
APPENDIX 22—ACEC DESIGNATION PROCESS

Areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) are areas of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered lands where special management attention is needed to protect their important and relevant values. “Special management attention” (43 U.S.C. 1702 Sec. 103[a]) refers to management prescriptions developed during preparation of a Resource Management Plan (RMP) or amendment expressly to protect the important and relevant values on an area from the potential effects of actions permitted by the RMP, including proposed actions deemed to be in conformance with the terms, conditions, and decisions of the RMP (BLM Manual 1613). These are management measures that would not be necessary or prescribed if the critical and important features were not present.

To be designated as an ACEC, the area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance (as defined in BLM Manual 1613). Areas meeting the relevance criterion possess significant historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish or wildlife resources, including threatened and endangered species; or natural hazards. To meet the importance criterion, the resource must have substantial significance and value. This generally requires qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern.

There were four existing ACECs within the Resource Management Plan Planning Area (RMPPA): Como Bluff ACEC, Sand Hills ACEC, Jep Canyon ACEC, and Shamrock Hills ACEC. Public comment received during scoping suggested that a number of areas be considered for designation as ACECs, and some areas were proposed as potential ACECs by BLM staff. Thus, other areas within the RMPPA that were identified as potential ACECs include the Red Rim-Daley Area, Upper Muddy Creek Watershed/Grizzly Area, High Savery Dam, Stratton Sagebrush Steppe Research Area, Chain Lakes Areas, Laramie Peak Area, Pennock Mountain wildlife habitat management area (WHMA), Wick-Beumee WHMA, Laramie Plains Lakes Area, blowout penstemon area, white-tailed prairie dog areas, black-tailed prairie dog areas, historic trails, mountain plover concentration areas, the Bates Hole/Chalk Mountain cushion plant community, and the Powder Rim juniper woodland.

BLM was required to determine if existing ACECs and areas proposed for ACEC designation met the relevance and importance criteria prior to inclusion in the RMP process. BLM completed the evaluation forms presented in Table A22-1, ACEC Proposal Evaluation Forms That Met Relevance and Importance. Areas that met the relevance and importance criteria are discussed in Chapter 3 and management of these areas is presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.11 and Table 2-1 of the RMP. Areas that did not meet both relevance and importance were dropped from further consideration for ACEC designation. The evaluation forms for all existing and proposed ACECs are presented in *Evaluation of Relevance and Importance Criteria for Existing and Proposed ACEC—BLM Rawlins Field Office* (USDI BLM 2004a).

**Table A22-1. ACEC Proposal Evaluation Forms That Met Relevance and Importance —
Rawlins Field Office**

RMP Process

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Como Bluff ACEC (Existing)

Como Bluff Area Considered		
General Location	T22N, R77W	
General Description	Gently dipping exposure of Jurassic Morrison formation	
Acreage	1550	
Values Considered	Paleontological	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	A location where many early dinosaur fossils have been recovered. More specifically, the formations exposed are highly fossiliferous and have provided significant paleontological resources since the 1870s. Como Bluff has yielded approximately 80 new species of vertebrates.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	NO	NA
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	Como Bluff has exposures of highly fossiliferous formations from the Cretaceous through the Triassic.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA

Como Bluff		
<p>Importance:</p> <p>The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:</p>		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	Known worldwide; specimens of dinosaur fossils from this site are exhibited in museums throughout the United States and Europe.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The exposures of numerous highly fossiliferous formations are considered one of the most significant in the United States, and are unique to the locale.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	Como Bluff was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for the role it played in the development of the science of paleontology in 1973, and was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1973.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Sand Hills ACEC (Existing)

Sand Hills		
Area Considered		
General Location	T17N, R90W; T16N, R90-91W,	
General Description	Sand Hills and JO Ranch Exchange	
Acreage	13,760 total acres, including 8,300 acres of the existing Sand Hills ACEC, 1,236 acres resulting from the JO Ranch Exchange), and 4,224 of buffer area to protect the viewshed and riparian habitat	
Values Considered	Historic and cultural values, wildlife values, and presence of an unique vegetation community complex	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	The JO Ranch/Rankin Ranch is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The ranch is a unique example of ranching that represents over 100 years of continuous use.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The Sand Hills area contains a very unique vegetation community complex combining natural sand dunes with an array of diverse vegetation including antelope bitterbrush, silver sage, Wyoming big sage, rabbitbrush, chokecherry and serviceberry. The area is also important crucial winter range for mule deer and elk. The area contains Greater sage-grouse habitat and raptor nesting. One known Columbian sharp-tailed grouse dancing ground has been identified within the Sand Hills ACEC portion of this proposed ACEC; the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is a Wyoming BLM state sensitive species.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	The Sand Hills area contains a very unique vegetation community complex combining natural sand dunes with an array of diverse vegetation. Also, riparian habitat exists along Cow Creek and associated irrigated meadows.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA

Sand Hills		
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	The ranch is a unique example of ranching that represents over 100 years of continuous use; the ranch is cultural-eligible for NRHP under Criteria A. The Sand Hills area contains a very unique vegetation community complex combining natural sand dunes with an array of diverse vegetation.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The ranch contains significant cultural values, and its buildings require stabilization and protection to protect these values. The soils (dunes) of the area's unique vegetation community complex require stabilization and protection.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	State historic properties present at the site must be protected.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	YES	Safety concerns related to unstable building structures exist on the ranch. Also, there are concerns related to hazardous materials, such as contaminated well water and rodent droppings, which may be present in these buildings.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	YES	There are concerns related to hazardous materials, such as contaminated well water and rodent droppings, which may be present in these buildings.

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Jep Canyon ACEC (Existing)

Jep Canyon		
Area Considered		
General Location	T17-19 N, R88-90W (in various sections)	
General Description	The area is located approximately ten miles southwest of Rawlins, Wyoming.	
Acreage	The ACEC exists in the checkerboard area; there are 13,320 acres of public land.	
Values Considered	Wildlife values, specifically, crucial winter range for elk and nesting raptor pairs	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance:		
An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The area contains crucial winter habitat for elk and habitat for nesting pairs of raptors.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	NO	NA
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance:		
The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	NO	NA

Jep Canyon		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	Public land in the area contains crucial winter habitat for elk and nesting raptor pairs.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Shamrock Hills ACEC (Existing)

Shamrock Hills		
Area Considered		
General Location	Located north of I-80 approximately 10 miles North West of Rawlins	
General Description	High relief topography that includes a high concentration of raptors ranging from red-tailed hawks, Cooper’s hawks, golden eagles, and prairie falcons	
Acreage	Approximately 17,280 acres of public land	
Values Considered	Wildlife	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The area has a large population of nesting ferruginous hawks. The area has been identified as both a raptor concentration area, and is an existing ACEC. In February 2000, the area was determined to meet the qualifications of a Nationally Important Bird Area in the American Bird Conservancy’s United States Important Bird Areas. The area is also part of a long-term monitoring program.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	NO	NA
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Shamrock Hills		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	In February 2000, the area was determined to meet the qualifications of a Nationally Important Bird Area in the American Bird Conservancy's United States Important Bird Areas. The area is also part of a long-term monitoring program.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	NO	NA
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Red Rim Daley (Proposed ACEC)

Red Rim Daley Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	T19-21N, R89-90W (in various sections); the area is located approximately 15 miles southwest of Rawlins, Wyoming.	
General Description	The Red Rim area contains both the Daley Ranch Allotment and the Daley Ranch Pasture.	
Acreage	15,524 acres	
Values Considered	The values considered include the scenic values within the Red Sandstone Uplift, which contain historic carvings, and crucial winter habitat for antelope.	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	This area has scenic values within the Red Sandstone Uplift, which also contains historic carvings. The historic carvings, located at the southern end of the rock uplift, include the names and dates of people that have traveled through the area.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	This area contains crucial winter habitat for pronghorn antelope, which is necessary for the long-term protection and development of the species.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	NO	NA
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Red Rim Daley Area		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	NO	The Red Rim area contains about a quarter of the important crucial winter range for pronghorn antelope in the RMPPA; the pronghorn antelope had national importance during the Red Rim fence controversy.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The Red Sandstone Uplift contains unique and fragile historic carvings. The potential for conflicts between pronghorn antelope using crucial winter range habitat and coal development, specifically coal bed methane development, exists in the area. The area may require additional management to maintain unique scenic and wildlife values.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

**ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Upper Muddy Creek Watershed/Grizzly Area
(Proposed ACEC)**

Upper Muddy Creek Watershed/Grizzly Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	T15-17, R88-90 (in various sections)	
General Description	Upper Muddy Creek watershed lies southwest of Rawlins, Wyoming. The habitat area is located approximately 30 miles southwest of Rawlins, Wyoming, and includes portions of the Muddy Creek watershed (4 th . Order) above the Weber Headcut structure.	
Acreage	127,430	
Values Considered	Wildlife and riparian values (the area is part of the Muddy Creek watershed system)	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance:		
An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The area contains elk crucial winter range and important potential habitat for Colorado river cutthroat trout (CRCT). Four BLM Wyoming state sensitive species (including CRCT) occur together in this watershed within Wyoming, making it a unique remnant of the Colorado River basin native fish fauna. Active research and restoration activities are being implemented for these species within this area.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	The area is part of the Muddy Creek watershed system, which includes important potential habitat for CRCT. The area is a species reintroduction area for CRCT. BLM and Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the management of CRCT. The area is also part of a grazing demonstration area; grazing boundaries must be observed.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance:		
The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Upper Muddy Creek Watershed/Grizzly Area		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	The area is part of the Muddy Creek watershed system, which includes important potential habitat for CRCT. The area is a species reintroduction area for CRCT. BLM and WGFD signed a MOU for the management of CRCT. Also, a tri-state plan exists for management and restoration of CRCT. The habitat area represents the last remaining remnant populations of this particular fish fauna within Wyoming.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The area is part of the Muddy Creek watershed system, which includes important potential habitat for CRCT. The area is a species reintroduction area for CRCT. BLM and WGFD signed a MOU for the management of CRCT. The riparian system is rare, and these fish species have witnessed drastic declines throughout their native ranges.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	The area is part of the Muddy Creek watershed system, which includes important potential habitat for CRCT. A tri-state plan exists for management and restoration of CRCT.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—High Savery Dam (Proposed ACEC)

High Savery Dam		
Area Considered		
General Location	T15N, R88W, 6 th P.M., Carbon County, Wyoming	
General Description	The area is located adjacent to the High Savery Dam and Reservoir, and encompasses portion of Savery Creek, a developable fishery. Big game habitat, antelope, elk, and deer exist in the area.	
Acreage	Approximately 530 acres of public land.	
Values Considered	Riparian and recreational values	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance:		
An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	Upon the completion of the High Savery Dam and Reservoir Site, the reservoir may be stock with up to 14,600 adult CRCT. Also, a segment of the Savery Creek is within the project area and this could be developed into a fishery and a recreation site. Big game habitat also exists within the area.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	NO	NA
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance:		
The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

High Savery Dam		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	A portion of the Savery Creek riparian area has potential to be developed into a fishery and recreation site. Through a MOU between the Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC) and the BLM signed June 2, 2003, the area would be jointly managed for recreational purposes. This includes lands both at the reservoir and at Savery Creek.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	Recreation and fishery development potential at Savery Creek, and at the High Savery Dam and Reservoir site.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Stratton Sagebrush Steppe Research Area

Stratton Sagebrush Steppe		
Area Considered		
General Location	Located along BLM Road 3422 West of Saratoga, Wyoming.	
General Description	The area includes five small watersheds in the headwaters of Beaver Creek,	
Acreage	5,500 (of federal lands)	
Values Considered	Historic and scientific	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	A watershed study area for the analysis of vegetation management in high altitude sagebrush ecosystems. There has been a tremendous investment in infrastructure and data gathering on this site in the past.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	NO	NA
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	High altitude sagebrush study locations are rare, which makes this particular site unique. This site offers the opportunity to gain information about how to better manage BLM high altitude sagebrush lands for multiple uses.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	High altitude sagebrush study locations are rare, which makes this particular site unique.

Stratton Sagebrush Steppe		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	NO	NA
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	This area was set aside as a withdrawal to protect the research value of the site.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	YES	This site offers the opportunity to gain information about how to better manage BLM high altitude sagebrush lands for multiple uses.
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Chain Lakes Area

Chain Lakes Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	The Chain Lakes Habitat Area is located in the Red Desert approximately 30 miles northwest of Rawlins, Wyoming.	
General Description	The area contains a string of alkali lakes and associated wetlands with high sagebrush steppe habitat located to the south.	
Acreage	30,562 acres of which 54 percent are either owned or leased by WGFD, and the remaining 46 percent are federal lands administered by the BLM.	
Values Considered	The values include the natural lakes and associated wetlands, and a fence-free corridor for antelope migration to the south and east. The area receives heavy antelope use during periodic severe winters.	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The area contains migrations corridors for antelope to the south and the east. Antelope use the area extensively during periodic severe winters.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	The area contains a unique alkaline desert natural wetland community. Mud pots, rare geological features, are scattered throughout the area. This area is a reserve common allotment that has winter use that is presently compatible with antelope use.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Chain Lakes Area		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	The area contains a unique desert wetland ecosystem that provides important habitat for a diversity of species.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The area contains a unique, fragile, and rare alkaline desert lake system.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Laramie Peak Bighorn Sheep Habitat Management Plan (HMP) Area

Laramie Peak Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	The HMP Area encompasses T19-33N, R68-78W (in various sections); the BLM administered lands are located in T. 22-24 N., R. 71-73 W., in various sections. The Laramie Peak HMP is located northwest of Cheyenne, Wyoming and west of Wheatland, Wyoming.	
General Description	The Laramie Peak HMP is located northwest of Cheyenne, Wyoming and west of Wheatland, Wyoming. The HMP was created by signed agreement between the BLM (Casper and Rawlins Field Offices), WGFD, and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in 1994-1995 to restore, improve, and enhance habitat conditions for bighorn sheep and other wildlife species. The BLM portions of the entire HMP area contain crucial winter habitat for bighorn sheep, elk, and mule deer.	
Acreage	2,045,300 acres (including 349,648 acres of BLM surface/federal minerals and 798 acres of BLM surface/state minerals located in this portion of the HMP area; there are also 576,380 acres of private surface/federal minerals and 33,675 acres of state surface/federal minerals)	
Values Considered	Wildlife	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The goal of the HMP is to improve the distribution of bighorn sheep populations and associated genetic diversity by increasing and improving the amount and quality of open, secure foraging areas (adjacent to water and escape cover) in site-specific habitat areas. There are presently 15 proposed habitat sites, of which one, the Split Rock/Reese Mountains area, had lightning strike fires occur in 2002.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	There is the potential for the Laramie columbine, a BLM Wyoming state sensitive plant species, to occur in this area.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA

Laramie Peak Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area

Importance:

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	NO	NA
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	Diseases, predators, fire suppression, decreased habitat quality (e.g., restricted travel corridors, over-abundance of dense conifer stands, and lack of good quality forage), competition, human encroachment, and stress have all contributed to the decreased bighorn sheep populations in the Laramie Range. Over the years, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), BLM, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), environmental groups (e.g., Foundation for North American Wild Sheep), and the general public have expressed concern over the low population growth and recruitment of sheep due to these factors. These sheep sub-herds are becoming more and more isolated in nature, which tends to decrease genetic viability and generates the overall detrimental condition to the population as a whole.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Laramie Plains Lakes Area¹

Laramie Plains Lakes Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	The area includes the Lake Hattie and Hutton Lake Habitat Areas, and the Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Area and Outdoor Classroom. The Hutton Lake Habitat Area is located approximately eight miles south of Laramie, Wyoming, and northeast of the Hutton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, which is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Lake Hattie Habitat Area is located approximately 15 miles southwest of Laramie, Wyoming. The Twin Buttes Habitat Area is located approximately 13 miles southwest of Laramie, Wyoming. The Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Area is located north of Twin Buttes Lake.	
General Description	The area includes the Lake Hattie and Hutton Lake Habitat Areas, and the Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Area and Outdoor Classroom.	
Acreage	The Hutton Lake Habitat Area is 640 acres; the Lake Hattie Habitat Area encompasses about 1,291 acres; the Twin Buttes Habitat Area encompasses about 320 acres.	
Values Considered	Wildlife	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA—All Habitat Areas
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	Lake Hattie and Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Areas—These wetland areas contain potential habitat for the endangered Wyoming toad. The toads are presently located in Moeboer Lake and Mortenson Lake, which are located to the southeast of these areas, and have the potential to travel between lakes via interconnected streams, canals, and wetlands.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	Lake Hattie and Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Areas—These areas are part of a complex of riparian habitat that contains a system of lakes, canals, and wetlands that provide known and potential habitat for the endangered Wyoming toad. Although these areas only contain potential habitat, it is highly possible that the toads can travel through the wetland corridors to Lake Hattie and Twin Buttes Lake.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA—All Habitat Areas

¹ The Laramie Plains Lakes Area encompasses the Lake Hattie and Hutton Lake Habitat Areas and the Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Area and Outdoor Classroom.

Laramie Plains Lakes Area		
<p>Importance:</p> <p>The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:</p>		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	<p>Lake Hattie Habitat Area—This area has potential habitat for the endangered Wyoming toad, which has limited wetland habitat overall.</p> <p>Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Area— The area has potential habitat for the endangered Wyoming toad, and is close enough to the local schools to be used as an outdoor biology classroom and lab.</p>
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	Lake Hattie and Twin Buttes Lake Habitat Areas—The unique wetland system of lakes, streams, and canals contains potential habitat for the endangered Wyoming toad. The system has the potential to be threatened by changes in agricultural practices and changes in land use practices; the area is vulnerable to drought.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	NO	NA—All Habitat Areas
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA—All Habitat Areas
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA—All Habitat Areas

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Blowout Penstemon Area

Blowout Penstemon Habitat Area		
Area Considered		
General Location	T26N, R85W; T26N, R86W; T26N, R86W; T25N, R86W (in various sections)	
General Description	The area includes the sand dunes east of Ferris Mountains and west of Bradley Peak, which includes a unique vegetation community complex containing the endangered blowout penstemon (<i>Penstemon haydenii</i>).	
Acreage	4,120 acres of federal lands	
Values Considered	Wildlife	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance:		
An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	This area encompasses unique sand dunes that contain steep sandy slopes deposited at the base of granite or sedimentary mountains. The endangered blowout penstemon plant is restricted to these sparsely vegetated, early successional, shifting sand dunes and blow out depressions created by wind erosion. Although some believe the plant to be a native of Nebraska, historic records show that the plant may have been collected during the Hayden Expedition in 1877 when he traveled from Casper to Rawlins through “Sandy Creek Pass” in the “Seminole Hills”, now called the Ferris Mountains.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	This area is composed of a unique terrestrial geological feature that contains the endangered blowout penstemon plant species. The system contains shifting sand dunes that support unique vegetation types.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance:		
The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Blowout Penstemon Habitat Area		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	The blowout penstemon is currently Wyoming's only listed endangered plant and as of present, it is only known to occur within this area, other than the populations that are known to occur in Nebraska. The plant was listed s endangered in 1987. The plant is protected under state law in Nebraska, but receives no comparable protection in Wyoming.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The Wyoming Natural Diversity Data Base (WYNDD) has determined that the plant is critically imperiled because of extreme rarity throughout its range. The plant is endangered and is vulnerable to the following threats: livestock grazing and trampling, changes in habitat quality, over collection, off-road vehicle use, pesticide use, construction activities, and natural threats.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	Endangered species must be protected.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—White-tailed Prairie Dog Areas²

White-tailed Prairie Dog Habitat Areas		
Area Considered		
General Location	Scattered throughout the RMPPA	
General Description	Eight white-tailed prairie complexes scattered throughout the RMPPA	
Acreage	221,471 total acres, including the Bolton complex (6,717 acres), Dad complex (6,785 acres), Kinney Rim complex (17,828 acres occurring in both the Rawlins FO and Rock Springs FO planning area), Pathfinder complex (12,507 acres occurring in both the Rawlins FO and Lander FO planning area), Saratoga complex (30,132 acres), Seminoe complex (1,725 acres), Shamrock Hills complex (19,781 acres), and Shirley Basin/Medicine Bow complex (139,498 acres) ³	
Values Considered	Wildlife	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	NO	NA
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	These white-tailed prairie dog complexes can provide habitat for the endangered black-footed ferret, or serve as a potential reintroduction sites. The white-tailed prairie dog is on the Wyoming BLM's State Sensitive Species list, which is a list of species warranting protection to keep these species from becoming listed. Also on the Sensitive Species list are the mountain plover, ferruginous hawk, swift fox, and burrowing owl, all of which have some dependence on the associated habitat. White-tailed prairie dog complexes also maintain species diversity by providing habitat for these other species.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	White-tailed prairie dog complexes are unique natural systems. Prairie dogs provide a prey source for several species. Burrows constructed by prairie dogs provide shelter for other species; these burrows also can change plant community composition.

² Several white-tailed prairie dog complexes located in the RMPPA were evaluated for relevant and important values requiring special management. These areas include the Dad White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Bolton Ranch White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Kinney Rim White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Pathfinder White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Saratoga White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Seminoe White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, Shamrock Hills White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex, and Shirley Basin/Medicine Bow White-tailed Prairie Dog Complex..

³ Acreages from surveys conducted prior to 1995.

White-tailed Prairie Dog Habitat Areas		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance: The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		
Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	These white-tailed prairie dog complexes meet the minimum required acreage size (1,000 acres) for a potential reintroduction site of the endangered black-footed ferret.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	These white-tailed prairie dog complexes are some of the largest in the state. White-tailed prairie dogs are considered sensitive in the state, and are identified on the BLM State Sensitive Species List. Also on the Sensitive Species list are the mountain plover, ferruginous hawk, swift fox, and burrowing owl, all of which have some dependence on the associated habitat. Protection of this fragile and unique habitat could provide some protection of other sensitive species.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	These white-tailed prairie dog complexes meet the minimum required acreage size (1,000 acres) for a potential reintroduction site of the endangered black-footed ferret. Protection of these complexes is in compliance with ESA and the mandates of FLPMA.
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form—Historic Trails

Historic Trail Areas		
Area Considered		
General Location	Located throughout RMPPA	
General Description	Historic trade routes, Pony Express route, and freight roads	
Acreage	179,119 total acres (65,129 acres on BLM-administered lands), including a quarter mile buffer of all trails	
Values Considered	Historical/Cultural	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in RMP alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance:		
An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	All of the historic trails are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A. Associated sites, including the Washakie Stage Station and Name Rock, are on the National Register. Each trail is unique in that each provides insight into the history of economics, transportation, and settlement in southern Wyoming. As the trails are comprised only of tracks, they are quite sensitive to natural erosional processes as well as human disturbances, including off road vehicle use and development activities. All trails are more than 100 years old, with portions retaining intact ruts and swales.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive, or threatened species; or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	NO	NA
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	NO	NA
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous cliffs). A hazard caused by human action may meet the relevance criteria if it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process.	NO	NA
Importance:		
The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values to satisfy the “importance” criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:		

Historic Trail Areas		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities, which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	<p>Howard Stansbury used the Overland Trail as an expedition route to explore the Salt Lake Valley in 1850. It later became the Pony Express route from Denver to Fort Bridger in eastern Wyoming where it connected up with the Oregon Trail. Emigrants used the trail in the 1860s rather than the Oregon Trail in response to increasing Indian attacks.</p> <p>The Cherokee Trail originated as an Indian migration route and was later used as a north-south connection to Texas for cattle drives. Emigrants also used it during the 1860s rather than the Oregon Trail in response to increasing Indian attacks.</p> <p>The Rawlins to Baggs Freight Road originated in Rawlins and then traversed south to the Ute Agency in Meeker, Colorado. After the establishment of the UP Railroad in 1868, Rawlins became a center for supplies and travel. Originally the route was used for freight but mail and passenger services were added as the region became more populated. The military used the road to transport troops and supplies from Fort Steele to Meeker during a massacre in 1879.</p> <p>The Rawlins to Fort Washakie Road was created by the military after the establishment of Camp Auger at present day Lander. The military used the route from Rawlins north, as Rawlins was the closest rail and supply point for Camp Auger. Later the route was extended north to Fort Washakie after the Indian Agency was established there. In 1885, a tri-weekly stage was established between Rawlins and Lander, which used the Rawlins to Fort Washakie Trail until 1906.</p>
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	All of the historic trails are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A. Associated sites including the Washakie Stage Station and Name Rock are on the National Register. Each trail is unique in that each provides insight into the history of economics, transportation, and settlement in southern Wyoming. As the trails are comprised only of tracks, they are quite sensitive to natural erosional processes as well as human disturbances including off road vehicle use and development activities. All trails are more than 100 years old, with portions retaining intact ruts and swales. The visual integrity of the trails are threatened by the development of oil, gas, and coal reserves throughout the field office, while increased development threatens to eliminate trail traces.
Has been recognized as warranting protection to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	<p>Under FLPMA, the BLM is required to protect the quality of historic resources and archaeological values. Therefore, the BLM is required to protect the trails, although there is no mandate as to what protection measures will entail.</p> <p>All trails are protected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act that stipulates Federal agencies must consider the effects of any undertaking on any site that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. There are seven aspects of integrity that must be met for determining if an historic property is eligible for inclusion on the National Register. Portions of each trail currently do not meet the eligibility criteria due to development of roads, installation of gas wells, and natural erosion.</p>
Has qualities that warrant highlighting to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	NA
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property.	NO	NA

ACEC Proposal Evaluation Form— Cave Creek Cave

Cave Creek Cave Potential ACEC Proposal		
Area Considered		
General Location	Rawlins Field Office: There are two caves that are located on Cave Creek on the northwest portion of Shirley Mountain.	
General Description	The cave system is located in T. 26 N., R. 82 W., section 24 and contains two caves – Cave Creek Cave and Monsoon’s Mudhole.	
Acreage	The caves and associated riparian area contain approximately 640 acres.	
Values Considered	A hibernaculum for BLM Wyoming state sensitive bat species, historic signature room located within Cave Creek Cave, and unique caving recreational opportunities.	
Identification Criteria		
To be considered as a potential ACEC and analyzed in resource management plan alternatives, an area must meet the criteria of relevance and importance, as established and defined in 43 CFR 1610.7-2.		
Relevance: An area meets the “relevance” criterion if it contains one or more of the following:		
Relevance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
A significant historic, cultural, or scenic value (including but not limited to rare or sensitive archeological resources and religious or cultural resources important to Native Americans).	YES	There is a signature room located within Cave Creek Cave that is large in size and contains numerous signatures dating back to the 1800s. There is a visitor register also located within the signature room.
A fish and wildlife resource (including but not limited to habitat for endangered, sensitive or threatened species, or habitat essential for maintaining species diversity).	YES	The cave system contains summer habitat for five bat species, including two BLM Wyoming State sensitive species – the long-eared myotis and the fringed myotis. The cave also contains a winter hibernaculum for three species, including one BLM Wyoming State sensitive species – the Townsend’s big-eared bat. The Townsend’s big-eared bat is also considered a high priority bat species by the Western Bat Working Group. The cave system provides habitat for bat species that is generally declining throughout the western United States.
A natural process or system (including but not limited to endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species; rare, endemic, or relic plants or plant communities which are terrestrial, aquatic, or riparian; or rare geological features).	YES	The cave system represents a unique geological feature. The cave system contains unique habitat for bats and serves as both a summer day/night roost and winter hibernaculum for at least six bat species. These habitat types require specific temperatures and humidity levels that are present within this cave system.
Natural hazards (including but not limited to areas of avalanche, dangerous flooding, landslides, unstable soils, seismic activity, or dangerous it is determined through the resource management planning process that it has become part of a natural process).	NO	N/A

Cave Creek Cave Potential ACEC Proposal

Importance:

The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described above must have substantial significance and values in order to satisfy the "importance" criteria. This generally means that the value, resource, system, process, or hazard is characterized by one or more of the following:

Importance Value	Yes/No	Rationale for Determination
Has more than locally significant qualities which give it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared to any similar resource.	YES	There are a limited number of natural caves within the area and this cave provides unique habitat for species, specifically for bat species that use the cave in both the summer and winter months.
Has qualities or circumstances that make it fragile, sensitive, rare, irreplaceable, exemplary, unique, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable to adverse change.	YES	The cave system is rare in the Rawlins Field Office area and provides habitat for at least six species of bats, of which three of the species are on the BLM Wyoming State sensitive species list. A bat gate was installed at the entrance of Cave Creek Cave in 2001 to provide for the seasonal closure of the cave between November 1 and April 1 for the protection of hibernating bats.
Has been recognized as warranting protection in order to satisfy national priority concerns or to carry out the mandates of FLPMA.	YES	The Federal Cave Resources Protection Act (Cave Act) was passed to allow caves to be recognized as a natural resource worthy of active management. BLM developed an MOU with Bat Conservation International (BCI) and issued specific guidance for the management of bats and their habitats on public lands. There is a bat gate located at the entrance of Cave Creek Cave for the protection of bat species, of which three species are identified as sensitive by the BLM.
Has qualities which warrant highlighting in order to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.	NO	N/A
Poses a significant threat to human life and safety or to property	NO	N/A

