



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Record of Decision and Approved Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan



BLM Mission

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

BLM/CO/PL-24-005
DOI-BLM-CO-G020-2022-0001-RMP-EIS

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



Upper Colorado River District
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In Reply Refer To:
1610 (LLCOG00000)

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is pleased to announce the completion of the Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO). Within the GJFO portion of the planning area, approximately 1,067,500 acres of BLM-administered surface lands and approximately 1,235,600 acres of BLM-administered federal fluid mineral estate are in Garfield, Mesa, Montrose, and Rio Blanco Counties in Colorado.

The BLM prepared this Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to comply with the settlement agreements in litigation of the Colorado River Valley Field Office RMP (Wilderness Workshop v. BLM, 16-cv-01822) and subsequent oil and gas leasing in both field offices (Wilderness Workshop v. BLM, 18-cv-00987) as well as to revisit the GJFO RMP, as described in the BLM's motion for voluntary remand in litigation associated with the GJFO RMP (Center for Biological Diversity v. BLM, 19-cv-02869).

The enclosed ROD and Approved RMP were prepared in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The ROD serves as the final decision for all land use planning decisions described in the enclosed Approved RMP.

The BLM provided the Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS for public protest on June 21, 2024 for a 30-day protest period and received three protest letters and one comment letter. The BLM Assistant Director resolved all protests. Responses to protest issues have been compiled and documented in a Protest Resolution Report. After careful review of the report by the BLM's Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, the Assistant Director concluded that the BLM Colorado State Director followed the applicable laws, regulations, and policies and considered all relevant resource information and public input. The Assistant Director addressed the protests and issued a Protest Resolution Report to protesting parties and posted the report on the BLM's website; no changes to the Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS were necessary.

The 60-day Governor's consistency review period for the Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS, which promotes consistency with State government plans or policies, concluded on August

20, 2024. The Governor's office did not identify any inconsistencies with State government plans or policies.

The ROD and Approved RMP are available online at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016085/510>. Printed copies of the ROD/Approved RMP are available for public inspection at the Grand Junction Field Office.

The BLM greatly appreciates all those who contributed to this planning effort, particularly members of the public, who provided important feedback; our cooperating agencies, which included federal, state, and local governments; and Native American Tribes. The extensive public interest and involvement in this planning process ensured that the Approved RMP will sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of BLM-administered lands.

Sincerely,

Greg Larson
District Manager

Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan for the Grand Junction Field Office

**Prepared by U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Upper Colorado River District
Grand Junction, Colorado**

Cooperating Agencies:

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Forest Service
Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Delta County
Eagle County
Garfield County
Mesa County
Pitkin County
Rio Blanco County
Town of Eagle
Town of Parachute

October 2024

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Chapter 1. Record of Decision

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared a supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) for the 2014 Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Final EIS and 2015 Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) RMP/Final EIS. The BLM approved the RMPs and Records of Decision (RODs) for the CRVFO and GJFO in 2015.

This supplemental EIS has been written in response to a United States (US) District Court, District of Colorado, opinion and order (1:16-cv-01822-LTB) regarding the CRVFO RMP ROD and a subsequent settlement agreement. The court granted a partial remand without vacating the decisions contained in the EIS and ROD so that the BLM can address two deficiencies identified by the court.

This supplemental EIS has also been written in response to a court-approved voluntary remand of the GJFO ROD (1-19-cv-02869-REB) to allow the BLM to address the same deficiencies identified in the CRVFO case.

This record of decision (ROD) approves the attached RMP to manage public lands administered by the BLM GJFO (see **Figure 1, Appendix A**).

1.2 DECISION

The decision is hereby made to approve the attached RMP as the land use plan for the GJFO planning area. The BLM prepared the Approved RMP under the regulations implementing the Federal Land Management Policy Act (FLPMA) (43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1600). The RMP includes broad land use plan decisions that provide the overall direction for managing resources and resource uses in the Decision Area (BLM-administered surface lands and federal mineral estate). The BLM prepared a supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) for this RMP in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Land use plan decisions identified in the Approved RMP are final and become effective when this ROD is signed. The decisions in this ROD and Approved RMP supersede portions of the previous BLM land use plan and land use plan amendments that guided management within the GJFO boundaries, except for the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area and the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area which are operating under their own approved land use plans. The portions of the 2015 GJFO ROD not changed by the attached approved RMP remain in effect.

1.3 ALTERNATIVES

The BLM analyzed three new alternatives in this supplemental EIS; the BLM developed these alternatives in consultation with cooperating agencies and comments received from the public during the scoping period and review of the draft supplemental EIS. The alternatives meet the purpose of and need for the supplemental EIS. The alternatives analyze areas open and closed to fluid mineral leasing, and take into consideration new information, including additional air quality analysis, cultural and Tribal considerations, and lands with wilderness characteristics surveys conducted after 2015. The alternatives did not reanalyze other potential decisions analyzed in the 2014 and 2015 Proposed RMPs/Final EISs.

Because this is a supplement to the 2014 CRVFO and 2015 GJFO Proposed RMPs/Final EISs, the lands allocated as open or closed to fluid mineral leasing analyzed in the Proposed RMPs/Final EISs (Alternatives A, B, C, and D), plus the three new alternatives developed to respond to the purpose and

need (Alternatives E, F, and G) presented in this supplemental EIS, constitute the range of alternatives considered.

Alternative E would close the no-known, low, and medium oil and gas development potential areas to future fluid mineral leasing. Alternative E would also close the areas analyzed as closed to fluid mineral leasing under Alternative C of the 2014 CRVFO and 2015 GJFO Final EISs but would provide an exception for geothermal leasing. Alternative E was identified as the BLM's Preferred Alternative in the draft supplemental EIS.

Alternative F would close the no-known, low, and medium oil and gas development potential areas to future fluid mineral leasing. Alternative F would also close the areas identified by the public for closure during scoping but would provide an exception for geothermal leasing. Under Alternative F, closure to fluid mineral leasing would include areas closed under Alternative E and special designations, important bird areas, native trout crucial habitat, eligible wild and scenic river segments, areas of tribal significance, Colorado Natural Heritage Program potential conservation areas, managed wildlife emphasis areas, and an expanded area of critical environmental concern. Alternative F would also designate a wilderness study area. Alternative F would close the largest amount of area to future oil and gas leasing.

The proposed RMP (Alternative G) in the final supplemental EIS draws from a combination of components from the various alternatives. Alternative G would close the no-known and low potential areas to future fluid mineral leasing, except for the helium potential area (GJFO), which would remain open to leasing. Medium potential areas would be closed where they are surrounded by low potential areas within the CRVFO. Medium potential areas that are either adjacent to (CRVFO) or surrounded by (GJFO) high potential areas would remain open for oil and gas leasing. The high potential areas would remain open for fluid mineral leasing. Within the high potential and open medium potential areas, there would be areas closed to fluid mineral leasing due to specific resource concerns. Geothermal resources would remain open to leasing, except for those within areas closed to oil and gas leasing due to specific resource concerns, and fluid mineral stipulations in the approved RMPs would apply. Alternative G would retain the areas closed to fluid mineral leasing in the 2015 CRVFO and GJFO RMPs and would retain the fluid mineral stipulations. Alternative G would also close five existing designated ACECs to fluid mineral leasing and expand 2 existing ACECs. Alternative G would manage 5 new areas to protect their wilderness characteristics within the GJFO.

1.3.1 Environmentally Preferable Alternative

When considering the human social and economic environment and natural environment, the BLM has determined that Alternative F is the environmentally preferable alternative. The DOI defines the environmentally preferable alternative as the one that best promotes the national environmental policy in Section 101 of NEPA.

Section 101 of NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4331, identifies six broad policy goals for all federal plans, functions, programs, and resources, to allow the nation to:

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations
- Ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings

- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences
- Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of the national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and a variety of individual choice
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources

1.3.2 Clarifications and Modifications since the Proposed RMP

In section 2.2.6 of the Proposed RMP and Final Supplemental EIS, Alternative G proposed to retain the existing management goal from the 2015 Grand Junction RMP, however, the goal for the GJFO was incorrectly stated. The correct goal for the GJFO is "Provide opportunities for leasing, exploration, and development of fluid minerals using balanced multiple-use management to meet local and national energy needs."

While updating the management direction in Appendix B, the following changes were identified that need to be made as part of ongoing plan maintenance (43 CFR 1610.5-4):

- MIN-MLP-AU-08: Replace "Designate" with "Manage" to clarify that these areas are not designations.
- NSO-12 ACECs: Remove references to Colorado Riparian, Glade Park-Pinyon Mesa, Plateau Creek, and Prairie Canyon from the description of the purpose of the stipulation since these areas are not included in this stipulation.
- Correct references to the A4-2 map in the 2015 RMP Appendix A to the A4-5 map which includes ACECs in the legend: MIN-MLP-AU-06, MIN-MLP-AU-07, MIN-MLP-AU-08, MIN-MLP-AU-13.

1.4 MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS AND DECISION RATIONALE

The Approved RMP provides for multiple use and sustained yield by prioritizing various uses of the public lands in different areas of the field offices. This decision seeks to ensure that oil and gas leasing on public lands occurs in a way that is consistent and deliberate, focuses development where there is the most potential for oil and gas recovery, and allows for management of public lands for other uses. In doing so, the BLM considered what lands make the most sense to lease in terms of expected yields of oil and gas, prospects of earning a fair return for U.S. taxpayers, and conflicts with other uses. In general, this decision prioritizes oil and gas development in high potential areas and closes areas of low oil and gas potential.

In determining which areas to close to oil and gas leasing based on oil and gas potential, the BLM considered the proximity to current oil and gas development and gave preference to lands in which it is assumed a prudent operator would seek to expand existing operations. The BLM also considered the potential for oil and gas development and gave preference to lands with high potential for oil and gas development. As such, areas with high oil and gas potential remain open for leasing under this decision as well as areas of medium potential (which are surrounded by high potential). Specific areas within areas of high or medium potential may be closed due to resource concerns. Colorado has some of the strictest oil

and gas regulations in the US and world. If a percentage of global oil and gas demand is going to be met regardless of where the supply is produced, it is reasonable to conclude that the overall global GHG emissions (mainly those associated with upstream and midstream emissions) would be lower by allowing the oil and gas development and production to occur in states and countries with additional regulations, such as Colorado.

1.5 APPLICATION OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN TO EXISTING PROJECTS

Numerous rights and privileges have been established on BLM-administered public lands under law, regulation, or planning decisions. The decisions included in this ROD and Approved RMP supersede portions of the 2015 Grand Junction RMP and ROD, and its subsequent amendments. All management direction and actions developed as part of the BLM planning process are subject to valid existing rights. Valid existing rights include all valid leases, permits, ROWs, or other land use rights or authorizations in effect on the date of approval of this RMP. Any new activity-level or project-specific authorization or management action must conform with the Approved RMP (i.e., be specifically provided for in the RMP or consistent with the terms, conditions, and decisions in the Approved RMP; 43 CFR 1601.0-5(b)). A land use plan amendment may be necessary to consider monitoring and evaluation findings; substantive new data; new or revised policy; changes in circumstances; or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in the terms, conditions, and decisions of the Approved RMP. Projects that require a decision to extend an existing authorization or permit may require modification to conform to the RMP before approval. Projects for which site-specific decisions have not yet been approved, but for which preparation of NEPA documents began before the ROD's effective date, may also require modification to conform to the RMP.

1.6 MITIGATION

This ROD/RMP does not include new mitigation measures. As described in the 2015 GJFO ROD/RMP, the BLM applies a variety of management methods and tools, including the identification of allowable uses, temporal, spatial, and/or methodological restrictions on uses, where specific uses would be prohibited, and specific actions that are needed to achieve the goals and objectives. Restrictions on land uses include seasonal closures, stipulations on surface disturbances, and the application of best management practices (BMPs). Appendix B of the 2015 ROD/ARMP has a description of the stipulations applicable to fluid mineral development and other surface disturbing activities. Appendix H of the 2015 ROD/ARMP provides a list of BMPs that are applicable to land use activities authorized by the GJFO.

1.7 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1.7.1 Scoping

Public scoping for this supplemental EIS began on June 23, 2022, with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* (*Federal Register* Volume 87, No. 120, June 23, 2022). The NOI informed the public of the BLM's intent to prepare a supplemental EIS to the 2014 CRVFO Final EIS and the 2015 GJFO Final EIS in response to the court order and settlement agreement for the CRVFO and to the partial remand of the GJFO ROD. The BLM posted the NOI on the project's ePlanning website. The BLM also solicited comments from known interested parties via US mail. Scoping ended on July 25, 2022.

The BLM held virtual public scoping meetings on July 12 and 13, 2022. The virtual meetings included a PowerPoint presentation describing the purpose of the supplemental EIS, the approach, a preliminary new alternative, and opportunities for public involvement. Materials presented and additional information are on the project's ePlanning website.

The BLM received 44 unique written submissions with 495 substantive comments. The BLM also received 760 form letters, and two form letters with additional text. The largest number of comments were related to alternatives, fluid minerals, climate change, lands with wilderness characteristics, air quality, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and special designations. Detailed information can be found in the scoping report on the project's ePlanning website.

1.7.2 Public Comment on the Draft Supplemental EIS

Public participation occurred throughout the development of the supplemental EIS. One substantial part of the process was providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft supplemental EIS during the comment period. In the final supplemental EIS, the BLM responded to all substantive comments received during the 90-day public comment period in Appendix F.

The BLM published the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* (*Federal Register* Volume 88, No. 149, August 4, 2023), announcing availability of the Draft Resource Management Plan Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Colorado River Valley Field Office and Grand Junction Field Office. The public comment period lasted through November 1, 2023.

The BLM held three public meetings:

- September 12, 2023 from 6:00 pm – 7:45 pm in Glenwood Springs, CO (38 attendees)
- September 13, 2023 from 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm as a virtual meeting (34 attendees)
- September 13, 2023 from 6:00 pm – 7:45 pm in Grand Junction, CO (30 attendees)

All meetings included a PowerPoint presentation describing the purpose of the supplemental EIS, the approach, the new alternatives being analyzed, opportunities for the public to ask questions of BLM staff, and guidance on how to submit comments. Spanish interpretation and informational materials were available at all meetings. In-person meetings included a self-paced open-house format for the public to view information on the draft SEIS and interact with BLM subject matter experts, obtain forms for submitting written comments, and submit comments electronically. The virtual meeting was recorded and closed-captioned. Materials presented are on the project ePlanning website.

The BLM received a total of 373 total letter submissions during the public comment period on the Supplemental EIS, including seven letters which contained non-unique, preformulated language that appeared elsewhere in letter submissions. There were 366 unique submissions, from which the BLM derived 407 unique substantive comments. During the comment period, letter submissions were received via mail or by hand, and online comments were submitted through the ePlanning website. All commentary received from the public was entered into the BLM comment analysis and response application (CARA) database.

Most submissions were focused on suggestions for specific alternatives or alternative elements, statements pertaining to the reasonably foreseeable development (RFD) scenario, and detailed input pertaining to various resource topics analyzed in the draft SEIS such as air quality and climate, social and economic conditions, and special designations.

1.7.3 Review and Protest of the Final Supplemental EIS and Proposed RMP

The BLM Colorado State Office released the CRVFO and GJFO Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS on June 21, 2024. The BLM received four unique protest letter submissions during the subsequent 30-day protest period.

The planning regulations at 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1610.5-2 outline the requirements for filing a valid protest. The BLM evaluated all protest letters to determine which protest letters were complete and timely, and which persons have standing to protest. All four letters were complete, timely, and were from parties who had standing to protest. One letter was not intended to be a protest letter, therefore is not considered further in this report. Three of the protest letters contained valid protest issues. The BLM documents the response to the valid protest issues in the protest resolution report.

After careful review of the report by the BLM's Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, the Assistant Director concluded that the BLM Colorado State Director followed the applicable laws, regulations, and policies and considered all relevant resource information and public input. The Assistant Director addressed the protests and issued a Protest Resolution Report to protesting parties and posted the report on the BLM's website; no changes to the CRVFO and GJFO Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS were necessary. Consistent with the BLM Delegation of Authority Manual (MS-1203 Delegation of Authority), resolution of protests is delegated to the BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning whose decision on the protest is the final decision of the U.S. Department of the Interior (43 CFR 1610.5-2(b)).

While inventory work has been completed along segments of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail within the Grand Junction Field Office, future inventory in accordance with BLM Manual 6280-1 is required. The BLM's Colorado State Office will seek additional funding to support this additional inventory work. The inventory work is a necessary precursor to developing a Comprehensive Management Plan in coordination with the National Park Service as the co-administrator. In the interim, additional site specific NEPA analysis would be conducted prior to authorizing any implementation actions with may impact the Old Spanish National Historic Trail and the BLM has the authority to require mitigation to avoid or minimize impacts during that site-specific NEPA evaluation.

1.7.4 Governor's Consistency Review

The BLM provided the Proposed RMP/Final EIS to the Governor of Colorado for a 60-day Governor's consistency review, which ended on August 20, 2024. No inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies, or programs were identified during the Governor's consistency review of the proposed RMP/final EIS. No changes to the proposed RMP/final supplemental EIS were necessary as a result of the Governor's consistency review.

1.8 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

1.8.1 Cooperating Agencies

The BLM is the lead agency for the supplemental EIS. On February 24, 2022, the BLM wrote to 53 local governments, state agencies, and federal agencies inviting them to participate as cooperating agencies for the supplemental EIS. Twelve entities agreed to participate as cooperating agencies.

On February 28, the BLM wrote to the three tribal governments inviting them to participate as cooperating agencies for the supplemental EIS. No tribal governments formally agreed to participate as a cooperating agency.

The BLM engaged with twelve cooperating agencies while producing this supplemental EIS. Cooperating agencies include six counties (Garfield, Mesa, Delta, Eagle, Rio Blanco, and Pitkin), two communities (Town of Eagle and Town of Parachute), two state agencies (Colorado Department of Natural Resources [including Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission] and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment), and two federal agencies (US Bureau of Reclamation and US Forest Service).

The BLM held cooperating agency meetings throughout the process and continued to meet with cooperating agencies throughout preparation of the final supplemental EIS.

1.8.2 Tribal Consultation

Consultation with Native American tribes is part of the NEPA process and is a requirement of FLPMA. The BLM invited the tribes to be cooperating agencies on February 24, 2022 and asked for comments during the scoping period. On April 12, 2022, the BLM sent letters to the three Ute tribes -- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Southern Ute Tribe, and Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah and Ouray Reservation) -- initiating government-to-government consultation. Face-to-face consultation was conducted on April 19, 2022 and October 12, 2022, April 4, 2023, August 31, 2023, and April 8, 2024.

The Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Ute Indian Tribe requested additional information during the consultation. The BLM responded to the request and incorporated comments and information received from the tribes into the supplemental EIS. Formal consultation on the draft supplemental EIS was sent to the three Ute tribes on August 7, 2023. Comments from the tribes have been incorporated in the plan throughout the consultation process. Formal consultation on the Final Proposed EIS was sent to the three Ute tribes on April 2, 2024. The BLM also will provide copies of the ROD/approved RMP.

1.8.3 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Consultation

The BLM submitted a Biological Assessment (BA) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Western Colorado Ecological Services Field Office in Grand Junction, Colorado on April 8, 2024. The BA analyzed effects on the following threatened and endangered species:

- Parachute penstemon and its Critical Habitat
- DeBeque phacelia and its Critical Habitat
- Colorado hookless cactus
- Ute ladies'-tresses
- Bonytail and its Critical Habitat
- Humpback chub and its Critical Habitat
- Razorback sucker and its Critical Habitat
- Colorado pikeminnow and its Critical Habitat
- Mexican spotted owl
- Yellow-billed cuckoo (western distinct population segment) and its Critical Habitat

- Gunnison sage-grouse and its Critical Habitat
- Canada lynx
- Gray Wolf
- Silverspot butterfly

In the BA, the BLM made “May Affect but Not Likely to Adversely Affect” determinations for all species listed above except for the gray wolf which had an effect determination of “Is Not Likely to Jeopardize”.

On April 15, 2024 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the BLM’s determinations and noted that the joint responsibilities of the two agencies under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act had been satisfied.

1.8.4 State Historic Preservation Office Consultation

The BLM initiated Section 106 consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) per the Colorado Protocol, Section IV, which allows SHPO involvement in BLM planning processes. The BLM provided the SHPO the opportunity to participate at the development stage of planning for the supplemental EIS via letter on October 31, 2023. The BLM did not receive a reply from the SHPO on the draft supplemental EIS. A subsequent informational letter was sent March 20, 2024 with the development of the final supplemental EIS.

1.9 APPROVAL

The decision is hereby made to approve the attached Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan. This Record of Decision serves as the final decision for the resource management plan and becomes effective on the date it is signed by the BLM State Director.

The BLM has considered all of the alternatives, information, analysis and objections submitted by the State, Tribal and local governments and public commenters for consideration in development of the supplemental EIS.

FIELD MANAGER RECOMMENDATION

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated impacts, and public and agency input, I recommend the adoption and implementation of the Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan.

Stacey B. Colón
Field Manager, Grand Junction Field Office

10/16/2024
Date

DISTRICT MANAGER CONCURRENCE

I concur with the adoption and implementation of the Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan.

Greg Larson
District Manager, BLM Upper Colorado River District

10/16/2024
Date

STATE DIRECTOR APPROVAL

In consideration of the foregoing, I approve the Grand Junction Field Office Resource Management Plan.

Doug Vilsack
BLM Colorado State Director

10/16/2024
Date

Chapter 2. Approved Resource Management Plan

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

The United States (U.S.) Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Upper Colorado River District prepared this Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) Resource Management Plan (RMP) to augment, and to replace a portion of, the 2015 approved GJFO RMP. This Approved RMP does not modify other resource allocations or management decisions in the 2015 approved RMP. The intent is to provide comprehensive current and future management of BLM administered lands in the GJFO. The BLM prepared the RMP in compliance with its planning regulations (43 CFR 1600) under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). This document also meets the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), the BLM's NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46), and requirements of the BLM's NEPA Handbook, 1790-1 (BLM 2008c).

2.1.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this supplemental EIS is to broaden the range of alternatives in the 2015 Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) and GJFO Approved RMPs with respect to the lands that are allocated as open or closed for oil and gas leasing. The purpose is also to provide additional air quality analysis for the fluid mineral management alternatives considered in the 2014 CRVFO Final EIS, the 2015 GJFO Final EIS, and in this supplemental EIS.

The need for this supplemental EIS is to comply with the settlement agreements in litigation of the CRVFO RMP (*Wilderness Workshop v. BLM*, 16-cv-01822) and subsequent oil and gas leasing in both field offices (*Wilderness Workshop v. BLM*, 18-cv-00987). The need is also to revisit the GJFO RMP as described in the BLM's motion for voluntary remand in litigation associated with the GJFO RMP (*Center for Biological Diversity v. BLM*, 19-cv-02869). The need is also to consider new information and to consider areas with tribal significance per the Tribal Consultations for Oil and Gas Leasing Handbook, Section 1.3.

2.1.2 Planning and Decision Area

The planning area is identical to the combined planning areas for the CRVFO RMP/EIS and the GJFO RMP/EIS. Within the GJFO portion of the planning area, approximately 1,067,500 acres of BLM-administered surface lands and approximately 1,235,600 acres of BLM-administered federal fluid mineral estate are in Garfield, Mesa, Montrose, and Rio Blanco Counties in Colorado.

The decision area is BLM-administered surface lands (BLM-administered lands) and the federal fluid mineral estate below BLM-administered lands, split-estate lands, and other federal lands (but not National Forest System lands). The acres are not identical to overall acres presented in the RMPs because of improved geographic information system (GIS) mapping, land exchanges, boundary adjustments, and updated public lands surveys.

2.1.3 Related Plans

Per FLPMA, the BLM coordinates planning efforts with land use planning and management programs of Native American tribes, other federal agencies, and agencies of state and local governments. While States are authorized to furnish advice regarding plans for the public lands, the Secretary of the Interior is directed to develop land use plans consistent with state and local plans to the maximum extent found consistent with federal law and the purposes of FLPMA.

The BLM has considered plans of other federal, state, and local agencies that are relevant in the development of this supplemental EIS.

The BLM is completing three separate RMP amendments which consider decisions related to oil and gas leasing and development for: 1) big game corridors and other important habitat; 2) Gunnison sage-grouse; and 3) greater sage-grouse. This supplemental EIS does not analyze fluid mineral leasing decisions for the specific purpose of the three RMP amendments (i.e., specific to wildlife habitat). Since this supplemental EIS was approved prior to the other RMP amendments, those RMP amendments will take precedence and amend the CRVFO and GJFO RMPs as appropriate. Management direction specific to big game, greater sage-grouse, or Gunnison sage-grouse, including any that may be less or more restrictive, could be amended through those planning processes.

2.2 MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

Goal: Provide opportunities for leasing, exploration, and development of fluid minerals using balanced multiple-use management to meet local and national energy needs.

Objective: Facilitate orderly, economic, and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources (including coalbed natural gas and geothermal), using the best available technology.

Close 543,300 acres in the GJFO to future fluid mineral leasing and leave 692,300 acres in the GJFO open to future fluid mineral leasing.

Close the no-known and low potential areas to future fluid mineral leasing, except the helium potential area will remain open to leasing to facilitate recovery of helium. Helium is a nonrenewable resource found in recoverable quantities in only a few locations around the world, many of which are being depleted. Accordingly, the US has important economic and national security interests in ensuring a reliable supply of helium. The BLM anticipates development in the helium potential area will be focused on helium production. If development in this area is not productive of helium, the BLM may pause future leasing within this area to conduct additional NEPA analysis to evaluate changed circumstances and may consider initiating an RMP amendment to analyze closing this area to future fluid mineral leasing.

Medium potential areas that are surrounded by high potential areas remain open for oil and gas leasing. The high-potential areas remain open for fluid mineral leasing. Within the high potential and open medium potential areas, there are areas closed to fluid mineral leasing due to specific resource concerns.

Geothermal resources are open to leasing, except within areas closed to oil and gas leasing due to specific resource concerns (i.e., geothermal leasing would not be closed based on oil and gas development potential). Fluid mineral stipulations in the approved RMPs apply.

Retain the areas closed to fluid mineral leasing in the 2015 GJFO RMP ROD, including:

- Badger Wash, Dolores River Riparian, Juanita Arch, Rough Canyon, Sinbad Valley, The Palisade, and Unaweep Seep ACECs
- All WSAs
- Bangs, Maverick, Unaweep lands with wilderness characteristics units
- Bangs, Dolores River, Palisade Rim SRMA, and the Gunnison River Bluffs ERMA

- Gunnison sage-grouse occupied habitat
- Greater sage-grouse habitat within 1 mile of an active lek
- Grand Junction and Palisade municipal watersheds
- BOR withdrawals (where the surface estate is managed by the BLM or BOR).

Close the following existing designated ACECs to fluid mineral leasing due to the identified relevant and important values in these areas:

- Atwell Gulch, Indian Creek, and Pyramid Rock ACECs.

Designate a new expansion area of the Pyramid Rock ACEC and close this area to fluid mineral leasing due to the identified relevant and important values in this area.

The 14,100-acre expansion to the Pyramid Rock ACEC will be managed to preserve habitat for rare plant species and to protect paleontological and cultural resources. The expansion area will be identified as zone 2. Management within zone 2 includes:

- Limit travel to designated routes
- Issue no special recreation permits for competitive events
- Manage as a right-of-way (ROW) exclusion area (except allow for ROWs to existing oil and gas leases issued under the 1987 RMP without no surface occupancy [NSO] stipulations, including valid and existing rights for access to private property)
- Petition the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mineral entry
- Only allow vegetation treatments and wildlife habitat improvements that benefit and do not damage the identified relevant and important values for the ACEC
- Manage as closed to fluid mineral leasing
- Allowable use: STIPULATION NSO-12: ACECs
- Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities (refer to 2015 Proposed RMP Appendix B); standard exceptions apply (NSO stipulations in the GJFO apply to all activities)
- Manage as visual resource management (VRM) Class II (3,100 acres) and Class IV (11,000 acres) (identical to the current approved RMP)

Manage the existing designated Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC in the GJFO with GJ-NSO-12 instead of GJ-CSU-39.

Manage the municipal watersheds or source water protection areas for Grand Junction, Palisade, Jerry Creek, Mesa/Powderhorn, and Collbran under GJFO-NSO-6. The Grand Junction and Palisade municipal watersheds remain closed to leasing but manage other activities under NSO-6 (rather than NSO-5) in these areas. Retain the existing GJFO-CSU-4 lease stipulation for Jerry Creek, Mesa/Powderhorn, and Collbran.

Continue to manage the following lands with wilderness characteristics units for the protection of their wilderness characteristics: Bangs Canyon, Maverick, and Unaweep. Manage the following units for protection of their wilderness characteristics: Cone Mountain, Granite Creek, Kings Canyon, Lumsden Canyon, and West Creek. Management of these units will follow direction in the 2015 GJFO RMP,

including closed to fluid mineral leasing (WIL-AU-03), NSO stipulation (WIL-MA-04), ROW exclusion, and various other management as described in WIL-MA-04, WIL-MA-05, and WIL-MA-06. Update management direction in WIL-MA-04 as follows:

- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.
- Within the Cone Mountain, Lumsden Canyon, and Maverick lands with wilderness characteristics: Manage for reclamation of abandoned mine sites to protect public health and safety.
- Within the Bangs Canyon, Cone Mountain, Kings Canyon, Lumsden Canyon, and West Creek lands with wilderness characteristics: Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Within the Granite Creek, Maverick, and Unaweep lands with wilderness characteristics: Only issue non-competitive SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Within the Bangs Canyon, Granite Creek, Unaweep, and West Creek lands with wilderness characteristics: Close to wood product sales and/or harvest, including Christmas tree cutting.

Stipulations apply, where appropriate, to all surface-disturbing activities (and occupancy) associated with land use authorizations, permits, and leases issued on BLM lands.

Existing management as described in the 2015 GJFO Approved RMP, including applicable amendments, will remain in effect, except for the changes described above and in Appendix B.

2.3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The BLM will continue to work with existing partners, to cultivate new partnerships, and to seek the views of the public. The public will have the opportunity to participate in the NEPA process as individual actions are reviewed and implemented. It will use such techniques as news releases and website postings to ask for participation and to inform the public of new and ongoing management actions and site-specific planning. The public may engage through the GJFO. The BLM will continue to coordinate, both formally and informally, with the numerous federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, local agencies, and officials interested and involved in the management of public lands in the GJFO.

2.4 MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The BLM will develop an implementation plan to identify actions to achieve the desired outcomes of the Approved RMP. The implementation plan will assist BLM managers and staff to prepare budget requests and to schedule work priorities. The BLM will prepare supplementary rules to provide full authority to BLM law enforcement to enforce management decisions made in the Approved RMP pursuant to the BLM's authority under 43 CFR 8365.1-6. The BLM will issue decisions about proposed actions to implement the RMP. During implementation of the RMP, the BLM will prepare additional documentation to comply with NEPA before approving specific actions. This can vary from a simple statement of conformance with the RMP and adequacy of existing NEPA analysis to more complex environmental assessments or EISs that analyze several alternatives.

2.5 PLAN EVALUATION, AMENDMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND MONITORING

The BLM will monitor and periodically evaluate implementation of the RMP based on guidance in the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1 (BLM 2005b), as amended.

2.5.1 Plan Evaluation

In accordance with the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1; BLM 2005b), the BLM will periodically evaluate the approved RMP. Evaluation is the process of reviewing the land use plan and the periodic plan monitoring reports to determine whether the land use plan decisions are still appropriate, how effectively the plan is being implemented, and whether the NEPA analysis needs to be updated to support future decision making. Land use plan evaluations determine whether:

- The decisions remain relevant to current issues;
- Decisions are effective in achieving or making progress toward achieving the desired outcomes specified in the RMP;
- Any decisions need revision, amendment, or deletion; or
- Any new decisions are needed.

In making these determinations, the BLM's evaluation will consider whether mitigation measures such as those described in the Approved RMP are effective in mitigating impacts, whether there are significant changes in the related plans of other entities, or whether there is significant new information. In addition to periodic evaluations, special evaluations may be required to review unexpected management actions or significant changes in the related plans of Native American tribes, other federal agencies, and state and local governments, or to evaluate legislation or litigation that has the potential to trigger an amendment or revision process for the RMP. Evaluations may identify resource needs, as well as the means for correcting deficiencies and addressing issues through plan maintenance, amendments, or revisions. Evaluations should also identify where new and emerging issues and other values have surfaced.

2.5.2 Plan Amendment

RMP decisions are modified through either a plan amendment or another RMP revision. The process for performing plan amendments is largely the same as the land use planning process used in developing and revising RMPs. The primary difference is that circumstances may allow for completing a plan amendment through the environmental assessment process, rather than through an EIS. Plan amendments (43 CFR 1610.5-5) change one or more of the terms, conditions, or decisions of an approved land use plan. Plan amendments are most often prompted by the need to consider a proposal or action that does not conform to the plan; implement new or revised policy that changes land use plan decisions; respond to new, intensified, or changed uses on BLM-administered lands; and consider significant new information from resource assessments, monitoring, or scientific studies that may change land use plan decisions.

2.5.3 Plan Maintenance

BLM regulations in 43 CFR 1610.5-4 stipulate that RMP decisions and supporting actions can be maintained to reflect minor data changes. Maintenance is limited to further refining, documenting, or clarifying a previously approved decision incorporated in the RMP.

Maintenance must not expand the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved RMP. Some examples of maintenance actions are:

- Correcting minor data, typographical, mapping, or tabular data errors, such as updating acreage figures shown throughout the RMP. Acreages are based on geographic information system (GIS) data, which are subject to constant refinement.
- Refining baseline information as a result of new inventory data (e.g., refining the known habitat of special status species, or adjusting the boundary of a fire management unit based on updated fire regime condition class inventory, fire occurrence, monitoring data, and/or demographic changes)

Plan maintenance will be documented in supporting records. Plan maintenance does not require formal public involvement, interagency coordination, or the NEPA analysis required for making new land use plan decisions.

2.5.4 Plan Monitoring

Monitoring is the process of tracking and documenting the implementation (or the progress of implementation) of land use plan decisions. Land use plan decision monitoring is a continuous process occurring throughout the life of the RMP, with the aim of maintaining a dynamic RMP. Monitoring data are collected, examined, and used to draw conclusions about: (1) whether planned actions have been implemented in the manner prescribed by the RMP (implementation monitoring) (2) whether RMP allowable use and management action decisions and the resultant implementation actions are effective in achieving program-specific objectives or desired outcomes (effectiveness monitoring), and (3) calculating the cost of delivering a service or product (efficiency monitoring by program elements). Implementation monitoring tracks the completion of land use plan decisions, whereas effectiveness monitoring helps determine whether completion of land use plan decisions achieves anticipated desired outcomes. If implementation of land use plans does not achieve anticipated desired outcomes, adaptive management may be necessary. The BLM uses conclusions drawn from monitoring to make recommendations on whether to continue current management or to determine what changes need to be made to implementation practices to better achieve RMP goals. Indicators, methods, locations, units of measures, frequency, and action triggers can be established by national policy guidance, in RMPs, or by technical specialists in order to address specific issues. Based on staffing and funding levels, monitoring is annually prioritized consistent with the goals and objectives of the RMP. The BLM may work in cooperation with local, state, and other federal agencies, or it may use data collected by other agencies and sources when appropriate and available.

Appendix A

Maps

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Appendix A. Maps

Figure 1. Areas Open and Closed to Oil and Gas Leasing in GJFO

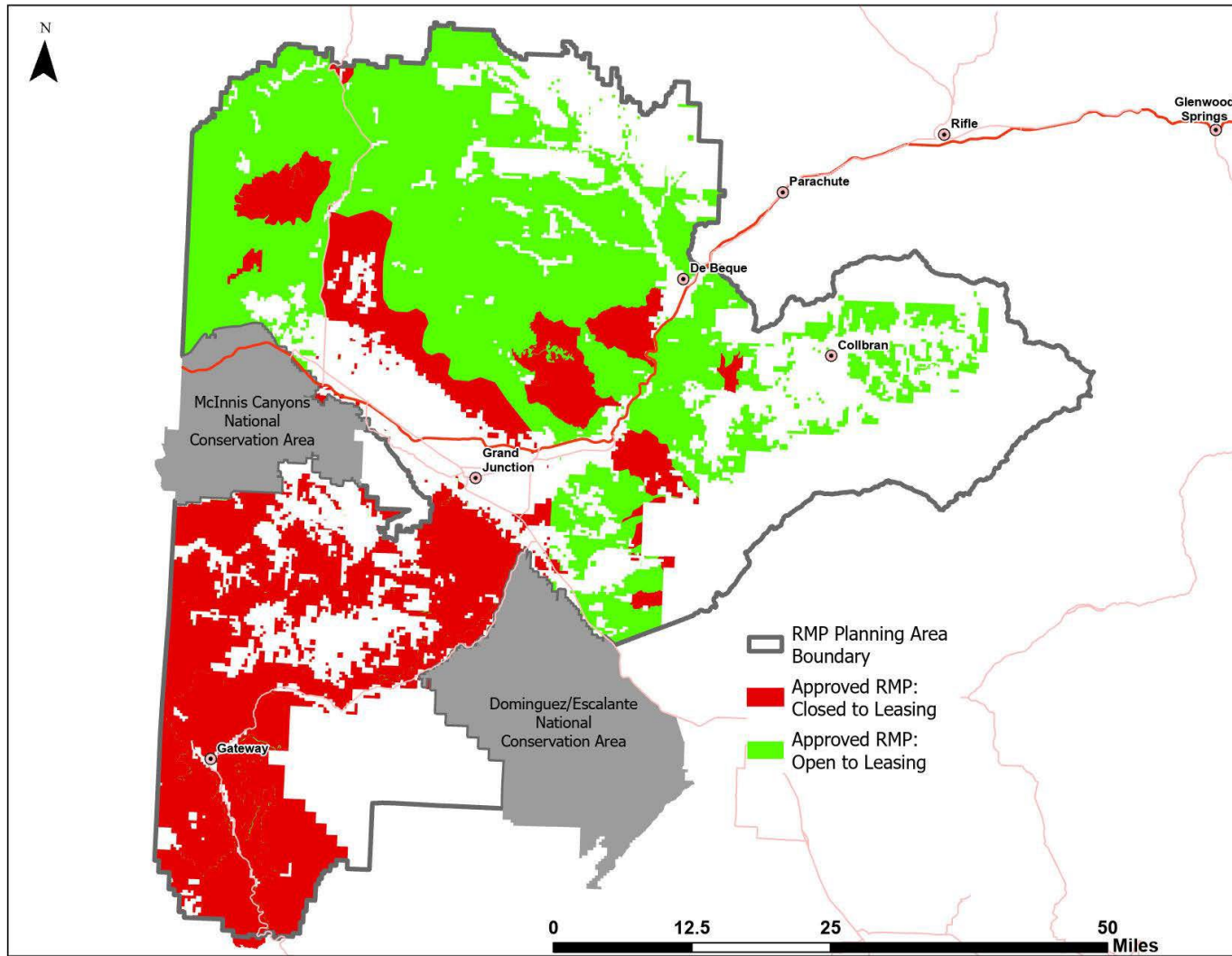


Figure 2. Existing Leases and Areas Open and Closed to Oil and Gas Leasing in GJFO

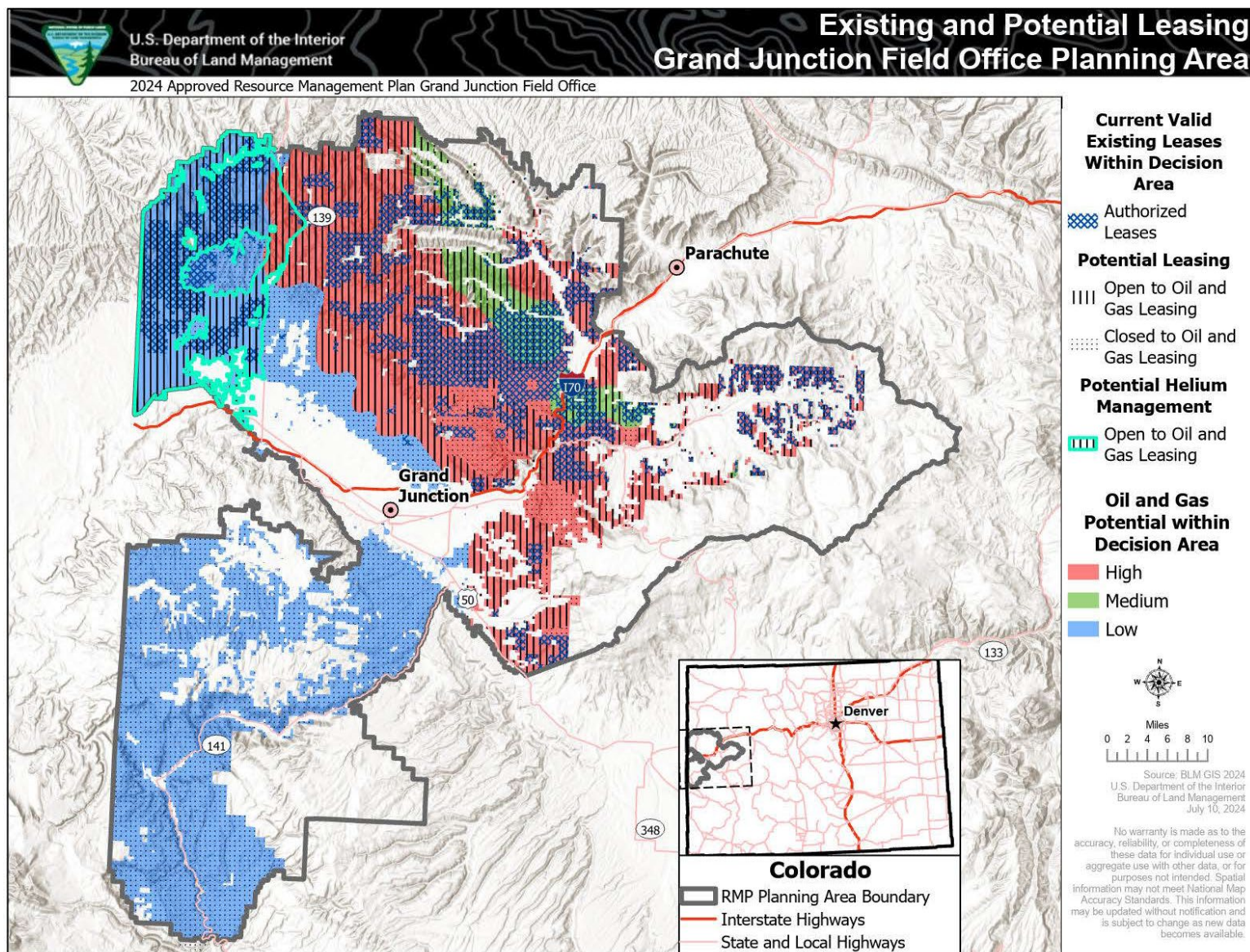


Figure 3. Areas Open for Leasing – Helium Potential Area

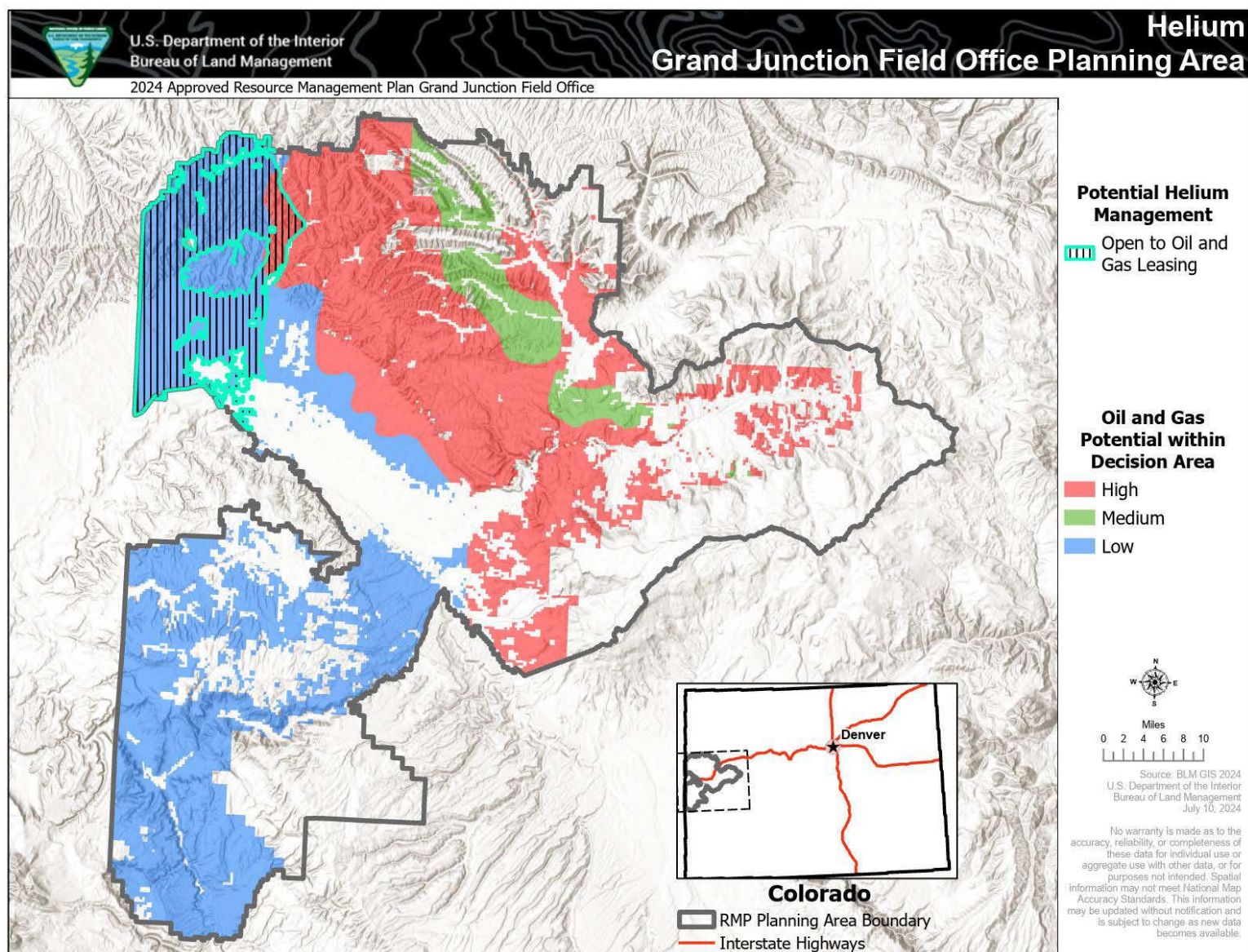


Figure 4. Areas Open and Closed to Geothermal Leasing

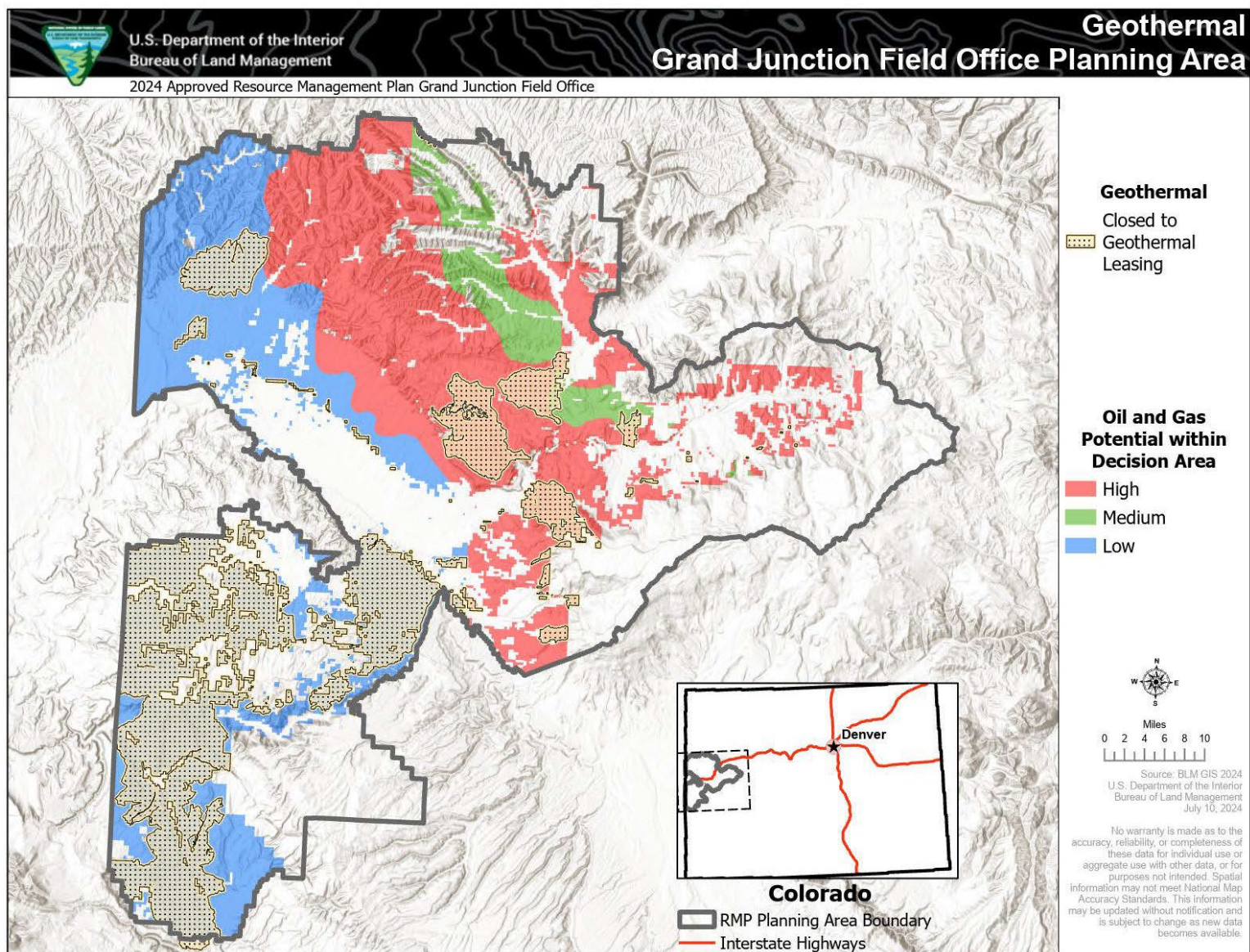


Figure 5. Areas Closed to Leasing – WSAs and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

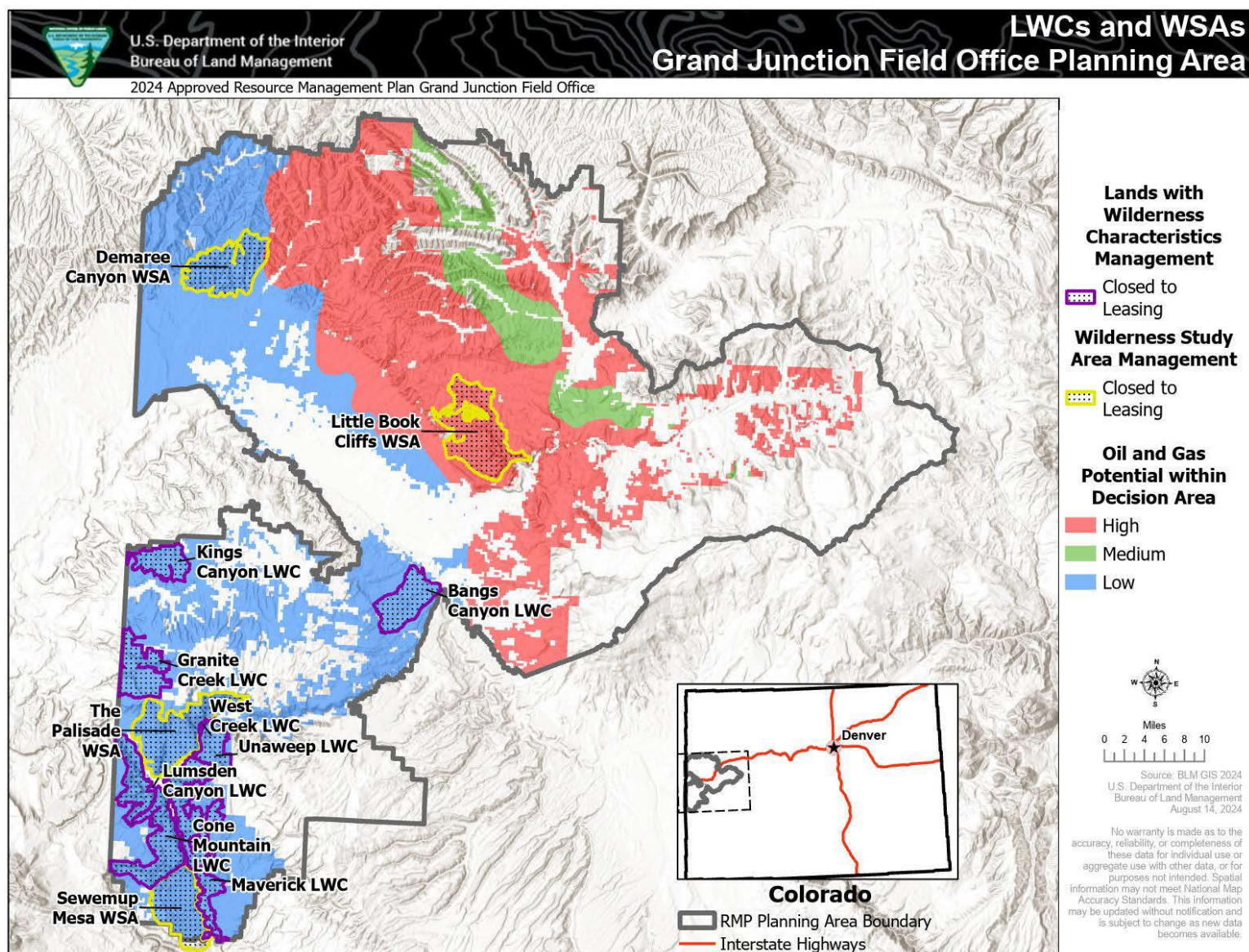


Figure 6. Areas Closed to Leasing – Recreation Management Areas

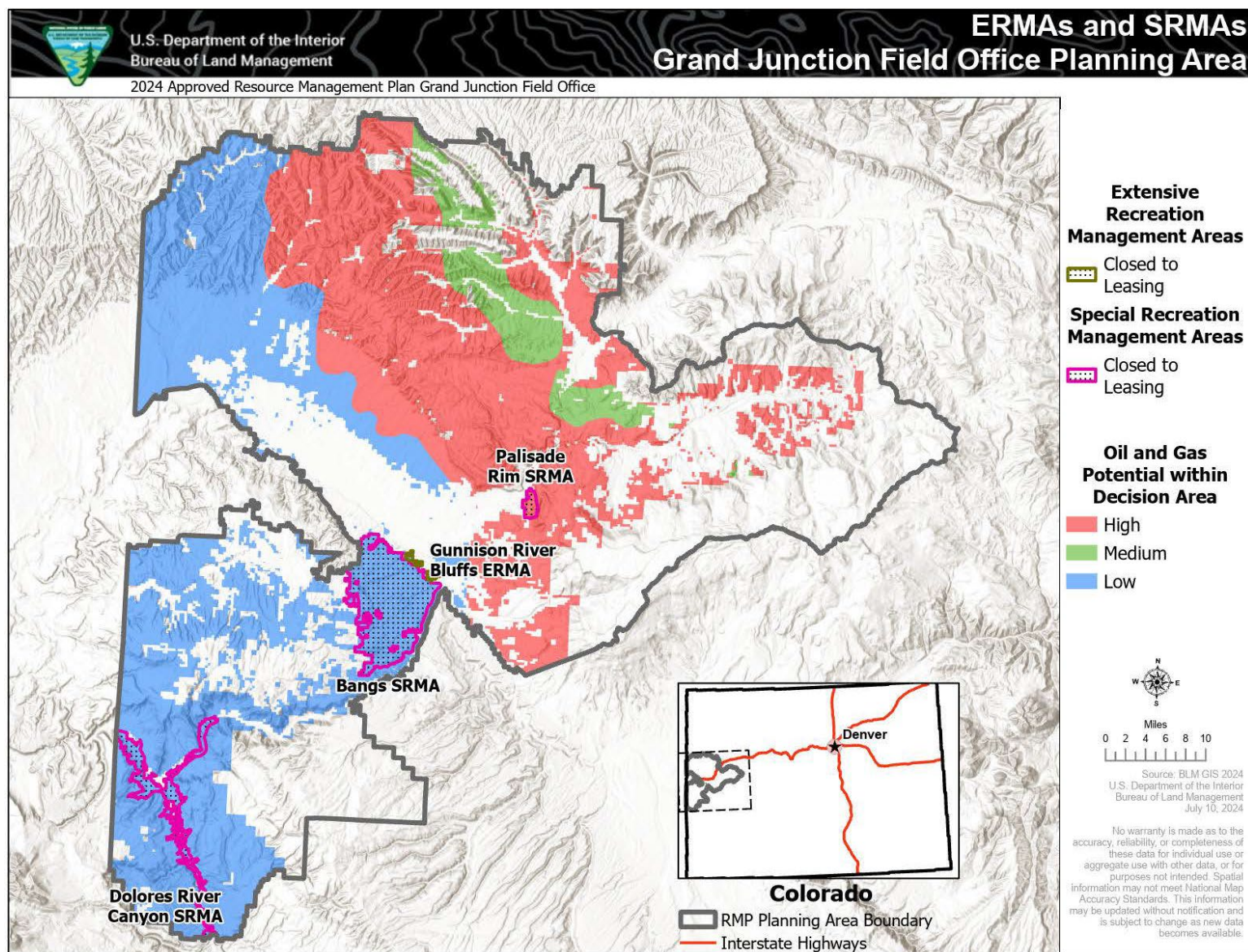


Figure 7. Areas Closed to Leasing – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

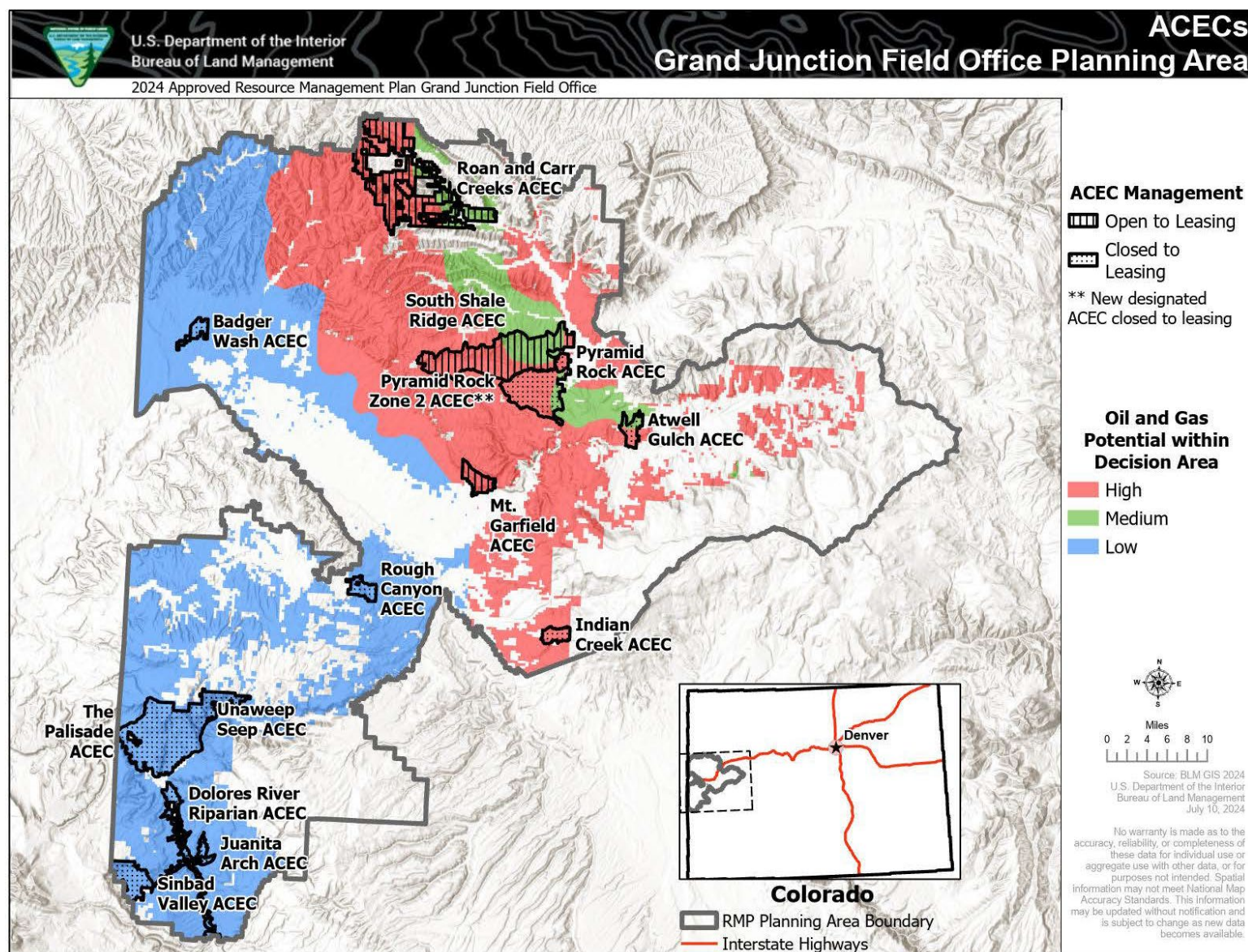


Figure 8. Municipal Watersheds

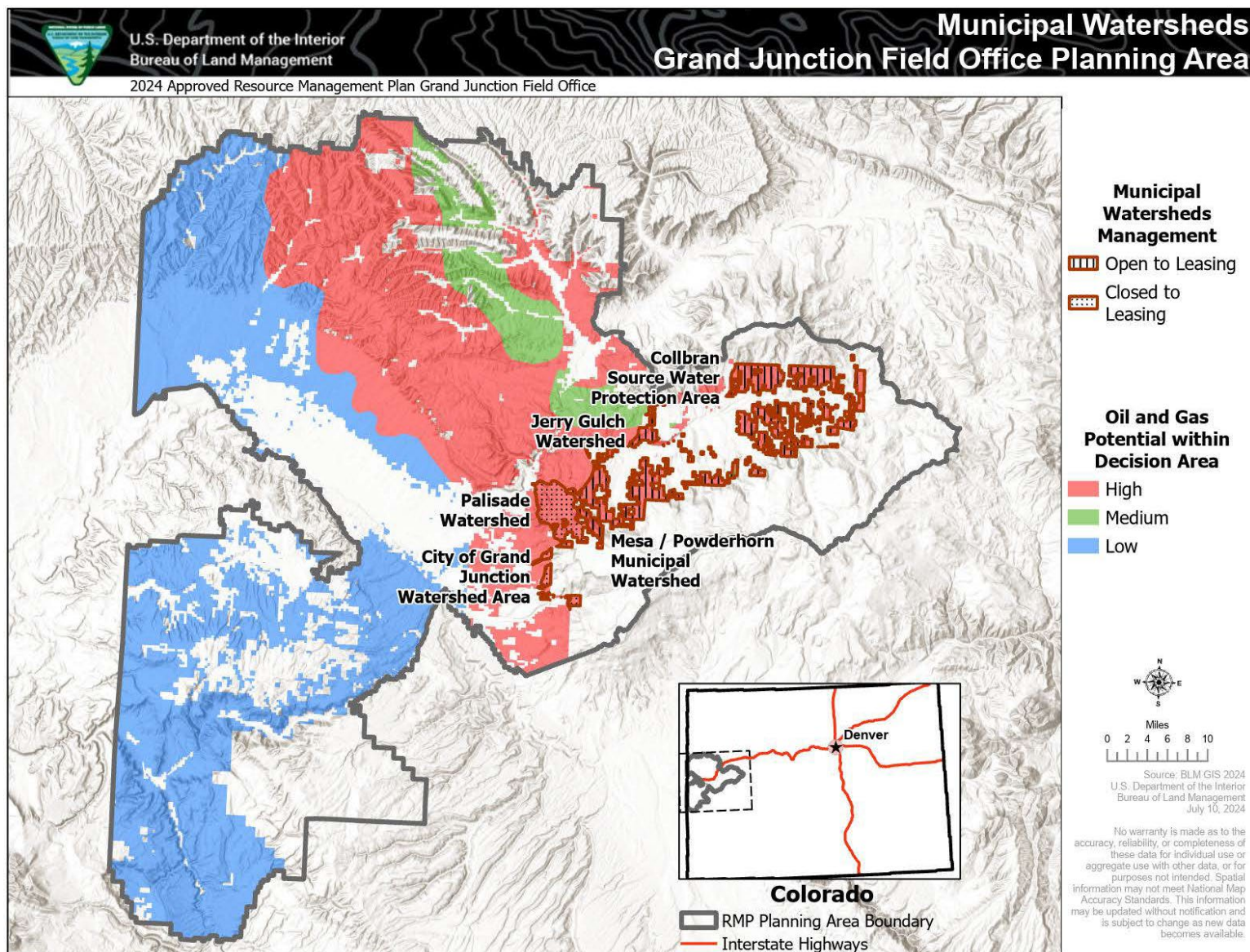
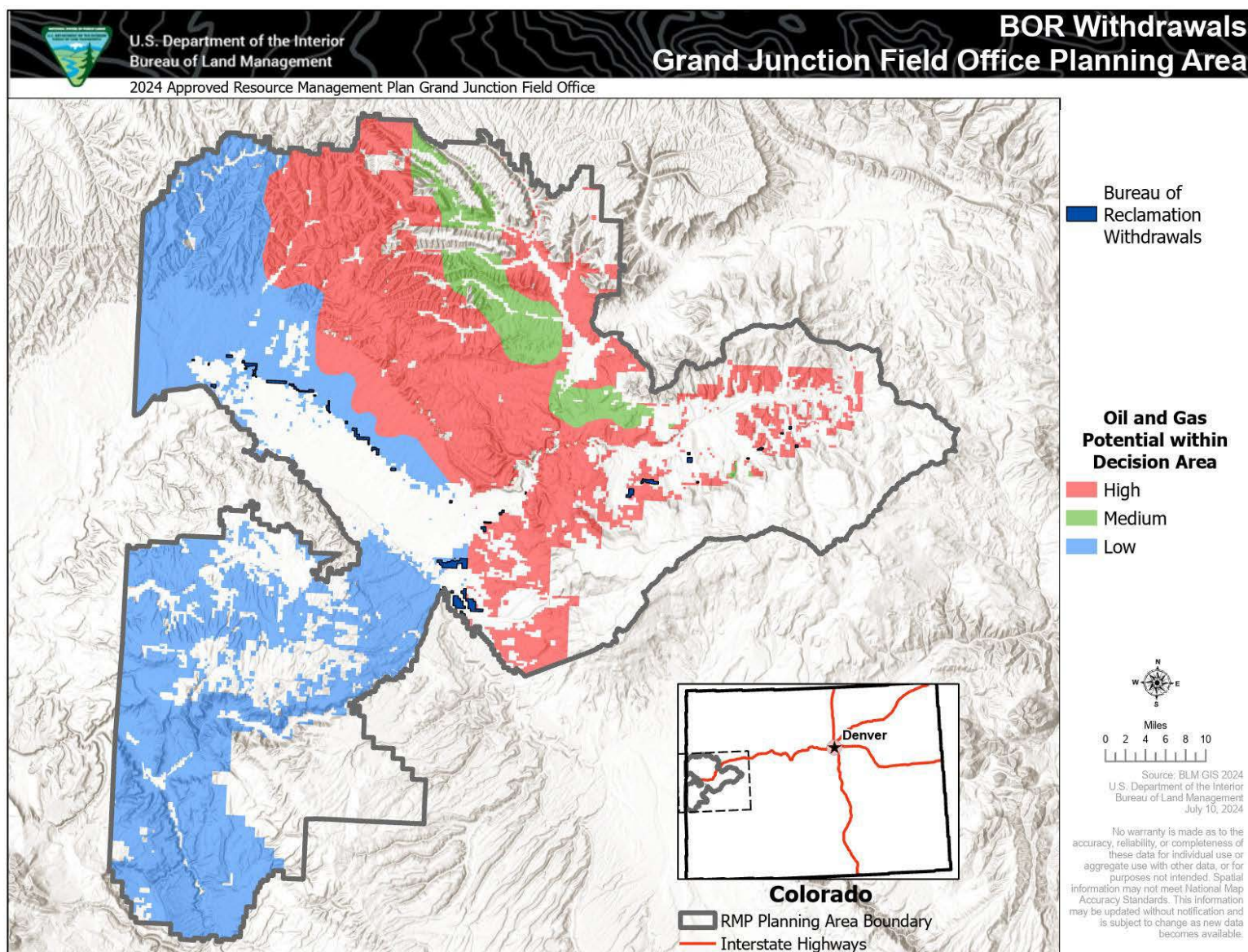


Figure 9. Areas Closed to Leasing – Bureau of Reclamation Withdrawals



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Appendix B

Changes to the 2015 RMP

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Appendix B. Changes to the 2015 RMP

The following text depicts plan components which have changes to resource management decisions in section 1.1.3 (RMP Decisions, Decisions by Category) and Appendix B (Lease and Other Surface Disturbing Stipulations) of the 2015 Grand Junction Field Office Approved RMP as a result of this 2024 Approved RMP.

1. RESOURCES

Water

WTR-AU-04:

Stipulation NSO-12: *Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC*. Apply NSO restrictions to surface-disturbing activities within the Roan and Carr Creek ACEC. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

WTR-AU-13:

Stipulation NSO-6: *No Surface Occupancy (Palisade and Grand Junction Municipal Watersheds, Collbran and Mesa/Powderhorn Source Water Protection Areas, and Jerry Creek Watershed)*. Prohibit surface occupancy and other surface-disturbing activities in the Palisade and Grand Junction municipal watersheds. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

Special Status Species

SSS-PLT-AU-01:

Stipulation NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities in the following ACECs to protect threatened, proposed, candidate, and sensitive plants. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

- Atwell Gulch (threatened and sensitive plants);
- Badger Wash (sensitive plants);
- Pyramid Rock (threatened and sensitive plants);
- South Shale Ridge (threatened and sensitive plants);
- Unaweep Seep (sensitive plants); and
- Roan and Carr Creeks (unique riparian habitat).

Fish and Wildlife

F&W-BGS-AU-02:

Stipulation NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

- Atwell Gulch;
- Indian Creek;

- The Palisade;
- Rough Canyon;
- Sinbad Valley;
- South Shale Ridge; and
- Roan and Carr Creeks.

Visual Resources

VIS-MA-04:

Manage 447,800 acres of BLM lands according to VRM Class II objectives, including the following areas:

- ACECs:
 - Atwell Gulch;
 - A portion of the Palisade (5,500 acres outside of the Palisade WSA);
 - A portion of Dolores River Riparian (7,100 acres);
 - Juanita Arch;
 - Indian Creek;
 - Pyramid Rock;
 - Roan and Carr Creeks
 - Rough Canyon;
 - South Shale Ridge;
 - Sinbad Valley; and
 - Unaweep Seep.
- Lands managed for wilderness characteristics
- SRMAs:
 - Bangs;
 - A portion of Dolores River Canyon (13,600 acres);
 - North Fruita Desert; and
 - Palisade Rim.
- Byways:
 - A portion of Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway (from the Bookcliffs north);
 - Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway; and
 - Unaweep-Tabeguache Scenic and Historic Byway (The ROW corridors are designated as VRM III).
- Other VRM Class II areas:
 - Includes the following:
 - Bangs, Rough, Ladder and Northeast Creek Canyons;
 - Cliffs of Unaweep Canyon (outside of ROW corridor);
 - Eastern Cliffs of Hunter Canyon;
 - Colorado River corridor
 - Gunnison river corridor (southwest side);
 - Foreground of Interstate 70;

- Cliffs adjacent to Mt. Garfield;
- Dolores River corridor (except for 75 meters corridor along Highway 141); and
- Juanita Arch.

Lands Managed for the Protection of Wilderness Characteristics

WIL-MA-01:

Manage 99,500 acres to protect wilderness characteristics in the following areas:

- Bangs (13,900 acres);
- Maverick (25,600 acres);
- Unawep (7,500 acres);
- Cone Mountain (18,000 acres);
- Granite Creek (14,400 acres);
- Kings Canyon (9,100 acres);
- Lumsden Canyon (10,900 acres); and
- West Creek (100 acres).

See **Figure 5** in Appendix A of the 2024 Approved RMP.

Bangs

WIL-MA-04:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Close to wood product sales and/or harvest, including Christmas tree cutting.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Manage consistently with the overlapping portions of the Bangs SRMA.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatments projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.

Maverick**WIL-MA-05:**

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue no SRPs for competitive events. Only issue non-competitive SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Close to motorized over-snow travel.
- Close the portion (1,600 acres) that overlaps the Juanita Arch ACEC to motorized and mechanized travel.
- A portion (16,200 acres) is limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel.
- Close to wood product sales and/or harvest.
- Issue non-commercial Christmas tree cutting permits as long as monitoring indicates that naturalness of the unit is not being impacted.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- Manage as VRM Class II.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatments projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.
- Manage for reclamation of abandoned mine sites to protect public health and safety.

Unaweeep**WIL-MA-06:**

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue no SRPs for competitive events. Only issue non-competitive SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel.
- Allow for administrative access to range improvements and livestock management.
- Close to wood product sales and/or harvest, including Christmas tree cutting.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- Manage as VRM Class II.

- In response to wildfire use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozer) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Allow for the placement of range improvements in locations that meet the naturalness and setting of the area.
- Close and restore unauthorized routes that affect naturalness.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatments projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.

Cone Mountain

WIL-OBJ-07:

Manage the Cone Mountain Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Area for the protection of outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and undisturbed landscapes.

WIL-MA-09:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.
- Allow for wood product sales, including Christmas tree cutting in established areas.
- Manage for reclamation of abandoned mine sites to protect public health and safety.

WIL-AU-07:

No Leasing: Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A.

WIL-AU-08:

Stipulation *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics NSO CO:* No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

Granite Creek

WIL-OBJ-08:

Manage the Granite Creek Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Area for the protection of outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and undisturbed landscapes.

WIL-MA-10:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue no SRPs for competitive events. Only issue non-competitive SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Close to wood product sales and/or harvest, including Christmas tree cutting.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.

WIL-AU-09:

No Leasing: Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A.

WIL-AU-10:

Stipulation *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics NSO CO:* No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

Kings Canyon

WIL-OBJ-09:

Manage the Kings Canyon Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Area for the protection of outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and undisturbed landscapes.

WIL-MA-11:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Allow for wood product sales, including Christmas tree cutting in established areas.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.

WIL-AU-11:

No Leasing: Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A.

WIL-AU-12:

Stipulation *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics NSO CO:* No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

Lumsden Canyon**WIL-OBJ-10:**

Manage the Lumsden Canyon Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Area for the protection of outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and undisturbed landscapes.

WIL-MA-12:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.

- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Allow for wood product sales, including Christmas tree cutting in established areas.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.
- Manage for reclamation of abandoned mine sites to protect public health and safety.

WIL-AU-13:

No Leasing: Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A.

WIL-AU-14:

Stipulation *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics NSO CO:* No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

West Creek**WIL-OBJ-11:**

Manage the West Creek Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Area for the protection of outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and undisturbed landscapes.

WIL-MA-13:

Protect wilderness characteristics by applying the following management:

- Issue Class I-II Commercial and Organized Event SRPs that meet area objectives.
- Limited to designated routes for motorized and mechanized travel, including over-snow travel (except for administrative access to range improvements).
- Close to wood product sales and/or harvest, including Christmas tree cutting.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Close to mineral material disposal.
- Close to non-energy leasable mineral exploration and/or development. Valid existing lease rights would remain in effect.
- In response to wildfire, use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to limit impacts on wilderness characteristics. Only allow ground-disturbing mechanical tactics (e.g., bulldozers) if life and/or property are threatened.
- Manage as VRM Class II, except manage existing range improvements as VRM Class III.
- Allow for implementation of habitat treatment and fuels reduction projects. Design projects to minimize impacts to the naturalness of the unit.

WIL-AU-15:

No Leasing: Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A.

WIL-AU-16:

Stipulation *Lands with Wilderness Characteristics NSO CO:* No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan.

11. RESOURCE USES

Lands and Realty

L&R-AU-01:

ROW Exclusion Areas (including renewable energy sites such as solar, wind, hydroelectric, and biomass development): Manage 285,900 acres as ROW exclusion areas that are not available for the location of ROWs or other realty authorizations under any conditions, to include the following (Figure A-9, Appendix A):

- ACECs:
 - A portion of Atwell Gulch (2,600 acres);
 - A portion of Badger Wash (1,800 acres);
 - Indian Creek;
 - Juanita Arch;
 - Mt. Garfield (excluding the Coal Canyon Corridor);
 - Pyramid Rock (Zones 1 and 2);
 - Rough Canyon;
 - South Shale Ridge (except for ROWs to existing oil and gas leases issued under the 1987 RMP without NSO stipulations); and
 - Unaweep Seep
- Ant Study Area
- LBCWHR (22,800 acres inside WSA)
- Lands managed for wilderness characteristics
- Parachute penstemon occupied habitat
- SRMAs:
 - Bangs (RMZs 3 and 4);
 - North Fruita Desert.
- VRM Class I
- Wildlife emphasis areas:
 - A portion of East Salt Creek (west of Highway 139 [4,100 acres])
- Within a 0.4-mile radius of Sage-Grouse leks
- WSAs (allow for ROWs to existing leases without an NSO stipulation issued under the 1987 RMP)

- High sensitivity zone of the Palisade municipal watershed, except for the Lands End Communication Site.

Fluid Minerals

Oil and Gas and Geothermal Resources

MIN-AU-01:

Leasing: Manage 692,300 acres of the federal mineral estate as open to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration:

- BLM surface/federal minerals: 601,900 acres (**Figure 1**, Appendix A of the 2024 Approved RMP)
- Private and State surface/federal fluid mineral estate: 90,400 acres.

MIN-AU-02:

No Leasing: *BLM surface/federal minerals.* Manage 465,600 acres of the federal mineral estate underlying BLM surface as closed to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See **Figure 1** in Appendix A of the 2024 Approved RMP:

- No leasing areas include the following:
 - Areas of low oil and gas potential (outside of the helium potential area) (377,500 acres)
 - Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical habitat;
 - ACECs:
 - Badger Wash (2,200 acres)
 - Dolores River Riparian (7,400 acres)
 - Juanita Arch (1,600 acres)
 - The Palisade (32,200 acres)
 - Rough Canyon (2,800 acres)
 - Sinbad Valley (6,400 acres)
 - Unaweeep Seep (85 acres)
 - Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres)
 - Indian Creek (2,300 acres)
 - Pyramid Rock (Zone 1) (1,300 acres)
 - Pyramid Rock (Zone 2) (14,100 acres)
 - Lands managed for wilderness characteristics (99,500 acres)
 - SRMAs:
 - Bangs (47,800 acres)
 - Dolores River Canyon (16,100 acres)
 - Palisade Rim (2,000 acres)
 - Watersheds:
 - Grand Junction (1,900 acres)
 - Palisade (5,200 acres)
 - BOR withdrawals where surface estate is managed by the BLM (3,000 acres)
 - WSAs:
 - Demaree Canyon (22,700 acres)
 - Little Book Cliffs (29,300 acres)

- The Palisade (26,700)
- Sewemup Mesa (17,800 acres)

MIN-AU-03:

No Leasing: *Split-estate.* Manage 77,700 acres of Private and State surface/federal fluid mineral estate as closed to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-12 in Appendix A:

- City of Grand Junction Municipal Watershed (1,300 acres);
- Palisade Municipal Watershed (7,100 acres);
- Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical habitat (16,500 acres);
- BOR withdrawals where the surface is managed by BOR (4,900 acres); and
- Areas of low oil and gas potential (outside of the helium potential area) (70,600 acres)

MIN-AU-10:

Open to Leasing: *Helium Potential Area.* The helium potential area (165,700 acres) would remain open to leasing to facilitate recovery of helium. Helium is a nonrenewable resource found in recoverable quantities in only a few locations around the world, many of which are being depleted. Accordingly, the US has important economic and national security interests in ensuring a reliable supply of helium. The BLM anticipates development in the helium potential area will be focused on helium production. If development in this area is not productive of helium, the BLM may pause future leasing within this area to conduct additional NEPA analysis to evaluate changed circumstances and may consider initiating an RMP amendment to analyze closing this area to future fluid mineral leasing.

MIN-AU-11:

Geothermal Leasing: Geothermal resources would be open to leasing (854,600 acres), except within areas closed to oil and gas leasing due to specific resource concerns (i.e., geothermal leasing would not be closed based on oil and gas development potential. Refer to MIN-AU-02). Apply fluid mineral stipulations in the approved RMP.

Shale Ridges and Canyons Master Leasing Plan

MIN-MLP-AU-06: Apply the following stipulations and conservation measures on future oil and gas leases within the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area to protect Special Status Species: See Appendix B for a detailed description of restrictions.

Stipulations:

- NSO-12 ACECs (See Figure 4-5)
- NSO-13 Current and Historically Occupied Habitat and Critical Habitat of Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Plant and Animal Species (See Figure 4-2)
- NSO-23 Golden Eagle Nest Sites (See Figure 4-2)
- NSO-24 Bald Eagle Nest Sites (See Figure 4-2)
- NSO-25: Sage-Grouse Leks, Nesting, and Early Brood-rearing Habitat (4 miles) (See Figure 4-2)
- NSO-26 Canyon Treefrog, Midget Faded Rattlesnake, Northern Leopard Frog, Great Basin Spadefoot, Long-nosed Leopard Lizard, Boreal Toad (See Figure 4-2)

- NSO-30: Occupied Prairie Dog Towns in Prairie Canyon WEA (See Figure 4-2)
- WILDLIFE BAT NSO CO (See Figure 4-2)
- CSU-9 BLM Sensitive Plant Species Occupied Habitat (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-13: Osprey Nests (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-14: Ferruginous Hawk Nest Sites (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-15: Red-tailed Hawk Nest Sites (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-16: Swainson's Hawk Nest Sites (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-17: Peregrine Falcon Nest Sites (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-18: Prairie Falcon Nest Sites (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-19: Other Raptor Species (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-23: Occupied Prairie Dog Towns (See Figure 4-3)
- TL-1 Salmonid and Native, Non-salmonid Fishes (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-3 Migratory Bird Habitat (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-7 Red-tailed Hawk Nests (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-13 Golden Eagle Nest Sites (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-15 Bald Eagle Winter Roost (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-16: Sage-Grouse Lek, Nesting, and Early Brood-rearing Habitat (0.6 mile) (See Map See Figure 4-4)
- WILDLIFE RAPTOR NESTS TL CO (See Figure 4-4)
- SENSITIVE WILDLIFE RAPTOR NESTS TL CO (See Figure 4-4)
- LN-3: Biologic Inventories
- LN-4: Threatened and Endangered Species

The following COAs from Appendix H will be analyzed at the development stage and may be applied to development proposals:

- Fish and Wildlife Management and Special Status Species (FWS) 1, 4-21, 23-26, and 28-55
- Wildlife Damage Management (WDM) 7 and 9

Refer to the Special Status Species section for other special status species management actions that are applied throughout the RMP decision area, including the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area.

MIN-MLP-AU-07:

Apply the following stipulations and mitigation measures on future oil and gas leases to protect Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. See Appendix B for a detailed description of restrictions.

Stipulations:

- NSO-12 ACECs (See Figure 4-5)
- NSO-13 Current and Historically Occupied Habitat and Critical Habitat of Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Plant and Animal Species (See Figure 4-2)
- TL-16: Occupied Sage-Grouse Winter Habitat (See Figure 4-4)

- TL-17 Sage-Grouse Leks (4 mile) (See Figure 4-4)

Mitigation Measures:

Measures to mitigate impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse, including leasing stipulations, may be applied to future oil and gas leases in the MLP Analysis Area upon publication of the Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Record of Decision (ROD).

Refer to the Special Status Species section for other Greater Sage-Grouse management actions that are applied throughout the RMP decision area, including the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area.

MIN-MLP-AU-08:

Manage the following areas in the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area as Wildlife Emphasis Areas. Wildlife Emphasis Areas are areas of high habitat value.

Two areas in Garfield County:

- East Salt Creek: 25,000 acres
- A portion of Prairie Canyon: 1,400 acres

Nine areas in Mesa County:

- Beehive: 4,700 acres
- Blue Mesa: 9,300 acres
- Bull Hill: 4,800 acres
- Glade Park: 27,200 acres
- Prairie Canyon (a portion): 20,800 acres
- Rapid Creek: 27,000 acres
- Sunnyside: 14,500 acres
- Timber Ridge: 11,800 acres
- Winter Flats: 3,200 acres

Apply the following stipulations on future oil and gas leases in the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area to protect big game, raptors, and fish. See Appendix B for a detailed description of stipulations.

- NSO-32 Research Sites (See Figure 4-2)
- NSO-34 Elk Production Area (See Figure 4-2)
- WILDLIFE HABITAT NSO CO (See Figure 4-2)
- RECREATION PARKS NSO CO (See Figure 4-2)
- CSU-10 Wildlife Habitat (See Figure 4-3)
- CSU-24 Deer and Elk Migration and Movement Corridors (See Figure 4-3)
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CSU CO (See Figure 4-3)
- TL-19 Occupied Prairie Dog Towns (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-20 Big Game Winter Range (See Figure 4-4)
- TL-22 Pronghorn Wintering Habitat (See Figure 4-4)

- BIG GAME PRODUCTION AREAS TL CO (See Figure 4-4)
- LN-3 Biologic Inventories
- LN-5 Working in Wildlife Habitat

Fisheries and Aquatic:

- NSO-12 ACECs (See Figure 4-5)
- WILDLIFE HABITAT NSO CO (See Figure 4-2)
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CSU CO (See Figure 4-3)
- TL-1 Salmonid and Native, Non-salmonid Fishes (See Figure 4-4)

The following Conditions of Approval (COAs) from Appendix H will be analyzed at the development stage and may be applied to development proposals:

- Fish and Wildlife Management and Special Status Species (FWS) 1, 4-21,
- 23-26, and 28-55
- Wildlife Damage Management (WDM) 7 and 9

Refer to the Fish and Wildlife and Special Status Species sections for other big game, raptor, and fish management actions that are applied throughout the RMP decision area, including the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area.

MIN-MLP-AU-13:

Apply the following stipulations on future oil and gas leases in the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area to protect the relevant and important characteristics of ACECs. See Appendix B for a detailed description of restrictions.

- NSO-12 ACECs (See Figure 4-2)

Refer to the ACEC section for other ACEC management actions that are applied throughout the RMP decision area, including the Shale Ridges and Canyons MLP analysis area.

111. SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACEC-MA-01:

Designate the following areas as ACECs (137,100 acres). (Figure 2-20, Appendix A):

- Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres);
- Badger Wash (2,200 acres);
- Dolores River Riparian (7,400 acres);
- Indian Creek (2,300 acres);
- Juanita Arch (1,600 acres);
- Mt. Garfield (2,400 acres)
- The Palisade (32,200 acres);

- Pyramid Rock (Zone 1) (1,300 acres);
- Pyramid Rock (Zone 2) (14,100 acres)
- Roan and Carr Creeks (33,600 acres);
- Rough Canyon (2,800 acres);
- Sinbad Valley (6,400 acres);
- South Shale Ridge (27,800 acres); and
- UnawEEP Seep (85 acres).

ACEC-AU-03:

Prohibit surface occupancy and use, and prohibit surface occupancy and use and surface-disturbing activities within the following ACECs:

- Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres);
- Badger Wash (2,200 acres);
- Dolores River Riparian (7,400 acres);
- Indian Creek (2,300 acres);
- Juanita Arch (1,600 acres);
- Mt. Garfield (2,400 acres);
- Palisade (32,200 acres);
- Pyramid Rock (Zone 1) (1,300 acres);
- Pyramid Rock (Zone 2) (14,100 acres);
- Roan and Carr Creeks (33,600 acres)
- Rough Canyon (2,800 acres);
- Sinbad Valley (6,400 acres);
- South Shale Ridge (27,800 acres); and
- UnawEEP Seep (85 acres).

Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

Atwell Gulch ACEC**ACEC-MA-02:**

Designate the Atwell Gulch ACEC (2,900 acres) to protect rare plants, cultural resources, scenic values, and wildlife habitat. Management actions include the following:

- Manage as VRM Class II.
- Close to motorized travel, including over-snow motorized travel.
- Close to mechanized travel.
- Issue no SRPs for competitive events.
- Close 2,600 acres to livestock grazing (approximately 250 acres will remain unallotted).
- Manage 2,600 acres as a ROW exclusion area (except allow for ROWs to existing oil and gas leases issued under the 1987 RMP without NSO stipulations).

- Manage 260 acres as a ROW avoidance area for natural gas pipelines, water pipelines, and produced water pipelines.
- Allowable Use: Only allow vegetation treatments for the benefit of the identified relevant and important values.
- Close to fossil collection.
- **No Leasing:** *ACECs*. Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A. Close to fluid mineral leasing
- Allowable Use:
STIPULATION NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13, Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

Indian Creek ACEC

ACEC-MA-05:

Designate the Indian Creek ACEC (2,300 acres) to preserve research and cultural values. Management actions include the following:

- Manage as VRM Class II.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.
- Classify motorized and mechanized travel as *limited to designated routes*.
- **No Leasing:** *ACECs*. Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A. Close to fluid mineral leasing
- Allowable Use:
STIPULATION NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

Pyramid Rock ACEC

ACEC-MA-09:

Designate the Pyramid Rock ACEC (Zone 1) (1,300 acres) to preserve habitat for rare plant species and to protect paleontological and cultural resources:

- Manage as VRM Class II.
- Close to motorized, mechanized, equestrian, and foot travel, including oversnow motorized travel.
- Prohibit target shooting.
- Issue no SRPs for competitive events.
- Close to camping.
- Close to livestock grazing.
- Manage as a ROW exclusion area.

- Close to all types of collection (e.g., fossil, vegetation, rocks, etc.), except for permitted collection for scientific research.
- Petition to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mineral entry.
- Require permit and agreement to allow research activities that support the objectives of the ACEC.
- **No Leasing:** *ACECs*. Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A. Close to fluid mineral leasing
- Allowable Use:
STIPULATION NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13, Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

ACEC-MA-15:

Designate the Pyramid Rock ACEC (Zone 2) (14,100-acre expansion) to preserve habitat for rare plant species and to protect paleontological and cultural resources:

- Manage as visual resource management (VRM) Class II (3,100 acres) and Class IV (11,000 acres) (identical to the 2015 approved RMP)
- Limit travel to designated routes
- Issue no special recreation permits for competitive events
- Manage as a right-of-way (ROW) exclusion area (except allow for ROWs to existing oil and gas leases issued under the 1987 RMP without no surface occupancy [NSO] stipulations, including valid and existing rights for access to private property)
- Petition the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mineral entry
- Only allow vegetation treatments and wildlife habitat improvements that benefit and do not damage the identified relevant and important values for the ACEC
- **No Leasing:** *ACECs*. Close to fluid mineral leasing and geophysical exploration. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-12, Appendix A. Close to fluid mineral leasing
- Allowable Use:
STIPULATION NSO-12: *ACECs*. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13, Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC**ACEC-MA-10:**

Designate the Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC (33,600 acres) to protect unique riparian habitats, genetically pure populations of cutthroat trout, and Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. Management actions include the following:

- Manage as VRM Class II.
- Allowable Use: Only allow vegetation treatments for the benefit of the identified relevant and important values.
- Limit motorized and mechanized travel to designated routes.

- Manage as ROW avoidance area.
- Close to mechanized travel.
- Classify the portion of the ACEC (700 acres) within the coal resource development potential area as unacceptable for coal leasing.

STIPULATION NSO-25: *Sage-Grouse Leks, Nesting, and Early Broodrearing Habitat.* Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within 4 miles of an active lek or within Sage-Grouse nesting and early brood-rearing habitat. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figures 2-13 in Appendix A. Standard and special exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

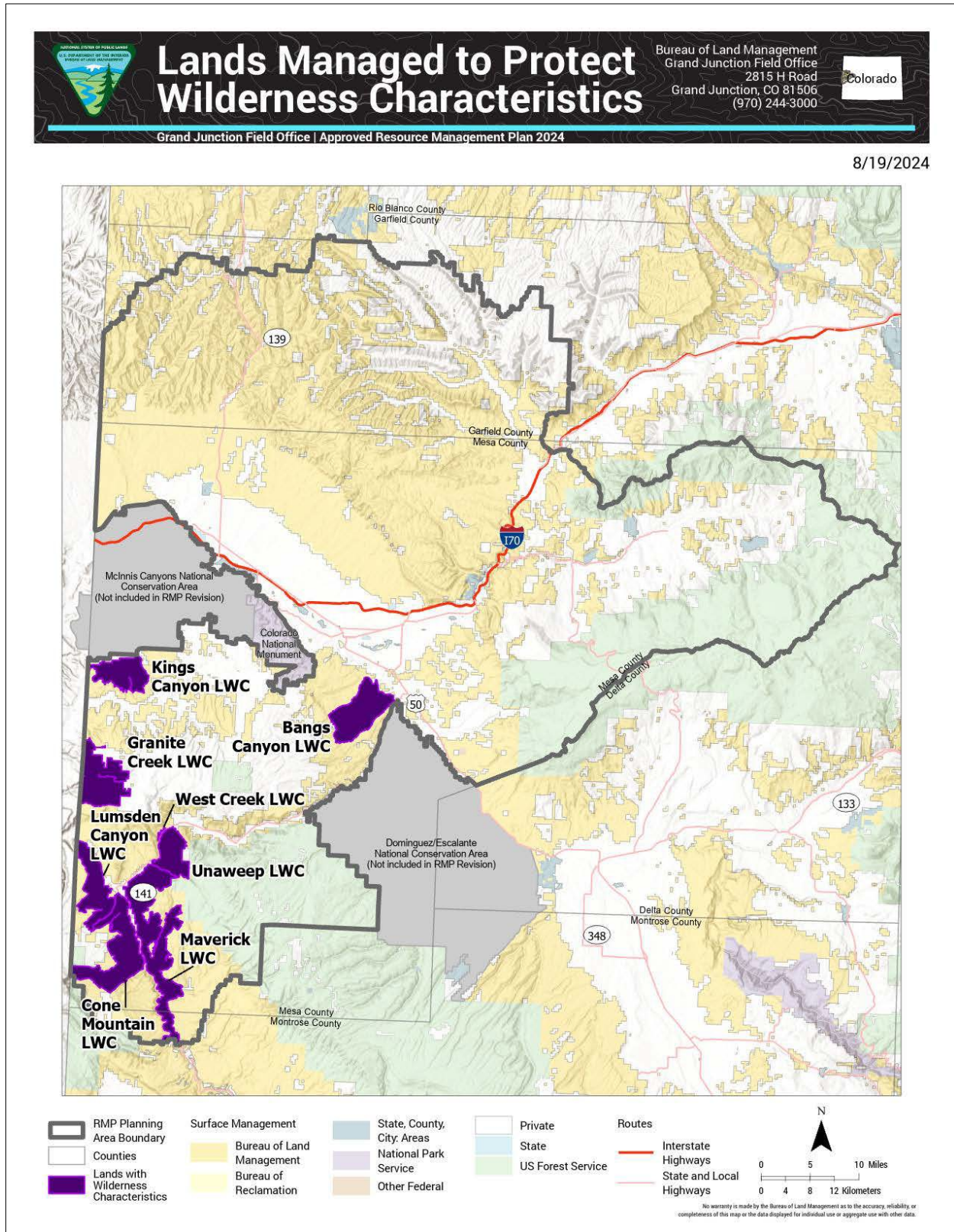
- Allowable Use:

STIPULATION NSO-12: *ACECs.* Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities. (Refer to Appendix B.) See Figure 2-13, Appendix A. Standard exceptions apply; see Appendix B.

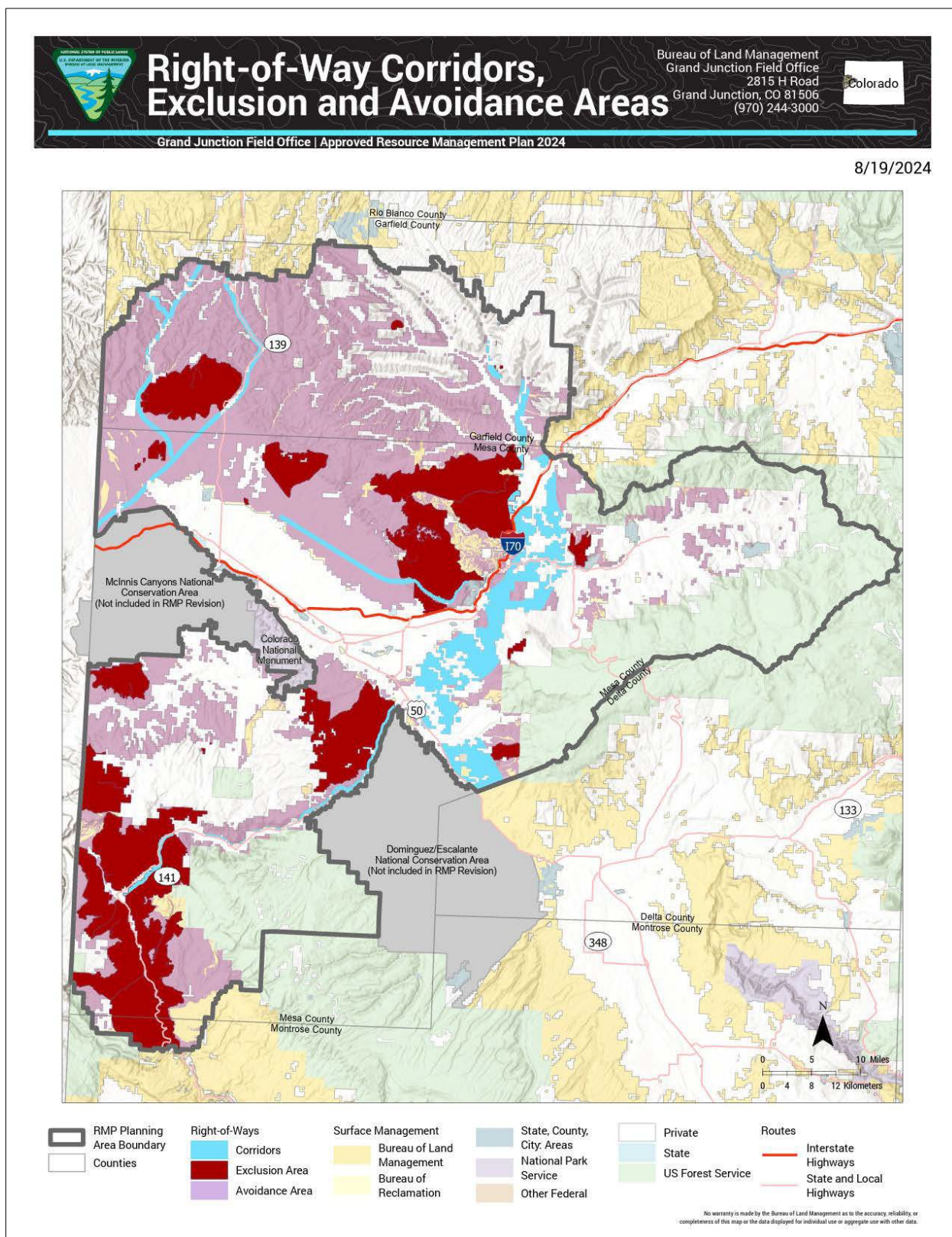
2015 RMP APPENDIX A - MAPS

The following maps in Appendix A of the 2015 ROD/RMP are modified by decisions in the 2024 Approved RMP:

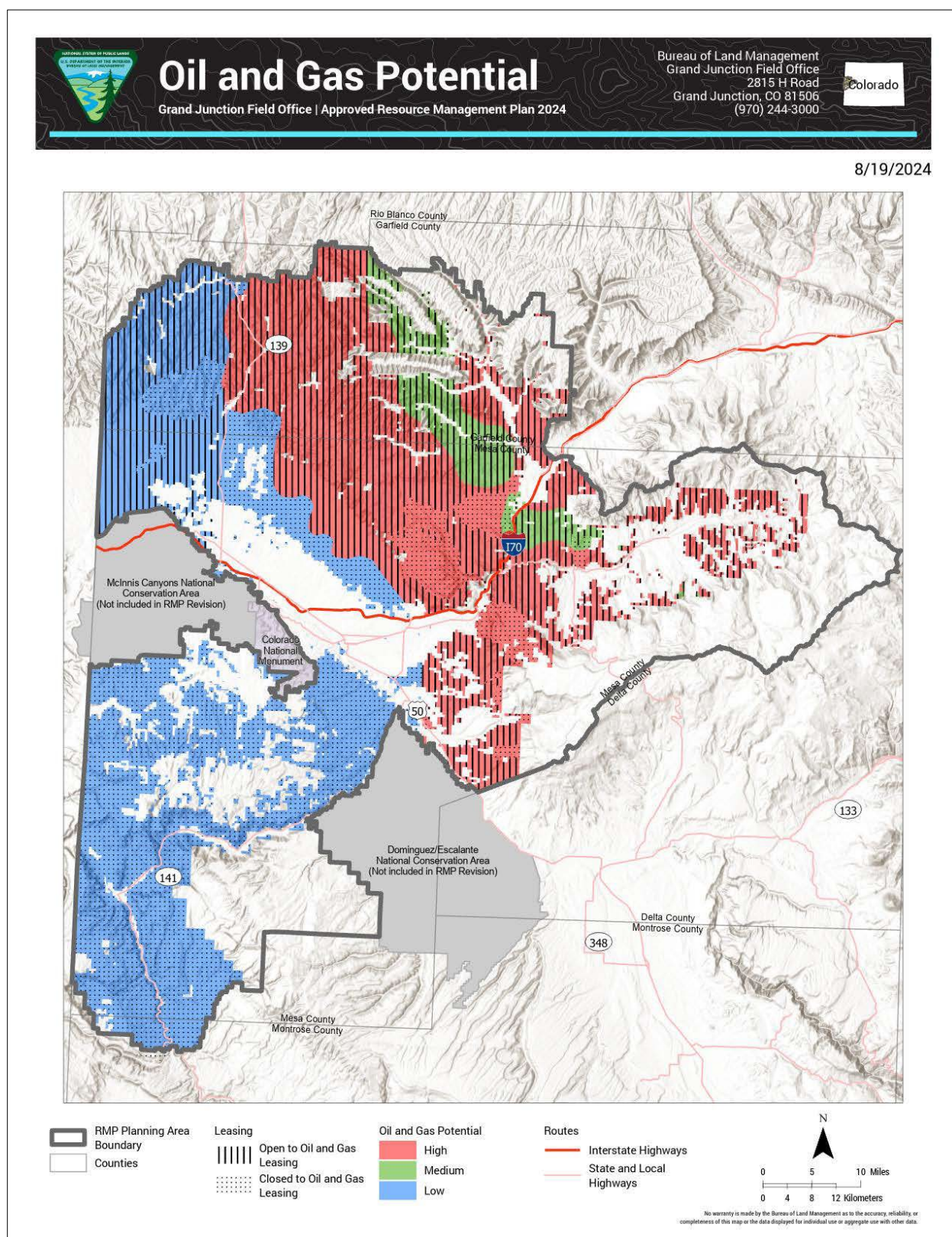
Lands Managed to Protect Wilderness Characteristics (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A-4)



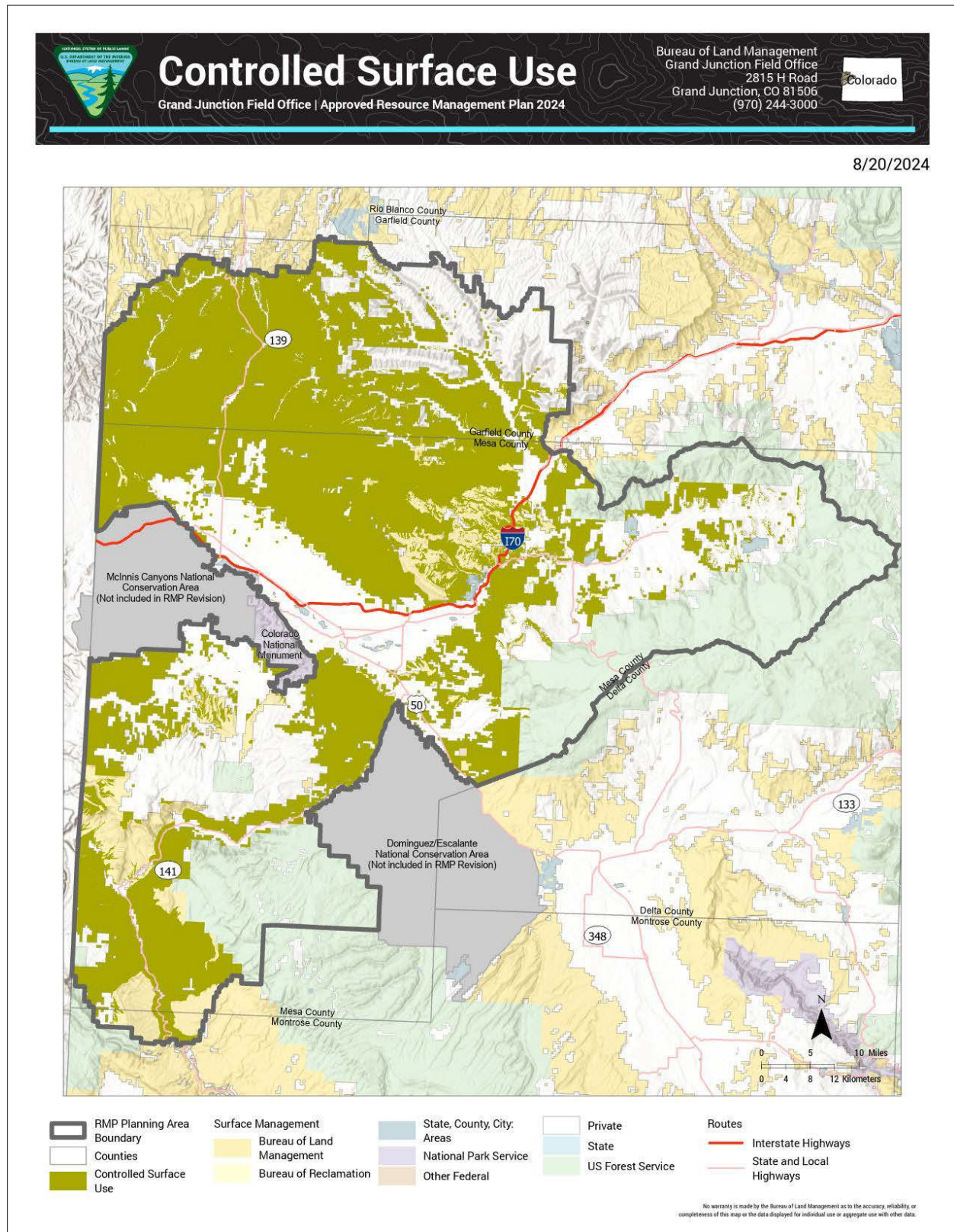
Right-of-Way Corridors, Exclusion and Avoidance Areas (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A-9)



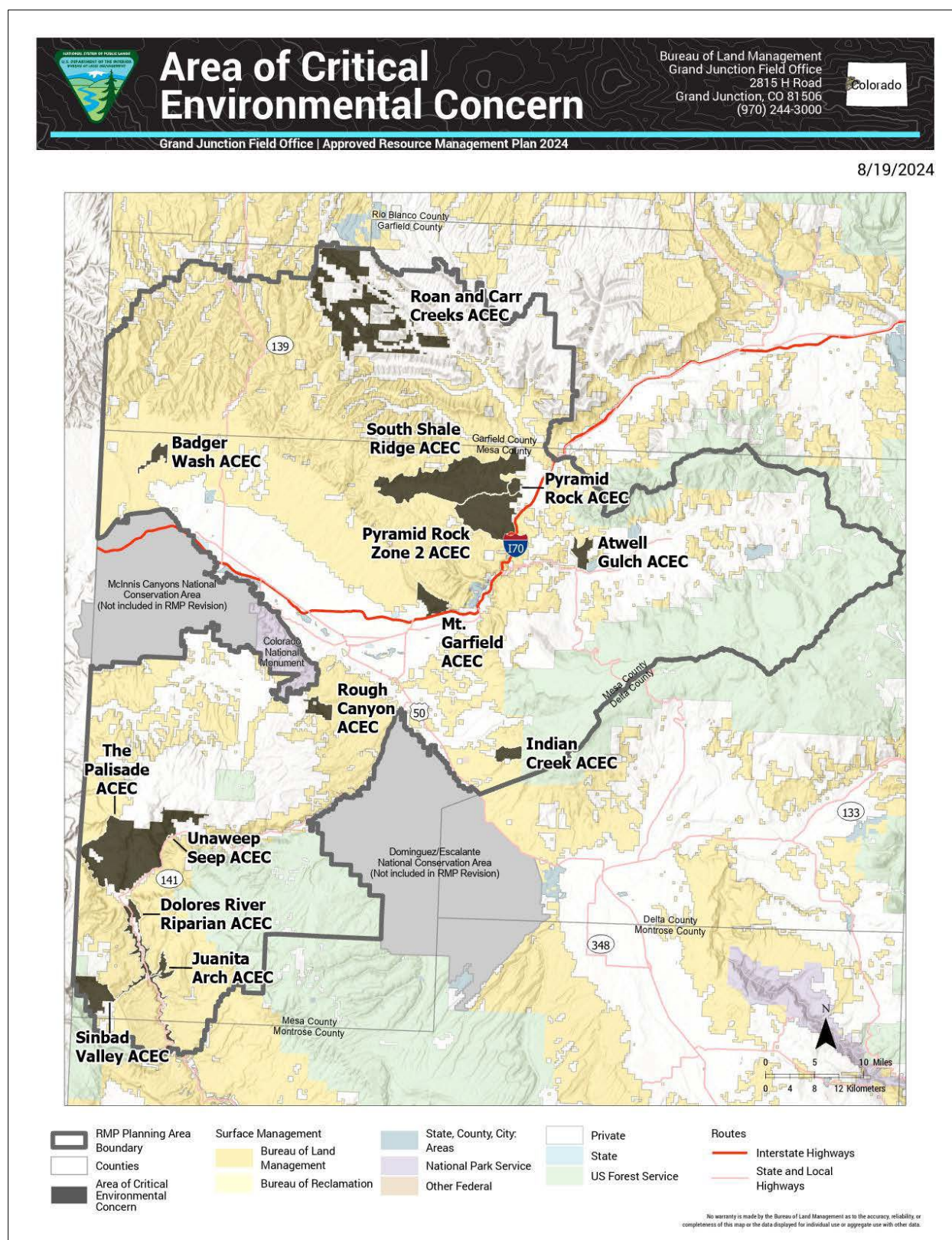
Fluid Minerals (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A-12)



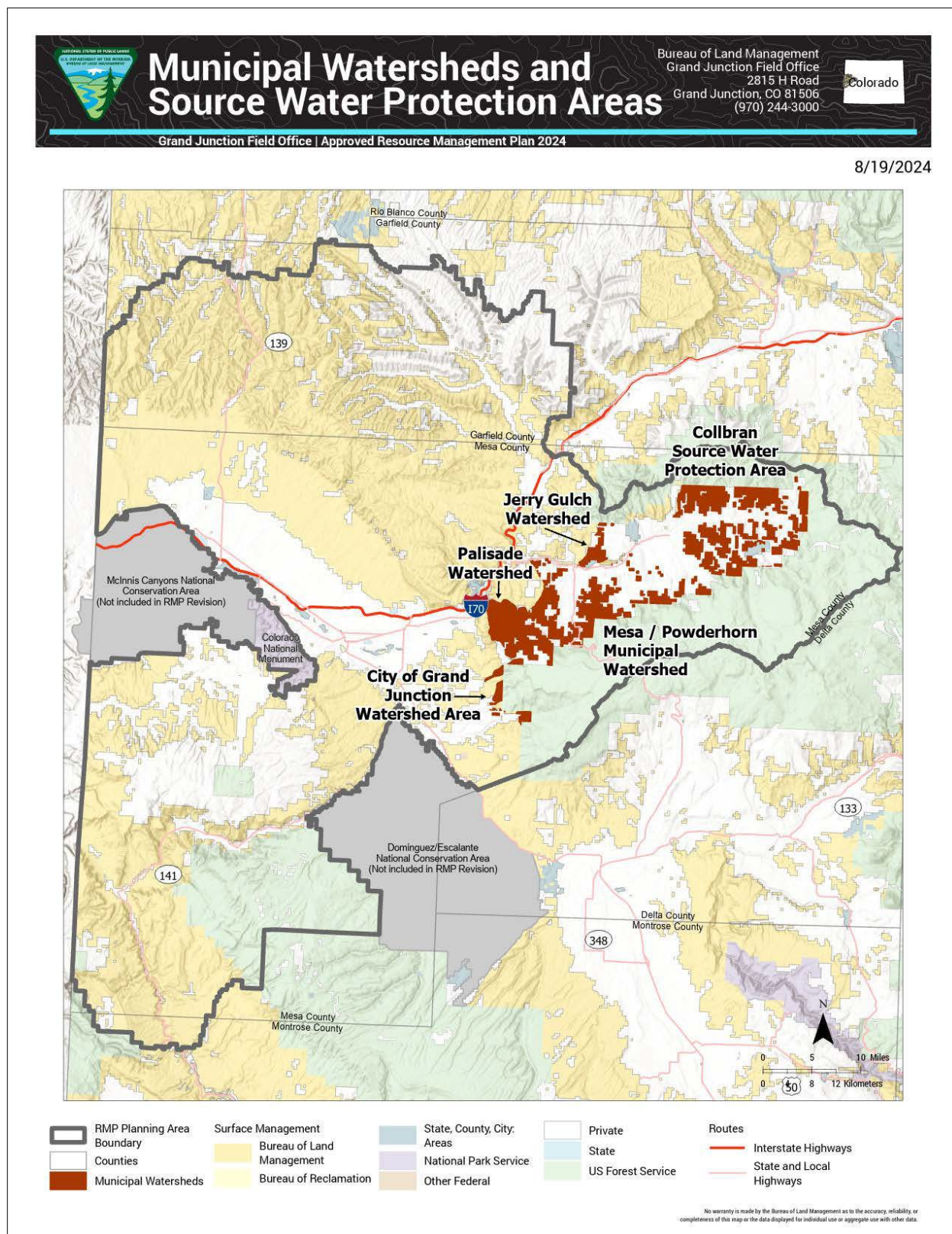
Controlled Surface Use (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A-14)



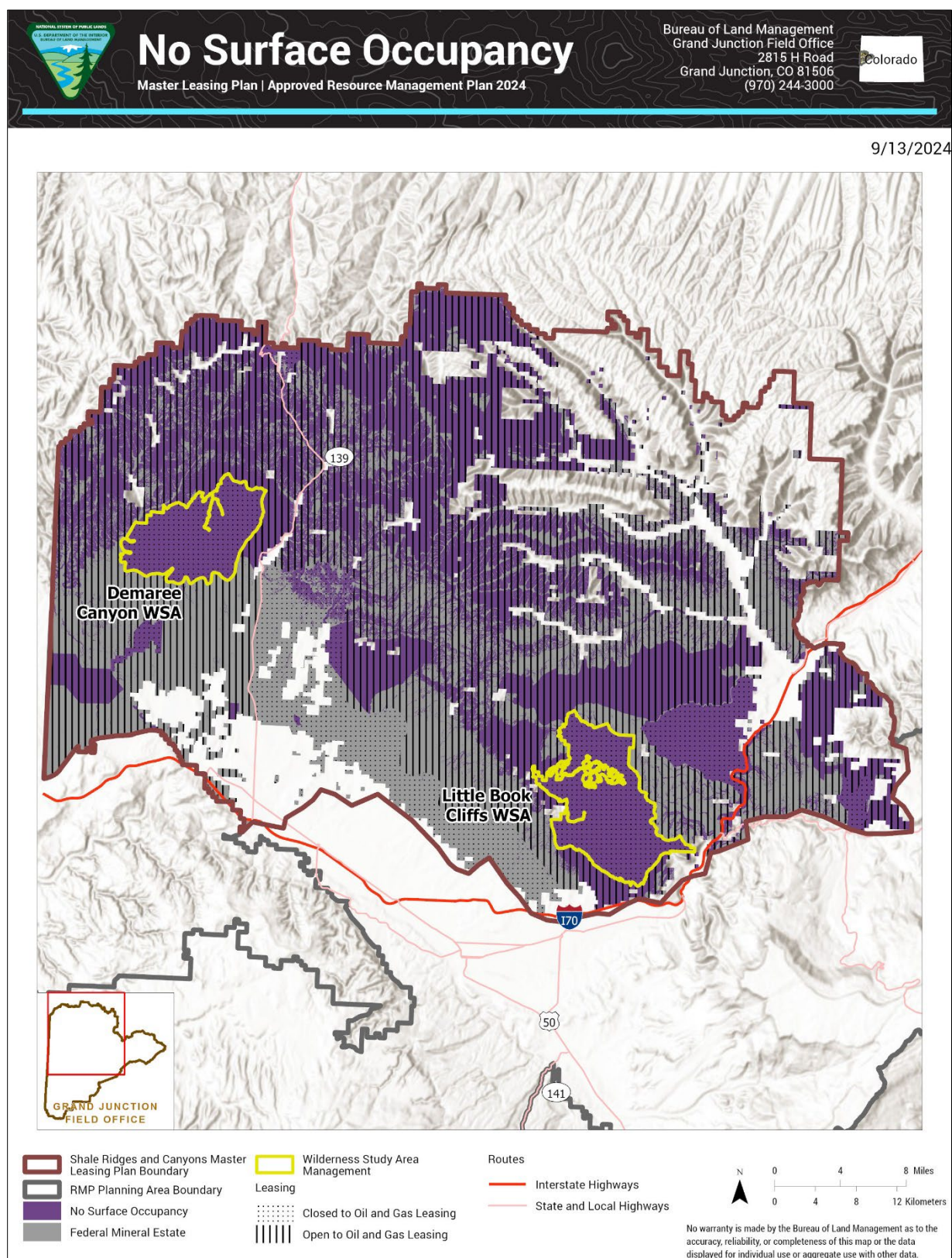
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A-20)



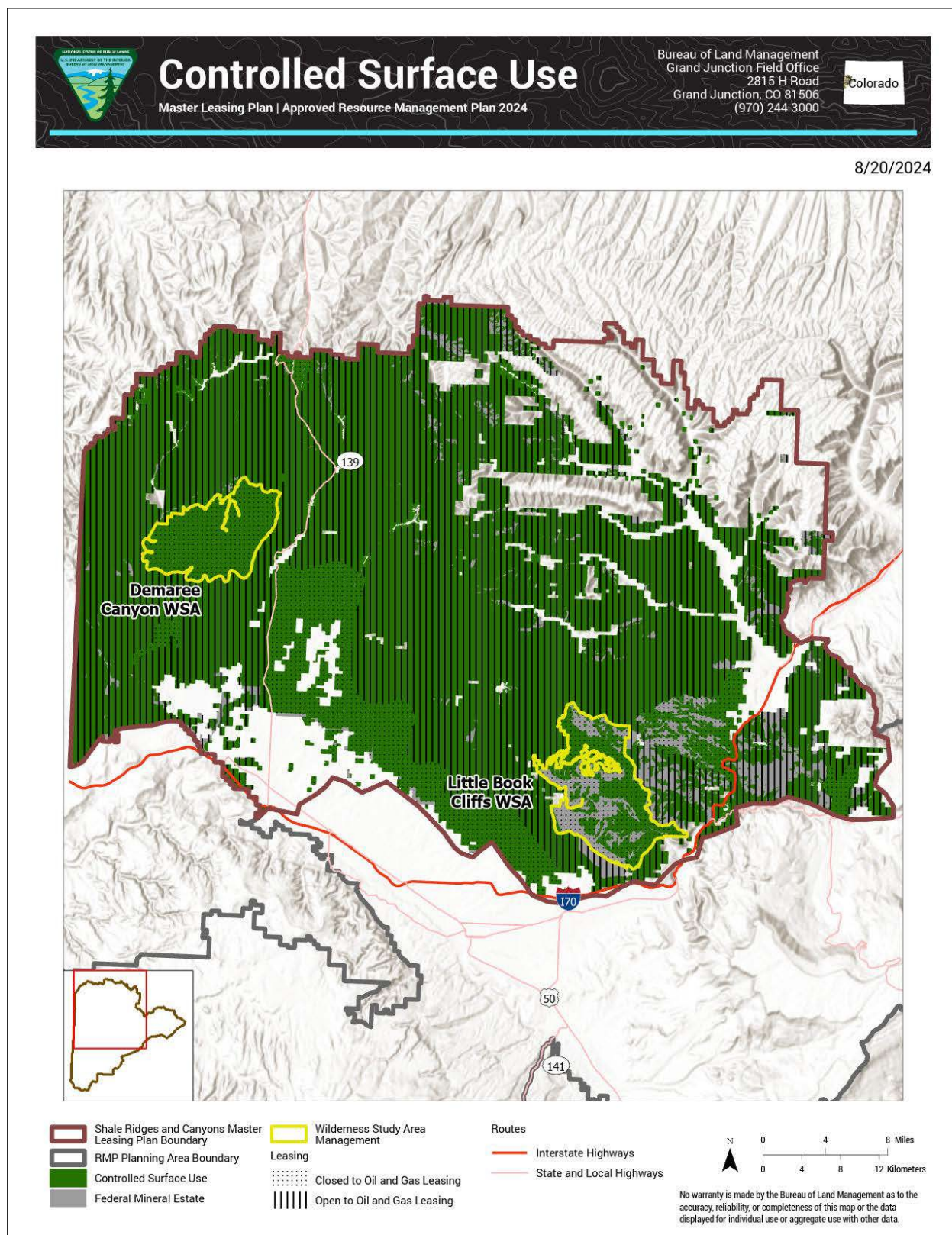
Municipal Watersheds and Source Water Protection Areas (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A3-5)



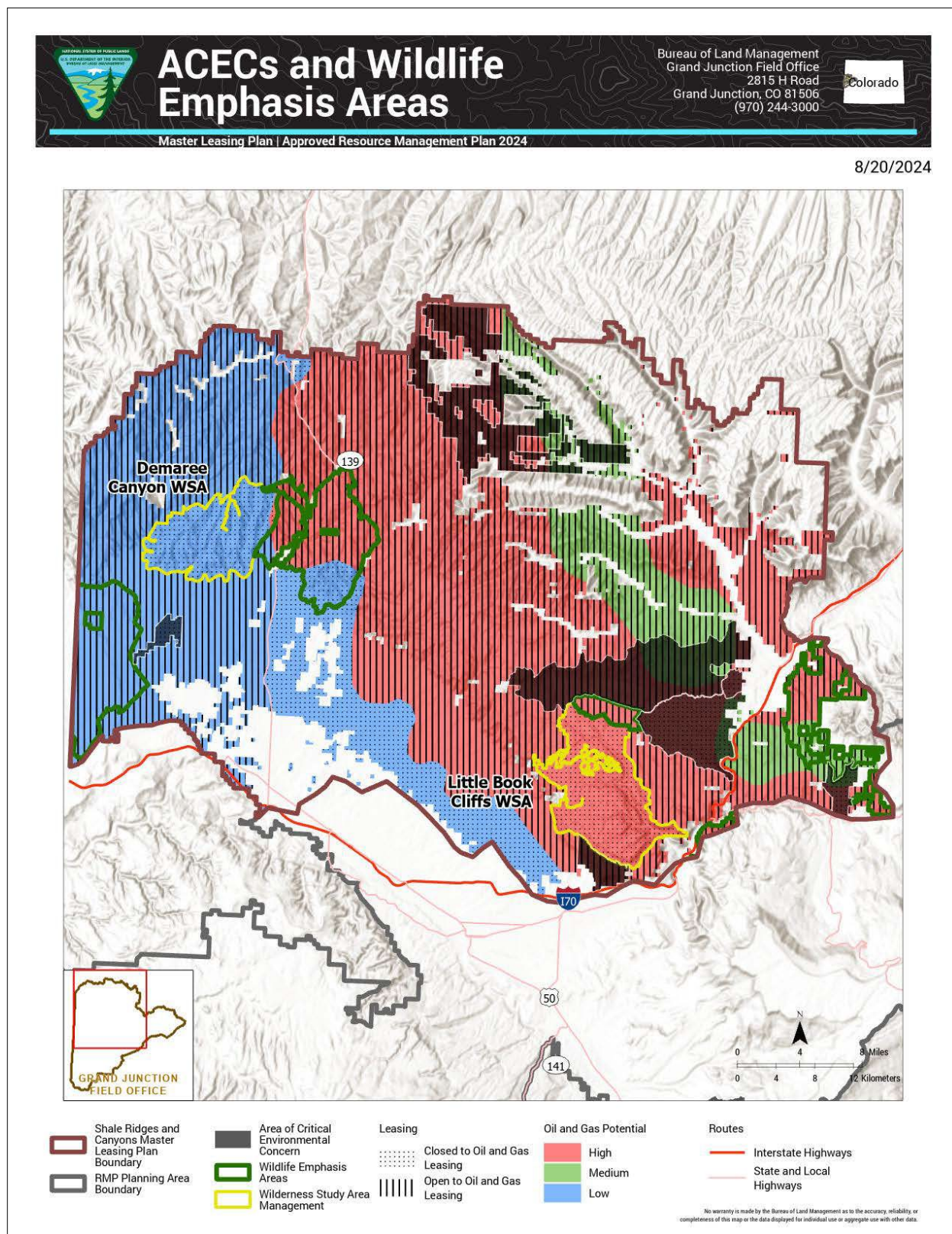
Master Leasing Plan No Surface Occupancy (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A4-2)



Master Leasing Plan Controlled Surface Use (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A4-3)



Master Leasing Plan ACECs and Wildlife Emphasis Areas (2015 RMP, Appendix A, Figure A4-5)



2015 RMP APPENDIX B – LEASE STIPULATIONS

Note that stipulations such as NSO and CSU apply to all uses in the GJFO, not only to oil and gas leasing.

Table B-5
No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Stipulations Applicable to
Fluid Mineral Leasing and Other Surface-disturbing Activities

Water Resources

Note: NSO-5 for Palisade and Grand Junction municipal watersheds is deleted in its entirety on page B-17 of the 2015 RMP. (Replaced by NSO-6.)

| Stipulation Number Protected Resource Acres/Miles Affected | Stipulation Description |
|--|--|
| NSO-6 Palisade and Grand Junction Municipal Watersheds, Collbran and Mesa/Powderhorn Source Water Protection Areas, and Jerry Creek Watershed). BLM surface/ federal minerals: 7,300 acres Private or State surface/federal minerals: 8,400 acres <i>All Surface-disturbing activities</i> | Stipulation: Prohibit surface occupancy and use and other activities in the Palisade and Grand Junction municipal watersheds, Collbran and Mesa/Powderhorn source water protection areas, and Jerry Creek watershed. Purpose: To protect municipal watersheds providing drinking water to local communities. Exception: Standard exceptions apply (Section B.2). In addition, exceptions would require professionally engineered design and construction for a 100-year flood event along strait and stable stream reaches. Modification: Standard modifications apply (Section B.2). Waiver: Standard waivers apply (Section B.2). Justification: This stipulation is necessary to reduce potential for groundwater contamination and/or dewatering of domestic and municipal sources. |

Special Status Species

| Stipulation Number Protected Resource Acres/Miles Affected | Stipulation Description |
|---|--|
| NSO-12 <i>(Partial ROWA)</i> ACECs. 82,300 acres <i>All Surface-disturbing Activities</i> | <p>STIPULATION: Prohibit surface occupancy and use and surface-disturbing activities in the following ACECs to protect threatened, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres); • Badger Wash (2,200 acres); • Pyramid Rock Zone 1 (1,300 acres); • Pyramid Rock Zone 2 (14,100 acres); • South Shale Ridge (28,200 acres); • Unaweep Seep (85 acres); and • Roan and Carr Creeks (33,600 acres). <p>PURPOSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atwell Gulch: To protect threatened and sensitive plants. • Badger Wash: To protect sensitive plants. • Pyramid Rock Zone 1: To protect known threatened, proposed, and sensitive plants. • Pyramid Rock Zone 2: preserve habitat for rare plant species and to protect paleontological and cultural resources: • South Shale Ridge: To protect threatened, proposed, and sensitive plants. • Unaweep Seep: To protect sensitive plants and Great Basin Silverspot Butterfly habitat. • Roan and Carr Creeks: To protect unique riparian habitat. <p>EXCEPTION: Standard exceptions apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>MODIFICATION: This stipulation may be modified to include species listed as threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive in the future. This stipulation may also be modified to account for the change in status of species protected in this stipulation.</p> <p>WAIVER: Standard waivers apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>JUSTIFICATION: This stipulation is necessary to protect critical habitat for threatened, proposed, and sensitive plants.</p> |

Fish and Wildlife

| Stipulation Number Protected Resource Acres/Miles Affected | Stipulation Description |
|--|--|
| <p>NSO-12 <i>(Partial ROWA)</i> ACECs. 108,400 acres <i>All Surface-disturbing Activities</i></p> | <p>STIPULATION: Prohibit surface occupancy and use and surface-disturbing activities in the following ACECs to protect threatened, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres); • Indian Creek (2,300 acres); • Palisade (32,200 acres); • Roan and Carr Creeks (33,600 acres). • Rough Canyon (2,800 acres); • Sinbad Valley (6,400 acres); and • South Shale Ridge (28,200 acres). <p>PURPOSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atwell Gulch: To protect wildlife habitat. • Indian Creek: To protect wildlife values. • The Palisade: To protect special status wildlife. • Roan and Carr Creeks: To protect core conservation populations of cutthroat trout and greater sage-grouse habitat. • Rough Canyon: To protect wildlife habitat. • Sinbad Valley: To protect wildlife resources. • South Shale Ridge: To protect wildlife habitat. <p>EXCEPTION: Standard exceptions apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>MODIFICATION: This stipulation may be modified to include species listed as threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive in the future. This stipulation may also be modified to account for the change in status of species protected in this stipulation.</p> <p>WAIVER: Standard waivers apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>JUSTIFICATION: This stipulation is necessary to protect critical habitat for threatened, proposed, and sensitive plants.</p> |

ACECs

| Stipulation Number Protected Resource Acres/Miles Affected | Stipulation Description |
|--|--|
| NSO-12 <i>(Partial ROWA)</i> ACECs. 137,500 acres <i>All Surface-disturbing Activities</i> | <p>STIPULATION: Prohibit surface occupancy and use (for fluid minerals only in Alternative A), and prohibit surface occupancy and use and surface-disturbing activities, within the following ACECs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atwell Gulch (2,900 acres); • Badger Wash (2,200 acres); • Dolores River Riparian (7,400 acres); • Indian Creek (2,300 acres); • Juanita Arch (1,600 acres); • Mt. Garfield (2,400 acres); • Palisade (32,200 acres); • Pyramid Rock Zones 1 and 2 (15,400 acres); • Rough Canyon (2,800 acres); • Sinbad Valley (6,400 acres); • South Shale Ridge (28,200 acres); • Unaweeep Seep (85 acres); and • Roan and Carr Creeks (33,600 acres). <p>PURPOSE: To protect and prevent irreparable damage to resources described in the relevance and importance criteria for which the ACEC was established.</p> <p>EXCEPTION: Standard exceptions apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>MODIFICATION: Standard modifications apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>WAIVER: This stipulation may be waived or reduced in scope if circumstances change, or if the lease can demonstrate that operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts on the concern(s) identified. If this stipulation is waived or reduced in scope, any of the other attached stipulations (if any) may impact operations on this lease.</p> <p>JUSTIFICATION: This stipulation is necessary to protect areas that contain highly important resources requiring special protections.</p> |

Lands Managed for Wilderness Characteristics

| Stipulation Number Protected Resource Acres/Miles Affected | Stipulation Description |
|--|---|
| LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS NSO CO. 44,100 acres <i>All Surface-disturbing Activities</i> | <p>STIPULATION: No surface occupancy or use is allowed on identified lands being managed to protect inventoried wilderness characteristics, in accordance with the Resource Management Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangs Canyon (13,900 acres); • Maverick (25,600 acres); • Unawee Canyon (7,500 acres); • Cone Mountain (18,000 acres); • Granite Creek (14,400 acres); • Kings Canyon (9,100 acres); • Lumsden Canyon (10,900 acres); and • West Creek (100 acres) <p>On the following lands: <LEGAL DESCRIPTION></p> <p>PURPOSE: To protect inventoried wilderness characteristics and their locally, regionally, or nationally significant recreational, social, economic, and environmental values.</p> <p>EXCEPTION: Standard exceptions apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>MODIFICATION: Standard modifications apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>WAIVER: Standard modifications apply (Section B.2).</p> <p>JUSTIFICATION: This stipulation is necessary to ensure lands with identified wilderness characteristics remain in their current undeveloped state.</p> |

Table B-6
Controlled Surface Use (CSU) Stipulations Applicable to
Fluid Mineral Leasing and Other Surface-disturbing Activities

| |
|--|
| Water Resources |
| <i>Removed: CSU-39 for Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC is deleted in its entirety on page B-36 (water resources) in Table B-6 of the 2015 RMP. (Replaced by NSO-12.)</i> |
| ACECs |
| <i>Removed: CSU-39 for Roan and Carr Creeks ACEC is deleted in its entirety on page B-49 (ACEC) in Table B-6 of the 2015 RMP. (Replaced by NSO-12.)</i> |

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