

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Richfield Draft Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/DEIS) identifies and analyzes five alternatives for future management of the public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Richfield Field Office (RFO). The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) requires developing, maintaining, and, as appropriate, revising land use plans for public lands. The purpose, or goal, of the land use plan is to ensure lands administered by the BLM are managed in accordance with FLPMA and the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

Revising existing land use plans is a major Federal action for the BLM. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, requires Federal agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for major Federal actions including the development of new and revised land use plans for the BLM's management of its public lands. Thus, this DRMP/DEIS is a combined document.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The planning area is located in south-central Utah and includes all of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, and Wayne counties and portions of Garfield and Kane Counties, an area totaling 5.4 million acres. Of this, the BLM manages a 2.1 million acre surface and subsurface (mineral) estate, additional Federal mineral resources underlying the national forests (1.5 million acres) and 95,000 acres of split-estate lands where the mineral estate is held by the Federal government but the surface rights belong to the state or private parties. The planning area is administered from a headquarters field office (FO) in Richfield and a field station in Hanksville. Decisions in this resource management plan (RMP) apply only to BLM-administered public lands (surface and subsurface) and resources.

The purpose of the RMP is to provide a comprehensive framework for managing the public lands and allocating resources administered by the RFO under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with the intent of Congress as stated in FLPMA. This new RMP is needed to respond to changing conditions and demands on public lands, and to provide a single updated plan for managing lands and resources currently addressed in six different land use-planning documents, which were adopted between 16 and 30 years ago. While the BLM can make decisions related only to public lands and its resources, the BLM is responsible for collaboratively planning with adjacent jurisdictions and the public to encourage compatible land uses within a regional context, and for considering potential impacts on all resources within the planning area, regardless of ownership and jurisdiction.

ALTERNATIVES

The DRMP/DEIS identifies and analyzes five alternatives for future management of the public lands and resources administered by the RFO. They are—

- **Alternative N (No Action)** would continue to manage the land and resources according to direction prescribed in the five existing land use plans as modified by subsequent law, regulation and policy. This alternative would least restrict cross-country off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, designate the most miles of open routes, continue the designation of four areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs, 14,780 acres), continue identification of one special recreation management area (SRMA, 120 acres) and manage all 12 eligible wild and scenic river segments (135 miles) to protect their outstandingly remarkable values.

- **Alternative A** would manage the land and resources with an emphasis on providing motorized access and encouraging commodity production—mining, grazing, commercial recreation, commercial woodland products harvesting, and energy development including oil and gas—using the minimum restrictions required to meet legal, regulatory and policy mandates. This alternative relies on existing laws, regulations and policies, rather than special management prescriptions or special designations, to protect resources. This alternative would least restrict oil and gas leasing and mining, designate no ACECs, recommend no suitable wild and scenic river segments and identify five SRMAs totaling 516,400 acres.
- **Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)** would manage the land and resources relying primarily on existing law, regulation and policy, applying special designations and restrictive management prescriptions only where needed to protect threatened or otherwise important resources. This alternative would eliminate overlapping WSA/ACEC designations, designate two ACECs (2,530 acres), recommend two suitable wild and scenic river segments (Dirty Devil and Fremont Gorge [59 miles]) and identify five SRMAs (838,700 acres).
- **Alternative C** would manage the land and resources with more emphasis on protecting special and sensitive natural resources. This alternative would protect all 12 eligible river segments as suitable wild and scenic rivers, designate all 16 potential ACECs (886,810 acres), identify four SRMAs (928,550 acres) and prohibit cross-country off-highway vehicle use.
- **Alternative D** would manage the land and resources with the most emphasis on protecting special, important, and sensitive resources by applying special designations and restrictive prescriptions. This alternative would recommend all 12 eligible river segments as suitable wild and scenic rivers, designate all 16 potential ACECs (886,810 acres), identify seven SRMAs (1,358,200 acres) and provide the greatest protection to scenic values and non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics (682,600 acres). This alternative would prohibit cross-country OHV use, designate the fewest miles of routes open to motor vehicles, and impose the greatest restrictions on off-highway vehicles, oil and gas leasing, and mining.

The alternatives are described in detail in Chapter 2 of the DRMP/DEIS and analyzed in Chapter 4. Based on the Chapter 4 analysis, Alternative N was determined to have the greatest overall environmental impact, followed by Alternatives A, B and C, respectively. Alternative D would have the least environmental impact and provide the greatest protection for most elements of the affected environment. Conversely, Alternative A would provide the greatest opportunities with the least restrictions for developing energy and mineral resources, while Alternative N would least restrict off-highway vehicle use.

MAJOR ISSUES

The alternatives were developed to respond to issues identified during scoping for the DRMP/DEIS. Major issues summarized here include visual resources (scenery), wilderness characteristics, livestock grazing, recreation, travel management (off-highway vehicles), minerals and energy resources, and special designations. These and other issues are discussed in detail in the DRMP/DEIS.

Visual Resources (Scenery)

Scenic resources within the planning area include internationally-recognized landscapes such as the Dirty Devil River canyons, Henry Mountains, and Factory Butte. The BLM manages scenery by designating all public lands in one of four Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes in resource management plans that allow varying degrees of change to scenic values—

- VRM Class I: This management class preserves the existing character of the landscape.
- VRM Class II: This management class retains the existing character of the landscape.

- VRM Class III: This management class partially retains the existing character of the landscape.
- VRM Class IV: This management class provides for management activities that require major modification of the existing character of the landscape.

VRM Classes I, II and III protect scenic values but can restrict other land uses to varying degrees. Class IV accommodates other uses at the expense of the scenic values. VRM classes in the alternatives are consistent with the themes of the alternatives (see Table 1).

Table 1. Visual Resource Management Classes

	Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
VRM Class I (Preservation)	0 ac 0%	446,900 ac 21%	446,900 ac 21%	446,900 ac 21%	1,129,600 ac 53%
VRM Class II (Retention)	529,500 ac 25%	0 ac 0%	209,000 ac 10%	230,600 ac 11%	66,700 ac 3%
VRM Class III (Partial Retention)	569,000 ac 27%	392,800 ac 18%	410,800 ac 19%	509,100 ac 24%	355,100 ac 17%
VRM Class IV (Modification)	1,029,500 ac 48%	1,288,300 ac 61%	1,061,300 ac 50%	941,400 ac 44%	576,600 ac 27%

Non- WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Management of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics is an issue in its own right (separate from WSAs) that is addressed in the RMP. Within the RFO, BLM identified 682,600 acres in 29 areas as meeting the criteria for "non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics" (see Chapter 3).

The BLM Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) guides the consideration of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in land use planning. It provides that although BLM may not establish new WSAs, it may consider information on non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in land use planning. Considering wilderness characteristics in the resource management planning process may result in several outcomes, including but not limited to:

- Emphasizing other multiple uses as a priority over protecting wilderness characteristics,
- Emphasizing other multiple uses while applying management restrictions to reduce impacts to some or all of the wilderness characteristics, or
- Emphasizing the protection of some or all of the wilderness characteristics as a priority over other multiple uses.

Considering wilderness characteristics in the resource management planning process would not result in the designation of new WSAs. In Chapter 2, goals and land use allocations and prescriptions for protecting and preserving the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics are identified under Alternative D. Chapter 4 discloses both (1) the impacts that proposed decisions in Chapter 2 would have on the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics identified in Chapter 3, and (2) the impacts that proposed decisions to protect wilderness characteristics under Alternative D would have on other elements of the affected environment. Table 2 displays a summary of selected proposed decisions, by alternative, that occur within the 29 areas of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics.

Table 2. Selected RMP Decisions within Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (figures expressed in acres and % of total Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the 29 areas.)

		Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Off-Highway Vehicles	Open Areas	656,400 ac 96%	221,600 ac 32%	1,100 ac <1%	0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%
	Limited Areas	5,000 ac 1%	461,000 ac 68%	646,900 ac 95%	472,700 ac 69%	0 ac 0%
	Closed Areas	21,200 ac 3%	0 ac 0%	34,600 ac 5%	209,900 ac 31%	682,600 ac 100%
Oil and Gas Leasing	Standard	577,600 ac 85%	329,300 ac 48%	239,600 ac 35%	201,700 ac 30%	0 ac 0%
	CSU/Timing	90,000 ac 13%	353,300 ac 52%	350,900 ac 51%	267,200 ac 39%	0 ac 0%
	No Surface Occupancy	6,000 ac 1%	0 ac 0%	86,800 ac 13%	105,600 ac 15%	0 ac 0%
	Closed to Leasing	9,000 ac 1%	0 ac 0%	5,300 ac 1%	108,100 ac 16%	682,600 ac 100%
Scenery	VRM I	0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%	682,600 ac 100%
	VRM II	161,300 ac 24%	0 ac 0%	148,300 ac 22%	163,900 ac 24%	0 ac 0%
	VRM III	144,900 ac 21%	213,300 ac 31%	135,200 ac 20%	153,000 ac 22%	0 ac 0%
	VRM IV	376,400 ac 55%	469,300 ac 69%	399,100 ac 58%	365,700 ac 54%	0 ac 0%
Proposed Withdrawals		0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%	11,200 ac 2%	110,900 ac 16%	682,600 ac 100%

Livestock Grazing

Range management and issues associated with livestock and grazing management were raised during scoping. Comments represented a spectrum of opinions about livestock grazing, ecosystem integrity, impacts to vegetation, soils and riparian resources, invasive species, wild horses, and the importance of grazing to the local economy and lifestyle.

Generally, the management direction for livestock grazing is prescribed by the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health and Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Subpart 4180) and other BLM policy and is common to all alternatives.

Recreation

Recreation was a frequently mentioned issue in the public scoping comments and recreational issues were identified by the agency and cooperators as well. Comments covered a wide-range of topics including—

- Provide more motorized and non-motorized trails, including horse trails
- Protect opportunities for primitive recreation
- Make special recreation permits easier to obtain
- Provide more law enforcement
- Provide better signing
- Reduce conflicts between different user groups

BLM policy requires that all public land within the RFO be identified as either a special recreation management area (SRMA) or extensive recreation management area (ERMA) in the RMP. SRMAs are identified where emphasis would be beneficial to highlight important recreational opportunities or where problems exist, such as conflicts between users or impacts on other resources. Public lands not identified as SRMAs are, by default, ERMAs, where recreation management is generally not a focal point. SRMAs can be established for a variety of purposes ranging from cross-country OHV use to areas for backcountry hiking and backpacking. SRMAs proposed under each alternative are consistent with the theme of the respective alternative. Table 3 identifies selected proposed decisions by alternative for recreation management areas.

Table 3. Recreation Management Areas

	Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA)	2.1 million acres	1.6 million acres	1.3 million acres	1.2 million acres	769,800 acres
Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)	<p>1 SRMA, 120 acres A small portion of Yuba Reservoir (Management of Yuba SRMA is deferred to the Fillmore FO in all alternatives)</p>	<p>5 SRMAs, 516,400 acres Motorized Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factory Butte • Big Rocks • Sahara Sands Dispersed Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty Devil • Otter Creek </p>	<p>5 SRMAs, 838,700 acres Motorized Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factory Butte • Big Rocks Dispersed Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Mountains • Dirty Devil • Capitol Reef Gateway </p>	<p>4 SRMAs, 928,550 acres Dispersed Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Mountains • Dirty Devil • Capitol Reef Gateway • Sevier Canyon </p>	<p>7 SRMAs, 1,358,200 acres Primitive/Semi-Primitive Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Mountains • Dirty Devil • San Rafael Swell • Little Rockies • Labyrinth Canyon Primitive/Semi-Primitive and Dispersed Recreation Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitol Reef Gateway • E. Fork Sevier River </p>

Travel Management (Off-Highway Vehicles)

Management of off-highway vehicles is one of the most controversial issues addressed in the DRMP/DEIS. It is related to the special designation and wilderness characteristic issues (discussed in this Executive Summary) and the county road claims issue (outside the scope of the DRMP/DEIS). Concerns raised during scoping include (1) OHV users value the access their vehicles provide to public lands and fear losing access due to closures and other regulations, and (2) OHV use—particularly cross-country travel and user-created trails—is adversely affecting resources such as wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, vegetation, water, soils, scenery and wilderness characteristics. In particular, the Factory Butte area near Caineville has been the focus of controversy.

Alternatives for OHV area and route designations are proposed in the DRMP/DEIS. OHV play areas are also addressed in the establishment of SRMAs.

OHV Area Designations

By BLM policy, the RMP will designate each acre of public land as open, limited or closed to OHV travel. Area designations are defined as follows—

- Open: Areas where vehicles are allowed to travel cross-country without restriction.
- Limited: Areas where vehicle use is allowed but is restricted, usually to designated routes. Vehicle use of the designated routes may be further restricted seasonally or to certain sizes or kinds of vehicles.
- Closed: Areas where motorized vehicle use is prohibited

Table 4 summarizes the acres of public lands that would be open, limited or closed to motorized use by alternative.

Table 4. OHV Area Designations (figures expressed in acres and percent of RFO)

	Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Open	1,636,400 ac 77%	449,000 ac 21%	8,400 ac <1%	0 ac 0%	0 ac 0%
Limited	277,600 ac 13%	1,679,000 ac 79%	1,909,200 ac 90%	1,445,000 ac 68%	972,800 ac 46%
Closed	214,000 ac 10%	0 ac 0%	210,400 ac 10%	683,000 ac 32%	1,155,200 ac 54%

Over three-quarters of the RFO is currently open to cross-country OHV use as reflected in the No Action Alternative. Any of the action alternatives would greatly reduce the amount of open area, diminishing both OHV recreational opportunities and the off-route impacts on other resources. Alternative A proposes 18 open areas totaling 449,000 acres including currently used play areas, new play areas, and areas where OHVs have traditionally been used for activities such as prospecting and firewood gathering. Alternative B proposes five open areas totaling 8,400 acres, providing continued opportunities for cross-country riding in some of the most popular areas, but minimizing acreage affected by cross-country travel. Alternatives C and D propose no open areas for cross-country travel, limiting the impacts of OHV use to designated routes. Alternative D proposes closing over half of the RFO to OHV use.

Route Designations

Within the limited area designation, inventoried routes would be designated for motorized use or closed. In some cases, designated routes would be closed seasonally or restricted by vehicle size/width. It should be noted that route designations are implementation decisions and that the resulting transportation network could change over time. Detailed route inventory maps by alternative will be available for review at the Richfield Field Office and on the project website for the Richfield DRMP/DEIS at <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/richfield/planning.html>. Work on a route inventory and route designations is ongoing and will be refined between the Draft EIS and Final EIS. Comments on the route inventory and proposed routes designations are invited during the DRMP/DEIS comment period.

Proposed route designations vary by alternative as displayed in Table 5 below.

Table 5. OHV Route Designations

	Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Designated Routes	4,315 mi	4,063 mi	3,693 mi	2,601 mi	2,493 mi
Designated Routes with Seasonal Closures or Size/Width Restriction	0 mi	249 mi	483 mi	591 mi	550 mi
Closed Routes	65 mi	68 mi	204 mi	1,188 mi	1,242 mi

Minerals and Energy Resources

Interest in energy resources within the RFO has increased dramatically since the discovery of oil in the Sevier Valley in May 2004. The issue was framed during scoping by those who support oil, gas, and other mineral development on public lands and others who are concerned that such development could have adverse impacts on resources such as soils, vegetation, water quality, wildlife habitat and wilderness characteristics. Several background reports on minerals, prepared as part of developing the DRMP/DEIS, provide information about the mineral potential and likelihood of development within the planning area. They are:

- Coal Resource Evaluation of Henry Mountains Coal Field, Garfield and Wayne Counties, Utah, July 2004
- Coal Resources of the BLM Richfield Planning Area, July 2004
- Mineral Potential Report, March 2005
- Draft Coal Unsuitability Report ,Wasatch Plateau and Emery Coal Fields, Richfield Field Office, BLM, Sanpete and Sevier Counties, Utah, March 2005
- Draft Coal Unsuitability Report, Henry Mountains Coal Field, Richfield Field Office, BLM, Garfield and Wayne Counties, Utah, March 2005
- Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas Development, March 2005.

Fluid Minerals

The Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario (RFD, Appendix 12) estimates that over the next 15 years, 454 oil and gas wells could be drilled within the planning area: 360 in the Sevier and Sanpete valleys, 49 on the Wasatch Plateau (primarily coal bed methane wells on the national forests) and 45 exploratory wells elsewhere. Direct surface impacts from oil and gas exploration and development would affect an estimated 8,180 acres: 5,100 acres from geophysical exploration and 3,080 acres from drilling.

In the RMP, all public lands will be designated as either open or closed to oil and gas leasing. The core of closed lands under all alternatives is the 446,900 acres of WSAs that are closed to oil and gas leasing by law. Additional areas are closed in Alternative C, primarily to protect scenic values and in Alternative D to protect non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. Within open areas, stipulations are applied to protect other resource values, as follows—

- Areas open to oil and gas leasing under standard lease terms.
- Areas open to leasing subject to controlled surface use (CSU) and/or timing limitations.
- Areas open to leasing subject to no surface occupancy (NSO).

It is important to note that much of the land within the planning area where there is high interest in oil and gas is already leased. Development of leased lands would be done according to the terms of the existing leases rather than existing land use plans. Table 6 summarizes the availability of land within the RFO for oil and gas leasing, by alternative.

Table 6. Availability of Land for Oil and Gas Leasing (figures expressed in acres and percent of RFO)

		Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Open to Leasing	Standard lease terms	1,236,500 ac 58%	860,600 ac 40%	545,000 ac 26%	491,900 ac 23%	290,200 ac 14%
	Controlled surface use or timing limitations	409,200 ac 19%	820,500 ac 39%	1,021,600 ac 48%	901,100 ac 42%	634,000 ac 30%
	No Surface Occupancy	22,600 ac 1%	0 ac 0%	110,900 ac 5%	148,700 ac 7%	43,300 ac 2%
	Total Open	1,668,300 ac 78%	1,681,100 ac 79%	1,677,500 ac 79%	1,541,700 ac 72%	967,500 46%
Closed to leasing		459,700 ac 22%	446,900 ac 21%	450,500 ac 21%	586,300 ac 28%	1,160,500 ac 54%

Coal

Coal resources are identified in three locations within the planning area: the Wasatch Plateau, Emery, and Henry Mountains coal fields. Only the Wasatch Plateau coal field is currently being mined and mining is expected to continue there for several more decades. Land use planning for coal leasing requires an

evaluation to determine the coal resources that have development potential by surface or underground mining methods, then a subsequent evaluation under the coal unsuitability criteria as defined at 43 CFR 3461.5 to determine the coal resources that are acceptable for further consideration of leasing.

Alternative N

For Alternative N, the coal evaluations and unsuitability reports were completed as part of the Management Framework Plans (MFPs). In the Wasatch Plateau and Emery coal fields, 73,952 acres of Federal mineral estate are identified as acceptable for consideration of leasing with 43,567 acres subject to NSO. In the Henry Mountains coal field, 107,414 acres of Federal mineral estate are identified as acceptable for consideration of leasing by underground mining with 19,255 acres subject to no surface facilities.

Alternatives A-D

For Alternatives A-D, the coal resources in these three fields were evaluated in two resource reports in 2003-2004 (Appendix 8) to delineate coal with development potential that would be mined by underground or surface mining methods, based on parameters and assumptions presented in the coal evaluation reports. The coal resources that were determined to have development potential were additionally analyzed by applying the unsuitability criteria (see Coal Unsuitability Reports, Appendix 8).

In the Emery coal field, 9,624 acres of BLM and 3,542 acres of National Forest are identified as having development potential by underground mining methods, with no acres acceptable for consideration by surface mining methods. In the Henry Mountains coal field, 50,512 acres of BLM lands are identified as having development potential by underground mining methods, 36,028 acres of which are acceptable for consideration of leasing by surface mining methods.

Federal regulations provide detailed guidance for addressing coal resources in BLM land use plans. Appendix 8 to the Richfield DRMP/DEIS includes draft coal unsuitability reports, providing regulation for the three coal fields. Public comment is invited on the draft coal unsuitability reports during the comment period for the DRMP/DEIS.

Coal resources within the Wasatch Plateau are within the Fishlake and Manti-La Sal National Forests. The unsuitability report addresses which coal resources within the national forests are available for consideration for coal leasing. However, Alternatives A-D for this DEIS do not analyze impacts of coal leasing on national forests nor does this DEIS analyze impacts of other resource management on coal resources within the national forests.

Special Designations

Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)

During scoping, the RFO received more comments regarding wilderness, WSAs and related issues than on any other topic. Commenters either strongly favored or strongly opposed the designation of new WSAs in the RMP. Respondents favoring wilderness often suggested that areas included in America's Redrock Wilderness Act, pending before Congress, be designated WSAs. However, a BLM policy change in September 2003 (IM 2003-275) prohibits consideration of new WSAs in RMPs. Likewise, because WSAs were established through Section 603 of FLPMA, 43 U.S.C. 1782, the BLM has no authority to change or eliminate previously identified WSAs through planning. Hence, this DRMP/DEIS does not address expanding, reducing or otherwise changing existing WSAs. The designation of WSAs or other public lands as Wilderness is a Congressional decision that is beyond the scope of this RMP and the authority of the BLM. (See also "Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics" above.)

There are 11 WSAs on public lands within the RFO, totaling 446,900 acres.

- Bull Mountain – 13,200 acres
- Dirty Devil - 72,100 acres
- Fiddler Butte – 74,000 acres
- Fremont Gorge – 2,800 acres
- French Spring/Happy Canyon – 24,300 acres
- Little Rockies – 40,700 acres
- Mount Ellen/Blue Hills – 81,400 acres
- Mount Hillers – 19,300 acres
- Mount Pennell – 77,100 acres
- Horseshoe Canyon (south) – 39,900 acres
- Portion of the Horseshoe Canyon (north) – 2,040 acres

Under all alternatives, WSAs must be managed in a manner that protects their suitability for designation as wilderness based on the following legal and policy guidance—

- BLM Handbook H-8550-1, Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (IMP), FLPMA Section 603 (c). Includes direction that WSAs be closed or limited to OHV use.
- Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1987 closes all WSAs to oil and gas leasing.
- IM-2000-096 directs that WSAs be managed as VRM Class I.

The BLM's discretion to make planning decisions on management of WSAs is limited to designating them as VRM Class I and determining if the WSAs will be limited or closed to OHV use.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Over 300 named drainages within the RFO were evaluated for their potential eligibility under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. On March 1, 2004, a *Wild and Scenic River Preliminary Eligibility and Tentative Classification Report for the Richfield Field Office* was released for 60 days of public comment. The RFO received seventy-six comments. Following an evaluation of those comments, BLM determined that 12 river segments totaling 135 miles containing one or more “outstandingly remarkable values” were eligible wild and scenic rivers (see Appendix 2, *Summary of Wild and Scenic River Evaluation*). Suitability determinations vary by alternative as reflected in Table 7. “Suitable” rivers represent BLM's recommendations to Congress. The final decision on which rivers are added to the National Wild and Scenic River System (NWSRS) rests with Congress and is outside the scope of planning.

Table 7. Eligible and Suitable Wild and Scenic Rivers

Eligible	Suitable		
Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternatives C and D
Make no suitability determination. Manage all eligible river segments to protect their outstandingly remarkable values (12 segments, 135 miles)— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty Devil River (54 miles, wild) 	Recommend no eligible river segments as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System (0 segments, 0 miles). Provide no special management for outstandingly remarkable	Recommend and manage the following eligible rivers as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System (2 segments, 59 miles)— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty Devil River (54 miles, wild) • Fremont Gorge (5 	Recommend and manage the following eligible rivers (all eligible segments) as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System (12 segments, 135 miles)— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty Devil River (54 miles, wild)

Eligible	Suitable		
	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternatives C and D
Alternative N (No Action) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaver Wash Canyon (6.8 miles, wild) • Larry Canyon (4 miles, wild) • No Mans Canyon (7.1 miles, wild) • Robbers Roost Canyon (31 miles, wild) • Sam's Mesa Box Canyon (9.5 miles, wild) • Twin Corral Box Canyon (9 miles, wild) • Fish Creek (1/4 mile, scenic) • Fremont Gorge (5 miles, wild) • Fremont River below Capitol Reef National Park to Caineville Ditch Diversion (4 miles, recreational) • Maidenwater Creek (3 miles, scenic) • Quitchupah Creek (1.4 miles, recreational). 	values.	miles, wild)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaver Wash Canyon (6.8 miles, wild) • Larry Canyon (4 miles, wild) • No Mans Canyon (7.1 miles, wild) • Robbers Roost Canyon (31 miles, wild) • Sam's Mesa Box Canyon (9.5 miles, wild) • Twin Corral Box Canyon (9 miles, wild) • Fish Creek (1/4 mile, scenic) • Fremont Gorge (5 miles, wild). • Fremont River below Capitol Reef National Park to Caineville Ditch Diversion (4 miles, recreational) • Maidenwater Creek (3 miles, scenic) • Quitchupah Creek (1.4 miles, recreational)

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

FLPMA mandates that the BLM "give priority to the designation and protection of areas of critical environmental concern" in developing or revising land use plans (43 USC § 1714 (c)(3)). Thirty areas totaling 1.6 million acres were nominated as ACECs during scoping. BLM evaluated the nominations and identified 16 areas totaling 886,810 acres meeting relevance and importance criteria as potential ACECs (see Appendix 1, ACEC Evaluation Report and Table 8 below). Comments on the ACEC Evaluation Report are invited during the DRMP/DEIS comment period.

Table 8. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Continue designation and management of four existing ACECs (14,780 acres)— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaver Wash Canyon (4,800 acres) • North Caineville Mesa (2,200 acres) • South Caineville 	Designate no ACECs.	Designate and manage two areas (one existing, one new) as ACECs (2,530 acres)-- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Caineville Mesa (2,200 acres) • Old Woman Front (330 acres) 	Designate and manage 16 areas as ACECs (886,810 acres)— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badlands (88,900 acres including North and South Caineville Mesa ACECs and Gilbert Badlands RNA ACEC) • Bull Creek Archaeological District (4,800 acres) • Dirty Devil (includes Beaver Wash Canyon ACEC) (205,300 acres) • Fremont Gorge/Cockscomb (34,300 acres) • Henry Mountains (includes No Man Mesa 	

Alternative N (No Action)	Alternative A	Alternative B (Preferred)	Alternative C	Alternative D
Mesa (4,100 acres) • Gilbert Badlands Research Natural Area (RNA) (3,680 acres)			potential ACEC, 288,200 acres • Horseshoe Canyon (RFO portion only, 40,900 acres) • Kingston Canyon (22,100 acres) • Little Rockies (49,200 acres) • Lower Muddy Creek (RFO portion only, 16,200 acres) • Old Woman Front (330 acres) • Parker Mountain (107,900 acres) • Quitchupah (180 acres) • Rainbow Hills (4,000 acres) • Sevier Canyon (8,900 acres) • Thousand Lakes Bench (500 acres) • Special Status Species (15,100 acres)	

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Environmental consequences potentially resulting from each of the five alternatives were analyzed relative to meaningful direct, indirect, short-term, and long-term impacts. The impacts of each alternative are summarized in Table 2-25 and described in Chapter 4. Also included in Chapter 4 is a discussion of cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impacts of each alternative when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

CONSULTATION

During the planning process, BLM coordinated with Indian tribes, cooperating agencies, and the public.

- **Coordination with American Indian Tribes:** The BLM is required by law to coordinate with Indian tribes in developing RMPs, be consistent with tribal plans and protection of treaty rights, and observe specific planning coordination authorities. In developing the Richfield DRMP/DEIS, BLM representatives met with representatives of the Hopi, Navajo, Paiute, and Ute tribes.
- **Cooperating Agencies:** In preparing the Richfield DRMP/DEIS, BLM invited other Federal agencies and state and local governments to participate as cooperating agencies. The State of Utah and Garfield, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne Counties each signed cooperating agency agreements and participated as members of the DRMP/DEIS interdisciplinary team. Other Federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, also participated in the interdisciplinary team meetings.
- **Other Consultation:** The field manager, land use planner, and other staff communicated regularly with a variety of groups and individuals interested in the RMP. Such communication will continue through the record of decision (ROD) and plan implementation.

FINAL EIS, RECORD OF DECISION AND RMP

Public comment on the Richfield DRMP/DEIS will be accepted for 90 days following its release. The comments will then be analyzed and a Proposed Final Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) prepared, followed by a protest period and governor's consistency review. Finally, a ROD and Approved RMP will be issued.

The Approved RMP will provide overarching guidance for all subsequent site-specific decisions and implementation and activity plans within the RFO for the next 15 to 20 years. Certain decisions will be effective immediately and will require no additional planning or NEPA analysis, including—

- Visual Resource Management class designations
- Off-highway vehicle area designations
- Areas closed and open to oil and gas leasing and the stipulations applied to leases within the open areas
- Wild and Scenic River suitability recommendations
- Area of Critical Environmental Concern designations