

TAOS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

May 2012

New Mexico • Taos Field Office



BLM MISSION

To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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Cover art by Pam Herrera-Olivas, Wildlife Biologist, Taos Field Office.

Acronyms/Abbreviations

ACEC ~ area of critical environmental concern

APD ~ application for permit to drill

APHIS-WS ~ U.S. Department of Agriculture
Animal Plan Health Inspection Services-Wildlife
Services

ATV ~ all-terrain vehicle

AUM ~ animal unit month

BA ~ biological assessment

BMP ~ best management practices

CAA ~ Clean Air Act

CFR ~ Code of Federal Regulations

CSU ~ controlled surface use

CWCS ~ Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation
Strategy

CWMA ~ coordinated weed management area

DOI ~ Department of the Interior

DOQQs ~ digital orthophoto quarter-quadrangle

EA ~ environmental assessment

EIS ~ environmental impact statement

EO ~ Executive order

EPA ~ Environmental Protection Agency

ERMA ~ extensive recreation management area

ESA ~ Endangered Species Act

FLPMA ~ Federal Land Policy and Management
Act

FMP ~ fire management plan

FMU ~ fire management unit

GBASPA ~ Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites
Protection Act

GHG ~ greenhouse gasses

GIS ~ geographic information system

HMA ~ habitat management area

HMP ~ habitat management plan

IM ~ instructional memoranda

IMP ~ interim management policy

IPM ~ integrated pest management

IWM ~ integrated weed management

JDB ~ John Dunn Bridge

NEPA ~ National Environmental Policy Act

NHPA ~ National Historic Preservation Act

NHT ~ national historic trail

NMDGF ~ New Mexico Department of Game and
Fish

NMDOT ~ New Mexico Department of
Transportation

NMED ~ New Mexico Environmental Department

NRHP ~ National Register of Historic Places

NSO ~ no surface occupancy

OHV ~ off-highway vehicle

ORV ~ outstandingly remarkable value

PFC ~ proper functioning condition

PV ~ photovoltaic

RAC ~ resource advisory council

RGCT ~ Rio Grande cutthroat trout

RMP ~ resource management plan

RMZ ~ riparian management zone

R&PP ~ Recreation and Public Purpose Act

SHPO ~ state historic preservation office

SRMA ~ special recreation management area

SRP ~ special recreation permit

TAFO ~ Taos Field Office (BLM)

TCP ~ traditional cultural property

T&E ~ threatened and endangered

TJB ~ Taos Junction Bridge

TL ~ timing limitation

USDI ~ U.S. Department of the Interior

USDA ~ U.S. Department of Agriculture

USFWS ~ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

VRM ~ visual resource management

WSR ~ wild and scenic river

WUI ~ wildfire urban interface

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 *Purpose and Need for Plan*

The purpose of the Taos Resource Management Plan (RMP) is to provide broad-scale direction for the management of public lands and resources administered by the Taos Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The RMP presents desired outcomes—expressed in terms of goals and objectives for resource conditions and uses—and establishes the allowable uses, management actions, and special designations that will enable the BLM to achieve the desired outcomes.

Management decisions presented in the Taos RMP are in accordance with principles of multiple use and sustained yield, as mandated by the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, which establishes public land policy and sets forth the requirement for the BLM to develop, maintain, and, when appropriate, revise or amend land use plans—such as the Taos RMP—for the management of public lands. The RMP guides the Taos Field Office in the implementation of all its subsequent management actions and site-specific activities.

BLM regulations require that existing land use plans be revised when necessary to address current resource conditions, evolving demands on resources, and new and revised national-level policy (43 CFR 1610.5-6). Management direction for the Taos Field Office was contained in the 1988 Taos RMP and subsequent amendments. Since the 1988 plan and amendments were completed, new information, revised laws and policies, emerging issues, and changed circumstances and resource conditions generated the need for a revised land use plan.

1.2 *Scope of Plan*

As indicated, the BLM prepares land use plans to ensure that the public lands are managed in accordance with FLPMA under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Management decisions in the RMP apply only to the surface and subsurface estate administered by the BLM (described below) and recognize all valid existing rights.

As required by FLPMA, the BLM must manage public lands “in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use . . . and in a manner which recognizes the Nation’s need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands” (43 U.S.C. 1702).

Management decisions in the Taos RMP are made compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, State, and Federal agencies and local Native American tribes to the extent consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of Federal law and regulations applicable to public lands. The BLM will work cooperatively and collaboratively with government agencies—as well as with interested groups and individuals and other members of the public—in implementing the land use plan, and will continue to provide for ongoing consultation with Native American tribal governments and strategies for protecting recognized traditional uses.

Types of Planning Decisions

The land use planning decisions contained in the Taos RMP fall into two categories: (1) desired outcomes, or goals and objectives, and (2) allowable uses and actions anticipated to achieve desired outcomes.

1. Desired outcomes

Land use plans identify desired outcomes expressed in terms of specific goals and objectives. Goals and objectives are established to direct the BLM's actions towards most effectively meeting legal mandates, regulatory responsibilities, departmental and agency policy, and various guidance and to achieve other important resource needs.

Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes and are usually not quantifiable.

Objectives identify specific desired outcomes for resources. They are usually quantifiable and measurable and may have established timeframes for achievement.

2. Allowable uses and management actions anticipated to achieve desired allocations

- Allowable uses

Land use plans identify allowable uses—referred throughout the RMP as *allocations*—that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited on the public lands and mineral estate. These allocations identify land and/or subsurface mineral interests where uses are allowed, including any conditions or limitations that may be necessary to meet goals and objectives. Land use plans also identify lands where specific uses are excluded to protect resource values. Certain lands may be open or closed to specific uses based on legislative, regulatory, or policy requirements or criteria to protect sensitive resource values.

- Management actions

Land use plans also identify the actions anticipated to achieve desired outcomes, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health. These actions include proactive measures as well as measures or criteria applied to guide day-to-day activities occurring on public lands.

Management actions may include the establishment of administrative designations such as areas of critical environmental concern, special recreation management areas, areas recommend for withdrawals, land tenure adjustments, and recommend or make findings of suitability for congressional designations.

1.3 Planning Area

The planning area—the area encompassing the public lands administered by the Taos Field Office that are subject to the approved RMP—includes approximately 15.5 million acres of mixed ownership in northern New Mexico. It includes lands within Union, Mora, Colfax, San Miguel, Los Alamos, Harding, Taos, and Santa Fe counties, and the eastern half of Rio Arriba County. The planning area provides a regional context for management decisions and establishes a framework for collaborative planning with various governmental or tribal jurisdictions and the public.

The decisions contained in the RMP affect approximately 594,700 acres of public surface estate and approximately 1,517,850 acres of Federal subsurface minerals and, as indicated, applies only

to BLM-administered surface and mineral estate (see Maps 1 and 2, respectively). No RMP decisions change existing rights or authority of private land owners or other surface management agencies.

The distribution of the public lands has an important influence on land management options. The public lands are fairly well consolidated in Taos, Santa Fe, and Rio Arriba counties, while scattered or isolated ownership patterns predominate over much of the remaining planning area. Figure 1-1 shows the planning area and its location within New Mexico. Major population centers include the areas around Santa Fe, Espanola, Taos, and Las Vegas.

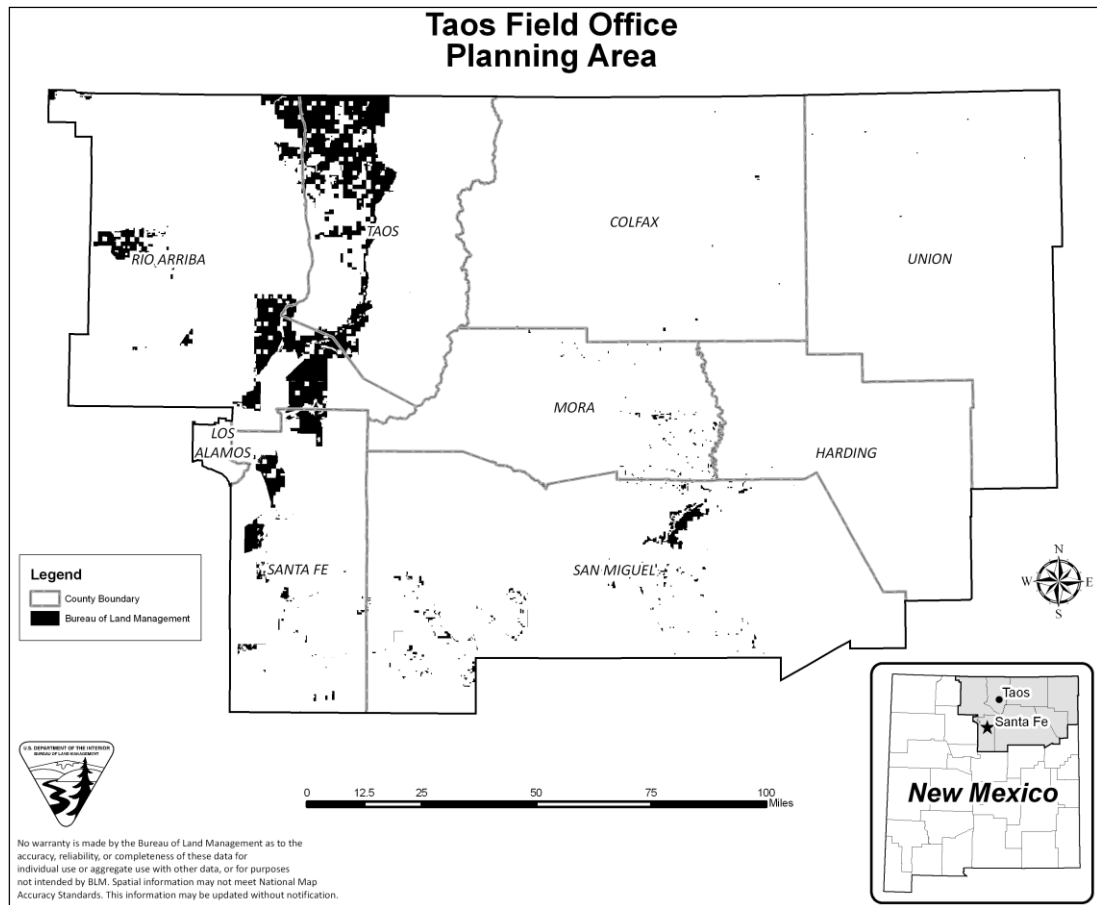


Figure 1-1. Location of planning area

Table 1-1 provides the acreage of Federal, State, tribal, and private surface acres in the planning area as well as Federal minerals.

To assist in delineating allowable uses and management actions for resources, resource uses, and special designations, the planning area is divided into eight distinct planning units (see Map 1). Management decisions are presented throughout the RMP according to these planning units.

Note that acreage figures presented throughout the RMP are based on geographical information system (GIS) data which is subject to constant refinement. Any potential discrepancies within the acreage figures or future refinements in the data may be corrected or updated in the RMP through plan maintenance, as provided for in the BLM regulation at 43 CFR 1610.5-4.

Table 1-1. Land and mineral ownership within the Taos Field Office planning area

Surface and Mineral Owner	Surface Acres*	Mineral Acres*
BLM	594,700	1,517,850
Forest Service	2,600,500	2,374,060
Other Federal minerals/Federal surface		5,590
Total Federal minerals		3,897,500
Tribal	394,830	
State	1,472,360	
Other agencies	165,930	
Private	10,292,260	
Total area (Taos planning area)	15,520,580	

*Acreages are approximate

Chapter 2 Plan Decisions

2.1 *Resources*

2.1.1 *Air and Atmospheric Values*

Goals

- To protect, maintain, or improve the quality of air resources associated with public lands managed by the BLM.
- Prevent or minimize the threat to public health and safety, damages to natural resources or economic losses due to decreases in air quality.

Objectives

- Minimize air quality impacts from BLM management actions such that compliance with all National Ambient Air Quality Standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are consistently achieved.
- Identify potential greenhouse gas (GHG) sources for proposed actions.
- Identify potential sinks for GHG emissions.

General Management Guidance

Congressional direction in the Clean Air Act (CAA) requires Federal agencies to comply with all Federal, State, and local air pollution standards. BLM guidance for air resource management is provided in BLM Manual 7300. The CAA also requires that each State develop an implementation plan to ensure that national ambient air quality standards are attained and maintained for criteria pollutants. Nonbinding New Mexico Environment Department air quality directives will be followed when considering allocations and implementing management activities. Best management practices will be used to ensure that air quality is not impaired onsite or in adjacent communities.

Over the life of the plan, permitting processes must comply with EPA and New Mexico air quality standards. Management actions and the allocation of resources will meet State air quality standards or result in reduced emissions of regulated air pollutants and greenhouse gasses.

2.1.2 *Cultural*

Goals

- Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.
- Seek to reduce imminent threats and resolve potential conflicts from natural or human-caused deterioration or potential conflict with other resource uses by ensuring that all authorizations for land and resource use will comply with National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), section 106.
- Identify and protect national historic trail routes and historic settings, remnants, and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.

- Promote stewardship, conservation, and appreciation of cultural resources through education and public outreach programs.
- Consult with Native American tribes to identify any cultural values or religious beliefs that may be affected by BLM authorizations or actions. Provisions will be made for Native American use of traditional cultural properties.

Objectives

- Preserve and protect significant cultural resources through designation of areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) with cultural management prescriptions.
- Support public awareness and interest in cultural resources through interpretive sites, archaeological tours, presentations, and literature.
- Encourage scientific research.
- Promote site stewardship.
- Identify traditional cultural properties and culturally significant resource sites through tribal consultation.
- National historic trails: Preserve the associated high-potential historic sites and high-potential historic route segments, physical remnants, and contributing features; interpret the historic aspects of the trails for the protection of the resource; and enhance understanding and enjoyment of these trails in cooperation with trail-administering agencies and nonprofit partners.

General Management Guidance

Management actions on public lands and projects on private land which are federally funded, permitted, or assisted will comply with sections 106 and 110 of NHPA, Executive Order 13287, and the Protocol Agreement between BLM New Mexico and the State Historic Preservation Office. The inventory, survey, classification, and preservation of cultural resources will proceed as directed under NHPA for BLM public lands and on private land projects where applicable. Known archaeological sites and sites identified in the future will be evaluated for placement in one of six use categories. These categories and their management actions are shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Cultural resource use allocation categories

Category	Allowable Uses	Management Actions	Desired Future Condition
Scientific Use	Research	Permit appropriate research, including data recovery	Preserved until research potential is realized
Conservation for Future Use	Research or public interpretation	Propose protective measures/designations	Preserved until conditions for use are met
Traditional Use	Native American activities	Consult with tribes to determine limitations	Long-term preservation
Public Use	Recreation and public interpretation/education	Determine limitations and permitted uses	Long-term preservation and on-site interpretation
Experimental Use	Research, followed by interpretation	Determine nature of experiment	Protected until used
Discharged from Management	All uses allowed	Remove protective measures	No use after recordation; not preserved

A balanced approach to site treatment will be implemented through excavation and data recovery versus avoidance of sites that are subject to natural deterioration (e.g., erosion) depending on site-specific factors. An extensive consultation program to identify traditional cultural properties and culturally significant economic resource sites throughout the management area will be developed, and identified properties will be protected and ecologically restored if deteriorated.

Native American tribes will be consulted on proposed projects that may affect traditional cultural properties or significant areas and tribal access to BLM-managed public lands. They will also be consulted concerning heritage tourism projects.

Special attention will be directed to protecting and preserving cultural resources, particularly within the West Santa Fe and Galisteo Basin planning units as called for in the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act (GBASPA). Cultural resources will also be protected and preserved within the Ojo Caliente, La Cienega, and other ACECs and along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and Old Spanish National Historic Trails.

The BLM will continue to carry out research through partnerships with students and professors from academic institutions. These projects add a great deal to the knowledge of cultural resources on public lands and help the BLM to develop strategies for the management and interpretation of these resources.

Livestock grazing allotments will be evaluated for significant cultural sites. Conflicts with cultural resources will be eliminated or minimized.

BLM law enforcement will regularly monitor and patrol listed, eligible, and potential National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) sites and other areas of high cultural significance to discourage illegal artifact collecting and site disturbance. The Site Stewards Program will continue to monitor site condition, and increase BLM presence at sites.

The BLM will educate the public through heritage tourism projects as outlined in Executive Order 13287. Interpretive projects will be developed and expanded in the Ojo Caliente and La Cienega ACECs, along historic roads and trails, within BLM recreation areas, and where other opportunities arise. Ward Ranch, La Cieneguilla Petroglyphs, and Posi Pueblo will continue to be interpreted to the public. Archaeology of the Galisteo Basin will be interpreted to the public as part of the implementation of the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act. Trails, roads, and battle sites, including national historic trails, will be interpreted to the public, and recreational opportunities will be developed. Archaeology field trips and presentations with school groups and interested publics will be accommodated. Work with the Ojo Caliente Hot Springs Resort will continue to develop an educational display interpreting the prehistory of the Ojo Caliente Valley. The publication of other educational materials will continue. A sign plan will be developed and implemented field office-wide, consistent with this RMP and subsequent activity-level plans, which will incorporate the objectives of cultural resource interpretation and protection.

The BLM will continue to work with the Taos Archaeological Society on archaeological projects including petroglyph recording, site mapping and recording, and archaeological inventory. The BLM will also continue the partnership with the Vecinos del Rio on the Mesa Prieta Petroglyph recording project.

Allocations and Management Actions

Several areas having unique or sensitive cultural resources will be designated for special management. Generally, management prescriptions to protect resources in these areas will include reduced access and restrictions on surface-disturbing activities. The following special designations are specifically related to cultural resources management and protection (see Map 11):

- Ojo Caliente ACEC (66,149 acres, including Ku Pueblo)
- La Cienega ACEC (13,724 acres)
- Pueblos ACEC (265 acres, including Ojo del Zorro, La Caja Pueblo, Pueblo Quemado, Pueblo Sarco, and Sahiu Pueblo)
- Santa Fe Ranch ACEC (21,030 acres)
- Galisteo Basin ACEC (450 acres, including San Lazaro)
- Sombrillo ACEC (18,080 acres)

See Appendix A for a description of how these sites and areas will be managed.

In order to protect cultural resources associated with Burnt Corn Pueblo (68 acres) and Petroglyph Hill (120 acres), two sites included in the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act designation and Galisteo Basin ACEC, livestock grazing will be unavailable at these locations within allotments 917 and 926, respectively.

2.1.3 Fish and Wildlife

2.1.3.1 Fish

Goals

- Manage streams within the planning area to ensure that the natural diversity of aquatic biota is consistent with habitat.
- Manage streams within the planning area to ensure that the natural integrity of aquatic ecosystems are protected, restored, and/or managed in an ecologically sound manner.
- Expand recreational fisheries while protecting native fish populations and their habitat by developing and enhancing partnerships.
- Protect aquatic habitats and manage BLM-affected streams to meet water quality standards established by the New Mexico Environment Department and from impairment or degradation.
- Ensure aquatic habitats will support a diversity of self-sustaining biotic communities that are appropriate to the given environment.

Objectives

- Manage all BLM perennial stream reaches to have at a minimum fish populations consisting of 50 percent native fish species as measured by catch per unit effort (e.g., number per minute).
- Eliminate or control populations of undesirable nonnative fish species in all waters managed by the BLM.
- Continue to work with New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) to stock trout species in BLM-managed waters for recreational fishing opportunities.

- Complete fish habitat quality and quantity surveys on all streams within the planning area on a 10 year rotating cycle.
- Develop and/or implement one project per year to conserve, enhance, or restore fish populations and habitats, based on survey results.

General Management Guidance

BLM guidance for aquatic resource management is in BLM Manual 6720. Congressional and presidential direction that guides management includes the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, the Sikes Act, Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980, Executive Order (EO) 12962 (June 7, 1995), and EO 13112 (February 3, 1999).

Collectively, these actions direct the BLM to conserve game and nongame aquatic species and their associated habitat as well as control introduced nuisance species. EO 13352 (August 26, 2004) directs the BLM to promote cooperative conservation allowing for local input into Federal decisions.

Implementation is directed at conserving populations of native aquatic species, providing angling opportunities for game fish, and identifying aquatic habitat conservation and restoration opportunities. The fisheries program will work closely with NMDGF to attain goals and will develop a cooperative network through affiliation with Western Native Trout Initiative and Desert Fish Habitat Initiative.

Management activities focus in order of importance on native game species, native nongame species, and nonnative game species. Activities include monitoring, habitat restoration and conservation, stocking to enhance existing populations, and removal of nonnative nongame species. Nonnative refers to species that were introduced to a river or stream system, where they were not historically present, through human activities such as stocking. The program also monitors native species to prevent population declines that could result in listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Management guidance from the Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in New Mexico affecting fisheries is also consistent with current program direction and provides direct and indirect management guidance. The Biotic Communities Standard is directly relevant to fish and other aquatic species and provides specific direction to manage ecological processes for species. The Riparian Site Standard is directly relevant to aquatic habitat and provides stream channel indicators related to physical aspects of aquatic resources. The Upland Sites Standard is indirectly relevant to aquatic resources through minimization of upland damage that could result in not meeting the two standards above.

Allocations and Management Actions

The Taos Field Office will support the designation of the Rio Grande cutthroat trout as a BLM sensitive species in New Mexico. The BLM will work with the NMDGF to restore Rio Grande cutthroat trout to 5 miles of the Rio Agua Caliente and continue to work with NMDGF to stock trout species in BLM-managed waters for recreational fishing opportunities. The BLM will prevent channelization/dredging along riparian stream areas to preserve fishery habitat.

In addition to the Rio Agua Caliente restoration, the Taos Field Office will actively manage fish populations and habitat to increase native and decrease exotic fish species on approximately 230 miles of perennial streams. Native fish populations of interest will include those identified as

BLM sensitive or those in the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New Mexico (CWCS) (NMDGF 2005).

2.1.3.2 Wildlife

Goals

- Manage public lands to achieve healthy watersheds and landscapes, sustained biological communities, and an improved understanding of ecosystems and resources through integrated, multi-party, and interdisciplinary assessment.
- Ensure optimum populations and a natural abundance and diversity of wildlife resources on public lands by restoring, maintaining, and enhancing habitat conditions.
- Determine the status and trends in selected indicators of the condition of BLM lands to allow managers to make informed decisions and to work more effectively with other agencies and individuals for the benefit of wildlife resources.
- Provide early warning of abnormal conditions of selected resources to help develop effective mitigation measures and reduce costs of management.
- Provide data to better understand the dynamic nature and condition of BLM lands and to provide reference points for comparisons with other altered environments.
- Provide data to meet certain legal and congressional mandates related to natural resource protection and public enjoyment.
- Provide a means of measuring progress towards performance goals.

Objectives

- Restore, protect, and enhance the resources necessary to support native wildlife species and their associated habitats, including monitoring and maintenance of wildlife water developments to improve design and/or retire/relocate to appropriate sites.
- Management priorities focus on big game winter and summer ranges by protecting and improving approximately 50,000 acres in the Taos Plateau and Chama planning units.
- Manage sagebrush habitat, including mapping of current condition and extent of habitat for sagebrush-obligate species, to provide a range of self-sustaining sagebrush cover containing a variety of age classes and structures.
- Map and assess priority habitats for migratory birds in the Chama, Taos Plateau, Lower Gorge/Copper Hill, Ojo Caliente and West Santa Fe planning units, and develop habitat management recommendations and/or plans within seven years after approval of the RMP.
- Protect and improve big game winter range in the Taos Plateau, Chama and Ojo Caliente planning units by managing for low road density in transportation plans, implementing vegetation treatments to increase structural and compositional diversity, and construction of projects to improve water availability and wildlife movement inside migratory corridors.
- Obtain scientifically sound biological information in order to properly assess potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat in relation to wind or solar energy development, gathering both pre- and post-construction data according to current industry and scientific protocols, as it affects wildlife in general and birds and bats in particular.
- Determine long-term trends in vegetation species composition, distribution, abundance, and community structure (e.g., cover and density by height class of woody species) of selected plant communities for focal wildlife species.

- Determine long-term trends in species composition and abundance of native and nonnative migratory birds.
- Improve understanding of breeding bird-habitat relationships and the effects of management actions, such as invasive plant and animal control, by compiling existing data and/or researching the effects of these management actions on changes in bird species composition and abundance in relation to changes in specific habitat variables.
- Determine long-term trends in the distribution and abundance of bats in the Chama, Taos Plateau, West Santa Fe, and Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning units.
- Determine long-term trends in the distribution and abundance of prairie dogs in the Chama and Taos Plateau planning units.
- Determine long-term trends in the distribution and abundance of river otters in the Rio Grande or any other areas of relocation, as appropriate.
- Use imagery or other techniques to estimate trends in the areal extent and configuration of land-cover types in the planning area.
- Determine annual nesting success of breeding raptors on BLM lands as measured by territories occupied, number of chicks produced, and number of chicks fledged.
- Determine annual status and trends in prey base for raptor species in the Taos Plateau, as measured by abundance and species composition of small mammals and rodents.

General Management Guidance

Primary guidance for the wildlife program is presented in BLM Manual 6500. In addition to those listed above under section 2.1.3.1, major laws (including pertinent amendments) affecting the BLM wildlife program include the Migratory Bird Treaty Acts of 1918 and 1929, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000, Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940, Endangered Species Act of 1973, Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988, Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act) of 1947, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974, Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) of 1972, Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, Lacey Act of 1900, Lacey Act Amendments of 1981, Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, Sikes Act of 1960, and the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934.

Key Executive Orders include EO 13186, Conservation of Migratory Birds; EO 13443, Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation; EO 13112, Prevention and Control of Invasive Species; and EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands.

The BLM will continue to cooperate and collaborate with Federal, tribal, and State wildlife management agencies, as well as private landowners, to improve habitat for wildlife and will continue to implement existing activity-level plans to improve wildlife habitat, including the San Antonio/Pot Mountain Habitat Management Plan (USDI-BLM 1992), the Final Rio Grande Corridor Plan (USDI-BLM 2000a), and the Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Management Plan (USDI-BLM 2000b).

While the BLM is responsible for protecting and improving wildlife habitat on public land, population management of resident fish and wildlife species (with the exception of migratory birds and threatened and endangered species) is under the authority of NMDGF. Where ever practicable, the BLM will coordinate and cooperate with the NMDGF to implement the CWCS.

The BLM will avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate adverse impacts on the habitats of migratory bird species of conservation concern to the extent feasible and in a manner consistent with regional or state-wide bird conservation priorities, such as those identified in the New Mexico Bird Conservation Plan. Management of habitat for species of conservation concern (as defined in BLM IM 2008-050) will emphasize avoidance or minimizing negative impacts and restoring and enhancing habitat quality to implement EO 13186.

BLM Manual 1745 outlines how the BLM coordinates with NMDGF to determine whether habitat conditions exist that will allow successful introduction, transplant, augmentation, or re-establishment of locally or regionally absent species.

Wildlife habitat will be protected or enhanced by conforming to the Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management, allotment management plans, and cooperative agreements. The BLM, working with the permittee and other governmental agencies, will adjust grazing practices where necessary.

In compliance with EO 13443, the BLM will continue to work with NMDGF and interest groups to maintain and enhance game species habitat and support hunting opportunities on public lands.

Animal damage control on BLM-administered land is conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Services-Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) in accordance with a 1987 national-level memorandum of understanding between the agencies. The APHIS-WS has overall responsibility for the program and supervises all control activities.

As part of the NEPA process, wildlife habitat will continue to be evaluated and measures to reduce impacts will be identified to assure compatibility of projects with management objectives for wildlife habitat, including seasonal restrictions and appropriate best management practices (see Appendix C for BMPs).

Allocations and Management Actions

Biotic and other public land health standards will be attained through management emphasis placed on key habitats identified by the NMDGF's CWCS and through continued implementation of existing HMPs and other plans, development of new HMPs—as might be developed for portions of the Chama, Ojo Caliente, West Santa Fe, Taos Plateau, and/or Lower Gorge/Copper Hills planning units or the Sabinoso ACEC—and management protection afforded by ACECs, such as Chama, Copper Hill, La Cienega, Lower Gorge, Ojo Caliente, Sabinoso, or Taos Plateau ACECs. Habitat management emphasis will be placed on native species, both game and nongame, using methods consistent with vegetation management decisions.

No livestock conversions from cattle to domestic sheep or goats will be allowed in allotments within occupied bighorn sheep habitat due to the potential transmission of disease and subsequent mortality of bighorn sheep. New sheep and goat allotments or conversions from cattle to sheep or goats will be permitted a minimum of nine airline miles from known bighorn sheep habitat. This distance will be greater if deemed necessary through site-specific analysis or a cooperative agreement with other Federal or State agencies.

In the Taos Plateau planning unit, livestock grazing will be unavailable in the portions of Ute Mountain acquired in 2003 and 2005 to prevent competition for forage with resident pronghorn, elk, and other wildlife species of special emphasis. Upon consultation with adjacent private landowners in this area regarding vegetation treatments, it has been determined that wildlife displaced from public lands onto adjacent agricultural lands results in a negative impact to

private landowners. Therefore, establishing a non-competitive forage base for wildlife in the Ute Mountain area will benefit wildlife and minimize impacts to adjacent landowners.

Also, based on an interdisciplinary review by BLM resource specialists, any additional AUM's for grazing in this planning unit will be apportioned to either wildlife or livestock based on site-specific conditions, including but not limited to special status species or wildlife habitat and watershed conditions.

Fences will be built to standard BLM wildlife specifications to allow wildlife passage, with the exception of fences built specifically to keep native ungulates out of an area (i.e., forage monitoring plots). Fences identified as barriers to wildlife movement will be considered for removal or reconstruction. In addition, the BLM will seek to acquire State or private lands within five miles of the Rio Grande if acquisition will provide protection to Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep habitat.

Transportation plans will consider opportunities to reduce fragmentation in the Taos Plateau, Chama, La Cienega, Ojo Caliente, Lower Gorge and Sabinoso ACECs. Determining the existing degree of habitat fragmentation will provide an accurate baseline against which to assess the potential impact of travel management decisions and assist in developing a travel management plan that can provide a road network that will preserve or create sufficient core habitat and linkages to support wildlife. In elk winter range and migratory corridors (see Map 3), road densities managed for 0.5 miles per square mile will reduce disturbance to these species during critical periods. Within a 0.25-mile buffer along the Rio Grande where roads or trails may impact bighorn sheep, actions will be implemented to prevent or minimize disturbance to bighorn sheep.

The BLM will ensure that OHV route designations are located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. When data becomes available, BLM lands will be managed to consider the relationship between large wildlife populations and smaller isolated populations whenever possible. The intent will be to maintain the function and diversity of all habitats in large areas, or patches, across the landscape and minimize long-term human disturbance to wildlife to provide for movement, dispersal, and home ranges. In the context of wildlife habitat fragmentation, the size of the patch will be relative to the size of the BLM parcel(s) and adjacent landowner status (private, Federal or State lands).

Timing restrictions will be applied to surface disturbing activities in priority species' critical habitat to avoid or minimize disturbance during their seasons of use, particularly the breeding and winter season. The critical wildlife habitat and time periods to which the restrictions will apply are elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and bighorn sheep critical winter habitat (see Map 3), January 1 through April 30, and bighorn sheep calving range/habitat, May 1 through June 30. Restrictions will also apply to Pronghorn fawning areas, May 1 to July 15. Exceptions to these timing restrictions may be granted by the authorized officer as new data becomes available or if warranted by seasonal conditions.

Portions of the Taos Plateau, Chama, Ojo Caliente and Lower Gorge ACECs, where seasonal critical ranges or migratory corridors for big game are present (see Map 3), including the Rio Grande for bighorn sheep, contain habitat where these timing restrictions may be applied. Potential uses which may be restricted include actions related to transportation, recreation, solid and fluid mineral development, livestock grazing, and land use authorizations.

To protect bald eagles, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, prairie falcons, other raptor species (not including special status species—see section 2.1.6 below), mountain plover, and gray vireo, spatial and temporal restrictions will be applied to surface disturbing activities. Prior to surface disturbing activities, surveys will be conducted in potential nesting habitat to identify any active nest (i.e., any nest occupied in the past seven years). Spatial and seasonal buffers are based on the best available recommendations for protecting nesting birds under a wide range of activities. However, they are necessarily site-specific to proposed projects. When determining site-specific buffers, a BLM wildlife biologist will evaluate the type and duration of the proposed activity, the position of topographic and vegetative features, the sensitivity of the affected species, the habituation of breeding pairs to existing activities in the proposed project area, and the local nesting density. The BLM will informally coordinate with State agencies and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) anytime a site-specific analysis shows that an action may have an adverse impact on nesting birds. The coordination will determine if the impact could be avoided or must be otherwise mitigated, and if so, to determine appropriate and effective mitigation strategies.

In general, the following species will have spatial and seasonal buffers applied accordingly:

- Bald eagle: 0.5-1.0 miles (January 1 – August 31)
- Golden eagle: 0.5 mile (January 1 – August 31)
- Peregrine falcon: 1.0 mile (February 1 – August 31)
- Prairie falcon: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31)
- Osprey: 0.25 mile (April 1 – August 31)
- Cooper’s hawk: 0.25 (March 15 – August 31)
- Northern goshawk: 0.5 mile (March 1 – July 31)
- Red-tailed hawk: 0.125 mile (February 1 – July 15)
- Ferruginous hawk: 1.0 mile (February 1 – July 15)
- Mountain plover: 1.0 mile (March 1 – August 1)
- Gray vireo: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31)

Long-duration activities will avoid active nests by the above specie-specific distances (NMDGF, 2007; USDI-USFWS, 2008; Williams, 1997). Short-duration activities—those which will begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to the next breeding season—will avoid active nests by these distances during the respective seasonal periods. These restrictions may be adjusted or waived if impacts can be adequately mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer. In addition, greater species-specific restrictions may be applied to wind energy projects (see section 2.2.7).

Similarly, prior to surface disturbing activities, surveys will be conducted in potential black tailed prairie dog habitat to identify any occupied prairie dog town. Long-duration activities will avoid occupied towns by 0.25 miles. Short-duration activities—those which will begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to the next breeding season—will avoid occupied towns by 0.25 miles between April 1 and September 15. These restrictions may also be adjusted or waived if impacts can be adequately mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer.

Management will emphasize protecting and restoring special habitat components or features that contribute to the conservation of bat species. These features include, but are not limited to, caves, cliffs, riparian areas, wetlands, snags, and downed wood. Caves and abandoned mines will be surveyed and assessed for bat use. Areas within 200 meters of features found to support

significant bat populations will be closed to any surface disturbing activities (this limitation will not apply to maintenance of existing infrastructure, such as roads and other developments).

Bat gates or other suitable measures will be used to protect bat habitat when significant bat use of caves or abandoned mines is determined. Public health and safety will take precedence over protection of bat habitat if hazardous mine openings cannot be remediated with installation of bat gates. Efforts will be made to safely remove resident bats prior to closure. Also, it has been determined that the Black Rock Springs cave does not contain significant bat habitat. Therefore, this cave will not be closed to protect priority wildlife species.

Noise disturbance and management activities will be avoided or minimized within 1 mile of raptor nests during the nesting and brood rearing period. Unoccupied raptor nests will be protected from removal or destruction, including a year-round protection of a 0.25-mile buffer of suitable habitat around any known occupied and unoccupied nests. Parking any motor vehicle or camping within 300 yards of any developed waters used by wildlife or domestic stock without prior consent of the BLM will be prohibited.

2.1.4 Paleontology

Goals

- Preserve and protect paleontological resources to ensure their availability for appropriate uses by present and future generations in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and Executive orders.
- Manage paleontological resources for their scientific, education, and recreational values, and mitigate any potential adverse impacts to them.

Objectives

- Evaluate and identify potential areas that contain vertebrate fossils or noteworthy occurrences of invertebrate or plant fossils.
- Develop strategies to monitor public lands where important paleontological localities have been identified.
- Develop volunteer or cooperative management agreements with associations, professional paleontologists, local organizations, universities, museums, and governmental entities to facilitate the management and protection of paleontological resources.
- Promote awareness among users of the BLM public lands of the importance of paleontological resources.

General Management Guidance

It is the policy of the BLM to manage and protect paleontological resources according to existing BLM handbook guidance (BLM Manual 8270, Paleontological Resource Management and H-8270-1) and under the provisions of the Paleontological Resources Preservation Subtitle of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 USC 470aaa). BLM New Mexico has an assistance agreement with the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History Foundation to ensure the care, protection, and storage of paleontological resources collected from public lands in New Mexico. The BLM will continue to use existing partnerships and information collected from paleontological collection permits to evaluate the importance of specific areas on public lands within the planning area. In the BLM's management of paleontological resources, it will continue to apply mitigation

measures in specific locations where these resources could occur based on the potential fossil yield and paleo-sensitivity map developed for the Taos Field Office.

Allocations and Management Actions

The Sombrillo ACEC will be managed for the protection of relevant and important paleontological resources (see Appendix A).

In addition, a qualified paleontologist will be required to conduct a survey for paleontological resources prior to any surface-disturbing activities within areas where significant resources are known to occur (e.g., the Sombrillo area) and may be required to monitor during such activities.

2.1.5 Soils

Goals

- Maintain or improve soil health by preventing or minimizing soil erosion and compaction.
- Prevent or minimize threats to public health and safety, damages to natural site characteristics, or economic losses due to accelerated runoff and erosion.
- Prevent impairment of soil productivity due to accelerated loss or physical/chemical degradation.

Objectives

- Over the life of the plan, begin restoration of all areas identified as having impaired soils within five years of assessment.
- Over the life of the plan, prevent any increases in acreage of impaired soils due to management activities.
- Manage all projects and authorized activities to maintain or improve soil condition.

Management Guidance

Many Federal laws and Executive Orders impact soil management because soil resources are fundamental to all other resources and resource uses. Guidance for management of soil resources is published in BLM Manuals 7000-7100. Primary authority for management includes the Taylor Grazing Act and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act, both of which address use of Federal rangelands including assessment, conservation, and improvement of soil resources. The Clean Water Act indirectly affects soil management by controlling the release of nonpoint sources of pollution such as sedimentation caused by erosion. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responsible for development of soil surveys, which are used by the BLM to determine soil types and characteristics when assessing management actions.

The Taos Field Office monitors and assesses soil resource condition primarily through the range program during reauthorization of livestock grazing permits. Project-level impacts to soils are assessed during the development of EISs or EAs for proposed projects and use authorizations. The soils program works to reduce impacts to soil and associated vegetation resources through allocation of uses such as transportation and grazing and mitigation of project impacts. The soils program also works with other programs to implement restoration projects.

In addition, under the existing Riparian and Aquatic HMP and standards and guidelines for grazing, soils will be provided protection through vegetation management.

2.1.6 *Special Status Species*

Goals

- Prevent the Federal listing of federally proposed and Bureau sensitive species, which include both Federal candidate species and delisted species within five years of delisting, through management prescriptions that will conserve, enhance, or restore habitat, and minimize adverse effects from actions.
- Facilitate the delisting of existing special status species so that their populations and the habitat on which they depend are restored to the point that the provisions of the Endangered Species Act are no longer necessary.
- Minimize or eliminate threats affecting BLM Sensitive species and improve condition of the species habitat, including ecosystem management and conservation of native biodiversity to reduce the chance of native species requiring BLM sensitive species status.

Objectives

- Achieve “no net loss” of special status species habitats.
- Determine long-term trends in distribution, abundance, and threats or other limiting factors of selected special status species on BLM lands and evaluate the significance of those lands in the conservation of the species.
- Ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
- Incorporate BMPs, standard operating procedures, conservation strategies and measures, and design criteria to mitigate specific threats during planning and implementation, including the use of Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management until site-specific management plans or conservation strategies are developed.
- Assist in the preparation and implementation of recovery or other special status species management plans.
- Monitor populations and habitats to ensure that objectives for special status species habitat development and protection are being met, including additional surveys for Southwestern willow flycatcher.
- Incorporate objectives and actions identified by the USFWS in authorized recovery plans into BLM plans and documents as appropriate.
- Conduct special status species habitat inventories and studies to provide data for multiple-use planning, habitat management plans, and resolution of conflicts involving resource development and protection activities.
- Prepare and implement habitat management plans to address special status species habitat development and protection needs, including riparian, giving priority to the Rio Grande corridor.
- Monitor habitat management plans and/or cooperative agreements with other State, local or non-governmental entities to determine if positive changes in trend for habitat development and protection are being met in such plans or agreements.
- Where feasible, acquire lands containing habitat for special status species.
- Cooperate with other Federal agencies to foster positive working relationships that promote the conservation of listed species.
- Participate in regional and national working groups to help coordinate agency actions and create opportunities to overcome barriers to special status species and the ecosystems upon which they depend, and to develop species-specific or ecosystem-based conservation strategies.

- Cooperate with State and local agencies, including participation on watershed councils and weed management areas and coordination with State natural heritage programs and State wildlife agency strategic plans, providing technical assistance where possible.
- Provide data to the BLM New Mexico State Office to assist with maintaining a current BLM Sensitive Species List.

General Management Guidance

Special status species are (1) species listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including designated critical habitat, and (2) species designated as BLM sensitive by the State Director, requiring special management consideration to promote their conservation and reduce the need for future listing under the ESA. All Federal candidate species, proposed species, and delisted species for five years following their delisting will be considered BLM sensitive species per BLM 6840 Manual.

Under the ESA, as amended, an *endangered* species is an animal or plant species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A *threatened* species is a species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A *proposed* species is a species of animal or plant that is proposed in the Federal Register to be listed under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act, while a *candidate* species is one on which the USFWS (or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's fisheries service) has sufficient file information regarding its biological vulnerability and threats to support a proposal for listing as endangered or threatened.

In addition, the BLM maintains a list of special status species that include species listed or proposed for listing under the ESA, and species requiring special management consideration to promote their conservation and reduce the likelihood and need for future listing under the ESA. These latter are designated as BLM *sensitive* by the respective State Director.

Guidance for implementation of the ESA is contained in BLM Manual 6840. Field offices are directed to maintain current inventories of special status species, to implement recovery plans for listed species, and to ensure all BLM authorized actions comply with the ESA and other directives related to special status species. Manual 6840 also requires that BLM authorized actions do not contribute to the need to list any special status species under the provision of the ESA or contribute to the designation of additional critical habitat.

The BLM will protect federally listed species by requiring site-specific evaluations and clearances and by applying more stringent management prescriptions in areas that have been specially designated to protect target species. Any action that may affect federally listed species requires consultation with the USFWS under section 7 of the ESA. Commitments to avoid adverse impacts to special status species are met by applying appropriate stipulations (e.g., timing or seasonal restriction or site-specific limitations) or by not authorizing the action altogether.

The BLM will continue to collaborate with Federal, State, and local governments, tribal governments, and landowners to manage special status species habitats. Management prescriptions will be attached to authorized actions to minimize negative effects. Where possible, habitats for species listed as proposed, threatened or endangered by the USFWS, habitat designated as critical by the USFWS, and species listed by the BLM State Director or BLM Manual 6840 as sensitive species will be enhanced.

The BLM will implement recovery activities for listed species by complying with and adopting current and future recovery plans developed by USFWS, such as the plan for the Southwestern willow flycatcher (USDI-USFWS 2002), and manage habitat for BLM sensitive terrestrial and aquatic species in a manner consistent with future restoration and conservation agreements.

Populations of special status species will be monitored to assess their abundance and trend. Field inspections will be conducted to identify special status species habitat prior to authorizing surface disturbing activities. Waivers for on-the-ground inventory may be granted in areas determined to have low potential based on previous research.

Management prescriptions and restrictions described in the Final Rio Grande Corridor Plan (USDI-BLM 2000a) and the Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Management Plan (USDI-BLM 2000b) that improve or protect habitat for other species will continue to be implemented.

Appendix G provides specific management guidance for most special status species that have potential habitat on BLM lands managed by the Taos Field Office, while the remaining listed species that could be found on BLM lands in the planning area will be subject to the guidelines presented above.

Allocations and Management Actions

To protect Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat, shoreline access is restricted in designated areas and closed on selected side channels in the Orilla Verde Recreation Area. In addition, approximately 1.5 miles of riparian habitat is closed (totaling 1.4 acres) to vehicle use, while the recreation area is closed to new rights-of-way (except for underground utilities and NM State Highway and Transportation Department road maintenance activities), livestock grazing, and mineral material development and mining.

Additional roads throughout the planning area may be closed permanently or seasonally, relocated, maintained, and/or designed to reduce sedimentation and restore or maintain special status species habitat.

Where Santa Fe cholla and grama grass cactus are known to occur, habitat will be inventoried, monitored, and protected from surface disturbing activities. Lands will be retained where these species are found to exist.

To protect bald eagles and ferruginous hawks, spatial and temporal restrictions will be applied to surface disturbing activities. Prior to surface disturbing activities, surveys will be conducted in potential bald eagle roosting habitat and ferruginous hawk nesting habitat to identify any active sites (i.e., for ferruginous hawks, any nest occupied in the past seven years). Long-duration activities will avoid active bald eagle sites by a minimum of 0.5 miles. Short-duration activities—those which will begin outside of a respective season and end prior to the next season—will avoid active bald eagle sites by a minimum of 0.5 miles from January 1 to August 31 for bald eagles and a minimum of 1.0 mile from February 1 to July 15 for ferruginous hawks during the respective species seasonal period. These restrictions may be adjusted or waived if impacts can be adequately mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer. In addition, greater species-specific restrictions may be applied to wind energy projects (see section 2.2.7).

Likewise, prior to surface disturbing activities, surveys will be conducted in potential Gunnison prairie dog habitat to identify any occupied prairie dog town. Long-duration activities will avoid occupied towns by 0.25 miles. Short-duration activities—those which will begin outside of a

given breeding season and end prior to the next breeding season—will avoid occupied towns by 0.25 miles between April 1 and September 15. These restrictions may also be adjusted or waived if impacts can be adequately mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer.

2.1.7 *Vegetative Communities*

2.1.7.1 **Riparian Vegetation**

Goals

- To provide for healthy watersheds and landscapes, sustained biological communities, and an improved understanding of ecosystems and resources through integrated interdisciplinary assessments (USDI 2007).
- To provide for proper functioning condition (PFC) of vegetative communities by managing for viable and resilient native wildlife species and their associated habitats.
- For riparian and wetland communities to move toward and/or remain in PFC such that riparian communities will be sustainable, provide physical stability and adequate habitat for a wide range of wildlife species, and support healthy, diverse, and abundant populations of fish and associated aquatic and riparian dependent species.

Objectives

- Manage all riparian zones that have hydrophilic plant species as priority habitats.
- Manage riparian areas with an emphasis on protection and restoration, and focus treatments on reestablishment of willows and cottonwoods, as well as other riparian vegetation, to stabilize stream banks and promote sinuosity and width/depth ratios appropriate to the site.
- To give consideration to the restoration and protection of riparian areas as part of the BLM's decision making process for land use authorizations.
- Monitor riparian areas and conduct rangeland health assessments to document progress toward achieving and maintaining PFC.

General Management Guidance

The BLM management decisions in riparian areas throughout the planning area will be guided by the Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Management Plan (HMP) (USDI-BLM 2000b), the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan (USDI-BLM 2000a), the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Management Plan for the Taos Field Office (USDI-BLM 1998), and the USFWS Recovery Plan for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (USDI-USFWS 2002).

The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Management Plan (USDI-BLM 1998) provides management objectives and planned actions for riparian habitat improvement projects for willow flycatcher population enhancement. The USFWS Recovery Plan outlines specific recovery actions and population goals to allow delisting of the species, including actions that will benefit riparian habitat by increasing and improving occupied, suitable, and potential breeding habitat and minimizing threats to migration habitat.

Under the Riparian and Aquatic HMP, the BLM cooperates with Federal, tribal, and State wildlife management agencies, as well as private landowners, to identify activities that prevent riparian areas from meeting standards and to design projects to minimize impacts. Riparian and

wetland areas will be assessed and monitored for PFC and other specific objectives by using appropriate stream survey methodologies and protocols.

Riparian areas functioning at risk will be high priority for restoration. Restoration priorities include invasive vegetation species control and active restoration to allow native plants to reestablish and prosper, as well as restoring functionality to impaired riparian areas.

Projects identified within riparian areas—not related to conservation, restoration, or recreation—that may have a detrimental effect on riparian function shall not be authorized. When projects cannot be located outside of riparian areas, short-term effects will be minimized by the use of BMPs, and long-term effects will be mitigated to recover the riparian function lost.

Using the Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management along with ecological site descriptions, functionality will be assessed to determine if goals are being met. Site-specific objectives and management strategies will be developed and applied through activity plans to meet the land health standards and move toward riparian PFC.

To achieve desired vegetative conditions, the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan (USDI-BLM 2000a) outlines actions and restrictions for BLM authorized activities in riparian areas. Existing livestock exclosures along streams, wetlands, and riparian areas will be maintained per the terms and conditions of existing cooperative agreements as long as necessary to meet management objectives and accomplish PFC.

Implementation actions that address riparian ecosystem function will continue to be applied. All proposed actions will continue to comply with EOs 11988 and 11990 to protect floodplains and wetlands.

Allocations and Management Actions

All riparian areas within the planning area will be included within the Riparian and Aquatic HMP. Wetlands include both natural and intentionally created areas adjacent to and influenced by streams (perennial, ephemeral, and intermittent), springs, seeps, lake shores, marshes, wet meadows, and stock tanks and are identified using a three parameter test including hydrology, soil, and vegetation indicators. Riparian areas are a form of transitional zone between permanently saturated wetlands and uplands.

For riparian-wetland areas not included in special designations such as wild and scenic rivers or ACECs, the following restrictions will be applied:

- Forestry activities will be limited in riparian-wetland areas to only those designed to improve resource function, health and conditions.
- Riparian-wetland areas will not be considered for disposal except for cases where (1) the area is small and not contiguous with other public lands, (2) the potential purchaser of the riparian area intends to include it in a conservation area that will provide equal or better resource protection than BLM management, and (3) no special status species resources are involved.
- New rights-of-way and other land use authorizations will be prohibited in all currently identified riparian-wetland areas—areas identified as having riparian-wetland characteristics, including those not previously documented or areas that are acquired after completion of the RMP—unless impacts can be adequately mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer.

- Where necessary to meet public land health standards or resource objectives, livestock grazing restrictions in riparian-wetland areas will be identified by allotment and managed under an allotment management plan or other project or activity-level plan.
- For mineral development activities, all riparian and aquatic areas will be restricted from surface use and occupancy to protect those habitats. In order to ensure that undocumented or newly acquired riparian-wetland areas are protected, mineral leasing actions will be subject to restrictions both at the time of lease and during the application to drill process. For all riparian-wetlands areas, no surface occupancy (NSO) will be allowed within up to 200 meters of the outer edge of 100-year floodplains or potential riparian-wetland edge as identified by hydrology, hydric soils, or vegetation.
- Existing travel routes through riparian areas will be restricted in one of the following ways: (1) closed, (2) limited with seasonal restrictions, (3) relocated away from riparian resources, or (4) designed and/or maintained to reduce sedimentation and restore or maintain riparian vegetation.

2.1.7.2 Terrestrial Vegetation

Goals

- Restore and/or maintain the health and productivity of public forests, including the support of watershed, wildlife, and other values, while providing for the use of forest and woodland resources.
- Maintain and/or improve ecological site potential of woodland communities for sustainability and diversity.
- Manage upland vegetation communities to move toward or remain in PFC, including a full range of herbaceous and shrub species.
- Manage forest resources to provide a sustained flow of local economic benefits and protect nonmarket economic values.

Objectives

- Manage forest types to contain healthy stands that combine for a diversity of age classes, densities, and structure (including dead and down material).
- Inventory and manage old-growth structures in a sustainable manner.
- Manage forest types to contain healthy stands of site-appropriate species.
- Maintain or enhance communities of priority species or habitats to provide desired ecological functions and values.

General Management Guidance

Current and continuing terrestrial vegetation management is described in the Taos Field Office Fire Management Plan (USDI-BLM 2005b) and the Fire and Fuels Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment for Public Land in New Mexico and Texas (USDI-BLM 2004). All terrestrial vegetation management will conform to the Standards for Public Land Health and comply with the Rangeland Health Standards Handbook H-4180-1.

The Taos Field Office will continue to support the Restore New Mexico Partnership, a partnership of government agencies, ranchers, industry, non-profit organizations, and others to restore New Mexico's grasslands, woodlands, and riparian areas to a healthy and productive condition. Under this partnership all BLM field offices in New Mexico works to treat lands,

regardless of ownership, across a landscape or watershed to defragment and improve the ecological health and habitat. The goal is to restore desert grasslands and woodlands to their natural states, where possible. This will be accomplished by treating those areas where encroachment by invasive shrubs has occurred and reclaiming disturbances from past permitted actions that have fragmented the habitat. The BLM will coordinate with adjacent land owners and other agencies to assure that this work is accomplished over a landscape or watershed. Field offices will choose from the various treatment methods, including fire, herbicides, and mechanical, or a combination of the three, to accomplish this work.

Natural disturbance regimes will be maintained or mimicked so that plant communities are resilient when periodic outbreaks of insects, disease, and wildland fire occur. Vegetation planning will be coordinated with managers/owners of private, Federal or State lands adjacent to site-specific proposals for a collaborative approach.

Vegetation manipulation projects will be designed to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat and improve habitat when possible. Existing and developing old-growth forests will be retained and managed to reduce the potential effects of uncharacteristically severe natural disturbances such as stand-replacing wildland fire and insect and disease epidemics.

The BLM will design fire restoration/rehabilitation standards on a case-by-case basis, compatible with landscape resource management objectives and long-term vegetation health protection and fuel management.

Where restoration, rehabilitation, or reclamation efforts (including BLM-authorized actions such as rights-of-way) require reseeding activities or use of other plant materials (such as potted plants and poles, etc.), nonnative plant species will be used only if native species are not readily available in sufficient quantities. Care will be taken in selecting nonnative species that are not likely to become invasive. If nonnative plant species are used or identified for use in restoration, rehabilitation, or reclamation projects, the BLM, through the Bureau Plant Conservation Program and partner organizations, will work to identify and develop native replacements for the nonnative species. Additionally, seed mixes used in these actions will consist of the closest locally adapted selections, varieties, or cultivars of native species available to improve success of the seeding effort.

Prescribed burning will be used to treat forest, grassland, or shrubland vegetation types to move communities toward desired ecological conditions and PFC. If these habitat types are not in PFC due to management activities, management will be modified to improve conditions.

Changes to grazing management or prescription grazing will also be used as a vegetative treatment. Management may include changing the season of use, the intensity of the use, or the kind of livestock.

Allocations and Management Actions

All terrestrial vegetation management will follow the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health per Handbook 4180-1.

Prescribed burning will be used to treat forest, grassland, or shrubland vegetation types. In grasslands or shrublands, prescribed burning will be used to kill encroaching conifers, removing dead finer fuels created by years of grass or shrub growth, and stimulating grass and shrub regrowth.

In forests, prescribed burning will be used to eliminate slash generated by mechanical treatments, thin under stories, recycle nutrients, eliminate “ladder” fuels, and/or create and maintain a more savannah-like habitat in stands dominated by medium- and large-sized trees.

Changing grazing management or prescription grazing may also be used as a vegetative treatment. Management may include changing the season of use, the intensity of the use, or the kind of livestock. Grassland and shrubland vegetation types will be treated to remove conifer encroachment and move towards a more desired ecological condition of open grasslands and shrublands with a low density of tree species. Grasslands and shrublands will also be assessed to ensure that uplands are in properly functioning condition. If these habitat types are not in properly functioning condition due to management activities, management will be modified to improve conditions.

2.1.8 *Visual Resources*

Goals

- Manage public lands in a manner that will maintain the overall visual quality of the region, certain open-space landscapes, undisturbed views, and other high-quality visual resources.

Objectives

- Visual resources will be managed according to the following objectives per visual resource management (VRM) class (Visual Resource Inventory Handbook H-8410-1):
 - Class I: Preserve the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be very low and must not attract attention.
 - Class II: Retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer.
 - Class III: Partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer.
 - Class IV: Allow management activities requiring major modifications to the existing character of the landscape. The level of change may be high. Management activities may dominate the view. However, every attempt will be made to minimize the impact and aim to repeat the basic elements in the landscape.

General Management Guidance

The Taos Field Office will manage scenic quality and viewsheds according to the guidance and indicators presented in the Visual Resource Inventory Handbook H-8410-1. The handbook will continue to be used regarding all guidance and activities related to management of visual resources.

Projects such as construction of campgrounds, energy and mineral development, vegetation treatments, and rights-of-ways will be evaluated for design to ensure consistency with the VRM classes. All permitted actions on public land will be evaluated to minimize impacts resulting in visual contrast with the landscape, including impacts on the night sky.

VRM classes acknowledge existing visual contrasts, and more restrictive requirements will not be retroactively applied to existing projects. For example, many maintenance activities within existing power transmission rights-of-way are generally unlikely to cause changes to the

characteristic landscape. Such maintenance activities may include travel along access routes adjacent to and under lines for repair and inspection, replacement of insulators and conductors or lines, and replacement of braces or support structures. However, upgrades such as installation of larger diameter or taller poles, additional supports, or substations may cause contrasts. The degree of impact depends on the scale, location, and height of potential upgrades or new projects. New projects must be analyzed using the BLM's Visual Resource Management Handbook (H-8431-1) and every effort must be made to mitigate contrasts and meet VRM objectives.

Steps in the contrast rating process for projects adjacent to the Old Spanish National Historic Trail should include selection of a key observation point from the trail and preparation of a viewshed analysis using GIS to determine visibility of a project from the trail.

Allocations and Management Actions

VRM classifications are applied accordingly:

The Ute Mountain and San Antonio areas with wilderness characteristics will be managed as VRM class I. The remaining areas in the Taos Plateau planning unit will be managed as class II, with the exception of class III within a 4-mile buffer along US 64.

VRM class I will be applied to the Chama ACEC, wild and scenic river (WSR), and wilderness study area (WSA) in the Chama planning unit. Outside of these special designations, the VRM inventory classes will be prescribed as VRM class III and IV with the exception of class II for areas within 0.5 mile of Highway 84 near Abiquiu Dam to protect the views along the highway. Also within the Chama planning unit, a 1-mile corridor along the Old Spanish National Historic Trail will be class II.

Within the Ojo Caliente planning unit, lands with wilderness characteristics will be managed as VRM class I, rights-of-way corridors as class III, the existing mining location along 31 Mile Road as class IV, and the remainder of the Ojo Caliente ACEC will be class II.

The majority of the El Palacio planning unit will be managed as VRM class II, based on the community sensitivity and the importance of the recreational setting, the presence of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, the high level of highway travel along NM-68, and the importance of the viewshed all the way to the Truchas Peaks. The 0.25-mile buffer adjacent to NM-68 and Alcalde Village will be managed as class III to accommodate highway and utility systems. Viewsheds along NM-76 and NM-503 will be managed as class II. Areas identified for disposal will be managed as class IV.

The majority of the West Santa Fe planning unit will be managed for VRM class II. However, Diablo Canyon along with the Santa Fe River canyon, which includes the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, will be managed as class I. The Old Buckman Road, the powerline running across La Bajada Mesa, and areas identified for disposal will be managed for class III objectives.

In the Galisteo planning unit, the Cerrillos Hills area and Galisteo Basin archaeological sites will be designated as VRM class II to protect community, recreational, and cultural values. The west end of the San Pedro Mountains will also be managed as VRM class II to protect the viewshed from the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway, while the remainder of the area will be class III.

The Sabinoso Wilderness and the Sabinoso ACEC will be designed VRM class I. Largo Canyon headwaters area will be class II, while VRM class IV will be applied to the remainder of the East Side planning unit.

Most areas covered by the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan will be managed under the same classifications outlined in that plan. The exception is the Central Protection Zone which will be managed as a class II instead of class III to protect the Old Spanish Nation Historic Trail. A 0.25-mile corridor on either side of NM-75 running southwest from the Canada de Piedra will be managed for class III objectives.

The VRM classes are shown on Map 4 and are totaled in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2. VRM classifications

VRM Class	Acreage
I	110,026
II	394,837
III	52,823
IV	37,003

2.1.9 Water

Goals

- For water resources to be highly functioning and in good condition, as measured by physical, chemical, and biological parameters in the planning area.
- To provide for the physical and legal availability of water to facilitate authorized use on public lands, including potable water at recreation facilities.
- Restore, maintain, and preserve the natural functions of floodplains to reduce the risk of flood loss or damage to property, and minimize the impact of floods on human health and safety.
- Restore, maintain, and preserve water quality in surface waters that flow through BLM-administered lands.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and individual stakeholders to develop and implement watershed restoration projects and pursue funding opportunities to complete projects.

Objectives

- Assess water quality and establish management objectives for perennial streams using the Standards for Public Land Health.
- Over the life of the plan, reduce channel instability across the planning area by 50 percent in ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial stream channels through a combination of resource management and active restoration or rehabilitation.
- Manage projects and activities to reduce water runoff and soil loss.
- Update water resource inventories and maintain water quality monitoring data necessary to make management decisions.
- Submit documentation to support Federal water rights to the New Mexico State Engineer for all waters on BLM lands that have not been previously claimed.

- The Taos Field Office will continue to participate in local watershed planning efforts for streams that cross BLM jurisdiction.
- Manage all projects and authorized activities so that they will not contribute to surface or ground water quality degradation.

General Management Guidance

Guidance for the water program is detailed in BLM Manual sections 7000 and 7200-7320. These manual sections cover a broad variety of water management issues including watershed management, water rights, water resource inventory, monitoring, and improvements. Authorities for this program include the Safe Drinking Water Act, requiring the BLM to comply with all statutes for safe drinking water; the Clean Water Act, requiring the BLM to participate with State and Federal agencies in water quality planning and permitting activities; Executive Orders 11988 and 121148, directing agencies to avoid impacts to floodplain function; Pickett Act, reserving springs and waterholes for the Federal government; Public Water Reserve No. 107, reserving important springs and waterholes for public use; Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Wilderness Act, reserving water rights for management in areas designated under those acts; and the Taylor Grazing Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and Public Rangelands Improvement Act that allow authority for water rights appropriation through State agencies.

Ongoing management will provide for mitigation and monitoring of land use activities to ensure that BLM public lands are not contributing to surface or groundwater water quality impairments. The BLM will continue to monitor water quality and quantity on public lands within the planning area. Water resources monitoring data will be assessed to guide water resource restoration, conservation, and acquisition of water rights on public lands. The Taos Field Office will continue to participate in and provide expertise for public lands water resources to work groups developing watershed restoration plans that address water quality impairments. The water program will work with other BLM programs to meet water resource goals.

Under the Riparian and Aquatic HMP, coordination will occur with the State engineer to acquire water rights as necessary to manage for special status species habitat and aquatic and riparian resource values. In addition to minimum necessary surface flows, the need for flushing flow events to maintain fish habitat and riparian areas will be considered.

Current and future potable drinking water systems at campgrounds and recreation sites will comply with Environmental Protection Agency standards as managed by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The BLM will cooperate with the NMED and other affected parties to comply with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) to maintain or restore the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of area waters and provide for mitigation and monitoring of land use activities to ensure that BLM-managed lands are not contributing to surface or ground water quality impairments.

2.1.10 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Goals

- Manage lands with wilderness characteristics identified for protection to maintain those characteristics.

Objectives

Where wilderness characteristics are managed for protection:

- Minimize surface disturbing activities such that the natural quality of the area is maintained.
- Maintain opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation where they occur in these areas.

General Management Guidance

Management to protect wilderness characteristics—naturalness, solitude, and opportunities for primitive recreation, as defined by section 2 (C) of the Wilderness Act of 1964—outside of designated wilderness or wilderness study areas may be applied administratively in one or more of the following ways: withdrawal of lands from mineral entry; close to mineral leasing or place no surface occupancy restrictions on such lands; designate as right-of-way exclusion areas; close to new roads; close or limit motor vehicle use and/or mechanized use; close to mineral material sales; exclude or restrict with conditions certain commercial uses or other activities; designate as VRM class I or II; restrict construction of new structures and facilities unrelated to the preservation or enhancement of wilderness characteristics; and/or retain public lands in Federal ownership.

Allocations and Management Actions

Specifically, five areas will be managed to protect their wilderness characteristics, totaling 67,032 acres (see Table 2-3 and Map 5).

The northern boundary of the Cerro Colorado area managed for its wilderness characteristics will be 300 feet from highway NM 554 (such that the acreage provided protective management will be approximately 131 acres less than the area inventoried to have wilderness characteristics).

Table 2-3. Areas managed for wilderness characteristics

Planning unit/Area	Acres	Management
Taos Plateau/Upper Rio Grande Adjacent to San Antonio WSA Ute Mountain	9,859 13,190	<i>All areas are in the proposed Taos Plateau ACEC</i> <u>Land Use Authorizations</u> : excluded. <u>Minerals</u> : closed to mineral material sales, withdrawn from locatable mineral entry, and closed to mineral leasing. <u>Renewable Energy</u> : excluded. <u>Transportation</u> : Ute Mountain is closed, and the area adjacent to San Antonio WSA is limited to designated routes. <u>Visual</u> : Ute Mountain is class I, and the other two areas will be class II.
Chama Adjacent to Rio Chama WSA	2,499	<i>This area is within the proposed Chama Canyons ACEC</i> <u>Land Use Authorizations</u> : excluded. <u>Minerals</u> : closed to all. <u>Renewable Energy</u> : excluded. <u>Transportation</u> : closed. <u>Visual</u> : class I.
Ojo Caliente Rincon del Cuervo Cerro Colorado	10,912 31,221	<i>Both areas will be in the expanded Ojo Caliente ACEC</i> <u>Land Use Authorizations</u> : both areas will be excluded <u>Minerals</u> : both areas will be withdrawn from all minerals. <u>Renewable Energy</u> : excluded. <u>Transportation</u> : Rincon del Cuervo closed;

Planning unit/Area	Acres	Management
		Cerro Colorado limited to designated routes. <u>Visual:</u> Rincon del Cuervo—class I, and Cerro Colorado—class I and II.

2.1.11 Wildland Fire

Goals

- Suppress wildland fires where they threaten human health and safety, natural resource values, and private property.
- Restore fire frequency and intensity regimes to pre-European settlement levels by reducing fuel loads.
- Reestablish appropriate vegetation communities to maintain natural fire regimes.
- Reduce the need for wildfire suppression through restoration activities.

Objectives

- Prevent the loss of life or property from wildland fire.
- Manage wildfire with minimal damage to other resources.
- Use prescribed fire and mechanical fuels treatments to reduce hazardous fuels while achieving the objectives of the wildlife habitat, livestock grazing, visual quality, vegetation, watershed quality, and weed control programs.
- Follow fire management actions delineated for each fire management unit throughout the planning area while employing multiple strategies to meet resource objectives.
- When possible, allow for wildland fire to be managed for resource objectives or limited suppression tactics, enabling fire to act in its natural role as a disturbance.
- Maintain a landscape of diverse plant communities and successional stages similar to those created by historic fire regimes.
- Implement wildfire rehabilitation efforts to protect and sustain ecosystems, protect public health and safety, and help communities protect infrastructure.
- Cooperate with adjacent landowners (Federal, State, tribal, and private) in fire management activities across jurisdictional boundaries.

Management Guidance

The planning area is divided into 20 fire management units (FMUs) that are assigned a management category of “A,” “B,” “C,” or “D.” These categories are based on factors which dictate the appropriate management response to wildfire such as special resource values, special designations, wildland-urban interface, land use and ownership, and topography within and around each unit. For each FMU, objectives are established to reduce hazardous fuels and determine the appropriate management response to any wildland fires, decide whether prescribed fire is an appropriate tool, and establish goals for non-fire fuels treatments.

FMUs in fire management category “A” are where wildland fire is not desired and prescribed fire treatments are limited. Mechanical treatments are the preferred fuels management alternative in this category. The sole FMU in this category is A9, Rio Grande Corridor Well-Developed Riparian.

FMUs in fire management category “B” are where unplanned wildland fire is not desired because of current conditions. Prescribed fire and mechanical treatments are used. These FMUs include B5, Cerro del Aire; B6, Wild Rivers; B8, Black Mesa/Ojo Caliente; B11, Copper Hill wildland urban interface (WUI); B12, 31 Mile Block; B14, Sombrillo SMA/Santa Cruz Lake; B15, Chimayo Scout Camp; B16, Buckman; and B18, La Cienega.

FMUs in fire management category “C” are where wildland fire is desired, but there are significant restraints that must be considered for its use. Prescribed fire can be widely used in this category, in addition to mechanical treatments. These FMUs include C1, TAFO – Rest of Field Office; C2, North Unit/Pot Mountain; C3, Rio Grande Corridor; C4, San Antonio Gorge WSA and ACEC; C7, Cebolla/Abiquiu; C10, Copper Hill/Sebastian Martin Grant; C13, Fun Valley/Chimayo; and C19, Archuleta Mesa.

FMUs in fire management category “D” are where wildland fire is desired and where there are few or no constraints for its use. Management of wildland fire to meet multiple objectives and prescribed fire are permitted in this category. FMUs in this category include D17, Sabinoso Wilderness, and D20, Ute Mountain.

The full range of fire management activities will continue to help achieve ecosystem sustainability, including its interrelated ecological, economic, and social components. The field office fire staff will conduct fuels treatments, community assistance, education/mitigation programs, and rehabilitation/restoration actions to implement management plan direction.

Response to wildland fire will be based on the ecological, social, and legal consequences of the fire. The circumstances by which the fire occur, and the resulting consequences, dictate the appropriate response to it.

Allocations and Management Actions

Management priorities for suppression, prescribed fire, non-fire fuels treatments, and community protection/assistance will be described in the current Fire Management Plan (FMP) for the planning area. The FMP will provide specific implementation strategies, evaluation criteria, and accomplishment reporting as referenced in the fire management portion of the RMP.

2.1.12 Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds

Goals

- Maintain plant communities free of noxious weeds and invasive species where possible.
- Isolate and control populations by an appropriate method.
- Immediately control and eliminate newly discovered outlier occurrences of noxious or invasive species.

Objectives

- Inventory and control weed populations through an integrated pest management (IPM) program implemented through integrated weed management (IWM) and cooperative weed management areas (CWMAAs).
- Reduce the area and density of existing populations to acceptable levels.
- Monitor and reevaluate populations at suitable intervals through the use of surveys to identify new infestations.

General Management Guidance

Guidance is provided to the weeds program by Departmental Manual 517 and a number of laws and Executive orders which require the development of a weed management programs: Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species; the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974; the New Mexico Noxious Weed Management Act of 1978; the Noxious Weed Control Act of 2004; and the Federal Plant Protection Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-224).

Other laws providing guidance to the weeds program include FLPMA; the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934; the Carlson-Foley Act of 1968; the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978; the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, as amended (Public Law 92-516); the Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act of 1972; the New Mexico Noxious Weed Management Act of 1978; and the Tamarisk Control and Riparian Restoration Act of 2003.

Executive Order 13112 defines an invasive species as “an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.” The definition includes many types of invasive species such as animals, plants, and micro-organisms. It focuses upon invasive species which are harmful, rather than focusing on nonnative species, most of which are not harmful. Several different terms have been used to describe invasive species, such as “alien,” “aquatic nuisance species,” “injurious wildlife,” and “noxious” (National Invasive Species Council 2008).

The Taos Field Office will focus on the five “Strategic Goals,” as presented in the National Invasive Species Management Plan, 2008-2012. These goals are:

1. **Prevention:** Prevent introduction and establishment of invasive species to reduce their impact on the environment, economy, and health of the United States.
2. **Early Detection and Rapid Response:** Develop and enhance the capacity to identify, report, and effectively respond to newly discovered/localized invasive species.
3. **Control and Management:** Contain and reduce the spread and populations of established invasive species to minimize their harmful impacts.
4. **Restoration:** Restore native species and habitat conditions and rehabilitate high-value ecosystems and key ecological processes that have been impacted by invasive species to meet desired future conditions.
5. **Organizational Collaboration:** Maximize organizational effectiveness and collaboration on invasive species issues among international, Federal, State, local and tribal governments, private organizations, and individuals (National Invasive Species Council 2008).

The Record of Decision on the Final Vegetation Treatments Herbicides Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, signed on September 29, 2007, provides programmatic policy and guidance to which subsequent field office-specific vegetation treatment plans can be tiered. Subsequent programmatic or site-specific plans could address the application of herbicides on noxious or invasive weed species.

Integrated weed management will continue to be practiced throughout the planning area to control the introduction and proliferation of noxious weeds and other undesirable invasive plants and the other objectives stated above. Emphasis will be on identification of existing populations on and off public lands, with a priority on noxious weed inventories in plant communities that are critical for wildlife habitat, in plant communities that are at-risk, in high-use areas, and at recreation sites.

Any fill, mulch, seed, or hay or other livestock feed used on public lands administered by the Taos Field Office must be certified “weed free.” Stipulations will be attached to use permits and emergency stabilization and rehabilitation plans to reduce the spread of noxious or invasive weeds through contaminated hay, straw, fill, and mulch. Education and prevention measures will include community education conducted by the BLM.

An emphasis will be placed on development of CWMA. Actions will be taken in cooperation with stakeholders to identify and treat weed populations where they exist through integrated weed management methods. All actions will be subject to a programmatic or site-specific NEPA analysis which considers local concerns on the methods of treatment.

2.2 Resource Uses

2.2.1 Forestry and Woodland Products

Goals

- Restore forest and woodlands structure, composition, and processes on public lands to maximize the ecosystem’s resilience to the natural disturbance regimes, using the best available information as a basis for decisions on how much restoration is feasible.
- Manage forest and woodland resources to provide a sustained flow of products to benefit local populations and support economic opportunities in the local communities.

Objectives

- Reduce fuels around communities to lessen the potential for a catastrophic wildfire to impact these communities.
- Salvage dead and dying timber to provide opportunities for fuelwood gathering, while focusing on areas with hazardous fuels and considering wildlife habitats, watershed health, and forest management concerns.
- Improve forest health as measured by stand density index through management actions such as mechanical treatments, prescribed fire, and fuelwood gathering.
- Preserve old and large trees, while maintaining the structural diversity and resilience of the forest and woodland stands.
- Follow protocols to monitor forest health treatments (i.e., the Taos Field Office Monitoring Protocol for Prescribed Fire and Fuels Treatments 2005).

General Management Guidance

As with other programs, Congress has mandated through FLPMA that the forestry and woodland program be managed on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield. The Material Disposal Act of 1947, as amended, establishes the authority under which the BLM disposes of timber and other forest products.

Further guidance is provided in the USDI Departmental Manual Part 135, section 1.2, which directs the BLM to “sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations”

Departmental Manual Part 586, Forest Management, section 1.3 states, “Forest lands are to be managed to yield the highest combination of products and benefits consistent with the purposes specified by Congress. All forest management activities are directed in accordance with sound silvicultural practices, multiple use, and environmental enhancement. The protection of streams, wildlife, and other forest values are taken into account in developing a forest management plan. Prompt regeneration after fire is also required as are reasonable efforts to protect forest values from fire, insects, diseases, and other destructive agents.” Regulations guiding the forest program are found at 43 CFR 5000.

All forest management activities will be in accordance with sound silvicultural practices, multiple use mandates, and environmental regulations. The forests and woodlands managed by the Taos Field Office must be managed to restore the historic tree species composition and structure. Since fire suppression and other past management activities have allowed fire sensitive and shade tolerant species to become more prevalent, forest and woodlands will be managed to re-establish the composition and structure approximating the natural (historic) range of variability, based on established reference conditions.

Allocations and Management Actions

Improving forest health and resiliency will be a primary objective of all forest and woodland management actions. Piñon-juniper woodlands management will incorporate the harvest and collection woodland products, except in selected areas where wildlife habitat management, recreation, or the protection of resources associated with a special designation may be a greater priority than woodland product production.

Areas excluded from woodland product extraction will be determined through area-specific or activity-level planning as part of the implementation of this RMP. Forestry activities will be limited in riparian-wetland areas to only those designed to improve resource function, health and conditions. Also, the limited stands of ponderosa pine on BLM lands within the planning area are a valuable asset and will be managed for maintenance and protection rather than forest product production.

Taos Field Office will target 2,000 acres per year for biomass utilization projects, including fuelwood collection. The 2,000 acres will be managed to improve forest health and yield the highest combination of products, including commercial forest species, and ecosystem values.

Biomass, the residue of normal forest treatments, will continue to be offered for fuelwood collection where available and appropriate. The field office will continue to provide traditional fuelwood, green and dead and downed, as well as special forest products for personal and commercial use through permits and agreements, including nonprofit groups and tribes.

The BLM will locate fuelwood areas which will include greenwood as well as dead and downed woody material where harvest and collection will maintain and improve long-term sustainability of resource values and uses. These fuelwood areas will, in general, not conflict with other permitted activities. Taos Field Office, however, may not issue permits during certain periods (e.g., during the winter thaw when wet soils are vulnerable to erosion) or where important resources need to be protected from disturbance. Some areas may be designated for harvesting all woody products on a sustained-yield basis.

2.2.2 Land Tenure

Goals

- Develop a deliberate and well-considered combination of public and private land ownership patterns to provide for more efficient and effective resource management actions.
- To provide for reasonable access to public lands, resources, and facilities for the use and enjoyment of the public, as well as for administrative purposes.

Objectives

- Retain public lands with high resource values in public ownership.
- Adjust land ownership to consolidate public land holdings, acquire lands with high public resource values, and meet public and community needs.
- Facilitate the acquisition, exchange, or disposal of public lands to provide the most efficient management of public resources.
- Acquire and maintain access to public lands where needed to improve management efficiency and facilitate multiple use and the public's enjoyment of these lands in coordination with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and private landowners.

General Management Guidance

Land generally will remain in Federal ownership unless it meets specific criteria for disposal as outlined in FLPMA and identified as available for disposal below. The acquisition of land that will enhance and protect important resources is an established priority for the Taos Field Office. Land will be acquired only from willing sellers or through exchange.

Lands identified for disposal prior to July 2000, approximately 84,518 acres, may be sold in accordance with the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act. This Act allows the BLM to retain the receipts from land sales that will be used to cover administrative costs and to acquire properties that will improve the Nation's land management pattern. Lands identified for disposal in the 1988 RMP are subject to the Act.

Lands acquired within special management areas with specific congressional mandates, such as national trails, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness areas, will be managed in conformance with established guidelines for those areas. Lands supporting special values acquired within or adjacent to administrative special designations, such as ACECs and SRMAs, will be incorporated into and managed according to the prescriptions for the special designation. Lands and interests in land obtained with Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriations will not be available for disposal by any means.

Acquired lands may not be leased or conveyed under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act. Bankhead-Jones lands (which are technically acquired lands—lands purchased by

the Federal government under the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937 for the purpose of rehabilitation and conservation) are subject to the following: (a) they are not “public lands” as that term is used in the R&PP Act and, therefore, are not subject to lease or sale under that Act; and (b) they are not public lands as that term is used in the State indemnity selection laws and, therefore, they may not be conveyed to a State under those laws. They may be conveyed through FLPMA exchange or sale, or use authorized under that Act.

Any lands designated for land ownership adjustment must be so identified through the Bureau’s land use planning process. All lands identified for sale or exchange must meet the criteria established in sections 203 and 209 of FLPMA. Disposals through exchange will be considered on a case-by-case basis. All exchanges or disposal of public land will be subject to valid existing rights. Existing authorized permits, leases, rights-of-way, and licenses will be identified as valid existing rights. The Federal government will generally retain all mineral rights and reservations for ditches and canals. Rights-of-way and easements will be retained, if necessary, when implementing exchanges or other types of disposal.

2.2.2.1 Disposals

Allocations and Management Actions

Areas identified for disposal total approximately 69,729 acres and include all of the parcels in the East Side planning unit, except for Sabinoso Wilderness and ACEC. Table 2-4 presents the lands specifically identified as available for disposal. A summary of these lands are provided below per planning unit.

Actions Common to All Planning Units

In addition to the lands specifically identified in Table 2-4, certain disposal opportunities may be considered on a case-by-case basis such as isolated parcels surrounded by private lands. Disposal through exchange will be considered on a case-by-case basis where the BLM will acquire lands with special resource values, including lands within or adjacent to ACECs or other special designations. R&PP leases/conveyance will also be considered on a case-by-case basis, except in special designation areas such as ACECs, unless otherwise specified.

Disposal of any lands, including those through R&PP leases/conveyance, will not occur if resources of national, State, or regional significance are found on them, including special status species habitat and cultural resources unless the disposal will accommodate comparable or greater management protection of such resources. Lands made available for disposal through an R&PP lease/conveyance within special designations that are not used for intended purpose will be automatically reincorporated into the boundary of the special designation.

Riparian-wetland areas will not be considered for disposal except for cases where (1) the area is small and not contiguous with other public lands, (2) the potential purchaser of the riparian area intends to include it in a conservation area that will provide equal or better resource protection than BLM management, and (3) no special status species resources are involved.

Taos Plateau planning unit

The 20-acre parcel near NM 585 (T .25 N. R. 13 E., sec 28, lots 10, 11) will be available for disposed, preferably through a R&PP lease/conveyance. The parcels immediately to the south of Cerros de los Taoses (T. 26 N., R. 10 E., sec. 13: E1/2 and sec. 24: E1/2; T. 26 N., R. 11 E., sec. 8: all; sec. 29: all; sec. 33: N1/2) will be available for disposal. The BLM will consider

disposal of all public lands within sec. 10, T. 29 N., R. 9 E. for renewable energy purposes along with 40 acres to Taos County (T. 25 N., R. 11 E., sec. 3: SENE). The 200-acre parcel previously identified for disposal in the Garrapata Ridge area (T. 27 N., R. 12 E., within sec. 20) will be available for other public purposes.

Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit

Approximately 2 acres (T. 23 N., R. 10 E., sec. 22: within SESE; sec. 23: within SWSW) will be available for disposal or for use as a solid waste transfer site.

Chama planning unit

The Cañones parcel in the Abiquiu area that was previously identified for disposal will be retained to protect sensitive species. Archuleta Mesa (T. 32 N., R. 1 W., secs. 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20), except for the communication sites, will be considered for disposal through an exchange for lands within or adjacent to the Rio Chama WSR. Approximately 600 acres of isolated tracts near US 84 will be available for disposal within the Chama planning unit (T. 27 N., R. 4 E., sec. 15: NWSW; sec. 20: SESW; sec. 21: SWSE; sec. 28: N1/2NW, NWNE, NWSW; sec. 29: NENE; and T. 26 N., R. 4 E., sec. 10: NW, N1/2SW; and sec. 22: NENE—east side of SR84 only). Approximately 80 acres (2 parcels) identified for disposal contain oil and gas leases (T. 27 N., R. 4 E., sec. 20: SESW and sec. 29: NENE), which will not be reissued by the BLM at the end of their primary term.

Ojo Caliente planning unit

Lands near the community of Ojo Caliente (T. 23 N., R. 8 E., sec. 13: within lot 10; and T. 24 N., R. 9 E., sec. 7: within lot 3 and NESW) will be available for disposal under an R&PP lease/conveyance for public purposes. The block of public land south of 31 Mile Road adjacent to Santa Clara Pueblo lands (within T. 21 N., R. 7 E., secs. 33, 34 and 35) will be available for disposal preferably by exchange for high resource value private lands to consolidate public ownership, but disposal through sale will not be precluded. Since most of these lands are covered by mining claims, and an associated pumice mine operates on adjacent private lands, any disposal will have to recognize the valid existing rights of the claimants, and any disposal will be subject to the continued development of the claims.

El Palacio planning unit

The BLM will consider disposal through exchange an area of up to one mile east of Ohkay Owingeh lands, subject to existing land use authorizations and access, consisting of portions of sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, and 30 in T. 21 N., R. 9 E.. This area, of up to 3,200 acres, has resources or values that are important to Ohkay Owingeh. Approximately 120 acres in the El Llano area (T. 20 N., R. 9 E., within sec. 6 and T. 21 N., R. 9 E., sec. 31) adjacent to the old City of Espanola landfill will be available for disposal by R&PP leases/conveyance or exchange for public purposes. Approximately 10 acres (T. 20 N., R. 9 E., sec. 23: SESESW) will be available for disposal under R&PP to Santa Fe County for the existing Nambe Transfer Station Site (including access road), a site within the Sombrillo ACEC. The 680-acre area on the east side of US 285/84 and the south side of Santa Cruz River (La Puebla), previously identified for disposal, will be retained, while the county or other governmental or nonprofit entity will be encouraged to assume management of the existing 127-acre OHV area (T. 20 N. R. 9 E., within sec 18) through R&PP lease/conveyance. The BLM will coordinate with the county or other governmental or nonprofit entity to develop a R&PP lease/conveyance for park purposes on the isolated tract below the Santa Cruz Lake dam (T. 20 N., R. 10 E., within sec. 7).

West Santa Fe planning unit

The following lands are available for dispose through an R&PP lease/conveyance for a shooting range or other recreational facilities: T. 16 N., R. 8 E., within sec. 18. Lots 21-24, 26 and 28 in T. 17 N., R.9 E, sec. 31 will be available for transfer to Santa Fe County Open Space for development of a trail system.

Galisteo planning unit

The BLM will retain the following parcels, which were previously identified for disposal, to protect cultural resources within the Galisteo planning unit:

T. 13 N., R. 8 E., secs. 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, 36;

T. 14 N., R. 8 E., secs. 4, 9, 24, 25;

T. 14 N., R. 9 E., secs. 18, 19, 29, 30, 31, 32.

An exception to retention will be disposal through exchange if these lands were used for open space preservation, and the BLM will acquire lands with special resource values through exchange. For split estate lands, the BLM will consider the sale of the subsurface to surface owners.

East Side planning unit

Outside of the wilderness and ACEC areas, the BLM will continue to consider disposal of isolated parcels without public access or where Federal management is not feasible, except where parcels contain valuable resources as identified by specialists. The BLM will also consider disposal of lands with valuable resources (e.g., cultural, water, riparian, and special status species) to special interest groups for preservation and/or conservation with applicable deed restrictions.

Table 2-4. Lands identified for disposal

Legal Description	Acreage*
T15N, R11E sec 32: N2NW	80
T16N, R8E sec 18: lots 3 and 4; E½; SENW; E½SW	485
T17N, R9E sec 21: lot 1 sec 22: NW sec. 26: lots 13,14,19, 20 sec 29: lots 54 and 55 sec 31: lots 21-24, 26, 28 sec. 35: lots 24, 26, 27	23 160 10 6 4 59
T20N, R7E sec 1: N½	320
T20N, R8E sec 6: lots 4-7	113
T20N, R9E sec 6: lots 8-17, 19-21 sec 23: SESESW	327 10
T20N, R10 E sec 7: within lot 3; NE sec 28: lot 2	50 18
T21N, R9E	

Legal Description	Acreage*
sec 5: W½*	320
sec 6: E½*	320
sec 7: E½*	320
sec 8: W½*	320
sec 17: W½*	320
sec 18: E ½*	320
sec 19: E½*	320
sec 20: W½*	320
sec 29: W½*	320
sec 30: E½*	320
sec 31: lots 2, 3, 4, 5; SENE; SE	334
T21N, R7E	
sec 33: lots 8, 17-19, 2, 24, 25, 27, 28; SESESE	110
sec 34: within S½	320
sec 35: within S½	320
T22N, R8E	
sec 36: within Sebastian Martin Land Grant	75
T22N, R9E	
sec 30: within Sebastian Martin Land Grant	75
T23N, R8E	
sec 13: lot 12;	46
sec 13: within lot 10	7
sec 24: lots 6 and 7	45
T23N, R10E	
sec 22: within SESE	1
sec 23: within SWSW	1
T24N, R9E	
sec 7: within lot 3; NESW	53
T25N, R11E	
sec 3: SENE	40
T25N, R13E	
sec 28: lots 10 and 11	20
T26N, R4E	
sec 10: NW; N½SW	240
sec 22: within NENE—east side of SR84	17
T26N, R10E	
sec. 13: E½	320
sec 24: E½	320
T26N, R11E	
sec 8: all	640
sec 29: all	640
sec 33: N½	320
T27N, R4E	
sec 15: NWSW	40
sec 20: SESW	40
sec 21: SWSE	40
sec 28: N½NW; NWNE; NWSW	160
sec 29: NENE	40
T27N, R12E	
sec 20: within N½	200
T29N, R9E	
sec 10: NESE; S½SE	120
T32N., R1W	
sec 7: lots 6-13	230
sec 8: lot 11	14
sec 9: lots 7 and 8	21

Legal Description	Acreage*
sec 17: N½NE; W½; SESE	440
sec 18: lots 3-12; E½SW; SE	617
sec 19: lots 1-4; E½W½; E½	630
sec 20: W½; NWSE	360

*approximate

2.2.2.2 Acquisitions

Allocations and Management Actions

Lands identified for potential acquisition total approximately 140,269 acres.

All planning units

Private and State lands with riparian/aquatic habitat may be acquired through purchase, while those riparian habitats that will improve overall riparian management capabilities will be evaluated for acquisition through exchange.

Taos Plateau planning unit

All private and State lands may be acquired from willing sellers within the Taos Plateau ACEC (approximately 46,116 acres). The BLM will consider acquisition of private and State lands from willing sellers within five miles of the Rio Grande if acquisition will provide protection to Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit

Non-Federal lands may be acquired from willing sellers within specially designated areas in this planning unit.

The BLM may acquire from willing sellers the nontribal lands (approximately 132 acres) adjacent to the Rio Pueblo de Taos for purposes related to recreation, wildlife, fisheries, riparian, and visual quality (T. 24 N., R. 11 E., sec. 1: block 15, lots 1, 2, 3; T. 24 N., R. 12 E., sec. 6: block 16, lot 4; T. 25 N., R. 12 E., sec. 31: block 12, lots 1-3, 12, 13; block 13, lot 16). The BLM may also acquire from willing sellers the area east of the Horseshoe Curve within the Gijosa Grant (approximately 700 acres within T. 24 N., R. 11 E., sec. 24: NE, E1/2NW; sec. 13: SE, SESWSW; T. 24 N. R. 12 E., sec. 19: NW; sec. 18: W1/2) for scenic quality and cultural and wildlife purposes.

The BLM will consider acquisition of private and State lands from willing sellers within five miles of the Rio Grande if acquisition will provide protection to Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep habitat.

Along the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, the BLM may acquire available private lands (approximately 520 acres) with trail resources by purchase or exchange, and State trust lands (approximately 960 acres) containing trail resources by exchange.

Chama planning unit

The Rio Chama WSR, WSA, and ACEC will be acquisition zones. Within the Chama Canyons ACEC, the BLM may acquire available private lands by purchase or exchange (approximately 731 acres) and available State lands by exchange (approximately 644 acres).

Along all segments of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail within the planning unit, the BLM may acquire available private lands with trail resources by purchase or exchange, and State trust lands containing trail resources by exchange.

El Palacio planning unit

The BLM may acquire private lands within and adjoining the ACECs from willing sellers. Along the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, State trust lands containing trail resources may be acquired by exchange.

Ojo Caliente planning unit

If available, all private lands (approximately 26,051 acres) and State lands (approximately 8,276 acres) may be acquired within the Ojo Caliente ACEC. The BLM may also acquire private lands with cultural sites (Ku, Posi, Nute, Sandoval, and Te'ewi pueblos) from willing sellers (approximately 180 acres).

West Santa Fe planning unit

The BLM may acquire State lands within T. 15 N., R. 8 E., secs. 29 and 32, and T. 16 N., R. 7 E., sec. 2 (totaling approximately 678 acres). Within the La Cienega ACEC, private lands in T. 16 N., R. 8 E., sec. 18, 19, 20, 29, 31, and T. 15 N., R. 7 E., sec. 1 (totaling approximately 1,000 acres) may be acquired from willing sellers if significant cultural and natural resources are present.

Within the Santa Fe Ranch ACEC, private lands in T. 18 N., R. 8 E., secs. 10, 13, 15, 16, 17; T. 19 N., R. 8 E., secs. 30 and 31; and State lands within T. 19 N., R. 8 E., sec. 32, totaling approximately 3,865 acres, may be acquired.

Available private lands with trail resources (approximately 100 acres) may be acquired by purchase or exchange along with State lands within the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail (approximately 678 acres).

Galisteo planning unit

The BLM may acquire from willing sellers private lands and State lands with important Galisteo Basin cultural sites (approximately 3,295 acres).

East Side planning unit

Areas within or adjacent to the Sabinoso Wilderness/ACEC is designated as an acquisition zone. The BLM may acquire approximately 9,240 acres of private lands by purchase or exchange, and approximately 2,700 acres of State lands by exchange, if available.

2.2.3 Land Use Authorizations, Utility Corridors, Communication Sites

Goals

- Provide land use authorizations in support of public needs, to be done in consideration of and in compliance with the various management decisions, goals, objectives, and resource restrictions required to protect or maintain multiple uses and resource values.

- Establish an efficient system of utility corridors and communication sites to meet the energy and communication needs of the public with minimum negative impacts on visual, biological, cultural, and physical resources.

Objectives

- Identify areas that are suitable and available to meet public needs for use authorizations such as rights-of-way, leases, and permits, while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.
- Process rights-of-way applications in a timely manner, applying appropriate mitigation to protect resource values.
- Issue land-use authorizations based on RMP decisions, BLM policy, and other Federal mandates to support the public need for uses such as utilities, renewable energy, and telecommunications.

General Management Guidance

Land use authorizations include various authorizations and agreements to use BLM lands such as right-of-way grants and temporary use permits; various leases, permits, and easements; and R&PP leases, pursuant to regulations found at 43 CFR 2740, 2800, 2900, 2911, and 2920. R&PP transfers are addressed under Land Tenure (see section 2.2.2.1).

Requests for land use authorizations will be analyzed and mitigation measures applied on a case-by-case basis in compliance with the NEPA process. Avoidance or exclusion areas may be applied to lands to be avoided but may be available to the location of rights-of-way with special stipulations and areas where location is not available under any conditions, respectively. BLM interim management policy and guidelines will be applied to land use authorizations in WSAs. In accordance with current policy, land use authorizations will not be issued for uses which will involve the disposal or storage of materials which could contaminate the lands (e.g., hazardous waste disposal sites, landfills, rifle ranges, etc.).

Rights-of-way, leases, permits, or easement will not be required for those activities that are considered casual use of public lands. Maximum use of existing rights-of-way is encouraged, including joint use whenever possible. All right-of-way actions will be coordinated with Federal, State and local government agencies, adjacent landowners, and interested individuals and groups. Potential new communication site users will be encouraged to locate within existing communication site locations to reduce impacts and expedite application processing, while new facilities could be built as co-locatable facilities.

The use of certain rights-of-way constructed on public lands prior to FLPMA will be recognized as a valid use even though the authorizing legislation has since been repealed (i.e., ditches and canals under the Act of July 26, 1866 and highways, roads, and trails under R.S. 2477, etc.). Changes in use, location, or size of such pre-FLPMA rights-of-ways will require authorization under existing law. No regulations currently exist to either assert or recognize R.S. 2477 rights-of-way.

Maintenance or improvement of acequias (irrigation ditches) are considered to be grandfathered uses. The following structures or improvements in the Rio Grande Gorge are also considered to be grandfathered uses, provided that they are consistent with protection of the outstandingly remarkable values of the wild and scenic river: power line at Bear Crossing, John Dunn Bridge, High Bridge, powerline at Powerline Falls, Taos Junction Bridge, Pilar Bridge, Glen Woody Bridge, and Embudo Station Bridge. Realty-related unauthorized use will be abated through prevention, detection, and resolution of such uses.

Permits to use the public lands for commercial film production are issued by the BLM under section 302(b) of FLPMA. Regulations governing filming on public lands are covered in 43 CFR part 2920, Leases, Permits, and Easements.

Allocations and Management Actions

General rights-of-way exclusion areas, which total 162,243 acres, are presented on Map 6 along with rights-of-way corridors. Additional exclusion and avoidance areas specific to renewable energy rights-of-way are presented in section 2.2.7 and on Map 9. Limitations on use relative to riparian and wetland areas are addressed in section 2.1.7.1. Authorizations will also be subject to the limitations, as applicable, presented in Table B-1 under Appendix B.

Land use authorizations issued under minimal impact permits (e.g., commercial filming permits) will be considered throughout the planning area, except in Sabinoso Wilderness, on a case-by-case basis, subject to applicable minimal impact criteria and appropriate terms and conditions.

Within the Taos Plateau planning unit, a maximum 530-foot width right-of-way corridor will be designated along the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge and rest area (in accordance with the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan). The corridor width is 530 feet at the bridge and widens to encompass the rest area. The second right-of-way corridor will be along the 345 kilovolt transmission line (Ojo-Taos line) and 115 kilovolt transmission line, with a maximum combined width of 190 feet. Rights-of-way will be excluded within the Wild Rivers, San Antonio, and Ute Mountain zones of the Taos Plateau ACEC.

Within the Chama planning unit, 13,644 acres will be excluded from rights-of-way to protect riparian, wildlife, water quality, and scenic values, particularly those in proximity to the Rio Chama. Rights-of-way and access easements will be maintained if Archuleta Mesa is removed from public ownership.

Within the Ojo Caliente planning unit, right-of-way corridors will be identified along US 285, US 84, NM 111 and NM 554, with a maximum 150 foot width. Within the Ojo Caliente ACEC, rights-of-way will be excluded from the Rincon Del Cuervo and Cerro Colorado areas managed for their wilderness characteristics.

Within the El Palacio planning unit rights-of-way will be allowed, but will be subject to meeting VRM classes II and III and mitigation necessary to protect any cultural or paleontological resources. The Pueblos ACEC will be a right-of-way avoidance area.

Within the Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit, rights-of-way for road improvements related to safety will be allowed within the Lower Gorge ACEC (clarifying the intent of the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan). New utility projects will be underground and will be co-located with existing rights-of-way and roads. As indicated above, rights-of-way for acequias (irrigation ditches) are grandfathered through the legislation for wild and scenic river designation, and so will remain in effect (in accordance with the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan).

Within the West Santa Fe planning unit, a 0.25-mile utility corridor will be designated along Buckman Road. Rights-of-ways will also be considered on a case-by-case basis within the La Cienega and Santa Fe Ranch ACECs.

Within the Galisteo planning unit, no new rights-of-way will be allowed within the Galisteo Basin ACEC.

Within the East Side planning unit, no new rights-of-way will be allowed within the Sabinoso Wilderness/ACEC.

2.2.4 Livestock Grazing

Goals

- Manage the public rangelands to provide for a sustainable level of livestock grazing consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- Manage livestock grazing on the public rangelands to provide maintenance or enhancement of the natural resources.

Objectives

- Maintain existing desirable rangeland conditions and improve rangeland health utilizing best grazing management practices, meeting or exceeding New Mexico Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (2001).
- Avoid net loss of animal unit months (AUMs) within the planning area where practical.
- Identify and implement vegetation improvements on a landscape scale to increase forage quality and quantity for both livestock and wildlife and to support and sustain local communities.
- Establish reserve common allotments to provide forage reserves for conservation benefits and management flexibility.

General Management Guidance

Primary guidance for the grazing program is provided by the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934; the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976; the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978; 43 CFR, Subchapter D- Range Management 4000-4180; and BLM Manual Handbooks H-4010-1, Grazing Administration, Range Management Records, Qualifications and Preference; H-4120-1, Grazing Management; H-4150-1, Unauthorized Grazing Use; H-4160-1, Administrative Remedies; H-4180-1, Rangeland Health Standards; H-1740-1, Renewable Resources Improvement and Treatment Guidelines and Procedures; H-1741-1, Fencing; H-1741-2, Water Developments; H-1745, Introduction, Transplant, Augmentation, and Reestablishment of Fish, Wildlife, and Plants; and H-9011-1, Chemical Pest Control.

Long-term monitoring, subject to staffing and the availability of funding, will continue on high priority allotments, typically those not meeting rangeland health standards or having sensitive resources, to determine the effectiveness of current management, the need for allocation changes, and establishment of future objectives. Monitoring will be conducted on areas not meeting standards if existing information is not adequate to determine causal factors. If current livestock grazing is determined to be significant factor for not meeting standards, appropriate action will be taken as required by regulation. Appropriate action will be taken as funds become available for significant other causal factors.

Monitoring will be used, as necessary, for the following activity-level decisions (i.e., decisions based on subsequent allotment-specific analyses, typically in an environmental assessment, tiered to the RMP):

- Any increase or decrease in the allocation of AUMs will be approved by the authorized officer. An interdisciplinary team will follow the guidance provided in 43 CFR 4110 when making recommendations to the authorized officer. The actual percentages of forage allocation between

wildlife and livestock will be determined on a case-by-case basis through allotment management plans, or other activity plans intended to serve as the functional equivalent, prepared in compliance with NEPA and in consultation, cooperation, and coordination with affected permittees or lessees, landowners, State agencies, and other interested publics.

- Livestock grazing adjustments to meet requirements of sensitive species and protect cultural and archeological sites and areas. As discussed in section 2.1.2, livestock grazing allotments will be evaluated for significant cultural sites, and conflicts with cultural resources will be eliminated or minimized.

After a disturbance event (e.g., wildland fire, prescribed fire, fuels treatments, thinnings, and seedings), livestock will not be allowed to graze until directed by the authorized officer. This period of time is usually two years to allow for grasses to establish sufficient root growth to sustain grazing, but may fluctuate based on climatic conditions. Permitted or prescribed livestock use may be used as a tool at any time after disturbances in pastures if an interdisciplinary team designs and monitors the grazing to accomplish resource objectives (e.g., to control noxious and invasive weeds or assist in getting broadcast seed worked into the ground). A drought management policy will be implemented when conditions warrant, with emphasis placed on monitoring for the drought conditions.

Allotments are assigned to one of three categories: *improve* (I)—allotments requiring attention, *maintain* (M)—maintain natural resources at current levels, or *custodial* (C)—minimal management effort, based on their need for management attention, with I-category allotments being the highest priority and C-category allotments the lowest. These categories are assigned through an evaluation process which includes multiple factors such as resource conditions and values, allotment location, social concerns, and resource conflicts. Changes to categories will be made in consultation and coordination with permittees, interested and affected parties, and the public.

Management plans will be completed or revised for all priority allotments, followed by lower category allotments as budget and time constraints allow. The BLM will consult with grazing permittees, government agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service and State Lands, and other interested parties to prepare allotment management plans.

Allowable Uses and Management Actions

Grazing allotments will continue to be reviewed and AUMs adjusted as conditions dictate. Areas unavailable to livestock grazing total 49,222 acres and include allotments in the Galisteo, Lower Gorge/Copper Hill, and Ojo Caliente planning units (see below). Vacant allotments or those allotments that become available through relinquishment or by decision will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis prior to the issuance of a grazing permit. Isolated allotments will be evaluated to determine the best use for these parcels and livestock grazing will remain a tool to be used to help comply with the Standards for Rangeland Health.

Reserve common allotments will be established for use by permittees or lessees whose Taos Field Office-administered allotments are not available due to drought, vegetation manipulations, and wildfire or when monitoring indicates a change or rest is needed in their respective allotments. While available for use under these or similar circumstances, these allotments will not be available by application.

Allotment 596 and 610 and the area described below in the Rio Chama planning unit will be established as reserve common allotments because they are (1) allotments which have been

vacant for more than five years, (2) contiguous tracts of BLM-administered lands of sufficient size, (3) newly acquired lands, and/or (4) allotments with minimal likelihood of having a qualified applicant. Consideration may be given to the establishment of additional reserve common allotments using these criteria where appropriate to allow the BLM to manage areas to better meet the needs of the resources as well as permittees or lessees.

As identified in section 2.1.3.2, based on an interdisciplinary review by BLM resource specialists, any additional AUM's for livestock grazing in the Taos Plateau planning unit will be apportioned to either wildlife or livestock grazing based on site-specific conditions, including but not limited to special status species or wildlife habitat and watershed conditions. Also in this planning unit, livestock grazing will be unavailable in the portions of Ute Mountain acquired in 2003 and 2005 to prevent competition for forage with resident pronghorn, elk, and other wildlife species of special emphasis.

Approximately 1,025 acres of acquired lands within the Chama Canyons ACEC will be managed as a reserve common allotment, as discussed above. Specifically, these lands are described as T. 27 N., R. 2 E., Sec. 27: SW¹/₄, Sec. 28: SE¹/₄; T. 27 N., R. 2 E., Sec. 28: S¹/₂ NW¹/₄; T. 27 N., R. 2 E., Sec. 33: W¹/₂; and T. 27 N., R. 2 E., Sec. 34: W¹/₂.

The Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor, which includes 17,330 acres within the Taos Plateau and Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning units, will be unavailable to livestock grazing. Within the Chama, El Palacio, and Ojo Caliente planning units, 245 acres associated with the Pueblos ACEC will be unavailable. Select riparian areas throughout the planning area, totaling 1,755 acres, will be unavailable.

Livestock grazing will also be unavailable in the following areas by planning unit:

Taos Plateau. Approximately 120 acres along the Rio San Antonio will be unavailable to livestock grazing. The Wild River zone (897 acres) and Ute Mountain zone (14,404 acres, not counting the acreage within the Wild and Scenic River corridor) will be unavailable.

Lower Gorge/Copper Hill. Allotments 518, 519, and 520, totaling approximately 17,135 acres, will not be available for livestock. Allotment 521 will become unavailable upon relinquishment of the current permit and no permit transfer will be allowed.

Riparian areas within the Lower Gorge ACEC, totaling approximately 3,661 acres, will not be available. (This acreage largely coincides with that of the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor.)

The boundary of allotment 636 will be modified to make approximately 4,000 acres below the rim of the Rio Grande Gorge unavailable.

Chama. Within the Chama Canyons ACEC, 300 acres along the Rio Cebolla, 74 acres within Lobo Canyon, and 338 acres in the Navajo Peak area along the Rio Chama will be unavailable.

In addition, 725 acres within the Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River corridor will be unavailable.

Ojo Caliente. Pueblo sites, totaling 230 acres, and the 325-acre Ojo Caliente Demonstration Area will be unavailable. Allotment 523 (126 acres) and allotment 524 (55 acres) will become unavailable to livestock grazing.

El Palacio. Two staging areas within the Sombrillo ACEC will make approximately 253 acres unavailable to livestock grazing. At Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area, approximately 350 acres around the developed recreational sites and La Caja Pueblo will be unavailable.

West Santa Fe. Approximately 120 acres around the La Cienega Mesa pueblo ruins, including a portion of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, will be unavailable.

In addition, livestock grazing could become unavailable if conflicts arise with the protection of cultural resources which cannot be mitigated otherwise.

Galisteo. Allotments 917 and 926, containing 2,075 acres and 115 acres respectively, will be unavailable to livestock grazing to better protect cultural resources, while 40 acres within allotment 830 and 80 acres within allotment 851 will also be unavailable for this purpose.

East Side. Approximately 15 acres of riparian vegetation will be unavailable to livestock grazing within the Sabinoso ACEC.

In addition, no livestock conversions from cattle to domestic sheep or goats will be allowed in allotments within occupied bighorn sheep habitat due to the potential transmission of disease and subsequent mortality of bighorn sheep. New sheep and goat allotments or conversions from cattle to sheep or goats will be permitted a minimum of nine airline miles from known bighorn sheep habitat. This distance will be greater if deemed necessary through site-specific analysis or a cooperative agreement with other Federal or State agencies.

2.2.5 Mineral Resources (Leasable, Locatable, and Saleable)

The Taos Field Office is responsible for administering approximately 1.5 million acres of Federal mineral estate in the planning area. The leasable minerals are carbon dioxide, coal, geothermal, and oil and gas. Locatable minerals that occur or may occur on or adjacent to BLM land include mica, diatomite, perlite, gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, turquoise, silica sand, and uranium. Saleable minerals, or mineral materials, include common varieties of sand, gravel, stone, pumice, pumicite, clay, rock, and petrified wood.

2.2.5.1 Leasable Minerals

Goals

- Make mineral resources available in order to provide stable, abundant, and affordable sources of energy while maintaining, restoring, and promoting a healthy, sustainable ecosystem.

Objectives

- Ensure that all energy exploration, operations, and reclamation are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner through the application of improved protection practices referred to as best management practices (BMPs).
- Provide leasing opportunities for oil, natural gas, geothermal energy, and solid mineral resource development.
- Mitigate resource impacts caused by the exploration and development of leasable minerals in a manner which provides for the rehabilitation of the affected lands.

- Provide guidance and standards for ensuring compliance with agency policies and operating requirements governing oil and gas in the Code of Federal Regulations, Onshore Oil and Gas Orders, and Notice to Lessees.
- Manage mineral resources in the public interest by maximizing the recovery of those resources, wherever appropriate, while minimizing their waste and protecting correlative rights (rights of various mineral interest owners).

General Management Guidance

The leasable minerals in the planning area include carbon dioxide, coal, geothermal, and oil and natural gas. Of the approximately 1.5 million acres of Federal mineral estate administered by the Taos Field Office, about 909,000 acres underlies private or State lands or lands managed by another Federal agency. The BLM coordinates closely with surface owners to ensure surface resource issues are considered before Federal mineral development occurs on split estate land. For split estate mineral leasing, the BLM will notify surface owners of interest to lease and will review parcels to identify any resources that need protection by attaching stipulations prior to leasing (see Appendix B).

Where appropriate, it is BLM policy to make mineral resources obtainable and to support mineral resource exploration and development. Geophysical exploration will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In addition, the BLM regulates mineral development to reduce environmental impacts in accordance with applicable law, many of which are summarized in Appendix B.

Policy guidance for managing mineral resources is provided in several pieces of legislation such as the 2005 Energy and Policy Act, as well as BLM Manuals and Handbooks, the Code of Federal Regulations, Onshore Oil and Gas Orders, and Notice to Lessees. The key directives are that (1) public land is to be managed for multiple use and (2) if it is determined to be necessary to place certain areas under special management, then that management must be the least restrictive necessary to protect the resource of concern to ensure that the area remains open to other uses.

Geothermal leasing and development will be subject to the procedures and BMPs selected as part of the Record of Decision, signed December 17, 2009, for the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States (USDI-BLM 2008a), prepared jointly by the BLM and U. S. Forest Service.

Coal leasing will occur in accordance with applicable laws subject to surface owner consultation and additional NEPA analysis, as appropriate.

For all mineral operations, the Taos Field Office will ensure that there are no “likely to adversely affect” occurrences for threatened and endangered species or disturbance of cultural resources.

Allocations and Management Actions

The RMP provides for mineral development while minimizing surface disturbance through BMPs to the extent possible. Co-mingling of different producing formations will be encouraged where possible, including consideration of opportunities to combine oil and gas operations across leases and between different lessees or companies through unitization. To control and restrict the amount of surface disturbance caused by oil and gas development, operators are required to co-locate and plan development infrastructure such as pipelines, utilities, roads, and production facilities to the extent practicable and in a manner that will reduce cumulative

disturbance. Development will be further consolidated by limiting the amount of disturbance to no more than one pad per 160 acres.

Table 2-5. Leasing decisions

Decision	Acres
Closed to leasing	525,740
Nondiscretionary closure	35,590
Open with standard terms and conditions	648,661
Open to leasing with constraints (limited)	343,449

Approximately 525,740 acres of Federal mineral estate will be closed to mineral leasing to protect sensitive resources (Table 2-5 and Map 7). This includes approximately 35,590 acres of Federal mineral estate that is closed nondiscretionarily. Approximately 648,661 acres will be open to mineral leasing with standard terms and conditions, and 343,449 acres will be open to leasing with constraints to be applied to leases in addition to the standard terms and conditions.

Table 2-6 presents the constraints that will be applied to leases within the special designations and other portions of each planning unit. These constraints include timing limitations (TL) and controlled surface use (CSU), considered to be moderate, and a no surface occupancy (NSO) constraint, considered major. A description of these constraints, to be applied to leases as special stipulations, is presented in Appendix B.

Minerals on split estate lands will be managed in cooperation and collaboration with surface owners and operators as well as appropriate government entities such as county governments, State Land Office, New Mexico Mining Minerals Division, and New Mexico Oil Conservation Division to determine the appropriate guidelines. Federal and Indian mineral estate underlying surface area managed or owned by private, State, or other Federal agencies will be managed in close coordination with the landowners.

All riparian and aquatic areas will have NSO to protect those habitats. In order to ensure that undocumented or newly acquired riparian-wetland areas are protected, mineral leasing actions will be subject to restriction both at time of lease and during the application to drill process. For all riparian-wetlands areas, no surface use or occupancy will be allowed within up to 200 meters of the outer edge of 100-year floodplains or potential riparian-wetland edges as identified by hydrology, hydric soils, or vegetation. However, an exception may be granted based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer if an approved plan of operations ensures the protection of water, soil, and habitat resources.

The proposed Taos Plateau ACEC, which includes the North Unit, Ute Mountain, Wild Rivers, and San Antonio zones and a total of 241,210 mineral acres, will be closed to mineral leasing to protect the resource values associated with the ACEC, particularly big game wildlife habitat and migration corridors. The remainder of the Taos Plateau planning unit, consisting of 109,429 acres, will be open to leasing with the CSU and TL stipulation provisions described in Appendix B.

In the Chama planning unit, the Chama Canyons ACEC will be closed to leasing. The one existing oil and gas lease located within the ACEC will not be re-issued after expiration of its primary term. Two parcels within T. 27 N., R. 4 E., sec. 20, totaling approximately 80 acres, would also not be re-issued after the primary term because of their location within a parcel

available for disposal. For the remainder of the planning unit, CSU and TL will be placed on new mineral leasing to protect the critical winter range and migration corridor for big game. For existing leases in the planning unit, conditions of approval will be attached to APDs to protect deer and elk habitat such as the critical winter range and migration corridor. In addition, both the Rio Chama WSR and the Rio Chama WSA will remain closed to leasing.

All lands within the expanded and existing Ojo Caliente ACEC, approximately 66,580 acres, will be closed to oil and gas leasing. This is to protect the expanded cultural ACEC which contains prehistoric and historic sites and is located in the Ojo Caliente planning unit.

Within the El Palacio planning unit, any new leases in the expanded Sombrillo ACEC, the proposed Pueblo ACEC, and the Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area will have a NSO stipulation applied to protect the significant cultural and paleontological resources in this portion of the Española Basin. The remainder of the planning unit will have CSU stipulations applied to leasing, as applicable.

Within the West Santa Fe planning unit, all new leases within the expanded La Cienega ACEC will contain stipulations for NSO. The newly created Santa Fe Ranch ACEC has two zones: the Ranch Zone will have a CSU stipulation applied while the Diablo Canyon Zone will be closed to leasing. The remainder of the planning unit will have a CSU stipulation applied to any new leasing.

The Galisteo planning unit will be closed to mineral leasing to protect cultural resources on BLM lands and split estate and to ensure consistency with Santa Fe County plans. However, if the oil and gas resource is being drained by wells accessing adjacent mineral reserves, the BLM will take action to ensure revenues on the Federal minerals are recovered.

Within the East Side planning unit, all of the minerals within Sabinoso Wilderness and the Sabinoso ACEC will be closed to leasing.

2.2.5.2 Locatable Minerals

Goals

- Allow for exploration and production of locatable minerals to contribute to a stable local and domestic mineral supply while minimizing effects to other resources and resource uses.

Objectives

- Ensure that all locatable minerals exploration and development is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner through the application of BMPs.

General Management Guidance

The RMP provides for locatable mineral exploration and development where consistent with management objectives. The BLM will continue to regulate surface-disturbing activities under the Mining Law under 43 CFR 3809 and 43 CFR 3802 to protect the environment and its resources and resource uses. For split estate, mining claimants and/or operators will coordinate with surface owners as required by 43 CFR 3809.31 and 43 CFR 3838.

Activities on public land under the Mining Law (mineral entry) can be prohibited only by a formal withdrawal under the provisions of Section 204 of FLPMA, such as a public law or a public land order (i.e., a nondiscretionary closure).

The BLM will ensure that there will be no “likely to adversely affect” occurrences for threatened and endangered species or disturbance of cultural resources.

Allocations and Management Actions

The following areas will be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry (see section 2.2.9):

- Taos Plateau ACEC (North Unit, Ute Mountain, San Antonio, and Wild Rivers Zones)
- Rio Chama ACEC
- Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River
- Rio Chama WSA
- Expanded Ojo Caliente ACEC
- Expanded La Cienega ACEC
- Diablo Canyon (within Santa Fe Ranch ACEC)
- Community Growth Areas (West Santa Fe and Galisteo planning units—see Map 2)
- Traditional Cultural Property within Sombrillo ACEC
- Sabinoso Wilderness
- Sabinoso ACEC
- Copper Hill ACEC
- Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River (Upper and Lower Gorge)
- Lower Gorge ACEC (including Orilla Verde)
- Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area
- Pueblo ACEC
- Galisteo Basin Archeological Sites Protection Act sites

Withdrawals involve approximately 268,100 acres of the Federal mineral estate administered by the Taos Field Office. All proposed withdrawals are subject to prior existing rights. Because Ute Mountain was acquired, it is not subject to the Mining Law, as minerals that are normally locatable under the Mining Law are leasable if acquired. Leasing of acquired hardrock minerals within the Ute Mountain area, however, will not be allowed.

2.2.5.3 Salable Minerals

Goals

- Allow for exploration and production of saleable minerals to contribute to a stable local and domestic mineral supply while minimizing effects to other resources and resource uses.

Objectives

- Ensure that all saleable minerals exploration and development is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner through the application of BMPs.

General Management Guidance

The RMP provides for saleable mineral exploration and development where consistent with management objectives. Management of saleable minerals will be according to 43 CFR 3600, Mineral Materials Disposal. It is the BLM's policy to make mineral materials available unless it is detrimental to the public interest to do so. The BLM will not dispose of mineral materials if it is determined that the aggregate damage to public lands and resources will exceed the public benefits that the BLM expects from the proposed disposition.

The BLM will not dispose of mineral materials from wilderness areas or other areas where it is expressly prohibited by law. The BLM will not dispose of mineral materials from areas identified in land use plans as not appropriate for mineral materials disposal.

While not expressly prohibited by law or regulation, sale and free use of mineral materials in WSAs will not be allowed in most instances because it will not be compatible with the nonimpairment criteria. The nonimpairment criteria require the BLM to manage lands under wilderness review in such a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness. For the purposes of this plan, WSAs are considered closed to mineral material disposal.

The BLM will ensure that there will be no "likely to adversely affect" occurrences for threatened and endangered species or disturbance of cultural resources.

Allocations and Management Actions

Approximately 511,100 acres are closed to mineral material sales and free use.

In the Taos Plateau planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material disposal will be 286,220 acres, coinciding with the Taos Plateau ACEC. Lands outside of the ACEC will remain open to mineral material disposal.

In the Chama planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material disposal will be 700 acres. The Rio Chama ACEC will be closed to mineral material disposal. The Rio Chama WSA will remain closed to disposals so long as it remains a WSA, and will be incorporated into the ACEC if released from wilderness consideration. Lands outside of the ACEC will remain open to mineral material disposal.

In the Ojo Caliente planning unit, 64,280 acres will be closed to mineral material disposal. Within the Ojo Caliente ACEC, only the area between El Rito and Ojo Caliente on the north side of NM-111 will be available for mineral material disposal, while lands outside the ACEC will remain open to disposal.

In the El Palacio planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material disposal will be 22,020 acres. The Pueblos ACEC will be closed to mineral material disposal. The clay and ash area within the Sombrillo ACEC will be designated as a traditional cultural property and will be available only for tribal uses. An area adjacent to NM 503 will be designated as a community pit.

In the West Santa Fe planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material disposal will be 36,500 acres. The La Cienega and Santa Fe Ranch ACECs will be closed to mineral material disposals, while lands outside the ACECs will remain open to mineral material disposals.

In the Galisteo planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material sales and free use will total 2,760 acres. The San Pedro area will be closed to mineral material disposals, except for within San Lazarus Gulch. Within San Lazarus Gulch, surface disturbance associated with mining operations and facilities, including excavation, stockpiling, and infrastructure, will be limited to 10 non-reclaimed acres. Haul roads will be treated or paved by one or more dust suppressant products (e.g., asphalt, chip and seal, chlorides, synthetic polymers, enzymes, or other similar products) approved by the authorized officer to control the generation of dust.

The Galisteo Basin archeological sites designated as ACECs will remain closed to mineral material disposals. If additional significant sites are discovered, they will be included in the ACEC and closed to mineral material disposals.

In the East Side planning unit, the amount of land closed to mineral material disposal will be 22,630 acres. The Sabinoso Wilderness and adjacent ACEC will be closed to mineral material sales and free use.

Table 2-6. Mineral resource allocations within special management areas

Special management areas [BLM Surface Acres]	Federal Mineral Withdrawals and Closures		
	Locatable Mineral Acres	Salable Mineral Materials Acres	Leasable Mineral Acres Geothermal, Oil and Gas
Taos Plateau planning unit			
Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River [17,330]	wd- 16,530	closed- 16,530	closed- 16,530
Taos Plateau ACEC [222,500]	open-227,380; wd-23,180	closed- 286,220	closed- 286,220
North Unit [185,539]	open- 249,210	closed-204,200	closed-204,200
Ute Mountain Zone [18,370]	wd-4,540	closed-18,370	closed-18,370
San Antonio Zone [7,371]	wd-8,020	closed-8,020	closed-8,020
Wild Rivers Zone [11,220]	wd-10,620	closed-10,620	closed-10,620
Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit			
Lower Gorge ACEC (includes Orilla Verde) [21,190]	wd-21,410	closed-21,409; open-1.0	closed-21,410
Rio Grande and Red Wild and Scenic River [3,660]	wd-16,530	closed-16,530	closed-16,530
Copper Hill ACEC [17,200]	wd-18,900	closed-18,879; open-21	closed-6,030; NSO-500; CSU-10,570
Rio Embudo Protection Zone [2,640]	wd-2,610	closed-2,609; open-1.0	closed-2,610
Agua Caliente Protection Zone [3,420]	wd-3,420	closed-3,420	closed-3,420
Lower Embudo Cultural Protection Zone [500]	wd-500	closed-500	NSO-500
Central Protection Zone [10,640]	wd-12,370	closed-12,350; open-20	CSU-10,570
Chama planning unit			
Chama Canyons ACEC [8,183]	wd-8,180	closed-8,180	closed-8,180
Rio Chama WSR [2,475]	wd-2,280	closed-2,280	closed-2,280
Rio Chama WSA [11,128]	wd-11,150	closed-11,150	closed-11,150
Ojo Caliente planning unit			
Ojo Caliente ACEC [66,150]	wd-66,580	closed-64,910; open-1,670	closed-66,580
El Palacio planning unit			
Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area [3,340]	wd-3,340	closed-3,340	NSO-3,340
Pueblos ACEC [240]	wd-490	closed-490	NSO-490
Sombrillo ACEC [18,080]	wd-60	closed-18,830	NSO-18,190
West Santa Fe planning unit			
La Cienega ACEC [13,390]	wd-13,690	closed-13,690	NSO-13,220; CSU-470
Santa Fe Ranch ACEC [21,030]	open-22,440; wd-710	closed-23,150	CSU-20,360; closed-710
Ranch Zone [20,320]	open-22,440	closed-22,440	CSU-20,360
Diablo Canyon Zone [710]	wd-710	closed-710	closed-710
Community Growth Area (non-Federal surface)	wd-15,730	open	open
Galisteo planning unit			
Galisteo Basin ACEC (w/San Lazaro) [450]	Cong. wd-750	closed-750	closed-750
San Pedro Mountains			
San Lazarus Gulch	open-240	open-240;	closed-240
San Pedro Mountains- remainder of area	open-2,010	closed-2,010	closed-2,010
Community Growth Area (minerals, non-Federal surface)	wd-32,770	open-32,770	closed-32,770
East Side planning unit			
Sabinoso ACEC (including Wilderness) [19,780]	wd-22,630	closed-22,630	closed-22,630
Common to all planning Units			
Riparian/aquatic areas	open-1,970	closed-1,970	NSO-1,970

Special management areas [BLM Surface Acres]	Federal Mineral Withdrawals and Closures		
	Locatable Mineral Acres	Salable Mineral Materials Acres	Leasable Mineral Acres Geothermal, Oil and Gas
wd = withdrawn from mineral entry. NSO = open to mineral leasing with a no surface occupancy stipulation. CSU = open to mineral leasing with a controlled surface use stipulation. TL = open to mineral leasing with timing limitation stipulation controlling access to a specific time of year (see Appendix B for more detail). Locatable, mineral material and leasable acreages are mineral acres only. BLM surface is added to NSO, CSU and TL stipulations when Federal surface/privates minerals occur and is subtracted when private surface/Federal minerals occur. Closed to leasing acres are only mineral acres.			

2.2.6 Recreation

Goals

- Provide a diversity of settings where visitors may have the opportunity to realize their personal expectations or goals while engaging in a variety of activities in the outdoors.
- Provide high quality recreation opportunities and experiences.
- Manage for appropriate levels of use, facilities, management and services, and administrative controls in each recreation area. Balance public demand, protection of resources, setting objectives, and fiscal responsibility.
- Issue special recreation permits in an equitable manner for specific recreational uses of public lands and related waters as a means to minimize user conflicts, control visitor use, protect recreation resources, and provide for private and commercial recreation use according to the management objectives and implementing actions of each SRMA and ERMA.
- Develop and maintain cooperative relationships with national, State, and local recreation providers, tourism entities, and local recreational groups.
- Improve and expand collaboration with the State of New Mexico on boating safety.

Objectives

- Strive to achieve the objectives of each Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) or Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA).
- Enhance recreation access, opportunities, and experiences by increasing the level of management presence through signs and basic onsite controls.
- Increase the BLM's identity, enhance visitor services, and promote appropriate behavior by providing clear and consistent signing, information, maps, interpretation, and environmental education at recreation sites and facilities.
- Collaborate with communities to provide trail links and access to public land.
- Manage and maintain recreation sites and facilities for quality experiences and enjoyment. Design for function and aesthetics, with design standards that are appropriate for the setting and enjoyment by the public.

General Management Guidance

The BLM has shifted the emphasis of the recreation program from an activity-based approach to one which focuses on recreation experiences and benefits. The BLM's Priorities for Recreation and Visitor Services (USDI-BLM 2003) which outlines seven primary objectives will be consulted for future planning and management. Furthermore, the Unified Strategy (USDI-BLM

2007) will be used to coordinate actions along a hierarchy of those objectives. Ongoing or future projects or administrative actions will be consistent with the assigned physical, social, and administrative setting character, experiences, and benefits that are unique to each unit.

A sign plan will be developed and implemented field office-wide, consistent with the RMP and subsequent activity-level plans, which will incorporate the objectives for recreational management.

The entire planning area will remain open to dispersed recreation. The camping limit on public lands is set by BLM policy and is currently limited to 14 days. Emphasis will be placed on providing interpretive and informational signs and materials for public land visitors and maintaining existing facilities to a high standard consistent with the recreational setting.

Special recreation permits will be considered for commercial, noncommercial, and competitive events on a case-by-case basis. Business plans will be developed where fees (i.e., those associated with recreation use permits) are required or special recreation permits are issued.

Installation of new rock climbing routes or hardware will require pre-approval by the BLM.

Allocations and Management Actions

Eleven SRMAs are established throughout the planning area, and some adjustments are made to the recreation areas currently being managed (Santa Cruz Lake, Orilla Verde, and Wild Rivers). In addition, 10 ERMAs will be created to provide guidance for casual uses and custodial management.

Recreation settings, which serve to guide the management of the SRMAs are presented in Table 2-7. Appendix D provides a detailed description of these settings: primitive, back country, middle country, front country, rural, and urban.

Table 2-7. Acreage of settings

Settings	Acreage
ERMA	409,150
SRMA	185,539
Primitive	43,550
Back Country	19,665
Middle Country	110,103
Front Country	7,423
Rural	4,204
Urban	0

Map 8 presents the SRMAs and ERMAs, while Table 2-8 below identifies these specific areas and their acreages.

Table 2-8. Acreage of recreation areas

Planning unit	Recreation Name	Designation	Acreage
Taos Plateau	Rio Grande Gorge Recreation Area	SRMA	71,291
	Del Norte River Recreation Management Zone (RMZ)		

	Taos Box RMZ		
	Wild Rivers RMZ		
	Guadalupe Mountain RMZ		
Lower Gorge/ Copper Hill	Rio Grande Gorge Recreation Area (cont.)		
	Orilla Verde and Lower Gorge RMZ		
	Taos Valley Overlook RMZ		
	Horseshoe Curve RMZ		
	Rio Grande Rim and Copper Hill RMZ		
Taos Plateau	Ute Mountain	ERMA	18,370
	San Antonio Gorge	ERMA	7,371
	Taos Plateau	ERMA	185,539
Lower Gorge/ Copper Hill	Rio Embudo	ERMA	14,054
Chama	Chama Canyons	SRMA	13,510
	Chama	ERMA	28,513
Ojo Caliente	Posi	SRMA	4,724
	Ojo Caliente	ERMA	72,108
El Palacio	Palacio Arroyos	SRMA	56,134
	La Puebla	SRMA	680
	Sombrillo	ERMA	17,375
	Santa Cruz Lake	SRMA	3,356
North Santa Fe County	Cieneguilla	SRMA	6,969
	Diablo Canyon	SRMA	713
	West Santa Fe	ERMA	28,384
Galisteo Basin	Cerrillos Hills/Burnt Corn	SRMA	4,811
	San Pedro Mountains	SRMA	2,663
	Galisteo Basin	ERMA	6,617
East Side	Sabinoso	SRMA	19,776
	East Side	ERMA	32,503

Delineated Special and Extensive Recreation Management Areas

SRMAs are established to meet recreation market demand which requires structured or planned recreation management targeting particular activities to produce specific recreation experiences and outcomes. ERMAs offer a variety of dispersed recreation activities through custodial recreation management to resolve use conflicts and provide for visitor safety and resource protection.

Management of each SRMA and ERMA is presented below.

RIO GRANDE DEL NORTE ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in boater skill development or outstanding opportunities for wildlife viewing in these back country and middle country settings.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Boating, hiking, fishing.

Experiences: Solitude, savoring river and rock-art aesthetics.

Benefits: Improved self-confidence, improved boating skills, renewed spirit, and a closer relationship to nature. Economic benefits through special recreation permits. Increased knowledge and appreciation of resources through river guided interpretation.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Primitive. Generally not accessible by road except at John Dunn Bridge (JDB), which is middle country, and Taos Junction Bridge (TJB), which is rural. Remote from highways and population.

Social: Up to 16 per group on river. Up to 14 encounters per day on trails and the river.

Operational: Signs present at key access points. Patrolled periodically by river rangers. Some use restrictions, limited boating permits required.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Develop interpretive signs at JDB on riparian resources, transportation history, user ethics and WSR and boating resources. Display orientation information about whitewater on BLM website.

Management: Signs present at key access points, but limited within the zone; interpretive signs at JDB, trails, shelters, visitor center, and parking areas at Wild Rivers. JDB boating put in, toilets, and signs will be maintained.

Monitoring: Vehicle counters, routine surveys, observation, SRP post use reports, and visitor reports of crowding. If trends show that use is over acceptable limits, additional action may be considered, such as encouraging use on other trails.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I, except at JDB which is class III.

Travel: Limited to designated but managed as nonmotorized except at JDB.

The "wild" character of these river segments will be maintained through controls on surface-disturbing activity.

Recreation: Limit the use of signing or other administrative controls.

Permits: Maintain limits on boating permits to keep social encounters on the river low.

WILD RIVERS RIM ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in nature appreciation, rest and exercise in this front country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, sightseeing, camping, and mountain and road biking.

Experiences: Escape from everyday responsibilities, enjoy spectacular views, mental and physical rest, and exercise.

Benefits: Sense of wellbeing, gaining closeness to nature, physical fitness, and a greater awareness of aesthetics.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Front country. Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as campsites, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs.

Social: 30 or more encounters in the front country.

Operational: Area personnel are periodically available; rules clearly posted and periodic enforcement presence.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Partner with schools and nonprofits to deliver programs to grades K through 8. Provide historic and natural resource interpretation for Wild Rivers Back Country Byway users. Basic orientation information will be displayed on the BLM website.

Management: Replace facilities per the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan.

Monitoring: Vehicle counters, routine visitor surveys, SRP reports, and trail registers.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class III.
Travel: Limited to designated routes.
Permits: Consider small competitive events and limited number of guide services.

GUADALUPE MOUNTAIN ZONE

Management Objectives: By the year 2030, manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in exercise and escape in this back country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hunting, hiking, mountain biking.

Experiences: Solitude, exercise.

Benefits: Fitness, wellbeing.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Back country. Sparse two tracks and trails. Minimal to nonexistent facilities.

Social: Up to 14 encounters per day on trails except during permitted events.

Operational: Area personnel are periodically available; rules clearly posted and periodic enforcement presence.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key.

Management: Work with partners to develop trail from Questa to the SRMA with potential to link to other trails.

Monitoring: Trail registers and routine visitor surveys.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II.
Travel: Limited to designated routes.
Recreation: Camping not allowed (except in designated sites along the Wild Rivers rim).
Permits: Consider small competitive events and limited number of guide services.

TAOS BOX (JDB TO TJB) ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in whitewater rafting with convenient access in this back country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Boating, fishing, swimming, hiking.

Experiences: Adventure, risk, teamwork, testing skills, time with family.

Benefits: Improved outdoor confidence, stronger ties with family and friends.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Back country. Generally not accessible by road except at TJB which is rural.

Social: Up to 16 per group on river. Up to 14 encounters per day on trails. 30 or more encounters in the rural areas.

Operational: Signs present at key access points.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Develop interpretive signs at TJB and JDB on riparian resources, transportation history, user ethics and WSR and boating resources. Basic orientation information displayed on website and in Rio Grande Gorge brochure.

Management: Maintain existing facilities. The Rio Grande Corridor Plan will serve as guidance at the activity plan level. Pursue access easements and explore trail opportunities along the Rio Pueblo de Taos.

Monitoring: Vehicle counters with routine surveys, observation, and SRP post use reports.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I, except at TJB which is class III.

Travel: Limited to designated but managed as nonmotorized except at TJB.

Recreation: Limit the use of signing or other administrative controls.

Permits: Maintain limits on boating permits to keep social encounters on the river low.

ORILLA VERDE AND LOWER GORGE ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage river-related activities with convenient access and creature comforts in this rural setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Boating, camping, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing, picnicking, swimming.	Experiences: Enjoying time with friends and family, connection to nature, and rest.	Benefits: Stronger ties with friends and family, enhanced understanding of nature.
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Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Rural. Proximate to NM Highway 68 and NM 570. Modified by agriculture, modern and convenient facilities.	Social: Seasonally and boating dependent; high level of encounters at developed sites.	Operational: Highway auto and truck traffic, orientation information, onsite education, and personnel available. Regulations prominent, reservations, routine enforcement.
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Implementing Actions

<p>Marketing: Campgrounds and day use sites will be featured in Rio Grande Gorge brochure, on BLM website, and Zimmerman and Rio Grande Gorge visitor centers. Orientation signs will be placed along NM Highway 68. Interpretive information about the Apodaca Trail, the Old Spanish Trail, and the Camino Real will be available at the Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center. Display the richness of archaeological and historical resources of the area.</p> <p>Management: Continue to replace old campground facilities through deferred maintenance. Maintain trails. Construct trail along NM 570 from Pilar Campground to Taos Junction Bridge. Collaborate with NMDOT and pursue safe access from NM Highway 68 along the Bosque segment. The Rio Grande Corridor Plan will serve as guidance at the activity plan level.</p>	<p>Monitoring: Observation by stratified sample and visitor survey or interviews every 2–5 years, vehicle counters at Quartzite and County Line, RUPs, and permit post use reports.</p> <p>Administrative: <i>VRM:</i> Class II; Class III in developed sites. <i>Travel:</i> Limited to designated routes. <i>Permits:</i> Maintain limits on boating permits. Consider up to three vending permits throughout this zone. <i>Land Use:</i> Rights-of-way exclusion. Minerals: Closed to leasing/Withdrawn.</p>
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TAOS VALLEY OVERLOOK ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in routine exercise and escape from responsibilities in this community market, middle country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, dog walking, horseback riding, mountain biking, running, and watching the sunset.

Experiences: Enjoy personal time, exercise, and enjoy nature.

Benefits: Peace of mind, improved health and fitness, greater aesthetics awareness.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Natural appearing except from primitive access routes to trailheads. Maintained and marked trails, simple and few trailhead developments, signs, and toilets as needed to protect resources.

Social: Up to 14 encounters/day on trails except during permitted events. Occasional noise and litter.

Operational: Orientation materials and low level interpretive media. Personnel periodic. Rules clearly posted with some restrictions. Periodic enforcement.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Primarily for community use. Keep highway signs small and low key. Orientation information will be available at Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center. May market special events to broader audience. Consult 2006 Taos Valley Overlook Plan for guidance on interpretive media and themes. Interpretive information will include the Old Spanish Trail and Camino Real as well as other themes from the 2006 Taos Valley Overlook Plan. Provide rustic trail signs with difficulty level and distance information.

Management: Develop trails according to the 2006 Taos Valley Overlook Plan. Develop rustic trailheads to rim; one on SE boundary and one on NE boundary. Acquire land and work with NMDOT and Taos County. If necessary, harden surfaces to the level needed to protect resources. Barbed wire fence the boundary where appropriate for vehicle closure, and fortify and define trailhead boundaries with materials that fit setting prescriptions. Pursue access easements and explore trail opportunities along the Rio Pueblo de Taos. Frequent patrols initially to establish management presence.

Monitoring: Vehicle counters, trail register, visitor survey or interviews every 2–5 years.
Indicators: Visitor complaints of crowding, unauthorized trails, and visible erosion. Potential adaptive management for impacts could include limiting the number of SRPs for guided trips and special events.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I.
Travel: Closed. Two and four wheel drive at trailheads. Nonmotorized and mechanized use everywhere else.
Permits: Issue commercial recreation permits appropriate to setting prescriptions. Consider mountain bike guide services and small competitive events.
Recreation: Work with NMDGF to close area to hunting; close to target shooting; close to camping; dogs on leashes at trail heads and under voice command everywhere else.

HORSESHOE CURVE ZONE

Management Objectives: This is a destination and a southern gateway for any visitor to Taos County. Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in natural and cultural history and orientation to the area in this rural setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Sightseeing, interpretation, and light hiking.

Experiences: Enjoy views, learn local history, geology, and culture, and environmental learning.

Benefits: Enhanced stewardship in other locales, economic benefits in Taos County, increased value in community by visitors, and enhanced pride in community

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Rural. Adjacent to NM Highway 68, modified by agriculture, modern facilities.

Social: High level of encounters.

Operational: Highway auto and truck traffic and wayside exhibits. Regulations prominent; routine enforcement and maintenance of signs.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Located along the NM Highway 68, signs maintained by BLM at this NMDOT rest area will serve as a gateway to Taos County. Onsite marketing for Taos County museums and business in general, BLM website. Install interpretive signs, benches, and interpretive trail through partnerships and volunteers. Interpretive information will include the Old Spanish Trail and the Camino Real as well as themes identified in the 2006 Taos Valley Overlook Plan.

Management: Set up an MOU with NMDOT on maintenance of signs and interpretive trail. Patrol on regular basis with recreation and/or maintenance staff. Obtain access easements on private property or pursue property acquisitions adjacent to NMDOT rest area.

Monitoring: Communication and interviews with local agencies and businesses every 2–5 years.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class III.
Travel: Limited to designated routes.

RIO GRANDE RIM AND COPPER HILL ZONE

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in routine exercise and escape in this middle country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, mountain biking, and dog walking.

Experiences: Independence, exploration, and solitude.

Benefits: Sense of adventure, balanced spirit, and better sense of place.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Distance from facilities and roads. Facilities minimal to nonexistent.

Social: Up to 14 encounters/day on trails except during permitted events.

Operational: Two and four wheel drive near old vehicle access points.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Minimal marketing except for Rio Grande Rim Trail.

Monitoring: Visitor survey or interviews every 2–5 years.

Management: Occasional or rare patrols. Communication with adjacent land owners. Obtain access easements on private property to develop nonmotorized trail connections along the east and west rims of the Rio Grande.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II
Travel: Limited to designated.
Permits: Consider SRP for an annual competitive trials riding event, excluding Rio Embudo Canyon.

UTE MOUNTAIN ERMA

Management Objectives: Manage this area to provide an open setting within this undeveloped market with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use, wildlife viewing, and hunting can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key. Information provided upon request.

Monitoring: Trail registers. State game and fish reports for hunting unit.

Management: No additional trails will be developed. The Rio Grande Corridor Plan serves as guidance for boating on the Ute Mountain stretch. Partner with NMDOT to establish a watchable wildlife area in an appropriate location. If necessary, contain and define parking with simple and rustic materials and design to prevent disturbance and protect resources.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I, except VRM II along travel routes
Travel: Closed except limited to designated routes along north and west borders.
Recreation: Trash will be packed out. Dead and down wood may be collected for camp fires. Parking not allowed beyond 300' of designated routes. Camping prohibited within 300' of descent points into the Rio Grande or Costilla Creek.

SAN ANTONIO ERMA

Management Objectives: Manage this zone to provide opportunities for visitors to engage in routine exercise and escape in this middle country setting.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key. Information provided upon request. Continued management of watchable wildlife program.

Management: Ranger patrols rare. Management actions are limited to implementing transportation plan.

Monitoring: Annual wilderness monitoring report.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I.
Travel: Limited to designated routes.
Recreation: Trash and human waste to be packet out. Fires in containers only. Dead and down wood collecting only.

TAOS PLATEAU ERMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped market where users can get several miles from human development and activity. Manage this area to provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Provide a kiosk for orientation to establish entrance and identity of BLM public land. Other signs and information will be minimal and low key.

Management: Designate and sign routes. Implement transportation plan. Post regulations and Leave No Trace ethics at access points. Pursue access easements and explore trail opportunities along the Petaca Drainage. Maintain trails in the Guadalupe Mountain area. Work with partners to develop trail from Questa to Zimmerman Visitor Center. Contain and define parking if needed to prevent disturbance and protect resources in areas such as Las Mestenas. Maintain Horse Thief Trail.

Monitoring: Routine surveys and rotating vehicle counters. Participate in hunter contact stations, and vehicle counters. Trail register and routine visitor surveys in the Guadalupe Mountain area within Wild Rivers Recreation Area.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II
Travel: Limited to designated routes.
Recreation: No camping in the Guadalupe Mountain area within Wild Rivers Recreation Area.
Permits: Consider small competitive events within Las Mestenas and guide services in remainder of unit.
Minerals: Closed to mineral material sales.

RIO EMBUDO ERMA

Management Objectives: Manage this area to provide an open setting in a community market with well-defined trailhead or access points to protect the watershed. There will be minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key. Information available upon request.

Management: Barricade sensitive areas from motor vehicles. If necessary, contain and define parking and/or harden surfaces to the level necessary to protect resources. Explore development of some single track trails from the Dixon area. Implement transportation plan.

Monitoring: Trip logs from fishing SRPs. Patrol observations. Visitor and public complaints.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II along the Rio Grande, class I along the Embudo and Agua Caliente WSR Study Corridors, and class III in the Central Protection Zone
Travel: Limited to designated.
Maintain WSR values.

CHAMA PLANNING UNIT—CHAMA CANYONS SRMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped destination market. The Rio Chama is a destination for float boaters, primarily from New Mexico and Colorado, with others from Arizona, California, and Texas. Manage this area to provide exceptional high scenic quality opportunities for multi-day float boating trips and trout fishing in this primitive and back country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Boating, camping and hiking.	Experiences: Solitude, challenge and risk, and spending time with friends and family.	Benefits: Greater self-reliance, improved outdoor skills, sense of adventure, stronger relationships, and a greater awareness of aesthetics.
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Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Primitive transitioning to back country at access points. Accessible by road at boat launch and rim locations for trailhead access. Facilities subordinate to the surrounding landscape.	Social: Up to 16 people per group. Up to 6 encounters per day in Primitive setting. Up to 14 encounters per day in back country setting.	Operational: Signs at key access points. Ranger patrols rare and usually by boat.
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Implementing Actions

<p>Marketing: Interpretation will be conducted off site, in the Rio Chama brochure, or through ranger patrols. Any onsite signage should be low key. Interpretation of the Old Spanish Trail National Historic Trail will be provided through guides on the Rio Chama.</p> <p>Management: Adaptive management and “limits of acceptable change” will be used to deal with user impacts. Continue to maintain trails such as Navajo Peak Trail. Possible strategies could include: increasing ranger patrols and/or decreasing number of weekday launches. Consult Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review.</p>	<p>Monitoring: Boater register and SRP trip logs. Routine surveys every 5 years. Annual wilderness monitoring report and photo points at campsites within the wilderness area. Lottery application numbers. Indicators of impacts include: visitor perception of crowding and unauthorized campsites.</p> <p>Administrative: <i>VRM:</i> Class I. <i>Travel:</i> Closed. Motorized use allowed at access points and outside the designated river wilderness area. <i>Permits:</i> Manage river permits according to 1990 allocation. <i>Recreation:</i> Trash and human waste to be packet out. Fires in containers only. Dead and down wood collecting only. <i>Land Use:</i> Rights- of-way exclusion area. <i>Minerals:</i> Closed to leasing/Withdrawn/Closed</p>
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CHAMA ERMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped market which benefits nearby communities. Manage this area to provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

<p>Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key. Interpretation of the Old Spanish Trail National Historic Trail will be provided with a sign along the auto tour route on NM Highway 84/downstream of Abiquiu Dam.</p> <p>Management: Contain and define parking if needed to prevent disturbance and protect resources. Implement transportation plan.</p>	<p>Monitoring: Patrol observations. Trail registers. Annual wilderness monitoring report.</p> <p>Administrative: <i>VRM:</i> Class II within 0.5-mile buffer of Hwy 84. Class III in the Nutrias and class IV everywhere else. <i>Travel:</i> Limited to designated routes.</p>
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OJO CALIENTE PLANNING UNIT – POSI SRMA

Management Objectives: This is a destination market. The area immediately adjacent to the Ojo Caliente Hot Springs is a destination for cultural resource enthusiasts. It attracts visitors from the local area and world-wide. Manage this area to provide opportunities to learn and explore natural and cultural history in this middle country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, visiting pueblo ruins, and mountain biking.	Experiences: Exercise, enjoy learning local archaeology, and sharing cultural heritage.	Benefits: Improved physical health, increased appreciation of cultural resources, sense of wellness, and a better sense of place.
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Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Marked trails, signs, and simple and basic trailhead developments. Encompasses Cerro Negro, Cerro Colorado east to Ojo Caliente and NM 285.	Social: Up to 14 encounters per day off travel routes and 29 on travel routes.	Operational: Maps posted on site. Regulations clearly posted and intermittent law enforcement presence.
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Implementing Actions

<p>Marketing: Develop interpretive objectives for key resource values to be presented in brochures, off site, or through guided hikes. Provide low key signs and maps on site and at Ojo Caliente Hot Springs.</p> <p>Management: Identify and develop trails connecting pueblos. Explore trail links from public land to Santa Fe County. Provide education material on site to increase awareness and appreciation of resources</p>	<p>Monitoring: On site trail register or surveys with interviews every 2–5 years. Commercial permit trip logs. Observe, assess, and apply adaptive management to the following indicators: Damage to cultural resources Visitor complaints Number of unauthorized trails Consider the following actions if unacceptable impacts occur from visitor use: Provide interpretive hikes Increase management presence.</p> <p>Administrative: <i>VRM:</i> Class II. <i>Travel:</i> Closed. Nonmotorized and mechanized use on trails. <i>Recreation:</i> Closed to shooting. Closed to camping. Partner with NMDGF Game Commission to close to hunting. <i>Permits:</i> Consider permits for guided trips to a consistent level with low social encounters. Dogs on leash in high use areas.</p>
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OJO CALIENTE ERMA

Management Objectives: This area is undeveloped and used primarily by nearby communities. Manage this area to provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Signs and information will be minimal and low key. Information available upon request.

Management: Provide signs and maps on site. Contain and define parking when needed to prevent disturbance and protect resources. Implement transportation plan. Develop mountain bike and hiking trails with demonstrated user demand.

Monitoring: On site trail register and vehicle counters. Commercial permit trip logs.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class I in back country, class III in right of way corridors, and class II in the remainder of the ERMA.

Travel: Closed south of Canada Ancha. Limited to designated in the remainder of the planning unit.

Permits: Consider permits for guided trips or events to a consistent level with low social encounters.

EL PALACIO PLANNING UNIT—PALACIO ARROYOS SRMA

Management Objectives: This area is both a destination for motorized, and motorcycle use across New Mexico as well as routine use by nearby communities in this middle country setting. Manage this area to provide high quality and diverse motorized and nonmotorized trail opportunities.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Motorcycling, OHV use, hiking and running, dog walking, mountain biking, horseback riding, target shooting, and collecting medicinal herbs.

Experiences: Challenge, competition, risk, exercise, fresh air and open space, and enjoying peace.

Benefits: Physical health, convenience ('close to home'), improved skill and self-confidence, spiritual connection to beauty and nature, and mental wellbeing. Chance for youth to hone skills and be easily supervised, connection to family, increased knowledge, appreciation, and pride in key natural and historic resources, greater sense of place, reduced vandalism and litter.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Marked trails and very simple trailheads. Routes primarily dirt, with limited construction where needed for resource protection. Limited rustic facilities, such as parking, ramps, basic toilet, and signs.

Social: Up to 14 encounters per day on trails. Up to 29 encounters/day or higher during special events.

Operational: Increase the level of law enforcement presence and education to control unauthorized trails. Provide some nonmotorized trails. Provide staging areas for variety of motorized and nonmotorized activity and warm up for motorcycle and ATV use.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: This area should serve a wide audience. Develop a brochure on recreation and cultural resources of the area. Install an information kiosk that helps define the entrance to public land and identify BLM. Develop a brochure on motorized safety, regulations, and user ethics. Provide interpretive information on key resource values including alternative routes of the Old Spanish Trail

Monitoring: Vehicle counters and surveys with interviews every 2–5 years. Monitor number of unauthorized trails.

and Camino Real. Provide education programs on Tread Lightly and Safety of OHV use. Provide information on BLM website and BLM contact stations.

Management: Provide signs and maps on site which indicate travel route designations. Provide distinct single track, ATV, and nonmotorized trails. Assign one park ranger to monitor and manage recreation use. Increase the level of law enforcement presence and education to control unauthorized trails. Define staging areas to include a restroom, parking, a vehicle barrier/fence to define the motorized/nonmotorized staging area, and provide a youth riding track/warm up loop. Staging areas will be clearly marked or defined and designed with traffic circulation and both motorized/nonmotorized access routes. If necessary, harden surfaces in staging areas to the level appropriate for resource protection.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II, except class III for right-of-way corridor, and staging areas near La Villita and Quarteles.

Travel: Limited to designated routes with staging areas.

Recreation: Close staging areas to target shooting. Dogs on leash in high use areas. Dogs under voice command everywhere else.

Permits: SRPs allowed for competitive events and guided commercial recreation.

Consider larger scale competitive events and additional commercial activities.

LA PUEBLA SRMA

Management Objectives: This is a community market used primarily for local residents and surrounding communities. It offers a unique setting for diverse interaction among recreational enthusiasts and the environmental educational opportunities provided by the Wildlife Center. Manage this area to provide opportunities for community access to learning, escape, and exercise in this rural setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, dog walking, mountain biking, running, horseback riding, ATV and motorcycle use, interpretive learning, and picnicking.

Experiences: Escape from the city, routine exercise, historical discovery, access to close to home amenities, adventure, and skill development.

Benefits: More well-rounded youth development, lifestyle improvement, increased desirability as a place to live, increased awareness and appreciation of nature and historic resources, reduced vandalism and litter, fitness, wellbeing, improved skill and confidence.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Rural. Proximate to NM Highway 68, Santa Fe County Roads, and business and residential development. Well defined but limited facilities.

Social: Up to 29 encounters per visit.

Operational: Maps posted on site. Regulations clearly posted and intermittent law enforcement presence.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Provide interpretive material onsite to increase awareness and appreciation of resources, particularly paleontological. Place trailhead signs offering information and regulations on various activities taking place in area. Interpret Tread Lightly principles.

Management: Acquire access easements in order to develop trailhead/staging areas. Develop as a park with multiple access/trailhead areas such as Country Road 88B. Define and segregate motorized/nonmotorized use areas with moderate design traffic circulation and access roads/trails. Fence and sign access to provide protection of paleontological and cultural resources. Inventory and designate routes. Conduct rehabilitation of soil and vegetation. Design nonmotorized trails using arroyos,

Monitoring: Trail registers, vehicle counters. Patrol observations. Visitor complaints.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II.

Travel: Closed—180 acres, Limited to Designated—500 acres

Permits: Consider competitive events, commercial activities, vendors, and guide services.

Minerals: Controlled surface use of leasable minerals.

Recreation: Closed to camping and target shooting.

existing routes, and some new construction.
Establish a ranger presence.

SOMBRILLO ERMA

Management Objectives: Primarily used by local residents of the community. Manage this area to provide community access to public land and an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Install a kiosk and trailhead signs to identify entrance to BLM public land. Include interpretation of paleontological resources. Keep other information minimal and low key. Marketed primarily to local communities.

Management: Build a fence and sign areas to define motorized and nonmotorized zones. Obtain and develop access points and easements to public land from adjacent private property. Locate trails into public land adjacent to Santa Fe County Open Space parcels. Connect historic villages with trails and enhance mountain biking opportunities where there is demonstrated demand. Adopt, maintain, and re-route the Nambe Badlands Trail and evaluate other user defined trails. Install signs at public land boundaries. Install trailheads and directional signs to define use and protect resources.

Monitoring: Trail registers. Patrol observations.

Administrative: VRM: Class II.
Travel: Majority is limited to designated.
Minerals: Closed to mineral material sales.

SANTA CRUZ LAKE SRMA

Management Objectives: This is a destination for fishing and used routinely by residents in surrounding communities. Manage this area to enhance fishing and boating opportunities in this middle country and front country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Boating, fishing, camping, and hiking.

Experiences: Family and group affiliation, exercise, and the convenience of being close to home.

Benefits: Improved fitness, sense of wellness, and a better sense of place. Stronger ties with family and friends, obtaining food.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Front country around the lake and back country everywhere else. Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as campsites, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs in front country. SRMA boundary modified and expanded from Recreation Area to NM Hwy. 503.

Social: Up to 29 encounters per day in Front Country. Up to 14 encounters per day on trails in middle country. Up to 14 encounters/day on trails in back country. Up to 6 people per group.

Operational: Rules clearly posted. Periodic enforcement presence.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Orientation information available on BLM website and at BLM contact stations. Provide onsite and offsite information in Spanish.

Management: Develop additional nonmotorized trails throughout the zone with trailheads and signs according to demand.

Monitoring: Traffic counter and routine surveys.

Administrative: VRM: Class III around existing facilities; class II in remainder.
Travel: Limited to designated routes. Dogs on lease in high use areas.
Permits: Consider commercial activities, events, and one vending permit. Open to shooting between recreation area boundary and expanded SRMA boundary.
Land Use: Right-of-way exclusion within

original boundary
Minerals: No Surface/Withdrawn/Closed

WEST SANTA FE—CIENEGUILLA SRMA

Management Objectives: This area is popular among the surrounding communities for interpretation of cultural and historic resources. Manage this area to provide opportunities to learn about historic and cultural resources in this front country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Exploration of cultural resources, hiking, interpretation, and rock art viewing.	Experiences: Exploration, learning local culture, feeling this is a special place, and discovery.	Benefits: Greater knowledge and appreciation of historic and cultural resources, connection to nature and history, greater sense of community pride and satisfaction, and reduced looting and vandalism of prehistoric sites.
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Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Front country. Proximate to county roads and Interstate 25. Improved yet rustic restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs. This encompasses area from powerline south to NM 599.	Social: 29 or more encounters per day.	Operational: Provide two pedestrian access points to rim and canyon. Nonmotorized, pedestrian access only. Regulations clearly posted; intermittent law enforcement presence.
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Implementing Actions

Marketing: Attempts will not be made to specifically draw visitors to the petroglyphs in the area. However, BLM will work with partners to interpret the collective resources of the Galisteo Basin through a variety of offsite and onsite forums. Once community members and visitors arrive at Cieneguilla, there will be low key interpretive signs and a brochure to illustrate and narrate onsite cultural history. Themes will be geared toward pre-history and petroglyphs, the Camino Real, and the Cieneguilla Spanish Land Grant. Orientation information, onsite education, and guided tours will be available on a case-by-case basis by volunteers and BLM staff.

Management: Provide hiking trail loops from parking, to petroglyphs and to rim. Install fencing and BLM signs around perimeter of management zone (to south of road and powerlines) for site protection. Provide pedestrian access through fencing. Install a restroom. Manage site in partnership with other local and Federal agencies, neighbors, and conservation groups. Assign one park ranger to monitor and manage recreation use. Partner with community, county, and organized groups to provide site stewards. Explore trail links from public land to Santa Fe County.

Monitoring: Onsite trail register, vehicle counter, or surveys with interviews every 2–5 years.

Observe, assess, and apply adaptive management to the following indicators:

- Damage to petroglyphs
- Visitor and neighbor complaints
- Visitor perception of crowding
- Number of unauthorized trails

Consider the following actions if unacceptable impacts occur from visitor use:

- Require scheduled, guided trips.
- Open to day use only.
- Increase management presence
- Limit size and/or amount of parking.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II.

Travel: Limited to designated. However, routes south of the powerline will be used for administrative use only as well as pedestrian or nonmotorized access. Close roads south of the powerline.

Permits: Consider permits for guide services. Dogs on leash in high use areas. Closed to camping. Close area to shooting.

Minerals: No surface/Withdrawn/Closed

DIABLO CANYON SRMA

Management Objectives: This area is used primarily by nearby communities. Manage this area to provide opportunities for access to diverse trails, learning, and unstructured play in this middle country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, motorized use, rock climbing, dog walking and interpretation.

Experiences: Adventure, risk, exercise, exploration, enjoy peace, quiet, and beauty, and learning history and environment.

Benefits: Improved skills and physical fitness, a greater sense of aesthetics, mental wellbeing, and a connection to community and western heritage.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Distant from improved roads but proximate to residences. Marked trails, signs, and simple, basic trailhead developments. Includes the canyon over to Buckman Road to the Rio Grande and a small section to the north.

Social: 7–14 encounters off travel routes. Up to 29 en route.

Operational: Maps posted on site. Regulations clearly posted and intermittent law enforcement presence.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Partner with the Santa Fe National Forest to help residents and users reconnect to the Rio Grande through environmental education and interpretation. Information available upon request.

Management: Provide signs and maps onsite. Define existing staging area into canyon with rustic vehicle barriers and signs. Manage site in partnership with the Santa Fe National Forest. If necessary, harden surfaces and provide a toilet to the level appropriate for resource protection.

Monitoring: Onsite trail register, vehicle counter, or surveys with interviews every 2–5 years.

Observe, assess, and apply adaptive management to the following indicators:

- Visitor complaints

- Visitor perception of crowding

- Number of unauthorized trails

- Number and size of campground rings

Consider the following actions if unacceptable impacts occur from visitor use:

- Close to camping

- Increase management presence and law enforcement presence

- Provide educational material on site to increase awareness and appreciation of resources

- Limit size and/or amount of parking

Administrative: VRM: Class I.

Travel: Closed.

Permits: Consider guide permits. Close area to shooting. Use of new permanent climbing hardware requires pre-approval.

WEST SANTA FE ERMA

Management Objectives: The Cerrillos Hills Historic Park, managed by Santa Fe County and adjacent to BLM, is a high visitor use/destination area for hiking and interpretation of mining history. The remainder of the ERMA is undeveloped. Manage this area to protect resources with a well-defined transportation system. Provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Primarily use by local communities. Educate youth and other publics to safe and ethical motorized and nonmotorized use. Information available upon request.

Management: Partner with the Forest Service on potential trailheads. Assign recreation and other staff to monitor and manage recreation use. Actively engage organized user groups to help patrol, monitor, and educate the public about resource values. Provide some single track trail. Implement transportation plan based on demand.

Monitoring: Patrol observations. Trail registers and vehicle counters.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II.

Travel: Limited to designated routes. Designate specific opportunities for motorized single track as well as other motorized and nonmotorized travel modes. Close the Boondocks Pasture to motorized use as well as a 0.25 to 1-mile buffer immediately adjacent to Las Campañas.

Permits: Consider on case by case basis. R&PP in T. 16 N., R. 8 E., section 18 near Camel Tracks, specifically for a shooting range.

GALISTEO BASIN— CERRILLOS HILLS/BURNT CORN SRMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped destination market used primarily by nearby communities. Manage this area to provide access to trails and open space, opportunities for routine exercise and escape, and learning local history and prehistory in this front country and middle country setting.

Outcomes

<p>Primary Activities: Exploring history and pre-history, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and casual use recreational mining/prospecting.</p>	<p>Experiences: Discovery, freedom, escape from traffic/city/noise, and exercise using trails and open space close to home.</p>	<p>Benefits: Gaining knowledge and appreciation of Galisteo resources, mental well-being; connection to nature, beauty, community, and western heritage; physical fitness; and enhanced quality of life.</p>
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Setting Prescriptions

<p>Physical: Front country at potential future interpretive center and at wayside exhibits. Middle country in remainder (at trailheads and recreation facilities). Proximate to county roads and residences. Trailhead and recreation facilities should be simple, modest, and use materials that fit this setting.</p>	<p>Social: Up to 29 or more encounters in front country. Up to 14 encounters per day in middle country off travel routes and up to 29 on travel routes.</p>	<p>Operational: Maps posted on site. Regulations clearly posted and intermittent law enforcement presence.</p>
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Implementing Actions

<p>Marketing: Offer guided tours only in sensitive cultural areas on a case-by-case basis. Cultural resources will be marketed on a broad scale at off-site locations. Coordinate with partners to provide information about significant, but fragile Galisteo Basin resources at selected sites and wayside exhibits. Market through neighborhood and archeological partners. Market interpretive resources and wayside exhibits to an international audience and other areas to the local surrounding communities. Develop publications and environmental programs that can be used both on and off site where appropriate. Engage partners in funding and operation of interpretive resources/sites.</p> <p>Management: Explore and locate trail links from public land to Santa Fe County Open Space. Locate and construct trail to Grand Central Mountain. If necessary, harden surfaces to the level appropriate for resource protection.</p>	<p>Monitoring: Vehicle counters. Patrol observations and trail registers.</p> <p>Administrative: <i>VRM:</i> Class II for Cerrillos Hills and Galisteo Basin Protection Act sites; class III in remainder of planning unit. <i>Travel:</i> Limited to designated routes including public land areas adjacent to Cerrillos Hills and in Burnt Corn. Burn Corn area closed to motorized travel. <i>Recreation:</i> Casual use recreational mining includes only hand tools, panning, nonmotorized sluicing, and metal detectors. <i>Permits:</i> Consider guided services. Close adjacent areas to shooting.</p>
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SAN PEDRO MOUNTAINS SRMA

Management Objectives: This is a market used primarily by nearby communities. Manage this area to provide access to trails and opportunities for routine exercise and escape in this middle country setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hiking, dog walking, biking, horseback riding, and recreational-prospecting.

Experiences: Exercise, enjoying nature, and escape.

Benefits: Peace of mind, improved health and fitness, appreciation of nature, and enhanced quality of life.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Middle country. Proximate to residences and the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway. Natural appearing except from primitive two track routes. Maintained and marked trails, with simple and few trailhead signs.

Social: Up to 14 encounters per day on trails and up to 29 en route.

Operational: Rules clearly posted with some restrictions. Post maps on simple trailhead signs.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Keep information and signs minimal and low key. Information available upon request.

Management: Partner with neighbors and local agencies to negotiate access easements across private property to BLM public land, and foster uses in collaboration with adjacent land owners and other land users. Ensure any open mines or mining related hazards on public lands are adequately mitigated to provide for public safety. Explore trail links between public land and Santa Fe County Open Space. Develop rustic trails and signs. Provide trail maps upon request.

Monitoring: Trail registers and visitor survey or interviews every 2–5 years.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class II and III.
Travel: Limited to designated routes, with opportunities for nonmotorized and/or mechanized trail use.

Permits: Consider on case by case basis.

GALISTEO BASIN ERMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped market. By the year 2030, manage this area to provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Information will be minimal and low key.

Monitoring: Visitor or public complaints.
Range allotment evaluations.

Management: Implement transportation plan.

Administrative: VRM: Class III
Travel: Limited to designated.
Permits: Consider on case by case basis.

EAST SIDE PLANNING UNIT—SABINOSO SRMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped market with limited access. With new opportunities for access, this area will be used primarily by New Mexico residents. Manage this area to provide access, solitude and unconfined recreation in this primitive setting.

Outcomes

Primary Activities: Hunting and hiking, backpacking and wildlife viewing.

Experiences: Solitude and exploration.

Benefits: A spiritual connection to nature, a sense of adventure and greater awareness of aesthetics.

Setting Prescriptions

Physical: Primitive. Remote from improved roads and population. Provide small, rustic and defined parking areas with a sign at potential trail heads. Only natural materials should be used.

Social: Guidance to be developed in Wilderness Management Plan.

Operational: No mechanized use allowed. Visitor controls not apparent. Enforcement presence rare.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Interpretation conducted off site. Develop a Sabinoso Wilderness brochure which provides orientation and interpretation of cultural and paleontological resources. Other signs and information will be minimal and low key.

Monitoring: Annual monitoring according to Keeping it Wild: An Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System (USDA 2008).

Management: Management will seek to establish public access at appropriate locations based on the availability of easements and compatibility of access with preserving wilderness character and ACEC values. Trails may be established to manage public use and enjoyment and preservation of wilderness character, including new trails or evaluating existing closed vehicle routes to determine if they may be reconditioned to hiking or equestrian trail specifications. Complete a wilderness management plan.

Administrative: VRM: Class I, except class III at access points.
Travel: Manage as closed to motorized and mechanized use.
Permits: Refer to Wilderness Management Plan.
Land Use: Rights-of-way exclusion (wilderness).
Minerals: Withdrawn/Closed (wilderness).

EAST SIDE ERMA

Management Objectives: This is an undeveloped market. Manage this area to provide an open setting with minimal to no facilities and controls where unconfined recreation and casual use can be maximized.

Implementing Actions

Marketing: Information will be minimal and low key.

Management: Implement transportation plan.

Monitoring: Visitor or public complaints.
Range allotment evaluations.

Administrative: *VRM:* Class III.
Travel: Limited to designated routes.
Permits: Consider on case by case basis.

2.2.7 Renewable Energy

Goals

- Facilitate environmentally responsible commercial development of renewable energy projects on public lands.
- Use renewable energy systems on BLM facilities where feasible.
- Issue rights-of-way for development of solar and wind energy facilities where consistent with resource management objectives.

Objectives

- Reduce the analysis time for solar and wind project authorizations by identifying appropriate use areas.
- Promote the development of small, local solar and wind projects that benefit adjacent communities.

General Management Guidance

Policy and guidance for processing right-of-way applications for renewable energy development on public lands administered by the BLM are provided in Instruction Memorandums No. 2011-003 and 2009-043 for solar and wind, respectively, along with Secretarial Order 3285A1. Geothermal energy development is addressed in section 2.2.5.1. For the purposes of this plan, biomass utilization refers to use of forest products, which is addressed in section 2.2.1.

Best management practices, as presented in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States (USDI-BLM 2005a), will be required as part of any authorizations for wind energy development unless new policy directs otherwise.

The Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Solar Energy Development in Six Southwestern States (Solar Energy Plan) (USDI-BLM 2008b) will provide programmatic guidance on solar energy development projects within the planning area upon its completion. The Solar Energy plan will identify best management practices and other applicable parameters for solar energy development to which future projects may be tiered.

Allocations and Management Actions

The following details allocations for solar and wind energy rights-of-way (see Map 9):

- In all planning units, if no other restrictions apply, wind and solar energy rights-of-way will be managed on a case-by-case basis using BMPs to minimize impacts. Wind and solar energy rights-of-way will be excluded from all riparian, all VRM class I areas, and within a mile wide buffer along segments of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and Old Spanish National Historic Trails. Up to a four mile radius avoidance area will be applied around occupied raptor nests depending on the species. Wind rights-of-way will be excluded from all VRM class II areas, while solar rights-of-way will be avoided in VRM class II areas. An exception to these restrictions may be granted if impacts can be mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer.
- Taos Plateau planning unit: Solar energy rights-of-way will be excluded in the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor and the area north of US 64. Most of the area south of US 64 within the planning unit will be open to solar with exception of an avoidance area adjacent to the west side of the Rio Grande corridor managed as VRM class II. Wind rights-of-way will be excluded within the entire planning unit to protect raptors, songbirds, and bats.
- Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit: Solar and wind rights-of-way will be excluded to protect the resource values of ACECs.
- Ojo Caliente planning unit: Rights-of-way for wind and solar energy development will be excluded within the Ojo Caliente ACEC. Wind energy will be excluded from the remainder of the planning unit to protect the avian species concentration areas.
- Chama planning unit: Solar and wind energy rights-of-way will be excluded from Rio Chama WSR, Rio Chama WSA, and Chama Canyons ACEC.
- El Palacio planning unit: Solar and wind rights-of-way will be excluded from Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area. Wind energy rights-of-way will be excluded from mapped avian species concentration areas. The remainder of the planning unit will be an avoidance area for wind rights-of-way. Solar energy rights-of-way will be avoided in this planning unit where not otherwise excluded.
- West Santa Fe planning unit: Wind energy rights-of-way will be excluded to protect important cultural sites, the scenic viewshed around Santa Fe, and to promote recreation opportunities over renewable energy development.
- Galisteo planning unit: Wind and solar energy rights-of-way will be excluded from the raptor migration corridors in the San Pedro Mountains and Cerrillos Hills areas and Pueblos ACEC.
- East Side planning unit: Wind and solar rights-of-way will be excluded within the Sabinoso Wilderness and ACEC.

Except within Sabinoso Wilderness, wild and scenic river corridors, WSAs, or other exclusion areas identified in section 2.2.3, these exclusions may not apply to access rights-of-way associated with renewable energy projects (i.e., transmission lines, roads, etc.). A total of 499,658 acres will be excluded from wind energy rights-of-way, while another 41,513 acres will be avoided. Solar energy rights-of-way will be excluded from 413,384 acres and avoided on 114,462 acres. Table 2-9 summarizes areas availability for renewable energy rights-of-way.

Table 2-9. Availability of solar and wind rights-of-way

Planning Unit	Exclude	Exclude Wind, Avoid Solar	Exclude Wind, Open Solar	Avoid Wind and Solar	Open
Chama	20,089	0	0	2,370	18,568
East Side	19,859	0	0	1,496	30,920

El Palacio	9,646	35,053	0	32,793	0
Galisteo	4,760	0	230	4,854	4,489
Lower Gorge/Copper Hill	42,082	0	0	0	0
Ojo Caliente	65,651	11,172	0	0	0
Taos Plateau	241,215	2,998	10,835	0	0
West Santa Fe	10,082	23,726	2,260	0	0
Total	413,384	72,949	13,325	41,513	53,977

2.2.8 Transportation and Access

Goals

- Provide reasonable access to public lands for multiple uses in a manner consistent with the goals and objectives of all resources, uses, and other opportunities.
- Work collaboratively with the public, including tribal, State and local governments, special interest groups, and individuals to develop an appropriate transportation system on public lands, including motorized and nonmotorized recreational trails.

Objectives

- Establish nine transportation areas to facilitate travel management.
- Inventory all transportation areas within three years following completion of the RMP in preparation for area-specific travel management plans, to be finalized within five years of the RMP's completion.
- Use criteria to guide the designation of routes in areas limited to designated roads, or use of roads in areas limited to existing roads, which will consider:
 1. The desired future condition for access (if different from the planning unit as a whole).
 2. Whether or not the road provides access to an important destination, to private, State or other Federal lands, or is critical for particular activities.
 3. Road and trail density to support goals related to conservation of scenic quality or sensitive habitat management; or to accommodate certain uses. For sensitive habitat, limit roads and trails to an average of 0.5 mile of road per square mile. In areas identified for motorized recreation use, a high density might exceed 2 miles of road per square mile.
 4. Reclamation of redundant roads or roads that no longer serve their intended purpose to achieve road density objectives and reduce habitat fragmentation, while maintaining road network connectivity.
 5. Conditions to be identified in the road inventory process that will require mitigation such as routes that are alongside or within riparian areas or routes in areas with cultural or paleontological resources. Mitigation might include rerouting, redesign of routes (e.g., riparian area crossings to minimize downstream sedimentation), or fencing of resources.

- 6. Maintenance standards to determine where work is needed to reduce damage to the land, such as installing culverts where flood damage recurs or filling in low-lying areas to eliminate the need for users to create new routes to avoid the area.
- Monitor use to determine if the road network requires modification to improve access or protect resources.

General Management Guidance

Management of OHV use and mountain biking will be consistent with the guidance in BLM's National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands (USDI-BLM 2001), the National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan (USDI-BLM 2002), and in accordance with 43 CFR 8342.1.

During the interim while area-specific travel management plans are being developed (but no more than five years from completion of the RMP), the BLM will allow the use of existing routes where route designations have not been completed. Where necessary, temporary closures subject to *Federal Register* notice (43 CFR Subpart 8341) will be implemented to prevent resource damage until the formal route designation process is completed.

Maps will be made available that depict the current approved travel network. These maps will be updated on a yearly basis until the designation process is completed. Thereafter, updates to the maps will be made available online as changes are made to the network, and new maps will be published periodically, as needed.

Portal signs will be installed at main entry points to the travel management areas. All designated roads will be mapped, and some signed on the ground. All closed areas will be posted as closed, and fencing installed depending on resource protection needs. Open areas will receive priority monitoring to assure that boundary fencing is intact and use of the open area is contained to the designated area.

In all areas, emergency access will be allowed. Authorized administrative access will include vehicular access for rescue purposes, law enforcement or firefighting, to provide reasonable access for permitted activities or for the exercise of valid existing rights (e.g., mining claims), for restoration work required after a fire, or to remove unneeded structures such as fences.

The following transportation areas are established:

1. Taos Plateau/Upper Rio Grande (northwest Taos, and northeast Rio Arriba counties)
2. Lower Rio Grande/Copper Hill (using NM 75 as the southern boundary)
3. Chama (western Rio Arriba County)
4. Ojo Caliente (southeast Rio Arriba County)
5. El Palacio (southeast Rio Arriba County)
6. Sombrillo (northern Santa Fe County)
7. West Santa Fe (northwest Santa Fe County)
8. Galisteo Basin (south Santa Fe County and the western third of San Miguel)
9. East Side (Colfax, Union, Mora, Harding, and eastern San Miguel counties)

These areas provide a context for developing plans that may focus on more specific travel management areas. While area-specific travel management plans are being developed, the transportation planning and management strategy will include the following components:

- The Taos Field Office will develop and implement a public involvement strategy that includes education of the inventory, planning, and designation processes, and the solicitation of involvement by local tribes and governments, user groups, and other interested members of the public in route inventorying, monitoring, and designation planning and enforcement. This strategy will also include a volunteer program to engage user groups and other interested participants in route inventories and other data collection.
- Complete comprehensive route inventories to be carried out by BLM crews and volunteers such as user groups and other interested publics.
- Create and maintain current maps of travel management areas based on an up-to-date, comprehensive GIS database of transportation routes.
- Implement a signing program as appropriate when preliminary travel networks are defined.
- Define use patterns of routes and travel networks.
- The BLM will continue to maintain roads identified as facility assets through the Facility Asset Management System.

Travel management planning and implementation will be prioritized accordingly:

High:

- El Palacio: Complete inventory to define and designate the network of routes, sign the area, and provide a site map. Mitigate access north of Highway 76 in the Chimayo area. Complete a rights-of-way assessment.
- West Santa Fe: Complete route inventories and designations and a rights-of-way assessment, with special attention given to the Buckman area.
- Sombrillo: Complete inventory to define and designate the network of routes. Complete a rights-of-way assessment.

Medium:

- Lower Rio Grande/Copper Hill: Re-evaluate the existing transportation plan due to the inaccuracy of existing data and route proliferation.
- Chama: Complete route inventories and designations and a rights-of-way assessment.
- Ojo Caliente: Complete route inventories and designations and a rights-of-way assessment.
- Galisteo Basin: Complete route inventories and designations and a rights-of-way assessment, with special consideration given to appropriate access to sites protected by the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act.
- Taos Plateau: Re-evaluate the existing transportation plan due to the inaccuracy of existing data and route proliferation, and define the current route network. Enforce seasonal closures for the protection of wildlife habitat and migration corridors. Complete a rights-of-way assessment.

Low:

- East Side: Complete route inventories and designations and a rights-of-way assessment.

Allocations and Management Actions

The RMP designates 75,425 acres as closed to OHV use and 519,675 acres as limited, primarily to designated routes.

Areas with cultural resources identified as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places that cannot be sufficiently avoided or otherwise mitigated by OHV use will be limited to inventoried routes until the route designation process is complete.

As presented in section 2.1.3.2, road densities in elk winter and spring ranges and migratory corridors will be managed at up to 0.5 miles of road per square mile to reduce disturbance and habitat fragmentation.

Existing travel routes through riparian areas will be restricted in one of the following ways: (1) closed, (2) limited with seasonal restrictions, (3) relocated away from riparian resources, or (4) designed and/or maintained to reduce sedimentation and restore or maintain riparian vegetation. Roads throughout the planning area may also be closed permanently or restricted seasonally, relocated, maintained, and/or designed to reduce sedimentation and restore or maintain special status species habitat.

Opportunities and limitations on access to wood gathering areas will be determined through site-specific planning, and will be specified on individual fuelwood permits. Access to gathering areas will be closed during certain periods (e.g., during the winter thaw when wet soils are vulnerable to erosion) and opened when seasonal conditions allow.

Parking will be allowed within 50 feet of designated roads, but not within 300 yards of any developed waters used by wildlife or domestic stock unless otherwise allowed by permit (e.g., wood gathering or special recreation permit) or other BLM authorization. Camping with a vehicle will be allowed within 300 feet of designated roads, but not within 300 yards of riparian areas or developed waters unless otherwise authorized. During the inventory, special attention will be given to designation and signing of short spur roads that provide access to undeveloped campsites.

Note: Management direction for each transportation area is discussed below and labeled on the respective map (Maps 10-1 to 10-8) according to circled numbers, ① through ⑦.

Transportation Area Guidance

1) Taos Plateau/Upper Rio Grande Transportation Area (see Map 10-1)

Closed – 23,305 acres: ① Ute Mountain, ② Rio Costilla, and ③ the Rio San Antonio WSA will be closed to vehicle access to support backcountry recreation and protect significant wildlife habitat.

Limited to designated routes – 231,743 acres: ④ The remainder of the planning area is limited to designated routes. Short spur routes will be identified and may be opened to allow access to campsites or target shooting areas. No other changes will be made to roads already designated in the upper Rio Grande corridor. The North Unit transportation plan will be reviewed as new inventories are completed. The BLM will continue to identify routes to complete a trail system along the gorge and to connect Questa with the Wild Rivers Rim Area trail system. Seasonal limits apply to 20,000 acres of wildlife habitat (affecting 52 miles of road). Existing designations will be reviewed in the next five years.

2) Lower Rio Grande/Copper Hill Transportation Area (see Map 10-2)

Designations made by the Rio Grande Corridor Plan will be reviewed within five years. A trials riding area ③ will be established along NM 75 near the Taos/Rio Arriba County line. The area will typically include single-track routes located to support specially permitted events. Certain routes used during permitted events may be closed to casual riding.

3) Chama Transportation Area (see Map 10-3)

Closed – 10,658 acres: ① The WSR corridor will be closed to motorized access; ② the ACEC will be closed to motorized access.

Limited to designated routes – 30,369 acres: ③ the remainder of the planning unit will be limited to designated routes. ④ In addition, roads within the portion of the WSA not within the WSR corridor (2,475 acres) will be limited to designated routes. The routes that will be considered for designation are those identified in the wilderness inventory conducted in the 1980s. In the WSAs, driving off routes is not permitted except for the minimum necessary to allow vehicles to pass.

4) Ojo Caliente Transportation Area (see Map 10-4)

Closed – 4,705 acres: ① The Posi Recreation Area (4,705 acres) will be closed to motorized use to support non-motorized recreation. (As indicated below, one route will transect this closed area within a limited to designated corridor or “cherry stem.”)

Limited to designated routes – 61,240 acres: ② The remainder of the planning area will be limited to designated routes. ③ One road through the Posi Recreation Area will be open within a linear limited to designated routes area, essentially a corridor “cherry-stemmed” through the Posi Recreation Area, to allow access to mining claims, but will be closed to camping. Some new trails will be developed for hiking, biking, and horseback riding; existing routes will be used to support this network.

5) El Palacio Transportation Area (see Map 10-5)

Closed – 0 acres

Limited to designated routes – 65,105 acres: ① 15,660 acres—the area between Arroyo Canada Ancha and Arroyo Chinguague. These roads will support ATV and motorcycle-based recreation, as well as access for other recreation activities (e.g., target shooting, dog walking, jogging, or mountain biking), and for maintenance of range improvements. The area contains fossil outcroppings, cultural sites, and easily eroded hillsides that will be avoided by closing or rerouting roads and trails as necessary. Some routes will be designated for single-track (motorcycle) use only. Some new routes may be considered to provide loop trails.

② 49,330 acres limited to designated routes—the area from NM 75 south to Cañada Ancha, including the Truchas Arroyo, and the area from NM 76 north to Arroyo de Chinguague. The two areas will have a limited number of routes designated. These routes will provide access to range improvements, erosion control structures, and recreation sites such as the open area and the old Civilian Conservation Corps site and trailheads. Nonmotorized trails will be built or routes closed to vehicles will be converted to nonmotorized trails that have historic interest (such as the old Apodaca Trail).

The Mesa de la Cejita primitive area will be managed for nonmotorized use to support backcountry recreation opportunities. The primitive area begins two miles east of Velarde on County Road 0435, located on the north and south sides of Truchas Arroyo. Turnouts and trailheads will be developed to provide access to nonmotorized areas. Routes that have historic interest (such as the Apodaca Trail) will be closed to vehicles and converted to nonmotorized trails.

The BLM will work with Ohkay Owingeh, the Carson National Forest, Nuestra Señora Del Rosario San Fernando y Santiago (Truchas) Land Grant, and the State Land Office to assure their access needs and resource concerns are addressed through travel management planning. Vehicle use will be restricted within Arroyo del Llano to protect special status plant species. Some roads will be rerouted to avoid cultural or paleontological sites.

A trials riding area ③ will be established within the limited designation area along NM 75 near the Taos-Rio Arriba county line. The area will typically include single-track routes located to support specially permitted events. Certain routes used during permitted events may be closed to casual riding.

6) Sombrillo Transportation Area (see Map 10-5)

Closed – 1,700 acres: ① The areas north of Santa Cruz Lake and west and east of Rio Chiquito (1,515 acres) will be closed to motorized use to allow for backcountry recreation. Nonmotorized trails will be developed to provide access to the Rio Quemado and the Rio Medio.

The small area near La Puebla and south of Santa Cruz River (180 acres) will be closed and managed for nonmotorized access, with some existing routes converted to trails for mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding; other routes will be reclaimed. A trailhead near the river and County Road 88B will be developed. A fence will be constructed to eliminate motorized use in the closed area.

Limited to designated routes – 19,230 acres: ② Approximately 500 acres near La Puebla will be limited to designated routes, providing opportunities for motorized use. Access will be from a staging area. The use will be primarily ATVs and motorcycles, excluding four-wheel drive vehicle use.

③ Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area (2,460 acres) will have a limited number of designated vehicle routes, all intended to provide access to developed facilities along the north shore and at the Overlook. The area south and west of the lake and north of NM 503 will be managed primarily for nonmotorized access on existing routes, with a few roads open to vehicle use to access range improvements.

The area east of Santa Cruz Lake, south of CR 98A, and west of NM 503 will also be managed for nonmotorized use.

④ The area east of NM 503, south of Borrego Mesa Road (FS-506), and north of the Santo Domingo de Cundiyo Grant will be managed for motorized recreation use and livestock grazing.

⑤ The block of public lands south of NM 503 to Nambe Pueblo (6,570 acres) will be managed to provide vehicle access to private lands, livestock grazing improvements, the Cerro Piñon communication site, and for traditional uses (e.g., plant collecting or wood gathering). The BLM will work with local groups to identify the most popular nonmotorized trails and designate trailhead access points.

⑥ In the Sombrillo ACEC (8,600 acres), one road following Arroyo Seco will be further limited to permitted users to support research, livestock grazing, and traditional Native American uses. A few trailheads will be developed to support equestrian users and mountain bikers. A few nonmotorized routes may be rerouted to mitigate impacts to paleontological or cultural resources or to eliminate excessive erosion. A few nonmotorized trail routes may be created to develop additional loop opportunities.

7) West Santa Fe Transportation Area (see Map 10-6)

Closed – 3,015 acres: ① Several blocks of public land within the Santa Fe River canyon will be closed to vehicle use. Public access will be on a system of nonmotorized trails. The

county road into the area and roads that access private property will remain open to vehicle use.

② The public lands in the vicinity of Diablo Canyon will have one route designated for access to a parking area/trailhead. Vehicle use of portions of the arroyo will be allowed for permitted uses, primarily filming. The route is shared by the BLM and the Santa Fe National Forest, and the BLM will work with the Forest Service to provide adequate access.

Limited to designated routes – 33,035 acres: ③ Access will be for mechanized travel (e.g., mountain bikes) and permitted users only on the mesa north of the Santa Fe River and south of Route 66.

④ The area between the Forest Service boundary and historic Route 66 contains a network of routes used for casual recreation, access to a mine, range improvements, sites used by the National Guard for training, and by a local club for model airplane flying. The northern part of this zone is habitat for a sensitive species (gray vireo) and will have fewer routes designated open for vehicular use.

⑤ The Boondocks pasture will be managed for a backcountry recreation experience, and will, therefore, have only a few roads designated open, primarily to serve the needs of livestock grazing and as access points for hikers or equestrian riders.

⑥ The area east of Buckman Road and south of Boondocks pasture will contain a system of roads/trails used for motorized recreation. Some reroutes are anticipated as necessary to protect cultural sites.

⑦ The remaining small parcels will be limited to designated routes.

8) Galisteo Basin Transportation Area (see Map 10-7)

Closed – 2,270 acres: ① The Burnt Corn Pueblo area contains one of the BLM-administered pueblo sites protected by the Galisteo Basin Cultural Sites Protection Act. Access to this area will be by foot, horseback, or bicycle. The purpose of the closure is to protect cultural resources and to provide for back-country recreation.

Limited to designated routes – 11,830 acres: ② The Cerrillos Hills area will be managed in partnership with Santa Fe County's Cerrillos Hills Historic Park. Vehicle use will be limited to designated roads, primarily used to access rock and mineral collection areas.

③ The San Pedro area will have roads designated to provide access to mineral resources.

④ In the remainder of the transportation planning area, vehicles will be limited to designated roads which are needed to access trailheads, private lands, or research sites. The BLM will work closely with Santa Fe County and adjacent private land owners to identify a transportation network that allows access to BLM lands, particularly access to select Galisteo Basin cultural sites. Many routes will be further limited to permitted use for research or protective work and for access to a few range improvements.

9) East Side Transportation Area (see Map 10-8)

Closed – 16,030 acres: ① The Sabinoso Wilderness will be closed to motorized use.

Limited to designated routes – 36,270 acres: ② Vehicle access in the Sabinoso ACEC will be limited to provide access to private lands and maintenance of livestock grazing or wildlife improvements. The BLM will pursue agreements with adjacent private lands to secure access for the public to trailheads in the ACEC that will also allow nonmotorized public access into the wilderness.

③ In the remainder of the planning area, all existing routes will be designated open, primarily in support of livestock grazing. Selected roads may be closed or rerouted if resource damage is consistently noted during monitoring.

2.2.9 Withdrawals

Goals

- Utilize withdrawal actions with the least restrictive measures and minimum size necessary to accomplish the required purposes.
- Identify areas requiring protection from mineral entry through withdrawal, including the minimum area necessary to protect the sensitive lands or resources.

Objectives

- Review existing withdrawals on a case-by-case basis prior to the end of the withdrawal period or as otherwise required by law to determine whether they should be extended, revoked, or modified.
- Consider requests for new withdrawals and withdrawal relinquishments, extension or modifications on a case-by-case basis.
- Lands with particularly sensitive resources will be protected from mineral entry through the use of withdrawals.

General Management Guidance

Under the provisions of section 204 of FLPMA and BLM regulations at 43 CFR 2300, lands may be withdrawn from entry under all or some of the land or mining laws for a period of up to 20 years. In other cases, Congress has full discretion to withdraw land, which it typically applies to special designations such as wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, and other congressional designations. Approximately 72,507 acres of public lands in the planning area are currently withdrawn either by Congress or by application to the Secretary of the Interior, and include the following:

Lower Gorge ACEC (4,820 acres)

Wild Rivers Recreation Area (9,952 acres)

Rio Chama WSR (9,581 acres)

Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River (17,642 acres)

Ojo Caliente ACEC

 Pueblos (291 acres)

Copper Hill ACEC

 Embudo Canyon Protection Zone (1,713 acres)

 Agua Caliente Protection Zone (878 acres)

 Central Protection Zone (4,386 acres)

Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act sites (1,303 acres)

Sabinoso Wilderness (16,030 acres)

While the BLM has no discretion regarding withdrawals by Congress, existing withdrawals by the Secretary will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis prior to the end of the withdrawal period or as otherwise required by law to determine whether they should be extended, revoked, or modified. Additional lands with special or sensitive resource values may be identified for withdrawal if criteria are met.

Other agency requests for withdrawal relinquishments, extension, or modifications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In some cases withdrawals may transfer jurisdiction to another Federal agency.

Allocations and Management Actions

A total of approximately 222,540 acres will be recommended for withdrawal or continued withdrawal from entry under of the mining laws to the extent the Secretary of the Interior has the discretion:

Taos Plateau planning unit

- Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, Upper Gorge (13,674 acres)

Taos Plateau ACEC

- San Antonio Zone in Taos Plateau ACEC (7,371 acres)

- Wild Rivers Recreation Area (11,223 acres)

Lower Gorge/Copper Hill planning unit

- Lower Gorge ACEC, includes OVRA (21,191 acres)

- Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, Lower Gorge (3,661 acres)

Copper Hill ACEC

- Rio Embudo Protection Zone (2,643 acres)

- Agua Caliente protection Zone (3,425 acres)

- Lower Embudo Cultural protection Zone (499 acres)

- Central Protection Zone (10,630 acres)

Chama planning unit

- Rio Chama ACEC (8,183 acres, an additional 2,280 acres)

- Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River (2,475 acres)

Ojo Caliente planning unit

- Expanded Ojo Caliente ACEC (66,149 acres)

El Palacio planning unit

- Expanded Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area (3,356 acres)

- Pueblos ACEC (Ojo del Zorro, La Caja Pueblo, Pueblo Quemado, Sahiu, Pueblo Sarco, Nambe Bugge, Ohkay Owingeh and Ojito) (265 acres)

West Santa Fe planning unit

- Expanded La Cienega ACEC (13,724 acres)

Santa Fe Ranch ACEC

- Diablo Canyon Zone (713 acres)

- Community Growth Area (15,727 acres)

Galisteo planning unit

- Arch Sites (1,012 acres)

- Community Growth Area (32,766 acres)

East Side planning unit

- Sabinoso ACEC (3,853 acres)

In addition, 48,493 acres of Federal minerals underlying non-Federal surface will be withdrawn from mineral entry under the Mining Laws.

Withdrawals no longer needed, in whole or in part, for the purpose for which they were withdrawn, will be revoked or modified. Upon revocation or modification of a withdrawal, all or part of the land no longer subject to the withdrawal will be managed in accordance with other RMP allocations and management actions for that respective area.

2.2.10 Special Designations

Special landscapes and resources in the planning area have been delineated for additional management attention. Some have been congressionally authorized and include WSRs, national scenic or historic trails, or other designations such as cultural protection areas or national heritage areas (see Map 13). Other designations are made administratively by the BLM or the Department of the Interior and include ACECs, WSAs, and back country or scenic byways. Other designations can include national recreation trails and watchable wildlife viewing sites.

Areas with exceptional natural beauty, nationally significant cultural or historic resources, sensitive plant and animal habitat, and/or other resources requiring special attention are recognized by some form of special designation. These landscapes or resources are protected and preserved through limitations on surface disturbance and careful implementation of any uses such that each area's special resource values are retained.

A sign plan will be developed and implemented field office-wide, consistent with the RMP and subsequent activity-level plans, which will incorporate the management objectives for special designations.

The BLM will manage a total of 473,085 acres as ACECs, WSRs, wilderness, or WSAs and approximately 42 miles as national historic trails. Appendix A presents the management prescription for ACECs, National Historic Trails, and WSRs.

2.2.10.1 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Goals

- Provide special management attention to areas with relevant and important values to ensure such values are protected and preserved from irreparable harm.

Objectives

- Inventory, protect, and monitor ACECs consistent with special management prescriptions to ensure their relevant and important values may be preserved.

General Management Guidance

As part of the BLM's implementation of FLPMA, Manual 1613 and 43 CFR 1610.7-2 require that areas meeting the relevance and importance criteria for ACECs be considered during the planning process, with special consideration for (1) the protection of the area and prevention of irreparable damage to the resources or natural systems identified during the inventory, and (2) the protection of life and the promotion of safety in areas where natural hazards exist. Areas qualifying for consideration as ACECs must have substantial significance and value, including qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern. The values for which ACECs are designated are

considered the highest and best use for those lands, and protection of those values will take precedence over multiple uses.

Allowable Uses and Management Actions

The RMP designates and provides special management for the ACEC listed in Table 2-10 (also see Map 11). A detailed outline of the management prescriptions for each ACEC is presented in Appendix A.

Table 2-10. ACEC designations

ACEC	Size (acres)	Relevant and Important Values
Chama Canyons	8,183	riparian, scenic, water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic quality
La Cienega	13,390	cultural, riparian, scenic, and wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species
Copper Hill	17,200	cultural, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian, scenic, and watershed resources
Galisteo Basin	450	cultural
Lower Gorge	21,190	cultural, riparian, and wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species
Ojo Caliente	66,150	cultural, ecological processes (soils), riparian, and wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species
Pueblos	240	cultural
Sabinoso	19,780	scenic
Santa Fe Ranch	21,030	cultural, geologic features, scenic, and wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species
Sombrillo	18,080	cultural, paleontological, and scenic
Taos Plateau	222,500	scenic, water quality and quantity, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species

2.2.10.2 Byways

Goals

- Provide for the promotion and enhancement of designated scenic and backcountry byways.

Objectives

- Partner with interested governments and special interest groups to provide for interpretation and marketing of the byways.
- Expose visitors to the byway’s recreational resources, and interpret natural, cultural, geological, and scenic features.
- Provide interconnectivity between local communities and a working partnership for regional development of eco- and recreational tourism.

General Management Guidance

There are several byways located in the planning area, but only five cross public lands or have viewsheds that include BLM-managed lands. These byways are El Camino Real, Enchanted Circle, High Road to Taos, Turquoise Trail, and Wild Rivers Back Country. The BLM will

collaborate with groups that have been established to manage these byways, and will notify them of any actions within the byway viewshed that might impact the purposes for which the byway is managed. The Wild Rivers Back Country Byway is the only one managed by the BLM in the planning area; the BLM will consult with local groups in the Questa area to determine the best way to market this opportunity, and will continue to collaborate with the groups involved with the Enchanted Circle.

Allowable Uses and Management Actions

Wild Rivers Back Country Byway will be managed as part of the Taos Plateau ACEC and Rio Grande Gorge Recreation Area. Its viewshed will be managed to maintain scenic quality and provide historic and natural resource interpretation for byway users.

2.2.10.3 National Historic or Scenic Trails

Goals

- Provide for effective and accessible orientation, interpretation, and education programs and activities on the trails, enabling visitors of all abilities to understand and appreciate their history, significance, and enduring legacy.

Objectives

- Provide for the safe enjoyment of cultural resource and recreational opportunities related to the trails' history and resources.
- Establish and support partnerships to provide visitor experiences and to conserve and preserve resources related to the historic trails' period of use.
- Use current management practices and technologies to implement the National Trails System Act, and administer the national historic trails to protect their setting, visual integrity, archaeological resources, and physical traces.

General Management Guidance

Four National Scenic or Historic Trails—the Santa Fe, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, and Old Spanish National Historic Trails and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail—lie within the planning area and are managed under the provisions of the National Trails System Act of 1968, the enabling legislation for each trail, and activity plan guidance. However, only 8 miles of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and approximately 33.5 miles of the Old Spanish National Historic Trails are located on public lands administered by the Taos Field Office. While the BLM will continue to work in partnership with the National Park Service to manage these trails, protective management prescriptions for the trail corridors on public lands are summarized in Appendix A.

Allowable Uses and Management Actions

The Taos Field Office will evaluate trail resources present (identified through survey or other means) and determine their respective values. Trail resources include physical traces of the trail (e.g., ruts, swales, campsites, artifact scatters, etc.) or may be associated with visitor uses and research, so that the evaluation will include an analysis of the opportunities for interpretation, recreational use, and research.

Within five years after approval of the RMP, a management plan will be developed to layout goals for the trail, including inventory, changing VRM classes, and resource development to provide visitor opportunities.

Within five years after approval of the RMP, an archaeological inventory will be carried out to help define the cultural and temporal settings of trail segments. Important artifacts associated with the trails will be collected, analyzed, and curated. These resources, along with historic information, may be used to interpret these national historic trails.

2.2.10.4 Watchable Wildlife Areas

Objectives

- Provide wildlife viewing opportunities at sites which are accessible by vehicle and have a high likelihood that species of interest can be seen.

Allowable Uses and Management Actions

The two watchable wildlife areas identified in the planning area—Wild Rivers and San Antonio—will have interpretive plans completed, with appropriate highway signing and parking/viewing areas provided for visitors. These areas will be developed in a manner that will be least intrusive on the habitat. The opportunity to view wildlife will be marketed at a regional or national level. Interpretation may include information provided in guidebooks, onsite signing, and written materials.

2.2.10.5 Wild and Scenic Rivers

Goals

- Continue to manage designated wild and scenic river segments consistent with the intent of their designations.
- To the extent of the BLM's authority, maintain the free-flowing character, preserve or enhance the outstandingly remarkable values, and allow no activities within the river corridor that will alter the tentative classification of those segments determined suitable for congressional designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Objectives

- Review all eligible rivers to determine suitability for congressional designation into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Continuing Management Guidance

The National Wild and Scenic River System includes three river segments in the planning area—32 miles of the Rio Chama, the lower 4 miles of the Red River, and 68 miles of the Rio Grande from the Colorado state line south to Rinconada, New Mexico. An additional 7.6 miles of the Rio Grande from Rinconada to Velarde was designated by Congress as a study segment. In the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan, the BLM identified seven river segments as eligible, of which two were determined suitable for designation. An inventory completed in January 2008 identified an additional 11 segments as eligible. Two of these are determined suitable by the BLM, while suitability determinations on the remaining nine, as well as the remaining five identified by the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan, are being deferred until the Carson National

Forest undergoes its land use planning, when coordination between the BLM and Forest Service on the suitability of streams crossing jurisdictional boundaries can be more affectively evaluated.

The designated wild and scenic rivers, as well as river segments which have been found eligible or suitable for designation, will be managed per guidance on the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended. Other management direction is provided by the enabling legislation for the Rio Chama and Rio Grande, subsequent river management plans prepared for the Rio Chama and Rio Grande in 1990 and 2000, respectively, and guidance contained in BLM Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers-Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, 1992.

Allocations and Management Actions

All eligible and suitable segments will be managed to protect their identified outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classification, and free-flowing character (see Appendix E).

The Rio Nutrias and Rio Pueblo de Taos segments are determined suitable for addition to the national WSR system, along with the Rio Embudo Box and Rio Grande Bosque, determined suitable in previous plans. If the Forest Service is unable to partner with the Taos Field Office to conduct a suitability study on other eligible streams within five years of the completion of the RMP, the BLM will move forward with a study.

Map 12 illustrates eligible and/or suitable river segments along with those designated.

2.2.10.6 Wilderness

Goals

- Provide for the long-term protection and preservation of designated wilderness under the principles of non-degradation. A wilderness area's naturalness and untrammled condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value will be managed such that they remain unimpaired.

Objectives

- Manage uses permitted by the Wilderness Act's special provisions and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent degradation of the area's wilderness character. In managing these uses, emphasis will be placed on maintaining wilderness character.
- Prepare a management plan for a wilderness area within two years of its designation by Congress.

General Management Guidance

The planning area contains one wilderness area, the Sabinoso Wilderness, which was designated by Congress in 2009 as part of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 (Section G, P.L. 111-11). The 16,030-acre Sabinoso Wilderness will be managed under guidelines in the Wilderness Act of 1964, the enabling legislation, regulations for wilderness management at 43 CFR 6300, BLM *Manuals* 8560 and 8561, BLM *Handbook* H-8560-1 and a wilderness management plan which will be prepared by the BLM.

2.2.10.7 Wilderness Study Areas

Goals

- WSAs will be managed to protect their wilderness characteristics until designated or released from further consideration by Congress.

Objectives

- Manage WSAs to ensure their wilderness characteristics will not be impaired.
- Identify appropriate management prescriptions if Congress were to release these areas from further consideration.

General Management Guidance

The two WSAs in the planning area, Rio Chama and San Antonio, will be managed under the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (BLM Manual H-8550-1). If either are designated wilderness, it will be managed under guidelines in the Wilderness Act of 1964, the enabling legislation, and a wilderness management plan that will be prepared by the BLM.

Allocations and Management Actions

If either the Rio Chama or San Antonio WSA is released from further consideration as wilderness, it will be managed as part of Chama Canyons or Taos Plateau ACEC, respectively, and would be protected by restrictive land use prescriptions (see Appendix A).

Table 2-11. Wilderness study areas

Name	Acres	BLM Recommendation
San Antonio	7,371	Nonsuitable—all If released, it will be managed for wildlife and riparian values as part of the Taos Plateau ACEC. Protective measures are in place to maintain the wilderness character of the area.
Rio Chama	11,128	Suitable—5,191 acres Nonsuitable—5,937 acres If released the area will be managed under prescriptions identified for the Chama Canyons ACEC, which will maintain the area's wilderness character.

Note: The original wilderness inventory acreages reported to Congress were not accurate; the acreage in this table is based on updated mapping. Original acreages reported were: San Antonio—7,050, and Rio Chama total—11,985 (suitable—5,232, nonsuitable—6,753).

2.2.10.8 Other Congressional/Secretarial Designations

Goals

- Areas or resources in the planning area which are designated by Congress or the Secretary of the Interior for special attention will be managed according to guidelines in the enabling legislation and BLM or departmental guidelines.

Objectives

- Where appropriate, the BLM will develop partnerships to assist in carrying out the purposes of the designations.

General Management Guidance

The Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act of 2004 designated 24 sites containing pueblos, rock art, and Spanish colonial settlements. The purpose of the Act is to provide for the preservation, protection, and interpretation of the nationally significant archaeological resources in the Galisteo Basin. It also encourages research on these or other sites that might warrant inclusion.

A programmatic plan tiered to the RMP will provide for management actions on sites on BLM-administered lands or on sites for which the BLM has a signed cooperative management agreement with the owner(s). The Act allows private property within the boundary of any site to be excluded, if the owner so requests. Nine sites are at least in part on BLM-managed land, and management guidance is described in the Galisteo Basin ACEC or La Cienega ACEC.

The enabling legislation contains the following nondiscretionary guidance for the BLM-managed sites:

- The Act requires the preparation of a management plan, to be completed within three years after funds are available to cover the sites on BLM land, or for which the BLM has a signed cooperative management agreement with the landowner, if non-Federal.
- Land acquisition from willing sellers is authorized (unless State Trust land, in which case acquisition is allowed only by exchange).
- All Federal lands are withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws.
- All Federal lands are withdrawn from location, entry and patent under the Mining Law.
- All Federal lands are closed to mineral leasing or material sales.

Congress designated the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area in 2006, which includes the counties of Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos. It encompasses a mosaic of cultures and history, including eight pueblos and the descendants of Spanish ancestors who settled in the area as early as 1598. Within its boundaries are many significant historic sites and a cultural landscape that reflects long settlement of the region. (The Taos Pueblo, for example, has been recognized as a World Heritage Site.)

The heritage area is proposed for management by a nonprofit corporation. The Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, Inc., in partnership with the National Park Service and participating pueblos, agencies, and community organizations, will plan, coordinate, and implement programs and services that recognize, respect, and preserve the multicultural people and the landscape of the area. BLM staff has attended several meetings with local supporters of this legislation and will collaborate on any initiatives affecting public lands in the three-county area.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Management Prescriptions for Special Designations

Management prescriptions for the special designations listed below—ACECs, National Historic Trail, and Wild and Scenic Rivers—are presented in detail in this appendix:

El Camino Real National Historic Trail
Chama Canyons Area of Critical Environmental Concern
La Cienega Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Copper Hill Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Galisteo Basin Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Lower Gorge Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Ojo Caliente Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Old Spanish National Historic Trail
Pueblos Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River
Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River
Sabinoso Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Santa Fe Ranch Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Sombrillo Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Taos Plateau Area of Critical Environmental Concern

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail was added to the National Trails System in 2000. While the trail is 404 miles long, only 8.1 miles—two trail segments—are located within the Taos Field Office planning area. Both segments are located within La Cienega ACEC and include Las Bocas Trail (approximately 3 miles on BLM land, located within the Santa Fe River canyon from La Bajada Village to La Cienega) and La Bajada Mesa Trail (approximately 5.1 miles).

These trail portions will be managed under the prescriptions outlined in La Cienega ACEC, which provides protective management in compliance with the National Trails System Act of 1968.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land with trail resources by purchase or exchange (approximately 100 acres)• Acquire state trust land containing trail resources by exchange (678 acres)
Minerals Leasable	Leasable: no surface occupancy Locatable: withdrawn Salable: closed
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Segments closed to wind energy development
Transportation and Access	Closed: Las Bocas Trail segment (Santa Fe River canyon) Limited to designated routes: La Bajada Mesa Trail segment
Visual Resources	Class I: 815 acres Class II: 3,560 acres Class III: 545 acres
Activity Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a management plan for an La Cienega ACEC within five years of RMP approval
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inventory and record trail resources in detail (class III inventory)• Nominate eligible cultural sites to the National Register of Historic Places• Protect trail segments and associated archaeological sites

Recreation

- Develop interpretation and education projects where appropriate (on- or off-site)

Monitoring

- monitor site condition using site stewards and BLM staff

Chama Canyons ACEC

Chama Canyons ACEC (8,183 acres) contains regionally significant riparian, wildlife, water quality, and scenic resources. If all or part of the suitably-recommended portion of the Rio Chama Wilderness Study Area is released from consideration for wilderness, those lands would be incorporated into the ACEC.

Lands adjacent to the Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River are within the ACEC, but the Wild and Scenic River corridor would not be included.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure

- Acquire available private land by purchase or exchange (approximately 845 acres)
- Acquire available state trust land by exchange (640 acres)

Land Use Authorizations

- Rights-of-way exclusion area (8,183 acres)

Livestock Grazing

- Grazing is not available in the riparian portion of the Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River corridor
- grazing is not available along the Rio Cebolla and Rio Lobo (375 acres)

Minerals

8,405 acres of mineral estate:

Leasable: closed

Locatable: withdrawn

Salable: closed

Recreation

- Manage ACEC as part of the Chama Canyons Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)

Renewable Energy

- Wind and solar development is excluded (8,183 acres)

Transportation and Access

Closed: 8,183 acres

Forestry

- Manage woodland and forest resources to enhance wildlife habitat

Fish and Wildlife

- In cooperation with NMDGF, manage Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River and adjacent tributaries to restore native aquatic fauna and reduce or eliminate aquatic invasive species
- Consider areas for introduction, augmentation or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with the

- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) plans
 - Habitat critical for winter range and migration for elk and mule deer

- Vegetation**
 - Actively manage the Rio Chama and tributary riparian areas to restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation

- Visual Resources** Class I: 8,183 acres

- Water Resources**
 - Secure water rights in perennial streams adequate to manage aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation
 - Manage Rio Chama in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area and condition, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion

- Lands with wilderness characteristics**
 - Manage the land adjacent to the Rio Chama WSA to protect wilderness characteristics (2,499 acres)
- Wildland Fire**
 - Implement limited fire suppression strategies to protect wilderness and wild and scenic river values

- Other Designations**
 - The Rio Nutrias is eligible and suitable for designation as a wild and scenic river, and until Congress should act, will be managed under guidelines for wild and scenic rivers
 - A small portion of the ACEC is under consideration for wilderness designation. Until designated or released, it is subject to the Interim Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review (BLM, 1995)

- Activity Planning**
 - Prepare a management plan, in cooperation with the US Forest Service and the Jicarilla Apache, for management of the ACEC

La Cienega ACEC

La Cienega ACEC (13,390 acres) contains relevant and important cultural, riparian, scenic, and vegetation values, as well as wildlife habitat, including habitat for special status species (gray vireo). Any acquired land would be managed according to ACEC prescriptions.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire private land with significant cultural/natural resources from willing sellers (1,000 acres)• Acquire enclosed/adjacent and available state land through exchange (678 acres)
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way avoidance area (13,390 acres)
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• La Cienega Mesa pueblo ruins is unavailable (120 acres)• Other pueblo ruins and areas where serious conflicts with cultural resources become apparent would be unavailable (approximately 100 acres)• Manage grazing and livestock use to restore and enhance riparian condition where feasible. Riparian areas are unavailable to grazing where livestock degradation is occurring and cannot be mitigated
Minerals	13,690 acres of mineral estate: Leasable: no surface occupancy – 13,220 acres; controlled surface use – 470 acres Locatable: withdrawn – 13,690 acres Salable: closed – 13,690 acres
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage recreation use of the ACEC under guidelines for the Cieneguilla SRMA and the West Santa Fe Extensive Recreation Management Area• Close the Santa Fe River canyon and cultural resource sites (e.g., petroglyph areas) to target shooting and petition NMDGF to close same area to hunting• Provide for improved access route for model airplane site
Renewable Energy	Closed to wind energy development: 13,390 acres Closed to solar energy development: 5,055 acres Avoidance of solar energy: 7,135 acres
Transportation and Access	Closed: 2,525 acres Limited to designated routes: 10,865 acres (applies to mountain biking also)

Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a comprehensive class III cultural resource inventory of the ACEC and record archaeological data • Nominate eligible cultural sites to the National Register of Historic Places
Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with NMDGF plans • In cooperation with NMDGF, consider using native fish species in the Santa Fe River for restoration and augmentation projects elsewhere • Conserve native fish populations in the Santa Fe River • No tree removal to protect gray vireo habitat in sec. 7, T16N, R7E
Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively manage the Santa Fe River riparian area to return it to full functioning condition, restore native plant species, and reduce or control the density of exotic vegetation
Visual Resources	<p>Class I: 1,100 acres Class II: 10,650 acres Class III: 1,640 acres</p>
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Santa Fe River in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river condition, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion
Wildland Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement limited fire suppression strategies to assist in the protection of resource values
Other Designations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four miles of the Santa Fe River would be managed as an eligible segment for wild and scenic river designation; suitability deferred until the Forest Service completes its inventory
Activity Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise an ACEC management plan within five years of RMP approval
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer site stewards will be trained to monitor site conditions and report any changes to BLM • Conduct breeding bird surveys – priorities are the Southwestern willow flycatcher and the gray vireo

Copper Hill ACEC

Copper Hill ACEC (17,200 acres) contains relevant and important riparian, fish and wildlife habitat, scenic cultural, and watershed resource values. The ACEC is divided into four zones: Agua Caliente (3,420 acres), Rio Embudo (2,640 acres), Lower Embudo (500 acres), and Central (10,640 acres).

Prescriptions

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land through purchase or exchange (2,270 acres)• Acquire available state trust land through exchange (2,445 acres)• Allow sale of up to two acres in the Central zone for a solid waste convenience center (parts of secs. 23 and 24, T 23 N, R 10 E) |
| Land Use Authorizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agua Caliente, Rio Embudo, and Lower Embudo zones are rights-of-way exclusion areas (6,560 acres)• Allow new rights-of-way in the Central zone (10,640 acres) |
| Livestock Grazing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lands in allotments 518, 519 and 520 remain unavailable (17,135 acres)• Allotment 521 will become unavailable when no longer in use by current permittee (1,630 acres) |
| Minerals | 18,900 acres of mineral estate:

Leasable: closed – 6,030 acres (Embudo Canyon, Agua Caliente, Lower Embudo zones); no surface occupancy – 500 acres; controlled surface use – 12,370 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 18,900 acres
Salable: closed, except at Piedra Lumbre, Hilltop, and Canada del Oso |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primitive camping allowed, except within 100 feet of rivers or streams• Marked hiking trails in Rinconada Hill and Agua Caliente areas to limit surface disturbance |
| Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded |
| Transportation and Access | Limited to designated routes: 17,200 acres, which includes routes designated for trial riding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vehicle access to pueblo ruins in the Lower Embudo zone is limited to permitted users only• Acquire administrative access to Agua Caliente for fisheries |

management

- Forestry**
 - Manage woodland/forest resources to enhance wildlife habitat, ecosystem health, and scenic values

- Cultural Resources**
 - Complete a 100% survey of all cultural resources, and nominate eligible sites to the National Register of Historic Places

- Fish and Wildlife**
 - Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with NMDGF plans
 - Employ mechanical removal methods to reduce non-native aquatic species from the Rio Embudo, Rio Grande, and Rio Agua Caliente
 - Cooperate with NMDGF to reintroduce Rio Grande cutthroat into the Agua Caliente watershed
 - Assess habitat in Rio Agua Caliente for restoration of long-nose dace, Rio Grande chub, and Rio Grande sucker, and work with NMDGF to implement
 - Cooperate with NMDGF to conserve Rio Grande sucker in the Rio Embudo through augmentation and removal of non-native fish

- Vegetation/Soils**
 - Prevent degradation of aquatic habitat by prohibiting activities that disturb soil and vegetation in streams and within the 100 year floodplain
 - Actively manage riparian areas to return them to full functioning condition, restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation and control their spread

- Visual Resources**
 - Class I: 3,895 acres
 - Class II: 10,165 acres
 - Class III: 3,140 acres

- Water Resources**
 - Secure water rights in perennial streams adequate to manage aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation
 - Manage in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river condition, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion

- Wildland Fire**
 - Fire suppression techniques causing earth disturbance will not be used in the Lower Embudo zone

- Other Designations**
 - Rio Embudo – Five mile segment eligible and suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation
 - Complete suitability studies with Carson National Forest on

nine BLM-eligible Wild and Scenic River segments

Activity Planning

- ACEC is managed under guidelines established by the Rio Grande Corridor Plan (2000); management will be reviewed and revised if needed within 10 years of the RMP's approval

Galisteo Basin ACEC

The Galisteo Basin Archaeological Sites Protection Act was passed by Congress in 2004. It recognizes 24 cultural sites in the Galisteo Basin as having national significance; 21 are in the Taos Field Office planning area. Nine of these are, at least, in part on BLM-managed lands. This ACEC, totaling 450 acres, includes five of those nine sites (the other four are in La Cienega ACEC). If other sites listed in the Act are acquired by the BLM, they would automatically be added to the ACEC. The Act also allows for the inclusion of significant sites discovered after its enactment—these would also become a part of this ACEC if they are on BLM land or would be acquired by the BLM.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquired available private/county land through purchase or exchange (2,776 acres)• Acquired available state trust land through exchange (520 acres)
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way are excluded (450 acres)
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Galisteo Basin cultural sites are unavailable to livestock grazing (includes parts of allotments 830 and 851 and all of allotments 917 and 926)
Minerals	Leasable: closed (non-discretionary) Locatable: congressional withdrawn Salable: closed
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close areas to target shooting• Manage recreation use under guidelines described for the Galisteo Basin Extensive Recreation Management Area
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded
Transportation and Access	Limited to designated and/or permitted use – 450 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire legal access to the San Lazaro site
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete inventory and detailed recording of cultural features for each site
Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooperate with Galisteo Watershed Group on restoration projects• Manage soils to protect integrity and reduce erosion that would damage cultural sites or impair downstream water quality

Visual Resources Class II: 450 acres

Activity Planning • A management plan for all sites (public and privately owned) is mandated by enabling legislation of congressionally designated sites

Monitoring • Operate a volunteer site steward program to monitor all sites on BLM land and on those privately owned sites with owner permission

Lower Gorge ACEC

Lower Gorge ACEC (21,190 acres) is established to provide more direct management of relevant and important riparian vegetation, special status species and wildlife habitat, and cultural values. Management emphasis also includes recreation.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	Acquire non-Federal land that has values that are identified above, as well as land that would improve recreation access; acres are the maximum available, not necessarily what the BLM would acquire. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land by purchase from willing sellers or exchange, especially undeveloped private land (3,130 acres)• Acquire available state trust land by exchange (320 acres)• The ACEC will be withdrawn from the public land laws
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exclude new rights-of-way, except for road improvements to improve safety, or to provide access or utility service to non-Federal land where no practicable alternative exists
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riparian areas and wetlands would be unavailable to livestock grazing
Minerals	21,410 acres of mineral estate: Leasable: closed Locatable: withdrawn Salable: closed – 21,409 acres; open – 1 acre (Arroyo Hondo)
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage ACEC as part of the Rio Grande Gorge Recreation Area; boating will continue to be managed under guidelines of the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded
Transportation and Access	Limited to designated routes: 21,190 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close certain sites to vehicles to improve riparian condition• Work with NM Department of Transportation to identify safe pullouts along NM-68
Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with NMDGF plans• In cooperation with NMDGF, managed the Rio Grande and adjacent tributaries to control or eliminate exotic species

- Employ mechanical removal methods to reduce non-native aquatic species from the Rio Grande
 - Assess aquatic habitat and develop restoration or enhancement plans to meet management goals for fish and other species
- Special Status Species**
- Protect Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat (critical habitat established in 2005)
- Vegetation/Soils**
- Prevent degradation of aquatic habitat by prohibiting activities that disturb soil and vegetation in streams and within the 100 year floodplain
 - Actively manage the riparian areas to return them to full functioning condition, restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation
 - Improve riparian condition by closing certain sites to vehicles
 - Suppress noxious weeds with methods deemed most effective; herbicides would be used as a last resort
- Visual Resources**
- Class I: 2,430 acres
Class II: 18,760 acres
- Improve scenic quality; re-vegetate closed roads, redesign/landscape recreation sites, and rehabilitate abandoned mine sites; work with rights-of-way holders to improve appearance of NM-68 and NM-570 and gas pipeline
- Water Resources**
- Secured water rights in perennial streams adequate to manage aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation
 - Manage in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river condition, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion
- Wildland Fire**
- Fire prescriptions and burn plans will be developed to meet vegetation management objectives; a full-suppression zone will be established around Pilar; unplanned fires will be extinguished
 - Improve watershed health by controlled burns in shrub grasslands
- Other Designations**
- 1.2 miles of the Arroyo Hondo is eligible for wild and scenic river designation; a suitability determination will be made in cooperation with the Carson National Forest; 1.2 miles of the Rio Pueblo de Taos is recommended suitable for designation as a wild and scenic river
 - 7.6 miles of the Rio Grande (Bosque segment) are recommended suitable for designation as a recreational wild and scenic river segment per a study completed after its Congressional designation as a study segment

Activity Planning

- Manage the ACEC under guidelines established by the Rio Grande Corridor Plan (2000); management will be reviewed and revised if needed within 10 years of the RMP's approval

Ojo Caliente ACEC

Ojo Caliente ACEC (66,150 acres) contains relevant and important cultural resources, as well as scenic quality, fragile ecological processes (soils), riparian, and special status species and other critical wildlife habitat values.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire all state trust land, if available, by exchange (9,020 acres)• Acquire private land with cultural sites from willing sellers (Ku, Posi, Nute, Sandoval, and Te'ewi) (180 acres)
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way are excluded from areas managed for wilderness characteristics (42,133 acres)
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pueblo sites and other areas where conflicts with cultural resources are apparent would be unavailable (230 acres)• The Ojo Caliente Demonstration Area is also unavailable (325 acres)
Minerals	66,580 acres of mineral estate: Leasable: closed – 66,580 acres Locatable: withdrawn – 66,580 acres Salable: closed – 64,910 acres; open – 1,670 acres (the area between El Rito and Ojo Caliente on north side of NM-554)
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage recreation as described for the Posi Recreation Area; the Posi Recreation Area would be closed to motorized use to support middle-country recreation; some new trails would be developed for hiking, biking, and horseback riding; existing routes would be used to support this network; the area south of Rincon del Cuervo will be closed to motorized use to support back country recreation
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded
Transportation and Access	Closed: 15,600 acres Limited to designated routes: 50,550 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire access easements to Ku Pueblo and other pueblo sites as needed
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inventory and record cultural resource sites in detail (class III survey)• Nominate eligible cultural sites to the National Register of Historic Places

- Fish and Wildlife**
 - Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of aquatic and wildlife species

- Vegetation/Soils**
 - Conserve native aquatic species populations in the Rio Ojo Caliente
 - Actively manage the riparian areas to return them to full functioning condition, restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation and control their spread
 - Prevent degradation of aquatic habitat by restricting activities that disturb soil and vegetation in streams and within the 100 year floodplain

- Visual Resources**
 - Class I: 10,890 acres (Rincon del Cuervo area)
 - Class II: 51,790 acres
 - Class III: 3,470 (Rights-of-way corridors)

- Water Resources**
 - Secure water rights in perennial streams adequate to manage aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation
 - Manage Rio Ojo Caliente in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river conditions, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion

- Lands with wilderness characteristics**
 - Manage the Rincon del Cuervo and Cerro Colorado areas to protect their wilderness characteristics (42,133 acres)

- Activity Planning**
 - Prepare a management plan for the ACEC

- Monitoring**
 - Monitor cultural site conditions using site stewards and BLM staff
 - Livestock grazing will be monitored in riparian areas, and adjustments made as needed using the Allotment Management Plan process

Old Spanish National Historic Trail

The Old Spanish Trail was designated by Congress as part of the National Trails System. The trail crosses approximately 33.5 miles of public land in the Taos Field Office planning area. Three of the Old Spanish Trail Routes, including the Northern Route, the Armijo Route, and the North Branch, cross through the Taos Field Office. Ten trail segments have been identified within the Taos Field Office. These include: (1) Abiquiu, (2) US-84, (3) Rio Chama, (4) Chimayo, (5) Embudo Pass, (6) Apodaca, (7) Entranas, (8) Ojo Sarco Cut-off, (9) NM-68, and (10) Taos Overlook. These trail segments will be managed under the prescriptions listed below and will provide protective prescriptions which will meet all of the trail protection needs. A one-mile wide corridor encompassing the Old Spanish Trail throughout the Taos Field Office planning area, totaling 21,280 acres, will be used to define the area in which these prescriptions will be implemented.

Prescriptions

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land with trail resources or access to trail resources by purchase or exchange (potentially on Rio Chama and Apodaca segments) (approximately 520 acres)• Acquire state trust land containing trail resources or access to trail resources by exchange (potentially on Rio Chama and Embudo Pass segments) (960 acres) |
| Livestock Grazing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If trail resources are being damaged by livestock, the BLM will mitigate with exclosures or other means to address the impacts |
| Minerals | Leasable: closed – 21,280 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 21,280 acres
Salable: closed – 21,280 acres |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop interpretation and education projects where appropriate (on- and off-site)• Taos Overlook segment is in the Taos Valley Overlook zone of the Rio Grande Gorge SRMA, where interpretive information would include the Old Spanish Trail; NM- 68 segment is within the Orilla Verde and Lower Gorge zone and the Horseshoe Curve zone of the Rio Grande Gorge SRMA; the Chimayo, Embudo Pass, Entranas, and Ojo Sarco cut-off segments are in the Palacio Arroyo SRMA; the Apodaca segment is within the Rio Grande Rim and Copper Hill zones of the Rio Grande Gorge SRMA; the Abiquiu and US-84 segments are within the Chama ERMA; the Rio Chama segment is within the Chama ERMA and the Chama Canyons SRMA; all of these special and extensive recreation management areas contain strong direction to manage and interpret the Old Spanish National Historic Trail |
| Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded |

Transportation and Access	Limited to designated routes: 21,280 acres, with no motorized travel on defined trail segments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire easements from willing landowners that provide access to trail resources
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct class III inventory and record trail resources in detail • Nominate eligible cultural sites to the National Register of Historic Places
Visual Resources	Class II: 21,280 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if any proposed project can be seen from the trail, and propose suitable mitigation
Wildland Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement limited fire suppression strategies to assist in the protection of trail resources
Activity Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a comprehensive management plan for the historic trail • An activity plan for trail segments in the planning area will be prepared to focus on inventory, research, interpretation, signing, and site specific actions to protect trail resources
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor site conditions using site stewards and BLM staff

Pueblos ACEC

Six Tewa pueblo sites, totaling 240 acres, are provided special management to protect their significant cultural resources: La Caja Pueblo (85 acres), Pueblo Quemado (120 acres), Pueblo Sarco (10 acres), Sahiu Pueblo (approximately 5 acres), Nambe Bugge (10 acres), and Ojito Pueblo (10 acres). All of the sites are in Rio Arriba County and are not shown on maps in this plan to protect them from human activity.

Prescriptions

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|----------------------------------|--|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land which contains pueblo ruins and associated resources that are adjacent to Pueblo Quemado (40 acres) |
| Land Use Authorizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sites are rights-of-way avoidance areas |
| Livestock Grazing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sites are unavailable to livestock grazing |
| Minerals | Leasable: closed – 240 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 240 acres
Salable: closed – 240 acres |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When managing for recreation use at these sites, relocate any hiking trails or other recreation facilities to be out of view of the cultural sites |
| Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded |
| Transportation and Access | Limited to designated routes: 240 acres |
| Cultural Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inventory and record cultural resources at each location• Nominate sites to the National Register of Historic Places• Complete a cadastral survey to determine what parts of Sahiu Pueblo are on BLM or private land• Provide barriers (rocks or fences) to keep vehicles or cattle from sites• Encourage excavation• Extract archaeological data from vandalized areas, and backfill disturbed areas |
| Soils | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage soils to protect integrity and reduce erosion that will damage cultural sites or impair downstream water quality |

Visual Resources Class II: 240 acres

Wildland Fire • Limit fire suppression through decreased surface disturbance to protect cultural sites

General • Allow no resource uses at any sites other than for site recordation or research

Monitoring • Monitor site conditions using site stewards and BLM staff

Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River

The Rio Chama was added by Congress to the National Wild and Scenic River System in 1988. A management plan was completed by the BLM, Forest Service, and Army Corps of Engineers in 1990; the Rio Chama Instream Flow Assessment was prepared in 1992 by the BLM to quantify flows needed to meet various management objectives, particularly for riparian health, fisheries, and recreation. The designated river corridor includes 2,680 acres of BLM lands.

Prescriptions

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|----------------------------------|--|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land through purchase or exchange (1,860 acres) |
| Land Use Authorizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way are excluded from the river corridor |
| Livestock Grazing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The river corridor is unavailable to livestock grazing• Eliminate unauthorized livestock grazing; work with permittees to identify fencing needs and water improvement locations, to use of range riders to move cattle, or other control measures |
| Minerals | 2,280 acres of mineral estate:

Leasable: closed – 2,280 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 2,280 acres
Salable: closed – 2,280 acres |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close important habitat areas to camping• No gathering and removal of fuelwood for home use allowed; fuelwood gathering for campfires limited to dead and downed wood only• Boating from El Vado Ranch to Chavez Canyon will be managed to provide for a primitive recreation experience through limits on the size of groups and the number of launches |
| Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded |
| Transportation and Access | Closed: 2,680 acres |
| Fish and Wildlife | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife• Provide adequate habitat privacy during important reproductive seasons for all avian and terrestrial species• Maintain habitat diversity and wildlife viewing opportunities |

- Work cooperatively to identify management needs to support brown and rainbow trout habitat
- Special Status Species**
- Modify existing management and protection measures to assure no effect on any threatened or endangered species
- Vegetation/Soils**
- Employ mechanical removal methods to reduce non-native aquatic species from the Rio Chama and tributaries
 - Rehabilitate existing erosion control structures and develop watershed improvement plans for the Rio Nutrias, Rio Cebolla, Gallina, Ojitos, and localized portions of the Chama watershed
 - Prevent degradation of aquatic habitat by prohibiting activities that disturb soil and vegetation in streams and within the 100 year floodplain
 - Actively manage the riparian areas to return them to full functioning conditions, restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation and control their spread
 - Leave an adequate amount of riparian habitat undisturbed from camping; reseed up to 100 acres of riparian habitat to restore productivity
- Visual Resources** Class I: 2,680 acres
- Water Resources**
- Secure minimum water rights in the Rio Chama Wild and Scenic River area necessary to manage for outstanding remarkable values designated by Congress
 - Manage in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river condition, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion
- Wildland Fire**
- Implement limited fire suppression strategies to protect wilderness and wild and scenic river values
- Other Designations**
- Most of the BLM WSR corridor is in a wilderness study area, and will be managed under the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Land Under Wilderness Review (USDI, BLM, 1995), unless released by Congress or designated wilderness
- Activity Planning**
- Manage the WSR under guidelines in the Rio Chama Management Plan
- Monitoring**
- Monitor key access sites to assure that limits on boating use are being met
 - Monitor areas of human use (particularly camping areas) to determine if and when temporary closures are needed
 - Monitor river corridors for trespass cattle or other livestock

Rio Grande and Red Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Rio Grande and Red Rivers were among a group of eight rivers which inaugurated the Nation's Wild and Scenic River System in 1988. No changes are proposed for management of the wild and scenic rivers, which was addressed in 2000 in the Rio Grande Corridor Management Plan. The designation covers 68.2 miles of the Rio Grande from the Colorado State line south to the village of Rinconada, and the lower four miles of the Red River, starting downstream from the Red River Fish Hatchery. The designated river corridor totals 17,330 acres.

Prescriptions

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|--------------------------------|--|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The BLM will attempt to acquire all State Trust land by exchange and will work with willing private landowners to acquire properties, with a priority given to undeveloped land (990 acres) |
| Land Use Authorizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow maintenance or improvements of acequias and existing rights-of-way in the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River that are considered to be grandfathered uses, provided that changes are consistent with protection of the outstandingly remarkable values of the wild and scenic river; these include powerline at Bear Crossing, High Bridge, powerline at Powerline Falls, John Dunn Bridge, Taos Junction Bridge, Pilar Bridge, and Glen Woody Bridge• New rights-of-way can be co-located within the utility corridors at the High Bridge and Powerline Falls crossings• New rights-of-way may also be considered for installation on existing structures, if such additions would not impact the designation's outstandingly remarkable values |
| Livestock Grazing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The river corridor is unavailable, but trailing across the corridor will be allowed |
| Minerals | 16,530 acres of mineral estate:

Leasable: closed – 16,530 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 16,530 acres
Sable: closed – 16,530 acres |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage boating according to guidelines listed in the Rio Grande Corridor Plan (2000); these guidelines limit the number of commercial use permits that can be issued for each segment, limit group size, restrict boating during certain times of day or seasons, close certain segments at high flows, and allow launch or takeout only at designated areas• Provide public education /interpretation at John Dunn Bridge, Manby (Stagecoach) Springs, the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge, and in the Orilla Verde and Wild Rivers zones of the Rio |

Grande Gorge Recreation Area

- Prohibit commercially guided fishing along the Rio Grande from Chiflo Trail to Big Arsenic Trail to protect fishery resources
- Prohibit commercially guided fishing and all boating on the Ute Mountain segment from April 1 to May 31 to protect sensitive wildlife breeding areas
- Extend the West Rim trail north from the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge to Chiflo; close the segment between John Dunn Bridge and Chiflo from May 1 to July 31 to protect big game species
- Improve the Ute Mountain, East Rim, Lee, Chiflo, Sheep's Crossing, Miners, Red River, Pescado, Manby Springs, and Powerline trails, and river trails north and south of John Dunn Bridge
- Recreation sites will be designed or rebuilt to control erosion, particularly at sites used for river access
- Locate an east rim trail from the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge south to Taos Junction Bridge, in cooperation with the Taos Pueblo
- Prohibit parking/camping within 300 feet of trailheads; overnight use would not be prohibited at Raven and Powerline, or at trails originating in developed camp areas in Wild Rivers
- Close John Dunn Bridge recreation site to primitive camping; monitor conditions at other primitive camp areas to determine if mitigation is required to address resource issues
- Coordinate with private landowners, Taos County, and the adjacent neighborhood associations to determine a management strategy for the Manby (Stagecoach) Springs area

Renewable Energy

- Wind and solar development is excluded

Transportation and Access

Limited to designated routes: 17,330 acres

Forestry

- Fuelwood and timber sales will not be allowed unless such action would enhance watershed resources

Fish and Wildlife

- Work with NMDGF to introduce a population of river otter into the Upper Gorge
- Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of native fish and wildlife
- Augment or reintroduce native fish species in the Rio Grande, Red River, Rio Hondo, and Rio Pueblo de Taos and tributaries through stocking
- Employ mechanical removal methods to reduce non-native fish species in the Rio Grande and tributaries
- Construct cable grates on the mine entry at Black Rock Springs

and at all Poso Cave entrances to protect bats; the BLM will allow access only for scientific studies

- Special Status Species**
- Protect Southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat through implementation of the *Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Management Plan, 1998* and additional management strategies developed in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Vegetation/Soils**
- Manage river corridor to conserve or enhance riparian vegetation
 - Prevent degradation of aquatic habitat by restricting activities that disturb soil and vegetation in streams and within the 100 year floodplain
 - Actively manage the riparian areas to return them to full functioning condition, restore native plant species, and reduce the density of exotic vegetation and control their spread
- Visual Resources**
- Class I: 12,380 acres (land adjacent to the wild segment in the Upper Gorge)
Class II: 4,900 acres (primarily land in the Lower Gorge outside of developed recreation areas)
Class III: 50 acres (developed recreation areas)
- Water Resources**
- Secure minimum water rights in the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River area necessary to manage for the outstandingly remarkable values designated by Congress
 - Manage in-stream hydrologic processes to maximize aquatic and riparian habitat area, improve river conditions, and reduce excessive deposition or erosion
- Wildland Fire**
- Fire suppression will be limited to those methods least disturbing to soils and vegetation
- Other Designations**
- Land adjacent to the Upper Gorge will be managed as part of the Taos Plateau ACEC, and land adjacent to the Lower Gorge will be part of the Lower Gorge ACEC
- Activity Planning**
- Management guidelines are provided by the Rio Grande Corridor Plan (2000)

Sabinoso ACEC

Sabinoso ACEC (19,780 acres) contains relevant and important scenic and riparian values, and includes Sabinoso Wilderness.

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land by purchase or exchange (9,270 acres)• Acquire available state trust land by exchange (3,060 acres)
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way are excluded from the ACEC
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riparian areas will be unavailable to livestock grazing (approximately 15 acres)
Minerals	22,630 acres of mineral estate: Leasable: closed – 22,630 acres Locatable: withdrawn – 22,630 acres Salable: closed – 22,630 acres
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage ACEC as part of the Sabinoso SRMA
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded
Transportation and Access	Closed: 16,030 acres (designated wilderness) Limited to designated routes: 3,540 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire legal public access to the area
Vegetation/Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restrict activities that disturb soil and vegetation to reduce soil loss and water quality impacts• Limit vegetative manipulation to those actions that would improve wildlife habitat
Visual Resources	Class I: 19,780 acres
Lands with wilderness characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage land adjacent to the wilderness, and select acquired land, to preserve wilderness characteristics (3,540 acres)
Wildland Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited fire suppression tactics will be used when necessary to protect wilderness values

General

- Gather basic inventory data, such as wildlife, vegetation, and geology, and encourage research on the area's natural resources

Activity Planning

- A management plan will be prepared within five years of RMP approval
- Complete a wilderness management plan
- A fire use plan will be developed

Santa Fe Ranch ACEC

The Santa Fe Ranch ACEC (21,030 acres) is designated to include contiguous land around the Santa Fe Ranch/Diablo Canyon area to protect cultural resources, unique geological features (Diablo Canyon), visual resources (Diablo Canyon), wildlife habitat, and special status species. The ACEC will be managed as two zones, the Diablo Canyon/Buckman zone (710 acres) and the Ranch zone (20,320 acres).

Prescriptions

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Land Tenure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land by purchase or exchange (3,195 acres)• Acquire available state trust land by exchange (670 acres) |
| Land Use Authorizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A ¼ mile wide rights-of-way corridor along Buckman Road is designated• Rights-of-way will be considered on a case-by-case basis |
| Minerals | 23,150 acres of mineral estate:

Leasable: closed – 710 acres; controlled surface use – 20,360 acres
Locatable: withdrawn – 710 acres (Diablo Canyon)
Salable: closed – 23,150 acres |
| Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Diablo Canyon area will be managed under guidelines for the Diablo Canyon SRMA and the remainder of the ACEC under guidelines for the West Santa Fe ERMA |
| Renewable Energy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind energy development is excluded; solar energy development will be considered on a case-by-case basis |
| Transportation and Access | Closed: 480 acres (at Diablo Canyon)
Limited to designated routes: 20,550 acres <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The public land in the vicinity of Diablo Canyon will have one route designated for access to a parking area/trailhead; vehicle use of portions of the arroyo will be allowed for permitted uses (primarily filming), with timing restrictions for wildlife/raptor breeding• The area east of Buckman Road and south of Boondocks pasture will contain a medium density of routes used for motorized recreation; some reroutes are anticipated to be needed to protect cultural sites |
| Cultural Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct class III cultural resource inventory of all designated routes used for motorized recreation• Encourage archaeological research, including excavation (many of the known archaeological sites within the ACEC are located within small eroding arroyos, so it is important to extract data |

before the sites are washed away)

- Fish and Wildlife**
 - Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with NMDGF plans
- Visual Resources**
 - Class I: 480 acres (at Diablo Canyon)
 - Class II: 19,000 acres
 - Class III: 1,550 acres (along Buckman Road)
- Water Resources**
 - Protect ephemeral channels to maintain stable hydrologic processes and appropriate vegetative communities as measured by diversity and cover density
- Activity Planning**
 - Prepare an ACEC management plan
- Monitoring**
 - Monitor condition of archaeological sites within the ACEC, especially those located adjacent to motorized routes

Sombrillo ACEC

The Sombrillo ACEC (18,080 acres) contains significant paleontological resources found in the Tesuque Formation and Santa Fe Group, as well as significant visual and cultural resources. A clay and ash area within the ACEC (60 acres) is recognized as a traditional cultural property (TCP) for tribal purposes.

Prescriptions

Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rights-of-way will be considered on a case-by-case basis (18,080 acres)
Minerals	18,830 acres of mineral estate: Leasable: no surface occupancy – 18,190 acres Locatable: withdrawn – 60 acres (TCP) Salable: closed – 18,830 acres
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage under guidelines for La Puebla SRMA and Sombrillo ERMA; a few trailheads will be developed to support equestrian users and mountain bikers
Renewable Energy	Excluded from wind and solar energy development: 1,094 acres Avoidance of wind and solar energy development: 10,592 acres Excluded from wind, avoidance of solar energy development: 6,409 acres
Transportation and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closed: 180 acres• Limited to designated routes: 17,945 acres• One road following Arroyo Seco will remain open to public use, and some routes will be designated open in La Puebla SRMA to support motorized recreation; the remainder of the area will be limited to permitted users to support research, livestock grazing, and Native American gathering; a few non-motorized routes may be rerouted to mitigate impacts to paleontological or cultural resources or excessive erosion; a few non-motorized trail routes may be created to develop additional loop opportunities.• Two areas would be managed to support OHV staging activities• Reclaim all non-designated recreational trails
Paleontological	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate with the New Mexico Museum of Natural History to develop an inventory data base for the ACEC• A qualified paleontologist will be required to conduct a survey for paleontological resources prior to any surface-disturbing activities within areas where significant resources are known to occur and may be required to monitor during such activities

- Vegetation/Soils**
 - Restrict activities that disturb soil and vegetation to reduce soil loss and water quality impacts

- Visual Resources**
 - Class II: 17,965 acres
 - Class III: 115 acres
 - Discourage land use practices and development which adversely alters or eliminates the character of the badlands

- Water Resources**
 - Protect ephemeral channels to maintain stable hydrologic processes and appropriate vegetative communities as measured by diversity and cover density

- Wildland Fire**
 - Implement limited fire suppression strategies to assist in the protection of paleontological resources

- Activity Planning**
 - Prepare an ACEC management plan within five years of RMP approval

- Monitoring**
 - Monitor archaeological and paleontological site conditions using site stewards and BLM staff

Taos Plateau ACEC

The Taos Plateau ACEC (222,500 acres) contains relevant and important values associated with wildlife habitat, special status species, water quality and quantity, wetlands, and scenic quality. The ACEC consists of four management zones with different restrictions on use: North Unit (185,539 acres), Ute Mountain (18,370 acres), Wild Rivers (11,220 acres), and San Antonio (7,371 acres).

Prescriptions

Land Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acquire available private land by purchase or exchange (66,862 acres)• Acquire available state trust land by exchange
Land Use Authorizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wild Rivers, Ute Mountain, and San Antonio zones are excluded from rights-of-way (37,610 acres)• Rights-of-way will be considered in the North Unit on a case-by-case basis (185,539 acres)
Livestock Grazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grazing will be unavailable on 120 acres in the Rio San Antonio area, on 897 acres in the Wild Rivers zone, and on 14,404 acres in the Ute Mountain zone• Grazing will be limited and managed to ensure enhancement of critical elk and pronghorn winter range; no increase in the existing grazing preference will be permitted• Vacant allotments will be considered for management as reserve common allotments• Work cooperatively with permittees to study impacts of grazing on playas through comparison of grazed to ungrazed playas or areas within a playa
Minerals	<p>286,220 acres of mineral estate:</p> <p>Leasable: closed – 286,220 acres Locatable: withdrawn – Ute Mountain zone, San Antonio zone, and Wild Rivers zone (hardrock minerals under acquired lands on Ute Mountain are leasable and are closed to leasing); open – North Unit zone Salable: closed – 286,220 acres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all existing mineral extraction operations will be reclaimed upon completion of mining operations
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage as part of the Rio Grande Gorge SRMA or the Ute Mountain, San Antonio, and Taos Plateau ERMA
Renewable Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wind and solar development is excluded

Transportation and Access	<p>Closed: 25,741 acres (San Antonio and Ute Mountain zones) Limited to designated routes and/or season of use: 196,759 acres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request seasonal closure of Forest Road 1016
Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensively manage and monitor all fuelwood sales to improve habitat; all forestry activities will be conducted in a manner to improve and expand thermal cover conditions
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect cultural resources associated with playas, among others
Fish and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider areas for introduction, augmentation, or reestablishment of fish and wildlife species consistent with NMDGF plans • Wildlife habitat improvement projects will continue to be planned and implemented throughout the ACEC • Assess wildlife uses of and needs for playas • Survey playas for aquatic biota
Vegetation/Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibit modification of playa surfaces and adjacent uplands • Vegetation transects may be used to determine total available forage
Visual Resources	<p>Class I: 25,741 acres (San Antonio and Ute Mountain WSAs) Class II: 196,439 acres Class III: 320 acres</p>
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure water rights in perennial streams adequate to manage aquatic habitat and riparian vegetation • Survey playas for frequency of inundation and relationship to precipitation events
Lands with wilderness characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Ute Mountain to preserve wilderness characteristics (13,190 acres) • Manage the area east of San Antonio WSA to preserve wilderness characteristics (9,859 acres) • Remove the abandoned telephone line and poles that form the eastern boundary of the San Antonio WSA and rehab the associated road
Wildland Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use limited fire suppression tactics whenever possible, and use minimum impact suppression tactics within the San Antonio WSA

Activity Planning

- Revise the San Antonio/Pot Mountain HMP to incorporate RMP prescriptions
- Prepare an ACEC management plan within five years of RMP approval

Appendix B: Fluid Mineral Resource Management

This appendix contains and describes:

- 1) Fluid Mineral Leasing, Standard Lease Terms and Conditions, Fluid Mineral Lease;
- 2) Stipulations and Exceptions, Waivers, and Modifications to Lease Stipulations;
- 3) Table B-1. Taos Field Office Lease Stipulations; and
- 4) Table B-2. BLM Washington and New Mexico State Offices Lease Stipulations

Fluid Mineral Leasing

This portion of the appendix describes standard lease terms and conditions, lease stipulations, and exceptions, waivers, and modifications to lease stipulations for fluid minerals leasing. Federal fluid minerals are made available for leasing through the Minerals Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, and the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970. The Minerals Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, provides the Secretary of the Interior with authority to issue leases on land where the mineral rights are held by the Federal government. This authority has been delegated to the BLM State Directors. The BLM is required to determine (1) which land is suitable and available for leasing and subsequent development and (2) how the leased land will be managed.

On land where the surface is owned by an entity other than the Federal government (referred to as split estate), the BLM's environmental objectives and constraints apply equally to these areas; however, such constraints are developed at the permit stage in consultation with the surface owner. Surface owners are notified when the BLM proposes to lease the fluid minerals under their land. Through discussion, their input at the permit stage, allows the surface owner to participate in any onsite examinations, and may recommend alternate access routes and propose reclamation goals.

A lease is a contract that conveys to the lessee the exclusive right to develop and produce fluid minerals for a specific period of time under certain agreed-upon terms and conditions. The issuance of a lease grants to the lessee exclusive rights to as much of the leased land as is needed to conduct exploratory drilling and development operations in the leasehold subject to stipulations attached to the lease; restrictions derived from specific nondiscretionary statutes; and reasonable measures as may be required by the surface management agency to minimize adverse impacts on other resource values, land uses, or users.

Before leases can be issued by the BLM, regulations require: (1) verifying that leasing on specific land is consistent with the land use plan, (2) ensuring that conditions of surface occupancy are properly included (as stipulations) in resulting leases, and (3) determining that operations and development could be allowed somewhere on each proposed lease except where a stipulation would prohibit the surface occupancy.

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 the lease terms and conditions as defined on the appropriate 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). The forms include lease terms and conditions that address subjects such as bonding, rentals, royalties, inspections, and

safety. Of particular interest for this discussion is section 6, Conduct of Operations, of the lease form, which establishes the general and reasonable requirements for the protection of surface resources and is referred to as “standard lease terms and conditions.” The authorized officer has the right to relocate proposed facilities, control timing of operations, and impose other mitigation in accordance with sections 2 and 6 of the standard oil and gas lease terms. Each proposed site would be investigated and, if site-specific conditions warrant more restrictive protection, such protective measures could be imposed through conditions of approval at the time of an application for permit to drill. In addition, the standard lease terms and conditions specifically require that the lessee contact the surface owner/lessee prior to disturbing the surface. They also specify that the lessee may be required to complete inventories or special studies in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, and other applicable laws.

Lease Stipulations

Constraints in the form of stipulations are conditions included in a lease when environmental and planning analyses have demonstrated that additional and more stringent environmental protection is needed. Stipulations are provisions that modify the standard lease rights and are made part of the lease. The operator would be expected to comply with the stipulations that are attached to a lease. Land currently under lease would be affected by the stipulations applied when the lease was issued.

A **Lease Stipulation** is 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 the BLM’s regulatory authority to protect resources or resource values. Lease stipulations are developed through the land use planning process.

Three surface use stipulation types could be applied to fluid mineral leases: (1) timing limitation (TL), (2) controlled surface use (CSU), both considered moderate constraints, and (3) no surface occupancy (NSO), considered a major constraint.

1. Areas identified for TL stipulations would be closed to surface use including construction and developmental activities during the identified timeframes. The TL stipulation does not apply to operational and maintenance activities, including associated vehicle travel.
2. Areas identified as CSU would require proposals to be authorized according to the controls, or surface protection measures. Controls will be applicable to all surface use activities.
3. Areas identified as NSO would be unavailable to placement of surface facilities such as oil and gas wells and the construction of new roads.

Lease stipulations may have exception, waiver, and modification criteria documented in the land use plan and on the lease. Exceptions, waivers, and modifications provide an effective means of applying “adaptive management” techniques to oil and gas leases and associated permitting activities to meet changing circumstances. The criteria for approval of exceptions, waivers, and

modifications should be supported by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, either through the land use planning process or site-specific environmental review.

- An **exception** is a one-time exemption for a particular site within the leasehold; exceptions are determined on a case-by-case basis; the stipulation continues to apply to all other sites within the leasehold. An exception is a limited type of waiver.
- A **waiver** is a permanent exemption from a lease stipulation. The stipulation no longer applies anywhere within the leasehold.
- A **modification** is a change to the provisions of a lease stipulation, either temporarily or for the term of the lease. Depending on the specific modification, the stipulation may or may not apply to all sites within the leasehold to which the restrictive criteria are applied.

In addition to lease stipulations, the BLM may apply certain conditions to specific exploration or development actions on a fluid mineral lease. A **condition of approval** means a site-specific and enforceable requirement included in an approved Application for Permit to Drill (APD) or Sundry Notice that may limit or amend the specific actions proposed by the operator. Conditions of approval minimize, mitigate, or prevent impacts to resource values or other uses of public land and are developed through site-specific NEPA analysis.

A number of new stipulations for fluid minerals leasing are proposed for specific areas. The stipulations for leasing are listed below and presented in Table B-1 by grouping the timing limitation, controlled surface use, and no surface occupancy. The table describes specific criteria of each stipulation, the period in which it applies, the area involved, and whether an exception, modification, or waiver would apply. Also, note that stipulations TAFO-CSU-W3 through TAFO-CSU-W7 also contain elements of TLs.

Taos Field Office Lease Stipulations:

TAFO-TL-W1 – Protection of Wildlife Resources
TAFO-CSU-RIP – Protection of Riparian and Aquatic Habitat
TAFO-CSU-S – Protection of Slopes and Soils
TAFO-CSU-W1 – Protection of Wildlife Resources
TAFO-CSU-W2 – Protection of Wildlife Resources
TAFO-CSU-W3 – Protection of Wildlife Resources
TAFO-CSU-W4 – Protection of Raptor Habitat
TAFO-CSU-W5 – Protection of Gray Vireo Habitat
TAFO-CSU-W6 – Protection of Mountain Plover Habitat
TAFO-CSU-W7 – Protection of Prairie Dog Habitat
TAFO-CSU-W8 – Protection of Cave-Roosting Bat Habitat
TAFO-CSU-REC – Protection of Special Recreation Management Areas
TAFO-CSU-V – Protection of Visual Resources
TAFO-CSU-P – Protection of Significant Paleontological Resources
TAFO-NSO-RIP – Protection of Riparian and Aquatic Areas
TAFO-NSO-ACEC – Protection of Relevant and Important Values
TAFO-NSO-NHT – Protection of National Historic Trails
TAFO-NSO-REC – Protection of Recreation Area
TAFO-NSO-CON – Protection and Preservation of Fresh Water Resources: Conchas Lake

In addition to the field office-specific stipulations listed above, stipulations provided by the BLM's Washington Office and New Mexico State Office may also apply depending on the location of the lease and other potential circumstances. These stipulations are listed below and presented in Table B-2.

BLM Washington and New Mexico State Offices Lease Stipulations:

- WO-BOR-7: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation
- WO-ESA-7: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation
- WO-NHPA: Cultural Resource and Tribal Consultation
- NM-4-ROW: Leases Subject of a Highway Material Site Right-of-way
- NM-6-NSO: Continental Divide Trail
- NM-8-LN: Protection of Coal Resources
- NM-9-NSO: Pooling Purposes Only
- NM-10: Federal Resource Drainage
- NM-11-LN: Protection of Special Cultural Resources
- NM-12-NSO: Occupied Structures or Dwellings
- PLS-1: Unleased Federal Minerals Subject to Drainage

Table B-1. Lease stipulations—Taos Field Office

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
Moderate Constraint - Timing Limitation			
<p>TFO-TL-W1 – Protection of Wildlife Resources</p> <p>All or portions of the lease area contain key wildlife habitat features (i.e., winter and spring range, migratory corridors, or key terrestrial/aquatic habitat) or wildlife habitat improvement projects, which require special protection to prevent further degradation or damage. Big game winter and spring ranges, bighorn sheep lambing range and habitat, and pronghorn fawning areas will be closed seasonally. This restriction will apply to drilling and construction activities, and not operational and maintenance activities and their associated vehicular access.</p>	<p>Big game winter and spring range: January 1 to April 30</p> <p>Bighorn sheep calving range and habitat: May 1 to June 30</p> <p>Pronghorn fawning areas: May 1 to July 15</p>	<p>Big game winter and spring ranges, bighorn sheep calving range and habitat, and pronghorn fawning areas</p>	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
Moderate Constraint - Controlled Surface Use			
<p>TFO-CSU-RIP – Protection of Riparian and Aquatic Habitat</p> <p>Noise producing activities which exceed a noise level of 75 A-weighted decibels (75dbA), measured at the perimeter of the 400 meter protective spatial buffer will not be allowed within 400 meters of riparian areas (springs, seeps, tanks, rivers, streams, playas, canyon bottoms, and floodplains). A more restrictive spatial buffer may be applied where the 400-meter spatial buffer has been documented to not provide adequate protection. Appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions will be made for the maintenance and operations of producing oil and gas wells.</p>		<p>Within 400 meters of riparian and aquatic habitat</p>	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: If a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer determines that the topographical features allow for the auditory or visual screening sufficient to protect the riparian or aquatic habitat.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>TFO-CSU-S – Protection of Slopes and Soils</p> <p>All or portions of the lease area contain slopes over 30 percent and/or fragile soils that require special protection to prevent further resource degradation. Surface disturbance will not be allowed on slopes over 30 percent. Occupancy upon areas containing fragile soils will be evaluated and special measures applied to prevent erosion of fragile soils.</p>		Slopes greater than 30 percent and fragile soils	<p>Exception: Exceptions may be made if the operator can show that operations can be conducted without adversely affecting the protected resources.</p> <p>Modification: None.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-W1 – Protection of Wildlife Resources</p> <p>In big game winter and spring ranges and migratory corridors, road densities will be no more than 0.5 miles per square mile to reduce disturbance to these species during critical periods.</p>		Big game winter and spring ranges	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-W2 – Protection of Wildlife Resources</p> <p>Applications for surface-disturbing or long-term noise producing activities, which exceed a noise level of 75dbA at the edge of the well pad, will be authorized only when lessee/operator demonstrates that the area is essential for operations and when the lessee/operator submits a satisfactory surface use and operations plan that provides protection for the key wildlife habitat features (i.e., winter and spring range, migratory corridors, or key terrestrial/aquatic habitat). If the 75dbA noise level is determined to not provide adequate protection from the auditory impact created by lease operations, a stricter level shall be applied as a condition</p>		Big game winter and spring ranges	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>of approval for lease operations. The BLM authorized officer will work with the lease holder on a case-by-case basis to achieve an acceptable level of noise mitigation.</p>			
<p>TFO-CSU-W3 – Protection of Wildlife Resources</p> <p>Surface-disturbing, or noise producing activities which exceed a noise level of 75dbA, measured at the perimeter of a 400 meter protective spatial buffer from wildlife habitat improvement projects, will not be allowed within the 400 meter protective spatial buffer of an existing or planned wildlife habitat improvement project(s). If the 75dbA noise level is determined to not provide adequate protection from the auditory impact created by lease operations, a stricter level shall be applied as a condition of approval for lease operations. A more restrictive spatial buffer may be applied where the 400 meter spatial buffer has been documented to not provide adequate protection. Use and occupancy within the 400 meter spatial buffer will be authorized only when lessee/operator demonstrates that the area is essential for operations and when the lessee/operator submits a satisfactory surface use and operations plan, which adequately protects resources of concern.</p>		<p>Big game winter and spring ranges</p>	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-W4 – Protection of Raptor Habitat</p> <p>Prior to approval of an APD and other related surface disturbing activities, the project area will be surveyed for raptor</p>	<p>Species-specific timing limitations are included in the stipulation language</p>	<p>Raptor habitat</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines that the action, with appropriate mitigation, would not impair the function or utility of the site for current or subsequent use by these species. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, the BLM, state wildlife agency, and where necessary, other affected</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>nests. Surveys will be conducted following accepted protocols by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. All raptor nests and bald eagle roosting sites will be avoided by the distances and seasonal periods listed below.</p> <p><i>Distance:</i></p> <p>Bald eagle: 0.5-1.0 miles (January 1 – August 31) Golden eagle: 0.5 mile (January 1 – August 31) Peregrine falcon: 1.0 mile (February 1 – August 31) Prairie falcon: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31) Osprey: 0.25 mile (April 1 – August 31) Cooper’s hawk: 0.25 (March 15 – August 31) Northern goshawk: 0.5 mile (March 1 – July 31) Red-tailed hawk: 0.125 mile (February 1 – July 15) Ferruginous hawk: 1.0 mile (February 1 – July 15) All other raptor species: 0.25 mile (March 1 - June 30)</p> <p>Long-duration surface use activities will not be allowed within the species-specific or all other raptor species’ spatial buffer zones of active nests or roosts listed above. Short-duration activities will be avoided within the species-specific or all other raptor species’ spatial buffer zones during the dates listed above. For this stipulation, a short-duration activity is defined as an activity, which would begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to initiation of a given</p>			<p>interests, negotiate compensation or mitigation that satisfactorily offsets anticipated impacts to raptor activities and/or their habitat.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: Waivers may be considered by the authorized officer if the following situations apply: relative resource values change, the lessee demonstrates that the operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts, or if the disturbance or impacts associated with the proposed activity are of short duration, and would not result in permanent adverse impacts to the landscape or degrade wildlife habitat.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>breeding season, and a long-duration activity is defined as an activity which would continue into or beyond a given nesting/breeding season. An active raptor nest is defined as any nest that has been occupied in the last seven years. A nest will be determined active or inactive by a qualified wildlife biologist approved by the authorized officer.</p>			
<p>TFO-CSU-W5 – Protection of Gray Vireo Habitat</p> <p>Prior to approval of an APD and other related surface disturbing activities, the project area will be surveyed for gray vireo habitat. Surveys will be conducted following accepted protocols by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. All gray vireo nesting sites will be avoided by the distance and seasonal period listed below.</p> <p><i>Distance:</i></p> <p>Gray vireo: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31)</p> <p>Long-duration surface use activities will not be allowed within the species-specific spatial buffer zone of active nests above. Short-duration activities will be avoided within the species-specific spatial buffer zones during the dates listed above. For this stipulation, a short-duration activity is defined as an activity, which would begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to initiation of a given breeding season, and a long-duration activity is defined as an activity which would continue into or beyond a given nesting/breeding season. A nest will be determined active or inactive by a qualified wildlife biologist</p>	<p>Species-specific timing limitations are included in the stipulation language</p>	<p>Gray vireo habitat</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines that the action, with appropriate mitigation, would not impair the function or utility of the site for current or subsequent use by these species. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, the BLM, state wildlife agency, and where necessary, other affected interests, negotiate compensation or mitigation that satisfactorily offsets anticipated impacts to gray vireo activities and/or habitat.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: Waivers may be considered by the authorized officer if the following situations apply: relative resource values change, the lessee demonstrates that the operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts, or if the disturbance or impacts associated with the proposed activity are of short duration, and would not result in permanent adverse impacts to the landscape or degrade wildlife habitat.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>approved by the authorized officer.</p> <p>TFO-CSU-W6 – Protection of Mountain Plover Habitat</p> <p>Prior to approval of an APD and other related surface disturbing activities, the project area will be surveyed for mountain plover habitat. Surveys will be conducted following accepted protocols by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. All mountain plover nesting sites will be avoided by the distance and seasonal period listed below.</p> <p><i>Distance:</i></p> <p>Mountain plover: 1.0 mile (March 1 – August 1)</p> <p>Long-duration surface use activities will not be allowed within the species-specific spatial buffer zone of active nests above. Short-duration activities will be avoided within the species-specific spatial buffer zones during the dates listed above. For this stipulation, a short-duration activity is defined as an activity, which would begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to initiation of a given breeding season, and a long-duration activity is defined as an activity which would continue into or beyond a given nesting/breeding season. A nest will be determined active or inactive by a qualified wildlife biologist approved by the authorized officer.</p>	<p>Species-specific timing limitations are included in the stipulation language</p>	<p>Mountain plover habitat</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines that the action, with appropriate mitigation, would not impair the function or utility of the site for current or subsequent use by these species. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, the BLM, state wildlife agency, and where necessary, other affected interests, negotiate compensation or mitigation that satisfactorily offsets anticipated impacts to mountain plover activities and/or habitat.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: Waivers may be considered by the authorized officer if the following situations apply: relative resource values change, the lessee demonstrates that the operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts, or if the disturbance or impacts associated with the proposed activity are of short duration, and would not result in permanent adverse impacts to the landscape or degrade wildlife habitat.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-W7 – Protection of Prairie Dog Habitat</p> <p>Prior to approval of an APD and other related surface disturbing activities, the project area will be surveyed for prairie dog colonies. Surveys will be conducted</p>	<p>Species-specific timing limitations are included in the stipulation language</p>	<p>Prairie dog habitat</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines that the action, with appropriate mitigation, would not impair the function or utility of the site for current or subsequent use by these species. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, the BLM, state wildlife agency, and where necessary, other affected</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>following accepted protocols by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. All prairie dog towns will be avoided by the distances and seasonal periods listed below.</p> <p><i>Distance:</i></p> <p>Gunnison Prairie Dog: 0.25 mile (April 1-September 15)</p> <p>Black Tailed Prairie Dog: 0.25 mile (April 1-September 15)</p> <p>Long-duration surface use activities will not be allowed within the species-specific spatial buffer zone of occupied prairie dog towns listed above. Short-duration activities will be avoided within the species-specific spatial buffer zones during the dates listed above.</p>			<p>interests, negotiate compensation or mitigation that satisfactorily offsets anticipated impacts to prairie dog activities and/or habitat.</p> <p>Modification: Based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, appropriate modifications to the imposed restrictions may be made as new data becomes available.</p> <p>Waiver: Waivers may be considered by the authorized officer if the following situations apply: relative resource values change, the lessee demonstrates that the operations can be conducted without causing unacceptable impacts, or if the disturbance or impacts associated with the proposed activity are of short duration, and would not result in permanent adverse impacts to the landscape or degrade wildlife habitat.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-W8 – Protection of Cave-Roosting Bat Habitat</p> <p>Surface disturbance and/or occupancy are prohibited in areas within 200 meters of features found to support significant bat populations. This restriction would apply to drilling and construction activities, and not operational and maintenance activities and their associated vehicular access.</p>		<p>Within 200 meters of known cave features</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines that the action, as proposed or conditioned, would not impair the function or utility of the site for current or subsequent use by bats, including daytime or nighttime roosting activities. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, the BLM, state wildlife agency, and where necessary, other affected interests, negotiate compensation or mitigation that satisfactorily offsets anticipated impacts to bat breeding activities and/or habitat.</p> <p>Modification: None.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-REC – Protection of SRMAs</p> <p>In SRMAs not closed or subject to no surface occupancy restrictions, surface disturbances may be moved greater than 200 meters to avoid conflict with recreation activities, facilities, or other special</p>		<p>Special recreation management areas</p>	<p>Exception: The authorized officer may grant an exception on a case-by-case basis considering the proposed activity or disturbance, possible mitigation, and the specific scenic, natural, recreational, and cultural values present, following site-specific analysis.</p> <p>Modification: None.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
recreation values.			Waiver: None.
<p>TFO-CSU-V– Protection of Visual Resources</p> <p>To minimize visual impacts to the characteristic landscape, surface disturbing activities would be subject to the following measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Painting of all facilities in accordance with Notice to Lessees NM-87-1 “Painting of Oil Field Facilities.” 2) Proposed disturbances may be moved distances greater than 200 meters. 3) Low-profile facilities may be required to reduce visual impacts. 4) Visual simulations may be required as part of the surface use plan for lease operations in sensitive viewsheds which may include, along scenic highways, trails, and back country byways. 		All areas subject to controlled surface use restrictions	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: None.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-CSU-P – Protection of Significant Paleontological Resources</p> <p>A qualified paleontologist must conduct a survey prior to any surface-disturbing activities within areas where significant paleontological resources are known to occur and may be required to be present when surface disturbing activities are occurring. All proposed surface-disturbing activities must be located to avoid and/or protect the paleontological resources present.</p>		Areas where significant paleontological resources are known to occur	<p>Exception: None.</p> <p>Modification: None.</p> <p>Waiver: None.</p>
Major Constraint - No Surface Occupancy			
TFO-NSO-RIP – Protection of Riparian and		Within 200 meters of	Exception: An exception may be granted if no other

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
<p>Aquatic Areas</p> <p>Surface waters, riparian-wetland areas, and floodplains will have no surface occupancy (NSO) within 200 meters of the outer edge of 100-year floodplains or potential riparian-wetland, as identified by hydrology, hydric soils, or vegetation. Riparian-wetland and aquatic areas include perennial, ephemeral, or intermittent streams; springs, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, and playas. Protected areas will be identified by surface hydrology or a combination of hydrology, hydric soils and hydric vegetation. Floodplains will be identified by geomorphic indicators. The BLM authorized officer has final authority on identification of these protected areas.</p>		<p>the outer edge of 100-year floodplains or potential riparian-wetland</p>	<p>practical alternative exists and the action could be fully mitigated, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer.</p> <p>Modification: None. Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-NSO-ACEC – Protection of Relevant and Important Values</p> <p>Certain areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) containing relevant and important values are subject to no surface occupancy.</p>		<p>All or portions of the following ACECs are subject to no surface occupancy:</p> <p>La Cienega Copper Hill Sombrillo Pueblos</p>	<p>Exception: None. Modification: None. Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-NSO-NHT – Protection of National Historic Trails</p> <p>No surface occupancy is allowed within 0.5 mile of the Old Spanish or El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trails.</p>		<p>Old Spanish National Historic Trail El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail</p>	<p>Exception: An exception may be granted, based on a site-specific evaluation by the authorized officer, if no other practical alternative exists and the action could be fully mitigated or the action would have no affect on the historic landscape of the trail.</p> <p>Modification: None. Waiver: None.</p>
<p>TFO-NSO-REC – Protection of Recreation Area</p> <p>No surface occupancy is allowed within the</p>		<p>Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area</p>	<p>Exception: None. Modification: None. Waiver: None.</p>

Stipulation	Period	Area	Exception, Modification, Waiver
Santa Cruz Lake Recreation Area.			
TFO-NSO-CON – Protection and Preservation of Fresh Water Resources All drilling sites must be located above elevation 4,218 feet. No surface occupancy is allowed on land at or below that elevation. All drilling sites and any production facilities must be located a minimum of 200 meters from the high water line of the lake. It is intended that these restricted lands be developed by directional drilling. Before surface disturbing operations are commenced, the lessee or lease operator must prepare, and submit a copy to the authorized officer of the Bureau of Land Management, a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan as described in Title 40 CFR.		Conchas Lake Area: Areas below elevation of 4,218 feet and/or 200 meters of high water line of lake	Exception: None. Modification: None. Waiver: None.

Table B-2. Lease stipulations—BLM Washington and New Mexico State Offices

Stipulation	Description
WO-BOR-7: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation	<p>The lease area may now or hereafter contain plants, animals or their habitats determined to be threatened, endangered, or other special status species. BLM may recommend modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that will contribute to a need to list such a species or their habitat. BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 1531 <i>et seq.</i>, including completion of any required procedure for conference or consultation.</p> <p>The lands encompassed by this lease are managed by the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation and contain riparian and aquatic habitat that may be suitable for special status species. No surface disturbing activities will be authorized on this lease unless and until a Biological Evaluation has been completed that meets requirements of the U. S.</p>

Stipulation	Description
	Fish and Wildlife Service. BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat.
WO-ESA-7: Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation	The lease area may now or hereafter contain plants, animals, or their habitats determined to be threatened, endangered, or other special status species. BLM may recommend modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that will contribute to a need to list such a species or their habitat. BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat. BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the Endangered Species Act as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 1531 <u>et seq.</u> , including completion of any required procedure for conference or consultation.
WO-NHPA: Cultural Resource and Tribal Consultation	This lease may be found to contain historic properties and/or resources protected under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Executive Order 13007, or other statutes and executive orders. The BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activities that may affect any such properties or resources until it completes its obligations (e.g., State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and tribal consultation) under applicable requirements of the NHPA and other authorities. The BLM may require modification to exploration or development proposals to protect such properties, or disapprove any activity that is likely to result in adverse effects that cannot be successfully avoided, minimized, or mitigated.
NM-4-ROW: Leases Subject of a Highway Material Site Right-of-way	<p>The lessee/operator shall conduct operations in conformity with the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The New Mexico State Highway Department will have unrestricted rights of ingress and egress to the right-of way. 2. The lessee/operator will not conflict with the right of the New Mexico State Highway Department to remove any road-building materials from the right-of-way. 3. The New Mexico State Highway Department reserves the right to set up, operate, and maintain such facilities as are reasonable to expedite the removal, production, and use of the materials; and the lessee shall not interfere with the Highway Department's use of the property for such purposes. 4. The lessee/operator will make no excavations and erect no structures on the right-of-way that might be adverse to the use and interest of the land by the New Mexico State Highway Department.

Stipulation	Description
NM-6-NSO: Continental Divide Trail	<p>No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within 1000 feet of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail treadway. This distance may be modified when specifically approved in writing by the Bureau of Land Management at the address shown below:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Address: Taos Field Office 226 Cruz Alta Road Taos, NM 87571 (575) 758-8851</p>
NM-8-LN: Protection of Coal Resources	<p>Federal coal resources exist on this lease. Operations authorized by this lease may be altered or modified by the authorized officer (at the address shown below) in order to conserve and protect the mineral resources and provide for simultaneous operations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Address: Taos Field Office 226 Cruz Alta Road Taos, NM 87571 (575) 758-8851</p>
NM-9-NSO: Pooling Purposes Only	<p>No surface occupancy or use is allowed on the lease. The purpose of this lease is solely for participation in a unit or for pooling purposes.</p>
NM-10: Federal Resource Drainage	<p>All or part of the lands contained in this lease are subject to drainage by well(s) located adjacent to this lease. The lessee shall be required within 6 months of lease issuance to submit to the AO plans for protecting the lease from drainage. Compensatory royalty will be assessed effective the expiration of this 6-month period if no plan is submitted. The plan must include either an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) a protective well, or an application to communitize the lease so that it is allocated production from a protective well off the lease. Either of these options may include obtaining a variance to State-spacing for the area. In lieu of this plan, the lessee shall be required to demonstrate that a protective well would have little or no chance of encountering oil and gas in quantities sufficient to pay in excess the costs of protecting the lease from drainage or an acceptable justification why a protective well would be uneconomical, the lessee shall be obligated to pay compensatory royalty to the Minerals Management Service at a rate to be determined by the AO.</p>
NM-11-LN: Protection of Special Cultural Resources	<p>All development activities proposed under the authority of this lease are subject to compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and Executive Order 13007. The lease area may contain historic properties, traditional cultural properties (TCP's), and/or sacred sites currently unknown to the BLM that were not identified in the Resource Management Plan or during the lease parcel review process. Depending on the nature of the lease</p>

Stipulation	Description
	<p>developments being proposed and the cultural resources potentially affected, compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 13007 could require intensive cultural resource inventories, Native American consultation, and mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects—the costs for which will be borne by the lessee. The BLM may require modifications to or disapprove proposed activities that are likely to adversely affect TCP's or sacred sites for which no mitigation measures are possible. This could result in extended time frames for processing authorizations for development activities, as well as changes in the ways in which developments are implemented.</p>
<p>NM-12-NSO: Occupied Structures or Dwellings</p>	<p>All or a portion of the lease contains dwellings or structures occupied by one or more persons. No Surface Occupancy is allowed on the portion of the lease described below.</p> <p><u>For the Purpose of:</u> Lessening the impacts caused by mineral resource development on a place of residence and the occupants within.</p> <p><u>No Surface Occupancy on the lands described below:</u></p> <p><u>Waiver:</u> This No Surface Occupancy restriction may be waived by the BLM Authorized Officer if written consent of such waiver is received from the owner/occupant of the structure or dwelling.</p>
<p>PLS-1: Unleased Federal Minerals Subject to Drainage</p>	<p>All or part of the lands contained in this (tract) (lease) may be subject to drainage in the _____ formation(s) by well(s) _____ located adjacent to this (tract) (lease) in section(s) _____, T. ____, R. ____, _____ M., _____ County, _____.</p> <p>The lessee shall, within 6 months of lease issuance, submit for approval by the authorized officer plans for protecting the lease from drainage. If no plan(s) is submitted, compensatory royalty will be assessed effective the first day following the expiration of this 6-month period and shall continue until a protective well has been drilled and placed in continued production status or until the offending well(s) ceases production, whichever occurs first.</p> <p>The plan must include either an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) for the necessary protective well(s) or inclusion to an agreement for the affected portion(s) of the lease. Any agreement devised should provide for an appropriate share of the production from the offending well(s) to be allocated to the lease. In lieu of this, the lessee must submit engineering, geologic, and economic data to demonstrate to the authorized officer's satisfaction that no drainage has or is occurring and/or that a protective well would have little or no change of encountering oil or gas in quantities sufficient to yield a reasonable rate of return in excess of the costs of drilling,</p>

Stipulation	Description
	<p>completing, and operating the well.</p> <p>In the absence of either an acceptable plan for protecting the lease from drainage by drilling or by entering into an agreement or an acceptable justification as to why drainage is not occurring or that a protective well would be uneconomical, the lessee shall be obligated to pay compensatory royalty based on the drainage factor(s) determined by the authorized officer.</p>

Appendix C: Best Management Practices

Best management practices (BMPs) are land and resource management techniques that may be applied to various authorizations, designed to maximize beneficial results and minimize negative impacts of management actions. Listed below are those measures that are generally applicable to actions authorized in the Taos Field Office planning area. A determination as to their applicability to specific projects, permits, and other actions and authorizations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

BMPs are defined as methods, measures, or practices selected on the basis of site-specific conditions to provide the most effective, environmentally sound, and economically feasible means of managing an activity and mitigating its impacts. Interdisciplinary, site-specific analysis is necessary to determine which management practices would be necessary to meet specific goals and objectives. BMPs include, but are not limited to, structural and nonstructural controls, operations, and maintenance procedures. BMPs can be applied before, during, and after pollution-producing or surface-disturbing activities to reduce or eliminate the introduction of pollutants into receiving waters (40 Code of Federal Regulation 130.2(m), Environmental Protection Agency Water Quality Standards Regulation) or to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of other resources.

BMPs are identified through the National Environmental Policy Act process with interdisciplinary team involvement. Because the control of nonpoint sources of pollution and mitigation of impacts is an evolving process, continual refinement of BMP designs are necessary. This process can be described in five steps: (1) selection of design of a specific BMP, (2) application of BMP, (3) monitoring, (4) evaluation, and (5) feedback. Data gathered through monitoring is evaluated and used to identify changes needed in BMP design, application, or in the monitoring program. Adjustments to BMPs will be made as necessary.

BMPs described in this appendix are a compilation of existing policies and guidelines and commonly employed practices designed to assist in achieving the objectives for maintaining or minimizing water quality degradation from nonpoint sources and loss of soil productivity, providing guidelines for aesthetic conditions within watersheds, and mitigating impacts to soil, vegetation, or wildlife habitat from surface disturbing activities. BMPs are selected and implemented as necessary, based on site-specific conditions, to meet a variety of resource objectives for specific management actions. Therefore, this document does not provide an exhaustive list of BMPs, as additional BMPs or modifications may be identified to minimize the potential for negative impacts when evaluating site-specific management actions through an interdisciplinary process.

Each of the following BMPs are a part of the coordinated development of this resource management plan and may be updated as new information becomes available to ensure goals and objectives of the Taos RMP are met and to conform to changes in Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regulations, policy, direction, or new scientific information. Applicants also may suggest alternate procedures that could accomplish the same result. These guidelines will apply, where appropriate, to all use authorizations, including BLM-initiated projects. Any BMP listed may be used in any program wherever it may be effective.

Road Design and Maintenance

- (1) Design roads to minimize total disturbance, to conform to topography, and to minimize disruption of natural drainage patterns.
- (2) Base road design criteria and standards on road management objectives such as traffic requirements of the proposed activity and the overall transportation objectives, and minimizing damage to the environment.
- (3) Locate roads on stable terrain such as ridge tops, natural benches, and flatter transitional slopes near ridges and valley bottoms and moderate side slopes and away from slumps, slide prone areas, concave slopes, clay beds, and where rock layers dip parallel to the slope. Locate roads on well drained soil types; avoid wet areas.
- (4) Construct cut and fill slopes to be approximately 3(h):1(v) or flatter where feasible. Locate roads to minimize heights of cut banks. Avoid high, steeply sloping cut banks in highly fractured bedrock.
- (5) Avoid head walls, mid slope locations on steep, unstable slopes, fragile soils, seeps, old landslides, side slopes in excess of 70 percent, and areas where the geological bedding planes or weathering surfaces are inclined with the slope. Implement extra mitigation measures when these areas cannot be avoided.
- (6) Construct roads for surface drainage by using out slopes, crowns, grade changes, drain dips, water bars and/or in-sloping to ditches as appropriate.
- (7) Sloping the road base to the outside edge for surface drainage is normally recommended for local spurs or minor collector roads where traffic volume is low and lower traffic speeds are anticipated. This is also recommended in situations where long intervals between maintenance will occur and where minimum excavation is wanted. Out-sloping is not recommended on steep slopes. Sloping the road base to the inside edge is an acceptable practice on roads with steep side slopes and where the underlying soil formation is very rocky and not subject to appreciable erosion or failure.
- (8) Crowning and ditching are recommended for arterial and collector roads where traffic volume, speed, intensity, and user comfort are considerations. Recommended gradients range from 0 to 15 percent where crowning and ditching may be applied, as long as adequate drainage away from the road surface and ditch lines is maintained.
- (9) Minimize excavation when constructing roads through the use of balanced earthwork, narrowing road widths, and end hauling where side slopes are between 50 and 70 percent.
- (10) If possible, construct roads when soils are dry and not frozen. When soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of 3 inches, BLM-authorized activities should be limited or cease unless otherwise approved by the authorized officer.
- (11) Consider improving inadequately surfaced roads that are to be left open to public traffic during wet weather with gravel or pavement to minimize sediment production and maximize safety.

- (12) Retain vegetation on cut slopes unless it poses a safety hazard or restricts maintenance activities. Roadside brushing of vegetation should be done in a way that prevents disturbance to root systems and visual intrusions (i.e., avoid using excavators for brushing).
- (13) Retain adequate vegetation between roads and streams to filter runoff caused by roads.
- (14) Avoid riparian/wetland areas where feasible; locate in these areas only if the roads do not interfere with the attainment of proper functioning conditions and riparian management objectives.
- (15) Minimize the number of unimproved stream crossings. When a culvert or bridge is not feasible, locate drive-through (low water crossings) on stable rock portions of the drainage channel. Harden crossings with the addition of rock and gravel, if necessary. Use angular rock if available.
- (16) Locate roads and limit activities of mechanized equipment within stream channels to minimize their influence on riparian areas. When stream crossing is necessary, design the approach and crossing perpendicular to the channel where practical. Locate the crossing where the channel is well defined, unobstructed, and straight.
- (17) Avoid placing fill material in a floodplain unless the material is large enough to remain in place during flood events.
- (18) Use drainage dips instead of culverts on roads where gradients would not present a safety issue. Locate drainage dips in such a way that water would not accumulate, or where outside berms prevent drainage from the roadway. Locate and design drainage dips immediately upgrade of stream crossings and provide buffer areas and catchment basins to prevent sediment from entering the stream.
- (19) Construct catchment basins, brush windrows, and culverts in a way to minimize sediment transport from road surfaces to stream channels. Install culverts in natural drainage channels in a way to conform with the natural streambed gradients to outlets that discharge onto rocky or hardened protected areas.
- (20) Design and locate water crossing structures in natural drainage channels to accommodate adequate fish passage, provide for minimum impacts to water quality, and capable of handling a 100-year event for runoff and floodwaters.
- (21) Use culverts that pass, at a minimum, a 50-year storm event and/or have a minimum diameter of 24 inches for permanent stream crossings and a minimum diameter of 18 inches for road cross drains.
- (22) Replace undersized culverts and repair or replace damaged culverts and downspouts. Provide energy dissipaters at culvert outlets or drainage dips.
- (23) Locate culverts or drainage dips in such a manner as to avoid discharge onto unstable terrain such as head walls or slumps. Provide adequate spacing to avoid accumulation of water in ditches or road surfaces. Culverts should be placed on solid ground to avoid road failures.
- (24) Proper sized aggregate and riprap should be used during culvert construction. Place riprap at culvert entrance to streamline water flow and reduce erosion.

- (25) Establish adapted vegetation on all cuts and fill immediately following road construction and maintenance.
- (26) Remove berms from the down-slope side of roads, consistent with safety considerations.
- (27) Leave abandoned roads in a condition that provides adequate drainage without further maintenance. Close abandoned roads to traffic. Physically obstruct the road with gates, large berms, trenches, logs, stumps, or rock boulders as necessary to accomplish permanent closure.
- (28) Abandon and rehabilitate roads no longer needed. Leave these roads in a condition that provides adequate drainage. Remove culverts.
- (29) When plowing snow for winter use of roads, provide breaks in snow berms to allow for road drainage. Avoid plowing snow into streams. Plow snow only on existing roads.
- (30) Maintenance should be performed to conserve existing surface material, retain the original crowned or out-sloped, self-draining cross sections, prevent or remove rutting berms (except those designed for slope protection), and other irregularities that retard normal surface runoff. Avoid wasting loose ditch or surface material over the shoulder where it can cause stream sedimentation or weaken slump-prone areas. Avoid undercutting back slopes.
- (31) Do not disturb the toe of cut slopes while pulling ditches or grading roads. Avoid side casting road material into streams.
- (32) Grade roads only as necessary. Maintain drain dips, water bars, road crown, in-sloping and out-sloping as appropriate, during road maintenance.
- (33) Maintain roads in special management areas according to special management area guidance. Generally, retain roads within existing disturbed areas and side cast material away from the special management area.
- (34) When landslides occur, save all soil and material usable for reclamation or stockpile for future reclamation needs. Avoid side casting of slide material where it can damage, overload, and saturate embankments, or flow into down-slope drainage courses. Reestablish vegetation as needed in areas where vegetation has been destroyed due to side casting.
- (35) Strip and stockpile topsoil ahead of construction of new roads, if feasible. Reapply soil to cut and fill slopes prior to re-vegetation.

Surface-Disturbing Activities

- (1) Special design and reclamation measures may be required to protect scenic and natural landscape values. This may include transplanting trees and shrubs, mulching and fertilizing disturbed areas, removal of surfacing material, imprinting, irrigation, use of low profile permanent facilities, and painting to minimize visual contrasts. Surface-disturbing activities may be moved to avoid sensitive areas or to reduce the visual effects of the proposal.
- (2) Above ground facilities requiring painting should be designed to blend in with the surrounding environment.
- (3) Surface disturbance will be restricted in areas that have special topographic (steep or broken terrain and/or benches) and soil concerns in order to reduce impacts caused by soil erosion and habitat disturbance. Development in these areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis and

will contain site-specific mitigation designed to prevent increased sediment from being transported into drainages and to prevent fragmentation of areas determined to provide important wildlife habitat.

(4) In areas that allow for off-road travel, minimize the off-road impact of large vehicles. Use wide, flat-tread, balloon tires (especially on seismic thumper trucks) where possible. Use all-terrain vehicles rather than large vehicles where possible.

(5) Only excavate topsoil and subsoil where it is absolutely necessary. Consider brush-beating, mowing, and/or parking on vegetation for surface disturbing activities.

(6) Disturbed areas should be contoured to blend with the natural topography. Blending is defined as reducing form, line, and color contrast associated with the surface disturbance. Disturbance should be contoured to match the original topography, where matching is defined as reproducing the original topography and eliminating form, line, and color caused by the disturbance as much as possible.

(7) Interim reclamation should be implemented concurrent with construction and site operations to the fullest extent possible. Final reclamation actions shall be initiated within 6 months of the termination of operations unless otherwise approved in writing by the authorized officer.

(8) Fill material should be pushed into cut areas and up and over back-slopes. Depressions should not be left that would trap water or form ponds unless the authorized officer has determined that dips or depressions may be used to assist reclamation efforts and seed propagation.

(9) Reclaimed soil will be free of contaminants and will have adequate depth, texture, and structure to provide for successful vegetation reclamation. Vegetation reclamation will be considered successful when healthy, mature perennials are established with a composition and density that closely approximates the surrounding vegetation as prescribed by the BLM, and the reclamation area is free of noxious weeds.

(10) If necessary after reclamation, a BLM-standard barbed wire fence will be constructed to exclude livestock for a minimum of at least two successful growing seasons.

(11) The project proponent will include a restoration plan for habitat of special status species when the BLM determines it is appropriate. The restoration plan will be developed in consultation with, and approved by, the BLM.

(12) Additional reclamation measures may be required based on the conditions existing at the time of abandonment.

(13) Oil and fuel for equipment and vehicles must be carefully handled and disposed of to prevent soil or water contamination.

(14) Develop a spill contingency plan which identifies all actions to be taken in the event of a chemical spill including phone numbers for Federal, state, and local agencies which must be notified.

(15) Time activities to avoid wet periods.

Fluid Mineral Activities

Best management practices (BMPs) for fluid minerals are innovative, dynamic, and economically feasible mitigation measures applied on a site-specific basis to reduce, prevent, or avoid adverse environmental or social impacts. BMPs are applied to management actions to aid in achieving desired outcomes for safe, environmentally sound resource development by preventing, minimizing, or mitigating adverse impacts and reducing conflicts. For each proposed action, a number of BMPs may be applied as necessary to mitigate expected impacts. The following list of BMPs may be applied to mitigate impacts from fluid mineral activities. This list is not all inclusive. Most of these BMPs apply to more than one resource or resource use.

(1) Field development plans are encouraged to minimize unnecessary disturbance. Field development plans should address sensitive area avoidance or mitigation, potential road, utility, and well locations, road classes, and plans for interim and final reclamation.

(2) Dual completion, re-completion, commingling (both downhole and at the surface), the drilling of multiple wells from a single location, and centralized tank batteries will be encouraged and permitted in order to reduce the number of new well pads and consequent surface disturbance.

This will reduce impacts to soil and vegetation, reduce air impacts caused by dust, reduce habitat fragmentation, and offer less opportunity for the spread of noxious weeds.

(3) Operators will be encouraged to unitize in areas of dense development to increase management efficiency and facilitate operations in sensitive areas. Unitization is the process by which multiple lease holders in a geographic area share facilities so as to reduce surface disturbance caused by multiple duplicate facilities such as pipelines and compressor stations.

(4) Reduce the size of the well pad whenever possible, without compromising safety.

(5) Remote monitoring of wells and related production equipment is encouraged to reduce wildlife disturbance and road deterioration.

(6) Pipelines associated with oil and gas activities will follow existing roads and rights-of-way corridors where possible to minimize surface disturbance.

(7) The burial of pipelines associated with oil and gas exploration, development, production, and transportation is preferred. Pipelines greater than 4 inches in nominal diameter, all injection lines, and gas lines with a pressure greater than 125 pounds per square inch must be buried and constructed of steel. The use of plastic pipe will be approved by the authorized officer on a case-by-case basis. A waiver of the requirement to bury pipelines will be considered in the following situations:

- The temporary (one year or less) surface installation of plastic pipelines, after considering the length of the pipeline, its proposed location, the potential hazards present, the characteristics of the pipe regarding deterioration, the American Society for Testing and Materials or similar specifications for the pipe, the intended use of the pipeline, and other appropriate factors
- Where rock outcrops make the burial of pipeline impractical and when it is unreasonable and unreclaimable surface disturbance. Where the pipeline is exposed, painting may be required in accordance with the painting policy for visual resource management areas

and Notice to Lessees 87-1, New Mexico. Waiver of the requirement for painting will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Where the surface ownership along the pipeline route is mixed and the majority of surface ownership is not public. In those cases, the installation of pipeline on public land will conform to the practice to be employed on the remainder of the pipeline, unless special resource management concerns dictate strict adherence to this policy.
- 8) Minimize noise in sensitive wildlife habitats. Consider using noise reduction mufflers, earthen berms, walls, sheds, and/or distance to reduce sound levels.
- 9) All production related pits and tanks, regardless of size, would be covered and fenced to exclude wildlife.
- 10) Require oil and gas operators to modify existing and new production facilities to minimize mortality of bird, bat, and other wildlife. This action would consist of tank and vent screening, netting and protective coverings with hole size to prohibit mortality.

The following list of specific BMPs can be applied to reducing impacts on big game crucial winter range and on wildlife habitat.

- Directional drilling of oil and gas wells
- Drilling of multiple wells from a single pad
- Closed drilling systems
- Flareless completions
- Remote well monitoring
- Piping of produced liquids to centralized tank batteries offsite to reduce traffic to individual wells
- Transportation planning (i.e., to reduce road density and traffic volumes)
- Cluster development
- Habitat enhancement
- Seasonal restriction of public vehicular access
- Noise reduction techniques and designs
- Early and continuous cooperation between state and Federal agencies
- Reclamation of unused well pads or portions of pads within 6 months
- Limiting pipeline crossings to corridors
- Piping of produced liquid
- Using BLM standard wildlife fences
- Limitation of disturbances and activities within operating well fields during crucial winter periods
- Monitoring of wildlife populations during drilling operations and production operations

The following list of specific BMPs can be applied to reducing impacts on visual resource management areas.

- Burying of distribution power lines and flow lines in or adjacent to access roads
- Repetition of form, line, color, and texture to blend facilities with the surrounding landscape

- Painting of all new facilities in a color, or colors that best allow the facility to blend with the background, typically a vegetated background
- Final reclamation re-contouring of all disturbed areas, including access roads, to the original contour or a contour that blends with the surrounding topography
- Avoidance of facility placement on steep slopes, ridge tops, and hilltops
- Screening of facilities from view
- Following the contours of the land to reduce unnecessary disturbance
- Re-contour and re-vegetation of disturbances to blend with the surrounding landscape
- Reclamation of unneeded roads to the original contour
- Thinning and feathering of vegetation to disrupt linear lines created by clearing activities.
- Reduce pad size
- Site selection adjustment to minimize visibility
- Collocation of wells and tank batteries out of view
- Other BMPs as applicable from Gold Book and BLM BMP website

The following list of specific BMPs can be applied to reducing impacts on air quality.

- Use water and dust suppressant on roads to achieve control of road dust
- Consider air quality levels in the approval of current actions
- Post speed limits on roads
- Implement transportation planning to reduce vehicle traffic
- Give emphasis to reducing emissions by using methods know as “green completion techniques” that minimize the amount of natural gas and oil vapors that are released to the environment when a well is being flowed during its completion phase
- Maintain and monitor drilling, completion, and production facilities for fugitive emissions (i.e., methane gas, greenhouse gases (GHGs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs))
- Capture VOCs by using enclosed tanks instead of open pits to reduce fugitive VOC emissions
- The use of vapor recovery units on oil, condensate, and produced water storage tanks reduces fugitive VOCs and recovers BTU-rich vapors for sale or use on site
- Use and maintain proper hatches, seals, and valves on production equipment to minimize VOC emissions
- More available on BLM BMP and EPA Natural Gas Star websites

The following list of specific BMPs can be applied to reducing impacts from fluid mineral construction, operation, and reclamation.

- Piping of produced liquids to centralized tank batteries offsite to reduce traffic to individual wells
- Submersible pumps
- Below ground wellheads

- Reduce repetitive visits to well locations and pipeline construction sites to reduce traffic volume
- Flareless well completions
- Burying of distribution power lines and flow lines in or adjacent to access roads
- Design and construction of all new roads to a safe and appropriate standard, “no higher than necessary” to accommodate their intended use
- Reuse of previous surface disturbance such as well pads and access roads
- Interim reclamation of well locations and access roads soon after the well is put into production
- Avoidance of facility placement on steep slopes, ridge tops, and hilltops
- Storage of chemicals within secondary containment in case of a spill
- Onsite bioremediation of oil field wastes and spills
- Removal of trash, junk, waste, and other materials not in current use
- Use treated, produced water rather than surface water or groundwater for drilling, completion, stimulation, dust suppression, and reclamation.
- Set cement surface casings to sufficient depths to protect fresh water bearing zones.

Preliminary Investigations. Activities occurring during preliminary investigations may include remote sensing; mapping of rock outcrops and seeps (either of which result in little or no surface disturbance); and seismic, gravity, and magnetic surveys. A leasee is not required to conduct such preliminary investigations. However, the geophysical operator is required to file a completed Form 3150-4, “Notice of Intent to Conduct Oil and Gas Exploration Operations for all operations on public lands.”

In general, the BLM requires an examination of resource values and development of appropriate surface protection and reclamation measures prior to the geophysical contractor beginning surface-disturbing activities associated with preliminary investigations. The BLM will solicit involvement from public land users (e.g., grazing allottees) to develop site-specific protection measures and reclamation specifications.

Compliance monitoring should occur during and after seismic exploration activities when or if necessary. Compliance inspections during the operation ensure that requirements and guidelines are being followed. Compliance inspections upon completion of work ensure that the lines are clean and drill holes are plugged properly.

The frequency of authorized seismic exploration will be dependent upon resource conditions and seasonal restrictions (timing limitations) that may be imposed to reduce conflicts with watershed conditions, wildlife, and hunting. Management practices specific to wildlife and vegetation resources include the following:

- Prior to surveying/flagging routes for geophysical surveys or other preliminary activities, the project area shall be surveyed for raptor nests. Surveys will be conducted by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. The Universal Transverse Mercator grid locations of all raptor nests will be reported to the authorized officer. All raptor nests will be avoided by species-specific required distances. A “raptor nest” is defined as any raptor or corvid nest.

- In areas that constitute occupied or potential raptor species habitat, a protocol survey for those species will be conducted along with the general raptor nest survey described above, prior to surveying/flagging lines.
- During operations at any time, large (greater than 6 feet in height) trees or shrubs containing or capable of containing a raptor nest will be avoided by vehicular traffic or other activities likely to destroy them.
- In areas that allow for off-road travel, minimize the off-road impact of large vehicles. Use wide, flat-tread, balloon tires (especially on seismic thumper trucks) where possible. Use all-terrain vehicles rather than large vehicles where possible.
- Occupied habitat for special status species will be avoided in a manner similar to surface use requirements (avoid occupied habitat up to 0.5 mile) unless impacts are adequately mitigated.

Renewable Energy

(1) All renewable wind energy projects will be subject to the BMPs identified in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM Administered Lands in the Western United States, U.S. Department of Interior, BLM, June 2005. BMPs are identified in volume I, section 2.2.3.2 of said document, which can be viewed online at <http://www.windeis.anl.gov/>.

Rights-of-Way and Utility Corridors

- (1) Rights-of-way and utility corridors should use areas adjoining or adjacent to previously disturbed areas whenever possible, rather than traverse undisturbed vegetation communities.
- (2) Water bars or dikes should be constructed on all of the rights-of-way and utility corridors, and across the full width of the disturbed area, as directed by the authorized officer.
- (3) Disturbed areas within road rights-of-way and utility corridors should be stabilized by vegetation practices designed to hold soil in place and minimize erosion.
- (4) Sediment barriers should be constructed when needed to slow runoff, allow deposition of sediment, and prevent transport from the site. Straining or filtration mechanisms may also be employed for the removal of sediment from runoff.

Forest Management

- (1) Design harvest units and forest health treatments to blend with natural terrain.
- (2) Utilize silvicultural regeneration systems that are most appropriate for treatment objectives. Utilize uneven-aged silviculture for most treatments; however, even-aged systems may be appropriate in situations to accomplish insect and disease control, aspen regeneration, or other site-specific objectives. Consider a range of maximum stand density index by species to accomplish forest health goals.
- (3) When soils or road surfaces become saturated to a depth of 3 inches, BLM-authorized activities, such as log yarding and hauling, should be limited or cease unless otherwise approved by the authorized officer.
- (4) Scatter non-merchantable material (tops, limbs, etc.) in cutting units and treatment areas, consistent with fuel loading limitations.

- (5) Locate skid trails on upper slope positions, as far as possible from surface water. Avoid skidding across drainage bottoms or creating conditions that concentrate and channelize surface flow.
- (6) Use directional felling, when applicable, to minimize skidding distance and locate skid trails as far as possible from sensitive areas.
- (7) Install water bars and apply native seed, when available, to skid trails and landings prior to temporary seasonal closures and following harvest operations. Consider ripping or subsoiling on skid trails and abandoned haul roads to reduce compaction where soil and slope conditions permit.
- (8) Locate landings away from surface water. Design landings to minimize disturbance consistent with safety and efficiency of operation.
- (9) Use low pressure grapple equipment, if possible, when piling slash.
- (10) Conduct forested land treatments when soil surfaces are either frozen, dry, or have adequate snowpack to minimize impacts to soil and water resources.
- (11) Prepare a pre-harvest plan for efficient forest and site harvesting and road systems. Use topographic maps, aerial photographs, soil surveys, and field trips to determine site conditions. Use global positioning system to geo-locate field data for incorporation into the geographic information system. Plan should clearly outline BMPs to be followed before, during, and after harvest; identify area to be harvested; locate special areas of protection (wetlands and streamside vegetation); allow for proper timing of activities; describe management measures for road layout, design, construction, maintenance, harvesting methods, and forest regeneration. As part of plan:
- Consider natural drainage channels; threatened, endangered, and special status species habitat; topography; and soil types in determining boundaries of timber harvest activities, location and design of roads and landings, selection of harvesting method, and reforestation techniques.
 - Avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands and important wildlife habitats. If avoidance is not possible, choose harvest practices with least serious effects or schedule to avoid areas during critical time periods (e.g., nesting or breeding seasons). Where access to adjacent land would allow for more efficient road system or avoidance, consider working with landowner to obtain an easement.
 - Time construction and harvest activities to take advantage of seasonal conditions. When possible, avoid construction during heavy rains or freeze/thaw conditions to avoid potential for runoff and erosion.
- 12) Conduct rapid re-vegetation of areas disturbed by harvesting operations or road construction to reduce erosion and sedimentation. Equipment and site preparation methods must consider site topography, soil type, natural drainage, amount of rainfall, and kind of vegetation. Site preparation may include:
- Removal of logging roads, landings, and drainage structures.
 - Mechanical activities to chop, root rake, disk, and blade the soil in the disturbed areas in preparation for planting.
 - Prescribed fires to reduce logging residue and undesirable trees and vegetation.

- 13) Establish vegetative cover planting on erodible areas that were cultivated in the fall but will not be planted until spring.
- 14) Stabilize steep slopes prior to planting.
- 15) Use native grasses or other plant species to reseed bare-erodible areas; do not introduce invasive non-native plants under any circumstance.
- 16) Windrow logging debris along contours, in gullies, and on skid trails to stabilize these areas.
- 17) Remove unneeded logging roads and skid trails immediately. Do not wait for entire harvest operation to be completed.
- 18) Smooth, grade and re-vegetate landings and, where appropriate, main haul roads.
- 19) Remove temporary drainage structures and clean permanent drainage structures.
- 20) Minimize the use and maximize the benefit of chemicals through skilled and appropriate management and application. To ensure safe use of chemicals, consider the following:
 - Transportation, handling, storage, application and disposal of pesticides, fire retardants, and fertilizers must comply with applicable local, state and Federal regulations.
 - Monitor weather conditions such as rain, wind speed, temperature and humidity during application to prevent drift, volatilization, and surface water runoff.
 - Do not apply chemicals in streamside management zones or wetlands.
 - Note that fertilizers and fire retardants contain high amounts of both nitrogen and phosphorus and are easily transported overland and deposited in streams along with the sediment. These compounds can accelerate eutrophication (a process whereby water bodies are choked by overabundant plant life and algae due to higher levels of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus).

Fire Suppression

- (1) Minimize surface disturbances and avoid the use of heavy earth-moving equipment where possible, on all fire suppression and rehabilitation activities, including mop-up, except where high value resources (including lives and property), are being protected.
- (2) Install water bars and seed all constructed firelines with native or adapted nonnative species as appropriate and in accordance with the BLM Emergency Fire Rehabilitation Handbook (BLM 1999c).
- (3) Avoid dropping fire retardant that is detrimental to aquatic communities on streams, lakes, ponds and in riparian/wetland areas.
- (4) The location and construction of handlines should result in minimal surface disturbance while effectively controlling the fire. Hand crews should locate lines to take full advantage of existing land features that represent natural fire barriers. Whenever possible, handlines should follow the contour of the slope to protect the soil, provide sufficient residual vegetation to capture and retain sediment, and maintain site productivity.
- (5) Suppression in riparian areas should be by hand crews when possible.

Prescribed Burning

- (1) To protect soil productivity, burning should be conducted, if possible, under conditions when a low intensity burn can accomplish stated objectives. Burn only when conditions of organic surface or duff layer have adequate moisture to minimize effects to the physical and chemical properties of the soil. When possible, maximize the retention of the organic surface or duff layer.
- (2) Slash should not be piled and burned within riparian/wetland areas. If riparian/wetland areas are within or adjacent to the prescribed burn unit, piles should be fire lined or scattered prior to burning.
- (3) When preparing the unit for burning, avoid piling concentrations of large logs and stumps; pile small material (3 to 8 inches in diameter). Slash piles should be burned when soil and duff moisture are adequate to reduce potential damage to soil resources.
- (4) All fire management activities will be subject to the BMPs identified in the Decision Record and Resource Management Plan Amendment for Fire and Fuels Management on Public Land in New Mexico and Texas, U.S. Department of Interior, BLM New Mexico State Office, September 2004c. BMPs are identified in chapter 2 of this document, which can be viewed online at <http://www.nm.blm.gov>.

Livestock Grazing Management

General. The objective of all range activities, projects, management plans, and vegetative land treatments is to achieve or exceed the New Mexico Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management. Grazing management practices are developed through consultation, with allotment specific objectives. The purpose of the objectives is to achieve standards and guidelines and progress toward multiple use objectives and sustainability of resources. Adaptive management will be used when applying management practices. Some of the management practices used to achieve standards and guidelines are:

- Monitoring of the weather, vegetation, livestock, and wildlife,
- Adjusting the season of use,
- Deferment periods,
- Rest periods,
- Forage use standards,
- Changes in livestock numbers,
- Changes in the class of livestock,
- Herding of livestock,
- Low stress livestock handling techniques,
- Closing of areas to livestock use,
- The use of salt and supplements as incentives for livestock distribution (no salt or supplement shall be placed closer than 0.25 mile from any water source unless otherwise specified),
- Construction of range improvements (i.e. fences, water developments, and pipelines) to facilitate grazing management and improve the resources. All improvements will conform to bureau standards.

- Other management practices will be evaluated and incorporated if they are determined beneficial to achieving resource objectives.
- New water developments for livestock and wildlife, and modifications to existing ones would provide for year-round access for wildlife use and for escape for small mammals and birds.

Riparian related: The following “cardinal rules” are taken from TR 1737-20 Riparian Management, Grazing Management Processes and Strategies for Riparian-Wetland Areas 2006.

- Take advantage of seasonal livestock preference for uplands in grazing prescriptions.
- Ensure that expertise from appropriate professional disciplines is represented on the planning team.
- Ensure that everyone involved clearly understands the issues and agrees with the management objectives, as well as understands the changes that can occur and how they can benefit from proper management and improved riparian conditions.
- Build flexibility into grazing management to accommodate any changes that are needed.
- Implement frequent (sometimes daily) supervision by the parties involved once management is in progress, so that adverse impacts (e.g., trampling damage and excessive utilization) can be foreseen and avoided.
- Don’t rely on a grazing system alone to improve conditions. Management tools and techniques work hand in hand with selected grazing systems.
- Document mistakes so they are not repeated.
- Use management successes to encourage proper management in the future and to promote good riparian area management elsewhere. Though each management situation is unique, there are still some general rules that can help ensure successful riparian area management: *Adapt grazing management to the conditions, problems, potential, objectives, public concerns, and livestock management considerations on a specific site.* Include all those willing to learn the details and contribute ideas or work for enhanced management throughout the planning process.
- Consider overall watershed goals and objectives and all important resource issues including watershed dynamics and issues associated with the receiving water or the stream reach that the grazing activities are located on (water quality and quantity, threatened and endangered species concerns).
- Manage grazing so there is sufficient vegetation growth and post grazing stubble on the banks and overflow zones to permit the stream to function naturally.
- Identify and implement alternatives to passive, continuous grazing.
- Employ rest or deferment from livestock grazing

Mining

(1) Reclaim all disturbed surface areas promptly, performing concurrent reclamation as necessary, and minimize the total amount of all surface disturbance.

(2) All surface soil should be stripped prior to conducting operations, stockpiled, and reapplied during reclamation, regardless of soil quality. Minimize the length of time soil remains in stockpiles and the depth or thickness of stockpiles. When slopes on topsoil stockpiles exceed 5

percent, a berm or trench should be constructed below the stockpile to prevent sediment transport offsite.

- (3) Strip and separate soil surface horizons where feasible and reapply in proper sequence during reclamation.
- (4) Locate soil stockpiles and waste rock disposal areas away from surface water to minimize off-site drainage effects.
- (5) Establish vegetation cover on soil stockpiles that are to be in place longer than 1 year.
- (6) Construct and rehabilitate temporary roads to minimize total surface disturbance, consistent with intended use.
- (7) Consider temporary measures such as silt fences, straw bales, or mulching to trap sediment in sensitive areas until reclaimed areas are stabilized with vegetation.
- (8) Reshape to the approximate original contour all areas to be permanently reclaimed, providing for proper surface drainage.
- (9) Leave reclaimed surfaces in a roughened condition following soil application.
- (10) Complete reclamation and seeding during the fall if possible.

Invasive/Noxious Weed Management

- (1) All surface disturbing equipment should be inspected and cleaned prior to coming onto public land. This is especially important on vehicles from out of state or if coming from a weed infested area.
- (2) If fill dirt or gravel is brought onto public land, the source needs to be noxious weed-free.
- (3) Construction sites should be monitored for the life of the project for the presence of invasive/noxious weeds (includes maintenance and construction activities). If weeds are found, the Taos Field Office will be notified and it will determine the best method for the control of that particular weed species.
- (4) All seed shall be certified noxious weed-free. Areas will be monitored to determine the success of re-vegetation, the presence of invasive/noxious weeds, and will be reseeded if necessary.
- (5) Consider livestock quarantine, removal, or timing limitations in invasive/noxious weed-infested areas.
- (6) All seed, hay, straw, mulch, or other vegetation material transported and used on public land for site stability, rehabilitation, or project facilitation shall be certified noxious weed-free of all reproductive parts upon the passage of a weed-free law in the state of New Mexico. All baled feed, pelletized feed, and grain used to feed livestock shall also be certified as free of noxious weed seed.
- (7) It is recommended that all vehicles, including off-road and all-terrain, traveling in or out of weed infested areas should clean their equipment before and after use on public land.

Developed Recreation

- (1) Construct recreation sites and provide appropriate sanitation facilities to minimize impacts to resource values, public health and safety, and minimize user conflicts of approved activities and access within an area as appropriate.
- (2) Minimize impacts to resource values or to enhance a recreational setting and recreation experience. Harden sites and locations subject to prolonged/repetitive concentrated recreational uses with selective placement of gravel or other porous materials and allow for dust abatement, paving, and engineered road construction.
- (3) Use public education and/or physical barriers (such as rocks, posts, vegetation) to direct or preclude uses and to minimize impacts to resource values and the quality of recreation experience.
- (4) As appropriate, employ limitations on specific activities to avoid or correct adverse impacts to resource values, public safety issues, and/or conflicts between recreational uses.
- (5) Employ land use ethics programs and techniques such as “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly” programs. Use outreach efforts of such programs to lessen need to implement more stringent regulatory measures to obtain resource protection and a quality recreation experience.

Wildlife and Riparian Habitat

- (1) Prior to the initiation of a surface-disturbing activity, the project area will be surveyed for raptor or migratory bird nests or active prairie dog towns. Surveys will be conducted by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer. All raptor nests and active prairie dog towns will be avoided by the distances and seasonal periods listed below:

Bald eagle: 0.5-1.0 miles (January 1 – August 31)
Golden eagle: 0.5 mile (January 1 – August 31)
Peregrine falcon: 1.0 mile (February 1 – August 31)
Prairie falcon: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31)
Osprey: 0.25 mile (April 1 – August 31)
Cooper’s hawk: 0.25 (March 15 – August 31)
Northern goshawk: 0.5 mile (March 1 – July 31)
Red-tailed hawk: 0.125 mile (February 1 – July 15)
Ferruginous hawk: 1.0 mile (February 1 – July 15)
Mountain plover: 1.0 mile (March 1 – August 1)
Gray vireo: 0.5 mile (April 1 – August 31)
Gunnison prairie dog – 0.25 mile, February 15-June 15
Black-tailed prairie dog – 0.25 mile, January 1-June 15

Long duration land use activities will not be allowed to occur within the species-specific spatial buffer zone of active nests or occupied prairie dog towns listed above. Short duration activities will be avoided within the species-specific spatial buffer zones during the dates listed above.

Short duration activities will be limited to the spatial buffer zone outside of the boundary of the occupied prairie dog town and will not occur within the occupied town. All other raptor species nests will be avoided by the spatial buffer zone only during the period listed above, regardless of the duration of the activity. Before land use activities can commence, a raptor and prairie dog survey must be completed.

A short duration activity is defined as an activity, which would begin outside of a given breeding season and end prior to initiation of a given breeding season. A long duration activity is defined as an activity which would continue into or beyond a given nesting/breeding season. An active nest is defined as any nest that has been occupied in the last seven years. A nest will be determined active or inactive by the authorized officer. Surveys will be conducted by professional biologists approved by the authorized officer.

- 2) Ensure that all fences are constructed to BLM Taos Field Office fence specifications to mitigate impacts to wildlife.
- 3) Ensure that wildlife escape ramps are installed and maintained on all applicable water development projects, including existing watering facilities upon their modification, on public land (see BLM Manual Handbook H-1741-2 Water Developments November 6, 1990).
- 4) Construct all new water improvements so that they are located a minimum of 30 meters away from fences or other structures likely to pose a collision threat to bats.
- 5) Surface disturbance will not be allowed within up to 0.5 mile of the outer edge of 100-year floodplains, playas, all artificial water developments (tanks, guzzlers, etc.), and riparian habitat (seeps, arroyos, etc.). Exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case-by case basis.
- 6) In areas where habitat and/or rangeland enhancement projects have been implemented, with the exception of large landscape projects (prescribed burns, chemical treatments, and mechanical treatments), adverse impacts to the landscape will be avoided by minimizing or excluding certain surface-disturbing activities that may degrade the objectives or intent of the project. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 7) In all crucial calving, lambing, kidding, and fawning areas and wintering ranges, all surface disturbing activities, permanent or temporary, will be avoided during the appropriate time periods.
- 8) Prior to initiating geophysical or other preliminary surveys during the raptor breeding season, the area will be surveyed for the presence of raptor nests.
- 9) In siting facilities, the following measures must be followed:
 - During operations at any time, all habitat features (pinnacles, cliffs, ledges, caves, and trees and shrubs greater than 6 feet in height) containing or capable of containing raptor nests or bat habitat, will be avoided by vehicular traffic or other surface-disturbing activities likely to remove or destroy them unless authorized by the BLM authorized officer.
 - Tree and vegetation clearing will be limited to the minimum area required.
 - Construction activities will be timed to avoid wet periods.
 - Power lines will be constructed to meet the standards outlined in the most recent version of *Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines*, published by the Edison Electric Institute/Raptor Research Foundation, or other current design standards, unless otherwise agreed to by the authorized. The utility is responsible for demonstrating that power pole designs that do not meet these standards are raptor-safe. Such proof will be provided by a raptor expert approved by the authorized officer. The BLM reserves the right to require modifications or additions to power line structures constructed under this authorization, if necessary, to ensure the safety of large, perching birds. The

modifications and/or additions will be made by the utility without liability or expense to the Federal government.

- All equipment installed on Federal land will be constructed to prevent birds and bats from entering them and, to the extent practical, to discourage perching and nesting.
- Open top tanks, reserve pits, disposal pits, or other open pits will be required to be equipped to deter entry by birds, bats, or other wildlife.

Visual Resources Management

All surface disturbing projects shall include consideration for visual resource management objectives early in the planning process with proponents and managers engaging a qualified Visual Resource Specialist as an integral member of the project planning team.

BMPs to address visual resource concerns have been incorporated into the above resource discussions, as appropriate. Additional BMPs dealing with visual resource management considerations in oil and gas development can be found on the BLM website at www.blm.gov/bmp/. BMPs dealing with visual resource management considerations in general are available at www.blm.gov/nstc/VRM/destech.

Appendix D: Natural Recreation Settings Matrix

PHYSICAL – LAND and FACILITIES: Character of the natural landscape

	Primitive		Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
Remoteness	Pristine: More than 10 miles from any motorized route.	Transition: More than 3 miles from any motorized route.	More than 0.5 mile from any kind of motorized route/use area, but not as distant as 3 miles.	On or near motorized routes, but at least 0.5 mile from all improved roads, though they may be in sight.	On or near improved gravel roads, but at least 0.5 mile from highways.	On or near paved primary highways, but still within a rural area.	Municipal streets and roads within towns or cities.
Naturalness	Undisturbed natural landscape.		Natural-appearing landscape having modifications not readily noticeable.	Natural-appearing landscape except for obvious motorized routes.	Landscape partially modified by roads/trails, utility lines, etc., but none overpower natural landscape features.	Natural landscape substantially modified by agriculture or industrial development.	Urbanized developments dominate landscape.
Visitor Facilities	None.		Some primitive trails made of native materials such as log bridges and carved wooden signs.	Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments, improved signs, and very basic toilets.	Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as campsites, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs.	Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and occasional exhibits.	Elaborate full-service facilities such as laundry, restaurants, and groceries.

SOCIAL – VISITOR USE and USERS: Character of recreation-tourism use

	Primitive	Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
Contacts with other groups	Fewer than 3 encounters/day at camp sites and fewer than 6 encounters/day on travel routes.	3-6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7-15 encounters/day on travel routes.	7-14 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., staging areas) and 15-29 encounters/day en route.	15-29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more encounters/day in route.	People seem to be generally everywhere.	Busy place with other people constantly in view.
Group Size	Fewer than or equal to 3 people per group.	4-6 people per group.	7-12 people per group.	13-25 people per group.	26-50 people per group.	Greater than 50 people per group.
Evidence of Use	No alteration of the natural terrain. Footprints only observed. Sounds of people rare.	Areas of alteration uncommon. Little surface vegetation wear observed. Sounds of people infrequent.	Small areas of alteration. Surface vegetation showing wear with some bare soils. Sounds of people occasionally heard.	Small areas of alteration prevalent. Surface vegetation gone with compacted soils observed. Sounds of people regularly heard.	A few large areas of alteration. Surface vegetation absent with hardened soils. Sounds of people frequently heard.	Large areas of alteration prevalent. Some erosion. Constantly hear people.

OPERATIONAL – ADMINISTRATION and SERVICES: Character of how Public Land Managers, Cooperative Agencies and Local Businesses Care for the Area and Serve Visitors

	Primitive	Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
Mechanized Use	None whatsoever.	Mountain bikes and perhaps other mechanized use, but all is non-motorized.	Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, or snowmobiles in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use.	Two-wheel drive vehicles predominant, but also four wheel drives and non-motorized, mechanized use.	Ordinary highway auto and truck traffic is characteristic.	Wide variety of street vehicles and highway traffic is ever-present.
Visitor Services	None is available on-site.	Basic maps, but area personnel seldom available to provide on-site assistance.	Area brochures and maps, plus area personnel occasionally present to provide on-site assistance.	Information materials describe recreation areas and activities. Area personnel are periodically available.	Information described to the left, plus experience and benefit descriptions. Area personnel do on-site education.	Information described to the left, plus regularly scheduled on-site outdoor skills demonstrations and clinics.
Management Controls	No visitor controls apparent. No use limits. Enforcement presence very rare.	Signs at key access points on basic user ethics. May have back country use restrictions. Enforcement presence rare.	Occasional regulatory signing. Motorized and mechanized use restrictions. Random enforcement presence.	Rules clearly posted with some seasonal or day-of-week use restrictions. Periodic enforcement presence.	Regulations prominent. Total use limited by permit, reservation, etc. Routine enforcement presence.	Continuous enforcement to redistribute use and reduce user conflicts, hazards, and resource damage.

Appendix E: Taos Planning Area Wild and Scenic Rivers Evaluation Report

Introduction

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (October 2, 1968, Public Law 90-542) established the National Wild and Scenic River System, designed to preserve free-flowing rivers with outstandingly remarkable values in their natural condition for the benefit of present and future generations, balancing the Nation's water resource development policies with river conservation and recreation goals.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act states, "In all planning for the use and development of water and related land resources, consideration shall be given by all federal agencies involved to potential national wild, scenic and recreational river areas. . . ." [section 5(d) (1)]. Federal agencies consider potential rivers by evaluating a river's eligibility, tentative classification, and suitability for designation under the Act. The evaluation process is part of the resource management planning effort for the Taos Field Office.

This study incorporates the findings of the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan for 14 streams, while considering additional streams as part of the current land use planning process with potential to be included in the Wild and Scenic River System. During the identification phase, the BLM examined river and stream segments that either pass through or are bordered by BLM-administered public land. Standard criteria were applied to determine eligibility of each segment. For those stream segments deemed eligible, that are not contiguous to U.S. Forest Service segments, a suitability study was conducted. This report describes the identification process followed, eligibility and classification criteria used, and suitability of a stream segment to be included in the Wild and Scenic River System.

The project area for this study includes all public land and related waters within the Taos Field Office boundaries that have not been previously studied. In 2000, the Rio Grande Corridor Plan examined the Rio Grande and its tributaries within the Taos Field Office. Seven stream segments were found to be eligible in the study, of which two were determined suitable. A determination on the remaining five streams was deferred to allow for consultation with the Carson and Santa Fe National forests. Tributary streams on land acquired after the Corridor Plan was completed are included in this study.

Eligibility Evaluation

According to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, eligible river segments must be free flowing and, with their immediate environment, possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs), such as scenic, recreational, geological, fish habitat, wildlife, historic, ecological, or cultural resource values. "Free flowing" is defined as "existing or flowing in natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping or other modification of the waterway that would encourage future construction of such structures." "Outstandingly remarkable values" are defined as natural and cultural resources that are either unique at a regional level or exemplary at the national level.

A river need not be "boatable or floatable" in order to be eligible. For purposes of eligibility determination, the volume of flow is sufficient if it is enough to maintain the ORVs identified within the segment. Rivers with intermittent flows exist within the National Wild and Scenic

River System, and rivers representative of desert ecosystems having outstanding ecological or other values should be considered.

The BLM guidance contained in the Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 2004-196 states: “. . . judgment is required in determining eligibility of water courses that are free-flowing and have associated ORVs. As a general rule, the segment should contain regular and predictable flows (even though intermittent, seasonal, or interrupted). This flow should derive from naturally occurring circumstances, e.g., aquifer recharge, seasonal melting from snow and ice, normal precipitation, instream flow from spillways or upstream facilities. Caution in applying the free-flow criterion to water sources that only flow during flash floods or unpredictable events. The segment should not be ephemeral (flow lasting only a few days out of a year). Evaluation of flows should focus on normal years, with consideration of drought or wet years during the inventory.”

During the evaluation of a river segment, jurisdictional considerations must be taken into account. If less than 40 percent of the shoreline and adjacent land in a segment is public land managed by the BLM (public land is not predominant), it is difficult to ensure that outstandingly remarkable values can be maintained in the future. Accordingly, the priority shall be segments with 40 percent or more public land. The better way to consider these segments is for state or local governments to complete planning, and for the segment to be designated under section 2 (a) (ii) of the Act, or a joint study under section 5(c). Four rivers fall into this category within the planning area: Canadian River (1.0 mile, one side of river only); Mora River (2.0 miles); Rio Ojo Caliente (2.5 miles); and Rio Chama, below Abiquiu dam (2.0 miles).

Tentative Classification

If a river segment is eligible, the next step is to assign a tentative classification and management measures needed to ensure appropriate protection of the values supporting the eligibility and classification determinations. There are three classifications for rivers designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Wild, Scenic, and Recreational (see Table F-1.). Classes are based on the type and degree of human development and access associated with the river and adjacent land at the time of the eligibility determination. The classification does not reflect the types of values present along the river segment. The classification assigned during the eligibility phase is tentative. Final classification is a congressional legislative determination, along with designation of a river segment as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Suitability Determination

The purpose of the suitability phase is to determine whether eligible river segments are suitable or not for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System per the criteria of the Wild and Scenic River Act. The suitability evaluation does not result in actual designation but only a suitability determination for designation. The BLM cannot administratively designate a stream via a planning decision or other agency decisions into the National Wild and Scenic River System, and no segment studied will be automatically designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Only Congress can designate a wild and scenic river. In some cases, the Secretary of the Interior may designate a wild and scenic river when the governor of a state, under certain conditions, petitions for a river to be designated. Members of Congress will ultimately choose the legislative language if any suitable segments are presented to them. Water protection strategies and measures to meet the purposes of the Wild and Scenic River Act will be the responsibility of Congress in any legislation proposed. Rivers found not suitable would be

dropped from further consideration and managed according to the objectives outlined in the resource management plan (RMP).

As part of the current planning process, a decision will be made as to the suitability of two eligible streams: Rio Nutrias and Rio Pueblo de Taos. Two streams, the Rio Embudo and Rio Grande Bosque were determined suitable in the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan and are not reevaluated as part of this study. The suitability of all other eligible streams will be deferred until a coordinated study can be completed with the U.S. Forest Service.

Eligibility Determinations, Outstandingly Remarkable Values Descriptions, and Suitability Findings

Table E-1. Attributes of the three classifications for wild and scenic rivers

Wild	Scenic	Recreational
Free flowing. Low dams, diversion works, or other minor structures that do not cause flooding of the natural riverbank may not bar consideration. Future construction is restricted.	Free flowing. Low dams, diversion works, or other minor structures that do not cause flooding of the natural riverbank may not bar consideration. Future construction is restricted.	May have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past. Water should not have characteristics of an impoundment for any significant distance. Future construction is restricted.
Generally inaccessible by road. One or two inconspicuous roads to the area may be permissible.	Accessible by roads that may occasionally bridge the river area. Short stretches of inconspicuous and well-screened roads or railroads paralleling the river area may be permitted.	Readily accessible with likelihood of roads or railroads along riverbanks and bridge crossings.
Shoreline is essentially primitive. One or two inconspicuous dwellings and land devoted to production of hay may be permitted. Watershed is natural in appearance.	Shoreline is largely primitive. Small communities are limited to short reaches of the total area. Agricultural practices that do not adversely affect the river area may be permitted.	Shoreline may be extensively developed.
Water quality meets minimum criteria for primary contact recreation, except where such criteria would be exceeded by natural background conditions and aesthetics. Capable of supporting propagation of aquatic life normally adapted to the habitat of the stream.	Water quality should meet minimum criteria for desired types of recreation, except where such criteria would be exceeded by natural background conditions and aesthetics. Capable of supporting propagation of aquatic life normally adapted to the habitat of the stream, or capable of being restored to that quality.	Water quality should meet minimum criteria for desired types of recreation, except where such criteria would be exceeded by natural background conditions and aesthetics. Capable of supporting propagation of aquatic life normally adapted to the habitat of the stream, or capable of being restored to that quality.

Sixteen river and stream segments—not including the Rio Embudo and Rio Grande Bosque segment, already determined suitable—have been determined to meet the eligibility criteria (see Table F-2.). The location map shows the locations and extent of the eligible segments (see Map 2-39.). Each segment determined eligible as part of this Taos RMP process is presented below with a detailed description of the segment characteristics, ORVs, tentative classification, and suitability to be added to the national system. Stream segments contiguous with U.S. Forest Service land were studied for eligibility, but, as indicated above, a suitability determination will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates their suitability study. At that time, the BLM will

collaborate with the Forest Service to determine suitability for those streams that flow through both jurisdictions.

Table E-2. Summary of Wild and Scenic River Study for Taos Field Office Planning Area

Stream Segment	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Eligible	Tentative Classification/Miles	BLM Miles	Forest Service Miles
Rio Nutrias*	Scenic, recreational, wildlife, geological	Yes	Wild (2.0)	2.0	0
Rio Pueblo de Taos*	Scenic, recreational, fish habitat	Yes	Scenic (1.0)	1.0	0
Rio Cebolla	Scenic, wildlife, recreational, geological	Yes	Wild (1.5)	1.5	1.5
Santa Cruz River	Scenic, geological, recreational, fish habitat	Yes	Wild (1.0) Recreational (0.25)	1.25	0
Rio Medio	Scenic, recreational, fish habitat	Yes	Wild (1.0) Recreational (0.3)	1.3	5
Rio Quemado	Scenic, recreational, geological, fish habitat	Yes	Wild (2.0) Recreational (0.5)	2.5	4
Red River	Scenic, recreational	Yes	Recreational (1.0)	1.0	8
Rio Grande (Buckman)	Scenic, recreational	Yes	Scenic (1.0)	1.0	10
Rio San Antonio	Wildlife	Yes	Wild (4.0)	4.0	20+
Santa Fe River	Recreational, cultural, fish habitat	Yes	Recreational (4.0)	4.0	1.5
Canjilon Creek	Scenic	Yes	Recreational (0.5)	0.5	1.5
Arroyo Hondo**	Geological	Yes	Scenic (3.0)	1.2	2
Tierra Amarilla**	Scenic, recreational, cultural, water quality, riparian, geological	Yes	Scenic (2.3)	2.3	2
Agua Caliente**	Geological	Yes	Wild (1.9) Scenic (1.0)	2.9	1.9
Ojo Sarco**	Geological	Yes	Scenic (2.4)	2.4	5
Rio de las Trampas**	Scenic, geological, wildlife	Yes	Scenic (1.3)	1.3	7

Note: Table does not include the Rio Embudo and the Rio Grande Bosque segment, already determined suitable in the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan.

* Determined suitable

** Determined eligible in the 2000 Rio Grande Corridor Plan

Rio Nutrias

Description: From the border of private land southwest of Tierra Amarilla to the confluence with the Rio Chama and BLM land. Township 27N Range 2E, sections 22, 23, and 24.

Total Length: 2 miles, (south side only, consisting of approximately 320.5 acres).

Eligibility

The Rio Nutrias is a perennial stream which flows through a rugged, 300 ft. deep, yellow Dakota sandstone canyon before its confluence with the Rio Chama. This area is an important corridor for wildlife accessing the Rio Chama. Big game species found in the canyon include deer, elk, black bear, and mountain lion. Vegetation is pinon/juniper, ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, grass, and cactus with sparse stands of willow streamside. Scenic, recreational, wildlife, and geological values are high. The BLM manages two miles on the south side of the Rio Nutrias.

Tentative classification: Wild; there are no roads or trails in the canyon.

It is determined that the Rio Nutrias meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic and wildlife values. It thus meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

River Values/Characteristics. The Rio Nutrias segment offers outstanding scenic and geological values with exposed sandstone canyon walls on the 2 mile length of the segment. It is important to wildlife and supports elk, deer, mountain lion, bear, and turkey. The Rio Nutrias is a perennial stream.

Land Ownership and Uses. The BLM owns only the south side of the river corridor (approximately 320.5 acres). The north side of the river is in private hands (approximately 293 acres). Currently grazing, hunting, and hiking occur in the segment. No development exists in the canyon at this time.

Potential Uses of Land and Water Resources. Hiking and hunting opportunities would be enhanced with designation. Hydroelectric power facilities would not be allowed. Other potential surface disturbing uses of the public land and water resources in the river corridor would be constrained by designation to protect scenic quality. Designation could impact private development indirectly by influencing local planning and zoning.

Interest in Designation. Initial reaction on designation from conservation organizations is positive.

Estimated Cost of Acquisition and Administration. The initial cost associated with designation would be limited to mapping and printing documentation of the Wild and Scenic River. Future costs would depend on the level of threats to river related values and are foreseen to result from the need for regulatory and educational signing, improved access, patrol and enforcement, and biological and social inventories. Approximately 293 acres of private land could be acquired if the owners were willing to sell.

Ability to Manage/Protect River Values. Recognition as a Wild and Scenic River would aid the BLM in managing and protecting the river related values should development or other threats to the recognized values be proposed in the future.

Adverse Effects on Historical/Existing Rights. No adverse effects on historical and valid existing rights are expected as a result of designation of the Rio Nutrias as Wild and Scenic.

Other Issues and Concerns. The intent of designation would be to preserve the existing river related values. This would benefit traditional uses of the Rio Nutrias such as hunting and hiking.

Rio Pueblo de Taos

Description: From the border with private land at the end of County Road C110 (southwest of Taos) to the confluence with the Rio Grande at Taos Junction Bridge. BLM land is on the southeast side of the stream, Taos Pueblo tribal land is on the northwest side of the stream. Township 24N Range 11E, section 1.

Total Segment Length: 1 mile, south side only.

Eligibility

The Rio Pueblo de Taos is a perennial stream which flows through a 600 ft. deep basalt canyon with several thin layers of sedimentary and alluvial rock. Two small perennial springs which support willow and cottonwood trees are located within the segment. The creek supports lush stands of willow in places; upland vegetation is a mix of sagebrush and isolated juniper and fir trees. The stream has high value for fish habitat and is an outstanding scenic and recreational resource near the town of Taos and largely within the Orilla Verde Recreation Area with an existing trail running on an old road parallel to the creek.

Tentative classification: Scenic; an old county road which has been closed by a landslide parallels the stream. This old roadbed has become a popular hiking trail. A county road accesses the rim of the canyon and a gravel road from Taos Junction parallels the lower 0.25 mile of the stream.

It is determined that the Rio Pueblo de Taos meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable fish habitat, recreation, and scenic values. It thus meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

River Values/Characteristics. The Rio Pueblo segment offers outstanding scenic, fishing, and recreational opportunities. It is important to wildlife, contains riparian habitat, and a perennial stream. The stream lies in a deep basalt canyon with walls shaped by natural forces. The aquatic habitat contains brown and rainbow trout and Rio Grande sucker.

Land Ownership and Uses. The BLM owns the south side of the river corridor; the north side is owned by the Taos Pueblo Indian Tribe. Hiking, fishing, and kayaking currently occur on the segment. An old road exits on the south side of the stream which has been closed to vehicle use by a landslide.

Potential Uses of Land and Water Resources. Recreational opportunities would be enhanced with designation. Hydroelectric power facilities would not be allowed. Other potential surface disturbing uses of the public land and water resources in the river corridor would be constrained

by designation to protect scenic and recreational quality. Designation is not expected to influence the Tribe's land on the north side of the stream.

Interest in Designation. Initial reaction to designation is positive by conservation organizations.

Estimated Cost of Acquisition and Administration. The initial cost associated with designation would be limited to mapping and printing documentation of the Wild and Scenic River corridor. Future costs would depend on the level of threats to river related values and are foreseen to result from the need for regulatory and educational signing, improved access, road closures/barriers, patrol and enforcement, and biological and social inventories.

Ability to Manage/Protect River Values. Recognition as a Wild and Scenic River would aid the BLM in managing and protecting the river related values should development or other threats to the recognized values be proposed in the future.

Adverse Effects on Historical/Existing Rights. No adverse effects on historical and valid existing rights are expected as a result of designation of the Rio Pueblo as Wild and Scenic.

Other Issues and Concerns. The intent of designation would be to preserve the existing river related values. This would benefit traditional uses of the Rio Pueblo such as hiking, fishing, and kayaking.

Rio San Antonio

Description: From the border of BLM land and Carson National Forest land to the border between BLM land and private land (within 0.5 mile of the New Mexico/Colorado state line). Township 31N Range 8E, sections 2, 11, 14; Township 32N Range 9E, sections 24, 30

Total segment length: 4 miles

Eligibility

The Rio San Antonio is a perennial stream that flows through a narrow, 200 ft. deep basalt canyon which is cut into a high grassy plateau. The canyon and surrounding area are important to wildlife for water and cover. Big game species include deer, elk, bear, and pronghorn antelope. Wildlife values are outstanding on this segment. Vegetation ranges from pinon/juniper woodland to stands of ponderosa, Douglas fir, and spruce with alder in the riparian zone.

Tentative classification: Wild; there is a primitive two-track road on the rim of the canyon which follows the rim for approximately five miles. Livestock have access to the stream via several rough trails where the BLM has constructed a plastic pipe fence across the creek to prevent grazing in the canyon.

The Rio San Antonio is considered to be a unique river segment containing a pristine variety of box canyon geologic and vegetative features associated with scenic values.

It is determined that the Rio San Antonio meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable wildlife values. It thus meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Santa Fe River

Description: From the border between private land west of the Santa Fe airport and BLM land to the border with the Santa Fe National Forest. Township 16N Range 8E, section 31; Township 16N Range 7E, section 36; Township 15N Range 7E, sections 1, 2,3,10

Total Segment Length: 4 miles

Eligibility

The Santa Fe River is a perennial stream which flows through an 800 ft. deep, wide basalt canyon downstream of the city of Santa Fe and the municipal wastewater facility. The canyon has many outstanding examples of ancient human activity including significant archaeological sites both prehistoric and colonial. Cultural values are high. It has a high recreation value due to its proximity to the city of Santa Fe. The creek has a high potential for riparian vegetation if grazing is limited; fish habitat values are high. Currently, the riparian vegetation is dominated by Russian olive trees. The upland vegetation in the area is common to this part of New Mexico with pinon/juniper stands interspersed with sagebrush and grasses. Big game species do not use the area much because of the proximity to the communities of Santa Fe and La Cienega. The area is relatively inaccessible and supports small mammal and avian species, making it locally important to non-game wildlife, including a function of dispersal corridor for amphibians on a regional scale.

Tentative classification: Recreational; a gravel road reaches the public land boundary. The primary flow in the Santa Fe River is effluent discharge from the sewage treatment plant. This discharge is considered impaired under the 303 (d) portion of the Clean Water Act. The BLM is currently engaged in riparian restoration efforts to improve water quality.

It is determined that the Santa Fe River meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable cultural and recreational values. It thus meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Rio Medio

Description: From the border with Santa Fe National Forest land to the border with private land near the village of Cundiyo. Township 20N Range 10E, sections 8, 9, 17, and 18.

Total Segment Length: 1.3 miles

Eligibility

The Rio Medio is a perennial stream which flows through a forested canyon on BLM land. The segment has dense riparian vegetation dominated by willow surrounded by pinon/juniper woodlands with the occasional ponderosa in the valley bottom. Occasional rock outcrops appear in the canyon bottom. Big game species found in the canyon include deer and elk. Scenic, recreational, wildlife and fish habitat values are high.

Tentative classification: Wild (1 mile); there are two primitive roads on the north side of the Rio Medio. Recreational (0.3 mile); the area is near NM-596.

It is determined that the Rio Medio meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, fish habitat, and wildlife values. It thus meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Rio Cebolla

Description: From the border with private land west of the village of Cebolla for 0.5 mile to the border with Carson National Forest land, then into BLM land again for one mile, then through Santa Fe National Forest land to the confluence with the Rio Chama. Approximately 1.5 miles of this segment is on BLM land. Township 26N Range 3E, section 19.

Total Length: 3 miles

Eligibility

The Rio Cebolla is a perennial stream which flows through a 500 ft. deep sandstone and shale canyon before its confluence with the Rio Chama. The exposed rock and forest cover in the canyon is visually impressive. Vegetation is primarily pinon-juniper with ponderosa and fir stands. Large open meadows are found in the valley bottom. The riparian zone is primarily willow with the occasional box elder. Game species found in the area include elk, deer, turkey, and ducks. The canyon is used by wildlife for access to the Rio Chama. Wildlife, scenic, recreational, and geological values are high. BLM land is located on the north side of the stream with National Forest land on the south side. There is an extensive trail network in the area.

Tentative classification: Wild; there are no roads or other developments in the canyon.

It is determined that the Rio Cebolla meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic and geological values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Santa Cruz River

Description: The Santa Cruz River begins at the confluence of the Rio Medio and the Rio Frijoles at the border between private land and BLM land northwest of the village of Cundiyo. The river flows into Santa Cruz Lake which is also on BLM land. After passing the Santa Cruz Dam, the river passes through BLM land for 0.25 miles before entering private land. Township 20N Range 10E, section 18.

Total Length: 1.25 miles

Eligibility

The Santa Cruz River begins where the Rio Medio and the Rio Frijoles join near NM-503. At this point, the river enters a 200 ft. deep granite gorge before emptying into Santa Cruz Lake after approximately one mile. Vegetation in the riparian zone consists of willow and cottonwood with ponderosa pine and pinon-juniper in the uplands. Game species found in the canyon include deer and elk. Scenic, geological, recreational, and fish habitat values are high on this segment.

Tentative classification: Wild (1.0 mile), Recreational (0.25 mile); there is 0.5 mile long trail on the north side of the river beginning at NM-503 and another trail on the south side, one mile downstream from NM-503, which continues to Santa Cruz Lake.

It is determined that the Santa Cruz River meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic, geological, recreational, and fish habitat values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Rio Quemado

Description: Two segments, the first begins at the border with private land west of the village of Cordova and flows for one mile through BLM land to the border with private land near the village of Rio Chiquito. The second segment begins at the border of private land downstream of the village of Rio Chiquito and flows for another mile through BLM land to the border with private land near the village of Chimayo. Township 20N Range 10E, sections 4, 5, and 6.

Total Length: 2.5 miles

Eligibility

The Rio Quemado is a perennial stream which flows through two small but dramatic mile long canyons with private land in between. The canyons are primarily of granite and are approximately 600 ft. deep. The exposed rock in the canyon has high geological value. The upper canyon vegetation has thick, tall willow stands and ponderosa pine while the lower canyon has some willow and many cottonwood trees (narrow and broadleaf) with pinon-juniper dominating the surrounding hillsides. Recreational, scenic, geological, and fish habitat values are high.

Tentative classification: Wild (2 miles); the upper segment is accessible via a steep trail from the canyon rim, the lower canyon has no trail or road access. Recreational (0.5 mile); the area between the two BLM segments runs through private land in the village of Rio Chiquito.

It is determined that the Rio Quemado meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geological, and fish habitat values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Red River

Description: From the border with private land, south of the town of Questa to the border with the NM Game and Fish Hatchery, on the north side of the river. The south side of the river is Carson National Forest land. Township 28N Range 12E, section 2.

Total Length: 1 mile

Eligibility

The Red River enters BLM land at the beginning of its descent into a deep basalt gorge. Several springs are located north of the river at the beginning of this segment. Vegetation is pinon-juniper mix with ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and oak in the uplands, with alder and willow in the riparian zone. Game species found in the canyon include deer and elk. Scenic and recreational values are high on this segment.

Tentative classification: Recreational; no roads exist in this segment; there is a primitive trail along the river which is on top of a water line running from the beginning of this segment down to the fish hatchery. Power lines cross overhead in this segment.

It is determined that this segment of the Red River meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Canjilon Creek

Description: Canjilon Creek flows out of Carson National Forest land onto BLM land for 0.5 mile and then back into the Carson National Forest. Township 25N Range 4E, section 11.

Total Length: 0.5 mile

Eligibility

The Canjilon Creek enters a wide sandstone canyon near US-84, south of Cebolla. The vegetation in the riparian zone is willow with pinon-juniper on the slopes above. Big game species found in the canyon include elk and deer. This segment has high scenic value.

Tentative classification: Recreational; this segment is parallel to US-84.

It is determined that the Canjilon creek meets the criteria for free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Rio Grande (Buckman)

Description: Bordered on the north and west by San Ildefonso Indian land and on the south by the Santa Fe National Forest. Township 19N Range 7E, section 30.

Total Length: 1 mile

Eligibility

The Rio Grande enters a wide basalt canyon below Otowi Bridge with BLM land on one side of the river for the distance of one mile. Riparian vegetation is willow and tamarisk with pinon-juniper on the surrounding hillsides. Big game species in the area include deer. This segment of the Rio Grande has high recreational and scenic values.

Tentative classification: Scenic; there is a primitive road that accesses the canyon in this area.

It is determined that the Rio Grande meets the criteria for being free flowing and possessing outstandingly remarkable recreational values. It meets the minimum eligibility requirements to be considered for addition to the national system.

Suitability

The suitability determination of this segment will be deferred until the Forest Service initiates a suitability analysis so that the BLM can collaborate on assessing the entire public land portion of this stream.

Deferred Suitability for Stream Segments

Five stream segments (Arroyo Hondo, Tierra Amarilla, Agua Caliente, Ojo Sarco, and Rio de las Trampas) were studied and found eligible in the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan, signed in 2000. Suitability for these segments was deferred until the Forest Service undertakes a suitability study because these segments originate on Forest Service land and flow into BLM land. The BLM will collaborate with the Carson and the Santa Fe National forests when they do their suitability studies to determine the suitability of the above named streams and the streams identified in this study which also flow on both BLM and National Forest lands. Those stream segments found eligible in this study whose suitability is deferred are the following: Rio Cebolla, Santa Cruz

River, Rio Medio, Rio Quemado, Red River, Rio Grande (Buckman), Rio San Antonio, Santa Fe River, and Canjilon Creek.

Other Stream Segments Studied

Some 90 other drainages in the BLM Taos Field Office were examined for Wild and Scenic River System eligibility (see spreadsheet). Most are dry washes that flow only during rain and snowmelt events. None of these were determined to possess outstandingly remarkable values that would qualify them for inclusion into the national system (see following listing).

Stream Section	Drainage	Beginning		Ending		Sec	BLM Miles
		Township	Range	Township	Range		
Canon Empiedrado	Canadian	18N	23E	33 18N	23E	27	2.5
Canon Hondo, Canadian Trib.	Canadian	20N	24E	15 20N	24E	14	1
Canon Jullian	Canadian	17N	23E	30 17N	23E	29	3
Canon Largo	Canadian	16N	22E	30 17N	24E	18	5
Canon Vivian	Canadian	16N	23E	9 17N	23E	28	5
Canyon Del Muerto	Canadian	16N	23E	20 16N	23E	18	1.5
Canyon Olguin	Canadian	16N	22E	26 16N	23E	17	2.5
Carrizo Creek	Canadian	19N	23E	6 19N	23E	6	0.5
Chico Creek	Canadian	24N	23E	25 24N	23E	25	1
Corrazon Creek	Canadian	13N	22E	3 13N	22E	3	0.2
Largarita Creek	Canadian	16N	23E	30 16N	23E	29	2
Manueles Creek	Canadian	24N	17E	33 24N	17E	33	0.5
Ocate Creek	Canadian	22N	20E	9 22N	20E	9	0.3
Spring Canyon	Canadian	17N	23E	31 17N	23E	30	0.75
Arroyo De La Presa	Chama	21N	7E	15 21N	8E	6	4.5
Arroyo de Puerto Chiquito	Chama	27N	2E	31 27N	2E	28	2.25
Canjilon Creek	Chama	25N	4E	11 25N	4E	11	0.3
Canones Creek	Chama	23N	5E	30 23N	5E	30	0.5
Chama Trib Clsd to Camping	Chama	26N	2E	3 26N	2E	3	0.5
Chama Trib w/Cottonwoods	Chama	27N	2E	29 27N	2E	28	1
Chama Trib w/Badlands	Chama	27N	2E	21 27N	2E	28	1
Chama Trib w/out much	Chama	27N	2E	33 27N	2E	33	1
Chama Trib w/Pour off	Chama	26N	2E	4 26N	2E	4	1
Lobo Canyon	Chama	26N	3E	7 26N	3E	19	0.8
Ojo Caliente River	Chama	24N	8E	1 22N	7E	25	3.5
Rio Cebolla	Chama	26N	3E	16 26N	2E	23	3
Rio del Oso	Chama	22N	7E	25 22N	7E	25	0.25
Rio De Los Pinos	Conejos	32N	8E	34 32N	8E	27	0.25
Arroyo Del Plomo	Embudo	23N	11E	28 23N	10E	24	3.5
Canada De Piedra Lumbre	Embudo	23N	11E	15 23N	10E	27	7
Canada del Agua	Embudo	22N	11E	5 22N	11E	5	1
Ojo Sarco	Embudo	22N	11E	6 22N	10E	1	2
Rio De Las Trampas	Embudo	22N	11E	5 22N	11E	6	1.5
Arroyo la Joya	Galisteo	13N	8E	36 13N	8E	24	1
Canada de la Cueva	Galisteo	14N	9E	19 14N	8E	25	4
Rio San Antonio	Los Pinos	31N	8E	25 32N	8E	24	7
Canadian River	Mississippi	20N	24E	23 17N	24E	8	1.38
Arroyo de las Lemitas	Ojo Caliente	23N	9E	7 23N	8E	12	1.5
Arroyo del Pueblo	Ojo Caliente	23N	9E	21 23N	8E	24	3
Arroyo El Rito	Ojo Caliente	24N	8E	7 24N	8E	26	5
Arroyo Gavilan	Ojo Caliente	24N	9E	30 23N	8E	1	3
Canada Ancha, Ojo	Ojo Caliente	24N	8E	7 23N	8E	24	11
Canada de Buena Vista	Ojo Caliente	23N	9E	17 23N	9E	13	3
Canada de la Cruz	Ojo Caliente	23N	8E	17 23N	8E	34	5
Canada de los Alamos	Ojo Caliente	23N	8E	29 22N	8E	3	4
Canada de los Comanches	Ojo Caliente	24N	9E	8 24N	9E	7	2
Cow Creek	Pecos	15N	13E	33 14N	13E	13	1
Gonzales Arroyo	Pecos	12N	14E	11 12N	15E	7	3
Tecolote Creek	Pecos	13N	16E	22 13N	16E	22	0.25
Tres Hermanos Creek	Pecos	13N	16E	6 13N	16E	8	1
Agua Caliente Canyon	Rio Grande	23N	11E	3 24N	11E	33	3
Alamo Creek	Rio Grande	18N	8E	35 18N	8E	33	3
Arroyo de la Plaza Larga	Rio Grande	21N	7E	30 21N	8E	30	7
Arroyo Hondo, Stauralite	Rio Grande	24N	11E	24 24N	11E	15	3
Arroyo Ocole	Rio Grande	22N	10E	9 23N	9E	35	5.5
Arroyo Seco	Rio Grande	20N	10E	19 20N	9E	22	5
Calabasa Arroyo	Rio Grande	18N	8E	13 18N	8E	20	5.5
Canada Ancha, (Buckman)	Rio Grande	17N	8E	15 18N	7E	12	12
Canada Comanche	Rio Grande	23N	10E	4 23N	10E	18	5
Canada de las Entranas	Rio Grande	22N	10E	21 22N	9E	16	5.25
Cieneguilla	Rio Grande	24N	11E	25 24N	11E	33	4.2
Galisteo Creek	Rio Grande	14N	10E	30 14N	9E	25	0.75
Great Calm West Trib	Rio Grande	29N	10E	23 28N	12E	6	7.5
Horsestief Shorty Arroyo	Rio Grande	27N	12E	17 27N	12E	19	2
Pecos River	Rio Grande	14N	13E	5 12N	15E	12	1
Petaca, Upper	Rio Grande	30N	8E	35 27N	10E	30	4
Piedra Lumbre Canyon	Rio Grande	24N	11E	35 24N	11E	33	3
Punche	Rio Grande	30N	9E	12 29N	12E	17	21
Red River, Above Hatchery	Rio Grande	28N	12E	2 28N	12E	2	1.25
Rio Costilla	Rio Grande	32N	12E	19 32N	11E	25	2.5
Rio De Truchas	Rio Grande	21N	10E	4 22N	9E	16	11
Rio Embudo, Box	Rio Grande	23N	11E	27 23N	10E	35	3
Rio Embudo, Confluence	Rio Grande	23N	10E	28 23N	10E	19	2.75
Rio Grande, Above Buckman	Rio Grande	19N	7E	25 19N	7E	25	2.5
Rio Grande, Bosque Section	Rio Grande	23N	10E	21 23N	9E	34	4
Rio Medio	Rio Grande	20N	10E	9 20N	10E	17	3
Rio Quemado	Rio Grande	21N	10E	33 20N	10E	6	2.5
Santa Cruz River	Rio Grande	20N	10E	17 20N	10E	7	8
Santa Fe River, by Agua Fria	Rio Grande	17N	9E	31 17N	9E	31	6
Santa Fe River, The Gorge	Rio Grande	16N	8E	17 15N	7E	10	10
Ski Jump Arroyo	Rio Grande	27N	10E	22 27N	11E	21	5.5
Tierra Amarilla Canyon	Rio Grande	23N	11E	3 24N	11E	33	2
Navajo River	San Juan	32N	1W	10 32N	1W	20	0.5
Arroyo from Cerrito Pelado	Santa Fe	16N	7E	1 16N	8E	17	5.5
Arroyo in Tsinat Mesa	Santa Fe	16N	7E	25 15N	7E	2	6
Dry Cimmaron River		30N	59W	5 30N	59W	5	0.25

Appendix F: Land and Minerals Disposal Policy and Plan for Rights-of-Way Exclusion and Avoidance Areas Surface Estate Disposal Policy

All surface estate disposal actions require the preparation of a mineral report to assess the mineral potential of the property prior to disposal. Any potential interference with mineral development will be considered through the disposal process. The creation of a split-surface mineral estate causing surface interference with Federal mineral development will be avoided to the extent possible. Any surface disposal action will closely analyze potential impacts to Federal mineral material development. All surface estate patents within areas of known coal potential will carry a reservation of surface owner consent rights under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. The following items will be examined when considering the merits of any disposal:

- Consistency and conformance with current planning
- Consistency with mineral resource policy and fluid mineral leasing procedures
- Potential effects on special status species and their habitat
- Potential effects on recreation and wilderness values
- Potential effects on prime and unique farmland
- Floodplain and flood hazard evaluation
- Potential effects on cultural and paleontological resource values
- Potential effects on American Indian religious values
- Potential effects on visual resources
- Potential effects on ACECs
- Potential effects on wetlands
- Potential effects on existing rights and uses
- Public controversy
- Potential effects on health and safety
- Potential effects on adjacent uses and ownership
- Potential effects on air resources

The following procedures will be followed for the various types of surface estate land disposal actions in the Taos Field Office area.

Exchanges

Disposal by exchange must meet the criteria outlined in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) sec. 206, whereby it is determined that the public interest will be well served by making the proposed exchange. Exchanges within designated retention areas may be possible if it is clearly determined that it is in the best interest of the public. The following principles will guide the Taos Field Office in its land exchange program.

- 1) The Taos Field Office will continue to strive to process mutually benefiting, public interest land exchanges in a timely and efficient manner.
- 2) Acquisition through exchange rather than purchase of land or interests in land required for resource management programs, will always be the preferred method of acquisition,

as this will reduce the expansion of Federal real estate holdings and help to assure the integrity of state and local tax basis.

- 3) Comments from state and local governments and the general public shall be sought and considered before completion of each exchange.
- 4) Patent and deed reservations and conditions will be kept to the absolute minimum necessary to complete the transaction. Rights of third-party rights-of-way holders and other legal interests in the exchanged land will be protected.
- 5) The generally preferred rule is for both surface and subsurface (mineral) estates to be traded in an exchange. However, due to third-party encumbrances, or difficulties in the valuation process, it may be preferable to complete certain exchanges with reservations. Such exceptions to the generally preferred rule are to be made on a case-by-case basis.
- 6) Exchanges shall be utilized to consolidate the surface and subsurface estates for both the Federal government and non-Federal owners in split-estate situations.
- 7) Exchanges may be utilized to affect ownership and management area boundary changes or adjustments and to form more logical and efficient land and resource management areas for both the Federal government and non-Federal owners.
- 8) As the law permits, expenses incurred by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on exchange actions for the benefit of other Federal agencies, shall be recovered from the benefiting agency. The BLM shall not attempt to recover nominal costs.
- 9) When an exchange involves the cancellation in whole or in part of a grazing permit or lease, the compensation for rangeland improvements and 2-year notification requirements of section 402(g) of the FLPMA and 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 4110 will be met.
- 10) The acquisition of non-public land containing unique or unusual historic, cultural, mineral, recreational, scientific, and scenic or wildlife habitat values will be pursued when formulating any exchange proposal.

Sales

Property selected for sale must be identified as being potentially suitable for disposal in an approved land use plan and must meet one or more of the criteria outlined in the FLPMA sec. 203. In addition, if the tract is 2,500 acres or more, procedures outlined in sec. 203(c) must also be followed. The disposal criteria are as follows:

- Such tract because of its location or other characteristics, is difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public land, and is not suitable for management by another Federal department or agency; or
- Such tract was acquired for a specific purpose, and the tract is no longer needed for that or any other Federal purpose; or
- Disposal of such tract will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to expansion of communities and economic development, which cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land and which outweighs other public objectives and values, including but not limited to recreation and scenic values, which would be served by maintaining such tract in Federal ownership. Anticipated environmental impacts to existing resources such as minerals, wildlife, recreation, range, cultural resources, wilderness values, floodplains, paleontological values, visual resources, areas of critical environmental concern, wetlands, threatened or endangered rivers, prime or unique farm lands, and social and economic conditions, will be considered during the preparation of each environmental assessment. The environmental assessment will be used to determine whether the subject parcel is suitable to be offered

for sale. Once this determination has been made, a fair market appraisal of the property will be completed to set the minimum acceptable bid. If a tract is determined suitable for sale, the environmental assessment will analyze the method of sale that will be used to dispose of the tract. Several factors are considered in determining the method of sale which include but are not limited to the needs of state and/or local governments, adjoining landowners' interests and concerns, public policies, historical uses, and equitable distribution of the land. In accordance with 43 CFR 2711.3, the Taos Field Office policy for determining the sale method is as follows:

- 1) Competitive bidding is the preferred method of sale and will be used where clearly there will be a number of interested parties bidding for the land and they could make practicable use of the land regardless of adjoining landownership. Competitive bidding will also be used where the land is clearly within a developing or urbanizing area and land values are increasing due to their location and interest on the competitive market. If there is no overriding basis for modified competition or direct sale, the land for sale will go by sealed bids; if unsold, the tract is offered for sale over-the-counter.
- 2) Modified competitive bidding may be used to permit the existing grazing user or adjoining landowner to meet the high bid or to limit the number of persons permitted to bid on the land. These sales will normally be for land not located near urban expansion areas or in areas with rapidly increasing land values, when there is a need to avoid jeopardizing existing use of adjacent land, to assure compatibility of the possible uses with adjacent land, and avoid dislocation of existing users. This procedure will allow for limited competitive bidding to protect ongoing use.
- 3) Direct (without competition) sales may be used when, in the opinion of the authorized officer, the public interest would best be served. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - A tract identified for transfer to state or local governments or nonprofit organizations; or
 - A tract identified for sale that is an integral part of a project or of public importance and speculative bidding would jeopardize the timely completion and economic viability of the project; or
 - There is a need to recognize authorized use such as an existing business which would be threatened if the tract were purchased by other than the authorized user, or
 - A tract is surrounded by land in non-Federal ownership and does not have public access; or
 - The land supports inadvertent unauthorized use or occupancy.
- 4) When land has been offered for sale under direct or modified bidding procedures and remains unsold, then the land will be re-offered by the competitive bidding procedure. In no case will the land be sold for less than fair market value. Public participation and intergovernmental coordination will be sought and encouraged during the development of each sale. Where a decision is made to dispose of land within a grazing allotment, permittees and lessees shall be given 2 years prior notification before their grazing preference may be cancelled in whole or part. A permittee or lessee may unconditionally waive the 2-year prior notification. The land may be disposed of at any time, provided a condition of the exchange or sale

allows the existing grazing user to continue grazing livestock on the land for at least 2 years from the date the 2-year notice is received. 43 CFR 2711.1-3 addresses sales requiring grazing permits or lease cancellations. In such cases, the condition of the disposal will include the same terms and conditions as the permit/lease in regard to numbers, kind of livestock, season-of-use, animal unit months, and maintenance of range improvements. Fees must be the same as the Federal grazing fees. Grazing permittees/lessees will receive fair market value (less salvage value) for their interest in authorized permanent rangeland improvements located on public land in accordance with 43 CFR 4120.3-6. Compensation for grazing improvements under the land sale action is addressed in 43 CFR 2711.4-1. If floodplain tracts are designated for disposal, the patent will contain language indemnifying the United States against any claims for loss or injury due to flooding. Land designated as retention areas may be offered for disposal through a competitive sale unless the authorized officer determines the interest of the public would best be served by modified competitive bidding or direct sale (WO IM-2002-143). Land ownership patterns within these areas are moderately consolidated and contain small tracts of land. Land sale may be pursued if the disposal of land within designated retention areas, not including areas of critical environmental concerns (ACECs) and special recreational management areas (SRMAs) would help enhance manageability and consolidate land status. Several parcels have no legal public access which makes manageability difficult. The parcels offered for disposal shall contain no known significant resource values.

Wilderness study areas (WSAs) and retention areas within ACECs, and SRMAs shall be excluded and unavailable for disposal through sales and/or exchanges. Consolidation of ownership within these specially managed areas would be through acquisition of state and private land to continue improving the ownership and manageability. Any exchange involving land within retention areas must be exchanged for land with a higher resource value than land being disposed. Direct sales must be clearly determined by the authorized officer to ensure that the sale is in the best interest of the public. When land has been offered for direct or modified bidding and remains unsold, the land will be re-offered under competitive bidding procedures. Mineral (subsurface) estate will be retained for all sales that occur within designated retention areas. Permittees will be given 2 years prior notification to disposal of land within a grazing allotment (permits/leases) before their grazing may be cancelled in whole or part.

Sales and Exchanges Involving Wetlands

Bureau policy is to retain wetlands in Federal ownership unless Federal, state, public and private institutions and parties have demonstrated the ability to maintain, restore, and protect wetlands and riparian habitats on a continuous basis (BLM Manual 6740). Sales and exchanges may be authorized when:

- The tract of public wetlands is either so small or remote that it is uneconomical to manage.
- The tract of public wetlands is not suitable for management by another Federal agency.
- The patent contains restrictions of uses as prohibited by identified Federal, state, or local wetlands regulations.

- The patent contains restrictions and conditions that ensure the patentee can maintain, restore, and protect the wetlands on a continuous basis.

Recreation and Public Purposes Patents

The Taos Field Office will continue to issue patents to qualified governmental and nonprofit entities for recreational and public purpose sites under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act. These patents may be issued at less than fair market value as outlined in 43 CFR 2740. Applications for patent of public land under the R&PP Act will be processed as a Taos Field Office priority under the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and will be subject to public review. Current policy dictates that new sanitary landfill sites or any other purpose which may result in or include the disposal, placement, or release of any hazardous substance will be patented and no new leases will be issued in the Taos Field Office pursuant to the R&PP Act for these uses. R&PP applications may be entertained on a case-by-case basis in all planning units, except in specially designated areas (ACEC's, etc.); yet, a determination must always be made that the disposal action is in the public's interest.

Mineral Estate Disposal Policy

Disposal of the mineral estate is possible under sections 206 and 209 of the FLPMA. It is the policy of the BLM to avoid disposing of the surface estate while retaining the mineral estate unless there are areas of "known mineral value," as defined in 43 CFR 2720.0-5. In areas of "known mineral value", the mineral estate (and the surface estate if substantial interference to development will result), should be retained except as described below. Prior to any land disposal, a "mineral value" determination must be made following a field reconnaissance by a BLM mineral examiner. A mineral report must be written to evaluate the leasable, locatable, and salable mineral potential of each proposed sale or exchange. Under the FLPMA, the conclusion of the mineral examiner will include an opinion as to whether the land has "known mineral values." If professional judgment concludes that the land does not contain "known mineral values", the surface and subsurface estate may be conveyed, subject to any existing mining claim(s) or mineral leases. A mining claim of record under section 314 of the FLPMA generally prevents an exchange or sale. If the land is under mining claim, the surface should be retained under Federal ownership or the claim examined for validity. However, a validity examination may be waived and the BLM may proceed with the sale or exchange of both the surface and the mineral estate, subject to the existing mining claim(s) if:

- The land meets the criteria for disposal as determined through land-use planning; and
- The land has no "known mineral value" as determined by a BLM geologist or mining engineer; and
- The prospective patentee is willing to accept a defensible title, preserving whatever rights the mining claimant may have. Conveyance of the surface and mineral estate would be subject to "existing mining claim(s)", allowing the mining claimant to apply for and receive full fee patent if a valid discovery were made prior to the date of transfer under sections 206 or 209, or alternatively, receive patent to the mineral estate only if discovery were made after the original conveyance.

The BLM will proceed with a sale or exchange only after reasonable efforts have been made to secure relinquishment of the mining claims(s). If the mining claimant opposes the action, the Notice of Realty Action protest procedures will apply.

For a direct sale or an exchange, the proponent must be informed early and fully of the potential title conflicts and rights of the mining claimant under the law. The BLM should then proceed only if these conditions are acceptable to the proponent. For a proposed competitive sale, the field office must carefully consider the effect on sale price, likelihood of success, and interests to be served if the sale is made subject to the rights of the mining claimant. If it is clearly in the public interest to proceed, the BLM must secure purchaser waiver of any liability against the United States in the event of subsequent title litigation. In cases where land is patented without a reservation of locatable minerals, a FLPMA patent is believed to have standing to bring private contest (43 CFR 4.450) against the mining claim(s). Should he or she do so, the burden is upon the patentee to prove lack of discovery. If the patentee is successful, or if the claims are abandoned or relinquished, the land will not be open to further location, and the patentee will receive full title to the involved locatable minerals. Mining claim locations and mineral leases for land in which the surface title has passed under the FLPMA disposal authority, may be made only after regulations providing for such locations or leasing have been promulgated. Because these regulations have not as yet been issued, land disposed of under the FLPMA is subject to de facto withdrawal. Land disposed of under the FLMPA is not withdrawn from mineral material sales or free-use permits.

All minerals must be reserved if Federal land is conveyed out of Federal ownership pursuant to the FLPMA disposal authority, except in the limited instances that follow:

1. Sales

a. If the public land proposed for sale is determined to have "known mineral values" for locatable, leasable, or salable minerals, one of the following courses of action may be taken:

- (1) Reject the offer to purchase or cancel the offer of sale.
- (2) Dispose of the surface estate and reserve all of the mineral interests to the United States.
- (3) Dispose of the surface and convey all or part of the mineral interests under terms set forth in section 209(b) of the FLPMA.

b. If the land has no "known mineral value", the mineral interests may be simultaneously disposed of with the surface estate under authority of section 209(b) of the FLPMA.

2. Exchanges

a. Public land which does not have "known mineral values" may be offered for exchange without any mineral reservation. This will apply whether or not the non-Federal party in an exchange controls the minerals under his or her land.

b. If the public land has some potential for mineral development, reserving the mineral interest is not mandatory as long as the values can be equalized by the payment of money and as long as the payment does not exceed 25 percent of the total value of the land. In any case, normally, it is desirable to keep surface and mineral ownership together in an exchange, whenever possible, to eliminate future problems associated with split-estate ownership.

c. If the public land in an exchange is determined to have "known mineral values" for locatable, leasable, or salable minerals, it may be in the public interest to cancel the offer,

depending upon the significance of the deposits. The leasable minerals alone can be reserved if significant.

Disposals Involving Land Use Authorizations

Disposal of lands involving right-of-way grants would be subject to Federal regulations at 43 CFR 2807.15. These regulations differentiate between transferring lands to another Federal agency and transferring to non-Federal ownership. If there is a proposal to transfer land to another Federal agency which encumbers an existing right-of-way, the BLM may, after reasonable notice to the right-of-way grant holder, transfer administration of grant as part of the land transfer, unless doing so would diminish the grant holder's rights. If the BLM determines the grant rights would be diminished by such a transfer, it can still transfer the land, but retain administration of the grant under existing terms and conditions.

There are three options for when there is a proposal to transfer the land the grant encumbers out of Federal ownership. The BLM may, after reasonable notice to grantee and in conformance with existing policies and procedures, transfer the land subject to the grants. In this case, administration of the grant for the lands is transferred to the new owner of the land. Another option is to transfer the land, but the BLM would retain administration of the grant. The third option is to reserve to the Federal government the land your grant encumbers, such that the BLM would retain administration of the grant.

In addition, the BLM, or if the BLM no longer administers the land, the new land owner may negotiate new grant terms and conditions with the grant holder. This may include increasing the term of the grant, should the holder request it, to a perpetual grant under 2806.23(c) of this part or providing for an easement. In the case where BLM retains administration of the grant, or reserves the land the grant encumbers, the grant will be managed under the same police and guidelines as before.

Rights-of-Way Exclusion Areas Plan

The Draft Taos Resource Management Plan Revision/Environmental Impact Statement identified a number of rights-of-way exclusion areas within the Taos decision area. This approach would allow a rights-of-way applicant to review resource area maps to determine what areas are closed to development and which open areas are subject to thorough examination with the potential for application rejection. All applicants would be notified that their project, if placed in an avoidance area, may be subject but not limited to requirements for re-contouring and/or revegetating disturbed areas, painting certain above-ground structures to blend with the surrounding landscape and vegetation, and using special tower design and/or pole color.

All designated rights-of-way exclusion areas would be closed to all forms of new rights-of-way development (unless specifically allowed). The BLM Manual 1623.51 A. 1 c states that rights-of-way exclusion areas are areas where future rights-of-way may be granted only when mandated by law. Mining claimants cannot be denied reasonable access to an exclusion area unless the land is withdrawn from mineral entry (see 43 CFR § 3809.0-6). The majority of the rights-of-way exclusion areas are within wilderness study areas, areas of critical environmental concern, and areas assigned visual resource inventory class I (Visual Resource Management class I). Class I is assigned to areas where management decisions have been made to preserve the scenic values within the natural landscape. The objective of this class is to greatly minimize any level of change to the existing characteristics of the landscape. As a point of clarification, it should be recognized that many of the areas or portions thereof discussed within this plan are

presently under wilderness review and designated as wilderness study areas. There are three wilderness study areas totaling approximately 34,795 acres within the Taos decision area. These lands are presently being managed under the Interim Policy and Guidelines for Land Under Wilderness Review dated July 5, 1995, and will continue to be managed until they are either added to the National Wilderness Preservation System or removed from wilderness review. Any rights-of-way authorizations granted in these areas after they are removed from wilderness review would be managed under the prescriptions within this plan.

All rights-of-way applicants should be aware that a mining claimant may refuse to allow a right-of-way to cross a claim if such claim was located prior to July 23, 1955. In such cases, the BLM would reject a rights-of-way application request or would help the applicant in the consideration of an alternative route which would be acceptable.

The rights-of-way avoidance areas are defined in the BLM Manual 1623.52 as areas where future rights-of-way may be granted only when no feasible alternative route is available. The purpose of the rights-of-way avoidance areas is to reduce the likelihood of rights-of-way being placed in these areas. When possible, alternative routes and sites would be considered. The authorized officer would closely review goals and objectives for special designated areas identified as avoidance areas in the resource management plan. This process would guide the authorized officer to determine which rights-of-way applications would be rejected upon submittal or processed for issue. All issued rights-of-way grants would be subject to special resource mitigating measures or stipulations. The terms and conditions of all rights-of-way grants depend upon the sensitivity of the affected resource, applicable laws and regulations, and management objectives of special designated areas identified in the Taos Resource Management Plan. All rights-of-way proposals would require the preparation of a site specific environmental analysis to determine impacts and mitigating measures needed to specifically protect sensitive resource values.

The rights-of-way avoidance areas also apply to land use leases and permits in accordance with section 302 of the FLMPA. The special designated areas identified in the resource management plan, including areas of critical environmental concern, special recreation management areas, and special management areas, include management prescriptions which exclude or avoid leases as well as rights-of-way. Leases and permits related to realty or land actions would be discouraged within avoidance areas. In cases where the location of the proposed activity cannot be avoided, the authorized officer will analyze it on a case-by-case basis. All leases and permits would be subject to the same review as stated in the paragraph above. All issued leases and permits would be subject to special resource mitigating measures and/or stipulations. These mitigation measures and/or stipulations prescribed would depend on the sensitivity of the affected resources, applicable laws and regulations, and the objective identified in the resource management plan.

All expansions of existing rights-of-way, permits, and leases located within the avoidance areas would be avoided. When avoidance is impossible, the proposed expansion would be subject to mitigation measures. The authorized officer would closely review the goals and objectives of the management area in which the proposed expansion would occur. This would help determine whether to reject or authorize the proposed expansion. All expansions which significantly conflict with the goals and objectives for special designated areas identified in the resource management plan would be rejected upon submittal. When the number of facilities within an avoidance area reaches the point of saturation, the authorized officer may determine that no additional authorizations will be granted. This determination would be made on the basis of

whether the management objectives for the Visual Resource Management class for the area can no longer support additional facilities without jeopardizing the visual quality of the area. This plan may be modified by the authorized officer at any time and is intended strictly as a guideline for the authorization of newly proposed rights-of-way projects within the Taos Field Office

Appendix G: Special Status Species Management

Management guidance is provided below for most special status species habitat that occurs on BLM lands managed by the Taos Field Office, while the remaining listed species habitat that might occur within the planning area will be subject to the guidelines presented in section 2.1.6, Special Status Species.

Species given special status are subject to change.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. The Southwestern willow flycatcher is listed as a Federal endangered species and BLM sensitive species. To protect Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat, the BLM will continue to implement the following management plans: The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Management Plan for the Taos Field Office (USDI-BLM 1998), the USFWS Recovery Plan for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (USDI-USFWS 2002), the Final EIS for Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Management in the Taos Field Office (USDI-BLM 2000b), and the Rio Grande Corridor Final Plan (USDI-BLM 2000a). BLM management actions will incorporate those recovery actions for the Southwestern willow flycatcher that will increase and improve occupied, suitable, and potential breeding habitat; increase metapopulation stability; and minimize threats to migration habitat; while the BLM will continue to survey and monitor populations and provide public education and outreach.

The only critical habitat designation within the planning area is that for the Southwestern willow flycatcher. The Final Rule establishing critical habitat for the Southwestern willow flycatcher was published on October 19, 2005 (*Federal Register*, Volume 70, Number 201), for land identified along the Rio Grande from Taos Junction Bridge to the border of the Pueblo of Ohkay Owingeh.

As needed, seasonal restrictions on BLM authorized activities will be applied in Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat from April 15 through September 15. These dates could be revised if new data becomes available. The following management prescriptions for the Southwestern willow flycatcher will apply:

- Presence/absence surveys will be conducted annually for the species in potential habitat areas where project activity is expected; and
- A 0.25-mile buffer will be established around any known Southwestern willow flycatcher nests that are being defended as a territory, typically during the breeding season from April through September, and project activity will be excluded from this buffer zone.

Gunnison's Prairie Dog. The Gunnison's prairie dog (montane population) is listed as a Federal candidate species and BLM sensitive species and is known to have active populations in the planning area. To protect Gunnison's prairie dog habitat, the BLM will continue surveying and mapping of colonies and monitoring for plague, the main threat to existing populations (*Federal Register*, Volume 73, Number 24, February 5, 2008). The Draft Conservation Plan for Gunnison's Prairie Dog (NMDGF 2008) outlines a conservation approach for this species, and Taos Field Office will, wherever feasible, employ the strategies and actions outlined therein to promote conservation and minimize disturbance to the Gunnison's prairie dogs where they occur or have potential habitat within the planning area. Focal populations occur in the Taos Plateau planning unit and will be managed for the protection of the metapopulation dynamics required for sustainability of the species. Potential areas for introduction, transplant or augmentation may be considered in cooperation with the NMDGF.

Black-footed Ferret. The black-footed ferret is a federally listed endangered and BLM sensitive species. In 1998, Vermejo Park Ranch and the Ted Turner Endangered Species Fund partnered with the USFWS to restore the species to the wild. Beginning with pen-based breeding facilities, the project evolved into an experimental release site and after 10 years resulted in permanent release on the Vermejo Park Ranch. Although the black-footed ferret has been extirpated from the state of New Mexico for some time, alerts beginning in 2006 have been issued by the USFWS to action agencies to survey for this species where projects are proposed in prairie dog towns or complexes. In the planning area, this will include those prairie dog colonies located in the Taos Plateau (see description for Gunnison's prairie dog below). To date, there have been no documented sightings of black-footed ferret on BLM land in the planning area, nor does potential habitat currently exist for the species. Potential areas for introduction, transplant or augmentation may be considered in cooperation with the NMDGF.

Bald Eagle. The bald eagle is a BLM sensitive species. According to the BLM 6840 Manual, because it was removed from the Federal threatened and endangered species list in 2007, it will remain a BLM sensitive species until 2012. There are no known roost sites in the planning area; however, activities during the migratory season when the eagle may be present or actions in eagle habitat that might occur when the species is not present will be conducted in a manner according to the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (USDI-FWS 2007) to avoid or minimize disturbance to the species.

Northern Goshawk. The northern goshawk is a BLM sensitive species, with only one known location on BLM lands in the Taos Plateau planning unit. The specific nest site is currently unknown, and, until determined, management activities where forestry or fire is employed will be conducted in a manner to minimize disturbance and enhance habitat features for this species. As landbird surveys are conducted at this site when funding allows, data regarding northern goshawk will inform management where this species occurs and the effects of land use decisions.

Ferruginous Hawk. The ferruginous hawk is a BLM sensitive species, and there is one location in the Taos Plateau planning unit where this species has been documented. Retention of roost trees and range management will ensure protection of habitat and enhancement of forage opportunities for this species. As surveys and monitoring of raptors throughout the planning area occur, data regarding ferruginous hawk will inform management where this species occurs and the effects of land use decisions.

Burrowing Owl. The burrowing owl is a BLM sensitive species, and there are known populations in the Taos Plateau and Santa Fe planning units. Timing restrictions for range management, rights-of-way and other projects that could disturb habitat will include measures to prevent impacts during the breeding season when the rearing and fledging of young occur. As projects occur within occupied or potential habitat, surveys and monitoring of burrowing owl will inform management where this species occurs and the effects of land use decisions. A statewide interagency conservation plan is not yet in place; however, once completed it will inform the BLM of conservation strategies recommended to promote enhancement of habitat for the species.

Loggerhead shrike. The loggerhead shrike is a BLM sensitive species. There have been documented occurrences of this species in the Taos Plateau and West Santa Fe planning units. It is quite possible they occur throughout the planning area during the migratory bird breeding season. As breeding bird surveys are conducted or project-level site visits attended by qualified

wildlife biologists occur, data regarding loggerhead shrike will inform management where this species occurs and the effects of land use decisions.

Long-eared myotis. The long-eared myotis bat is listed as a BLM sensitive species and there have been documented reports of this species in the Taos Plateau and Chama planning units. Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Pale Townsend's big-eared bat. The Pale Townsend's big-eared bat is a BLM sensitive species. This species occurs in semi-desert shrub lands, pinyon-juniper woodlands, and open montane forests. The species may occupy caves, mine tunnels, or large rock shelters ranging from low desert to mixed conifer woodland. Townsend's big-eared bat has occurred on BLM lands in Taos and Los Alamos counties (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, proper protection of cave and underground mine habitat, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Small-footed myotis. The small-footed myotis is a BLM sensitive species and occurs in deserts, chaparral, riparian zones, and coniferous forest. It is most common above piñon-juniper forest. Individuals are known to roost singly or in small groups in cliff and rock crevices, buildings, concrete overpasses, caves, and mines. Small-footed myotis has been documented in Rio Arriba, Taos, and Los Alamos counties on BLM lands (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, proper protection of cave and underground mine habitat, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Fringed myotis. The fringed myotis bat is a BLM sensitive species and appears to be most common in drier woodlands (oak, pinyon-juniper, ponderosa pine), but is found in a wide variety of habitats including desert scrub, mesic coniferous forest, grassland, and sage-grass steppe. The fringed myotis has been documented in Taos County on BLM lands (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Long-legged myotis. The long-legged myotis bat is a BLM sensitive species and uses abandoned buildings, cracks in the ground, cliff crevices, exfoliating tree bark, hollows within snags as summer day roosts, and caves and mine tunnels as hibernacula. The long-legged myotis has been documented in Taos and Los Alamos counties on BLM lands (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, proper protection of cave and underground mine habitat, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Yuma myotis. The Yuma myotis bat is a BLM sensitive species and is usually associated with permanent sources of water, typically rivers and streams. It occurs in a variety of habitats including riparian, scrublands, deserts and forests. The species roosts in bridges, buildings, cliff crevices, caves, mines, and trees. The Yuma myotis has been documented on BLM lands in Taos County (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, proper protection of cave and

underground mine habitat, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Big free-tailed bat. The big-free tailed bat is a BLM sensitive species and appears to be mainly an inhabitant of rugged, rocky habitats in arid landscapes. It has been found in a variety of plant associations, including desert shrub, woodlands, and evergreen forests. It appears to be associated with lowlands, but has been documented at around 8,000 feet in New Mexico (WBWG 2005). This species is a seasonal migrant and roosts mainly in the crevices of rocks in cliff situations, although there is some documentation of roosting in buildings, caves, and tree cavities. The big free-tailed bat has been documented on BLM lands in Rio Arriba County (Gannon 1997). Continued development of wildlife waters accessible to bats, proper siting and mitigation for bats where wind development may occur, proper protection of cave and underground mine habitat, and project-related surveys for this species will allow for proper management decisions and conservation of this species.

Arkansas River shiner. The Arkansas River basin population of the Arkansas River shiner is a BLM sensitive species and federally listed as threatened and occurs in the Canadian River near the New Mexico/Texas border. The Taos Field Office will monitor for habitat condition and presence of this species as necessary for projects on BLM parcels on the Canadian River.

Rio Grande cutthroat trout. Rio Grande cutthroat trout (RGCT) is a BLM sensitive species and listed as a Federal candidate species and occurs in perennial streams within the planning area. The BLM is a signatory on a multi-state, multi-agency conservation agreement for RGCT and participates in conservation planning and activities. The BLM will continue this participation and work to protect and enhance RGCT habitat and populations.

Flathead chub. The Flathead chub is listed as a BLM sensitive species and occurs in perennial streams in the planning area. The BLM has not created any conservation plans for this species, and there are no regional conservation plans. The BLM will continue to monitor the species population and habitats, but the Taos Field Office will support the removal of this species from the sensitive list as populations appear to be stable.

Plains minnow. The plains minnow is listed as a BLM sensitive species and occurs in perennial streams on the east side of the planning area. The BLM has not created any conservation plans for this species and there are no regional conservation plans. The BLM will continue to monitor the species population and habitats, but the Taos Field Office will support removal of this species from the sensitive list as populations appear to be stable.

Santa Fe Cholla. The Santa Fe cholla is a BLM sensitive species. There is one known population on BLM lands within the planning area. Retention of these lands, along with site-specific surveys in areas known to contain other populations of the species, and, if found, monitoring, and protection from disturbance, will allow this population to continue and perhaps expand onto adjacent BLM lands.

Grama Grass Cactus. The grama grass cactus is a BLM sensitive species. There have been documented reports of this species in the Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties. Habitat for this species consists of grama grasslands and pinyon-juniper woodlands, and is located in the Chama, Lower Gorge/Copperhill, Ojo Caliente, El Palacio, West Santa Fe, and Galisteo planning units. Site-specific surveys for the species will continue as projects are proposed on BLM lands. Management strategies will be developed for the species as locations are determined and guidance provided.

Ripley's milkvetch. The Ripley's milkvetch is a BLM sensitive species. It is known in the planning area from a 600-square mile area along the southwestern perimeter of the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Ripley's milkvetch was reported on BLM and Forest Service lands in the Taos Plateau planning unit in 1990; however, no known populations exist today. Management strategies will be developed for the species as locations are determined and guidance provided.

Appendix H: Maps

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