

## **Glossary of Common BLM Terms**

---

**Acquired Lands.** Acquired lands, as distinguished from public lands, are those lands in federal ownership which have been obtained by the government by purchase, condemnation, or gift, or by exchange for such purchased, condemned or donated lands, or for timber on such lands.

**Adaptive Management.** A type of natural resource management in which decisions are made as part of an ongoing science-based process. Adaptive management involves testing, monitoring, and evaluating applied strategies, and incorporating new knowledge into management approaches that are based on scientific findings and the needs of society. Results are used to modify management policy, strategies, and practices.

**Allotment.** An area of land in which one or more livestock operators graze their livestock. Allotments generally consists of BLM lands but may include other federally managed, state-owned, and private lands. An allotment may include or more separate pastures. Livestock numbers and periods of use are specified for each allotment.

**Animal Unit Month (AUM).** The amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or its equivalent for a period of one month.

**Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).** Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards (BLM Manual 1613, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern).

**Best Management Practice (BMP).** A practice or usually a combination of practices that are determined by a State or a designated planning agency to be the most effective and practicable means (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) of controlling point and nonpoint source pollutants at levels compatible with environmental quality goals.

**Big Game.** Indigenous, ungulate (hoofed) wildlife species that are hunted, such as elk, deer, bison, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope.

**Biodiversity (biological diversity).** The variety of life and its processes, and the interrelationships within and among various levels of ecological organization. Conservation, protection, and restoration of biological species and genetic diversity are needed to sustain the health of existing biological systems. Federal resource management agencies must examine the implications of management actions and development decisions on regional and local biodiversity.

**Candidate Species.** Taxa for which the US Fish and Wildlife Service has sufficient information on their status and threats to propose the species for listing as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act, but for which issuance of a proposed rule is currently precluded by higher priority listing actions. Separate lists for plants, vertebrate animals, and invertebrate animals are published periodically in the Federal Register (BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Manual).

**Condition Class (fire regimes).** Fire regime condition classes are a measure describing the degree of departure from historical fire regimes, possibly resulting in alterations of key ecosystem components, such as species composition, structural stage, stand age, canopy closure, and fuel loadings. One or more of the following activities may have caused this departure: fire suppression, timber harvesting, livestock grazing, introduction and establishment of exotic plant species, introduced insects or disease, or other management activities.

**Conditions of Approval.** Conditions or provisions (requirements) under which an application for a permit to drill or sundry notice is approved.

**Controlled Surface Use (CSU).** A stipulation intended for application where standard lease terms and permit-level decisions are deemed insufficient to achieve the level of resource protection necessary to protect the public interest, but where a No Surface Occupancy stipulation is deemed overly restrictive.

**Cooperating Agency.** Assists the lead federal agency in developing an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. These can be any agency with jurisdiction by law or special expertise for proposals covered by NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6). Any tribe or Federal, State, or local government jurisdiction with such qualifications may become a cooperating agency by agreement with the lead agency.

**Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).** An advisory council to the President of the US established by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. It reviews federal programs to analyze and interpret environmental trends and information.

**Critical Habitat.** An area occupied by a threatened or endangered species “on which are found those physical and biological features (1) essential to the conservation of the species, and (2) which may require special management considerations or protection.”

**Cultural Resources.** Locations of human activity, occupation, or use. Cultural resources include archaeological, historic, or architectural sites, structures, or places with important public and scientific uses, and locations of traditional cultural or religious importance to specified social and/or cultural groups.

**Cumulative Effects.** The direct and indirect effects of a proposed project alternative’s incremental impacts when they are added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, regardless of who carries out the action.

**Desired Future Condition.** For rangeland vegetation, the condition of rangeland resources on a landscape scale that meet management objectives. It is based on ecological, social, and economic considerations during the land planning process. It is usually expressed as ecological status or management status of vegetation (species composition, habitat diversity, and age and size class of species) and desired soil qualities (soil cover, erosion, and compaction). In a general context, desired future condition is a portrayal of the land or resource conditions that are expected to result if goals and objectives are fully achieved.

**Disposal.** Transfer of public land out of federal ownership to another party through sale, exchange, Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926, Desert Land Entry or other land law statutes.

**Easement.** A right afforded a person or agency to make limited use of another's real property for access or other purposes.

**Endangered Species.** Any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range (BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species).

**Environmental Assessment.** A concise public document prepared to provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact. It includes a brief discussion of the need for the proposal, alternatives considered, environmental impact of the proposed action and alternatives, and a list of agencies and individuals consulted.

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).** A detailed statement prepared by the responsible official in which a major federal action that significantly affects the quality of the human environment is described, alternatives to the proposed action are provided, and effects are analyzed.

**Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA).** A public lands unit identified in land use plans containing all acreage not identified as an SRMA. Recreation management actions within an ERMA are limited to only those of a custodial nature.

**Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).** Public Law 94-579, October 21, 1976, often referred to as the BLM's "Organic Act," which provides most of the BLM's legislated authority, direction policy, and basic management guidance.

**Fluid Minerals.** Oil, gas, coal bed natural gas, and geothermal resources.

**Forage.** All browse and herbaceous foods that are available to grazing animals.

**Geographic Information System (GIS).** A system of computer hardware, software, data, people, and applications that capture, store, edit, analyze, and display a potentially wide array of geospatial information.

**Geothermal Energy.** Natural heat from within the Earth, captured for production of electric power, space heating or industrial steam.

**Habitat.** An environment that meets a specific set of physical, biological, temporal, or spatial characteristics that satisfy the requirements of a plant or animal species or group of species for part or all of their life cycle.

**Habitat Management Plan.** A written and approved activity plan for a geographical area which identifies habitat management activities to be implemented in achieving specific objectives of planning decisions.

**Herd Management Area.** Public land under the jurisdiction of the BLM that has been designated for special management emphasizing the maintenance of an established wild horse or burro herd.

**Historic Resources.** Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places.

**Intermittent Stream.** An intermittent stream is a stream that flows only at certain times of the year when it receives water from springs or from some surface sources such as melting snow in mountainous areas.

**Land Use Plan.** A set of decisions that establish management direction for land within an administrative area, as prescribed under the planning provisions of FLPMA; an assimilation of land use plan level decisions developed through the planning process outlined in 43 CFR 1600, regardless of the scale at which the decisions were developed. The term includes both RMPs and management framework plans (BLM Handbook H-1601-I, Land Use Planning).

**Lease.** Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 provides the BLM's authority to issue leases for the use, occupancy, and development of public lands. Leases are issued for purposes such as a commercial filming, advertising displays, commercial or noncommercial croplands, apiaries, livestock holding or feeding areas not related to grazing permits and leases, native or introduced species harvesting, temporary or permanent facilities for commercial purposes (does not include mining claims), residential occupancy, ski resorts, construction equipment storage sites, assembly yards, oil rig stacking sites, mining claim occupancy if the residential structures are not incidental to the mining operation, and water pipelines and well pumps related to irrigation and nonirrigation facilities. The regulations establishing procedures for processing these leases and permits are found in 43 CFR 2920.

**Lease Stipulation.** A modification of the terms and conditions on a standard lease form at the time of the lease sale.

**Leasable Minerals.** Those minerals or materials designated as leasable under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. They include coal, phosphate, asphalt, sulphur, potassium and sodium minerals, and oil and gas. Geothermal resources are also leasable under the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970.

**Lek.** An assembly area where birds, especially sage-grouse, carry on display and courtship behavior.

**Locatable Minerals.** Minerals subject to exploration, development, and disposal by staking mining claims as authorized by the Mining Law of 1872, as amended. This includes deposits of gold, silver, and other uncommon minerals not subject to lease or sale.

**Mineral.** Any naturally formed inorganic material, solid or fluid inorganic substance that can be extracted from the earth, any of various naturally occurring homogeneous substances (as stone, coal, salt, sulfur, sand, petroleum, water, or natural gas) obtained usually from the ground, under federal laws considered as locatable (subject to the general mining laws), leasable (subject to the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920), and salable (subject to the Materials Act of 1947).

**Mineral Estate.** The ownership of minerals, including rights necessary for access, exploration, development, mining, ore dressing, and transportation operations.

**Mineral Materials (salable minerals).** Materials such as sand and gravel and common varieties of stone, pumice, pumicite, and clay that are not obtainable under the mining or leasing laws but that can be acquired under the Materials Act of 1947, as amended.

**Mining Claim.** A parcel of land that a miner takes and holds for mining purposes, having acquired the right of possession by complying with the Mining Law and local laws and rules. A mining claim may contain as many adjoining locations as the locator may make or buy. There are four categories of mining claims: lode, placer, millsite, and tunnel site.

**Mining Law of 1872.** Provides for claiming and gaining title to locatable minerals on public lands. Also referred to as the “General Mining Laws” or “Mining Laws.”

**Multiple-use.** The management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are used in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to changing needs and conditions; the use of some land for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output (FLPMA) (BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species).

**National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).** Public Law 91-190. Establishes environmental policy for the nation. Among other items, NEPA requires federal agencies to consider environmental values in decision-making processes.

**National Register of Historic Places.** A listing of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural sites of local, state, or national significance, established by the Historic Preservation Act of, 1966 and maintained by the National Park Service.

**National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.** A system of nationally designated rivers and their immediate environments that have outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, and other similar values and are preserved in a free-flowing condition. The system consists of three types of streams: (1) recreation—rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad and that may have some development along their shorelines and may have undergone some impoundments or diversion in the past; (2) scenic—rivers or sections of rivers free of impoundments with shorelines or watersheds still largely undeveloped but accessible in places by roads; and (3) wild—rivers or sections of rivers free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trails, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted.

**No Surface Occupancy (NSO):** A fluid minerals leasing constraint that prohibits occupancy or disturbance on all or part of the lease surface to protect special values or uses. Lessees may exploit the fluid mineral resources under the leases restricted by this constraint through use of directional drilling from sites outside the NSO area.

**Off-highway Vehicle (off-road vehicle).** Any motorized vehicle capable of, or designated for travel on or immediately over land, water or other natural terrain, excluding: (1) any non-amphibious registered motorboat; (2) any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes; (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved; (4) vehicles in official use; and (5) any combat or combat support vehicle when used for national defense.

**Off-highway Vehicle Area Designations.** BLM-administered lands in the CCD are designated as Open, Limited, or Closed for OHV use.

- **Open.** Designated areas where all types of motorized vehicles (jeeps, all-terrain vehicles, motorized dirt bikes, etc.) are permitted at all times, anywhere in the area, on roads or cross country, subject to the operating regulations and vehicle standards set forth in 43 CFR subparts 8341 and 8342.
- **Limited.** Designated areas where motorized vehicles are restricted to designated routes. Off-road, cross-country travel is prohibited in Limited areas, unless an area is specifically identified as an area where cross-country over-snow travel is allowed. Some existing routes may be closed in Limited areas.
- **Closed.** Designated areas where off-road motorized vehicle travel is prohibited yearlong. Emergency use of vehicles is allowed yearlong.

**Outstandingly Remarkable Values.** Values among those listed in Section 1(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968: “scenic, recreational, geological, fish and wildlife, historical, cultural, or other similar values....” Other similar values that may be considered include ecological, biological, or botanical.

**Paleontological Resources.** The physical remains or other physical evidence of plants and animals preserved in soils and sedimentary rock formations. Paleontological resources are important for correlating and dating rock strata and for understanding past environments, environmental change, and the evolution of life.

**Perennial Stream.** A stream that flows continuously. Perennial streams are generally associated with a water table in the localities through which they flow.

**Permittee.** A person or company permitted to graze livestock on public land.

**Petroglyph.** A form of rock art created by incising, scratching or pecking designs into rock surfaces.

**Planning Area.** The geographical area for which land use and resource management plans are developed and maintained. The Carson City District (CCD) RMP planning area totals approximately 5 million acres in 11

**Planning Criteria.** The standards, rules, and other factors developed by managers and interdisciplinary teams for their use in forming judgments about decision making, analysis, and data collection during planning. Planning criteria streamlines and simplifies the resource management planning actions.

**Planning Issues.** Concerns, conflicts, and problems with the existing management of public lands. Frequently, issues are based on how land uses affect resources. Some issues are concerned with how land uses can affect other land uses, or how the protection of resources affects land uses.

**Prehistoric Resources.** Any material remains, structures, and items used or modified by people before Euro-Americans established a presence in the region.

**Prescribed Fire Treatments.** A pre-planned, management-ignited fire designed to meet specific resource objectives, such as reducing fuel loads, preparing a site for chemical treatment or seeding, or promoting vegetation regeneration. Prescribed fires are useful for reducing fuel loads and providing or promoting vegetation regeneration. Prescribed fires can be performed anywhere that specific fire prescriptions can be met and fire risks to resources are mitigated after site-specific planning and NEPA

**Public Land.** Land or interest in land owned by the US and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the BLM without regard to how the US acquired ownership, except lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf and land held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos (BLM Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning).

**Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario.** The prediction of the type and amount of oil and gas activity that would occur in a given area. The prediction is based on geologic factors, past history of drilling, projected demand for oil and gas, and industry interest.

**Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926.** Provides for the lease and sale of public lands determined valuable for public purposes. The objective of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act is to meet the needs of state and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations by leasing or conveying public land required for recreation and public purpose uses. Examples of uses made of Recreation and Public Purposes Act lands are parks and greenbelts, sanitary landfills, schools, religious facilities, and camps for youth groups. The act provides substantial cost-benefits for land acquisition and provides for recreation facilities or historical monuments at no cost.

**Renewable Energy.** Resources that constantly renew themselves or that are regarded as practically inexhaustible. These include solar, wind, geothermal, hydro and wood. Although particular geothermal formations can be depleted, the natural heat in the Earth is a virtually inexhaustible reserve of potential energy.

**Resource Advisory Council (RAC).** A council established by the Secretary of the Interior to provide advice or recommendations to BLM management. The Northeastern Great Basin RAC cover issues within the CCD.

**Resource Management Plan (RMP).** A land use plan as prescribed by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act that establishes, for a given area of land, land-use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple-use, objectives, and actions to be achieved.

**Right-of-Way (ROW).** Public lands authorized to be used or occupied for specific purposes pursuant to a right-of-way grant, which are in the public interest and which require ROWs over, on, under, or through such lands.

**Riparian Area.** A form of wetland transition between permanently saturated wetlands and upland areas. Riparian areas exhibit vegetation or physical characteristics that reflect the influence of permanent surface or subsurface water. Typical riparian areas include lands along, adjacent to, or contiguous with perennially and intermittently flowing rivers and streams, glacial potholes, and the shores of lakes and reservoirs with stable water levels. Excluded are ephemeral streams or washes that lack vegetation and depend on free water in the soil.

**Roadless.** A linear route declared a road by the owner, managed for use by low-clearance vehicles having four or more wheels, and maintained for regular and continuous use.

**Scoping.** An early and open public participation process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.

**Season of Use.** The time during which livestock grazing is permitted on a given range area, as specified in the grazing lease.

**Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).** A public lands unit identified in land use plans to direct recreation funding and personnel to fulfill commitments made to provide specific, structured recreation opportunities. Both land use plan decisions and subsequent implementing actions for recreation in each SRMA are geared to a strategically identified primary market—destination, community, or undeveloped.

**Special Status Species.** Includes proposed species, listed species, and candidate species under the Endangered Species Act; also, state-listed species and BLM State Director-designated sensitive species (BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Management).

**Split Estate.** Lands on which the mineral estate remains with the federal government (BLM).

**Standard Lease Terms and Conditions.** Areas may be open to leasing with no specific management decisions defined in a Resource Management Plan; however, these areas are subject to lease terms and conditions as defined on the lease form (Form 3100-11, Offer to Lease and Lease for Oil and Gas; and Form 3200-24, Offer to Lease and Lease for Geothermal Resources).

**Stipulation.** A condition of lease issuance that provides a level of protection for other resource values or land uses by restricting lease operations during certain times or locations or to avoid unacceptable impacts, to an extent greater than standard lease terms or regulations. A stipulation is an enforceable term of the lease contract, supersedes any inconsistent provisions of the standard lease form, and is attached to and made a part of the lease. Lease stipulations further implement BLM's regulatory authority to protect resources or resource values. Lease stipulations are developed through the land use planning process.

**Threatened Species.** Any species that is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range (BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Management).

**Timing Limitation (TL).** A leasing stipulation that prohibits surface use during specified time periods to protect identified resource values. The constraint does not apply to the operation and maintenance



of production facilities unless analysis demonstrates that such constraints are needed and that less stringent, project-specific constraints would be insufficient.

**Traditional Cultural Property.** A property that derives significance from traditional values associated with it by a social or cultural group, such as an Indian tribe or local community. A traditional cultural property may qualify for the National Register of Historic Places if it meets the criteria and criteria exceptions at 36 CFR 60.4. See National Register Bulletin 38.

**Traditional Use.** Longstanding, socially conveyed, customary patterns of thought, cultural expression, and behavior, such as religious beliefs and practices, social customs, and land or resource uses. Traditions are shared generally within a social and/or cultural group and span generations. Usually traditional uses are reserved rights resulting from treaty and/or agreements with Native American groups.

**Utility Corridor.** Tract of land varying in width forming passageway through which various commodities such as oil, gas, and electricity are transported.

**Visual Resource Management (VRM).** The inventory and planning actions taken to identify visual resource values and to establish objectives for managing those values, and the management actions taken to achieve the visual resource management objectives.

**Visual Resource Management Classes.** Define the degree of acceptable visual change within a characteristic landscape. A class is based on the physical and sociological characteristics of any given homogeneous area and serves as a management objective. Categories assigned to public lands are based on scenic quality, sensitivity level, and distance zones. Each class has an objective that prescribes the amount of change allowed in the characteristic landscape (from BLM Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning). The four classes are described below:

- Class I provides for natural ecological changes only. This class includes primitive areas, some natural areas, some wild and scenic rivers, and other similar areas where landscape modification activities should be restricted.
- Class II areas are those areas where changes in any of the basic elements (form, line, color, or texture) caused by management activity should not be evident in the characteristic landscape.
- Class III includes areas where changes in the basic elements (form, line, color, or texture) caused by a management activity may be evident in the characteristic landscape. However, the changes should remain subordinate to the visual strength of the existing character.
- Class IV applies to areas where changes may subordinate the original composition and character; however, they should reflect what could be a natural occurrence within the characteristic landscape.

**Wild and Scenic Study River.** Rivers identified in Section 5 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 for study as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The rivers will be studied under the provisions of Section 4 of the act (BLM Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers – Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management).

**Wilderness.** A congressionally designated area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, that is protected and managed to preserve its natural conditions and that (1) generally appears to have been affected mainly by the forces of nature, with human imprints substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least 5,000 acres or is large enough to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value. The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891) (BLM Handbook H-6310-1, Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures).

**Wilderness Characteristics.** Wilderness characteristics include size, the appearance of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. They may also include ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. However Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 has been updated by Instruction Memorandum 2003-195, dated June 20, 2003. Indicators of an area's naturalness include the extent of landscape modifications, the presence of native vegetation communities, and the connectivity of habitats. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation may be experienced when the sights, sounds, and evidence of other people are rare or infrequent, in locations where visitors can be isolated, alone or secluded from others, where the use of the area is through nonmotorized, nonmechanical means, and where no or minimal developed recreation facilities are encountered.

**Wilderness Study Area.** A designation made through the land use planning process of a roadless area found to have wilderness characteristics, as described in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (BLM Handbook H-6310-1, Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures).

**Wildland Fire.** Any fire, regardless of ignition source, that is burning outside of a prescribed fire and any fire burning on public lands or threatening public land resources, where no fire prescription standards have been prepared (BLM Handbook H-1742-1, Emergency Fire Rehabilitation).

**Wildland Fire Use.** A vegetation treatment that involves taking advantage of a naturally-ignited wildland fire in an area where fire would benefit resources. Wildland fire use would be conducted in specific areas needing treatment after a site-specific plan and NEPA analysis are completed and only if predetermined prescriptive parameters (e.g., weather/fire behavior) can be met. Until this planning and NEPA analysis are accomplished, wildland fires would be suppressed using an appropriate management response.

**Wildland-urban Interface (WUI).** The line, area or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.

**Withdrawal.** An action that restricts the use of public land and segregates the land from the operation of some or all of the public land and mineral laws. Withdrawals are also used to transfer jurisdiction of management of public lands to other federal agencies.