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# The Grand Junction RMP Newsletter

## Resource Management Planning Update

On January 9, 2009, the BLM Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) completed the public scoping process as part of its Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision. A scoping report summarizing the comments received and further defining the issues for the GJFO is available for viewing. Information and comments gathered during public scoping will be used as the GJFO begins the alternatives development process. BLM staff will continue collecting data from the public, stakeholders, cooperators, and other agencies on all programs throughout the planning process, including Travel Management and Wild and Scenic Rivers, which are highlighted in this newsletter. 



BLM hosted six travel management workshops throughout the GJFO, including one in Grand Junction on February 19, 2009.

## BLM Gathering Input on Roads and Trails

The GJFO is gathering information about the routes (roads and trails) under its management as a part of its RMP revision. The BLM's Travel Management Plan will address different types of travel on BLM lands, from hiking and horseback riding to motorcycles and off-highway vehicles. It will address which routes should be open to certain uses, which should be closed, and will examine if new routes should be developed.

The first travel management-specific public comment period focused on gathering data from the public on BLM's existing route inventory. In February 2009, the GJFO

## Documents Available for Public Review

The following documents are or will soon be available on the GJFO web site, <http://www.blm.gov/colst/enlfo/gjfo.html>:

- Scoping Report
- Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Report, suitability criteria, and common questions and answers
- Analysis of the Management Situation  
(expected Summer 2009)



**Mark your calendar!**  
Upcoming Public Comment Period

**July 20—August 21, 2009**  
Travel Management Desired Future Conditions

hosted six public workshops at which approximately 3,200 miles of inventoried roads and trails were displayed on 23 maps. The BLM received an overwhelming response, with close to 1,500 comments collected during the comment period, which ended on March 20, 2009. Most comments (76%) focused on existing routes, about 14% proposed new trails not in the BLM's inventory, and 6% were general comments about the travel management planning process.

Based on the public's interest, the BLM will continue to gather input during a second 30-day comment period from July 20 to August 21, 2009. This period will focus on gathering the public's desired future conditions for the GJFO travel route network.

"We want to know what the users of our roads and trails think so that we can create a more manageable and sustainable system that ensures safety and access to areas the public is interested in," said Field Office Manager Catherine Robertson. "Our goal is to manage the roads and trails system so that the public can access popular areas, scenic areas, and areas of historical and cultural interest while minimizing resource damage."

Information gathered during the public comment periods will be used by the BLM to draft management alternatives for the RMP. The Draft RMP will be available for at least a 90-day public comment period when it is released early 2010. 

# Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report Now Available

The Wild and Scenic River (WSR) Eligibility Report is complete and available online. The report is the **first step** in a Wild and Scenic River evaluation being conducted as the GJFO revises its RMP. The eligibility report provides an inventory of the river and stream segments on BLM lands that are eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS).

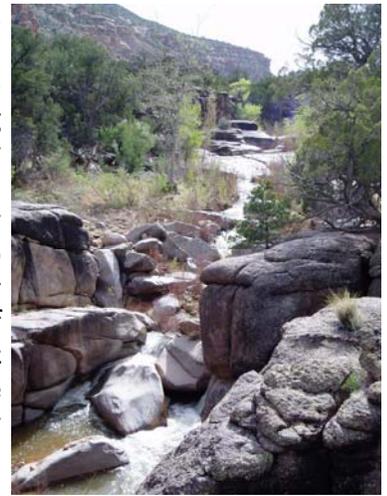
The report evaluated 117 river and stream segments and found 20 were eligible. Eligible segments include a 20-mile stretch of the Colorado River west of Grand Junction, 18 miles of Big Dominguez Creek, 15 miles of Little Dominguez Creek, and stretches of the Dolores and Gunnison Rivers.

The **second step** is a suitability study that determines which, if any, of the eligible segments are suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS based on criteria set forth in the WSR Act. The suitability process will begin in Summer 2009 and will involve an interdisciplinary study of each eligible segment. The public may provide the BLM additional information pertaining to the suitability criteria in order for the BLM to come to an informed determination on the suitability of the eligible river and stream segments.

During alternatives development, the BLM will consider alternative approaches to managing water-related values, fully recognizing that wild and scenic river designation may not be the only way to protect these values. After a thorough analysis of suitability criteria and input from stakeholders and the public, the BLM may or may not actively recommend suitable segments for WSR designation.

The suitability study will be included in the Draft RMP, which will analyze a range of suitability determinations and possible recommendations to Congress. River segments determined to be eligible are afforded interim protective management under BLM authorities until a suitability study is completed. The RMP revision process and suitability analysis is scheduled to be completed in 2011.

For more information on the WSR Act, designation into the NWSRS, and many other management-related issues, visit <http://www.rivers.gov>. 



A portion of the Gunnison River was found eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS.

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**How to contact us**  
If you have questions about the RMP, please contact:  
Mr. Matt Anderson  
Bureau of Land Management  
Grand Junction Field Office  
2815 H Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81506  
970-244-3027  
gifo\_rmp@blm.gov

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US Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Grand Junction Field Office  
2815 H Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81506



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