

# **SERVICEBERRY**

## **SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

**An Integrated Activity Management Plan and  
Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2016-0003**

**Bureau of Land Management  
Little Snake Field Office  
2016**



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## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

The Little Snake Approved Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision (RMP/ROD), October 2011, recognized seven areas where demands for specific structured recreation opportunities have been determined to exist. These areas are called “Special Recreation Management Areas” or SRMAs and have been delineated as follows:

SRMA Name	Acres
Emerald Mountain SRMA	4,140
Little Yampa Canyon	27,310
Juniper Mountain	1,780
Cedar Mountain	900
South Sand Wash	35,510
Serviceberry	12,380
Fly Creek	12,340

A SRMA designation intensifies management of areas where outdoor recreation is a high priority. It helps direct recreation program priorities toward areas with high resource values, elevated public concern, or significant amounts of recreational activity. Areas with a SRMA designation can be expected to see investments in recreation facilities and visitor services aimed at reducing resource damage and mitigating user conflicts. Implementation-level plans are completed for each SRMA to fully describe management actions and objectives.

### 1.1 Location and Setting

The Serviceberry SRMA is located in Moffat County, Colorado east of Highway 13 and approximately one-half mile south of the Wyoming state line, near Baggs, Wyoming. Figure 1.1. The western boundary of this unit runs roughly parallel to Willow Creek and is defined by borders with private lands. The southern boundary is bordered by private property. The eastern boundary is a combination of borders defined by private land (central and southern portions) and by a State Land Easement Access Road (northern quarter). The northern boundary is primarily Moffat County Road 2.

The legal description is:

T11N R90W Sections 5-8, 17-21, 29-30

T12N R90W Sections 21, 28-29, 31-33

#### 1.1.1 Colorado State Land Board (SLB) Lands

Three state land parcels adjoin the Serviceberry SRMA and provide additional hunting opportunities. The remaining lands along the boundary of the SRMA are private parcels of various sizes. The majority of these parcels are agricultural/ranching lands. Private homes in the area are generally secluded and cannot be seen from the Serviceberry SRMA. The state land parcels are managed by the Colorado State Land Board as follows:

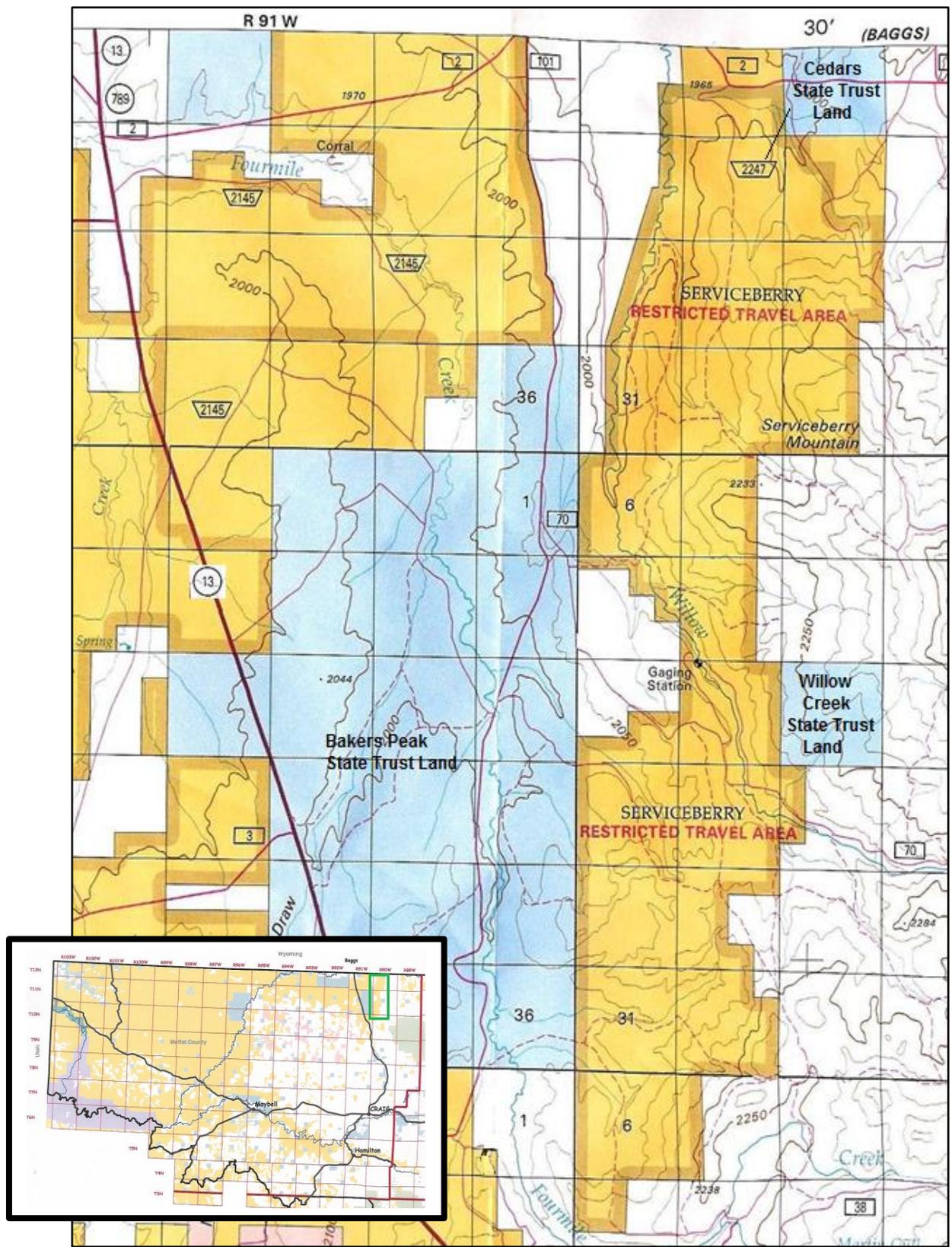


Figure 1.1 Serviceberry SRMA

### Bakers Peak State Trust Land

This is the largest adjoining state land parcel at 12,393 acres. The State Trust Land provides access to the central portion of the Serviceberry SRMA on County Road 101 to County Road 70. The area is open from August through February for hunting of pronghorn, deer, elk, sage grouse, rabbit and coyote.

### Cedars State Trust Land

The 640-acre Cedars State Trust Land provides the main access to the Serviceberry SRMA via BLM Road 2247. The area is open from August through February for hunting of pronghorn, deer, elk, sage grouse, rabbit and coyote.

### Willow Creek State Trust Land

The 640-acre Willow Creek State Trust Land is located northeast of CR 70. Access to this state trust land is by foot or horseback and is located .25 mile through the Serviceberry SRMA. The area is open from September through May for hunting of deer, elk, lion, pronghorn, and small game.

#### **1.1.2 Existing Structures/Facilities**

In the northern section of the SRMA (Zone 1) there is a large holding tank and stock tank. An old corral and loading chute are located across from the tanks. The corral and loading chute are located both on state and BLM lands. The corral and chute were built prior to the BLM land exchange that occurred during the mid-1990s by the private land owner. Currently, the corral and chute are encouraging trespass on the Cedars State Trust Land through staging, camping, grazing activities as a result of an incorrectly fenced boundary.

Since the corral and chute are used sparingly by the BLM grazing leasee to temporarily hold livestock and by hunters for their pack animals, and for staging and camping, BLM worked with the Colorado State Land Board for possible solutions to prevent trespass issues on state land, which included:

1. Remove the corral and loading chute located on state land and rebuild on BLM land to eliminate trespass issues on state leased lands.
2. Remove the corral and chute on state land and BLM land.
3. Develop a mutual agreement in allowing use and maintenance of the corrals on state land.

The State Land Board was receptive to 1 or 2. Depending on the outcome and the corrals remain the corrals would be entered into the BLM Range Improvement Projects System (RIPS) and the Facility Asset Management System (FAMS), which allows BLM to maintain the corrals for use. Use would be open for horseback riders and outfitters to secure stock for day and/or overnight use.

The BLM does have a legal access through the Cedars State Trust Land on the road marked BLM 2247 only.

At the end of BLM Road 2247 is the Holmes Homestead. This is the site of the proposed Interpretive Area, which will be described further in Section 2.3.2.1 below.

Associated range improvements (i.e., pasture fencing, stock ponds, stock tanks, routes, etc.) are found throughout the SRMA and are, for the most part, in relatively good condition.

Other facilities include a gaging station located approximately one mile north of CR 70 along Willow Creek and an agricultural water diversion station located along the northeastern border of the SRMA.

There are no developed trails or roads within the SRMA other than the main BLM access road (BLM Road 2247).

## **1.2 Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plan**

The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Little Snake Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan as amended by the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment  
Date Approved: October 2011 and September 2015

Decision Language: The Proposed Action and all alternatives are consistent with the Little Snake Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Recreation Management goals and objectives to provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, activities, and experiences for various user groups, unorganized visitors and affected communities, their residences, economies, and the environment. Section/Page: 2.15 Recreation/RMP-42

## **1.3 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, and Other Requirements**

The following laws, acts, manuals, policies, and regulations provide the foundation for managing wildlife habitat, livestock, recreation, and cultural resources on BLM-administered lands.

### Fish and Wildlife

*Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 as amended* (16 USC 1531): Section 7 of the ESA outlines the procedure for federal interagency cooperation to conserve federally listed species and their designated habitats. Section 7(a) (2) of the ESA states that each federal agency shall, in consultation with Secretary, insure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of their habitats within the project area.

*Special Status Species Management Manual for the Bureau of Land Management* (BLM Manual 6840): National policy directs BLM State Directors to designate sensitive species in cooperation with the state fish and wildlife agency. This manual establishes policy for management of species listed or proposed for listing pursuant to the ESA and Bureau sensitive species which are found on BLM-administered lands to conserve sensitive species, including their habitats, and to mitigate adverse impacts. Where relevant to the activities associated with this project, effects to special status species are analyzed in this Environmental Assessment (EA).

*Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Executive Order 13186, and BLM Memorandum of Understanding WO-230-2010-04* (between BLM and US Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]): Federal agencies are required to evaluate the effects of proposed actions on migratory birds (including eagles) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) “or other established environmental review process;” restore and enhance the habitat of migratory birds, as practicable; identify where unintentional take reasonably attributable to agency actions is having, or is likely to have, a measurable negative effect on migratory bird populations; and, with respect to those

actions so identified, the agency shall develop and use principles, standards, and practices that will lessen the amount of unintentional take, developing any such conservation efforts in cooperation with the Service. Effects to migratory birds are analyzed in this EA.

#### Livestock Management

*The Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) of 1934 as amended:* Provides for the orderly use of public land. The goals of the TGA were to stop injury to the public grazing lands by preventing overgrazing and soil deterioration; to provide for their orderly use, improvement, and development; to stabilize the livestock industry dependent upon the public range; and for other purposes.

*The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976:* Authorized the following: Inventory and identification of BLM-administered lands, land use planning, public involvement and participation. FLPMA also provides BLM with broad management authority under principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Land use planning resulted in the preparation of the Little Snake RMP.

*The Public Rangelands Improvement Act (PRIA) of 1978:* Mandates that livestock grazing be managed to improve range condition and maintain the highest level of productivity.

*Title 43 CFR, Subpart 4100 – Grazing Administration, Exclusive of Alaska:* The regulations embody the Acts, as amended, listed above. Specifically, 43 CFR 4180.2 is the regulatory requirement that implements Colorado's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management, 1997 (USDI 1997).

#### Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Management

*Executive Order 11644 (1972):* The executive order (E.O.) directs federal agencies "to establish policies and procedures that will ensure the use of off-road vehicles on public lands will be controlled and directed to protect the resources of those lands, to promote the safety of all users of those lands, and to minimize the conflict among various users of those lands and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors." The E.O. also requires Federal agencies to designate specific areas where the use of off-road vehicles may or may not be permitted, and "to monitor the effects of off-road vehicles on public lands and amend or rescind management decisions in order to further the policy of this order."

*Executive Order 11989 (1977):* The order directs federal land managers to immediately close areas or trails to off-road vehicles whenever the land manager determines that "the use of the offroad vehicle will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on the soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitats or cultural or historic resources of particular areas or trails until such adverse effects have been eliminated and that measures have been implemented to prevent further recurrence."

*Code of Federal Regulations (CFR):* Designation of areas and trails as open, closed, or limited to motorized use is required and authorized under 43 CFR 8342 Designation of Areas and Trails. These designations would be effective upon issuance of the Record of Decision. Designation of areas as open, closed, or limited for non-motorized and other uses (mechanical, mountain bike, equestrian, and foot), or conditions of use, is authorized under 43 CFR 8364.1 Closure and Restriction Orders, and 43 CFR 8365.1-6 Supplementary Rules. Designations under 43 CFR

8364.1 and 43 CFR 8365.1-6 require publication in the Federal Register and local media and are not effective until such publication.

### Cultural Resources

Federal agencies are mandated by various laws to consider the effect of proposed land use activities on cultural resources (i.e. historic and prehistoric sites). The *National Environmental Policy Act* directs the federal government to preserve important historic and cultural aspects of the national heritage. The *National Historic Preservation Act* requires federal agencies to take into account the effect of federal undertakings on cultural resources that are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. (Proposed activities discussed in this document, such as trail construction and historic site interpretation, are considered to be federal undertakings.

### Native American Concerns

Federal law directs land managing agencies to consider the views of Native Americans as part of the process of making land use decisions. The *National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)* requires federal agencies to consult with Native Americans regarding the effect of federal undertakings on sites or areas that may be of cultural or religious importance to Indian people to ensure that tribal values are taken into account to the extent feasible.

## **1.4 Scoping and Development of Issues**

On June 1, 2015, the development of the Serviceberry SRMA plan was introduced to the Little Snake Interdisciplinary Team at the NEPA Priorities meeting. BLM staff input was used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action, and to identify alternatives that meet the purposed and need.

Resource issues and concerns identified through the internal scoping process included:

*Vegetation* – Motor vehicle use in the area open to their use can bring in noxious weeds, and habitat alteration caused by motor vehicles has made the area susceptible to noxious and invasive species. Changes in recreational uses could negatively or positively affect native species.

*Wildlife* – Fencing, parking areas, camping areas and other changes to recreational uses could affect wildlife use of the area.

*Recreation* – Changes in recreational designations could affect public access and use of less than 25 acres. Modifying uses on less than 25 acres could push those uses to adjacent public, State and private lands.

*Private Property* – Management actions on public lands could affect access to or use of adjacent private lands.

*Livestock Management* – Proposed management actions could affect the use of less than 2 acres.

*Cultural Resources* – Proposed actions could affect historic properties in the area. The effect could be positive or negative.

## **CHAPTER 2 – ALTERNATIVES**

### **2.0 Purpose and Need**

The following Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses the resources and impacts on a site-specific basis as required by the NEPA of 1969, as amended (Public Law 91-90, 42 USC 4321 et seq.). Pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.28 and 1502.21, this site-specific EA tiers to the information and analysis contained in the RMP/ROD. Tiering to a NEPA document containing broader impact analysis allows the BLM to consider a narrower range of alternatives for a Proposed Action. Scoping conducted during the development of the RMP/ROD is also brought forward as it allows the BLM to focus on the site-specific issues or concerns of the Proposed Action.

The purpose of the Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) is to provide comprehensive guidance and direction toward providing big game hunting, camping, and interpretation/education opportunities for national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors and communities to the area. Other recreation activities would be allowed in the project area to the extent they are compatible with the primary, targeted activities. The plan will provide direction for:

- Identifying a process, along with specific opportunities to enhance collaboration between BLM, local communities, and other agencies.
- Developing and managing both natural and heritage tourism in a manner compatible with resource protection goals.
- Identifying travel management decisions necessary to sustain the prescribed character of recreation settings and the production of targeted activities, experiences, and benefits desired by visitors.
- Identifying the type and level of visitor services needed to support desired visitor use.
- Developing methods to assess and monitor visitor satisfaction levels and resource conditions.

### **2.1 Goals and Objectives for Proposed Action**

- Provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, activities, and experiences for various user groups, unorganized visitors and affected communities, their residences, economics, and the environment:
  - Increase managed and non-motorized use trails.
  - Focus the development of non-motorized trails in backcountry areas or where public demand warrants.
  - Provide legal public access opportunities for recreational uses.
  - Manage for special recreation permit services.
  - Identify strategies and decisions that may be applied to protect or preserve primitive and semi-primitive areas so as to provide solitude and backcountry opportunities.
  - Manage motorized recreation to reduce impacts on big game hunt quality and harvest success on BLM lands.
- Provide visitor services including interpretive and educational information:
  - Provide facilities in heavy-use areas where such use is impacting resources and experiences.
  - Use education as a means to further resource protection.

- Enhance recreational experiences by such actions as providing boundary signing and information, and managing campsites and access.
- Provide staff and law enforcement for campsite conditions and use, and on-site assistance mainly during rifle hunting season (October through December).
- Continue coordination with organized interpretive associations.
- Designate an Interpretive Area to promote heritage tourism and education, and prevent user conflicts.
- Develop a volunteer program with gateway communities to assist with monitoring needs.
- Support tourism efforts for local economic diversification associated with public land resources:
  - Maintain cooperative agreements with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Moffat County, and the Moffat County Sheriff.
  - Continue coordination with local and regional recreation economic development organizations, such as BLM community partners and community organizations.
  - Pursue cooperative agreements with other agencies and governments.

## **2.2 Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed in Detail**

*Construction of a Campground with Vault Toilet, and Trail System* – The Little Snake RMP/ROD states that “camping facilities will be provided, and there will be improvements to the roads to these facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses. A managed and maintained trail system will be developed within the area” (RMP-49). However with input from LSFO staff, this alternative was not considered further because experience has shown that hunters prefer to camp in a dispersed manner rather than in a designated campground. Further, due to the distance from a town or city, maintenance of the campground and toilets would be difficult. Past experience in the LSFO has also proven that developed facilities have a good chance of being vandalized, making upkeep even more difficult and expensive. It is the general feeling of the staff that until existing camping facilities on LSFO managed lands can be brought up to acceptable standards, it is impractical to build additional facilities.

## **2.3 Description of the Alternatives**

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the management of the Serviceberry SRMA. This section presents the alternatives in comparative form, in order to define the differences between each alternative and provide a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public. Design criteria and monitoring measures incorporated in the alternatives are also described.

The following alternatives have been identified based on the scoping process:

Alternative A – No Action/Continue Current Use

Alternative B – Implement the Serviceberry SRMA Plan (Preferred Alternative)

### **2.3.1 Alternative A – Continue Current Use/No Action**

The area would remain open to dispersed camping wherever recreationists choose to camp including by the Holmes Homestead. The corrals would remain in use on both state and public land, would not be maintained, and trespass issues on state land would continue. There would be no interpretive or education work done at the Holmes Homestead. The historical homestead would not be protected by a fence and cattle would continue to degrade the site. Parking areas and

improved access would not be constructed. The Interpretive Area would not be created and user conflicts would continue to occur between hunters and heritage tourism visitors.

### 2.3.2 Alternative B – Implement the Serviceberry SRMA Plan

Alternative B, the Proposed Action, was identified in the Little Snake Resource Management Plan (RMP 2011) Record of Decision. In the Serviceberry area 12,380 acres of public land were designated as a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) through the RMP process in order to primarily provide big game hunting, (non-motorized), camping activities, and interpretation/education opportunities. Other recreation activities would be allowed in the project area to the extent they are compatible with the primary, targeted activities.

Though encompassing a single SRMA, the project area was divided into two Recreation Management Zones (RMZs). They are identified as RMZ 1 – Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access, and RMZ 2 – Serviceberry backcountry. In delineating these RMZs, consideration was given to the distinct settings these areas offer, as well as their predominant recreation activities, use patterns, and management issues. See Figure 2.1: Recreation Management Zones and Table 2.1: Management Objectives.

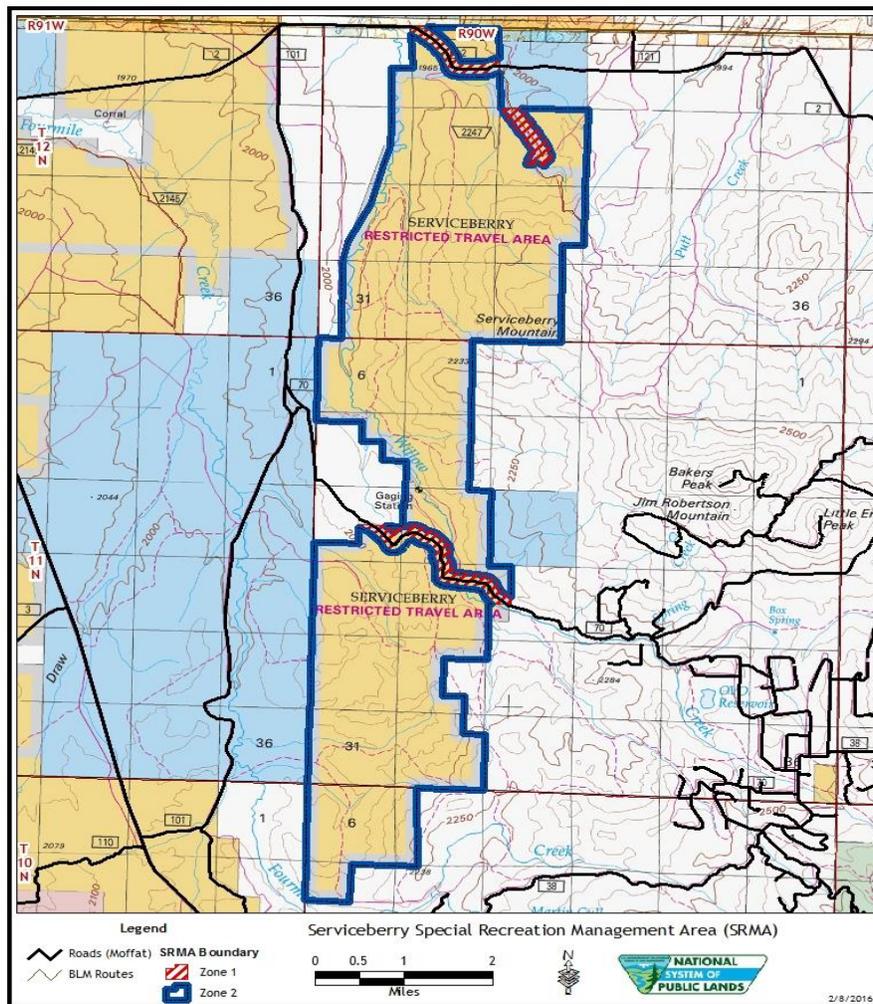


Figure 2.1: Recreation Management Zones

**Table 2.1: Management Objectives**

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

Following the implementation plan (Appendix A) the effectiveness of the management actions toward meetings goals and objectives would be tracked through monitoring. Core activities would include:

**2.3.2.1 Zone 1: Willow Creek and North Serviceberry Access**

Zone 1 would be a destination area for national and/or regional recreation-tourism visitors and other constituents to the area for opportunities for visitors to engage in big game hunting and associated camping activities, heritage interpretation/education, and other recreation activities. OHV use would be limited to the designated roads and trails.

Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, and enjoying easy access to recreation. Benefits would include a reduction in wildlife disturbance from recreation users, greater self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, self-confidence, improved physical fitness, positive contributions to local and regional economic stability, and a great understanding of the area’s heritage.

**Camping**

Primitive camping facilities would be developed in Zone 1 in the high-impact area related to hunting season uses, depending on funding availability. This camping area would be developed along BLM Road 2247. Up to five sites would have campfire rings and game hangers, and the remaining area would remain open for undeveloped camping, unless otherwise posted. Most of these sites would be located in areas already used for camping.

No primitive camping facilities would be developed along County Road 70 in Zone 1. Driving off designated roads and trails would be allowed for camping within 100 feet from a designated road or trail. However, campsites should be selected by non-motorized means by using existing pullouts, if possible. Access to campsites should be by the most direct route causing the least damage and social trailing.

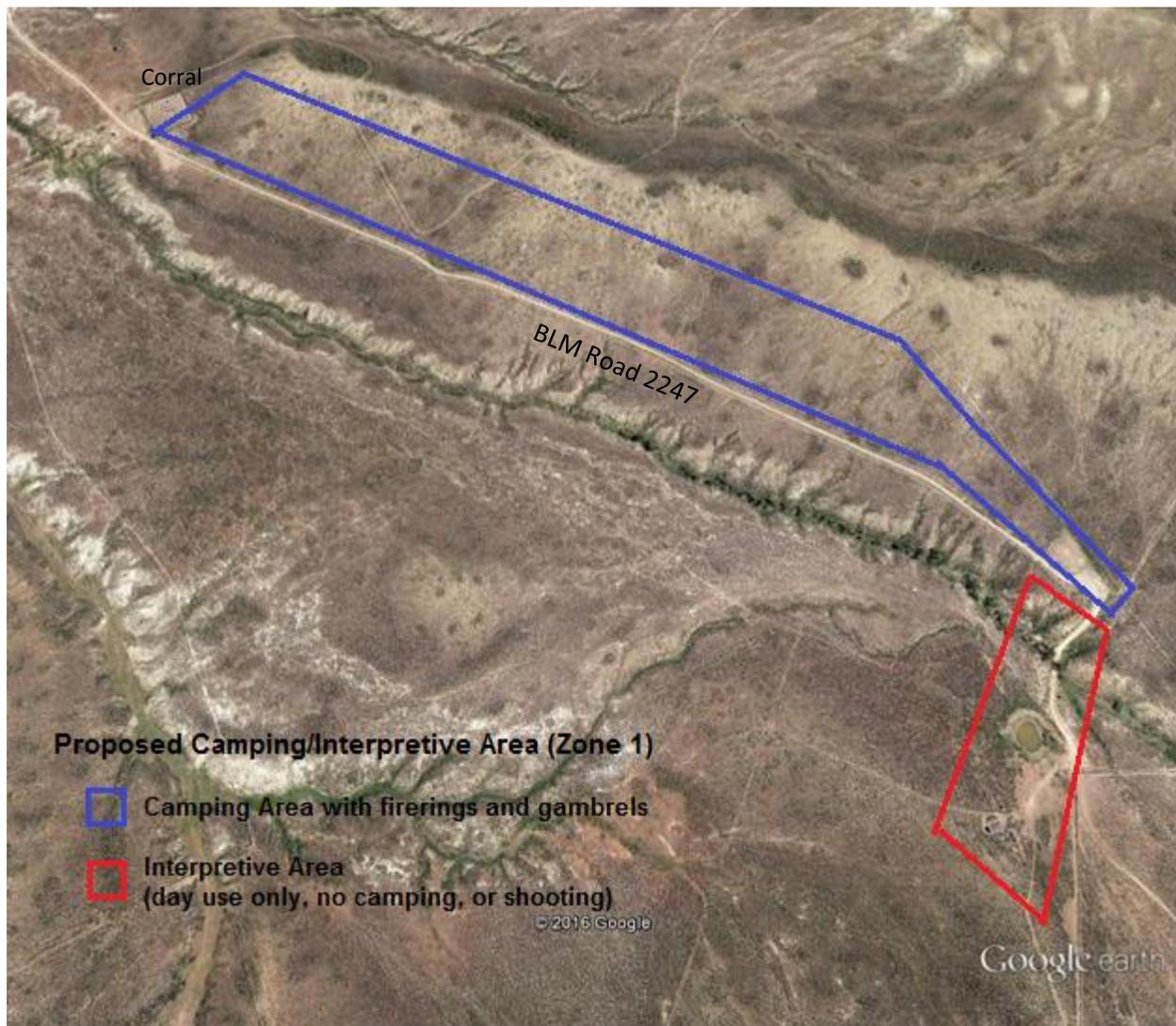
Campfires would be allowed in this zone. Visitors would be encouraged to camp in existing campsites and use existing fire rings, fuel stoves, or fire pans. Camping/campfires would not be authorized within the area designated as the Interpretive Area or within 150 feet of any historic or cultural resources, and riparian areas. Campfires may be prohibited during high fire hazard times of the year; these restrictions would be posted.

Camping would continue to be limited to 14 days to prevent long term occupancy on public lands. After the 14 days have been reached, campers cannot return to that location for 30 days and/or

must move at least 30 air miles away from the previously occupied location. The project area would be patrolled to detect and resolve problems with campers staying beyond the 14-day limit.

No camping would be allowed within the cottonwood stand located along BLM Road 2247 or at the homestead site in order to protect natural and cultural resources from further degradation, promote heritage tourism, reduce user conflicts, and improve visitor safety and health. The no camping area, herein referred to as the Interpretive Area, would have space for vehicle parking and would be day-use only with no overnight camping.

Figure 2.2 gives an overview of the proposed camping area, fire rings and game hoists, and the Interpretive Area. Figure 2.3 provides a more detailed view of the Interpretive Area and will be covered further under the Heritage Interpretation/Education section.



**Figure 2.2: Proposed Facility Development and Camping Area**

### **Heritage Interpretation/Education Experiences**

The Holmes Homestead has outstanding potential for interpreting the homesteading experience of Moffat County during its peak period, and of a time when new government policies were making homesteading lands easier to obtain. In 1916 Mr. Harry Lincoln Holmes took up lands near Baker’s Peak and built a house; by 1917 he had moved his family in and became a dry-land farmer. A homestead patent for the subject property covering 277.84 acres was conveyed to Mr. Holmes in February 1924, under the Enlarged Homestead Act of February 19, 1909. In 1994, a private land exchange brought the property back into federal ownership. The site contains the main two-and-a-half story log and fieldstone family dwelling, machine shops, ice house, chicken house, granary, three-seat outhouse, corrals and barn, and pond.

Through partnerships with the Northwest Colorado Cultural Heritage Association, Moffat County Tourism Association, and other community organizations, the BLM is working to grow the foundation, understanding and value of cultural heritage tourism through interpretation, tours, and brochures for the Holmes Homestead.

The Holmes Homestead would be a day use only area with no hunting, recreation shooting, or camping to protect the integrity of the homestead and for safety concerns. The area would be identified as the Interpretive Area and used for the purpose of interpretive and educational purposes only to avoid any conflicts with other recreational uses in the area. Figure 2.3.



**Figure 2.3 Interpretive Area.**

An effort would be made to accurately mark the boundary of the Interpretive Area to reduce the possibility of user conflicts, and safety concerns.

Proposed improvements for the Interpretive Area are discussed below:

#### Parking Facilities

A parking area would be constructed near the Homestead, based on funding availability. The parking area would be authorized for day-use only, no camping, recreation-use parking (hunting, hiking, heritage tourism, etc.). The parking area would accommodate 2 vehicles and no more than 2 buses. The parking facility would remain primitive, with some minor grading and gentle sloping to prevent erosion and easy access. Natural barriers would be used to formally delineate the parking area, along with appropriate signage.

Since parking facilities would be limited, recreation and heritage tourism/education activities would be monitored for overall use. If heritage and educational demands increase, the parking area at the Holmes Homestead would be designated strictly for activities related to cultural interpretation, and clearly posted as such. Additional parking facilities could be constructed with specific authorization from the BLM and a site specific environmental analysis would be completed for that authorization.

A kiosk would be placed near the first parking area to inform visitors they are entering the Interpretive Area and to help them understand and appreciate the resources they are seeing in the area and include ethics messages to encourage visitors to help protect these values, along with rules and regulations for the area.

#### Fencing

A protective fence would be installed around the Holmes Homestead. The fence would be approximately 540 feet in length and would be constructed of treated posts and poles, and have a 10-foot long access gate. The fence would be designed in order to keep large livestock (cattle and horses) out of the Holmes Family homestead. Installation of the fence would be monitored by a professional archaeologist.

#### Trail System

A proposed trail system would be built around the Holmes Homestead to prevent unnecessary social trailing and negative impacts to cultural resources. The trail would provide opportunities for visitors to examine the architectural structure of buildings and to experience living conditions during the homesteading period.

Trail construction standards are covered under Section 2.3: Management Applicable to Both Zones; Trails. The Standard Paleontology Stipulations (Appendix D) would apply to all ground-disturbing activities as appropriate.

#### Interpretation/Education

An interpretive panel would be placed at the Holmes Homestead to educate visitors on natural and cultural history to improve their experience, and create a better understanding and appreciation of the area. The message would be crafted with the goal of providing the general public with the information they need to become better stewards of their public lands.

Information and education materials would be developed and available to help visitors locate, understand and appreciate historical resources in the project area. This would be done using a variety of media including maps, visitor guides, brochures, signs, web based information, personal communication and visitor center information. All these materials would include key messages about protecting and preserving cultural resources.

No other improvements would be constructed, unless the need dictates, in order to limit sign clutter and modern improvements so that visitors can experience what homesteading was like in a remote area. For the most part, the landscape will be naturally-appearing except for obvious primitive and maintained roads.

### **2.3.2.2 Zone 2: Serviceberry Backcountry**

Under Zone 2, the niche will be backcountry where national and/or local recreation-tourism visitors and communities would value the area for its dispersed, open, and undeveloped character. Objectives would be to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in non-motorized big game hunting and undeveloped camping, hiking, and other primitive recreation.

Experiences would include developing skills and abilities, gaining a greater sense of achievement, feeling good about solitude and being isolated, enjoying primitive and unconfined outdoor recreation environments, and enjoying exploration. Benefits would include a greater sense of self-reliance gained from hunting, improved outdoor knowledge, improved physical fitness, closer relationship with the natural world, and positive contributions to local and regional economic stability.

#### **Camping**

There would be no developed camping sites within Zone 2. Access to undeveloped camping opportunities would be by foot or horseback only. Camping would be limited to 14 days to prevent long term occupancy on public lands. After the 14 days have been reached, campers cannot return to that location for 30 days and/or must move at least 30 air miles away from the previously occupied location. The project area would be patrolled to detect and resolve problems with campers staying beyond the 14-day limit.

Campfires would be allowed in this zone. Visitors would be encouraged to camp in existing campsites and use existing fire rings, fuel stoves, or fire pans. Camping/campfires would not be authorized within 150 feet of any historic or cultural resources, or riparian areas. Campfires may be prohibited during high fire hazard times of the year; these restrictions would be posted.

#### **Trails**

Depending on need and funding availability, a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system could be developed in the area. The BLM would work in partnership with partners and volunteers for trail development, construction, and maintenance. These trails would represent the most direct path, or the least path of resistance to key areas. Any surface disturbing activity, such as social trailing to other areas off any designated trails, may not be created without specific authorization from the BLM, and after site-specific environmental analysis has been completed. Trail construction standards are covered under 2.4: Management Applicable to Both Zones; Trails.

## **2.4 Management Applicable to Both Zones**

### **2.4.1 Horseback Riding and Pack Animals**

At present, the RMP allows for stock use to occur off of designated roads and trails. The BLM would work with both horseback riders and other pack animal users to ensure these activities are practiced in a sustainable fashion, with minimal impact to cultural and natural resources.

Depending on the outcome with the State Land Board on the corrals and loading chute, vehicles with horse trailers or other horse or pack animal related activities, would be encouraged to stage/camp at the corrals located on BLM Road 2247. Information would be disseminated through brochures, social media, kiosks, etc.

Any feed that is used on public lands must be certified weed free hay or pellets to reduce the chances of spreading invasive weeds.

### **2.4.2 Hunting/Target Shooting**

The Serviceberry SRMA falls within Game Management Unit 4. The planning area would be open to legal hunting within the two RMZs. Big game and small game hunting would be restricted to the hunting seasons set by current Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) guidelines and consistent with CPW regulations.

No target shooting or hunting would be allowed along designated roads or trails, camping areas, or within the Interpretive Area. Access for hunting within the SRMA would be limited to foot and horse traffic only.

The BLM would continue and improve coordination with CPW regarding hunting. This includes efforts to share information and ideas, to cooperate on law enforcement, to identify issues and concerns, and to develop affordable strategies for dealing with them.

For the purposes of ensuring public health and safety and preserving quality recreation experiences, disposal or abandonment of game carcasses or carcass parts would be prohibited within 300 feet of any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or developed day-use area.

Regular patrols would continue during hunting season to contact hunters, offer information, make sure hunters understand the rules, encourage responsible behavior, and identify and resolve inappropriate activities. The use of motorized vehicles off designated roads for game retrieval would not be permitted. The use of mechanized vehicles, such as game carts, off designated routes would be allowed. The BLM would stay informed about the availability of legal outfitters that are willing to provide horse packing services to assist hunters in removing their game from backcountry areas.

### **2.4.3 Special Recreation Permits (SRPs)**

Special recreation permits (SRPs) are authorizations that allow specified recreation use of the public lands and related waters. SRPs are issued to manage visitor use, protect natural and cultural resources, and achieve the goals and objectives of the field office recreation program as outlined in a land use plan. SRPs are required for all competitive, commercial, vending, special area and organized group/event uses of public lands.

Permits are issued at the discretion of the Field Manager who would only approve complete application packages that are received 120 days prior to the planned event or visitation, are in agreement with management goals in the project area, and that are unlikely to cause undesirable resource impacts or conflicts with other visitors.

Outfitters - The number of outfitters permitted, the area they would be allowed to use, and the number of service days they would be granted may be regulated to maintain desirable experiences, avoid resource impacts, avoid overcrowding and reduce conflicts with other visitors.

K-12 Public School Groups – Public school groups that are involved in outings on public lands would be required to obtain a SRP under the following conditions:

- Their trip is classified as a commercial trip (i.e., the school hires someone to specifically outfit and guide the trip who is not on the normal teaching staff).
- The trip is classified as recreational.
- When the BLM determines that there are resource concerns, potential for user conflict, public health and safety issues.
- If students are charged a fee beyond the sharing of actual costs.

Scientific, Educational, and Therapeutic Institutions or Non-profit Organizations – Any activity, service, or use requiring tuition and/or fees associated with an activity or trip and/or where a duty of care or expectation of safety is owed participants by service providers as a result of compensation on BLM public lands would require a commercial SRP. If a use authorized by another program has a commercial recreation component (e.g., paleontology or archaeology tour, recreational mining) an SRP would be required in addition to the program permit.

Organized Groups – Organized groups (e.g., OHV club, family reunion, large scout campout, hiking club) that are neither commercial nor competitive would be evaluated by the authorized officer to determine if a permit would be required based on planning decisions, concern for cultural or natural resources, or facilities on public land, potential user conflicts, public health and safety issues, or services are required such as law enforcement, fire protection, on-site monitoring of resources or activities, exclusive use or other specialized management. The threshold size of a group would be determined for each area in the project area (Interpretive Area vs upland area). Thresholds would be based upon planning, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, and public health and safety.

Competitive Events – Competitive events using motorized or mechanized vehicles would not be authorized anywhere in the project area. Competitive events not using motorized vehicles or mechanized vehicles (e.g., trail running) would be allowed if the activity is consistent with management objectives. These types of events would generally be permitted only on designated roads and trails.

If the activity or group event is not primarily recreational in nature, the activity or event may be authorized as a land use permit or Letter of Agreement.

All permittees would be encouraged to incorporate interpretive/educational components into their trips.

The BLM would develop, when feasible, thresholds through land use planning for when permits are required for organized groups and events for specific types of recreation activities, land areas, or resource settings.

The standard SRP stipulations (see Appendix B) would apply to all events as appropriate.

#### **2.4.4 Travel Management and Access**

Comprehensive travel management planning addresses all resource use aspects and accompanying modes and conditions of travel on public lands, not just motorized or vehicle activities. Land use plan decisions must 1) delineate travel management areas and 2) designate off-highway vehicle management areas.

The Serviceberry SRMA is managed to provide backcountry, non-motorized hunting and heritage interpretation/education experiences for Yampa Valley residents and visitors to the area. Travel Management Area (TMA) delineations for the two zones are:

- a. Zone 1: Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access.
  - Improvement to roads to camping facilities in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses, and for heritage tourism.
  - A managed and maintained trail system.
- b. Zone 2: Serviceberry backcountry.
  - Managed and maintained non-motorized trails.

Under the ROD/RMP, travel designations limit motorized vehicles (e.g., street legal vehicles, motorcycles, ATVs) to designated roads and trails within the Serviceberry SRMA. As such, no motorized vehicles may travel off designated roads and trails unless authorized by BLM. No changes in the “Limited to Designated Roads and Trails” designation would be made through this planning process.

The main access to the Serviceberry SRMA is by County Road 2 and BLM Road 2247 to the north, and County Road 70 in the central portion of the SRMA. From CR 2, BLM Road 2247 would provide access through the state land board to the camping area, the Holmes Homestead, and recreational activities associated with the Serviceberry SRMA.

As funding permits, the BLM would maintain roads to allow access, preserve recreation settings, experiences and benefits, and mitigate resource impacts. The BLM would make emergency repairs to damaged roads, prioritizing maintenance on roads with problem spots that visitors are tempted to drive around, potentially impacting natural and cultural resources outside the disturbed travel surface. Another priority for maintenance would be to repair areas where vehicles have driven off the designated road including blocking or signing the illegal route, if appropriate, and rehabilitate impacts as quickly as possible to prevent other visitors from continuing to drive off road.

For administrative use roads, access would only be granted for legitimate and specific purposes. Authorized users could include grazing permittees, researchers, contractors, State and Federal agencies, and others carrying out authorized activities under a permit or other authorization. If the administrative purpose of a road ceases, the road would be evaluated for closure. The BLM would work with any individual operating within the project area under existing permits or authorizations

to document where access must continue in order to allow operations of a current permit or authorization.

Patrol and enforcement presence in the project area would be improved by encouraging all permanent, seasonal and volunteer recreation staff working in the project area to watch for violations of vehicle designations as well as unsafe behavior and address those problems as appropriate. Staff without law enforcement authority would gather appropriate information on problems and share it with law enforcement personnel for further action. Patrol and law enforcement personnel would watch for vehicles driving off the designated roads and address those problems as soon as they are detected.

### Trails

Trails would be designed, built and maintained to standards for primitive, backcountry trails, unless a higher standard is necessary to ensure public health and safety or mitigate resource impacts. Standards for primitive, backcountry trails include:

- 18- to 24-inch tread
- Natural direct surfaces
- Branch and brush trimming out to 3 feet from the centerline on both sides of the trail.
- Vertical clearance of 8 feet on foot and mountain bike trails, but up to 10 feet on horse trails.
- Average grades no greater than 10 percent, but with the possibility of short stretches with grades up to 20 percent.
- Trails and water control structures designed to provide adequate drainage and minimize erosion.

Trails would be signed using the Colorado Inter-Agency Uniform Sign Standards so the public is clear where travel is allowed and what mode of travel is permitted.

The BLM would pursue additional funding and/or partnerships to improve travel management capabilities to contact visitors, offer information and education about responsible use, address violations, establish and maintain signing, and close illegal routes.

The BLM would work cooperatively with county and other agency law enforcement officials. Existing law enforcement agreements would be updated, and through these agreements, county and agency law enforcement officials would jointly enforce unauthorized, cross-country travel.

No new roads or trails would be created without specific authorization from the BLM. Site specific environmental analysis would be completed for that authorization.

### Over-the-Snow Vehicles (OSV)

Over-the-snow activities on BLM managed lands in Moffat County are not common, as most of the BLM land within Moffat County does not provide sufficient snow levels for snowmobile activity. OSVs could disturb animals during critical winter months. However, when snow reaches a certain depth (a depth at which OSV can safely travel in the area), big-game typically move to other areas. In order to accommodate both OSV use and to protect wintering wildlife, OSVs would be allowed only in areas where snow depth is equal to or greater than 2 feet. If snow

depth is lower than 2 feet, over-the-snow travel will not be allowed on BLM-managed surface estate, except for permitted and administrative uses. If winter conditions warrant, BLM would temporarily close areas to over-the-snow vehicles in order to reduce stress to wildlife. In most cases, snowmobilers try and avoid big game winter habitat range and stay on the hundreds of miles of groomed and marked trails on Forest Service and State lands.

#### **2.4.5 Recreation Information, Education, and Marketing**

For the purposes of this plan, recreation marketing is defined as communication with the potential recreationist to match recreation opportunities and setting character conditions with their preference for activities, outcomes, and areas that are consistent and appropriate as defined in the RAMP management goals. Marketing is used as a tool to guide prospective visitors to the areas that are managed to provide the experience and benefit opportunities that they seek.

The BLM would offer opportunities for staff, outfitters and guides, and employees of local businesses to meet with BLM staff, learn about the resources in the project area, understand the importance of protecting these resources to ensure a sustainable tourism destination, and become familiar with the key messages they should be conveying to their clients

The BLM would examine the feasibility of providing education programs on area history, ecology, and resource protection.

Training for seasonal employees and volunteers working for the agencies would include focused discussions of common problems on public lands, the messages BLM wants to get across to the public as they are contacted in the field and the best way to address violations if they are found.

Easily accessible information would be provided to visitors that will help them find and enjoy recreation opportunities and experiences, learn more about their public land resources, understand regulations and serve as stewards to the area. This information would be distributed via brochures, maps, web sites, kiosks, regular mail, phone conversations, and face-to-face communication.

The BLM would work with community partners to develop, produce, fund and distribute a variety of appropriate information and marketing materials. Among others, these community partners would include county and municipal governments, Chambers of Commerce, visitor center staff, interpretive associations, various business owners and organizations, special interest groups, SLB, and CPW. In general, this collaborative management partnership would work toward developing and reviewing information and marketing material to ensure consistency with the management objectives and framework identified above, and to ensure that information is accurate.

#### **2.4.6 Signs**

The BLM would maintain an inventory of all signs in the project area, and regularly evaluate their necessity and effectiveness.

The BLM would work in cooperation with local communities, counties (e.g., roads department) and other stakeholder groups to develop and maintain an effective sign program using the following criteria:

1. Provide adequate directional signs at intersections, junctions, and turnoffs.

2. Provide informational or interpretive signs located at specific points of interest, and recreational facilities.
3. Provide regulatory signs necessary to inform the public of travel management and any other restrictions.
4. Provide boundary signs to identify, where appropriate, the boundary between public and private lands and the Interpretive Area.
5. Provide educational signs targeted at improving the public's understanding and stewardship of their public lands and resource values.
6. Provide safety signs to identify and educate the public about hazardous areas or conditions.

To avoid cluttering natural landscapes with too many signs, only signs that are essential to achieving overall management goals would be used. All signs would be designed to be unobtrusive and to meet the visual resource objectives contained within the existing RMP.

Information kiosks would be located at main access points (BLM Road 2247 and County Road 70), and at the entrance to the Interpretive Area along BLM Road 2247. An interpretive panel would be located at the Holmes Homestead. Information at these kiosks would include travel management restrictions, interpretation, Leave No Trace and other land use ethics, visitor safety information, and area map.

## **2.5 Monitoring**

The BLM would periodically monitor and document a variety of factors to evaluate whether management goals are being achieved. Periodic monitoring is necessary to ensure that the BLM is achieving the recreation management objectives, avoiding unnecessary impacts to resources, and detecting and dealing with problems before they cause undesirable effects.

A monitoring strategy would be developed by the BLM that uses key indicators to evaluate social, environmental, and administrative standards and document findings.

Monitoring data and other information will be compiled, updated, and analyzed at least annually to help in management decisions concerning appropriate uses, education, interpretation, and protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources. Corrective actions will be identified and implemented as needed.

### **2.5.1 Recreation**

The BLM would implement the monitoring described below as part of the RMZ-specific management. One measurement used to determine if BLM and its partners are successful in providing these experiences and benefits is that by the year 2020 the mean (average) response in a survey of visitors would result in at least a "moderate" (i.e., 3.0 probability scale where 1 = not at all, 2 = somewhat, 3 = moderate, 4 = complete/total) attainment of the experiences and benefits listed below. In addition, conduct monitoring of physical, social, and administrative conditions to ensure that the settings described below are being managed for. Monitoring of physical, social and administrative conditions would be carried out as staff and funding allow. Priorities would be placed on resources or situations that pose the greatest threat to critical resources and values in the area. These could include monitoring to capture the amount of disturbed areas at undeveloped campsites and determine impacts at historical sites with the help of site stewards. Monitoring

could also include determining potential impacts to threatened and endangered species, detecting infestations of noxious weeds, and monitoring water quality near heavily used recreation sites.

### **2.5.2 Transportation System**

BLM's primary focus in monitoring the transportation management network is to ensure that the system of designated roads and trails remains open and accessible during the normal seasons of use. A second priority for monitoring would be to ensure that closed roads and trails are not getting used, and that no unauthorized roads or trails are being established. Findings of the monitoring program will be documented and recorded.

Vehicle use in the project area would be assessed and managed by applying the following monitoring strategies:

- Install an appropriate number of traffic counters on major routes and trails to identify changes and trends in use.
- Periodically tally vehicle types to capture the relative numbers of each vehicle class used in the project area.
- Monitor to detect areas where vehicles are getting off the designated roads and trails and resolve problems as they are found.

New construction areas are especially susceptible to weed establishment and should only be implemented with post construction monitoring and treatment as a funded part of the planning process. Implementation of monitoring programs associated with recreation management that include weed presence awareness would be a benefit. The proposed recreation and facility development would provide a greater opportunity for infestation establishment through use of equipment and cleared areas. All the disturbed construction areas and their perimeters would be vulnerable to weed infestation. Weed infestation is fairly likely and would be mitigated through the monitoring plan. (see Appendix E).

### **2.6 Law Enforcement**

The Serviceberry SRMA will be patrolled by law enforcement on a regular basis. In addition BLM staff or volunteers will be periodically available to assist visitors and report any illegal activity. Because of limited staff, other law enforcement agencies could be contracted to provide additional assistance on a regular basis through an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding.

Rules will be clearly posted at access points to ensure that users are aware of and abide by the rules and regulations for the area. With clearly posted rules it is hoped that users will encourage others to exhibit proper user etiquette within the Serviceberry SRMA.

### **2.7 Supplementary Rules**

Supplementary rules will be established to 1) achieve resource objectives, 2) protect visitor health and safety, 3) reduce use and user conflicts, and 4) achieve management objectives.

The following rules were identified to implement the Serviceberry SRMA Recreation Area Management/Environmental Assessment. These rules and regulations will be published in the Federal Register to supplement the Rules of Conduct found in 43 CFR 8365.

- The cottonwood stand located off of BLM Road 2247 within T12N R90W, Sec. 21 is closed to overnight camping, staging, and target shooting.

- No tree cutting is allowed. Bring your own firewood, limited dead and down trees are available on site for firewood.
- No hunting or target shooting is allowed with Zone 1 (including firearms, BB guns, paintball, and bow and arrows) within 100 feet of BLM Road 2247, proposed camping areas, or at the Holmes Homestead Interpretive Area.
- The Holmes Homestead area is day-use only, sunrise to sunset. Camping and overnight use is prohibited.
- The Serviceberry SRMA is closed to motorized travel with the exception of BLM Road 2247 (excludes military, fire, emergency, law enforcement, vehicles authorized by the Authorizing Officer, and vehicles in official use) unless otherwise posted.
- Driving off designated roads and trails would be allowed for camping within 100 feet from a designated road or trail.
- Upon the Public Lands within the established boundaries of the Serviceberry SRMA, no person shall bring in, dispose of or possess any firewood containing nails, screws, and other metal hardware.
- Competitive events using motorized or mechanized vehicles would not be authorized anywhere in the project area. Competitive events not using motorized vehicles or mechanized vehicles (e.g., trail running) would be allowed if the activity is consistent with management objectives.
- No mechanized or motorized transport activities (with the exception of game carts) are allowed within Zone 2.

## CHAPTER 3– AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND EFFECTS

### 3.0 Introduction

Affected Resources:

The CEQ Regulations state that NEPA documents “must concentrate on the issues that are truly significant to the action in question, rather than amassing needless detail” (40 CFR 1500.1(b)). While many issues may arise during scoping, not all of the issues raised warrant analysis in an environmental assessment (EA). Issues will be analyzed if: 1) an analysis of the issue is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives, or 2) if the issue is associated with a significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact, or where analysis is necessary to determine the significance of the impacts. Table 3.1 lists the resources considered and the determination as to whether they require additional analysis.

**Table 3.1: Resources and Determination of Need for Further Analysis**

Determination <sup>1</sup>	Resource	Resource Issue/ Rationale for Determination	Specialist Initials	Date
<b>Physical Resources</b>				
NI	Air Quality	Hunting and recreational activities are not a significant source of certain pollutant emissions that occur in Moffat County. See Section 3.1.1	GMR	1/5/16
NP	Floodplains	No known floodplains are present in the Serviceberry SRMA	GMR	1/5/16

<b>Determination<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Resource Issue/ Rationale for Determination</b>	<b>Specialist Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>
NI	Hydrology, Ground	None of the alternatives would affect groundwater hydrology.	GMR	1/5/16
PI	Hydrology, Surface	See Section 3.2.1.1 for detailed analysis.	ES	1/22/16
NI	Minerals, Fluid	There would be no impact to fluid minerals from the Proposed Action. See Section 3.1.2	GMR	1/4/16
NI	Minerals, Solid	The proposed action and alternatives would not affect solid minerals. There are currently no solid mineral authorizations within the project area. See 3.1.2	JAM	10/26/15
PI	Soils	See Section 3.2.1.2 for detailed analysis.	ES	1/22/16
NI	Water Quality, Ground	None of the alternatives would affect groundwater quality. See Section 3.1.3	ES	1/11/16
NI	Water Quality, Surface	No perennial streams exist near the project area. The pond located within the project area would not be affected by any of the alternatives. See Section 3.1.3	ES	1/22/16
<b>Biological Resources</b>				
PI	Invasive, Non-native Species	See Section 3.3.1.1 for detailed analysis	CBR	1/5/2016
PI	Migratory Birds	See Section 3.3.1.5 for detailed analysis	DMA	1/8/2016
PI	Special Status Animal Species	See Section 3.3.1.2 for detailed analysis	DMA	1/8/2016
NP	Special Status Plant Species	There are no federally listed threatened, endangered, or BLM sensitive plant species populations present in the project area.	ARH	11/2/15
PI	Upland Vegetation	See Section 3.3.1.3 for detailed analysis	ARH	2/8/16
PI	Wetlands and Riparian Zones	See Section 3.3.1.4 for detailed analysis.	ES	1/25/16
NI	Wildlife, Aquatic	There would be no impact to aquatic wildlife from the Proposed Action.	DMA	1/8/2016
PI	Wildlife, Terrestrial	See Section 3.3.1.5	DMA	1/8/2016
NP	Wild Horses	There are no wild horse Herd Management Areas present within the project area.	GMR	1/4/16
<b>Heritage Resources and the Human Environment</b>				
PI	Cultural Resources	See Section 3.4.1.1 for detailed analysis	BSN	11/6/15
NI	Environmental Justice	See Section 3.1.4	LM	10/22/15
NI	Hazardous or Solid Wastes	See Section 3.1.5	GMR	1/4/16
NI	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	See Section 3.1.6	GMR	10/21/15
NP	Native American Concerns	See Section 3.4.1.2 for detailed analysis	BSN	11/6/15
NI	Paleontological Resources	The Proposed Action and Alternatives would be unlikely to affect paleontological resources. The	JAM	10/26/15

<b>Determination<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Resource Issue/ Rationale for Determination</b>	<b>Specialist Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>
		standard paleontological discovery stipulations apply and have been added as Appendix D.		
NI	Social and Economic Conditions	There would not be any change to local social or economic conditions under any of the alternatives.	LM	10/22/15
NI	Visual Resources	See Section 3.1.7	GMR	10/21/15
<b>Resource Uses</b>				
NI	Access and Transportation	There is very little public access in the project area due to surrounding private lands. Access would remain non-motorized to include foot and horse travel only. The topography around the area also makes it difficult to access public lands within the project area. Due to limited access there are no foreseeable impacts or concerns to access and transportation in the project area.	DJA	10/27/15
NI	Fire Management	Neither alternative would affect fire management on the project area.	DRB	1/10/16
NP	Forest Management	There are no forest resources present on the project area.	GMR	1/4/16
NI	Livestock Operations	Authorized livestock grazing operations would not be affected by the Proposed Action or No Action alternatives. The construction of road improvements, parking and camping areas, visitor facilities, and a short trail to/from the Holmes Homestead would not affect the available forage on the allotment to a point necessary to adjust authorized livestock use.	ARH	1/28/16
NP	Prime and Unique Farmlands	No prime and unique farmlands exist on this project area.	GMR	1/4/16
NI	Realty Authorizations, Land Tenure	All alternatives would have no impact to existing realty authorizations. There are no proposed changes to land tenure in the project area.	LM	10/22/15
NI	Recreation	The project area is mostly landlocked by private and state lands. Topography around the area isn't recreation friendly with the exception of big game hunting which occurs 4 months out of a year. The project itself would enhance public recreational opportunities in the Northeast portion of the LSFO and promote diverse recreation activities other than hunting. Due to landlocked public lands and limited use from recreationists there would be no foreseeable impacts to recreation.	DJA	10/27/15
<b>Special Designations</b>				
NP	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	There are no ACECs within the project area.	GMR	10/21/15
NP	Wild and Scenic Rivers	There are no WSRs within the project area.	GMR	10/21/15
NP	Wilderness Study Areas	There are no WSAs within the project area.	GMR	10/21/15

<sup>1</sup> NP = Not present in the area impacted by the Proposed Action or Alternatives. NI = Present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required. PI = Present with potential for impact analyzed in detail in the EA.

### **3.1 Resources Eliminated from Detailed Analysis**

Other resources that are found in the project area, but are not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required because the management actions in this plan will have no measurable effect on them are ground hydrology, aquatic wildlife, paleontological resources, social and economic conditions, access and transportation, fire management, livestock operations, realty authorizations/land tenure, and recreation. Resources listed below are present, and required supporting rationale to eliminate them from detailed analysis.

#### **3.1.1 Air Quality**

The generation of air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from a variety of sources can affect air quality in general. Although many documented impacts to general air quality are associated with external sources (those outside public land boundaries and jurisdiction), some public land activities have the potential to impact air quality. These activities include but are not limited to, developed recreation and use of travel-ways, oil and gas development, solid minerals development, and fires, both prescribed and wild.

The federal government established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) under the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and its amendments for six criteria pollutants: 1) carbon monoxide (CO) 2) ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), 3) sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), 4) nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), 5) lead (Pb), and 6) particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Although the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) retains oversight authority, the federal government has delegated enforcement of the CAA to the states. In Colorado, the Air Pollution Control Division of the Department of Public Health and Environment acts as the lead agency. The state is required to develop and administer air pollution prevention and control programs; state standards must be either the same as or more stringent than federal CAA standards. The Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) program was established to protect Class I and Class II attainment areas from all major sources that could potentially exceed the NAAQS and established allowable concentration increases. The program provides for special emphasis on implementation of best available control technology, protection of scenic areas such as national parks and Wilderness areas, and informed public participation. The Class I designation (i.e., national parks, national monuments, and federally-designated wilderness areas in excess of 5,000 acres and created prior to 1977) warrants the highest level of protection afforded to an area. The Class II designation typically applies to all non-Class I areas.

According to the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission Report to the Public, 2014-15, (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) the project area is located within the Western Region (Western Slope) for air quality planning. The air quality of the project area is similar to other undeveloped regions in the western United States; ambient pollutant levels are usually low with some higher concentrations near population centers (i.e., inversions during the winter) and near dirt and gravel roads during the travel season. The project area is designated as PSD Class II.

Forest fires, wild or prescribed, regardless of ignition source, have the potential to affect general air quality in the project area. Air quality effects from fire include emissions of CO, PM<sub>2.5</sub> including soot and ash, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons – a class of organic compounds found on the particulate matter from burning wood and wood products, and the irritants of aldehydes and volatile organic compounds. While prescribed fires are not part of the proposed action, wildland fires can happen at any time (CDPHE 2006).

The proposed RAMP has identified approximately 25 acres (.20 percent of the project area) of surface disturbance associated with the construction and improvement of trails, trailheads, and facilities. These improvements would be made over the 15 to 20 year life of the plan and therefore, associated impacts to air quality are expected to be minimal.

The majority of air quality impacts would be concentrated around the designated route system and camping area. During the winter season, the volume of vehicles would be considerably lower and vehicle emissions would primarily result from vehicles on County Road 2. If winter weather conditions permit, emissions from over-the-snow vehicle use, which would not be restricted to roads, would be dispersed over a larger area. The most common contributors to atmospheric degradation as a result of motorized recreation include hydrocarbon (HC) and carbon monoxide (CO) emissions from over-the-snow vehicles. The proposed RAMP includes management prescriptions to protect air quality from increased vehicle emissions from motorized recreation, such as ATVs and 4WD vehicles (excluding over-the-snow) by leaving more than 12,000 acres (approximately 99 percent) of the project area closed to vehicle use; restricting all motorized travel to designated roads; and not proposing the construction of new roads unless associated with authorized leases (e.g., oil and gas, nonenergy leaseables, mineral location, ROWs).

Emissions standards for over-the-snow vehicles, ATVs, and off-highway motorcycles have been established per 40 CFR 1051, Subpart B-Emission Standards and Related Requirements. Through a phased approach to regulating emissions, manufacturers of these vehicles were required to meet increasing vehicle emission standards by 2012. Because these standards apply to the manufacturer and not the user, the BLM has no authority to regulate the amount of vehicle emissions from each source. Additionally, those vehicles manufactured prior to the 2006 are not included in this phased approach, and therefore, may potentially have exhaust systems which emit higher concentrations of pollutants of concern. However, older vehicles will go out of service and newer, more efficient and less polluting vehicles will replace them over the life of the RAMP. As such, the projected effects of emissions on air quality are difficult to quantify but likely less than significant under NEPA, and therefore air quality will not be carried forward for detailed discussion in this EA.

### **3.1.2 Mineral Resources**

Management for the area is covered under management common to all as Locatable Minerals are managed under the General Mining Law of 1872. Federal mineral estate in areas not withdrawn from mineral entry will be open to entry and location under the general mining laws. Zones 1 and 2 would be administered as open for oil and gas leasing and development, and also open to nonenergy leaseables and mineral location, but no open to coal leasing.

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

conditions of approval are incorporated into authorizations to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation, reduce environmental impacts, and prevent a jeopardy opinion.”

Areas open to mineral location allows claims to be held and developed in accordance with applicable regulations (39 CFR 3809). Mining of mineral materials will comply with applicable regulatory requirements (43 CFR 3600) and air and water quality protection regulations. BLM will apply lease stipulations to new leases as necessary. Stipulations will condition the leaseholder’s development activities and will provide BLM with authority to require mitigation or to deny some proposed exploration and development methods. The general types of resource protections in the land use plan include areas closed to oil and gas leasing, areas open to oil and gas leasing with standard terms and conditions, NSO, CSU, and timing limitations. Leasing of solid minerals will comply with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, and coal regulations and coal planning requirements.

There are no changes to the leasing categories or lands recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry; therefore mineral resources will not be carried forward for detailed analysis in this EA.

### **3.1.3 Water Quality**

Water quality is a measure of the suitability of surface water for a designated use based on selected physical, chemical, and biological criteria. Water quality criteria are determined by the state, as required by the EPA, to describe levels of individual pollutants or water quality characteristics, or give descriptions of conditions of a waterbody that, if met, will generally protect the designated use of the water. Water quality standards generally include three major components; designated uses, water quality criteria, and antidegradation provisions (Cordy 2001). The project area includes the Yampa River watershed, which is located in the northern portion of the Colorado River Basin as determined by the USGS. Watersheds in the project area lie within riparian, sagebrush grasslands, and pinyon-juniper woodlands. Annual precipitation as snow during December through April in the mountains, serves as the principal source of streamflow.

The major land uses in the watershed include livestock grazing, farming, mineral production, residential use, and recreational use. Currently the project area does not have any waters on the 303D list for impairment (CDPHE 2016). Although sedimentation is not a listed cause of impairment, best management practices will continue to be employed to reduce soil erosion and water quality deterioration, and will be required in all plans involving surface disturbance. Roads and other developments will be maintained in appropriate condition to minimize erosion. Several mitigation and minimization measures, such as use of rock barricades, signage, and trail improvements, will be designed to reduce illegal off-trail driving and other incidents. Additionally, to protect water quality, riparian areas will be managed to maintain, restore, or improve riparian conditions (hydrological, soil, and vegetation) such that proper functioning conditions are achieved, and to enhance natural values.

### **3.1.4 Environmental Justice**

Executive order (EO) 12898 requires federal agencies to assess projects to ensure there are no disproportionately high or adverse environmental, health, or safety effects on minority and low-income populations. The Presidential Memorandum that accompanied EO 12898 called for a variety of actions. Four specific actions were directed at NEPA-related activities, including the following:

- Each federal agency must analyze environmental effects (i.e., human health, economic, and social effects) of federal actions, including effects on minority communities and low-income communities, when such analysis is required by NEPA.
- Mitigation measures outlined or analyzed in EAs, EISs, or RODs, whenever feasible, should address significant and adverse environmental effects of proposed federal actions on minority communities and low-income communities.
- Each federal agency must provide opportunities for community input in the NEPA process, including identifying potential effects and mitigation measures in consultation with affected communities and improving accessibility of public meetings, official documents, and notices to affected communities.
- In reviewing other agencies' proposed actions under Section 309 of the CAA, the EPA must ensure that the agencies have fully analyzed environmental effects on minority communities and low-income communities, including human health, social, and economic effects.

Environmental Justice is defined as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, culture, education, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair Treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies. Meaningful Involvement means that (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public’s contribution can influence the regulatory agency’s decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected” (EPA 1994).

In terms of Environmental Justice, a population is typically considered low-income when the household median income is below the federally defined poverty level. Similarly, the population is considered a minority population if minority races and/or ethnicities in the study area represent more than 50 percent of the population. Thus, a city or county is considered an Environmental Justice community if both of these criteria are met.

According to Census 2012, the only minority population of note in the impact area is the Hispanic community of Moffat County. Hispanic or Latino represented 14.2% of the population, considerably less than Colorado state figure for the same group, 21.0%. Blacks, American Indians, Asians and Pacific Islanders each accounted for around 1% of the population, below the comparable state figure in all cases. The census counted 12% of the Moffat County population as living in families with incomes below the poverty line, compared to 12.9% for the entire state.

Both minority and low income populations are dispersed throughout the county, therefore no minority or low income populations would suffer disproportionately high and adverse effects as a result of any of the alternatives.

### **3.1.5 Hazardous or Solid Wastes**

Hazardous wastes for this section include human waste and trash. The majority of recreational activities occur within Zone 1 and along BLM Road 2247, which is the main access road into the

Serviceberry SRMA. Potential for waste and trash to spread is high in multiple use areas. The majority of trash, human waste, and animal carcasses are found along the north fence line adjacent to BLM Road 2247 in the primitive camping areas, and within a stand of cottonwood trees near the end of the road. The cottonwood stand has occasionally been used for target practice in which household items (e.g., computer, cans, bottles) have been used for target practice. To a lesser extent, trash left behind in fire rings at the large parking area near the Holmes Homestead poses a risk to visitors walking in the area. These occasional problems are monitored and actions to correct the situation are conducted on a case by case basis. With increased visitor use, the need for monitoring also increases to quickly mitigate problem areas.

The proposed action would have minimal impact on hazardous or solid wastes since all human waste and trash is managed in accordance with state regulations including Solid and Hazardous Waste Commission Regulations 6 CCR 1007-3. Furthermore, the proposed RAMP includes management actions that address facilities. As prescribed in the RAMP, facilities would be maintained according to the following guidance; provide regular cleaning and maintenance at all developed facilities during the peak use; utilize permanent and seasonal employees and/or volunteers for maintenance, but explore the possibility of other partnerships that can expand BLM's capacity to carry out maintenance tasks; and provide for repair, reconditioning, and replacement of facilities, prioritizing those problems that pose a safety threat to the public or are creating unacceptable resource impacts.

Based on the level of waste and trash present within the project area the total cumulative impact of trash and waste to increase under the proposed action would be minimal and would most likely decrease. Closure of the cottonwoods and making the parking area by the Holmes Homestead a day-use only area (no camping) could result in trash levels actually decreasing. For the purposes of ensuring public health and safety and preserving quality recreation experiences, disposal or abandonment of game carcasses or carcass parts would be prohibited within 300 feet of any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or developed day-use area.

It is the intent of the BLM to work in partnership with Federal and state agencies, local communities and organizations to provide camping facilities, maintained trail system, and signs on public lands that support recreation goals, are in character with the desired settings, help ensure public safety, meet reasonable visitor needs and help reduce resource impacts. Based on the above information, and since the current management is working and areas will be monitored to address any site specific problems that might arise, hazardous wastes would not be significant.

### **3.1.6 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics**

In accordance with the FLPMA, through the land use planning process, the BLM is required to consider all available information in order to determine the mix of resource use and protection that best serves the multiple-use and sustained-yield mandate. Under the FLPMA, the BLM has numerous authorities requiring the agency to maintain inventories of all public lands and their resources, including wilderness characteristics, and to consider such information during the land use planning process. Consistent with Section 201 of the FLPMA, which requires the Secretary of the Interior to "prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resource and other values," and the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, the LSFO has identified and made an assessment of BLM-managed lands with wilderness characteristics outside of existing WSAs. *BLM Manual 6310 - Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on*

*BLM Lands*, provides the guidance from which LSFO performed the wilderness characteristic inventory process.

In 2005, LSFO BLM specialists conducted a preliminary assessment of areas likely to have wilderness characteristics. Public comments were received from local and State agencies, conservation groups, and private interests disputing the initial determination completed by BLM. The comments focused on differences from the final wilderness inventories (1991), noting presence of developments and presence or condition of vehicle routes. Lands with the potential for wilderness characteristics were re-evaluated and three areas (Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North and Cold Spring Mountain) were identified to contain wilderness characteristics. Through the Land Use Planning process these areas are currently being managed for naturalness and solitude in the LSFO Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (October 2011). In 2012 another inventory of the LSFO was completed by AECOM after the LSFO RMP/ROD. This inventory only updated the original inventory completed in 1979. A new polygon map was generated for AECOM by the LSFO GIS specialist, taking into account BLM and county roads, which altered some of the original boundaries. New Unit numbers were assigned to each polygon. (GIS data references the original inventory number where applicable). BLM Manual 6310 states: "This wilderness characteristics inventory process directive does not mean that the BLM must conduct a completely new inventory and disregard the inventory information that it already has... Rather, the BLM must ensure that its inventory is maintained" and further states that "...a full inventory may not be necessary for a proposed project."

### **Assessment**

The assessment reflects current conditions and is used to update wilderness inventories as well as identify other areas within LSFO that may potentially contain wilderness characteristics. The process entails the identification of Wilderness Inventory Units, an inventory of roads and wilderness character, and a determination of whether or not the area meets the overall criteria for wilderness character (size, naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined types of recreation).

### Size:

1. Roadless areas with over 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM lands. State or private lands are not included in making this acreage determination.
2. Roadless areas of less than 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM lands where any one of the following apply:
  - a. They are contiguous with lands which have been formally determined to have wilderness or potential wilderness values, or any Federal lands managed for the protection of wilderness characteristics. Such lands include:
    - (1) Designated Wilderness,
    - (2) BLM Wilderness Study Areas,
    - (3) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas Proposed for Wilderness Designation,
    - (4) U.S. Forest Service (FS) Wilderness Study Areas or areas of Recommended Wilderness, and
    - (5) National Park Service (NPS) areas Recommended or Proposed for Designation. They do not include NPS areas merely considered "Eligible for Wilderness Study," nor do they include FS Roadless Areas unless they are also designated as "Recommended Wilderness" through a Forest Plan Revision.

- b) It is demonstrated that the area is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.
- c) Any roadless island of the public lands.

Naturalness:

Lands and resources exhibit a high degree of naturalness when affected primarily by the forces of nature and where the imprint of human activity is substantially unnoticeable. An area's naturalness may be influenced by the presence or absence of roads and trails, fences or other developments; the nature and extent of landscape modifications; the presence of native vegetation communities; and the connectivity of habitats. Wildlife populations and habitat are recognized as important aspects of naturalness and would be actively managed. Assessing an area for naturalness includes examining the area for attributes such as the presence or absence of roads and trails, fences, and other infrastructure; the nature and extent of landscape modifications; the presence of native vegetation communities; and the connectivity of habitats.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive and Unconfined Types of Recreation:

Visitors may have outstanding opportunities for solitude, or primitive and unconfined types of recreation, when the sights, sounds, and evidence of other people are rare or infrequent, where visitors can be isolated, alone or secluded from others, where the use of an area is through non-motorized, non-mechanical means, and where no or minimal recreation facilities are encountered.

Supplemental Values:

These include ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

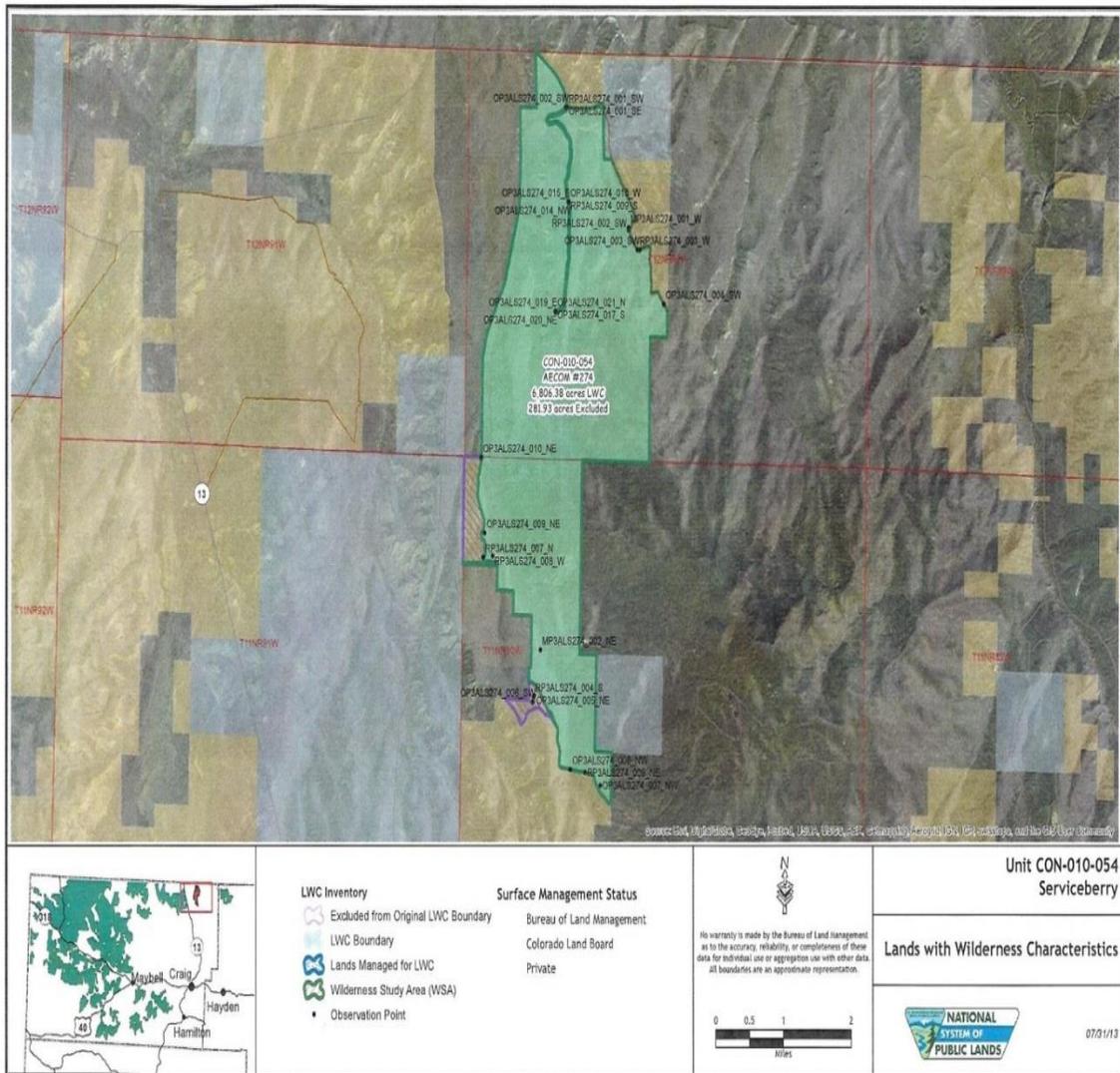
Through this assessment by AECOM, 6,806.38 acres of the 12,380 acres of the Serviceberry SRMA were identified to contain the potential for wilderness characteristics (CON-010-054, AECOM #274). Figure 3.1.

Results of the analysis indicate that the bulk of the unit appears to be natural with varying topography; including a large canyon running north/south along the west side of the unit containing Willow Creek. The unit is topographically isolated from outside land uses. Surrounding farms and ranches cannot be heard and primarily cannot be seen. The area offers solitude and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

However, since the Serviceberry SRMA is managed as two separate recreation management zones, Alternative B to implement the Serviceberry SRMA proposed actions, falls within Zone 1, the Willow Creek and north Serviceberry access. Zone 1 is located outside the area identified as having the potential for wilderness characteristics because of lack of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Zone 2 is the Serviceberry backcountry and is within lands having the potential wilderness characteristics.

Lands identified to have potential for wilderness characteristics could be impacted by other resource uses authorized under the LSFO RMP/ROD 2011/2015, as amended. Activities that could affect lands with wilderness characteristics are those that would impair naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Examples include construction of new roads or structures and an increase in recreational use that affects solitude and primitive recreation opportunities. Actions that would have an effect on wildlife

habitat and native vegetation communities would also adversely affect lands with wilderness characteristics.



**Figure 3.1 Lands with Potential for Wilderness Characteristics**

The 6320 Manual describes how lands determined to have lands with wilderness characteristics should consider various ways of protecting wilderness characteristics or should not protect because of conflicts with other resource uses. Furthermore, FLPMA Section 201 states, "the preparation and maintenance of such inventory or the identification of such areas shall not, or itself, change or present change of the management or use of public lands."

As such, the projected effects of proposed projects within Zone 1, which is not within an area identified as having potential for wilderness characteristics and the SRMA being managed for multiple use, lands with potential for wilderness characteristics will not be carried forward for detailed discussion in this EA.

### 3.1.7 Visual Resources

To properly manage valuable scenic areas the BLM uses Visual Resource Management (VRM), defined as “a system for minimizing the visual impacts of surface-disturbing activities and maintaining scenic values for the future” (BLM 2007). The Little Snake RMP/ROD (BLM 2011) designated the project area as VRM Class III in Zones 1 and 2 in which the objective is to “partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Any changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.”

The project area covers two distinct scenic quality rating units, 1) Unit 10 Three Forks, which represents the northern section of the SRMA, and 2) Unit 1 Routt, covering lands south of the SRMA. County Road 70 generally acts as the dividing line between the two units. Figure 3.2.

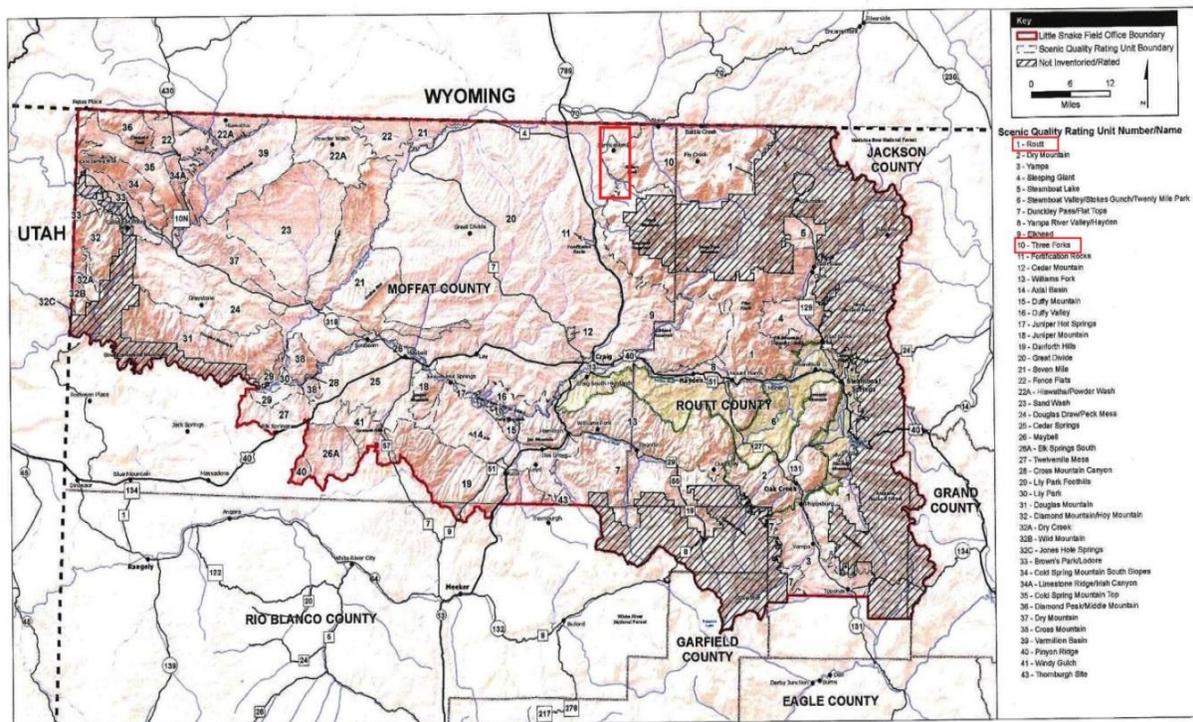


Figure 3 Scenic Quality Rating Units

Bureau of Land Management  
Little Snake Field Office  
Visual Resource Management Inventory

September 2011  
2-5

Figure 3.2 Scenic Quality Rating Unit Number/Name

Each unit was evaluated using distinct characteristics and components of the landscape. Seven key factors are considered in the evaluation of scenic quality and are elements generally expected to be part of the visual landscape in most any setting, which are: landform, vegetation, water, color, influence of adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural medication.

The scenic quality rating is the result of totaling the scores of the seven analysis factors. Units are given an overall rating based of these characteristics, and assigning a rating based on points according to the following:

Class A = a score of 19 points or more

Class B = a score of 12 to 18 points

Class C = a score of 11 points or less

Unit 10 received a Scenic Quality Rating of 19.5 and Unit 1 received a rating of 19.

VRM Resource Management Classes are established by the BLM to serve two purposes 1) an inventory tool that portrays the relative value of the visual resources, and 2) a management tool that portrays the visual management objectives (BLM Manual H-8410-1). Four classes (I, II, III, and IV) exist, with class I being assigned to those areas to manage visual resources to maintain the existing character of the landscape, to Class IV being assigned where management activities may include major modifications to the landscape. Classes are assigned during the inventory process as an evaluation of scenic quality, sensitivity level of visitors, and distances from viewers. Visual resource management classes are assigned through RMPs and are determined to concert with other resource management decisions. Each class has an objective which prescribes the amount of change allowed in the characteristic landscape.

#### Viewsheds, View Corridors, and Sensitive Viewers

Landscape viewsheds are the extent of view in which features are noticeable or apparent in the landscape. Key Observation Points (KOPs) identified in Figure 3.3, were chosen within each of the scenic quality units (1, 10) to provide a view of the project area. Visual Distance Zones, Figure 3.4, represents the foreground, middleground, and background from which landscape areas are more visible to the public and are more noticeable and may precipitate the public's concern for visual quality. Boundaries of the distance zones may also assist in defining the boundaries of an area's Sensitivity Level Rating Units.

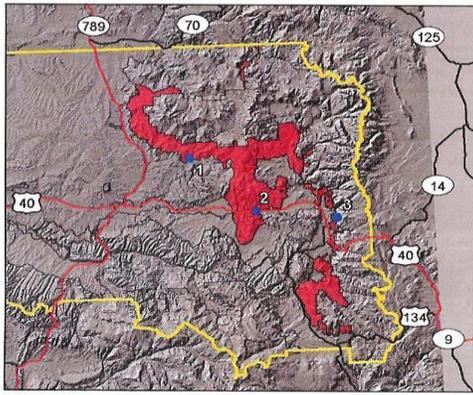
#### **Sensitivity Level Rating**

The evaluation of sensitivity levels in the VRM process provides a measure and an indication of the public's concern for scenic quality. Public lands are assigned high, moderate, or low sensitivity levels by analyzing certain factors that contribute to the public's overall concern of an area's scenic quality. These factors, as identified in BLM Manual H-8410-1, include:

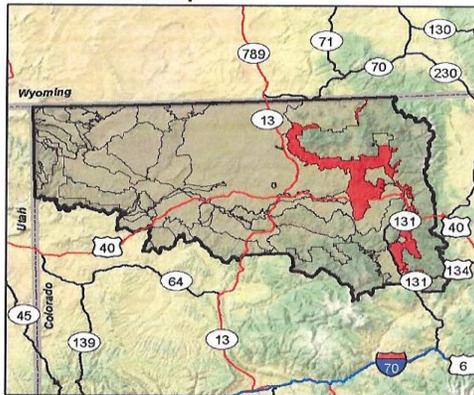
- Types of users
- Amount of use
- Public interest
- Adjacent land uses
- Special areas
- Other factors

Determining the overall sensitivity level of an area is a subjective process that requires careful consideration of all of the above factors. Both the rating of individual factors and the relationship between factors were analyzed in determining the overall rating of the Serviceberry SRMA and are outlined in Table 3.2.

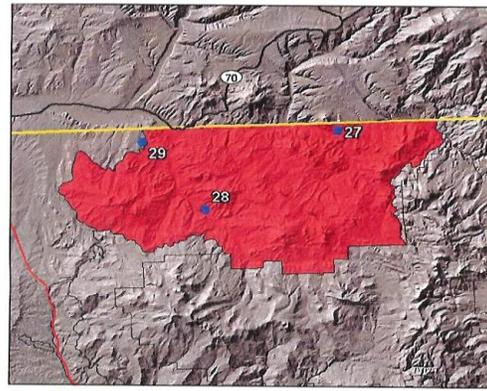
### Routt #1



Detail Location Map



### Three Forks #10



Detail Location Map

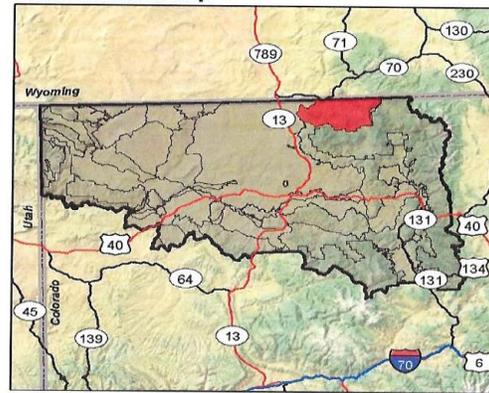


Figure 3.3 Key Observation Points

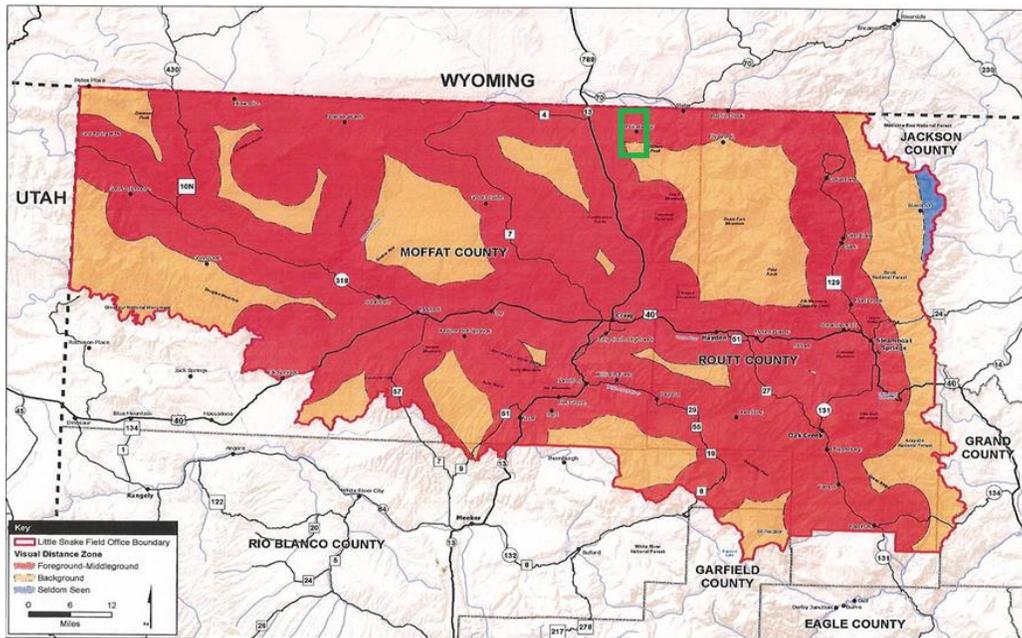


Figure 3.4 Visual Distance Zones

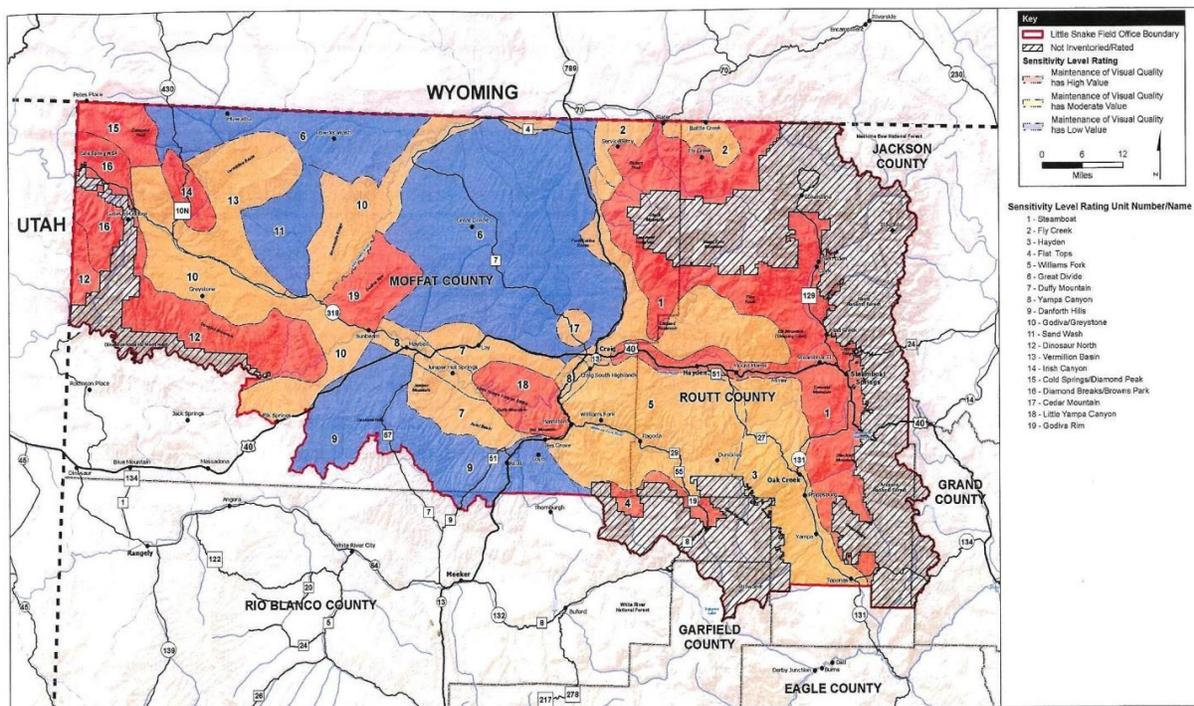
**Table 3.2: Sensitivity Level Rating Summary**

Unit No.	Name	Type of Use	Amount of Use	Public Interest	Adjacent Land Uses	Special Areas	Other Factors	Overall Rating	Explanation
1	Steamboat	H	H	H	H	H	N/A	H	High use and high sensitivity, area also well-known worldwide
2	Fly Creek	M	L	M	L	N/A	N/A	M	Forest land nearby, conflicting user groups

Sensitivity levels in the Little Snake Field Office are generally higher in the eastern and western portions of the field office, though isolated area of high sensitivity are also located in the southern portion (Figure 3.5). The eastern area includes high and moderate levels of sensitivity in areas of increased variety of topography and vegetation because those areas are generally more heavily used for recreation activities.

**Trends in Visual Resources**

Although historically and currently, hunting is one of the most popular forms of recreation occurring within the project area, national trends show scenic driving as an increasing recreational activity. It is anticipated that heritage tourism will also contribute to an increase in visitors to the project area as a result of brochures, social media and interpretation promoting the Holmes Homestead.



**Figure 3.5 Sensitivity Level Rating Units**

Direct impacts to visual resources would continue to occur from general recreation use and in areas from high levels of use. There would continue to be minimal environmental degradation in over-used areas from disturbance related to off-road parking. Dispersed camping would continue to be unlimited and impacts due to campfires, parking, visible tents, campers, RVs, human waste, and litter associated with camping would continue to affect the visual setting in the immediate foreground. Hunting would continue and impacts from spent cartridges, trash, and discarded carcasses would continue to affect the visual setting in the immediate foreground.

## **3.2 Resource Brought Forward for Detailed Analysis**

### **3.2.1 PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

#### **3.2.1.1 Hydrology, Surface**

**Affected Environment:** The project area includes an intermittent stream that flows into the perennial Willow Creek approximately 2 miles downstream. There is also an unnamed freshwater pond in the project area. Also relevant to proposed project is that the intermittent stream contains a low-water crossing within the project area.

**Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action:** The primary consequence of the proposed project is that vehicular traffic across the low-water crossing would likely be reduced due to the prohibition of camping on the opposite side of the crossing. This would be expected to reduce sediment entrainment into the stream when flow is present. To the extent that the margins of this crossing revegetate due to a lack of disturbance, this feature of the project should increase infiltration of surface water locally.

**Environmental Consequences, No Action:** Under this alternative, there would be no impact to surface water hydrology on BLM land.

**Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts:** Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

#### **3.2.1.2 Soils**

**Affected Environment:** The area delineated in Figure 2.2, above, encompasses approximately 29 acres of public land. This is the area described and analyzed here. There are four soil types present in this area. Most extensive is the Yamo loam on 3 to 15 percent slopes, which covers 11.7 acres, or 40% of the area. This soil occupies the upper elevations of the project area, found on toeslopes, and it is well drained, with moderate permeability and medium runoff. Proceeding downslope to the next most extensive soil is the Borollic Natrargids-Borollic Haplargids-Ustic Torrifluvents complex, on 0 to 20 percent slopes. This soil covers 8.8 acres, or 30% of the project area, and is also described as occurring on toeslopes. It is well-drained with very slow permeability and very high runoff. Next, the Forelle loam on 3 to 12 percent slopes covers 5.3 acres, or 18% of the area. It is found on benches, is well-drained with moderate permeability, and shows medium runoff. Crossing the intermittent stream, to the south and west of most of the project area is Bulkley stony loam, on 15 to 30 percent slopes, very stony. This soil covers the smallest amount of the project area, at only 3.3 acres, or 11%. It is generally found on hillslopes near the summit, is well-drained with slow permeability and very high runoff.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: Implementation of campsites and related facilities construction for the proposed action will necessarily require movement of some soil. However, this would only be negligible surface disturbance, and there should not be any net movement of soil out of the project area. A more long-lasting effect of the proposed action to be considered is due to the construction of a fence around the Holmes Homestead. Given the natural tendency of cattle to congregate and trail along fence lines, it is likely that paths and forage depletion would occur along the fence. The resulting decrease in canopy cover would increase the impact of raindrops on the soil surface, while the expected increase in compaction would increase runoff from both rain and snowmelt. These factors would combine to increase the likelihood of both wind and water erosion in the areas adjacent to fences. If the fence were more extensive, then this could indirectly impact federal lands through deposition or by the eroded area actually spreading onto federal lands. However, due to the limited size of the area to be fenced, these effects would not be widespread enough to damage the soil resource.

The proposed action would designate a portion of the project area as a no-camping zone, which should reduce vehicular traffic to this area. This zone is currently accessed by crossing an intermittent stream, which increases erosion, especially when the stream is flowing. Therefore this element of the proposed action should protect the soil resource.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: Under this alternative, there would be no impact to soil resources on BLM land.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

### **3.3.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

#### **3.3.1.1 Invasive/Non-Native Species**

Affected Environment: Noxious weeds are present throughout the LSFO management area. Species off of Colorado's C and B Lists of Noxious Weeds can be found in spot locations and dense infestations. The most common noxious weeds in the area include downy brome (cheatgrass), halogeton, hoary cress (white top), Canada thistle, scotch thistle, musk thistle, bull thistle, Russian knapweed, spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, houndstongue, Dalmatian toadflax, yellow toadflax, perennial pepperweed (tall whitetop), tamarisk and Russian olive. Management and control of these weeds are implemented through coordinated efforts of multiple weed control partnerships. All facets of Integrated Pest Management are implemented through the LSFO noxious weed control program.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: Weeds can be spread through many activities on public lands including human recreational use. Activities that bring people to a site could introduce new weed infestations through seeds carried by clothing, transportation vehicles, domestic animals, feed products, tents, etc. Additionally, during these type of activities seeds from an existing infestation could be carried away from the site causing a spread to other areas and locations. The risk of weed spread can be reduced by applying appropriate weed awareness methods when selecting a site and responsible use of the area. Compliance with special stipulations of the proposed action that require use of certified weed free forage, as well as

minimal disturbance to vegetation communities, would help reduce the potential for establishment of invasive species.

Environmental Consequences, No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, there would be no affect to invasive species.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: The risk of infestation under the proposed action is acceptable with the area consisting of less than 40 acres of impact.

### **3.3.1.2 Special Status Animal Species**

Affected Environment: There are no ESA listed or proposed species that inhabit or derive important benefit from the project area. Several BLM sensitive animal species are known to inhabit the general area, including greater sage-grouse, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, bald eagle, golden eagle and Brewer's sparrow.

#### *Greater sage-grouse*

Sage-grouse are considered a sagebrush ecosystem obligate species. Sagebrush provides nesting, brooding, and fall and winter cover, as well as forage throughout the year. Each year, male sage-grouse congregate in late winter through spring on leks to display their breeding plumage and to attract hens for mating. Typically, leks are positioned within proximity of nesting and brood-rearing habitat; therefore, they are often considered an excellent reference point for monitoring and habitat protection measures.

Greater sage-grouse utilize sagebrush ecosystems in the area for breeding, nesting and brood-rearing. The north and west portions of the SRMA are located in a Priority Habitat Management Area. There is one active lek located within the SRMA. This is a small lek with an attendance of two males in the last two years.

#### *Columbian sharp-tailed grouse*

Columbian sharp-tailed grouse habitat is comprised of mountain shrub-grassland communities and associated edges. Like greater sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse breed on leks in the spring and construct ground nests near or under shrubs. Sagebrush stands and mixed mountain shrublands in the Proposed Action area provide habitat for Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. Much of the area is classified as winter habitat by CPW. There is one active lek just outside the SRMA and sharp-tailed grouse likely use a small portion of the SRMA for nesting.

#### *Bald eagle*

The general area is mapped as winter habitat for bald eagles by CPW. There are no nests or roosting sites located within the SRMA. Bald eagles use upland habitats as scavenging areas primarily for winter or vehicle killed mule deer and elk.

#### *Golden eagle*

There are several golden eagle nests located in the vicinity of the SRMA. Golden eagles likely hunt in the area and scavenge for carrion during the winter months.

### *Brewer's sparrow*

Brewer's sparrows are a summer resident in Colorado and nest in sagebrush stands. Nests are constructed in sagebrush and other shrubs in denser patches of shrubs. This species would likely be nesting in the project area from mid-May through mid-July.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is unlikely to have impacts to any BLM sensitive species. The area is primarily used in the fall months for big game hunting. The goals and objects defined in the Proposed Action would not change use in the Serviceberry Area. Dispersed camping and hunting have occurred here for a number of years and are expected to continue. Wildlife will continue to benefit from the non-motorized/travel restricted designation.

The interpretive plans near the Holmes Homestead would have minimal impacts to BLM species. This is a very small area of the SRMA, and the fence, kiosk and small parking lot would not remove important habitat. Disruptive construction activities should not occur between March 1 and July 1, to reduce any potential impacts to wildlife in the area. In addition, specific sites for parking or camping must be cleared by a wildlife biologist prior to any construction activities.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: There would be no impacts to BLM sensitive species from the No Action Alternative. Current use (primarily hunting) would be expected to continue.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

### **3.3.1.3 Upland Vegetation**

Affected Environment: The majority of vegetation types in the planning area are Wyoming big sagebrush, mountain big sagebrush, and basin big sagebrush. Other vegetation types that occur as minor plant communities include silver sagebrush/grassland, which occurs in riparian habitat along streams above the wet sedge and willow riparian zone, juniper/sagebrush, juniper/pinyon pine/sagebrush, and mountain shrub/aspen woodland vegetation types found at higher elevations where precipitation is more abundant. There are a variety of range sites, but the planning area is dominated by clayey footslopes, rolling loam, clayey foothills, mountain loam, and brushy loam. These range sites typically support Wyoming big sagebrush, western serviceberry, mountain snowberry, yellow rabbitbrush, western wheatgrass, Nevada bluegrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg's bluegrass, needleandthread grass, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush squirreltail, Gambel's oak, Letterman's needlegrass, elk sedge, nodding brome, slender wheatgrass and a wide variety of forbs.

*Wyoming Big Sagebrush/Grassland:* The Wyoming big sagebrush/grassland is the most common vegetation cover type in the allotments within the planning area. It occurs in shallow to moderately deep coarse soil types at lower elevations between 6,000 and 7,500 feet. Grass and forb species vary depending on soil texture, aspect, and slope. Common grass and grass-like species include bluebunch and thick spike wheatgrass, Sandberg and mutton bluegrass, Indian ricegrass, needle-and-thread, threadleaf sedge, and bottlebrush squirreltail. Common forbs include phlox, Hooker sandwort, buckwheat, penstemon, Indian paintbrush, globemallow, and prickly pear cactus.

*Basin Big Sagebrush:* Basin big sagebrush can intermix with serviceberry, green and rubber rabbitbrush, snowberry, bitterbrush, silver sagebrush, and mountain mahogany, depending on the soil depth, annual precipitation, and elevation. Grasses occurring in these communities include basin wildrye, green needlegrass, Idaho fescue, thick spike wheatgrass, Kentucky and mutton bluegrass, and bottlebrush squirreltail. Common forbs include bluebells, groundsel, wild onion, violet, buttercup, false dandelion, buckwheat, penstemon, Indian paintbrush, globemallow, and prickly pear cactus.

*Mountain Big Sagebrush/Grassland:* Mountain big sagebrush is usually the dominant shrub in foothill and higher elevation sagebrush communities, with bitterbrush, serviceberry, snowberry, and mountain mahogany providing subdominant brush diversity. Grasses include Idaho fescue, spike fescue, green and Colombian needle grass, Kentucky, mutton and big bluegrass, elk sedge, and Ross's sedge. Common forbs found in these areas include Indian paintbrush, globemallow, lupine, larkspur, penstemon, and Oregon grape.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: There are unlikely to be any impacts on the upland vegetation within the project area. The area is primarily used in the fall months for big game hunting when most herbaceous vegetation is dormant. The goals and objectives defined in the Proposed Action would not introduce any new impacts. Dispersed camping and hunting have and would continue to occur in the Serviceberry Area. The interpretive plans and campsite designations would have minimal impacts to individual plants, but would not impact the overall upland health of the SRMA.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: There would be no impacts to upland vegetation within the planning area. The current isolated and dispersed use would be expected to continue.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

#### **3.3.1.4 Wetlands and Riparian Zones**

Affected Environment: An extensive cottonwood gallery is present along the intermittent stream in the project area. Aerial photographic imagery and site visits show this cottonwood stand is dense. Under current management, this riparian area is also available for overnight camping, and it may be impacted by upstream influence of the stream crossing that is located in the project area.

This riparian reach has not been assessed using the Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessment Methodology. The closest riparian reach that has been assessed is located on the perennial Willow Creek, and is located approximately 1 ½ miles east of the project area. It was classified as being in Proper Functioning Condition in 2004.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The main feature of the proposed action that would affect this riparian cottonwood gallery is the prohibition of overnight camping within the riparian area. This would decrease traffic and soil compaction within the riparian area. Such a change should increase the health of the riparian vegetation over time. An additional feature of the proposed action that may influence the condition of this riparian area is the prohibition of

overnight camping on the opposite (east) side of the drainage. This would be expected to reduce traffic across the low-water crossing upstream of the riparian area, which should also favorably impact the health of this riparian vegetation due to a decrease in soil erosion and compaction.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: Under this alternative, the impact to riparian resources on BLM land of overnight camping within the riparian area could continue at the current level. The health of the cottonwood gallery located in the project area could be degraded due to this activity, depending on the level of traffic that occurs, as well as the interaction of climatic conditions and weather events, such as heavy rainfall events.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

### **3.3.1.5 Wildlife, Terrestrial (including Migratory Birds)**

Affected Environment: Native plant communities in the SRMA are composed of sagebrush stands and mixed mountain shrublands. These plant communities provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The SRMA provides year round habitat for mule deer, elk and pronghorn antelope, including important winter habitat for these species. In addition, numerous small mammals, reptiles and songbirds such as sage sparrow, sage thrasher and loggerhead shrike likely utilize the area.

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is unlikely to have impacts to terrestrial wildlife species. The area is primarily used in the fall months for big game hunting. The goals and objects defined in the Proposed Action would not change use in the Serviceberry Area. Dispersed camping and hunting have occurred here for a number of years and are expected to continue. Wildlife would continue to benefit from the non-motorized/travel restricted designation.

The interpretive plans near the Holmes Homestead would have minimal impacts to wildlife. This is a very small area of the SRMA, and the fence, kiosk and small parking lot would not remove important habitat. Any additional trails outside the Holmes Homestead area would need additional NEPA analysis.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: There would be no impacts to BLM sensitive species from the No Action Alternative. Current use (primarily hunting) would be expected to continue.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Land uses in the area consist of livestock grazing, recreation (primarily hunting) and limited oil and gas development. The Proposed Action is not anticipated to add substantially to existing or proposed disturbances.

## **3.4.1 HERITAGE RESOURCES AND THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

### **3.4.1.1 Cultural Resources**

Affected Environment: A total of eleven small-scale cultural resource surveys have been completed within the SRMA. These surveys took place prior to various kinds of projects involving ground disturbing activities. The projects included construction of livestock reservoirs,

fences, oil and gas well pads and associated access roads, and an irrigation canal, as well as projects intended to curtail encroachment of juniper woodland into areas covered with sagebrush grassland vegetation. Together, the previous surveys covered a small percentage of the total area within the SRMA.

Four historic sites are recorded within the SRMA. Foremost among these is the Holmes Homestead. The site was originally on private land that was homesteaded and transferred into private ownership. As a result of the land exchange that served to consolidate BLM land in the SRMA, the site came back into public ownership. Most homesteads that have survived to the present in relatively good condition are on private land, so the Holmes Homestead is unusual in being a good example of one that is now situated on public land. The BLM in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer has determined that the Holmes Homestead is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. Other recorded historic sites in the SRMA include a segment of an irrigation ditch dating to the 1910s and 1920s and two line camps associated with the ranching industry.

Previous cultural resource survey in the SRMA has resulted in the documentation of a number of prehistoric sites and isolated finds. Sites recorded in the SRMA are classified as either campsites or lithic scatters. The later site type consists of a scatter of flaked stone artifacts. Prehistoric campsites commonly have flaked stone artifacts but also often contain ground stone artifacts used in processing wild plant foods as well as archaeological features such as remnants of campfires and roasting pits. Isolated finds commonly are comprised of relatively few flaked stone artifacts or, less commonly, an isolated feature. In total, previous survey work in the SRMA resulted in the documentation of 10 campsites, five lithic scatters, and four isolated finds. Of the sites, only one produced an artifact allowing the time period of occupation to be determined. That site produced a poorly known basally notched atl-atl dart point this is broadly assignable to the early or middle Archaic period (ca. 8,000 to 3,000 radiocarbon years ago).

Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action: The effect of the proposed action on cultural resources is intended to be beneficial in an overall sense. The Holmes Homestead would be interpreted to the public through the use of a sign that not only tells the story of this particular homestead and of homesteading in the American West in general, but also would be designed to encourage the public to visit and appreciate this and other historic sites on public land while leaving them as they were found for others to enjoy. Telling the story of homesteading in Moffat County and the West in general is intended to instill a sense of how historic sites on public land serve to provide a tangible connection to a by-gone era in American history that can be appreciated by the general public and particularly by local residents descended from the first homesteaders in the area.

However, by promoting the SRMA as an area for various forms of outdoor recreation on BLM land, and by providing for easier access to the area through the construction of hiking trails, the proposed action could result in increased access to, and degradation of, cultural resources in the area, particularly prehistoric sites. By promoting the SRMA as an area that is well suited for hunting and other outdoor recreational activities, there is a possibility that the Holmes homestead may be subjected to increased degradation from vandalism such as graffiti and being shot with firearms, as well as unauthorized collection of historic artifacts as souvenirs. Also, prehistoric sites in the area may be degraded by an increase in unauthorized collection of flaked stone artifacts that accompanies easier access to the area (see Nickens et al. 1981). However, it is the intention of the IAMP to promote appreciation and stewardship of cultural resources on public

lands such that any risk of degradation to the Holmes Homestead and prehistoric sites in the area should be more than offset by increasing the public's appreciation of the value of historic sites on public lands.

**Environmental Consequences, No Action:** At present, the SRMA is managed as an Extensive Recreation Management Area with the primary use being big game hunting. The degree to which modern land use negatively affects cultural resources through unauthorized artifact collection, etc. is unknown, but believed to be minimal. Under the No Action alternative, the present state of affairs will remain unchanged.

**Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts:** Cumulative effects of the proposed action on cultural resources are intended to produce an overall positive result. In a BLM field area that presently has only one interpreted cultural resource (the Irish Canyon Rock Art site) and continues to be subjected to unauthorized artifact collection by relic hunters, installation and maintenance of the interpretive sign at the Holmes Homestead is intended to produce an overall benefit to cultural resources by increasing public appreciation and stewardship of cultural resources over the long-term.

Some negative impacts to cultural resources may accrue as a result of implementing the proposed action, though it is believed that these will be more than offset by positive effects. Through time, increased public access to the area as a result of promoting the area for recreational use and construction of hiking trails is expected to increase public visitation of the SRMA. Under the current cultural norms and values, increased access to an area has been shown to result in increased looting and vandalism to sites. Again, the intention of the proposed action is to help to slowly change the status quo by increasing public appreciation and stewardship of cultural resources. The rationale behind the proposed action is that any possible negative affect to cultural resources resulting from unauthorized collection of artifacts on prehistoric sites resulting from increased access would be more than offset by beneficial effects resulting from a change in public sentiment where vandalism and looting of historic and prehistoric sites on public lands is no longer seen as inevitable human behavior.

#### Reference Cited

Nickens, Paul R., Signa L. Larralde, and Gordon C. Tucker, Jr.  
1981 A Survey of Vandalism to Archaeological Resources in Southwestern Colorado. Cultural Resource Series, No. 11. Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office. Denver, Colorado.

#### **3.4.1.2 Native American Concerns**

**Affected Environment:** In historic times, the Little Snake field area was inhabited by the Utes and the Shoshone. Sites of concern to the tribes usually include burials, rock art sites, wickiups, possible vision quest sites, and possible eagle traps. No sites of the above-mentioned varieties are known within the area to be affected by the proposed project. Also, the project is not located within an area known to be of concern to the tribes.

**Environmental Consequences, Proposed Action:** Based on available information, the proposed action would not affect sites or areas of concern to native peoples.

Environmental Consequences, No Action: The No Action alternative would also have no effect on sites or areas of Native American concern.

Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts: Since the Proposed Action is not expected to have an effect on sites or areas of concern, there also would be no cumulative affects over time.

## **4.0 PUBLIC LAND HEALTH STANDARDS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In January 1997, the Colorado State Office of the BLM approved the Standards for Public Land Health and amended all RMPs in the State. Standards describe the conditions needed to sustain public land health and apply to all uses of public lands. The Serviceberry SRMA project area was assessed for compliance with the Colorado Standards of Public Land Health by an interdisciplinary team.

### **4.2 Colorado Public Land Health Standards**

**4.2.1 Standard 1:** Upland soils exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, land form, and geologic processes.

Finding of most recent assessment: The project area was assessed most recently in 1999 as part of the Slater Landscape Assessment. At this time, the site that was assessed adjacent to the project area was found to have active rills and plant pedestalling, but also adequate canopy and ground cover, with litter showing moderate movement. Biological soil crusts were found to be intact. This standard is being met.

Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives: This standard would be met under the Proposed Action. Given the good condition of the soil resource near the project area, the Proposed Action would maintain sufficient plant cover to both protect the soil surface from wind and water erosion, and allow the plant community to continue to produce litter in sufficient amounts to maintain litter and sustain appropriate water permeability. The No Action Alternative would also meet this standard, since upland soil standards are being met under current management.

**4.2.2 Standard 2:** Riparian systems associated with both running and standing water function properly and have the ability to recover from major disturbance such as fire, severe grazing, or 100-year floods.

Finding of most recent assessment: There is an extensive cottonwood gallery present along the intermittent stream in the project area. Aerial photographic imagery and site visits show this cottonwood stand is dense. Although this specific riparian reach has not been assessed using the Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessment Methodology, the closest riparian reach that has been assessed is located on the perennial Willow Creek, approximately 1 ½ miles east of the project area. It was classified as being in Proper Functioning Condition in 2004. This standard is being met.

Proposed Action: The proposed action is more protective of the riparian area than is current management because it would prohibit overnight camping within the cottonwood gallery. This would decrease traffic and soil compaction within the riparian area. Therefore, under the proposed action this standard would continue to be met.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, the impact to riparian resources on BLM land of overnight camping within the riparian area could continue at the current level. The health of the cottonwood gallery located in the project area could be degraded due to this activity, depending on the level of traffic that occurs, as well as the interaction of climatic conditions and weather events, such as heavy rainfall events. It is possible that this standard would not continue to be met under the No Action Alternative.

**4.2.3 Standard 3:** Healthy, productive plant and animal communities of native and other desirable species are maintained at viable population levels commensurate with the species and habitat's potential.

Finding of most recent assessment: The planning area is currently meeting this standard. The majority of the vegetative communities appear to include a high density of native plant species expected to occur on each site. Overall, plant community structure and composition is in good condition with high plant density, production, and vigor.

Implementation of either alternative would not result in diminished animal production, diversity, or resilience. This standard would continue to be met under either the Proposed Action or the No Action Alternative.

**4.2.4 Standard 4:** Special status, threatened and endangered species (federal and state), and other plants and animals officially designated by the BLM, and their habitats are maintained or enhanced by sustaining healthy, native plant and animal communities.

There are no federally listed threatened or endangered or BLM sensitive plant species present on public lands within the project area. This standard does not apply. The planning area is currently meeting the standard for special status animal species. Implementation of either alternative would not preclude this standard from being met.

**4.2.5 Standard 5:** The water quality of all water bodies, including ground water where applicable, located on or influenced by BLM lands will achieve or exceed the Water Quality Standards established by the State of Colorado.

No perennial streams exist in the proposed project area, nor are any 303(d)-listed streams influenced drainage from the project area. The pond located within the project area would not be affected by any of the alternatives. This standard does not apply.

**SIGNATURE OF PREPARER:** /s/ Gina Robison



**SIGNATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWER:**



**DATE SIGNED:**

6/2/16

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)**

DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2016-0003-EA

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the EA and all other available information, I have determined that the proposal and the alternatives analyzed do not constitute a major Federal action that would adversely impact the quality of the human environment. This determination is based on the following factors:

1. Beneficial, adverse, direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts have been disclosed in the EA. Analysis indicated no significant impacts on society as a whole, the affected region, the affected interests or the locality. The physical and biological effects are limited to the Little Snake Resource Area and adjacent land.
2. Public health and safety would not be adversely impacted. There are no known or anticipated concerns with project waste or hazardous materials.
3. There would be no adverse impacts to regional or local air quality, prime or unique farmlands, known paleontological resources on public land within the area, wetlands, floodplain, areas with unique characteristics, ecologically critical areas or designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.
4. There are no highly controversial effects on the environment.
5. There are no effects that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk. Sufficient information on risk is available based on information in the EA and other past actions of a similar nature.
6. This alternative does not set a precedent for other actions that may be implemented in the future to meet the goals and objectives of adopted Federal, State or local natural resource related plans, policies or programs.
7. No cumulative impacts related to other actions that would have a significant adverse impact were identified or are anticipated.
8. Based on previous and ongoing cultural surveys and through mitigation by avoidance, no adverse impacts to cultural resources were identified or anticipated. There are no known American Indian religious concerns or persons or groups who might be disproportionately and adversely affected as anticipated by the Environmental Justice Policy.
9. No adverse impacts to any threatened or endangered species or their habitat that was determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act were identified. If, at a future time, there could be the potential for adverse impacts, treatments would be modified or mitigated not to have an adverse effect or new analysis would be conducted.
10. This alternative is in compliance with relevant Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and requirements for the protection of the environment.

impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives as disclosed in the Alternatives and Environmental Impacts sections of the EA. Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Because there would not be any significant impact, an environmental impact statement is not required.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: *Kathy McKinstry, acting*

DATE SIGNED: *6/2/16*

## APPENDIX A

### Management Action Implementation Schedule

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>MANAGEMENT UNIQUE TO EACH RECREATION MANAGEMENT ZONE</b>						
<b>Specific Management for RMZ 1 – Willow Creek and North Serviceberry Access</b>						
<b>Camping</b>						
Construct and maintain five campfire rings and game hoists in high-impact areas related to hunting season uses (BLM Road 2247), as funding allows.				X	BLM	Low
Monitor campsites to ensure game carcasses or carcass parts are disposed 300 feet away from any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or developed day-use area.		X			BLM	Medium
Patrol the project area to detect and resolve problems with campers staying beyond the 14-day camping limit.						
<b>Interpretive Area</b>						
Install boundary markers, signs, and kiosk to identify the Interpretive Area as day use only/no camping area, no hunting/target shooting area.		X				
Prepare Supplementary rules for Interpretive Area.		X			BLM	High
Construct and maintain a day-use only/no camping parking area at the Holmes Homestead, as funding allows				X	BLM	Medium
Construct and maintain a day-use only/no camping parking area within the Interpretive Area for recreational use (hunting, hiking, homestead), as funding allows.			X		BLM	Medium
Monitor heritage tourism and educational programs at Homestead. If activities increase, designate Homestead parking area strictly for cultural activities.				X	BLM	Low
Construct and maintain additional parking facilities if recreation/heritage demands increase, as funding allows				X	BLM	Low
Construct fencing and trail system around homestead to protect archaeological significance and for safety concerns, as funding allows.			X		BLM	Medium
Install interpretive panel for the Holmes Homestead to promote heritage interpretation/education.	X				BLM	High
Develop, update and maintain, as necessary, brochures, maps, and social media on the Interpretive Area.		X			BLM,	High

**APPENDIX A**  
**Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>Visiting Cultural Sites and Heritage Tourism</b>						
Cooperate with cultural program specialist and other partners to identify, document and prioritize the cultural resources on public land that attract visitors and residents or are marketed as heritage tourism sites and can benefit from improved management.	X				BLM & partners	Medium
Work with a variety of interests to accomplish cultural resource programs.			X		BLM & partners	Medium
Look for grant opportunities and other funding sources to help accomplish cultural resource programs.		X			BLM & partners	Medium
Develop educational recreation programs targeted at discovering, protecting, interpreting and enhancing cultural sites through stewardship activities.		X			BLM	Medium
Document and preserve the historic landscape on BLM.	X				BLM	Medium
<b>Specific Management for RMZ 2 – Serviceberry Backcountry</b>						
Monitor camping areas to ensure that access is by foot and horseback only.	X				BLM	
Monitor undeveloped campsites for impacts to natural and cultural resources, trash, illegal game disposal.	X				BLM,	Medium
Remove and dismantle campsites that are impacting natural and cultural sites		X			BLM	Low
<b>MANAGEMENT APPLICABLE TO BOTH ZONES</b>						
<b>Horseback Riding and Pack Animals</b>						
Work with State Land Board to resolve issue with corral located on state and BLM lands. Outcomes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remove corral and loading chute located on state land to eliminate trespass issues on state leased lands and rebuilt on BLM land.</li> <li>2. Remove the corral and chute on state land and BLM land.</li> <li>3. Develop a mutual agreement in allowing use and maintenance of the corrals on state land.</li> </ol>	X				BLM, State Land & Volunteers	High
Maintain corrals and encourage vehicles with horse trailers or other horse or pack animal related activities to stage/camp at corrals.		X			BLM	Low
Patrol the project area to ensure that only weed-free hay is used.	X				BLM	Medium

**APPENDIX A**  
**Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>Hunting/Target shooting</b>						
Continue regular patrols during hunting season to ensure recreation management objectives are being met.	X				BLM, County, CPW	High
Monitor for hunting and target shooting activities along main access routes and trails, and camping areas.		X			BLM, CPW,	Low
Work with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to cooperate on law enforcement, sharing information and ideas, identify issues and concerns, and developing affordable strategies for dealing with them.	X				BLM, CPW	High
Monitor resource area to ensure that game carcasses or carcass parts are disposed 300 feet or more from any existing developed or dispersed campsite, parking area, trailhead, or day-use area.	X				BLM, CPW	High
Monitor for unauthorized vehicular travel for the retrieval of game.						
Work with legal outfitters to provide horse packing services to assist hunters in removing game from backcountry areas.			X		BLM, Outfitters	Low
<b>Outfitters and Special Events</b>						
Encourage permittees to incorporate Tread Lightly, Leave No Trace, local history, cultural etiquette and other topics to their clients.	X				BLM & permittees	Medium
Monitor the number of outfitters permitted to maintain desirable experiences, avoid resource impacts, avoid overcrowding and reduce conflicts with other visitors.						
Prepare supplementary rules not allowing competitive events using motorized or mechanized vehicles.		X			BLM	High
<b>Signs</b>						
Maintain an inventory of all signs in the project area, and regularly evaluate their necessity and effectiveness.			X		BLM	Medium
Work in cooperation with local communities, county, and other stakeholder groups to develop and maintain an effective sign program.			X		BLM & various partners	Medium
Maintain and replace, as necessary, route and boundary markers, and signs			X		BLM	Medium

**APPENDIX A**  
**Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>TRAVEL MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS</b>						
<b>Travel Management: Zone 1</b>						
Continue management of Zone 1 as "Limited to Designated Roads and Trails"	X				BLM	High
Maintain and improve main public access route to the SRMA (BLM Road 2247).	X				BLM	High
Install and maintain route markers and signs along designated roads and trails.		X			BLM	Medium
Modify road to mitigate impacts to cottonwood stand, as funding allows.			X		BLM	Medium
Construct a managed and maintained trail system, as funding allows.				X	BLM & Volunteers	Low
Monitor existing staging areas on BLM Road 2247 and County Road 70; expand if demand regularly exceeds capacity, and as funding allows.				X	BLM	Low
Maintain and improve, as necessary, the existing staging areas on BLM Road 2247 and County Road 70.			X		BLM	Medium
Designate parking at various undeveloped campsite locations in the project area and delineate pullouts and parking areas to prevent them from increasing in size and unnecessarily effecting resources.			X		BLM	Medium
<b>Public Access Easements</b>						
Maintain BLM Road 2247 through the State Land easement, which is needed to support the transportation management network.	X				BLM & State Land Board	Medium
<b>Travel Management: Zone 2</b>						
Continue management of Zone 2 as "Closed" to OHV use	X					High
Develop a managed and maintained non-motorized trail system, as funding allows.				X	BLM, Youth Corp, Partners	Low

**APPENDIX A**  
**Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>Management, Maintenance, and Monitoring of the Transportation System</b>						
<b>Management</b>						
Install barriers or signs at the end of designated road(s).		X			BLM	Medium
Block and/or rehabilitate closed roads and trails, as funding permits.			X		BLM	Medium
Prioritize enforcement of the travel management network by keeping all types of use (e.g., motorized vehicles, bicycle, ATV) on designated roads and trails.	X				BLM	Medium
Pursue additional funding and/or partnerships to improve management		X			BLM, County, User Groups	High
Work cooperatively with county and other agency law enforcement officials to increase patrols during hunting season (i.e., September – December), during special events, and in areas experiencing high levels of unauthorized, cross-country travel or trespass.	X				BLM	Medium
Train law enforcement personnel, permanent staff, seasonal employees, and volunteers who work in the project area about the management goals, and rules and regulations that apply.	X				BLM & County	High
Manage roads and trails on public land that are not designated as open to the public to minimize resource impacts and prevent their unauthorized use.	X				BLM	Low
<b>Maintenance</b>						
Periodically maintain the transportation management network to ensure reasonable public access, minimize resource impacts, and reduce safety hazards.	X				BLM	High
<b>Monitoring</b>						
Encourage all permanent, seasonal, and volunteer staff working in the project area to monitor road and trail conditions as they carry out their daily work activities.	X				BLM	High
Maintain regular communication with visitor centers, outfitters, and other sources of information to stay informed about current road and trail conditions.		X			BLM, visitor centers	Medium
Improve patrol and enforcement presence in the project area.	X				BLM, County, State	High

**APPENDIX A**  
**Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>RECREATION INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND MARKETING</b>						
Work with community partners to develop, produce, fund, and distribute a variety of appropriate information and marketing materials, including periodic review of these materials, to ensure consistency with the management objectives and framework identified and to ensure that information is accurate.		X			BLM, Chambers, MCTA, & various partners	Medium
Develop general message materials using a variety of media for the following: information, rules and regulations, education and interpretation, promotion and advertising, motorized vehicle recreation; hunting, cultural resources; camping; horse use; interpretation and education.		X			BLM, Chambers, MCTA, & various partners	Medium
<b>RECREATION MONITORING</b>						
Develop a monitoring strategy that uses key indicators to evaluate social, environmental, and administrative standards and documents findings	X				BLM	Medium
Continue to work with a variety of partners including the county, historical societies, and Community Agricultural Alliance to assist with identifying, monitoring, and preserving heritage tourism sites.	X				BLM	Medium
Assess and manage vehicle use in the project area applying monitor strategy	X				BLM	High
Monitor physical, social, and administrative conditions of each RMZ to ensure that the desired settings are being managed for.	X				BLM	Medium
<b>RECREATION COLLABORATION</b>						
Build and maintain partnerships with agencies, groups, and individuals that have an interest in recreation and recreation resource management in the project area.		X			BLM & various partners	High
Work toward entering into cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and citizens and user groups that have adequate resources and expertise to assist in the management of public lands in the project area.		X			BLM & various partners	Medium
Consider, where appropriate, contracting with private sector businesses, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, or State and local agencies to accomplish essential studies, monitoring, or project development.		X			BLM & various partners	Medium

**APPENDIX A  
Management Action Implementation Schedule**

Action Item	Timeframe Within				Leads & Partner	Priority
	Ongoing	2 yrs	5 yrs	10-20 yrs		
<b>RECREATION MANAGEMENT – RESOURCE PROTECTION</b>						
<b>Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species</b>						
Manage recreation to minimize or eliminate impacts to federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species in accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA).	X				BLM	High
Manage recreation to prevent associated impacts from pushing sensitive species on to the list of federally threatened, endangered, or candidate species.	X				BLM	High
Manage area to reduce off-trail travel that could impact habitat for the Greater Sage-grouse.	X				BLM	High
<b>Visual Resources</b>						
Apply visual resource principals on all projects within the project area that will enhance and/or restore the area.		X			BLM	High
<b>Other Resources</b>						
Treat known weed infestations to reduce the potential for recreation activities to spread seeds.			X		BLM	High

## Appendix B

### Standard SRP Terms, Conditions and Stipulations for All Permitted Activities

**Stipulations:** The following standard stipulations are automatically included and apply to all permits (some additional stipulations are specific to only certain activities). Failure to comply with these stipulations may result in remedial actions listed below under Performance Evaluation, Section XVIII. B. Per 2932.40, violations of permit terms or stipulations may be subject to fines and imprisonment, in addition to administrative penalties.

#### I. RISKS, HAZARDS AND SAFETY

- A. Adequate first aid and safety equipment shall be provided while performing the permitted activities.
- B. All guides and employees responsible for clients in the field shall be trained in First Aid and hold a valid certification of training from the American Red Cross or its equivalent.
- C. In case of human death, or wildfire, involving the permitted operation, the County Sheriff shall be notified immediately, and the BLM shall be notified immediately after the Sheriff is notified.

#### II. INDEMNIFICATION

- A. The permittee shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the United States and/or its agencies and representatives from any and all demands, claims, or liabilities of every nature whatsoever, including, but not limited to damages to property, injuries to or death of persons, arising directly or indirectly from, or in any way connected with the authorized use and occupancy of the lands authorized for use under this permit.
- B. Insurance: Coverage shall be obtained for the permitted operations in the minimum liability coverage amounts of:

<b>GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MINIMUM INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS</b>		
<b>SRP Event or Activity</b>	<b>Per Occurrence</b>	<b>Per Annual Aggregate</b>
Low Risk: general non-competitive and non-commercial activities such as group camping, group activities, mounted orienteering, backpacking, or dog trials.	\$300,000	\$600,000
Moderate Risk: whitewater boating, horse endurance rides, OHV events, mountain bike races, rock climbing (with ropes), ultra-light outings, rodeos	\$500,000	\$1,000,000
High Risk: bungee jumping, speed record events, unaided rock climbing, heli-skiing, or aviation assisted activities	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000 - \$10,000,000

- C. An insurance certificate shall be submitted, stating the limits of coverage, identifying the “Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management” as additional insured, that includes the minimum shown above, expiration date, that the permittee or insurer will notify BLM 30 days in advance of termination or modification of the policy, or modification of such insurance, and a list of the activities that are permitted and insured.

### **III. LIMITATIONS**

- A. This permit authorizes only temporary use in connection with the operations, during the period(s) and in the area(s) identified in the permit and authorized by an Annual Operating Authorization.
- B. If an existing commercial permittee wishes to sell or otherwise terminate his or her business and desires that permit privileges be transferred to a new owner, the permittee must notify the authorized officer in advance, in writing, and receive advance written approval for the permit transfer from the authorized officer.
- C. Use of Non-Public lands: This permit does not authorize use of non-BLM land (i.e. private, city, county, state, or other federal land).
- D. The applicant shall provide upon request the name(s) and address(s) of private landowners whose property is used in connection with the permitted operations, and evidence of permission to use such land.
- E. Access to Public Lands: The BLM does not guarantee legal access to public lands unless legal access for the general public is available. Where legal public access is not available, the permittee is responsible for obtaining permission from the landowner(s) to travel through or use private lands.
- F. Multi-Year Permits: A multi-year permit is not valid unless accompanied by a current Annual Operating Authorization.
- G. Joint Permit Requirement: This permit authorizes use of public lands in this Field Office; use of public lands in other Field Offices or National Forest lands must be approved under a separate or joint permit. Code of Federal Regulation citations for both the BLM and Forest Service are valid and will be enforced for joint permits on associated public lands.
- H. If a lion outfitter does not own their own dogs, they must furnish copies of all lease or rental *arrangements for the dogs and/or dog handler(s) that they plan on using. Dog handlers must be listed as guides.*

#### **IV. ASSIGNMENT AND SUBLETTING OF PERMIT PRIVILEGES**

The permittee may not assign permit privileges to a third party, including booking agents. The permittee or permittee's representative may not assign, contract, or sublease any portion of the permit authorization or interest therein, directly or indirectly, voluntarily or involuntarily. However, contracting of equipment or services may be approved by the authorized officer in advance, if necessary to supplement a permittee's operations. Such contracting should not constitute more than half the required equipment or services for any one trip or activity and the permittee must retain operational control of the permitted activity. If equipment or services are contracted, the permittee shall continue to be responsible for compliance with all stipulations and conditions of the permit.

The following is required:

- A. A third party advertisement used to book a trip must clearly indicate that the trip will be operated by the company holding the permit;
- B. Guides and employees must fall under federal and state employment regulations and be listed in the operating plan prior to each operating season. (ie. IRS Form-1099, independent contractor form).
- C. If you are proposing to employ guides or employees who are licensed and/or permitted outfitters elsewhere that must be disclosed at the time you submit their name and information on your guide list.
- D. Written notice must be given to the BLM to use equipment with outfitter markings (company names, logos, etc.) other than those of the permit holder prior to the time of use (hunt, launch, tour, etc.).

#### **V. NON-EXCLUSIVE USE**

- A. Roads, trails and trailheads, or campsites commonly in public use shall not be blocked or enclosed by the permittee.
- B. Public lands will generally remain available on a first-come, first served basis to other commercial and private recreational users.

#### **VI. CONDUCT AND MANNERS**

- A. The permittee is at all times responsible for the actions of himself, his employees, clients and guests in connection with the authorized operations, and shall not cause a public disturbance or engage in activities which create a hazard or nuisance.
- B. The permittee should practice the TREAD LIGHTLY and LEAVE NO TRACE land ethics and inform their clients about these practices and ensure that they follow them.

## VII. MODIFICATION OR AMENDMENT

- A. The permittee shall request amendment or modification of the permit to provide for changes prior to issuance of annual operating authorization in: use areas or sites, season of use, services provided, fee structure, or any other changes in operations.

## VIII. PAYMENTS

- A. Use Fee Payments: Permit fees are due and payable in advance based on estimated use gross receipts. Payments shall be sent to the Field Office by check, money order or cashier's check, made payable to the "Bureau of Land Management".
- B. Basis for Fee: The annual permit fee shall be three percent (3 %) of total client charges or \$100.00 annual minimum for commercial permits, or \$5.00 per person per day for events whichever is greater. Gross receipts shall be the sum of all payments made by clients for services rendered in connection with the permitted operations, before disbursement to private landowner for use of private land, payment to employees, and any other disbursement.
- C. Periodic Payments: At the Field Manager's discretion, when the estimated use fee is greater than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), a schedule for periodic payments may be arranged.
- D. End of Season Payment: The actual use fee shall be determined from the use reports. Payment should accompany the post-use reports and trip logs due 30 days after the last day of use or as specified on SRP.
- E. Refunds:
  - 1. No refunds of less than ten dollars (\$10.00) will be made.
  - 2. Unless requested in writing all overpayments will be credited for use for the following operating season.
- F. Late Payments  
Late payment of fees may result in additional fee penalties, permit probation, suspension, and/or revocation, and interest and administrative handling charges.
- G. Deductions: Allowable deductions in permit fees shall be agreed upon in advance, and may include costs related to the permitted operations incurred by the permittee for long distance off-site transportation, and off-site lodging, per Handbook H-2930-1.
- H. Discounts for Non-Public Lands use (For Upland Use Only) must be requested and approved prior to use. No discounts are allowed for river related permits.

## IX. USE REPORTS

- A. Trip Logs: Trip Logs shall be submitted within 30 days of the authorized use season or as specified on the permit, on a form provided by the BLM, or an approved equivalent. Trip logs shall indicate accurately the dates of use, location, type of use, number of clients, number of staff, vehicles and livestock used, total receipts, and any deductions claimed. Penalty fees may be charged for late reports.
- B. Post Use Report: A Post Use Report shall be submitted as specified or within 30 days of the last day of use authorized or as specified on permit, on a form provided by the BLM, or an approved equivalent. The post use report shall indicate accurately the total number of clients served during the term of the permit, total staff and total use, total receipts and total deductions claimed, discounts for time off public lands, and describe any accidents or injuries occurred, and management problems or concerns. Penalty fees will be charged for late reports.
- C. Late Use Reports: **Late submission of use reports may be cause for action against the permittee**, including late fees, probation, suspension, and/or revocation, and criminal penalties.
- D. Non-Use: Zero use must be requested in writing prior to the issuance of Annual Operating Authorization. Minimum payments still apply. The authorized officer may cancel a permit after two consecutive seasons of non-use. In certain areas covered by Special Recreation Management Plans, travel management plans, or other site-specific plans, special provisions regarding non-use of permits may apply.

## X. INSPECTION OF RECORDS AND PREMISES

- A. The BLM and its cooperators, including Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), USDA Forest Service shall at all times have the right to enter the premises located on public land on official business. The permittee shall allow reasonable access to private lands owned or utilized in the permitted operation for purposes related to administration of the permit.

## XI. SIGNING AND ADVERTISING

- A. Signs or advertising devices on public land require advance approval on the location, design, size, shape or color, and message.
- B. All advertising shall be accurate and not misrepresent in any way the services or accommodations provided, or the area authorized for use. Brochures and other advertising materials shall include the following disclosure: "All or part of this operation is conducted on Public Lands under special permit from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management".

- C. Official BLM agency symbols may not be used in advertising.

## **XII. CAMPSITES**

- A. Camps may be set up for no longer than necessary, and no earlier than 5 days prior to the first day of use authorized and must be removed within five days after the authorized use period. No year-round, permanent camps may be established on BLM lands; only temporary facilities are permitted.
- B. Camps shall be located to avoid conflict with public road and trail traffic, and stream or lake access, and to the extent possible shall be located out of sight of major trails.
- C. All campsites and temporary improvements shall be as described in the approved operating plan.
- D. All campsite facilities including but not limited to tents, latrines, livestock control facilities, shall be located at least 200 feet from the nearest spring, stream, lake, pond or reservoir unless specifically authorized otherwise.
- E. All campsites must be approved prior to use. Clearances may be required, such as inventories for cultural resources and/or for threatened or endangered species.

## **XIII. CAMPFIRES**

- A. Unless permanent fire rings are designated, open campfires shall be built only in areas free of hazardous fuels. Fire rings or pits shall be set on bare mineral soil. After use, fire rings or pits shall be obliterated and the site rehabilitated. Open fires may be prohibited during periods of extremely high fire hazard by order of the BLM, the applicable county or the State of Colorado.
- B. Campfires shall be completely extinguished when left unattended. The permittee is responsible for all fires started by him/herself, employees, or clients, and may be held responsible for fire suppression costs resulting from wildfire caused by his/her operations.
- C. An axe, shovel, water bucket or extinguisher for fire control shall be available at each campfire.
- D. Wildfire caused by the permitted operation shall be reported immediately to the nearest BLM office. The permittee is responsible for informing employees, clients, and participants of the current fire danger and required restrictions or precautions that may be in effect.

## **XV. LIVESTOCK USE**

- A. Authorized pasture use of livestock is temporary and limited to transportation purposes, and will not establish a priority for future use of the range. Rangeland grazing may be restricted and feed may be required to be packed, all feed supplied as part of permitted operations must be **certified weed free**. The permittee shall prevent localized over grazing and damage to vegetation by permitted livestock.
- B. Construction of permanent fences or corrals is not permitted. Temporary livestock control structures may be erected with advanced approval, including corrals and hitching racks, provided they are dismantled after the use season.
- C. The permittee may be required to pay additional fees for forage consumed by livestock during the permitted operations. This fee will be at the current rate for grazing use.
- D. Livestock shall not be tied to trees for other than short term, temporary stops. Hobbles, pickets, high lines or corrals shall be used to control livestock.
- E. Livestock control structures (corrals, hitching racks, pickets, high lines) must be at least 200 feet from springs, streams, lakes, reservoirs or other water sources. Whatever method of livestock control is used, it will not result in removal or death of the under story vegetation.
- F. Pack stock may be grazed if permitted by the SRP. If electric fences are used, they will be moved every 3 days to a new area. If picket ropes are used, they will be moved every other day to a new area. If high lines are used, their location must be approved in advance.

## **XVI. EQUIPMENT CACHES**

Food and/or equipment caches require advance authorization. When authorized, caches shall be neatly stored out of sight of roads and trails. Food caches must be “wildlife proof.”

## **XVII. RESOURCE PROTECTION**

- A. Aesthetics: Permittee shall protect the scenic and aesthetic values of the public lands used in the operations, and maintain premises on permitted areas to acceptable standards of repair, orderliness, and cleanliness.
- B. Rehabilitation: After camps and other temporary facilities are dismantled, insofar as practical, the area shall be left in a natural state. Reseeding with BLM approved seed mix may be required of any areas disturbed by campsites.
- C. Sanitation: Self contained or pit type toilets/privies, with or without tent coverings, shall be used at all campsites on public land. The permittee will be

responsible for establishing a latrine for all permitted camps and for final rehab when the camp is removed. Waste from self contained toilets must be disposed of at a State approved sewage disposal facility. When abandoned, toilet pits shall be covered with a minimum of 12 inches of topsoil and back filled to pre-existing grade. While in use, human waste in pits shall be covered with a layer of topsoil or lime after each individual use.

- D. Trash Disposal: Camps and other permitted areas shall be regularly cleaned and no trash or litter shall be allowed to accumulate. Combustible trash may be burned when campfires are authorized. All non-combustible trash, including but not limited to tin cans, spent brass, glass bottles, foil, and wire shall be packed out. Trash shall not be buried on public land.
- E. Dead animals and their remains shall be disposed of at least 200 feet away from springs, streams, lakes, ponds, campsites, roads/trails.
- F. Waste or by-products of any kind shall not be discharged into any stream, reservoir, lake or pond.
- G. Soils: Permittee shall conduct the permitted operations in a manner which prevents rutting, or soil erosion.
- H. Vegetation Damage/Removal: All operations shall be conducted in a manner which prevents damage to or loss of vegetation cover. Poles may be cut for temporary facilities if these are authorized by permit on public land. Cutting, clearing or defacing of standing trees, alive or dead, or clearing and cutting of shrub/groundcover for any other reason shall require specific advance authorization. When tree cutting is authorized, stumps shall be left no higher than 6 inches above ground level and slash shall be lopped and scattered. A separate permit is required for removal and transportation of woodland/tree products from public land.
- I. Firewood Cutting: Firewood may be cut on public land only for campsite use while on public land, and may not be transported off the public lands without a separate firewood cutting permit. Only dead and down trees shall be cut for firewood, with stumps left no higher than 6 inches above ground level, and the slash shall be lopped and scattered.
- J. Protection of Public Property: Signs, equipment, markers, fences, livestock watering facilities or any other property found on public land shall not be damaged, destroyed, defaced, removed, or disturbed.
- K. Cultural Resources: All persons associated with operations under this permit must be informed that any objects or sites of cultural, paleontological, and scientific interest, such as historic or prehistoric resources, graves or grave markers, human remains, ruins, cabins, rock art, fossils, or artifacts shall not be damaged, destroyed, removed or disturbed. If in connection with operations under this permit any of the above resources are discovered, the

permittee shall immediately stop operations in the immediate area of the discovery, protect such resources, and notify the BLM authorized officer of the discovery. The immediate area of the discovery must be protected until the operator is notified in writing to proceed by the authorized officer.

- L. Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas (WSA): Use of electric generators, all motorized and mechanized equipment including chainsaws and vehicles is prohibited within a Wilderness and most WSAs. Check with your local office to see if there are exceptions. If supplemental livestock feed is used, cubed, pelletized, or processed feed or **certified weed free hay** shall be used.
- M. Permittee is responsible for knowing where Public Land, Wilderness, and WSA boundaries are and the restrictions that may apply to an area of operation within these boundaries. Maps and information concerning restrictions are available at the local Field Office.
- N. Facility Construction: Construction of permanent facilities or improvements of any kind, including but not limited to roads, trails or structures, is not approved by this permit and shall require separate written authorization.

## **XVIII. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

- A. The BLM shall conduct periodic inspections and performance evaluations of the permittee's operations and compliance with the terms, conditions and stipulations of the Permit.

Evaluation Ratings are as follows:

**Acceptable** means that the permittee has generally operated in accordance with the terms and conditions established for the permit

**Probationary** means that the permittee has not operated in full accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit. Corrective action by the holder is mandatory and continued operation at this level of performance is unacceptable. If this performance level is received 2 years in a row, the authorized officer may suspend or terminate the permit and/or deny future permit applications.

**Unacceptable** means that the permittee has not operated in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit and cannot be allowed to continue. This performance level will result in suspension or termination of permit privileges as appropriate to the circumstances.

- B. Violations and Penalties: Any violation of the permit terms, conditions and stipulations may be subject to penalties prescribed in 43 CFR 2932.40, which may include fines up to \$1,000 and/or imprisonment up to 12 months. Additionally, any such violation may result in permit termination, suspension, or probation. Violations may also be cause for the BLM to deny approval of a Special Recreation Permit or Operating Authorization for subsequent years. If a

permit is terminated, permit applications will not be approved for any person connected to or affiliated with the operation under a terminated or suspended permit.

**XVIV. CERTIFICATION**

I have read these terms, conditions and stipulations and understand that I must abide by them while performing activities in connection with the permitted operations.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Compliance with Travel Designation Monitoring Plan Example

**Management Goal** - Motorized and mechanized vehicle users are expected to comply with BLM travel designations. During the spring, summer and fall all motorized vehicles and mountain bikes will stay on routes designated as open for those uses and vehicle type. During the winter, snowmobiles, snowcats, tracked ATVs and other motorized vehicles may travel over the snow only in areas where snow depth is equal to or greater than 2 feet.

**Monitoring Actions** – BLM staff and volunteers will be made aware of the vehicle and route designations in the SRMA. During regular duties of patrol, maintenance and visitor contact, BLM staff and volunteers will make observations and routinely monitor for evidence of non-compliance with designations. The BLM Ranger, CPW, and local sheriff office will be encouraged to periodically patrol the routes in the SRMA looking for conditions generally and violations of travel designations. Periodic patrols during winter would be carried out to detect inappropriate winter activities in closed areas as resources allow. Reports of inappropriate use from the staff/volunteers/public would be used to determine patterns of use or reported to the BLM Ranger for investigation if necessary.

**Indicators That Will Be Monitored** – Staff will look for vehicles parked or driving off the designated routes. They will also look for evidence such as tracks, disturbed soil or crushed vegetation that indicates patterns of vehicles traveling off designated routes.

**Locations and Times BLM Plans to Monitor** – The land immediately adjacent to all designated routes are the most likely places to detect inappropriate use. Particular attention should also be paid to the boundaries between public land and private land where unauthorized access routes can often develop. Popular camping areas are also likely locations for vehicles to push into areas that they should not be. The peak seasons (spring and fall) and the hunting season (October through November) will be a priority for patrols.

**Limits of Acceptable Change** – Isolated instances of vehicle violations rarely cause enough damage to be of significant concern though violations in wet or muddy conditions can be more noticeable. These isolated violations will be treated as an enforcement issue. Patterns of repeated violations occurring in the same area require corrective management action. Areas with repeated violations can start to create a noticeable route that other recreationists follow. With increased use on a particular unauthorized route, impacts to soils, vegetation and scenery are more noticeable. These would be considered unacceptable changes since these types of impacts are often slow to heal. BLM's goal would be to curtail repeated use before these noticeable impacts develop.

**Corrective Actions to Be Taken** – BLM will continue to be sure that information about vehicle designations and responsible use are included in visitor information materials. All observed violations of vehicle designations should be dealt with immediately. If vehicles are noted in areas they should not be in the staff will make an attempt to contact the owner or operator of the vehicle either directly or with a written warning to encourage compliance with the rules. If the violation is blatant or causes significant damage then staff will be encouraged to record pertinent information such as name, location, date, time, license number, and photographs so that law enforcement can follow up. Violations detected after the fact should be repaired or obliterated as much as possible to discourage repeated use. Areas where repeated violations are starting to occur should be physically blocked with rocks, logs, or other barriers. Signs reminding visitors to stay on the designated routes may also be appropriate. These areas would also benefit from increased patrol.

## **Appendix D**

### **Standard Paleontology Stipulations**

1. Areas that contain geologic formations that are PFYC 3, 4, and 5, for which new surface disturbance is proposed on or adjacent to bedrock (native sedimentary stone), including disturbance that may penetrate protective soil cover and disturb bedrock, may be subject to an inventory that shall be performed by a BLM permitted paleontologist and approved by the appropriate LSFO specialist. Surface disturbing activities in many areas including PFYC 4 and 5 may also require monitoring by a permitted paleontologist. The risks of damage or degradation by human-caused impacts could be lowered if the area of the Proposed Action is covered by extensive soil and vegetative cover.
2. Any paleontological resource discovered during ground disturbing activities shall be immediately reported to the BLM Authorized Officer. Construction operations shall be suspended in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the Authorized Officer and the discovery shall be protected from damage or looting. Activities may not be required to be suspended if activities can be adjusted to avoid further impact to a discovered locality or be continued elsewhere. The Authorized Officer would evaluate or would have evaluated, such discoveries as soon as possible, but not later than 10 working days after being notified. Appropriate measures to mitigate adverse effects to significant paleontological resources will be determined by the Authorized Officer after consulting with the operator. Within 10 days, the operator would be allowed to continue construction through the site, or would be given the choice of either (1) following the Authorized Officer's instructions for stabilizing the fossil resource in place and avoiding further disturbance to the fossil resource, or (2) following the Authorized Officer's instructions for mitigating impacts to the fossil resource prior to continuing construction through the Planning Area.. An evaluation of the discovery will be made by the Authorized Officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant paleontological or scientific values.

## Appendix E

### Weed Management Monitoring Plan

#### NOXIOUS WEED INVENTORY REPORT

Bureau of Land Management  
Little Snake Field Office

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#### INSTRUCTIONS

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Thank you for your weed report! We ask for the names, phone numbers and any additional contact information for our weed reporters simply in case we have any questions regarding the location and nature of the infestation. We appreciate your continued support and contribution to our weed inventory!

1. **TYPE OF INFESTATION:** Please include the common name (i.e. houndstongue, Dalmatian toadflax, salt cedar, etc.) or scientific name (i.e. *Cynoglossum officinale*, *Linaria dalmatica*, *Tamarisk spp.*, etc.) of the weed being reported. If a plant is unknown, but appears to be invasive, please provide a brief description in the section provided at the bottom of the report form (leaf shape and color, flower color, height/ size of individual plant, etc.), provide a sketch of the plant in the space provided below, and/or include a field sample.
2. **SIZE:** Any estimate in size or area of the infestation is extremely helpful. The estimate can be provided in any unit (i.e. radius length, acres, square feet, square meters, river miles, etc.)
3. **APPROXIMATE % WEED COVER:** This refers to the density and vigor of the infestation. For example, if the infested area being reported is composed of approximately ¼ native plants and ¾ leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*), this area would have an approximate weed cover of 75%.
4. **PHOTOGRAPHS:** If hardcopy photographs are readily available, please attach them. If photos were taken but hardcopies are not available, please let us know so we can contact you later, or you can send them to the mailing or email address provided at the bottom of the report form.
5. **LAND STATUS:** We appreciate information on infestations on all lands within or bordering the Little Snake Field Office boundaries. Please designate whether the reported infestation is on BLM, Forest Service, State, Private or Other land.
6. **WATERSHED/ LANDSCAPE NAME:** Please include the general location of the infestation in relation to landmarks and natural boundaries (i.e. Cedar Mountain, Horse Gulch, Great Divide, Axial Basin, etc.)
7. **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Please provide a legal description of the infested area, as it is found on any map. The more specific the legal description, the better.
8. **GPS COORDINATES:** If GPS coordinates are available, please provide the information. This can be in the form of a plotted map or simply by writing down the UTM's.
9. **VECTORS OF SPREAD:** Please indicate the presence of any mechanisms of weed dispersal that may increase the risk of spread.
10. **TREATMENT STATUS:** Please note if the area appears to be previously or currently treated. Some signs of prior or current chemical treatment include: wilting, curling and yellowing of plant parts and overall reduced health, vigor, and density.

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#### SKETCHES/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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# NOXIOUS WEED INVENTORY REPORT

Bureau of Land Management

Little Snake Field Office

RECORDED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (        )        -       

## DESCRIPTION

1. WEED TYPE \_\_\_\_\_

2. SIZE \_\_\_\_\_ UNITS \_\_\_\_\_ 3. APPROXIMATE % WEED COVER \_\_\_\_\_

4. ARE PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE?        YES        NO

## LOCATION

5. LAND STATUS:     BLM     PRIVATE     STATE     FOREST SERVICE     OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

6. WATERSHED/ LANDSCAPE NAME \_\_\_\_\_

7. LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TOWNSHIP \_\_\_\_\_ RANGE \_\_\_\_\_ SECTION(S) \_\_\_\_\_

8. ARE GPS COORDINATES AVAILABLE?    YES        NO

## TRANSPORT AND SPREAD

9. VECTORS OF SPREAD

Please circle any potential or present vectors of spread:

STREAM/ DRAINAGE

WILDLIFE

LIVESTOCK

ROAD

TRAIL

CAMPGROUND

OHV

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

10. DOES THIS SITE APPEAR TO HAVE PAST OR CURRENT TREATMENT?    YES        NO

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON COMPLICATING FACTORS, PLANT GROWTH STAGE, DISTURBANCE, SURFACE WATER, EVIDENCE OF TREATMENT, HINTS OR DIRECTIONS TO INFESTATION SITE, ETC.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please return all reports and attachments (pictures, maps, etc.) to:

Bureau of Land Management  
Little Snake Field Office  
455 Emerson St.  
Craig, CO 81625