national significance. In this context, the ACECs probably should not have been classified initially but cannot be rejustified.	day public comment period.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD372 (R-SD36)	Delete the entirety of the following statement: "With all alternatives, relevance and importance values of potential and existing ACECs would benefit from the special management attention they would receive if designated, including development of comprehensive, integrated activity plans in some cases. The plans would address the maintenance and development of OHV or non-OHV trails, minimal facilities development necessary for human health and safety, and other surface disturbing activities that may be complementary to the goals and objectives of each ACEC."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS. See comment response SD27-G-22 for irreparable and reparable damage discussion.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD372A (R-SD36)	The RMP fails to identify the substantial importance and threats to the ACEC resources for which they were established. It is not accurate to assume that plans will protect the values.	See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS for relevance and importance criteria.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD372B (R-SD36)	The emphasis appears to be on OHV plans, thereby suggesting that a separate limit on OHV use is all that is necessary rather than a special management plan for the entire ACEC.	OHV use would not be the sole focus of integrated activity plans but would be one component of them. As the statement quoted by the commenter indicates, other issues to be addressed in the plan include, but are not limited to, facilities development for human health and safety as well as surface	

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				disturbing activities.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD373 (R-SD37)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"In alternatives where some potential ACECs would not be designated or where surface disturbance may occur, the relevance and importance of these areas may mean the areas will not be fully reclaimed be at some risk of irreparable damage during the life of the plan, depending upon the specific resource use categories or other actions proposed by alternative."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD373A (R-SD37)	<p>It is inaccurate to describe surface disturbance as having "irreparable damage" to resources. Oil and gas development is an irreversible commitment of the mineral resources and will arguably occur for the life of the plan. Soil and vegetation resources are routinely reclaimed, contradicting the description of "irreparable damage."</p>	<p>See comment response SD27-G-22 for irreparable and reparable damage discussion.</p> <p>Table 2.1.7 (Soils and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS indicates the BLM will comply with Gold Book standards as a Best Management Practice, which includes reclamation. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 and 43 CFR Part 3100 authorizes the BLM to enforce reclamation standards on all of its managed lands.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD374 (R-SD38)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"Decisions that would generally have a positive impact on potential and existing ACECs, regardless of which alternative is chosen, include those involving restrictions on development. fire resources, soil and</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not</p>	

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			watershed actions, and vegetation resources (including riparian areas and woodlands). Positive impacts of treatments would, in the long-term, restore vegetative components to resemble more natural ecosystems, which are important to identified relevant and important values in some ACECs."	<p>substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD374A (R-SD38)	As written, fire management and vegetation treatment would not occur in ACECs so it is difficult to assume benefit to these resources. Similarly, it is inaccurate to assume benefits to soil and water, when big game and wild horses continue and recreation use is increased but management actions are constrained.	The commenter is incorrect in the assumption that fire management and vegetation treatment would not occur in ACECs. There is no blanket correspondence between ACEC boundaries and fire management categories. Compare Figures 2 and 22-24. Further, no ACECs preclude vegetation treatments. Treatments limitations related to VRM class or other program decisions are site specific and restrict only the manner and duration of treatment, not the ability to treat.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD375 (R-SD39)	The RMP classifies the ACECs as VRM I and II, which prohibits or restricts vegetation treatments. Thus, ACEC classification will have adverse effects.	No VRM classification prevents necessary vegetation treatments, including prescribed burns, which are considered short-duration visual disruptions. No BLM management decisions, including VRM classifications, apply to state trust land inholdings. The BLM cannot impose any restrictions or limitations on lands not under its jurisdiction. The BLM must also provide for reasonable access to such inholdings.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD376 (R-SD40)	The RMP does not disclose the status of the lands within the ACECs (proposed and current). If these areas are already under lease, it suggests that the areas are of local but not national importance and should not be classified as ACECs.	The status of lands is irrelevant to the creation of ACECs.	
Vermillion	O-33	SD377	Delete the following statement in its entirety:	BLM declines to make the suggested wording	

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Ranch Limited Partnership		(R-SD41)	<p>"Alternatives A and C would designate 52,721 acres in Brown's Park as an ACEC. It would develop a comprehensive integrated activity plan that would address protection of high-value scenic views, wildlife habitat, and cultural and historic resources. The area would be closed, NSO, or managed with timing and controlled surface use for oil and gas leasing. Visual Resources would be managed as Class I or II. OHV use would be closed or limited to designated routes. This would preserve existing wildlife habitat and cultural resources. It would also afford protection to visual resources, and would consequently improve the recreational experience in the area. Closing the area to OHV use or restricting it to existing routes would also decrease disturbance but would also decrease the motorized recreational opportunities in the area."</p>	<p>changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD377A (R-SD41)	<p>This ACEC should be dropped from the preferred alternative for the simple fact that there is no threat of irreparable harm to the values described and the identified values are not of national significance. The wildlife and scenery are common throughout the planning area.</p>	<p>See comment response SD27-G-22 for irreparable and reparable damage discussion.</p> <p>ACECs are only required to meet one of five criteria listed in BLM Manual 1613. See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS for a list of the importance criteria.</p> <p>The Browns Park ACEC relevance and importance criteria can be found in Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS and include high value scenery, cultural, and historic resources. These values are not common throughout the planning area.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD377B (R-SD41)	<p>The cultural/historic resources occupy less than 1% of the entire 52,271 acres. Thus, this area does not meet the statutory criteria for an ACEC and must be reduced to conform to the site or dropped.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.</p>	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD377C (R-SD41)	BLM policy does not support either Class I or Class II VRM. VRM management is an entirely different exercise and there is no documentation that the entire 52,271 acres could be seen from trails or roads. Instead, the RMP appears to "lump" the area into the same viewshed, which does not conform to VRM policy H-8410, H-8431.	VRM classification prevents necessary vegetation treatments, including prescribed burns, which are considered short-duration visual disruptions. No BLM management decisions, including VRM classifications, apply to state trust land inholdings. The BLM cannot impose any restrictions or limitations on lands not under its jurisdiction. The BLM must also provide for reasonable access to such inholdings.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD377D (R-SD41)	<p>Modify the following statements as indicated:</p> <p>"Under Alternative B 18,474 acres would be designated as an ACEC. The area would be open subject to standard lease terms, closed, NSO, or managed with timing and controlled surface use for oil and gas leasing. Visual Resources would be managed as Class I, II, III, or IV. OHV use would be closed or limited to designated routes."</p> <p>"Since Alternatives A and C have a higher amount of acreage being managed as an ACEC and they have greater restrictions on minerals development and VRM this would result in a greater benefit to wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and recreation in comparison with Alternative B."</p> <p>While smaller, Alternative B proposal also fails to meet the statutory criteria for an ACEC.</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD378 (R-SD42)	<p>Delete the following statement in its entirety relative to Alternative D:</p> <p>"Accordingly, this alternative would provide less</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes</p>	

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			protection to wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and visual resources than A and C but more than B due to the increased acreage."	<p>necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See comment response SD53 for ACEC range of alternatives.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD378A (R-SD42)	There is no basis to assume wildlife habitat or cultural resources would be less protected without the ACEC. The RMP fails to rejustify the ACEC and reliance on these common resource values also suggests the ACEC was never properly established. BLM has no valid soil type data since it has never conducted a digitized soil survey. The RMP cannot make any sound conclusions without such a survey.	The purpose of the ACEC is to focus special management attention where such attention has been deemed necessary in order to protect identified relevant and important resource values. By definition then, the resources of the area need such special management attention, and the lack thereof would place them at risk. Access to a digitized soil type survey would not change the relevant and important values identified for this ACEC nor would it alter the need for special management attention for said values.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD379 (R-SD43)	Delete the following statement in its entirety: "Should Congress designate eligible/suitable river segments into the NWSRS, protection of the outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classifications, and free-flowing nature of these rivers would continue to be protected, but to a greater extent than under the proposed management actions. In	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why</p>	

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			<p>addition to the BLM protecting wild and scenic values to the extent of its authority, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) would not be able to license any hydropower projects within any designated segments. This would preclude any future construction of a dam involving Segment 1 of the White River. Also, if Congress were to designate Segment 2 of the White River into the NWSRS with a tentative classification of Wild, all public lands within the river corridor would automatically be withdrawn from mineral location and the public land laws. In addition, Congress may choose to provide a federal reserved water right for in-stream flow purposes for..."</p>	<p>the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD379A (R-SD43)	<p>BLM cannot manage the river as if it were already designated. Authority is limited to conducting the study. BLM is free at all times to make recommendations to Congress, it just cannot impose management changes to make these de facto wild, scenic or recreational rivers without additional authority.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD380 (R-SD44)	<p>Delete the following statement in its entirety:</p> <p>"Cumulative impacts from implementation of other resource decisions on WSAs, Non-WSA lands with Wilderness Characteristics, and Non-WSA lands likely to have Wilderness Characteristics would be minimal with the exception of mineral and OHV decisions. Mineral resource development and OHV activity could result in major adverse impacts to wilderness characteristics (see Table 4.14.3)."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the</p>	

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				adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD380A (R-SD44)	BLM cannot manage these lands to limit oil and gas and other uses without affecting a withdrawal in accordance with FLPMA, 43 U.S.C. §1714(c).	<p>The commenter does not support his/her contention.</p> <p>The statement in question effectively says that the limited nature of restrictions placed on mineral resource development and OHV use within areas containing or likely to contain wilderness characteristics could result in cumulative adverse impacts on those characteristics. The section in question discusses the cumulative effects of all program decisions, including minerals development, on areas of special designations. It does not discuss the potential impacts of special designations on minerals development, as the commenter appears to suggest.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SD382 (R-SD5)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated:</p> <p>"Visual resource management (VRM) decisions would be both beneficial and adverse. long-term. They would directly affect water and soil resources by precluding some areas from surface disturbance due to their proximity to highways, scenic areas, and special designation areas."</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited	O-33	SD382A (R-SD5)	The proposed management of a segment of the Green River as a wild and scenic river is unlawful. For the most part, but not disclosed, much of the corridor is	The commenter does not identify which segment of the Green River that would be managed as a WSR is in question nor why such management would be	

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Partnership			private and state land. Moreover, the proposal would violate established water compacts and water rights, neither of which is disclosed or addressed in the DEIS.	<p>unlawful.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.</p> <p>The BLM's management of any river to preserve those characteristics that render it eligible and suitable for WSR designation is subject to all valid and existing water rights and compacts.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO101 (R-SO1)	The draft RMP Reasonable and Foreseeable Development Scenario ("RFD") appears to fall short of the analysis required. IM 2004-89. While this only indirectly affects grazing permittees like us, it suggests that the RMP does not adequately address the economic effects of the proposed changes in management found in the draft RMP. A challenge to the RFD could lead to a successful challenge to the RMP, which in turn would delay approval of range projects and vegetation treatments, as well as wild horse management actions.	<p>The socioeconomic impacts of proposed management actions are discussed in Section 4.12 and its subsections.</p> <p>See comment responses ME47 and ME70.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO102 (R-SO2)	The failings of the cumulative effects analysis are most evident in the discussion of social and economic effects of the RMP. The RMP assumes only beneficial effects without addressing the opportunity costs of additional SRMAs and ACECs or limiting rangeland management.	The cumulative impacts sections discuss the impacts of the proposed management decisions in the RMP as a whole in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions unrelated to the RMP. The impacts of special designations and other management decisions considered in the RMP are outlined in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO103 (R-SO3)	RE: Mineral Development--The social and economic section for all of the alternatives entirely omits the role of agriculture in the region. It is the historical land use and consistently plays an important role in the custom and culture of the community as well as the economy. This is a huge omission that needs to be corrected.	The socioeconomic role of agriculture in the planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1 and in the socioeconomic analysis in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO103A (R-SO3)	Re: Recreation--The DEIS needs to acknowledge that tourism tends to generate minimum wage and often seasonal jobs. Such employment is a poor substitute for energy and agriculture as the economic engines of the communities.	See comment response SO12.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO104 (R-SO4)	The DEIS needs to address the fact that the seasonal restrictions concentrate development activities and, thus, economic activity in three months of the summer. This too will have significant and adverse environmental, social, and economic effects. The RMP incorrectly assumes that a tourism-based economy has greater social benefits than communities driven by energy and agriculture. There is no basis for this assumption and strong evidence to the contrary. The economic analysis omits severance taxes paid to the state as well as higher income taxes that are paid to the state when workers earn professional salaries rather than minimum wage and tips (where under-reporting is a longstanding issue).	See Section 4.12 and its subsections for impacts analysis with additional information incorporated into the FEIS. See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO105 (R-SO5)	The DEIS discussion of social and economic factors is limited to tourism and is inadequate. The area historically depended on agriculture and mineral development for its social and economic base. This is still true now. Recreation by contrast plays a relatively small role in the economy. Moreover, a tourism tax base is only sales tax. There is little other tax base since the United States owns the majority of the land in the planning area. It is a misnomer to describe a sales tax base as healthy since it suffers from periodic slumps. By comparison, the State of Utah also assesses a severance tax, which is entirely omitted from the economic discussion. In addition, the counties receive half of the federal mineral leasing revenues	This information has been incorporated into Section 4.12 and its subsections in the FEIS. The socioeconomic role of agriculture in the planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1 and in the socioeconomic analysis in Section 4.12 and its subsections. The socioeconomic role of minerals and energy exploration and development in the planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.1, 3.12.2.2.3, 3.12.3.2.1, 3.12.3.2.3, 3.12.4.2.2.	

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			and these funds play a greater role in funding schools and public services.	Also, see comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO106 (R-SO6)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated by bolded additions and strikethrough deletions:</p> <p>"Visual resource management (VRM) decisions would be both beneficial and adverse. long-term. They would directly affect water and soil resources by precluding some areas from surface disturbance due to their proximity to highways, scenic areas, and special designation areas. However, adverse, short-term, indirect impacts would occur if vegetation treatments were not implemented in VRM-sensitive areas."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO106A (R-SO6)	VRM classes limit land management options and increase the costs of doing business. The EIS must address the adverse effects on the local and regional economies.	This section of Chapter 4 discusses the impacts of VRM decisions on soil and water resources, not minerals or socio-economics. Impacts to those resources are discussed in Sections 4.8 and 4.12.	
Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO107 (R-SO7)	<p>Modify the following statement as indicated by strikethrough deletions:</p> <p>"The Forest Management Plan for the Ashley National Forest could have a cumulative impact with respect to social and economic conditions by either increasing or decreasing tourism visitation based on allowable activities. Additionally, if drilling for oil and gas is allowed on the forest, it could affect the regional economy by reducing tourism and potentially increasing the oil and gas sector of the economy."</p>	<p>Section 4.22.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows:</p> <p>"Additionally, if drilling for oil and gas is allowed on the forest, it could affect the regional economy potentially increasing the oil and gas sector of the economy. In addition, tourism is likely to lose some of its appeal if the visible oil and gas-related activities or installations, detract from the natural environment."</p>	X

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Vermillion Ranch Limited Partnership	O-33	SO107A (R-SO7)	The discussion of cumulative social and economic impacts entirely omits the role of agriculture. BLM appears to forget that ranching forms part of the economic backbone of these counties.	Section 4.22.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to add information on the role of agriculture in the counties...	X
Julander Energy	O-34	SD263 (JSD-7)	We do not agree with the need or justification provided in the RMP to establish as white-tailed prairie dog ACEC in the Vernal area. BLM has not provided substantive scientific info in support of the designation nor has it demonstrated how the white-tailed prairie dog meets the relevance and importance criteria or that the white-tailed prairie dog needs special management.	The Coyote Basin ACEC relevance and importance criteria can be found in Appendix G in the Final EIS. Additionally, the importance for this proposed ACEC is based on a specific white-tailed prairie dog complex that has had many consecutive years of population inventory collected. Prairie dog complexes have relevance in the life cycles of other sensitive species.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD264 (JSD-8)	There are adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already: No surface disturbance within a white-tailed prairie dog town greater than 200 acres, no shooting and no poisoning. No ACEC is necessary.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD265 (JSD-9)	Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already, for example: Protection of bald eagles, and ferruginous hawks with specific language protecting white-tailed prairie dogs as a prey. There is additional language regarding special and temporal protection of the various raptors. These protections will protect the white-tailed prairie dog throughout the whelping period, which also coincides with the shooting ban in place in Utah on public lands not included in the black-footed ferret protection areas. No ACEC is necessary.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD266 (JSD-12)	Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already: "The plan should recognize	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	

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			<p>the National Energy Policy by...(2) encouraging conservation of sensitive resource values."</p> <p>No ACEC is necessary.</p>		
Julander Energy	O-34	SD267 (JSD-11)	<p>Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already: "Manage for unfragmented block of continuous habitat that would provide for the life cycle requirements of a variety of wildlife species".</p> <p>No ACEC is necessary.</p> <p>While gas and oil activity may cause disturbance on the landscape, they also provide habitat expansion opportunities for white-tailed prairie dogs. Conservation Assessment acknowledges that while some populations may decrease in size, others have increased. Also, all alternatives include APHIS support for predator control, managing habitat to prevent the need for listing additional species and cooperating with utility companies to prevent electrocution of raptors. This is important because by eliminating perching opportunities, predation on white-tailed prairie dogs is reduced.</p>	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD268 (JSD-12)	<p>Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already, and no ACEC is necessary: "BLM will participate in the development of a conservation plan for white-tailed prairie dogs."</p> <p>BLM specifically stated it would be revising the RMP to consider the white-tailed prairie dog in special species status which would carry with it protections similar to those for species protected under ESA. They do not</p>	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	

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			say what these protections would be nor does the draft RMP ever hint at that.		
Julander Energy	O-34	SD269 (JSD-13)	Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already, and no ACEC is warranted: Alternatives A and B are very similar. The table (2.3) fails to establish any management to protect white-tailed prairie dogs that is not already provided in other provisions of the document, not special management, no ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD270 (JSD-14)	Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already, and no ACEC is necessary: Summaries are all pretty much the same, similar to A and even to C. If protections are the same regardless of the amount of land covered by an ACEC (or none as in Alternative D), then there is no advantage to the designation of an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD271 (JSD-15)	Adequate protection policies are in place for the white-tailed prairie dog already, and no ACEC is necessary: Raptors: Alternative A provides BMPs in Appendix A and H. These provide protecting for white-tailed prairie dogs during the whelping season.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD272 (JSD-16)	The ACECs really appear to be largely symbolic. We fail to see what they could add to the protection of white-tailed prairie dogs since no "special management" is provided. As such, an ACEC is not appropriate.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD273 (JSD-17)	The Primary Management Zone for black-footed ferret is protected regardless of ACEC designation. There seems to be some confusion in the document regarding the protection area provided by the black-footed ferret reintroduction. The reintroduction plan calls for the entirety of Uintah and Duchesne counties to be considered black-footed ferret potential areas and therefore closed to shooting year round and other	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	

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			<p>protections provided by the black-footed ferret plan. If this is the case then the areas described by Alternative C are already protected, as is the expanded area of Alternative A, and no ACEC is needed as special management already exists through the protection of the ferret. There seems to be an effort throughout the RMP not to discuss the black-footed ferret plan and how it affects/protects the white-tailed prairie dog. ACEC justification includes a need for research focused on disease transmission by fleas, and habitat protection... but these are already in place through black-footed ferret program, which provides protection of the white-tailed prairie dog as the prey base. If the white-tailed prairie dog population is OK the other associated species are also protected.</p> <p>Relevance and importance criteria are not clearly defined for the Coyote Basin complex. It would be circular to argue that because the white-tailed prairie dog is important to black-footed ferret reintroduction it needs to be protected by an ACEC.</p>		
Julander Energy	O-34	SD274 (JSD-18)	<p>The Fish and Wildlife Service considers all of Uintah and Duchesne counties to be within the experimental population area for black-footed ferret. Within this area, white-tailed prairie dogs are to be protected as prey base for the black-footed ferret. The proposed [Coyote Basin] ACEC is fully within Uintah County. Also, BLM protects BLM- and state-listed species as if they were candidates so they do not become listed. With these protections in place, no additional protection is necessary for white-tailed prairie dogs. Therefore, an ACEC to protect white-tailed prairie dogs is not appropriate. Coupled with BLM applying standard stipulations along with limited CSU/timing and NSO, no</p>	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	

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			special management is necessary.		
Julander Energy	O-34	SD275 (JSD-19)	Table 3.15.2 states that major threats to white-tailed prairie dogs include habitat loss, poisoning and disease. The Conservation Assessment identifies oil and gas as potential threats to the habitat of the white-tailed prairie dog and suggests ACEC designation. However, the FWS 90-Day Finding does not concur, stating there is information showing that oil and gas activity actually enhances or expands white-tailed prairie dog habitat.	The BLM will manage according to USFWS findings	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD276 (JSD-20)	"Designation...would not prevent the continued adverse impact of plague. However it would provide positive benefits in the form of preservation of essential habitat..." It is not clear that there is anything in the proposed management of the ACECs that would preserve the essential habitat.	If the ACEC is designated, activity level planning will take place. Also, see Response to Comment SD161-G1.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD277 (JSD-21)	"Alternative D does not designate the ACEC, thereby offering no additional benefit for protection for the white-tailed prairie dog or black-footed ferret." BLM fails to recognize the black-footed ferret reintroduction plan protects all white-tailed prairie dog habitat, occupied or unoccupied, in Uintah County. An ACEC to provide this protection is, therefore, unnecessary.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD278 (JSD-22)	"Designation as a Research Natural Area would provide additional opportunities for research..." ACEC designation is not necessary in order to conduct research, see Section 2.4.18.2 regarding ongoing	ACEC designation is not proposed for this area in order to provide for opportunities to conduct research. The designation of the area as a Research Natural Area is independent of the proposed ACEC and is a mechanism through which the BLM can focus a special management effort in	

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			APHIS control efforts and plague research. Conservation Assessment concluded white-tailed prairie dogs do not appear to be on the verge of extinction because of plague, though more research needed.	order to study specific issues while controlling external influences. See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS for relevance and importance criteria.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD279 (JSD-23)	"ACECs would provide essential habitat for the potential reintroduction of black-footed ferrets". The habitat for the ferret is already protected as the current populations are considered by the Fish and Wildlife Service as being within the experimental population area, wherein their habitat is protected. Also, through black-footed ferret protection, many other species and their habitat are also afforded protection. ACEC designation not needed.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD280 (JSD-24)	Page 4-233 doesn't even mention white-tailed prairie dogs or black-footed ferrets, indicating a lack of true importance. Also, management actions under Section 4.15.1.6 on page 4-235 preclude the need to establish white-tailed prairie dog ACECs. No additional special management is needed. The NEED for special management of the relevant and important resource is the key to designating an ACEC.	See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS for relevance and importance criteria.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD281 (JSD-25)	BLM has stated, and it is mentioned in Section 4.15.1.6, that they will work with UDWR to maintain white-tailed prairie dogs as viable prey base for ferruginous hawks. This cooperative effort provides protection for white-tailed prairie dogs without the need for an ACEC. It is not mentioned in the analysis of Alternative A.	Chapter 4 discusses the impacts of minerals and energy program decisions on special status species. The commitment for the BLM to work with the UDWR to maintain white-tailed prairie dogs as a viable prey base for ferruginous hawks is a special status species program decision and is discussed in Chapter 4.	
Julander	O-34	SD282	Given the level of protection being afforded raptors,	It should be noted that areas of special designations	

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Energy		(JSD-26)	BLM has not made any scientifically based argument to demonstrate why additional protection would be needed under an ACEC, in fact, they have not suggested any, therefore, an ACEC is not needed. Further, BLM has not provided any scientific justification for the extremely expansive protection being advocated with 7 years of protection of unoccupied nests. FWS raptor guidelines are not available for review	are rarely established for a single purpose or to protect a single resource. While raptor nests may be afforded certain protections through specific seasonal and spatial buffers, their habitat and prey base are not. Additionally, other relevant and important resources located in a given area would not necessarily be afforded sufficient consideration through these seasonal and spatial raptor buffers. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for raptor habitat can be found in Appendix A.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD283 (JSD-27)	This section provides no justification for an ACEC for white-tailed prairie dogs. The protections provided by raptor stipulations and the black-footed ferret reintroduction plan provide protection for white-tailed prairie dogs, without the need for ACEC designation.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD284 (JSD-28)	This section says "mineral resource development ...could result in major adverse impacts to Resource values in some areas depending upon alternatives". This very hollow statement means nothing if not backed up by scientific citations.	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS discloses the impacts for each resource.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD285 (JSD-29)	White-tailed prairie dogs do not warrant ACEC protection. Answers to criteria questions should be 1) questionable, 2) NO, FWS chose not to list 3) NO, has NOT been recognized as warranting special protection (see 2); 4) No, 5) No.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD286 (JSD-30)	Page G-5 [Coyote Basin ACEC section] needs to be updated to reflect: 1) FWS decision of "not warranted"; 2) the Conservation Agreement regarding the estimated remaining percentage of the area once	See Response to Comment SD275-O-34.	

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			occupied, and finding of "unknown"; 3) the fact that white-tailed prairie dogs are not particularly vulnerable; 4) critical ecosystem, one of 25 complexes nominated, does not mean there are only 25 complexes and the majority of the 25, if not all, are associated with oil and gas development, and in some instances very old oil and gas development.		
Julander Energy	O-34	SD287 (JSD-31)	White-tailed prairie dog and black-footed ferret habitats are discussed as being the same. It appears from Table 16 that Alternative D (no Action) provides a GREATER level of protection than the others, including Alternative C. If this indeed the case, then there is no need for the Coyote Basin ACEC.	The figures for Alternative D in the DRMP/EIS, Table 16 does not include the 188,500 acres of the Hill Creek Extension. As such, the percentages of area open to mineral development in Alternative D must be compared with Alternatives B, C, and D with that clarification in mind.	
Julander Energy	O-34	SD288 (JSD-32)	There is no discussion of white-tailed prairie dogs or black-footed ferrets in this appendix, though there is a lot of discussion of various spatial and seasonal restrictions for raptors. This is further evidence that the BLM is not proposing any special management for white-tailed prairie dogs and that ACECs are not justified.	Appendix K has been revised in the PRMP/FEIS to include additional prescriptions.	X
Outdoor Industry Association	O-35	SO58 (JSO-2)	BLM should reconsider the impacts of a rapid and unbalanced oil and gas development on the socioeconomics of the area. The BLM work plan states that the goal is to provide assistance in sustainable economic diversification that is both ecologically and socially responsible. There should be balance between resource development/extraction, outdoor recreation, travel and tourism, and agriculture.	The term "multiple use" as defined in the FLPMA means "the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people." This direction indicates that not all uses need to be accommodated in all areas. The DRMP/DEIS includes a detailed evaluation of all options to ensure a balanced approach. This balanced approach will ensure protection of resource values and sensitive resources while allowing opportunities for mineral exploration and production. The PRMP/FEIS will offer management flexibility to	

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				ensure that resource values and uses are protected while allowing for acceptable levels of mineral development. The BLM believes that its preferred alternative satisfies these objectives.	
Californians for Western Wilderness	O-36	SD250 (ASD-6)	...we would like to see all areas that presently possess wilderness character (generally untouched by humans, solitude, opportunities for unconfined, primitive recreation, etc.) managed to preserve that character. This includes all those lands covered by America's Redrock Wilderness Act (H.R.1774), as well as other areas which may not be included.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Californians for Western Wilderness	O-36	SD251 (ASD-7)	Lands included in H.R.1774 should be closed to oil and gas leasing, or at least have no surface occupancy stipulations placed on them. OHV use should also be eliminated in these areas.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Californians for Western Wilderness	O-36	SD252 (ASD-8)	Sand Wash in Upper Desolation Canyon. Because this is the put-in for rafters on the Green River, it is important that the motors be kept far away, to preserve the peace and quiet of the area. Many routes designated in the Preferred Alternative are returning to their natural state and are not needed. These should be eliminated from the list of designated routes.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Californians for Western Wilderness	O-36	SD253 (ASD-9)	The White River is an outdoor laboratory for many schoolchildren, as well as being a recreation corridor. These uses are more important than oil and gas leasing, which should be prohibited there. OHV use should also be limited, and the routes in Atchee Wash and Saddle Tree Draw should not be designated as open. This will help preserve the primitive and wild nature of the area.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
National Outdoor Leadership	O-37	SD262 (JSD-6)	Desolation Canyon SRMA is not documented in this draft, nor does it appear in Figure 21. We do not know if Sand Wash is/will be a recognized integral part of this SRMA and how recreation management of this	The Desolation Canyon SRMA is under the jurisdiction of the BLM's Price Field Office. Please, see the Price RMP for information about this SRMA.	

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School			developed site will be integrated with other resource uses considerations/impact analyses.		
Center for Native Ecosystems	O-38	SD260 (JSD-4)	Prescriptions for the Coyote Basin ACEC are vague. Noxious weeds would be controlled but the primary weed in this area is cheatgrass, and we are unaware of any effective control strategy. Natural fire regimes would be restored, but we are not sure how this will be possible since it is overrun with cheatgrass, which alters fire regimes and is often better able to out-compete natives after fire. Page 4-232 says prescribed burns would take place in desert shrublands, but also says fire won't take place in black-footed ferret habitat, which is confusing. The main special management that could benefit prairie dogs (the reason for ACEC designation) consists of "implementing actions to maintain or enhance...habitat". What ARE the actions? What about prohibiting actions that reduce habitat? Instead, BLM proposed to continue to lease habitat with standard lease terms, or perhaps with timing limitations, but does not spell out what the stipulations would be in place where.	Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) has been revised to clarify the prescriptions for the Coyote Basin ACEC under the various alternatives.	X
Center for Native Ecosystems	O-38	SD261 (JSD-5)	The multi-state Prairie Dog conservation Team has recommended ACEC designation for large complexes. The BLM admits that the complex as we nominated it for special management (including the Shiner, Snake, John Kennedy Wash and Coyote Basin subcomplexes) meets the relevance and importance criteria. Choosing not to provide special management via ACEC designation for the entire complex is arbitrary and capricious. The resource and threats are the same throughout the full complex, it makes no sense that the need for special mgt would be any different. Myton's Bench relevance, importance and needs for special management should be fully assessed as well. BLM must include a rationale of why these areas were not	<p>Please, see Chapter 3 in the PRMP/FEIS wherein the proposed Coyote Basin Complex ACEC is discussed. This 124,161-acre potential ACEC includes the following five subcomplexes: Coyote Basin-Coyote Basin; Coyote Basin-Snake John; Coyote Basin-Kennedy Wash; Coyote Basin-Myton Bench; and Coyote Basin-Shiner.</p> <p>See Responses to Comment SD24-G-22 and Comment SD8-G-9.</p> <p>The projected RFD for each alternative accounts for</p>	

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			included in the preferred alternative.	restrictions resulting from closures associated with special designations, special status species protections, and other resource program decisions.	
Outdoor Industry Assoc., National Outdoor Leadership School, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Wilderness Society, National Resources Defense Council, Outward Bound West, Colorado Plateau River guides, Living Rivers, Wasatch Mountain Club, Dinosaur Expeditions, Grand Canyon Trust, Utah	O-39	SD245 (ASD-1)	The BLM has proposed 10 miles of the White River for "scenic" designation. The White River is an island of generally unleased and undeveloped public land in a constantly encroaching sea of oil and gas activity. Recent BLM oil and gas lease sales and industry proposals to drill many more gas wells, as well as motor vehicle routes, threaten this area.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	

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Rivers Council, River Runners Transport, Adrift Adventures, Uinta Mountain Club, Desolation Canyon Outfitters, Inc., Wild Utah Project, Holiday Expeditions					
Outdoor Industry Assoc., National Outdoor Leadership School, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Wilderness Society, National Resources Defense Council, Outward	O-39	SD246 (ASD-2)	...the Upper Desolation Canyon area is seeing heightened levels of oil and gas leasing and development. River runners beginning their trip at Sand Was are increasingly being confronted with the sights and sounds of oil and gas developments where river runners floating the Green River between Ouray and Sand Wash put-in. Proposed off road vehicle route designations could also significantly impact boaters experiences on this portion of the Green River.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	

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Bound West, Colorado Plateau River guides, Living Rivers, Wasatch Mountain Club Dinosaur Expeditions, Grand Canyon Trust, Utah Rivers Council, River Runners Transport, Adrift Adventures, Uinta Mountain Club, Desolation Canyon Outfitters, Inc., Wild Utah Project, Holiday Expeditions					
Outdoor Industry Assoc., National Outdoor	O-39	SD247 (ASD-3)	Include no-surface occupancy stipulations for the proposed White River and Lower Green River ACECs or within 1 mile of river centerline, whichever is greater. For areas already leased for oil and gas development without NSO stipulations, the BLM should exercise the	Under all alternatives, the Lower Green River corridor would be managed for NSO for line of sight up to ½ mile along both sides of the river from the trust land boundary at Ouray to the Carbon County Line. Under Alternatives A and B, the White River	

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Leadership School, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Wilderness Society, National Resources Defense Council, Outward Bound West, Colorado Plateau River guides, Living Rivers, Wasatch Mountain Club, Dinosaur Expeditions, Grand Canyon Trust, Utah Rivers Council, River Runners Transport, Adrift Adventures, Uinta Mountain Club,			full extent of its management discretion to preserve the backcountry experience (reducing the sight and sound of development to the maximum extent feasible).	corridor from where the river enters T.10S, R24E, to where it leaves Section 18 of T.10S, R.23E would be managed as NSO for line of sight up to ½ mile along both sides of the river. Under Alternative B, the White River from the Utah State line to where the river leaves R.23E would be managed with timing and controlled surface use stipulations to comply with VRM Class II objectives. Under Alternatives C, D and E, the White River from the Utah State line to the Indian Reservation boundary would be managed as NSO for line of sight up to ½ mile along both sides of the river. Please, see Appendix K for more information.	

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Desolation Canyon Outfitters, Inc., Wild Utah Project, Holiday Expeditions					
Outdoor Industry Assoc., National Outdoor Leadership School, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, The Wilderness Society, National Resources Defense Council, Outward Bound West, Colorado Plateau River guides, Living Rivers, Wasatch Mountain Club, Dinosaur Expeditions,	O-39	SD248 (ASD-4)	Prohibit all off-road vehicle use in the White River and (Upper) Desolation Canyon areas with BLM identified wilderness characteristics and BLM identified lands "which have a reasonable probability" of wilderness character.	Under all action alternatives, OHV use would be restricted to designated routes and open areas. Please, see Figures 21-28 for illustration of the proposed open, closed, and limited OHV areas relative to areas of special designations under each alternative.	

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Grand Canyon Trust, Utah Rivers Council, River Runners Transport, Adrift Adventures, Uinta Mountain Club, Desolation Canyon Outfitters, Inc., Wild Utah Project, Holiday Expeditions					
Enduring Resources	O-40	SD177 (JPR-2) SD-Temp1	NEPA and BLM policy require that the BLM make available for public comment the information upon which the decision to designate ACECs were reached, including the underlying analysis for the proposed and existing.	Information on the evaluation and determination of ACEC designations was provided in Appendix G of the Draft RMP, which was available for public review and comment. The information in this appendix has been expanded in the PRMP/FEIS. Additional opportunities for public input were provided during the scoping process as well as the public comment period for the Vernal Supplement to the DRMP and EIS. Section 4.21.2.9 and Table 4.21.2 discuss ACECs.	X
Enduring Resources	O-40	SD257 (JSD-1)	"Manage WSAs as directed...in a manner that does not impair their suitability for designation as wilderness. Allow temporary uses that create no new surface disturbance nor involve permanent placement of structures." We find this analysis vague and did not	Please refer to BLM Handbook H-8550-1 – Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review, Introduction, Management to the Non-Impairment Standard.	

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			find any supporting documents for this consideration.		
Enduring Resources	O-40	SD258 (JSD-2)	Designate and manage areas as ACECs where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage...continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper and Lower Green rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values...." What are the "outstandingly remarkable values"...we would like to have more specifics here so that we can understand why/how BLM will handle this issue ahead of time.	See Responses to Comments SD27-G-22, SD19-G-22. See Appendices C and G for more information regarding the Upper and Lower Green River Wild and Scenic Rivers segments as well as the Green River ACECs.	
Enduring Resources	O-40	SD259 (JSD-3)	"This 1700-acre potential Lower Green River Expansion ACEC includes the current Lower Green River ACEC and is being proposed to include the eastern shoreline. Relevance and importance values are the same as the existing Lower Green River ACEC." (3-83) The "importance criteria" given in the draft RMP for the lower Green River Expansion ACEC states the relevant value is that it "has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth and distinctiveness" (3-79). There is no documentation in the draft RMP that verifies this statement. We would like further explanation of the "importance" criterion.	See Appendix G for more information regarding the Lower Green River Expansion ACEC.	
National Trust for Historic Preservation	O-41	SD333 (LSD-8)	ACECs should not be strictly subject to multiple use principles; they need greater protection and management than other areas. They are a priority and should not be discretionary. Eligible sites are located in Bitter Creek, Main Canyon, White River, and Nine Mile Canyon.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
National Trust for Historic Preservation	O-41	SD46	The BLM provides very little evidence for all of the alternatives about where and how mineral development will occur within ACECs. Furthermore, the draft RMP does not analyze in detail the impacts stemming from management decisions made, nor is there a discussion about how to mitigate these impacts. In terms of	Leasing stipulations for minerals development in ACECs are provided in Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) and illustrated on Figures 11-18 and 22-24. The exact locations where such development may occur are not known at this time.	

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			<p>ACECs, such a lack of discussion, or moreover effort, to protect the valuable resources identified for the ACECs and prevent against irreparable harm violates the strict requirement of FLPMA. See 43 U.S.C. §§ 1702(a), 1712(c)(3).</p>	<p>Additional NEPA analysis and disclosure will be conducted at the project-level stage, when site specific information is known.</p> <p>Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS outlines the analysis of potential impacts from each resource program's management decisions.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD302 (JSD-45)	<p>The RMP proposes 3 new ACEC designations and expansion of 2 existing ACECs under the preferred alternative. NEPA and BLM policy require that BLM make available for public comment the information upon which the decisions to designate ACECs were reached, including the underlying analysis for the proposed and existing ACECs. The Draft RMP does little to disclose to the public how and on what info the proposed ACEC determinations were reached. The ACECs were nominated by non-governmental organizations, and there is a lack of disclosure about these submissions and how these procedures complied with existing BLM policy. Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when the RMP is revised. There is no information about the need to continue existing ACECs in the RMP. Appendix G, page 4, just contains a presumptive statement that these areas will be carried forward, without specifying why they should be carried forward and what information was used in making that decision. The RMP also fails to explain why other management prescriptions are inadequate.</p>	<p>See Responses to Comments SD55-G-25, SD301-O-44.</p> <p>BLM Manual 1613 .21 C states:</p> <p>“Normally, the relevance and importance of resource or hazards associated with an existing ACEC are reevaluated only when new information or changed circumstances or the result of monitoring establish the need.”</p>	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD303 (JSD-45)	<p>The proposed ACEC designation of Coyote Basin fails to meet regulatory criteria of importance and relevance. No data is provided to verify that this area contains</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD263-O-034.</p>	

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			<p>"critical" white-tailed prairie dog habitat, and no mention is made that the FWS denied white-tailed prairie dog listing because they were found to be in abundance and in no threat of extinction. Page 3-80 states that this ACEC would provide crucial habitat for other species as well, though no data are provided to support this assertion. The black-footed ferret reintroduction program includes monitoring by FWS, BLM, and DWR in this area; therefore adequate protections are already in place, and overlapping restrictions are not necessary. Also, the FWS requires black-footed ferret surveys be conducted prior to construction/drilling in prairie dog colonies, provided that a minimum of 200 acres of colonies with a minimum density of 8 burrows/acre are present. It is not indicated in the draft RMP whether these purportedly critical areas meet the FWS criteria. This is information that must be included in the RMP.</p>		
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD304 (JSD-46)	<p>The proposed ACEC designation of Nine Mile Canyon fails to meet regulatory criteria of importance and relevance. There is no documentation in Chapters 3 or 4, or in Appendix G that verifies that this area has "substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable exemplary and unique". Appendix G states that the significance of these importance resources has been recognized (no citation given). Figures 22 and 23 indicate that under Alternative A, this area is being restricted from development more than under Alternatives B and D, with little explanation why this occurring. There is no analysis demonstrating that BLM adhered to its ACEC policy manuals in developing potential ACECs. There are existing laws and management prescriptions in place here [to protect the identified values], and ACEC designation is inappropriate.</p>	<p>See Responses to Comments SD50-G-25, SD295-O-44.</p> <p>Information gathered from comments provided during the 60-day comment period that started December 13, 2005, was considered with the BLM Interdisciplinary (ID) Team. As part of its consideration, the ID team considered "substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable exemplary and unique" for all ACECs.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9 for range of alternatives discussion.</p>	

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Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD305 (JSD-47)	The proposed Lower Green River ACEC Expansion fails to meet regulatory criteria of importance and relevance. There is no documentation in Chapters 3 or 4, or in Appendix G, that verifies that this area has "substantial significance due to qualities that make them fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable exemplary and unique". Appendix G states that the significance of these importance resources has been recognized (no citation given). Without such supporting documentation, this area should be eliminated from consideration as an ACEC. Figure 22 shows many areas of overlap in current and proposed ACECs. This is inconsistent with the text in the RMP, since the stated goal is not to re-propose or layer additional restriction onto the existing ACEC areas within the planning area.	See Responses to Comments SD14-G-13,SD27-G-22. Additional information has been added to Appendix G and Chapters 3 and 4 to clarify the proposed Lower Green River Expansion ACEC.	X																				
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD306 (JSD-48)	The RMP should include a table that clearly identifies the stipulations for each proposed ACEC under all the alternatives. The table should approximate the following: <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Standa rd</th> <th style="text-align: center;">T&CS U</th> <th style="text-align: center;">NS O</th> <th style="text-align: center;">close d</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ACEC 1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACEC 2</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>etc</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Standa rd	T&CS U	NS O	close d	ACEC 1					ACEC 2					etc					This information has been added to the Final EIS.	X
	Standa rd	T&CS U	NS O	close d																					
ACEC 1																									
ACEC 2																									
etc																									
Utah Petroleum	O-42	SD307	The RMP does not contain any discussion on the effects of designation of new ACECs on mineral	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the effects of ACEC designation of mineral																					

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Association		(JSD-49)	leasing and development. Since the impacts of additional stipulations for ACECs would be exceptionally restrictive, a discussion of the impacts to mineral development from designation of new ACECs must be included in Chapter 4.	leasing and development.	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD308 (JSD-50a)	Re: Non-WSA Lands With Or Likely To Have Wilderness Character. DEIS does not adequately analyze the extent to which proposed management for areas within these lands was tailored to preserve alleged wilderness values identified in the 1999 wilderness inventory and the interdisciplinary team evaluation. The only clear correlation between wilderness characteristics and preferred management is the Browns Park SRMA extension, which is to be managed for primitive recreation values. A separate analysis is the only means for determining whether wilderness characteristics were considered in a manner commensurate with other resource information, as required by FLPMA's multiple use principles. The issue is significant given that the vernal plan revision was originally intended to determine whether the non-WSA lands found to possess wilderness character would be managed as WSA under the IMP. In fact, before the settlement agreement, several of the large areas of undisturbed wildlife were also being analyzed for "wilderness designation potential" through special designations.	See Response to Comment SD244-O-28, O-29.	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SD309 (JSD-50b)	Appendix K states that the Bitter Creek ACEC is 71,000 acres. Page 3-81 says it is 68,834 acres. Please correct this contradiction.	The Proposed RMP/Final EIS has been revised to correct acreage amounts or rationale provided for the differences.	X
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO45 (SO-P) (JSO-3)	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in Chapter 3 should indicate that the "Mining" category includes oil and gas employment.	Tables 3.12.3 and 3.12.7 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to indicate that the "mining" category includes oil and gas employment.	X

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Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO47 (SO-R) (JSO-4)	The draft RMP/EIS fails to effectively address the full realm of positive economic benefits associated with current and future oil and gas activities. While Section 4.12 provides a brief comparison of wells to be drilled, industry jobs that would be created, industry sales, and federal royalties under each alternative, what appears to have been excluded is the highly significant state and local revenue generated due to a variety of taxes paid.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten. The BLM believes this revision represents the importance of this industry to the Vernal planning area.	X
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO48 (SO-S) (JSO-5)	The socioeconomic analysis contained in Section 4.12 of the draft Vernal RMP/EIS does not adequately describe the long-term incremental and cumulative differences in public sector revenues of the four alternatives. Specifically, the section fails to discuss the property tax revenues that each alternative would generate and the various community facilities and services that this significant source of revenue funds for residents in the Vernal planning area. As an example, according to the Uintah County Treasurer's office, fully 57.6% of that county's 2004 property tax revenue was derived from the oil and gas and mining industries. Accordingly, management decisions that influence the level of oil and gas activity have direct and significant impacts on local government fiscal conditions in the VPA and indirect impacts on the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. These impacts must be disclosed in the draft RMP/EIS.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO49 (SO-T) (J-SO7)	The Draft RMP/EIS does not address Utah severance taxes. Severance taxes on natural gas are assessed on a sliding scale, 3% on the first \$1.50/Mcf, and 5% percent thereafter. The draft RMP/EIS does not estimate the differences in severance taxes for each alternative. Given that oil and gas production from the Vernal planning area was a substantial portion of the state's total, it is important to understand the	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten and discusses the fiscal impacts to local government (including severance taxes) of the alternative decisions affecting the oil and gas industry in the Vernal planning area.	X

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			implications of each alternative for State of Utah severance tax revenues.		
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO50 (SO-U) (J-SO8)	The absence of a more complete fiscal assessment will impede the ability of the public, local governments, and BLM decision-makers to assess the effects of each alternative on local government revenues and on their ability to provide public services, which directly affect the quality of life of Vernal planning area residents. Moreover, the limited scope fiscal analysis in the Draft RMP/EIS does not fulfill the BLM's charge to assess the degree of local dependence on resources from public lands, or fulfill the agency's obligations outlined in Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-H) or Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-167.	Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to expand the discussion of the fiscal impacts to state and local governments. The BLM will review the Utah State University survey of rural counties conducted by the State of Utah. The BLM has received preliminary data from this study received after completion of the DEIS. The BLM has incorporated findings in the PRMP/FEIS as appropriate.	X
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO51 (SO-V) (J-SO9)	The Draft RMP/EIS assumes development costs of \$600,000 per well. This figure is dated and does not account for other types of development taking place in the Vernal planning area. The deeper formations being developed cost more than the figure used above and the analysis should reflect this fact. This number should be revised to ensure that any economic analysis accounts for the activities in the planning area. Regardless of this oversight, the impact analysis does not address the extent these expenditures would occur in the local economy, nor do they address how the economy would be impacted both locally and nationally. Indirect employment as a result of industry expenditures and the additional tax revenue this spending activity would generate are important impacts the Draft RMP/EIS should disclose. A study was prepared that estimated that eighty-one percent (81%) of the expenditures for development benefited the local economy. On that assumption, the numbers should be	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been extensively rewritten. The PRMP/FEIS incorporates recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. This data has been used in the recent (November, 2007) study commissioned by the State of Utah: The Structure and Economic Impact of Utah's Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Industry Phase I - The Uinta Basin.	X

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			reworked to reflect this significant detail.		
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO53 (SO-X) (JSO-11)	In paragraph 5, of Section 4.12.2.2, there is a statement that, "increasing jobs (related to mineral development) would also increase population in the region ... and this would increase the need for social services and infrastructure." Yet, under Section 4.12.2.3 — Recreation, the projected increase in tourism and recreation-related employment is not expected to have similar impacts of increased population and demand for social services and infrastructure. We contend that growth in any and all economic activities and employment sectors would generate increased population and demand for services. As the DEIS is currently written, it unfairly singles out the minerals industry as the sole source of these presumably negative impacts. Further, as stated above, there are studies that indicate that 81% of expenditures on well development. Thus, the positive impacts of job creation and "increase[d] overall prosperity in the region" could be a more significant benefit to the planning area because, as BLM correctly notes, "wages in th[e] [energy] sector. . . are typically higher than service and government related jobs."	According to data provided by the State of Utah's Utah Data Center, the population increases for the Uintah Basin was 13.1% from 2000-2007. This figure is well below the State of Utah total of 20.2%, indicating that population change has not been very high. It is possible, however, that the components of population change (age, gender, etc) may be changing, but the BLM lacks data to assess this possibility.	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO54 (SO-Y) (J-SO12)	The draft RMP/EIS states that the rationale for decreasing mineral development is to increase recreation and OHV opportunities in the Vernal Planning Area. According to the information presented in Table 4.12.1, the economic value of oil and gas sales in the Vernal planning area is currently \$189.53 million and \$248.68 million, respectively. Royalties are currently more than \$8.6 million annually. According to the draft RMP/EIS recreation currently provides a total tax benefit at approximately \$1.6 million. The revenues from royalties, alone, are more than five times the tax benefits from recreation.	The jobs created per well has been revised in the FEIS. Based on data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, it is more reasonable to project an increase approximating 3.74 new jobs per well drilled than the approximately 14 suggested in the UEO study, which was for only one well. The impact analysis in Chapter 4 will be rewritten to reflect this lower estimate. The FEIS will continue to reflect the high economic value provided by minerals activities in the Uintah Basin.	X

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			<p>Under Alternative D (existing conditions) the total number of jobs, based on the average number of employees per well, is estimated to be 215,260 over the next 20 years, while there are 1,578 jobs attributable to recreation. We question the rationale for increasing recreational opportunities at the expense of oil and gas development, which would decrease the revenues to the state, counties, and Tribes, as well as decrease the supply of oil and gas to the public. In addition, a decrease in future oil and gas development is contrary to the President's Energy Policy.</p>	<p>See also comment responses SO15 and SO37.</p>	
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO59 (JSO-6)	<p>Oil and gas-related sales and use taxes are significant. The oil and gas industry makes significant contributions to sales and use tax revenues in their purchases of substantial quantities of goods and services. Also oil and gas industry workers spend their earnings in local communities, thereby also adding to the sales tax revenue. The draft RMP does not estimate this contribution or project the impacts of each alternative on sales and use tax revenues.</p>	<p>The sales tax information will be included in the PRMP/FEIS based on information the Counties have provided. In Section 4.12.3.2, contributions from industry workers are discussed.</p>	X
Utah Petroleum Association	O-42	SO60 (JSO-10)	<p>Statements to the effect that areas open to mineral exploration would have an adverse impact on the recreation and tourism industries and that recreational experience would be degraded are incorrect. In much of the VPA, mineral development would take place in remote areas that are not popular for recreation or visually sensitive. Also mineral development and recreation generally take place in separate areas and co-exist quite successfully. Despite increases in mineral development [in the past], tourism has increased. This directly contradicts baseless statement that mineral development has hurt the tourist economy.</p>	<p>See comment responses SO15, SO37, and SO52.</p>	
Ranges West	O-43	SO55	Pg 3-65, 3.12.3.2.2 and pg 3-68, 3.12.4.2.1 Agriculture-	The commenter does not indicate how the	

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		(ASO-1)	Grossly inadequate discussion of agriculture's social and economic contribution to the Uinta Basin. Obvious lack of knowledge on the subject.	discussion of agriculture's role in the Uinta Basin is inadequate. As such, the BLM cannot respond to the comment.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD292 (JSD-36)	In order for ACEC designation to occur, an area must meet criteria for identification of important environmental resource or natural hazard. Review of the available documentation submitted for the Coyote Basin application establishes that this designation does not meet the legal standards for ACEC designation: the listing petition for white-tailed prairie dogs to the FWS was denied; the white-tailed prairie dog isn't a rare or sensitive species; its' historical range hasn't changed much; and evidence does not show that oil and gas development negatively affects the species. Classification of white-tailed prairie dogs as a fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable species is overstated, outdated, and inaccurate. Accordingly there is no basis to identify Coyote Basin as a potential ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD293 (JSD-37)	The designation process for an ACEC requires a need for special management. Evidence provided in the RMP shows that Coyote Basin does not require special management attention. BLM provides no analysis in the RMP on the need for special management attention for this area; there is only a general statement about how the area would benefit from ACEC designation. This does not satisfy the requirement that the area NEEDS special management. Other measures are already in place to protect white-tailed prairie dogs, such as: the OHV plan, which limits use to designated routes, thus protecting white-tailed prairie dogs; the black-footed ferret reintroduction protections will also protect white-tailed prairie dogs; current timing and controlled surface use constraints for other species, which also provide serendipitous protections for white-tailed prairie dogs; and the shooting ban during most	See Responses to Comments SD27-G-22, SD263-O-34.	

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			sensitive times. There is no need to add redundant management practices that would provide no greater benefit but would substantially and adversely affect oil and gas development.		
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD294 (JSD-38)	No evidence is provided in the RMP to show that the White River ACEC designation is warranted. Until this is shown, ACEC designation cannot be justified. BLM provides no analysis in the RMP on the need for special management attention for this area; there is only a general statement about how it would benefit from ACEC designation. This does not satisfy requirement that the area NEEDS special management.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD295 (JSD-39)	The public is supposed to be afforded the opportunity to meaningfully participate in and comment on identification and designation of ACECs. Information provided regarding the white-tailed prairie dog ACEC and White River ACEC is so vague the public cannot do this. BLM must provide its analysis for the public to meaningfully participate.	See Response to Comment SD239-O-47, O-28, O-29. In addition, the public was given the chance to comment on ACEC designation-once during the DEIS comment period from January 14, 2005 through June 24, 2005 and then an additional comment period specifically for ACECs from December 13, 2005 through February 10, 2006.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD296 (JSD-40)	Even if ACEC designation was supported, BLM has not provided the requisite legal or factual support for the management actions it has proposed. The draft RMP does not adequately describe the Coyote Basin management requirements, and the limited management descriptions provided are inappropriate and unnecessary for the protection of the white-tailed prairie dog in the White River corridor. The RMP fails to provide information as to resource use limitations, particularly with respect to oil and gas production. The RMP indicates that the appendices list all the surface use stipulations in the Vernal Planning area. However,	See Responses to Comments SD27-G-22, SD8-G-9, The white-tailed prairie dog is considered a sensitive species under IM 2007-078 and BLM Manual 6840 provides guidance that does not allow actions that would lead to listing. In addition, the 1999 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan Amendment and those portions of the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin, Uintah County,	X

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			Appendix K does not contain any timing limitation stipulation or controlled surface use stipulations for white-tailed prairie dogs. BLM needs to address this.	Utah that are consistent with this plan amendment affords mitigation to the white-tailed prairie dog. Appendix K has been modified to incorporate mitigating measures for the white-tailed prairie dog.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD297 (JSD-40)	The RMP provides no justification for the timing limitations, controlled surface use, and no surface occupancy limitations in the Coyote Basin and White River ACECs. Legislative history and ACEC Guidelines make clear that development can still happen in these areas. Oil and gas exploration does not endanger the white-tailed prairie dog or its habitat, and in fact, it provides favorable habitat. Curtailing oil and gas activity may reduce the production of favorable habitat.	The rationale behind the proposed designation of the Coyote Basin and White River ACECs is provided in Appendix G in the Final EIS. By comparing Figures 11-14 with Figures 22-24, the reader will see that closed to leasing, no surface occupancy, and timing and controlled surface use stipulations for the White River and Coyote Basin ACECs do not correspond directly with the proposed ACEC boundaries. This is because ACEC designation would not apply blanket stipulations to the entire area and would recognize that potential for multiple use. Restrictive stipulations within the ACECs are not directly tied to prairie dog preservation beyond what is contained in the black-footed ferret recovery plan. Restrictive stipulations on oil and gas leasing in these two areas is related to such issues as wild and scenic rivers, high visual/scenic resource values, riparian areas, and special status species. By comparing the figures as referenced, the reader will also note that the vast majority of the areas within these two proposed ACECs remains open to oil and gas leasing under standard stipulations.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD298 (JSD-41)	The limited management prescriptions in the RMP regarding Coyote Basin are inappropriate and/or inapplicable. No visual resource management limitations are necessary, as the area contains no specified scenic resources that need to be protected. In addition, the travel management classification for OHV use in this area already adequately protects the	See Response to Comment SD297-O-44.	

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			white-tailed prairie dog habitat.		
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD299 (JSD-42)	BLM must consider valid existing rights when making management prescriptions. In fact, management of an ACEC should not conflict with the valid existing rights of existing oil and gas leases in these areas. Specifically, the Savings Provisions of FLPMA stat that "all actions by the Secretary concerned under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights." (see 43 U.S.C. § 1701(a), note (h)). These rights must be heavily considered before making such stringent management requirements.	In Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS, it states that: "All decisions made in the RMP and subsequent implementation decisions will be subject to valid existing rights".	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD300 (JSD-43)	BLM has proposed Coyote Basin as a Research Natural Area (RNA). There is no legal or factual basis for this designation. Prairie dog complexes are not that unusual, and the species is not threatened. In addition, 85,000 acres greatly surpasses the 6,250 acres of PD habitat that are recommended for black-footed ferret reintroduction area. Finally, it is not entirely clear what will be studied in the area; APHIS is already doing predator control and disease research, and RNA designation is not necessary for that work to continue.	Research Natural Areas and ACECs are separate designations that carry different management goals and objectives. Also, see Response to Comment SD278-O-34.	
Westport Oil and Gas Co.	O-44	SD301 (JSD-44)	BLM has committed several procedural errors in development and publication of RMP. ACEC Guidelines state that BLM must make identification determination as soon as possible, but not later than 6 months after the resource is nominated. In this case, Coyote Basin was nominated in 2001 and 2003 and White River was nominated in 2003. These nominations are between 2 and 4 years old, and determinations should have been made with respect to these nominations years ago. Failure to complete the determinations at the appropriate time has led to use of outdated and inaccurate scientific information and reliance on a listing petition to the FWS that has since	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1. BLM Manual 1613 gives policy direction for ACEC designation. No 6-month timeline is included in this manual. 43 CFR 1610.7-2 also gives instruction and authority for ACEC designation and gives no 6-month timeline. The Federal Register Notice published on December 13, 2005, listed proposed ACECs and specific associated resource limitations. A 60-day comment period on the potential ACECs	

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			<p>been denied. The BLM should eliminate these ACECs from the Draft RMP until proponents submit new nominations containing updated and scientifically accurate and verifiable information.</p> <p>The BLM is also required by its own polices to publish a notice in the Federal Register listing each ACEC proposed and specifying the resource use limitations, if any, that would occur if the ACEC were formally designated. The Federal Register notice published on 1/14/05 does not make mention of any specific ACECs and does not describe the resource use limitations that would occur if formal designation occurs. This oversight results in a major procedural default and fails to provide adequate information to the public.</p> <p>The Draft RMP should be resubmitted for public notice and comment to ensure that all relevant information has been provided to the public.</p>	<p>commenced with the publication date and ended 60 days after the publication date.</p>	
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD310 (JSD-51)	<p>In order for ACEC designation to occur, an area must meet criteria for identification of important environmental resource or natural hazard. Review of the available documentation submitted with Coyote Basin application establishes that this designation does not meet the legal standards for ACEC designation: the listing petition for white-tailed prairie dogs to the FWS was denied; the white-tailed prairie dog isn't a rare or sensitive species; its' historical range hasn't changed much; and evidence does not show that oil and gas development negatively affects the species. Classification as fragile, sensitive, rare irreplaceable species is overstated, outdated, and inaccurate. Accordingly there is no basis to identify Coyote Basin as a potential ACEC.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD263-O-34.</p>	

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Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD311 (JSD-52)	Designation process for ACEC require a need for special management. Evidence provided shows that Coyote Basin does not require special management attention. BLM provide no analysis in RMP on the designation for need for special management attention for this area; there is only a general statement about how they would benefit from ACEC designation. This does not satisfy requirement that they NEED special management. Other measures already in place to protect WTPD: OHV plan limited use to designated routes, thus protecting WTPD; BFF reintroduction protections will also protect WTPD; Current timing and surface use constraints for other species also provide further protections; and there is also a shooting ban during most sensitive times. No need to add redundant management practices that would provide no greater benefit but would substantially and adversely affect oil and gas development.	See Responses to Comments SD27-G-22, SD263-O-34.	
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD312 (JSD-53)	Public is supposed to be afforded opportunity to meaningfully participate in and comment on identification and designation of ACECs. Info provided re: WTPD ACEC and White River ACEC is so vague, the public cannot do this. BLM must provide its analysis for public to meaningfully participate.	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD313 (JSD-54)	Even if ACEC designation was supported, BLM has not provided the requisite legal or factual support for the management actions it has proposed. Draft RMP does not adequately describe Coyote Basin management requirements. RMP fails to provide info as to resource use limitations, particularly with respect to oil and gas production. RMP indicates that appendices list all the surface use stipulations in the Vernal Planning area. However, appendix K does not contain any timing limitation stipulation or controlled surface use	See Response to Comment SD239-O-47, O-28, O-29. In addition, the public was given the chance to comment on ACEC designation-once during the DEIS comment period from January 14, 2005 through June 24, 2005 and then an additional comment period specifically for ACECs from December 13, 2005 through February 10, 2006.	

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			stipulations for WTPD. BLM needs to address this.		
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD314 (JSD-55)	The RMP provides no justification for the timing limitations, controlled surface use, and no surface occupancy limitations in the Coyote ACEC. Legislative history and ACEC Guidelines makes clear that development can still happen in these areas. Oil and gas exploration does not endanger the WTPD, or its habitat and in fact, provides favorable habitat. Curtailing oil and gas activity may reduce the production of favorable habitat.	The rationale behind the proposed designation of the Coyote Basin and White River ACECs is provided in Appendix G in the Final EIS. By comparing Figures 11-14 with Figures 22-24, the reader will see that closed to leasing, no surface occupancy, and timing and controlled surface use stipulations for the White River and Coyote Basin ACECs do not correspond directly with the proposed ACEC boundaries. This is because ACEC designation would not apply blanket stipulations to the entire area and would recognize that potential for multiple use. Restrictive stipulations within the ACECs are not directly tied to prairie dog preservation beyond what is contained in the black-footed ferret recovery plan. Restrictive stipulations on oil and gas leasing in these two areas is related to such issues as wild and scenic rivers, high visual/scenic resource values, riparian areas, and special status species. By comparing the figures as referenced, the reader will also note that the vast majority of the areas within these two proposed ACECs remains open to oil and gas leasing under standard stipulations.	
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD315 (JSD-56)	Limited management prescriptions in the RMP re: Coyote Basin are inappropriate and/or inapplicable. No visual resource management limitations are necessary, as the area contains no specified scenic resources that need to be protected. In addition, the travel management classification for OHV use in this area already adequately protects the WTPD habitat.	See Response to Comment SD297-O-44.	
Julander Energy Company	O-45	SD316 (JSD-57)	BLM has also proposed Coyote Basin as a Research Natural Area (RNA). There is no legal or factual basis for this designation. Prairie dog complexes are not that	Research Natural Areas and ACECs are separate designations that carry different management goals and objectives.	

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			<p>unusual, and the species is not threatened. In addition, 85,000 ac greatly surpasses the 6,250 ac of PD habitat that are recommended for BFF reintroduction. Finally, it is not entirely clear what will be studied in the area; APHIS is already doing predator control and disease research and RNA designation not necessary for that work to continue.</p>	<p>Also, see Response to Comment SD278-O-34.</p>	
<p>Julander Energy Company</p>	<p>O-45</p>	<p>SD317 (JSD-58)</p>	<p>BLM has committed several procedural errors in development and publication of RMP. ACEC Guidelines state that BLM must make identification determination ASAP, but not later than 6 months after the resource is nominated. In this case, Coyote Basin was nominated in 2001 and 2003 and white river was nominated in 2003. Nominations are between 2 and 4 years old, determination should have been made years ago. Failure to complete identification as appropriate time has led to use of outdated and inaccurate scientific info and reliance on listing petition that FWS as being denied. BLM also required published Federal Register notice listing each ACEC proposed and specifying the resource use limitation, if any, that would occur if designated. The Federal Register notice published 1/14/05 does not make mention of any specific ACECs and does not describe the resource use limitations that would occur if formal designation occurs. Draft RMP should be resubmitted for public notice and comment to ensure that all relevant information has been provided to the public.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.</p> <p>BLM Manual 1613 gives policy direction for ACEC designation. No 6-month timeline is included in this manual. 43 CFR 1610.7-2 also gives instruction and authority for ACEC designation and gives no 6-month timeline.</p> <p>The Federal Register Notice published on December 13, 2005, listed proposed ACECs and specific associated resource limitations. A 60-day comment period on the potential ACECs commenced with the publication date and ended 60 days after the publication date.</p>	
<p>Wilderness Society, Wild Utah Project,</p>	<p>O-46</p>	<p>SD334 (NSD1)</p>	<p>We believe the following human activities to be suitable for Compatible Use Areas: Mechanical recreation (both motorized and mountain</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	

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Center for Native Ecosystems			<p>bike) on designated routs only;</p> <p>Camping;</p> <p>Livestock grazing management that uses stocking levels and seasons of use that ensure that range health goals are met and sustained, and riparian areas are restored; grazing should be conducted in a manner that allows predator populations to reach traditional levels, by utilizing “predator friendly” lives tock grazing based on non-lethal methods to deal with livestock depredation wherever and whenever possible;</p> <p>Limit woodcutting to a level that ensures a pre-settlement patchwork stands in varying structure and condition;</p> <p>Restoration management should limit habitat manipulation to that necessary for focal plant and animal species;</p> <p>All fencing needs to meet state fence standards or wildlife; and</p> <p>Oil and gas should limit surface disturbance as much as possible to existing oil fields, emphasizing using directional drilling.</p>		
Wilderness Society, Wild Utah Project, Center for Native Ecosystems	O-46	SD335 (NSD2)	<p>BLMs regulations provide for designation of areas as open, limited, or closed to OHVs “based on the protection of the resources of the public lands, the promotion of safety of all the users of public lands, and the minimization of conflict among various uses of the public lands.” However, the alternatives presented in the DEIS do not adequately take into account the extent of the conflict with other resources, such as wilderness characteristics, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and riparian areas.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p> <p>A systematic interdisciplinary approach was used to provide accurate, objective and scientifically sound environmental analysis on the environmental consequences associated with the management actions or prescriptions under each alternative. The analysis discloses the direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the public lands resources and uses sufficient for the decision maker to make a reasoned choice among alternatives.</p>	

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Wilderness Society, Wild Utah Project, Center for Native Ecosystems	O-46	SD336 (NSD3)	The plan needs to include comprehensive analyses of the general impacts of OHV use on desert biota and ecosystems, and include site-specific analyses of where OHV use is inappropriate due to expected impacts on species at risk and their essential habitats, along with all other resources considered in the upcoming DEIS.	As part of the travel management plan, any OHV areas or routes would require additional analysis and disclosure prior to designation.	
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance	O-47	SD178 (PR-K)	The BLM is required to review wilderness characteristics and account for those values as it plans for the use of our public lands.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1	
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance	O-47	SD237 (SD-GGG)	Unfortunately, the Draft Plan fails to provide any meaningful protection for the wilderness quality lands that do not currently fall within the boundaries of existing WSAs	See Response to Comment SD234-O-17.	
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance	O-47	SD238 (SD-HHH)	The draft RMP fails to consider fully and to analyze the full spectrum of available management options that could provide protection of wilderness characteristics, as provided by FLPMA and BLM instruction. Rather, every alternative allows some degree of leasing, development and motorized recreation within these areas and real protection from certain damaging actions essentially only exist within the existing WSAs...even under ALT C	See Response to Comment SD234-O-17.	
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance	O-47	SD239 (SD-III)	The draft RMP fails to comply with its FLPMA and NEPA responsibilities in its consideration and analysis of areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and fails to propose designations necessary to protect important resource values. The DRMP also fails to give priority to ACEC designation. The BLM's only significant treatment of ACEC nomination is in Appendix G. Furthermore, SUWA was not notified of the decisions regarding our nominations.	The public was notified in a supplement to the notice of availability of the Draft RMP and Draft EIS for the Vernal Field Office to list proposed areas of critical environmental concern and specific associated resource use limitations for public lands was published in the Federal Register on December 13, 2005. This NOA addressed ACECs within the Vernal Field Office and identified an associated 60-day public comment period.	

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			The lack of written record and rationale is in direct violation of BLM's manual 1613.33.		