

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado State Office
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May 7, 1999

In Reply Refer To:
1737 (CO-932) P

EMS Transmission 05/07/99
Instruction Memorandum No. CO-99-023
Expires: 9/30/99

To: Field Office Managers, Riparian Coordinators

From: Deputy State Director, Resource Services

Subject: Colorado Riparian Area Strategic Plan

Attached are your copies of Colorado's Riparian Area Strategic Plan. This strategic plan provides direction for Colorado's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) riparian program over the next five years. It is designed to be used in conjunction with existing district riparian strategic plans. Riparian coordinators from each field office have reviewed the plan and their comments have been incorporated throughout.

The plan contains riparian program goals, as well as planned actions that will help us accomplish each goal. The program goals are realistic and mainly serve to reaffirm the types of actions that we are already undertaking. Appendices to the plan include an overview of riparian resources on public lands in Colorado, an update on the current condition of our riparian resources, and a review of riparian program accomplishments since 1987.

The goals and planned actions found in the plan are intended as guidance.

Not all goals or planned actions will be applicable to each field office or situation. The priorities for the riparian program that are set forth in this plan should be considered as one part of Colorado BLM's overall assessments of land health. Although our agency focus is moving away from individual program plans to broader scale planning efforts, such as land health assessments, it is critical that the riparian program retain some of its focus on small scale local projects.

There is a direct correlation between existing BLM assessments of riparian functioning condition and compliance with public land health standard number two. If all riparian sites within a given allotment are determined to be in proper functioning condition or functioning-at-risk with an upward trend, then standard number two is being met. The Riparian Area Strategic Plan supports efforts to improve riparian conditions at the local project level while recognizing that riparian assessments will be an integral part of upcoming public land health standards and guidelines implementation.

Please direct comments or questions to Jay Thompson, Riparian Coordinator, at (303)239-3724.

Signed by
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Deputy State Director,
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Authenticated by
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Attachment

COLORADO RIPARIAN AREA STRATEGIC PLAN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COLORADO STATE OFFICE

Ann J. Morgan
Colorado State Director

February, 1999

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Executive Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Colorado recognizes the values of productive riparian areas and wetlands, and is strongly committed to proper management of these vital resources. This strategic plan establishes priorities and provides direction for Colorado BLM's riparian program over the next five years. Evaluations of riparian functioning condition have been completed for approximately 90% of Colorado BLM's riparian areas during the past 8 years. These assessments should now be used to guide on-the-ground improvement efforts over the next five years.

The Colorado Riparian Program shares goals similar to those presented in BLM's Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's. The goals are to: (1) implement riparian management, protection, and restoration efforts so that 75% of our riparian areas are in proper functioning condition, or functioning-at-risk with an upward trend; (2) acquire new and expand existing key riparian areas to provide for maximum public benefit and efficient management; (3) increase the understanding and awareness of riparian values and ensure commitment of proper riparian-wetland management through an aggressive information/outreach program, training, and research; and, (4) establish new and improve existing partnerships to foster cooperative restoration and management of riparian areas. Each goal is accompanied by several planned actions designed to help achieve that goal.

Following the strategic plan, there are three appendices that provide an overview of :

- Riparian resources on BLM lands in Colorado (Appendix A)
- Current condition of BLM riparian areas in Colorado (Appendix B)
- Riparian program accomplishments (Appendix C)

Riparian Resources, Appendix A: Riparian areas are among the most productive ecosystems of the over 8 million acres managed by the BLM in Colorado. Public lands contain over 38,000 acres of riparian vegetation, associated with approximately 4,280 miles of perennial and intermittent streams. In

addition, there are over 7,500 acres of riparian vegetation associated with wetlands and other standing water habitats. The total acreage of riparian vegetation on BLM lands in Colorado is about 46,000 acres, which represents about 0.6% of BLM's land holdings in Colorado.

Current Riparian Condition, Appendix B: Riparian condition assessments show that 45% of our riverine (lotic) riparian areas are now functioning properly. The remainder of our lotic riparian areas are functioning-at-risk (33%) or not functioning properly (16%). We have not yet evaluated 7% of our lotic riparian areas. Assessments reveal that 70% our non-riverine (lentic) riparian areas are functioning properly, 14% are functioning-at-risk, and 4% are not functioning properly. Thirteen percent (13%) of our lentic riparian areas still need to be evaluated.

Riparian Accomplishments, Appendix C: Over the past ten years, approximately 1,060 riparian improvement projects have been completed on public lands in Colorado. An additional 250 existing riparian projects have been maintained on numerous streams, lakes, and wetland sites. These projects protected or improved approximately 1,260 miles and 7,530 acres of riparian and wetland habitat. We have conducted inventories on approximately 11,700 miles of streams and 7,900 acres of wetlands to determine riparian condition. We have also completed or revised 140 activity plans which include riparian objectives, and continue to monitor 690 plans with specific riparian objectives. We are taking an ecosystem approach to managing riparian areas, concentrating on entire watersheds and involving all land owners and land managers. Via the ecosystem approach, Colorado BLM has been able to form and maintain long-term partnerships with many different private and public organizations.

Colorado BLM Riparian Strategic Plan

This strategic plan provides direction for Colorado BLM's riparian program over the next five years. This statewide strategic plan should be used in conjunction with existing District riparian strategic plans. Now that the majority of the initial functioning condition assessments for Colorado BLM riparian areas have been completed, it is time to use those assessments to guide on-the-ground improvement and restoration efforts. The goals and planned actions that follow are intended as guidance; not all goals or planned actions will be applicable to all resource areas or situations. Priorities for the riparian program that are set forth in this plan should be considered as one part of Colorado BLM's overall assessment of land health.

GOALS AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Goal #1: Implement management, protection, and restoration efforts so that 75% of riparian areas managed by BLM in Colorado are in proper functioning condition or functioning-at-risk with an upward trend by 2004.

Planned Actions:

A. Continue to evaluate, and where appropriate, re-evaluate, the functioning condition of all riparian

areas on a priority basis, using BLM Technical References 1737-09 (Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition) and 1737-11 (Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition for Lentic Riparian-Wetland Areas).

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

B. Monitor priority riparian/wetlands areas under current or proposed management where conflicting uses or potential impacts are anticipated. Monitor progress toward specific objectives as stated in activity plans.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

C. Identify riparian ecosystems which are not meeting minimum acceptable Public Land Health Standards and those that are below the desired ecological condition. Improve condition of these riparian ecosystems through development and implementation of activity plans.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

D. Summarize and store riparian data in Geographic Information System (GIS) for national and statewide use.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices with assistance from Colorado State Office and National Applied Resource Science Center]

E. All new resource management plans and activity plans, and existing plans when revised, will address and identify appropriate riparian management strategies; will use recommended guidelines for protection of high priority areas; and will initiate management to maintain, restore, or improve riparian areas.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

F. Riparian areas will be prioritized through an interdisciplinary effort based on condition and potential, with emphasis placed on those areas where current condition is below potential. Additional prioritization criteria should include: presence of T&E species, important fisheries, high public visibility, BLM control over factors causing poor condition, recovery potential, and RMP decisions relating to specific riparian areas.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

Goal #2: Acquire new and expand existing key riparian areas to provide for maximum public benefit and effective management.

Planned Action:

A. In accordance with BLM policy, public lands with significant riparian values will be retained in public ownership. Each Resource Area will identify ecologically important riparian areas which will be candidates for acquisition.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

Goal #3: Increase understanding and awareness of riparian values and ensure commitment to proper riparian area management within the BLM, by users of the public land, and the general public through an aggressive riparian-wetland information/outreach program, training, and research.

Planned Actions:

A. Create an achievement award for outstanding riparian area management for land managers, resource specialists, public land users, and private landowners in Colorado. [Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office, Colorado Riparian Association]

B. Each District will host educational programs for the general public and user groups on the value, productivity, and management of riparian areas.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado Riparian Cadre, District and Resource Area Offices]

C. Offer technical training sessions focusing on riparian classification, evaluation, and management to BLM resource specialists, other federal and state agency personnel, and interested landowners.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: National Riparian Team, Colorado Riparian Cadre, BLM National Training Center, and the Colorado State Office in cooperation with National Applied Resource Science Center]

D. Evaluate current status and ongoing progress of existing riparian demonstration sites in each district within the state. If current riparian demonstration sites are no longer serving their intended purpose, establish new demonstration areas. Demonstration areas will be used to show the results of various riparian management practices to other agency professionals and interested private landowners.

[Ongoing. District and Resource Area Offices]

E. In areas that receive heavy recreational use, consider adding interpretive signs that explain riparian area functions and values.

[Ongoing. District and Resource Area Offices]

Goal #4: Establish new and improve existing partnerships to foster cooperative restoration and management of riparian areas.

Planned Actions:

A. Support the efforts of the Colorado Riparian Association through collaboration with other federal agencies, state agencies, organizations and private landowners.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office with representation from District and Resource Area Offices]

B. Encourage interested support and user groups to participate in restoration work, and keep these groups informed on issues pertaining to riparian management.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office, District and Resource Area Offices]

C. Where practical, use the concept of basinwide or watershed wide management to develop coordinated resource management plans with adjacent landowners.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: District and Resource Area Offices]

D. Work with the Colorado Water Conservation Board to ensure instream flows for the long-term protection of riparian values.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office, District and Resource Area Offices]

E. Work with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (Water Quality Control Division) to identify stream segments with water quality problems and, if practical, develop management strategies to bring them into compliance with the Clean Water Act.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office, District and Resource Area Offices]

F. Continue to support existing national, statewide, and local partnerships while working to develop new ones, especially at the local level.

[Ongoing. Responsibility: Colorado State Office, District and Resource Area Offices]

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Riparian Resources on BLM Lands in Colorado

Riparian areas are defined as a form of wetland that is transitional between permanently saturated wetlands and upland terrestrial areas. They are characterized by visible vegetation or physical features reflective of permanent surface or subsurface water influence. Riparian areas are the green zones adjacent to lake shores and along permanently or seasonally flowing rivers and streams. These systems are among the most productive ecosystems on the over 8 million acres managed by BLM within Colorado. BLM lands in Colorado contain over 39,264 acres of riparian vegetation associated with approximately 4,332 miles of perennial and intermittent streams. In addition, there are also 7,653 acres of wetland and riparian vegetation associated with marshes, seeps, springs, and other wetlands, bringing the total to about 46,917 acres (Table 1, page 7).

Properly managed riparian areas offer a number of benefits. Riparian vegetation absorbs and dissipates flood energy, and decreases streambank and channel erosion. Water quality is improved through the filtering and trapping of sediment and pollutants. Water is retained, allowing continuous recharge of aquifers below and adjacent to the stream. Water flow volume, longevity, and timing are all closely tied to riparian condition.

Riparian areas provide vital habitat for fish and wildlife by providing food, cover, water, and space. The shape of many riparian areas maximizes the edge effect both horizontally and vertically, which provides habitat for many species. Migration routes and travel corridors for wildlife are afforded by riparian areas. Abundance and diversity of aquatic species are also directly correlated to and dependent upon high quality riparian areas.

In Colorado, riparian ecosystems comprise only a small portion of the landscape (less than 0.6% of BLM land). However, the demand for a variety of uses often focuses on these small areas. Camping, fishing, hiking, and bird watching are just a few of the recreational uses that occur in riparian areas. Due to the gentle sloping nature of the terrain, riparian areas are often convenient locations for road construction. Riparian areas are generally preferred by livestock due to the presence of water, lush forage, and shade. Due to both present and past uses, many of Colorado's riparian areas are in degraded condition. Fortunately, riparian areas are very resilient; they respond very quickly to changes in management and can be restored to a healthy condition.

Table 1 - Estimated Riparian-Wetland Acreage by District/Resource Area Office

OFFICE	BLM ADMINIS- TERED LAND (acres)	LENTIC RIPARIAN- WETLAND (acres)	LOTIC RIPARIAN STREAM (miles)	LOTIC RIPARIAN STREAM (acres)	TOTAL RIPARIAN- WETLAND (acres)	RIPARIAN- WETLAND AREA (%)
Craig DO	3,151,816	3,255	869	7,064	10,319	0.33
Little Snake RA	1,339,456	25	231	1,920	1,945	0.15

White River RA	1,430,351	65	408	3,427	3,492	0.24
Kremmling RA	382,009	3,165	233	1,717	4,882	1.28
Montrose DO	2,131,754	3,043	1,917	20,718	23,761	1.11
Uncompahgre RA	919,952	250	534	4,032	4,282	0.47
Gunnison RA	603,372	93	755	12,786	12,879	2.13
San Juan RA	608,430	2,700	628	3,900	6,600	1.08
Canon City DO	1,209,260	1,322	746	6,281	7,603	0.63
Royal Gorge RA	689,025	438	671	5,651	6,089	0.88
San Luis RA	520,235	884	75	630	1,514	0.29
Grand Junction DO	1,800,376	33	797	5,201	5,234	0.29
Grand Junction RA	1,354,598	6	544	3,193	3,199	0.24
Glenwood Spgs RA	445,778	27	253	2,008	2,035	0.46
COLORADO TOTAL	8,293,206	7,653	4,329	39,264	46,917	0.57

APPENDIX B: Current Condition of Riparian Areas on BLM Lands in Colorado (12/23/98)

The results of 1998 riparian condition assessments show that 46% of stream (lotic) riparian areas are now functioning properly, 33% are functioning at risk, and 16% are not functioning properly. We still have 162 stream miles (4%) that have not been evaluated (Table 2). For non-riverine (lentic) riparian areas, 63% are functioning properly, 9% are functioning at risk, and 0% are not functioning properly. We still need to assess 2,130 acres (28%) (Table 3).

TABLE 2 - RIPARIAN FUNCTIONING CONDITION STATUS -- RIVERINE (LOTIC) HABITAT--COLORADO BLM--FY 1998

TABLE 2 - FUNCTIONING CONDITION STATUS -- RIVERINE (LOTIC) HABITAT

STATE: Colorado

HABITAT TYPES	PROPER FUNCTIONING CONDITION	FUNCTIONAL AT RISK			NOT PROPERLY FUNCTIONING	TOTAL
		TREND UP	TREND NOT APPARENT	TREND DOWN		
BY						
OFFICE						

Lotic Riparian	mi	%	mi	%	mi	%	mi	%	mi	%	mi	%	mi	%	
RIVERINE (miles)															
Little Snake		57	25	5	2	133	58	7	3	29	13	0	0	231	5
Kremmling		193	83	1	0	28	12		0	3	1	8	3	233	5
White River		71	17	21	5	52	13	10	2	130	32	123	30	407	9
Uncompahgre		372	70	18	3	97	18	9	2	33	6	5	1	534	12
Gunnison		266	35	87	12	111	15	4	1	287	38	0	0	755	17
San Juan		380	61	98	16	80	13	20	3	50	8	0	0	628	14
Royal Gorge		105	16	5	1	437	65		0	124	18	0	0	671	15
San Luis		35	47	3	4	10	13		0	11	15	16	21	75	2
Grand Junction		373	69	18	3	136	25	1	0	13	2	0	0	541	12
Glenwood Springs		164	60	15	6	56	21	9	3	18	7	10	4	272	6
RIVERINE TOTAL		2,016	46	271	6	1,140	26	60	1	698	16	162	4	4,347	100

TABLE 3 - RIPARIAN FUNCTIONING CONDITION STATUS -- NON-RIVERINE (LENTIC) HABITAT -- COLORADO BLM -- FY 1998

TABLE 3 - FUNCTIONING CONDITION STATUS - NON-RIVERINE (LENTIC) HABITAT

STATE: Colorado

HABITAT TYPES	BY	OFFICE	PROPER FUNCTIONING CONDITION	FUNCTIONAL AT RISK				NOT PROPERLY FUNCTIONING		UNKNOWN		TOTAL			
				TREND UP	TREND NOT APPARENT	TREND DOWN									
NON-RIVERINE (acres)															
Lentic Riparian	ac	%	ac	%	ac	%	ac	%	ac	%	ac	%	ac	%	
Little Snake		4	16	10	40	11	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0
Kremmling		2,680	83	0	0	535	17	0	0	0	0	10	0	3,225	42
White River		52	80	0	0	13	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	1
Uncompahgre		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	100	250	3
Gunnison		93	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	93	1
San Juan		800	30	0	0	30	1	0	0	0	0	1870	69	2,700	35
Royal Gorge		333	76	0	0	0	0	105	24	0	0	0	0	438	6
San Luis		884	100		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	884	11
Grand Junction		6	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
Glenwood Springs		27	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	0
NON-RIVERINE TOTAL		4,879	63	10	0	589	8	105	1	0	0	2,130	28	7,713	100

APPENDIX C: Riparian Efforts and Accomplishments

Improvement and Restoration Projects

Since 1987, approximately 1,060 riparian improvement projects have been completed and 250 projects have been maintained on BLM lands in Colorado. Projects have included water developments for better livestock distribution, fencing to create riparian pastures, willow planting, improved grazing systems, exclosures for monitoring and evaluating management practices, salt-cedar control, instream structures for grade control and wetland development, and bank stabilization measures. These projects have resulted in protection or improvement of 1,260 miles and 7,530 acres of riparian and wetland habitat.

Notable projects include:

Little Snake RA:

- Axial Basin Coordinated Resource Management Plan - implemented in 1992, the plan created a four-pasture rotation deferred grazing system with cattle and sheep; 12 miles of intermittent and perennial streams are continuing to improve.
- Lower Fly Creek Seep Exclosure - constructed in 1997 around an intermittent stream reach and meadow area that had been compacted. Objectives are to improve both lotic and lentic riparian values within the 6 acre exclosure, including improvement of water storage in meadow soils and extended stream flow.

White River RA:

- East Douglas Creek Allotment - implemented a 3-pasture rotation grazing system on East Douglas and Brush Creeks, covering 2.5 miles of an historic Colorado River cutthroat trout fishery.

Kremmling RA:

- Hebron Slough - constructed or enlarged several ponds, provided irrigation for waterfowl production, implemented rotation grazing system to meet waterfowl and livestock objectives.
- North and Middle Park Areas - used cooperative partnerships (HPP and OMP) to develop and implement grazing systems that support riparian or wetland objectives on 9 allotments.

Uncompahgre RA:

- San Miguel River - improved recreation management has reduced impacts to riparian vegetation from dispersed rafting and camping activities.

Gunnison RA:

- Wood Gulch Riparian Pasture - ineffective earthen dams that had filled and caused the stream to incise were removed; channel was reshaped and revegetated; and livestock grazing has been managed to allow for vegetation recovery.

San Juan RA:

- Dry Creek - implemented Dry Creek Basin CRMP which includes construction of water developments to improve livestock and wildlife distribution, and upland vegetation treatments to decrease sediment movement into riparian areas.

Royal Gorge RA:

- Texas Creek - restored 2 miles of riparian habitat through a change in grazing management.
- Badger Creek - ongoing watershed restoration effort with numerous partners.
- Grape Creek - riparian improvement project using volunteers.

San Luis RA:

- Blanca Wetlands - development and protection of wetland/aquatic ecosystem.
- Ford Creek - watershed restoration effort.
- San Luis Creek - watershed restoration effort.
- La Garita Creek- riparian improvement project using volunteers.

Grand Junction RA:

- Roan Creek Enclosure - repaired 1 mile of enclosure fence.
- Duck Inn Pond - revegetated approximately 3 acres in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation.
- Devils Canyon Pond #3 - installed a pond sealant (bentonite) to create a warm water fishery and provide for riparian vegetation where none previously existed.
- East Desert - completed Phase 1 (well development), to improve water availability and livestock use on upland areas. Phase 2 is planned for a pipeline system, catchment, and 4- pasture rest rotation grazing system, allowing the East Salt Creek riparian area to be rested in 2 years out of a 4 year grazing cycle.
- Grassy Gulch - Willow cutting transplants along 1 mile of gulch in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Colorado River - salt cedar control by Hotshot Fire Crew on 20 acres of property acquired in the Hawxhurst land exchange.
- Dolores River - salt cedar control on 7 acres with resprout control planned.

Glenwood Springs RA:

- Trapper Creek Riparian Restoration - reconstructed drop structures and planted cottonwood trees.
- Dry Rifle Creek - planted cottonwood and chokecherry trees to add a woody component to the riparian community.

Inventory

Implementation of restoration projects has required extensive preparation and coordination. Over the past ten years, BLM has conducted inventories on approximately 11,700 miles of streams and 7,900 acres of wetlands to determine condition and develop strategies for protection. Approximately 140 activity plans have been completed or revised to incorporate riparian objectives and another 690 existing plans with specific riparian objectives were monitored. Monitoring activities include photo points, water quality analysis, macroinvertebrate analysis, channel cross-section measurements, vegetation trend, waterfowl nest searches, recreation uses, soil organism/land health studies, beaver distribution, neotropical bird studies, and livestock use patterns. Monitoring results are used to determine if riparian objectives identified in activity plans are being met.

Protection and Mitigation

Measures to protect riparian values are part of BLM's standard operating procedures.

Examples of protection and mitigation include:

- In Little Snake Resource Area, impacts to the riparian zone have been avoided or minimized with oil and gas wells and associated rights of ways in the Timberlake Creek area through the NEPA process by selecting alternative sites for roads, pipelines and drilling and production sites.
- In Grand Junction Resource Area (GJRA), minerals specialists worked with oil and gas companies to locate new gas wells in sites that minimized or eliminated disturbance to riparian areas. Where riparian disturbance was unavoidable, mitigating measures were cooperatively developed to ensure that no overall riparian values were lost.
- GJRA completed the Colorado River Riparian Protection Plan. New regulations were established along the river to protect riparian areas from recreational impacts.
- GJRA installed 3 gates in the District's Riparian Demonstration Area to protect riparian vegetation from vandalism and livestock use.
- Also in the GJRA, a common vision has been developed for protecting open space within the Grand Mesa Slopes Special Management Area. Signs and fences were installed to restrict ORV use and prevent damage to riparian areas.

Watershed Approach

In Colorado, field offices are taking an ecosystem approach to managing riparian-wetland areas by concentrating on entire watersheds and involving all landowners and land managers.

Watershed Management efforts include:

- The Little Snake RA has formed three Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) groups to address land management issues relating to forage allocation, rangeland health, weed control, and ORV use.
- In the Kremmling RA, the Owl Mountain Partnership is working with landowners to implement community-based management strategies to improve watershed conditions. Due to its success, the community has requested the original 400,000 acres be expanded to include any interested landowner in North Park, an area of 1.1 million acres. Both the North Park and Middle Park Habitat Partnership Committees have supported landowner-initiated efforts to improve wetland and riparian values.
- The White River RA is working on preliminary formulation of Square-S summer range riparian plan, in cooperation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and the permittee, specifically relating to riparian conditions and livestock management on CDOW and BLM intermixed parcels.
- The Uncompahgre RA is taking an active role in the San Miguel Watershed Coalition, helping to lead local communities through a collaborative process to address watershed, environmental, resource, and community issues. Issues involve maintaining water in the river, managing growing recreational and fishing demands, and preserving globally rare riparian community types.
- The Gunnison RA completed the Gunnison Sage Grouse Conservation Plan which identifies riparian areas in the Upper Gunnison River and Tomichi Creek watersheds as a priority for improvement and restoration. This effort encourages riparian area improvement on all land, regardless of ownership or administrative responsibility.
- In San Juan RA, BLM is participating in the Animas Stakeholders Group. BLM initiated the bio-assessment/limiting factors cooperative agreement with U. S. Forest Service (USFS) and Animas Stakeholders/State of Colorado to address riparian and aquatic habitat in Upper Animas Basin. BLM completed an inventory of abandoned mines that contribute to water quality problems and initiated remediation planning for 4 abandoned mines on public lands.
- In Royal Gorge RA, riparian restoration efforts continue on Badger Creek, Grape Creek, Rio Grande, and Four Mile Creek. These watersheds include a mixture of private and federal lands.
- The BLM in the Grand Junction Resource Area (GJRA) is a partner in the Grand Mesa Slopes Special Management Area plan, which involves managing several watersheds together, including two watersheds used for municipal water supplies. Over 30 local entities have come up with an open space vision that will provide long-term protection of scenic values, riparian areas, wildlife habitat and critical big game winter range, municipal watersheds, traditional ranching uses, and recreational opportunities.
- In the GJRA, the Bangs Canyon Activity Plan was initiated in 1996, and covers approximately 70,000 acres. The plan is being developed by a Citizen Advisory Group formed under the Northwest Resource Advisory Council. The 20 member planning team includes the BLM, Mesa

County, Sierra Club, grazing permittees, and adjacent land owners. Riparian areas along the Gunnison River, Northeast Creek, Ladder Creek, and Rough Canyon are addressed in the plan. A draft plan has been completed.

- Also in GJRA, work is underway on the Ruby Canyon-Black Ridge Activity Plan which will address approximately 118,000 acres. The plan was developed with the aid of an ad-hoc committee which is a sub-group of the Northwest Resource Advisory Council. The 24 member planning team includes the BLM, Mesa County, Park Service, Audubon Society, Colorado Mountain Bike Association, Colorado Motorcycle Trail Rider Association, the Riverfront Commission, outfitters, County planners, Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, and many others including adjacent land owners. Riparian areas totaling about 1,000 acres along the Colorado River in Ruby Canyon, Rattlesnake Canyon, Mee Canyon, Salt Creek and Knowles Canyon will be addressed in the plan. A Desired Plant Community (DPC) group has already developed riparian objectives/actions. The BLM has initiated the use of fire plans for recreation users on the river to avoid man caused fires in the cottonwood galleries.

Partnerships

Colorado BLM has been able to form and maintain long-term partnerships with many different private and public organizations.

These partnerships include:

Little Snake RA:

- Axial Basin CRM group (Axial Basin)
- Bald Mountain CRM group (Bald Mountain Basin)
- Sandwash Basin CRM group

Kremmling RA:

- Owl Mountain Partnership (Owl Mountain Project & Water Study)
- North Park Habitat Partnership Program (Independence Mountain Allotments)
- Middle Park Habitat Partnership Program, Colorado Soil Conservation Board, and landowners (Knorr HRM allotment)

White River RA:

- CDOW and grazing permittees (Square S Plan)

Uncompahgre RA:

- Telluride Institute, Uncompahgre River Corridor Partnership/River Conservation, Valley Land

Conservancy, CDOW, and USFS (San Miguel Watershed Planning)

Gunnison RA:

- Quail Unlimited (Dry Gulch riparian restoration and Chance Gulch riparian stabilization)
- Colorado Sage Grouse Working Group (Gunnison Sage Grouse Conservation Plan)

San Juan RA:

- Animas Stakeholders (Animas River restoration)
- Dry Creek Coordinated Planning group (Dry Creek Basin)
- San Miguel County (weed control)

San Luis RA:

- Rio Grande Restoration Steering Committee and Costilla County Soil Conservation District (Rio Grande River Restoration)

Royal Gorge RA:

- Numerous partners (Badger Creek Working Group)
- Trout Unlimited (Arkansas River)

Grand Junction RA:

- CDOW and Trout Unlimited (protect and restore a native population of Colorado River cutthroat trout in Carr Creek)
- Bureau of Reclamation, Colorado Riparian Association, and Colorado Division of Wildlife (River Dynamics Education Trailer)
- Mesa County and City of Grand Junction (Gunnison Bluff Plan)
- CDOW, U. S. Forest Service, and local government (Grand Mesa Habitat Partnership Plan)
- Go Colorado (Grand Mesa Signing)
- Bureau of Reclamation (Duck Inn Pond)

Glenwood Springs RA:

- Department of Energy, grazing permittee (Northwater Spring, Forked Gulch Riparian Fence, Naval Oil Shale Reserve Weed Control, E. Fork Springs)

Colorado (Statewide):

- Colorado Natural Heritage Program and 12 other partners (statewide Riparian Classification)