Monticello Field Office
Bureau of Land Management
Environmental Assessment

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Project Type: Special Recreation Area Management Plan and EA

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Document Structure

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This Environmental Assessment discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. The document is organized into five chapters:

1.0 Introduction
This section includes information on the history of the project proposal, the purpose of and need for the project, and the agency's proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details how the BLM informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded.

2.0 Comparison of Alternatives, including the Proposed Action
This section provides a more detailed description of the agency's proposed action as well as alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose. These alternatives were developed based on issues raised by the public and other agencies through scoping. This discussion also includes possible mitigation measures. Finally, this section provides a summary and comparison table of the alternatives.

3.0 Affected Environment
This section describes the critical elements of the human environment, or resources, which may be impacted by implementing the proposed action. This analysis is organized by critical element. The analysis is broken into critical elements carried forward for additional analysis in Chapter 4.0 Environmental Consequences, and critical elements not carried forward. The discussion of affected environments carried forward for analysis in Chapter 4.0 is organized by issue.

4.0 Environmental Consequences
This section describes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed action and other alternatives. This analysis is organized by issue. Within each section a description of the effects of the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Alternative are discussed.

5.0 Agencies and Persons Consulted
This section provides a list of preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the EA.

Appendices
The appendices provide more detailed information to support the analyses presented in the EA.

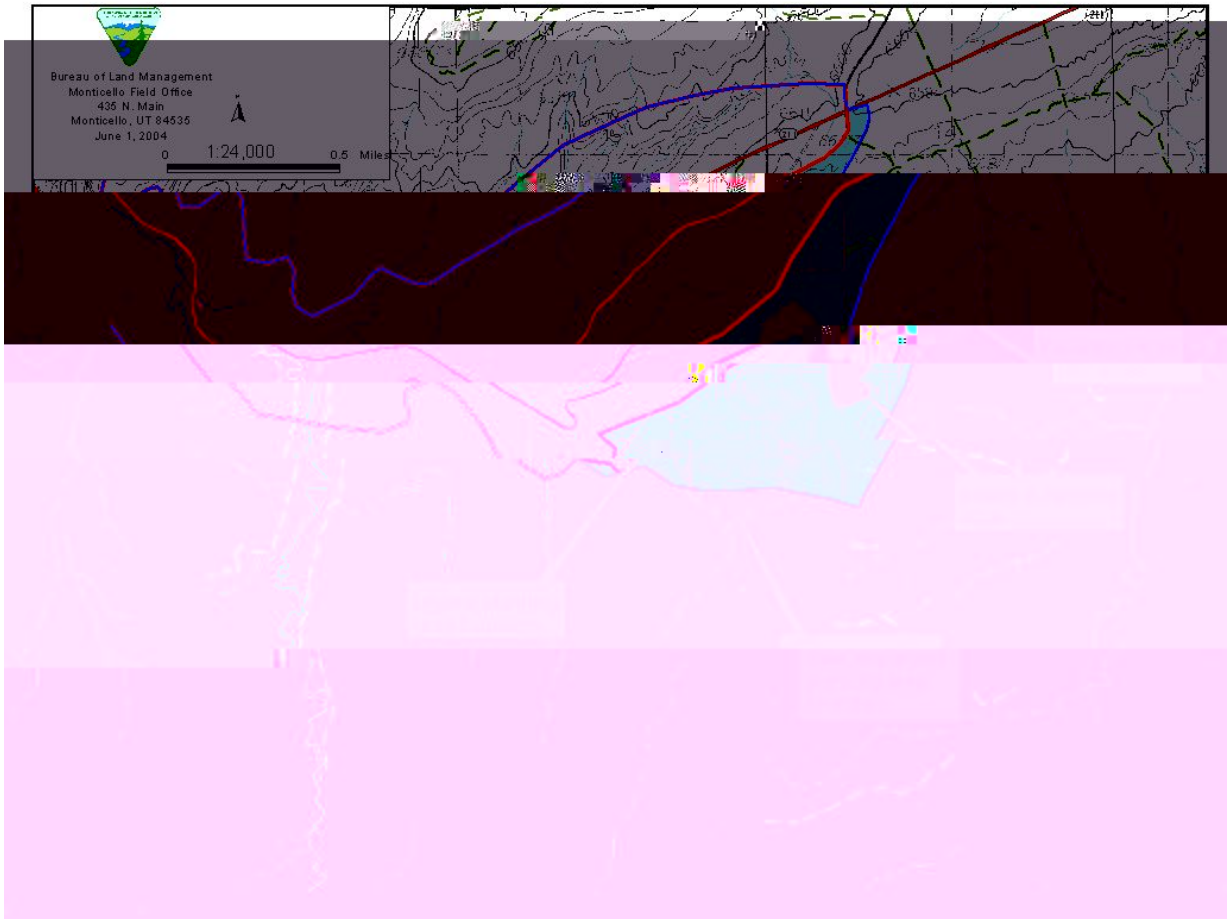
Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at the BLM Monticello Field Office, Monticello, Utah.

1.0 Purpose and Need

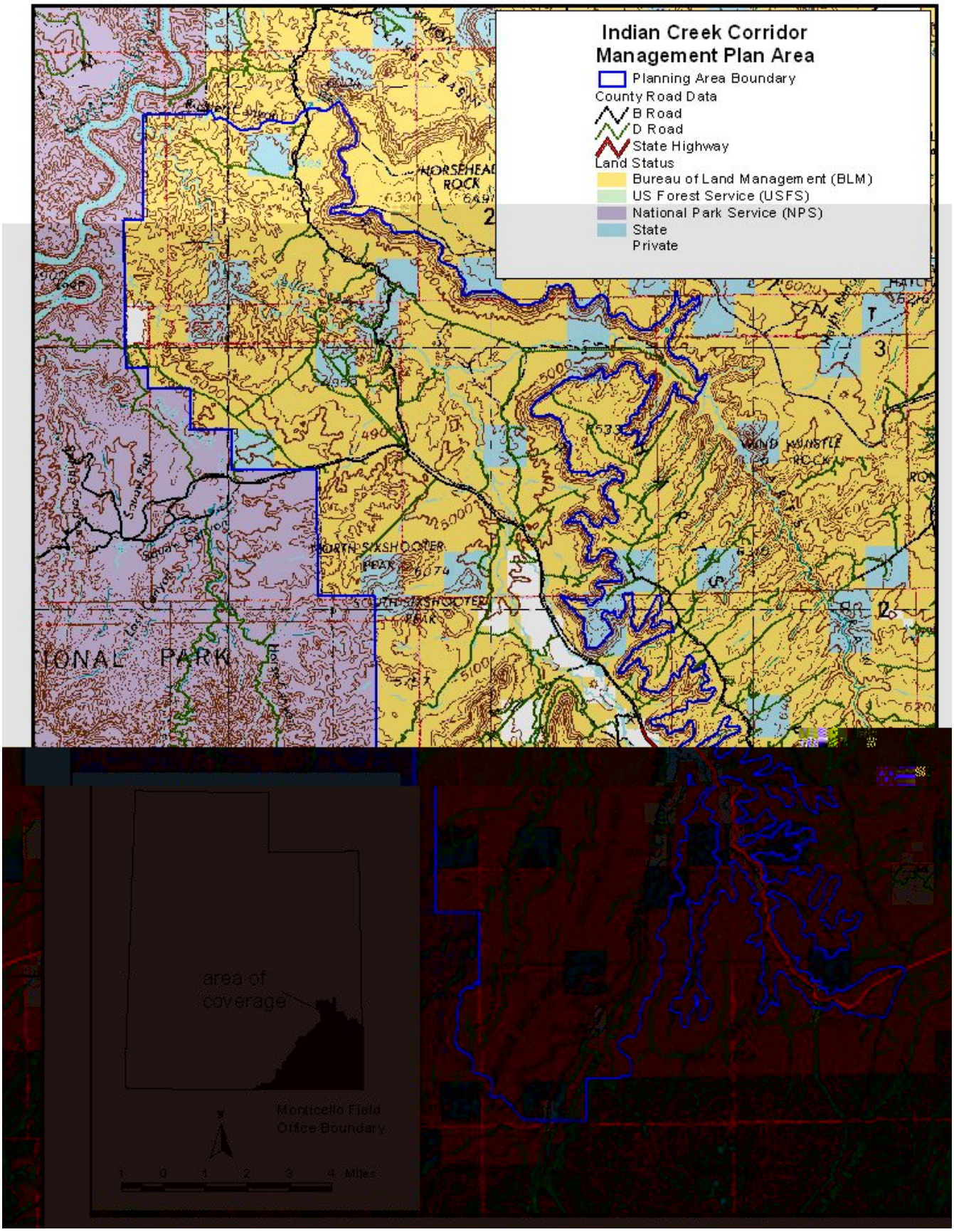
This chapter includes information on the history of the project proposal, the purpose of and need for the project, and the agency's proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details how the BLM informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded.

1.1 Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Indian Creek Corridor planning area is located in San Juan County, Utah. The boundaries of the planning area are indicated in the Indian Creek Corridor planning area map on page 3. Generally, the planning area's southern border reaches to the boundary of the Manti La Sal National Forest. The western border reaches to the boundary of Canyonlands National Park. The northeastern border extends up into Harts Draw to the rim of the Wingate sandstone cliffs, but does not include the land above the rim. The Rustler Canyon drainage serves as the northwestern border. The eastern border follows the cliff line and extends just beyond the junction of Highway 211 and the Harts Draw Road. The planning area initially ended at this junction, but was expanded by 262 acres because of the identification of a high potential campground site just outside of this initial boundary.



Special areas within the planning area include Newspaper Rock, the Shay Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), the Indian Creek Riparian Demonstration Area, the Indian Creek ACEC, the Bridger Jack Mesa ACEC, and the Lavender Mesa ACEC. The project area also encompasses the BLM lands surrounding the Nature Conservancy's Dugout Ranch, operated by Heidi Redd, and the Bar MK Ranch in Harts Draw, owned and operated by Val Dalton.


Indian Creek Corridor
Management Plan Area
Planning Area Boundary
County Road Data
B Road
D Road
State Highway
Land Status
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
US Forest Service (USFS)
National Park Service (NPS)
State
Private
HORSEHEAD ROCK
WIND WHISTLE ROCK
NORTH SIXSHOOTER PEAK
SOUTH SIXSHOOTER PEAK
TONAL PARK
area of coverage
Monticello Field Office Boundary
Miles

The BLM Monticello Field Office proposes to prepare and implement a plan to manage certain resources and uses in the Indian Creek Corridor, in conformance with the San Juan Resource Management Plan (RMP), to meet the following objectives:

- Protect natural resources,
- Protect cultural and paleontological resources, and
- Provide for a variety of safe visitor opportunities to campers, climbers, and other user groups.

The proposed action does not include activities that would modify broader management decisions in the San Juan Resource Management Plan, including:

- Modifying the existing management of OHVs within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area.
- Modifying the existing management of oil and gas exploration and production within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area.
- Modifying the terms of the existing grazing permits.
- Modifying the management of Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), or ACECs.

1.2 Purpose and Need of the Proposed Action

The BLM San Juan Resource Management Plan, March 18, 1991, states that activity level plans are to be completed for Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) within the San Juan Resource Management area. Because the level and type of use in the Indian Creek corridor is different than the rest of the Canyon Basins SRMA, it was determined that a specific activity plan for this area would be more appropriate than a plan that encompasses the entire Canyon Basins SRMA.

The Indian Creek Corridor planning area has experienced increases in visitation and use over the last decade due to a number of factors. Increased visitation to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park has brought more visitors to the Indian Creek area, and has necessitated the use of the Indian Creek Corridor as overflow for the park's camping areas. Indian Creek has also become an increasingly popular recreation destination. Visitation to Indian Creek for its superb rock climbing and other recreation opportunities has increased in recent years, bringing with it thousands of new visitors to the Corridor. Indian Creek's proximity to Moab, and Canyonlands and Arches National Parks, make it a convenient alternative to these busier recreation destinations.

Increased visitation within the Indian Creek corridor has generated resource and visitor management challenges that need to be addressed if the natural and cultural resources of the planning area are to be maintained. Conflicts are arising in this area as a result of increases in the total number of visitors to the area, as well as the diversity of types of users (climbers, mountain bikers, campers, Off-Highway Vehicle users, etc.). The natural and cultural resources of the Corridor are being increasingly impacted. Soils and vegetation are being impacted in the lower Indian Creek area as a result of unrestricted camping and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use. Cultural and paleontological sites have been the target of various forms of vandalism. The loss and degradation of these resources is a concern to BLM, the National Park Service (NPS), the Dugout Ranch, and many of the public land users.

This plan and (EA) is needed to satisfy the requirements of the San Juan Resource Management Plan to develop Special Recreation Management Area activity level plans, and also to meet the objectives of the Monticello Field Office to:

- Protect natural resources
- Protect cultural resources, and
- Provide a variety of safe visitor opportunities and camping experiences to the users of the Indian Creek Corridor.

1.3 Decision to be Made

The Monticello Field Office of the BLM must decide:

1) Whether to implement a plan to manage recreational resources and certain uses in the Indian Creek Corridor, and if so:

2) How should resources and certain uses be managed to best provide for a variety of safe visitor services to campers, climbers, and other user groups?

3) How should resources and certain uses be managed to best protect natural resources?

4) How should resources and certain uses be managed to best protect cultural and paleontological resources?

Details of these decisions are reflected in Section 1.6, Issues, and in Chapter 2.0 Alternatives.

1.4 Conformance with Land Use Plans and Regulation

1.4.1 San Juan Resource Management Plan

The proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with the San Juan RMP (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM MS 1617.3). The RMP outlines broad management objectives and directions for the entire San Juan Resource Area as well as specific directions for ACECs including: the Bridger Jack Mesa, Indian Creek, Lavender Mesa, and Shay Canyon ACECs.

The RMP specifies directions for the management of several resources including: oil/gas/mineral resources, rights-of-way, woodlands, grazing, wilderness, recreation, visual resources, soil, water, wildlife, endangered species, air quality, and fire management.

The majority of the proposed action is an implementation of the management directions prescribed in the existing March 1991 San Juan Resource Area (Monticello Field Office) Resource Management Plan and would require no change or modification to this RMP. The RMP states on page 78 " Dispersed recreation use would be allowed throughout the San Juan Resource Area, with permits required for commercial use." "If demand increases, BLM may require permits for use in other areas where needed to protect resource values; this would not require a plan amendment." The exception to conformance with the RMP is the maintenance and revision of the current "emergency closure" as described in section 1.52 below.

1.4.2 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Policies

The proposed action is consistent with the San Juan County's Master Plan of July 8, 1996. The plan recognizes that travel, tourism, outdoor recreation and the film industry are playing a stronger role in San Juan County's economy. Several objectives in the plan address the enhancement of the county's economy while maintaining a rural lifestyle.

The County Master plan states on page 29 "The County views recreation and tourism as an additional economic opportunity." "The County believes this opportunity may only be in its infant stage. The County will continue… promoting the county's tourist industry."

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) contains the BLM's general land use management authority over public lands. The proposed action poses no conflicts with FLPMA.

The proposed action is also consistent with the following Federal natural resource related policies and laws:

- Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470aa - 470mm)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 1999 amendment (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)
- Native American Graves and Repatriation Act of 1990 (43 CFR 7)
- National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1242-1243)
- Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq. as amended)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321)
- Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926, as amended (43 U.S.C. 869 et seq.)

- Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1977 (Clean Water Act) (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.)
- Executive Order 11988 Floodplains
- Taylor Grazing Act, as amended, 1970
- Public Rangelands Improvement Act 1978
- Plant Protection Act (2000) (Federal Noxious Weed Act, Plant Quarantine Act).
- Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974 (as amended by Sec. 15, Management of Undesirable Plants on Federal Lands, 1990)
- BLM Manual Section 6840
- Executive Order 11987 Exotic Species
- Executive Order 13112 (1999) National Invasive Species Council
- Seed Act (Utah Code, Title 04, Chapter 16)
- Seed Law (Rule R68-8),
- Utah Noxious Weed Act, Title 3 Ch. 17, Utah Code, as amended
- Utah Noxious Weed Act (Rule R68-9)
- Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Management (BLM 1997)
- Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) (1991) and Record of Decision (ROD) for Utah (1991)
- The Weed Management Handbook for Montana, Utah, and Wyoming (Bussan, A.J., et al. 2001) and Partners Against Weeds, An Action Plan for the BLM

1.5 Scoping and Issue Identification

Background

The Indian Creek Corridor planning process initially began in 1991 with the approval of the San Juan Resource Management Plan, which specified the development of Special Recreation Management Area plans. Although the Indian Creek Corridor would have geographically fallen under the Canyon Basins SRMA plan, the BLM decided that management for the Indian Creek Corridor would be best addressed in a separate plan.

Issue identification began in the early 1990s. Two public scoping periods were held, and coordination with key stakeholders was ongoing. The first version of this plan, originally called the “U-211 Management Plan” and later the “Indian Creek Partnership Plan” was completed in draft in December 1993. Due to a shift in work priority and declining staff, this draft was never finalized. A later version of the plan entitled, “Indian Creek Corridor Recreation Facilities Plan and Environmental Assessment,” was not written until 2000. Because of personnel changes, funding issues and other factors, the draft was never completed.

In summer of 2003, the BLM agreed with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) who proposed to contract a third party consultant to work on the Indian Creek Corridor Plan which has resulted in this EA.

Current Process

The issue identification process for this new effort began on July 9, 2003, with a site visit to the Indian Creek Corridor. Attendees included the Dugout Ranch, The Nature Conservancy, the project consultants, and the BLM.

Scoping of the general public began on July 29, 2003, with a scoping newsletter mailed to approximately 100 persons and organizations identified by the BLM as interested parties. The scoping newsletter provided a summary of the Indian Creek planning process, provided background on the planning area, identified preliminary issues to be addressed in the EA, and solicited public comment. A total of 32 written comments were received in response to this newsletter.

A stakeholder meeting was held on September 29, 2003, with the BLM, the Access Fund, the Dugout Ranch, and The Nature Conservancy. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the issues raised in the scoping comments, and give these interested parties opportunity to identify any additional issues.

A second public scoping notice was published on September 30, 2003, in the San Juan Record, the Blue Mountain Panorama, the Moab Times Independent, the Cortez Journal, and the Durango Herald. This notice extended the scoping comment deadline to October 24, 2003, and was published in an effort to solicit additional comments. Written comments received before this deadline totaled 330. Nine (9) comments were received after the deadline.

On October 27, and 28, 2003, interviews were conducted with San Juan County, the NPS, and the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Additional interviews were held on December 15 and 16, 2003, with the Manti-La Sal National Forest, the Utah Department of Transportation, the NPS, the Dugout Ranch, and the Access Fund. The San Juan County Commission was also briefed on the planning effort during their meeting on December 15, 2003. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss preliminary plan alternatives and get feedback from stakeholders on these draft ideas.

Upon identification of a high potential campground location just outside of the Indian Creek Planning Area, a public notice and map was posted on the BLM website (http://www.blm.gov/utah/monticello/IC-index.htm) announcing a change in the Planning Area boundary.

1.6 Issues Relevant to the Decisions to be Made

The following issues have been identified by the project Interdisciplinary Team as consistent with the scope of the analysis, pertinent to the decisions to be made, and appropriate for the development of a range of reasonable alternatives including the proposed action. These issues are based on public comment, resource evaluations of the affected area, and BLM knowledge of the Indian Creek corridor and its use.

Table 1. Issues carried forward for further analysis	
Issue	**Evaluation Criteria**
Issue 1: ***The extent to which certain uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect natural resources.***	Evaluation Criteria used to compare alternatives include: • A description of the extent to which each alternative may affect: o Vegetative cover o Soil erosion o Water quality o Riparian and wetland area o Visual resource management o Wildlife and wildlife habitat o Threatened, endangered, or candidate species o Livestock grazing
Issue 2: ***The extent to which certain uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect cultural and paleontological resources.***	Evaluation criteria used to compare alternatives include: • A description of the extent to which each alternative may affect cultural and paleontological resources within or adjacent to the planning area.
Issue 3: ***The extent to which visitor opportunities should be provided to meet the needs of the users.***	Evaluation criteria used to compare alternatives include: • A description of the impacts of campsites alternatives on users and uses. • A description of the impacts of restroom alternatives on users and uses. • A description of the impacts of trail alternatives on users and uses. • A description of the impacts of fees on visitor services, natural and cultural resources, and the relocation of users. • A description of the impacts of parking on visitor services, natural and cultural resources, and users. • A description of the impacts of each alternative on user and visitor safety. • A description of the impacts of the alternatives on visitor's desired settings, experiences, benefits, and activities.

1.6.1 Issues Not Carried Forward

The following issues were identified during the public scoping process and discussed by the BLM project Interdisciplinary Team. It was determined that these issues were beyond the scope of this analysis, or directly related to the decisions to be made. These issues were not used in the development or evaluation of the proposed action or associated alternatives. Table 2 summarizes the issues not carried forward.

Table 2. Issues not carried forward for further analysis

Issue	Rationale
Off Highway Vehicles (OHV's) In some of the older reference documents used for this EA, such as the San Juan RMP, OHVs are referred to as Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs). This EA will refer to these vehicles as OHVs.	The proposed action does not include any changes to the management of OHVs. The BLM's policies for OHV are outlined in the San Juan RMP, and this proposed action is constrained to the management directions set forth in the RMP. OHV areas are described in the RMP as either Open, Limited or Closed. Changes in the management of OHVs in the Indian Creek Corridor would require amendments to the RMP, and are therefore not discussed in this EA. The RMP is currently under revision, and this issue is being addressed as a broader issue in this revision.
Oil, Gas, and Minerals	The proposed action does not include any changes to the oil, gas, or minerals leasing categories, or mineral development. Changes in the management of extractive industries in the Indian Creek Corridor would require amendments to the RMP, and are therefore not discussed in this EA. The RMP is currently under revision, and this issue is being addressed as a broader policy issue in this revision.
Grazing and Agriculture	The proposed action does not include any changes to grazing or agriculture. The BLM's policies for grazing uses are outlined in the San Juan RMP. Changes in the management of agricultural uses in the Indian Creek Corridor would require amendments to the RMP, and are therefore not discussed in this EA.

Grazing and Agriculture (Continued)	The RMP is currently under revision, and this issue is being addressed as a broader policy issue in this revision. However, the effects of the Proposed Action and Alternative on livestock grazing operations in the planning area are carried forward and analyzed in this document.
WSAs and ACECs	Management of WSAs on BLM lands are guided by BLM's H-8550-1 Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review. This issue is not carried forward for further analysis because the proposed action does not include any changes to the management of WSAs or ACECs The BLM's policies for the management of these WSAs and ACECs are outlined in the San Juan RMP, and this proposed action is constrained to the management directions set forth in the RMP. Changes in the management of WSAs or ACECs in the Indian Creek Corridor would require amendments to the RMP. The RMP is currently under revision, and this issue is being addressed as a broader policy issue in this revision. Although the proposed action would have no impact on WSAs and ACECs, further discussion on these issues is located in Chapter 3.0 Affected Environment to provide context.
Reintroduction of Native Colorado Cutthroat Trout	The proposed action does not include any changes to the management of fisheries in the Indian Creek Corridor. BLM and UDWR recent surveys have not found that Indian Creek supports a trout fishery on BLM lands. Because of recent drought conditions, low annual precipitation for the area, and upstream diversions, it is not likely that Indian Creek would maintain sufficient in-stream flow to support Colorado Cutthroat in the near future.

Land Acquisitions or Exchanges	The proposed action does not include any proposed land acquisition or exchange within the Indian Creek Corridor. However, School & Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) inholdings may present an opportunity to address management issues. SITLA land exchanges or adjustments may be recommended for consideration during the current revision of the RMP. Similarly, land exchange possibilities may exist with The Nature Conservancy or with the Kelly Ranch, just east of Newspaper Rock. Such exchanges would be explored and may be recommended for consideration in the RMP revision.
Environmental Justice	The proposed action includes only public lands which are available to the entire public. This proposed action would not place any burden which could be considered an environmental injustice on any segment of the population, and therefore this issue has not been carried forward for further analysis.
Hazardous Materials	No hazardous substance as defined by Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) would be used in the proposed action. No Resource Conservation & Recovery Act of l976 (RCRA) hazardous wastes would be generated. Since hazardous materials are not an issue associated with the current conditions or the proposed action, this issue has not been carried forward for further analysis.
Air Quality	Currently there are no mining, oil and gas or other industry point source locations that would affect air quality within the Corridor. The types of visitor uses in the proposed action generally would have no measurable effect on air quality. This

Wild and Scenic Rivers	Indian Creek has been identified as an eligible Wild and Scenic River in the BLM Monticello Field Office's August 2003 report, "Preliminary Eligibility Determination of Wild and Scenic Rivers," for its outstanding and remarkable cultural resources. The 5-mile segment of the Creek which has been identified as eligible runs from the Manti-La Sal National Forest boundary to Donnelly Canyon. The Proposed Action would not change the free flowing nature of the river, nor would it impact the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values. This issue was therefore not carried forward for further analysis.
Prime or Unique Farmlands	Although the irrigated farmlands of the Dugout Ranch, owned by the Nature Conservancy are considered to be prime or unique farmlands, there is no action proposed that would effect these lands. This issue was therefore not carried forward for further analysis. The Dugout Ranch, owned by The Nature Conservancy and operated by Heidi Redd, is located within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area. The 5,200-acre Dugout Ranch is an operating cattle ranch with 250,000 acres of grazing allotments on BLM land. Much of the ranch lands are irrigated alfalfa fields. The Nature Conservancy is managing the Dugout Ranch to preserve and enhance the property's ecological and open space features. The property is used for ecological research, biological management, and natural and cultural history interpretation. It is being maintained as an economically viable and ecologically sustainable cattle ranching operation.
Native American Religious Concerns	Several Native American Tribes have cultural affiliation with the area within the Corridor. The Hopi Tribe, in particular, has visited Newspaper Rock National Historic Site and considers it among other sites in the area to be a Traditional Cultural Property.

Native American Religious Concerns (Continued)	Protection for all prehistoric cultural sites is a concern for The Hopi Tribe as well as other Tribes who were associated with this area in the past and maintain some association today (see Chapter 5.0 for list of tribes consulted). All potentially affected tribes have been given opportunity to comment on the proposed action. No potential conflicts or impacts have been identified associated with Native American religious concerns, and therefore this issue has not been carried forward.

1.6.2. Wilderness Values

The Indian Creek Corridor presents a wide variety of opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, including but not limited to: multi-day backpacking trips, canyoneering, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, cultural and historical exploration, photography, and rock climbing. These lands also have supplemental values such as spectacular scenery and viewpoints, rock-art panels, raptor habitat, bighorn sheep, archeological sites, and natural arches and bridges.

The following history of Monticello Field Office wilderness evaluations is presented to better understand current wilderness practices, concerns, and issues.

In 1979, the BLM began an inventory of 22 million acres of public land in Utah. The BLM ultimately determined that 95 areas (totaling over 3.2 million acres) possessed wilderness character. With completion of the inventory in 1980's, lands with wilderness character became Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). In the Monticello Field Office, BLM designated thirteen WSAs. The Indian Creek Corridor contains two of these WSAs: Bridger Jack WSA, and Indian Creek WSA.

WSAs are managed under the BLM's Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review (IMP). The WSAs are managed so as not to impair their suitability for Congressional designation as Wilderness. Generally this means that no new surface disturbance or permanent placement of structures is allowed, although existing developments and resource uses may continue to be maintained and operated. (Handbook -8550-1, Chapter 1A. General Policy)

In the 20 years since the BLM's inventory was completed, Utah wilderness has become a national issue with debates over which lands have wilderness character and should be considered for wilderness designation. Because of the debate, and a significant passage of time since the BLM's original inventory, the Secretary of the Interior in 1996 directed the BLM to take another look at the areas in question – lands proposed for wilderness designation in legislation then before Congress (H.R. 1500). The Secretary wished to know if, in the 20 years since BLM completed its first inventory, conditions had changed on the ground and if there were other lands that possessed wilderness characteristics. BLM determined that some of these reviewed lands had wilderness characteristics.

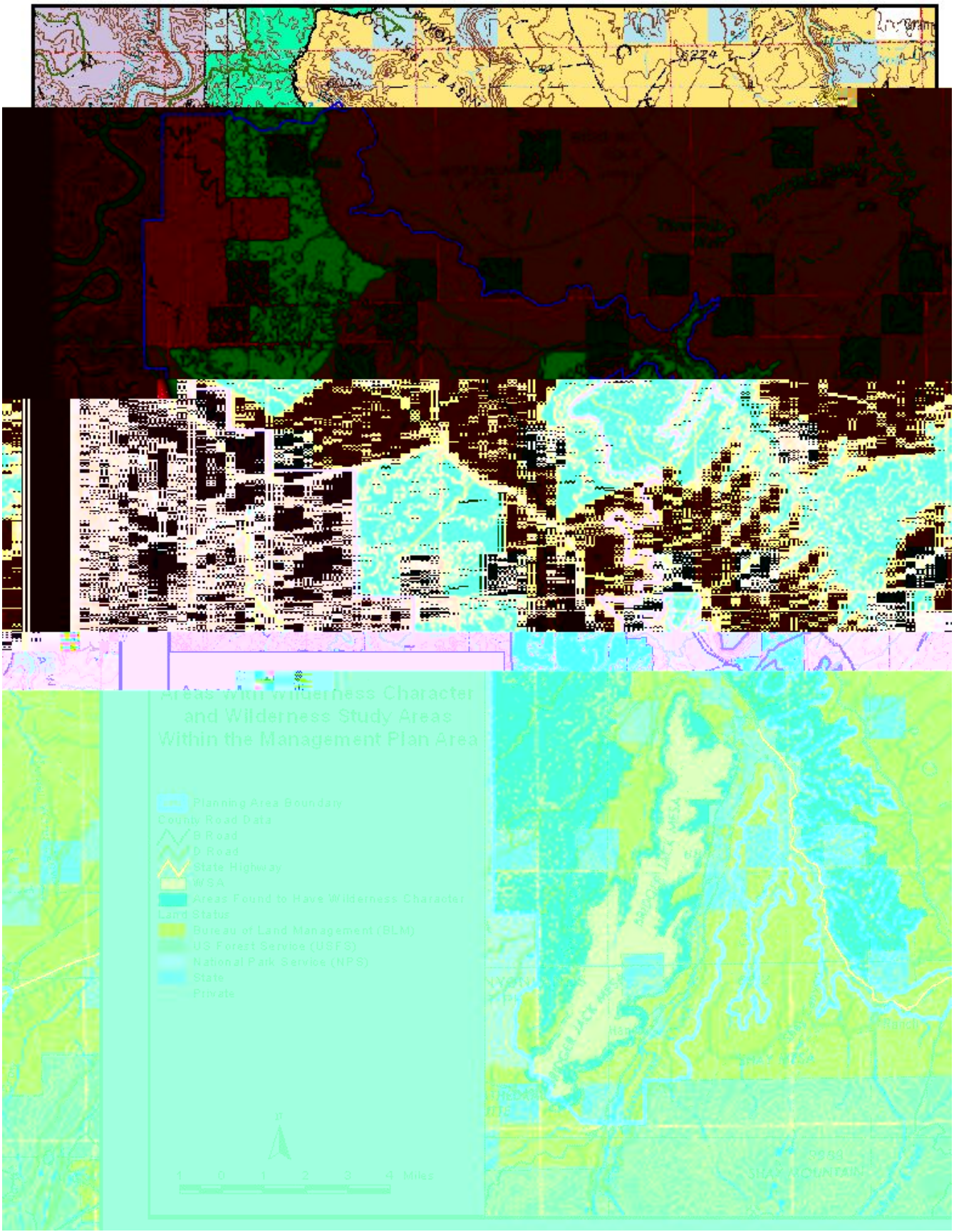
Currently, legislation has been introduced into the US Congress as “America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act of 2003” (H.R. 1796, S. 639). The Act seeks to designate as wilderness the BLM WSAs in Utah, the additional public lands found to have wilderness character through the BLM 1996-1999 wilderness inventory, and other areas proposed for wilderness by the public.

Following resolution of an injunction from a lawsuit that challenged the Secretary’s authority to conduct the 1996 inventory, the BLM completed the inventory in 1998. A year later the BLM released the *1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory*, finding that another 2.6 million acres of public land in Utah had wilderness characteristics. Following the release of the *Inventory*, BLM solicited public comments and held scoping meetings throughout Utah. Based on some of the comments received, and after conducting necessary field checks, BLM revised the inventory for the Moab and Monticello Field Offices in 2003.

In addition to the approximately 337,000 acres of WSA lands In the Monticello Field Office, 20 areas totaling about 488,744 acres were found to have wilderness characteristics in the 1999 inventory. These lands are managed under the existing San Juan Resource Area Resource Management Plan.

The Indian Creek Corridor contains three of the areas that were re-inventoried (1999) and were found to have wilderness characteristics. These were: Bridger Jack Mesa, Harts Point, and Indian Creek. These areas have been affected primarily by the forces of nature and retain their natural character. They provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

During scoping for the current RMP revision BLM solicited new information and comments. All RMP solicited comments (scoping period ended December 30, 2003) have been directed to the BLM contractor. and will be used in preparation of the RMP. A proposal was submitted to BLM’s Monticello Field Office, by the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance on behalf of Utah Wilderness Coalition in 2001, indicating that they believe lands in the Harts Point area and Lockhart Basin area of the Indian Creek Corridor possess wilderness characteristics (naturalness, opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation). A subsequent evaluation of these areas found that there was a reasonable probability that the Lockhart Basin may have wilderness characteristics and that the Harts Point area does have wilderness characteristics as updated in the 2003 revision of the *1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory*. A map of these wilderness proposals can be found in Appendix C of this document. Based on an agreement between the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of Utah over the l999 Wilderness inventory no lands will be managed under the Interim Management Plan except for existing WSAs. All other lands will be managed under the framework of the current RMP. Through its land use revision planning process, BLM will consider all available information to determine the mix of resource use and protection that serves the FLPMA multiple-use mandate.


Areas With Wilderness Character
and Wilderness Study Areas
Within the Management Plan Area
Planning Area Boundary
County Road Data
B Road
D Road
State Highway
WSA
Areas Found to Have Wilderness Character
Land Status
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
US Forest Service (USFS)
National Park Service (NPS)
State
Private
1 0 1 2 3 4 Miles

1.6.2.1 ACECs

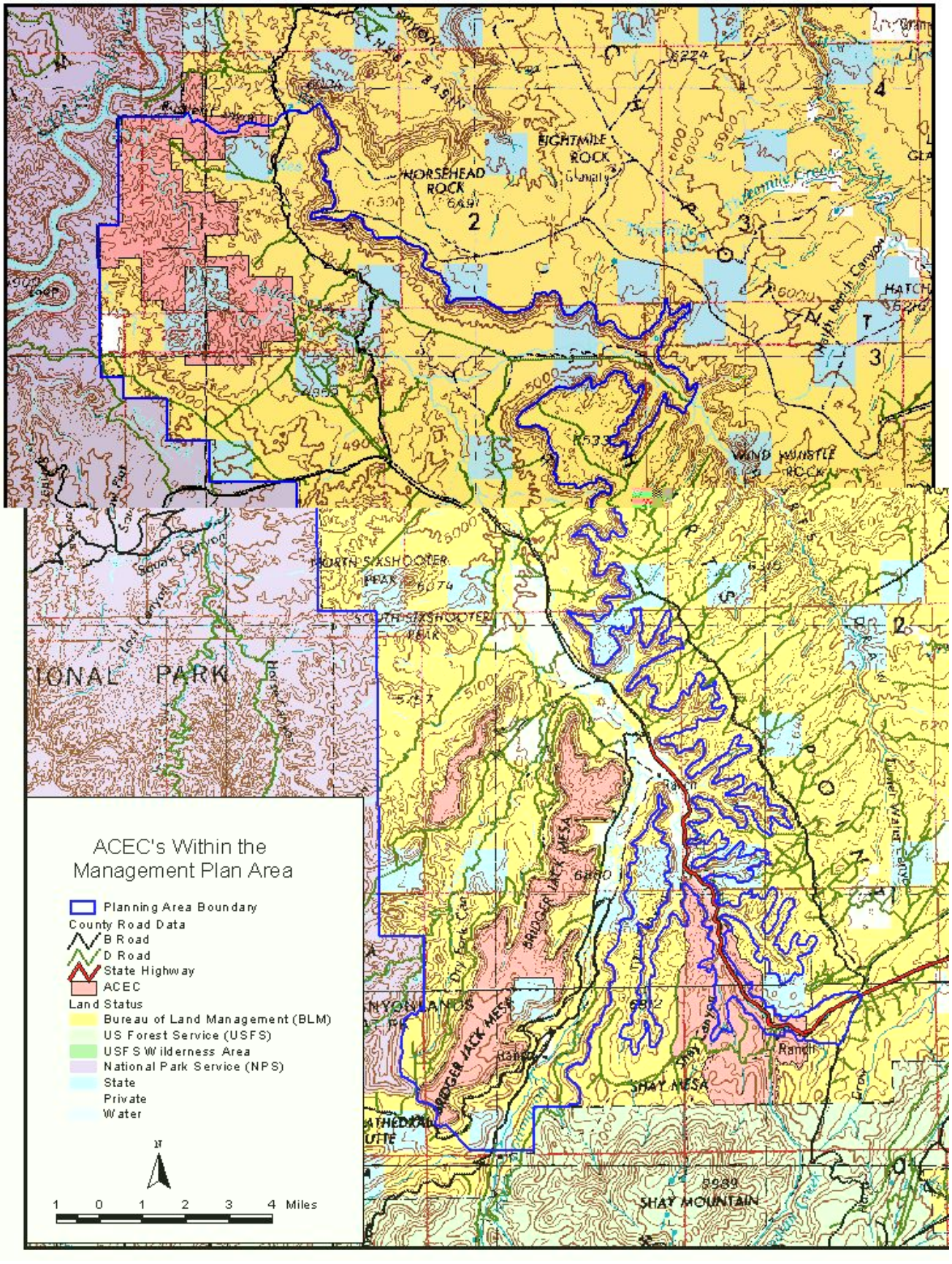
The Indian Creek Corridor contains four Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). These are: the Shay Canyon ACEC, the Indian Creek ACEC, the Bridger Jack Mesa ACEC, and the Lavender Mesa ACEC. Each of these ACECs was created to protect their cultural, visual, biological, or recreational values.

The Shay Canyon ACEC is 3,560 acres in size and includes two branches of the Indian Creek Drainage. This area is managed under the Cultural Resource Management program, and managed for conservation and public values. The Shay Canyon ACEC is designated Roaded Natural at the mouth of the canyon, and the remainder is classified as Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized under the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS).

The Indian Creek ACEC is 8,509 acres in size and covers an area adjacent to Canyonlands National Park. It is designated under the Recreation/Visual Resource management programs, and managed to maintain scenic quality. Almost all of the ACEC is managed under primitive or semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classifications.

The Bridger Jack Mesa ACEC is 6260 acres in size, and covers the top of the Bridger Jack Mesa some of the talus slopes below the cliff lines. This area is managed under the Grazing Management Program to provide a baseline for rangeland studies. It is used for comparative studies of ecological sites to study the recovery of near-relict plant communities from the effects of grazing. The Bridger Jack Mesa ACEC is managed under the semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classification.

The Lavender Mesa ACEC is 649 acres in size and covers the top of Lavender Mesa. This ACEC is designated under the Grazing Management program to provide a baseline for rangeland studies. As a relict vegetation area (never having been grazed by livestock), it is used for comparative studies of ecological sites to study the effects of livestock grazing on vegetation. The Lavender Mesa ACEC is managed under the semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classification.


ACEC's Within the Management Plan Area
Planning Area Boundary
County Road Data
B Road
D Road
State Highway
ACEC
Land Status
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
US Forest Service (USFS)
USFS Wilderness Area
National Park Service (NPS)
State
Private
Water
1 0 1 2 3 4 Miles
HORSEHEAD ROCK
EIGHTMILE ROCK
WIND WHISTLE ROCK
NORTH SIXSHOOTER PEAK
SOUTH SIXSHOOTER PEAK
BRIDGER JACK MESA
SHAY MESA
SHAY MOUNTAIN
Ranch

2.0 Alternatives

This chapter describes the range of alternatives considered as part of the Indian Creek Corridor Plan and EA process. All alternatives considered are consistent with the resource management objectives stated in the 1991 San Juan Resource Management Plan, and address unique characteristics of the Indian Creek Corridor planning area.

2.1 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

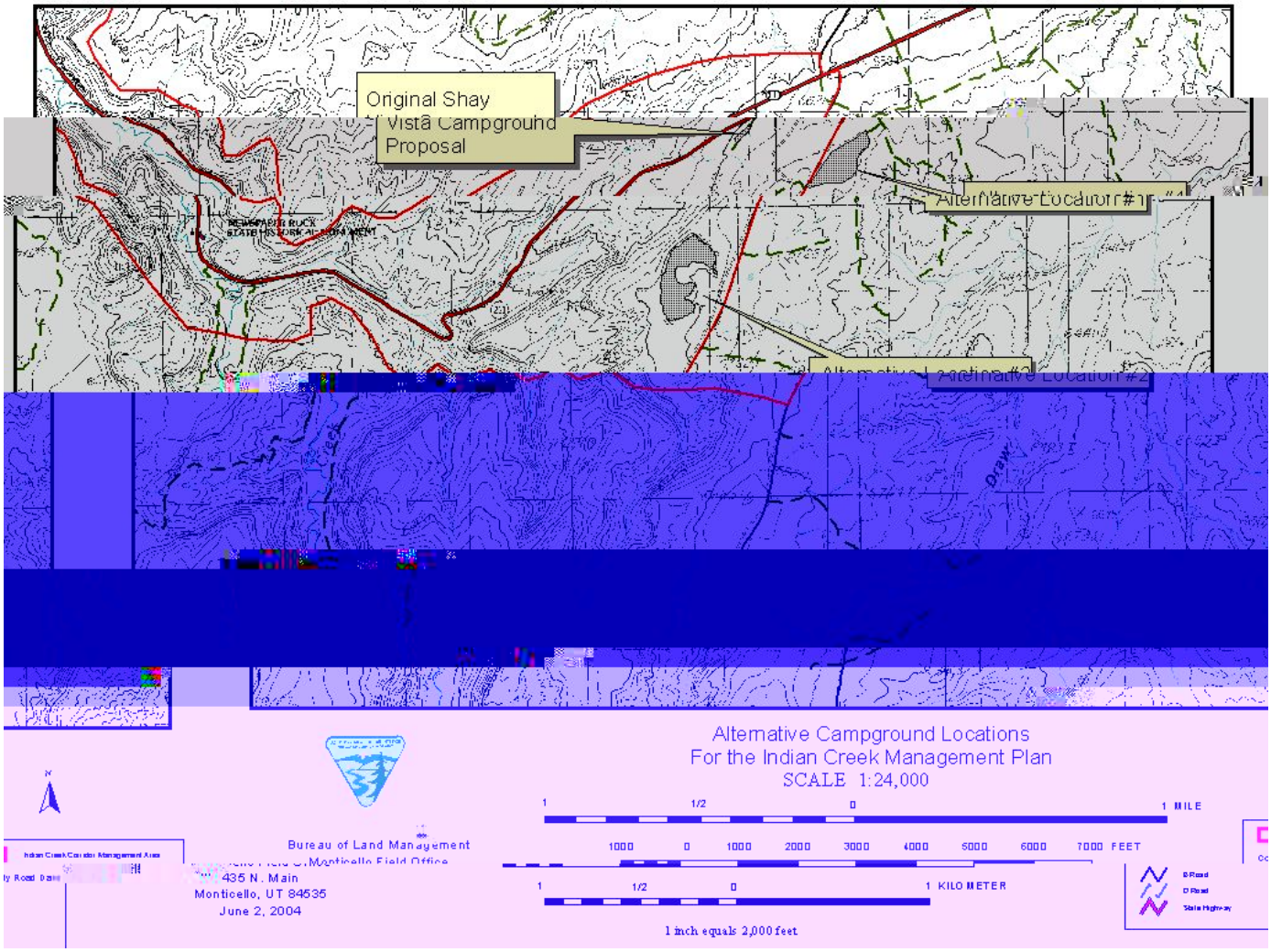
The following alternatives were identified and considered by the BLM project Interdisciplinary Team. It was determined that these alternatives would not be carried forward for detailed analysis. Table 3 summarizes the alternatives considered but eliminated.

Table 3. Alternatives Considered but Eliminated

Alternative	Rationale
Developing and improving the Indian Creek Falls campground.	Although the RMP directs the BLM to designate a campground in this area, such an action would be in conflict with cultural resources protection. In order to protect these sensitive resources, this alternative was eliminated from the analysis.
Identifying the Superbowl area as a designated campground.	In the Superbowl area, there is a concentration of decaying cottonwood trees that pose a potential risk to campers and picnickers. It is recommended that camping not be encouraged at Superbowl, and that campers be encouraged to use the Creek Pasture area as a safer alternative. This alternative was eliminated.
Leaving existing camping at Newspaper Rock.	There are a number of resource and safety concerns in this area. Part of the existing campground is located in the Indian Creek floodplain, and was inundated twice between 2002 and 2003. Camping in a floodplain and riparian area also poses questions about the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, riparian vegetation, stream banks, and other resources. Furthermore, according to Executive Order 11988 on Floodplains, no construction or development should occur in a floodplain if practicable alternatives exist. For these reasons, this alternative was eliminated.

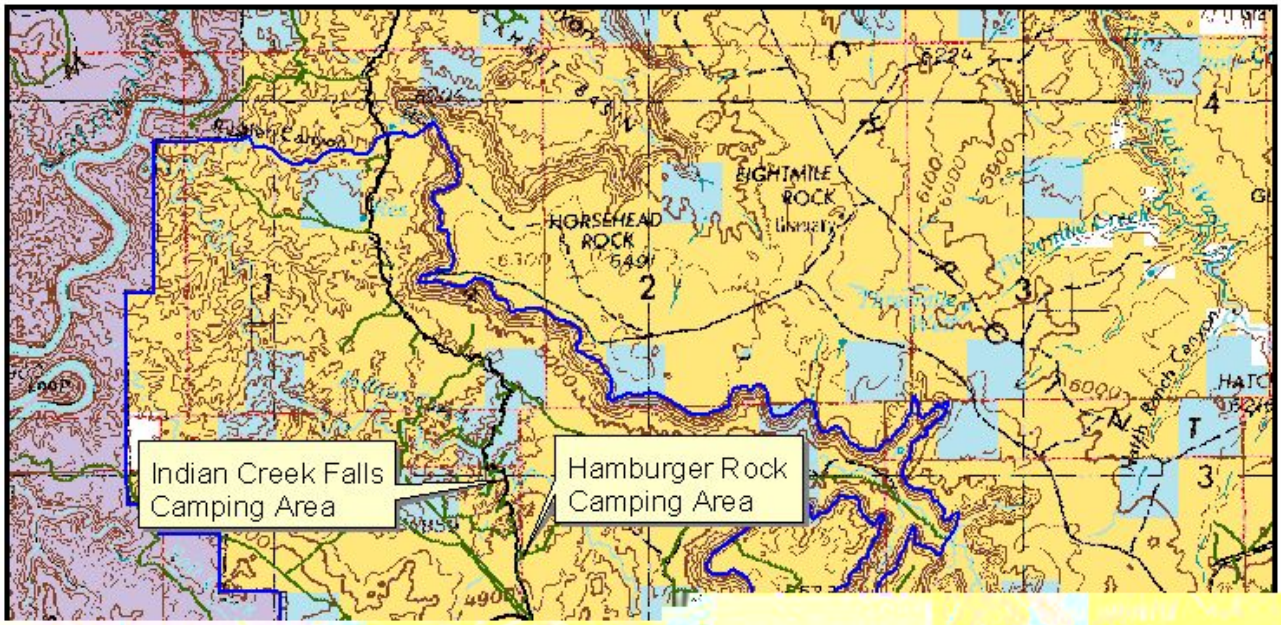
Identifying the Cottonwoods area as a designated campground.	Legal public access to this area is in question. The need for a cadastral survey has been identified. In addition there is a concentration of decaying cottonwood trees that pose a potential risk to campers and picnickers. It is recommended that camping not be encouraged at Cottonwood, and that campers be encouraged to use the Bridger Jack area as a safer alternative. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated.
Implementing a toll booth type entrance station along Highway 211 at Newspaper Rock.	The BLM has received suggestions that a toll booth type of entrance station be placed on Highway 211 for all visitors entering the Indian Creek Corridor. Funds generated by this entrance station would be used for the Corridor needs such as visitor education, law enforcement, facilities maintenance, and natural and cultural/paleontological resource protection and monitoring. It is beyond the scope of this EA to consider this option. Prior to the implementation of such a system, the BLM and NPS would have to work together to complete an appropriate level of NEPA.
Installing toilets at Bridger Jack, Superbowl, Creek Pasture, Cottonwoods camping areas.	The BLM does not currently have the resources to install and maintain toilets in these areas. A trial period pack-in/pack-out alternative for these areas was selected instead, but includes a provision for adding permanent restrooms if deemed necessary in the future or if appropriate funding can be obtained. Parameters of this trial period are outlined in Section 2.2.3 of this chapter.
Charging fees at Bridger Jack, Superbowl, Creek Pasture, Newspaper Rock, Cottonwoods, and Indian Creek Falls.	Charging fees is generally based on the level of services provided. It has been determined that charging fees for using these areas is not warranted at this time, and this alternative was eliminated. If permanent restrooms or other services were deemed necessary in the future, fees would be charged to cover the costs or installation and maintenance.
Closing the Indian Creek Corridor to undesignated dispersed vehicle camping.	The BLM considered closing the Indian Creek Corridor to undesignated dispersed camping in response to problems with human waste disposal. A trial pack-in/pack-out policy has been considered as an alternative to removing all undesignated dispersed camping.

Closing the Indian Creek Corridor to undesignated dispersed vehicle camping. (Continued)	If at the end of the trial period, the BLM determines that the pack-in/pack-out policy is not working, the BLM may consider a number of options to address the issue. Such options include installing permanent toilets at designated campsites, and/or using a permit system for dispersed recreation.
Locating a campground near the gravel area at the top of the Highway 211 switchbacks.	*Original Shay Mountain Vista Campground Location:* Because of unsuitable topography (steep slopes, stream crossings, etc.) and the length of new road needed to access this site, this alternative was considered but eliminated. *Shay Mountain Vista Alternative Location #1:* An alternative campground location was identified near this same area which was also eliminated as an alternative because of a variety of issues and impacts: Although the campground location would provide nice scenery for camping, there was concern that several of the campsites would be visible from Highway 211. The site could interfere with a sagebrush restoration project and break up cow movement between feeding areas and several watering ponds in the area. A campground in this location would also interfere with a fencing project that is being planned. These alternatives and the alternative selected to carry forward for detailed analysis (alternative location #2) are illustrated in the following graphic.
Implementing a permit system for dispersed camping within the Indian Creek Corridor.	Initial scoping pointed out the desire to retain the primitive unconfined recreation opportunities in Indian Creek. The primary impact of dispersed camping is disposal of human waste, and potential effects on soils, vegetation, and cultural sites. The proposed action was designed to eliminate the need to iy.8.3992i7m(l1 252. 0 0 10.98 72 22l of)Tj0.0098 0n48 0293.399



2.2 Alternatives Analyzed in Detail

The following orientation map illustrates the location of specific areas identified in the alternatives. These include proposed and existing camping areas, a proposed day-use area, and camping areas proposed for removal.


Indian Creek Falls
Camping Area
Hamburger Rock
Camping Area
HORSEHEAD
ROCK
EIGHTMILE
ROCK

2.2.1 Management Objectives Common to All Alternatives

In addition to San Juan Resource Area-wide BLM management objectives, the Interdisciplinary Team identified several Indian Creek Corridor-specific management priorities and impact mitigation measures. Collectively, these objectives are common to all alternatives considered.

Resource management objectives and impact mitigation measures applicable to the Indian Creek Corridor plan include the following:

Riparian Areas, Stream Corridors, and Wetlands

- Facilities, trails, or activities will be allowed on existing trails in wetlands within stream corridors.
- Soil disturbing activities in wetlands, floodplains, or riparian areas will be avoided when possible.

Watershed, Soils, and Water Quality

- Water quality and soil productivity will be maintained and protected.
- Activities will not be allowed if the associated water quality impacts cannot be mitigated.
- Water quality monitoring will continue along Indian Creek.

Cultural/Paleontological Resources

- Cultural and paleontological resources will be protected and preserved.
- A cultural/paleontological resource clearance survey will be done for proposed actions and consultation with the Utah State Historical Preservation Office (USHPO) and Native American Tribes will take place.
- Activities and uses impacting known cultural and paleontological resources will not continue prior to a complete evaluation, consultation and implementation of mitigation measures.

Trail Construction and Maintenance

- Trails will be constructed with minimal soil and vegetation disturbance.
- As necessary, trails will be reconstructed or realigned to improve public safety, prevent erosion, and avoid sensitive areas.
- Unnecessary multiple social trails leading to climbing areas will be eliminated.

Visual Resources

- Visual resources will be managed to retain the quality of naturally occurring landscapes.
- Any facilities will be constructed to be consistent with the surrounding natural environment.
- Site-Specific developments will employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials.

Wildlife

- Riparian corridors would be managed to provide wildlife habitat.

- Activities and uses found to be impacting wildlife would be evaluated and, where appropriate, mitigation measures would be implemented.

Vegetation

- Vegetation and vegetative cover will be maintained and protected.

- Activities and uses found to be impacting vegetation would be evaluated and, where appropriate, mitigation measures would be implemented.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

- Management would provide for the protection of threatened, endangered, and candidate plant and animal species as identified.

Recreation, Safety, and Visitor Opportunities

- Management will provide for a quality experience and enjoyment of natural, cultural, and paleontological resources by providing a range of recreational opportunities. Facilities built will provide for health and safety and improve the conditions of accessibility to recreation sites.

- Management of the Corridor will be consistent with the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum objectives specified in the RMP.

1998 Emergency Closure Notice

In 1998 a closure notice was published in the Federal Register (January 2, 1998, Volume 63, Number 1) which placed a closure on certain recreational uses within the Indian Creek Corridor. This closure was placed on the corridor in order to reduce damage to natural and cultural resource values and provide for public safety in the Indian Creek Canyon Corridor. The closure consists of five restrictions:

1) Motor vehicles and mountain bike travel is restricted to existing roads and trails and indiscriminate damage by off highway vehicles play will be rehabilitated.

2) Camping is restricted to either improved recreation sites with facilities for overnight use or designated undeveloped campsites.

3) Campsite occupancy may be limited to posted numbers of vehicles and persons.

4) Wood gathering within one half mile of a motorized route will be prohibited.

5) Campfires within one half miles of a motorized route may only be built in BLM constructed fire rings, designated fire rings, or fire pans.

The existing closure notice states that the restrictions shall remain in effect until updated by the authorized officer. Plans are to update this emergency closure to keep in place the restrictions on OHV travel (1) to designated roads and remove those restrictions that were not necessary (2-5).

2.2.2 Alternative A- No Action Alternative

Under Alternative A, the Indian Creek Corridor would continue under current management pending the current RMP revision. Restrictions in the 1998 closure notice for the Indian Creek Corridor would be lifted upon the signing of a decision notice for this plan and EA. There would be no change to the location, designation, or establishment of campsites, trails, restroom facilities, parking areas, or recreation sites. There would also be no change to the management of water quality, vegetative cover, wildlife, riparian or wetland areas, or scenic quality. Likewise, there would be no change to the management of cultural/paleontological resources in the planning area.

The management directions under the No Action Alternative have been broken into two sections: Area-Wide Management Directions, and Specific Area Management Directions.

No Action Alternative: Area-Wide
These management directions are currently being applied to the entire Indian Creek Corridor and would continue under the No Action Alternative.

Rock Climbing
Climbing in the Indian Creek Corridor would be open to the public with minimal regulations and restrictions. The establishment of new routes and placing of bolts and anchors would be allowed. There would be no regulations for fixed anchors. The use of chalk would be allowed. No climbing would be allowed on routes which may adversely impact cultural resources such as rock art. Anchors may be removed on any route found to be in conflict with cultural resources. The BLM also has the authority to seasonally close climbing routes which adversely impact nesting raptors.

Trails
As needed, the BLM would evaluate and develop access trails to popular recreational sites as identified in the Rocky Mountain Field Institute study, “Recreation Inventory and Report: Rock Climbing and Related Activities in Indian Creek Canyon, Utah.” These trails are identified in Appendix D. RMFI and the BLM would continue to develop some access trails and climbing recreational sites as identified needs arise. Multiple unnecessary social trails will be removed when main trails are developed. Individual Environmental Assessments would be required to analyze the impacts of each trail project.

Parking
There would be no parking regulations enforced within the Corridor. Parking would continue in user-created turn-outs along Highway 211. On busy days, cars would be allowed to park along the roadside. No established parking areas would be identified or improved.

Undesignated Dispersed Camping
All restrictions in the 1998 closure notice for the Indian Creek Corridor, including restrictions on dispersed camping, would be lifted upon the signing of a decision notice for this plan and EA. Dispersed camping would be allowed throughout the Corridor. Newspaper Rock, Hamburger Rock, and Indian Creek Falls provide the only designated camping within the Corridor. These campgrounds would not be further developed, and no new camping areas would be designated.

Sanitation and Garbage
The restrooms at Newspaper Rock, Hamburger Rock, and Indian Creek Falls would continue to be the only permanent restrooms within the corridor. These facilities would be maintained as they are currently, and no improvements would be made to them. Standards for the management of human and other waste would be consistent with Leave No Trace principals. Most human waste at campsites and popular recreation areas would be buried in "cat holes." Neither current, nor future, demands for restrooms and sanitation would be met.

Fires
Under the 1998 closure notice, campfires within one half mile of motorized routes may only be built in BLM constructed fire rings, designated fire rings, or fire pans. Additionally, wood gathering within one half mile of a motorized route is prohibited under this closure. If this No Action Alternative is selected, all of the restrictions in the 1998 closure notice for the Indian Creek Corridor would be lifted upon the signing of a decision notice for this plan and EA and both fires and wood gathering would be allowed throughout the corridor.

Pets
Pets would continue to be allowed throughout the Corridor without regulations or leash restrictions. The burial of pet waste or other appropriate disposal would be encouraged.

Education
The information kiosks at Donnelly Canyon and Indian Creek Falls would remain and would be maintained sporadically. The Access Fund climbing brochure on Indian Creek would be available at these kiosks.

Fees
Fees would be charged according to the level of service and facilities provided. Fees would continue to be charged at Hamburger Rock Campground to cover the maintenance costs of the facilities provided at this location. No fees would be charged for use of any other area within the Corridor at this time.

No Action Alternative: Specific Area
These management directions are currently being applied to specific sites within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area and would continue under the No Action Alternative.

Shay Mountain Vista Campground
This campground would not be developed. No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees would be charged in this area.

Newspaper Rock
For the safety of the visitors that frequently use this area, designated camping in the Newspaper Rock corridor will be removed upon completion of a Federal Register Notice posting this closure. All formal campground facilities (picnic tables, fire rings, parking areas) will be removed. Dispersed camping will be allowed throughout the Corridor, including the Newspaper Rock area.

Bridger Jack Mesa
All restrictions in the 1998 closure notice for the Indian Creek Corridor would be lifted upon the signing of a decision notice for this plan and EA, and dispersed camping would be allowed in this area. The Bridger Jack Mesa area would not be designated as a dispersed camping area, and no specific campsites would be identified. No facilities or services would be installed. No restrooms would be installed, nor a pack-in/pack-out policy enforced. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." No fees would be charged for use of this area. This area would continue to receive heavy use and no limits would be placed on the number of campers here.

Donnelly Canyon
This area would continue to be one of the most heavily used climbing and recreation sites within the Corridor. No designated parking areas would be established, and users may frequently park along Highway 211 and on private property. No restrooms would be installed and no fees would be charged. User-created trails would continue to be used and expanded through use.

Cottonwoods
Under the 1998 closure notice, camping at Cottonwoods is not currently allowed. If this alternative is selected, the restrictions on dispersed camping would be lifted. No facilities or services would be implemented, and therefore no fees would be charged. No restrooms would be installed, nor a pack-in/pack-out policy enforced. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." This area would continue to receive heavy use and no limits would be placed on the number of campers here.

Superbowl
Under the 1998 closure notice, camping at Superbowl is not currently allowed. If this alternative is selected, the restrictions on dispersed camping would be lifted. No facilities or services would be implemented, and therefore no fees would be charged. No restrooms would be installed, nor a pack-in/pack-out policy enforced. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." This area would continue to receive heavy use and no limits would be placed on the number of campers here.

Creek Pasture
Under the 1998 closure notice, camping at Creek Pasture is not currently allowed. If this alternative is selected, the restrictions on dispersed camping would be lifted. No facilities or services would be implemented, and therefore no fees would be charged. No restrooms would be installed, nor a pack-in/pack-out policy enforced. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." This site would continue to have light to moderate use as most people would choose to camp at the nearby Superbowl area.

Hamburger Rock
This area would continue to provide limited designated camping. Camping opportunities would be limited to the existing sites, and no new sites would be developed. The restrooms at this site would continue to be maintained as they are now, and no improvements would be made to their design or construction. This site would continue to have heavy use, and fees would be charged through a self registration honor system.

Indian Creek Falls
Existing designated camping which is impacting cultural resources would be removed upon completion of a Federal Register Notice posting this closure. The existing restroom and educational kiosk at this site would be maintained unless found to be in conflict with cultural resources. Existing dispersed camping would be allowed if found not to be in conflict with cultural resources, but camping here would not be encouraged.

2.2.3 Alternative B- Preferred Alternative

The BLM Monticello Field Office proposes to update the management practices for the Indian Creek Corridor planning area to better meet the increasing resource and visitor management needs of the area.

If this alternative is selected, the BLM would publish in the Federal Register a revised update to the 1998 closure notice. Restrictions in the 1998 closure notice for the Indian Creek Corridor would be lifted (as described in section 2.2.1). The revised closure would state the following:

1. Motorized vehicles and mountain bike travel will be restricted to existing roads and trails as described in the current l998 closure notice.

2. Camping along the Bridger Jack Mesa Bench will be limited to designated camping sites as shown in the map on page 36.

3. Camping at Creek Pasture will be limited to designated areas or sites as described in the map on page 36.

4. The established Newspaper Rock Campground will be closed due to flood danger.

5. The three designated campsites at Indian Creek Falls will be removed due to cultural resource conflicts. If replacement sites can be found in this area that do not conflict with Cultural resources, they would be established.

The management directions for the Indian Creek Corridor have been divided into two sections: Area-Wide Management Directions, and Specific Area Management Directions.

Preferred Alternative: Area-Wide
These management directions would apply to the entire Indian Creek Corridor planning area under the Preferred Alternative.

<u>Rock Climbing</u>
Climbing in the Indian Creek Corridor would continue to remain open to the public. The establishment of new routes and placing of bolts and anchors would be allowed. When placing fixed anchors, climbers should limit their impact by all reasonable means. All fixed anchors should be camouflaged to minimize visual impact. Climbers should refrain from placing bolts where removable protection is feasible and safe. The use of white chalk would be allowed, but rock colored chalk is encouraged. Climbers should avoid slings or use rock-colored webbing as permanent anchors. Alteration of the rock surfaces by gluing, chipping, or chiseling would not be allowed. Removal of vegetation, would be prohibited.

No climbing would be allowed on routes which may impact cultural/paleontological resources. As the BLM learns of climbing routes which are in conflict with the protection of cultural resources, they would be closed. Known cultural sites would be signed to alert climbers about restrictions. The BLM would also seasonally close and post climbing routes that are near a raptor's nest to avoid adversely impacting raptors. Because raptors can, and do, change nesting areas from year to year, seasonal closures would be flexible to protect the most current situation.

BLM may permanently or temporarily close climbing routes which;

- Can only be accessed by crossing private land,
- Are found to be in conflict with cultural/paleontological resources, or
- Are found to be in conflict with natural resources.

Trails

As needed, the BLM would evaluate and develop access trails to popular recreational sites as identified in the 2002 Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI) study, "Recreation Inventory and Report: Rock Climbing and Related Activities in Indian Creek Canyon, Utah," and any appendices or updates which are made to this study. Decisions to construct relocation trails would consider recreational needs as well as needs for the protection of natural and cultural resources. Maintenance of existing trails is allowed New trails, not identified in the RMFI study would require NEPA analysis. The trails proposed for development are identified in Appendix D. The development of any trail would be subject to cultural, paleontological inventory, consultation, and biological clearance surveys. Generally, these clearances do not take place until after the on-site flagging of the specific trail is agreed upon. As new trail projects are approved, multiple unnecessary social trails would be eliminated and rehabilitated. The BLM will use materials consistent with the natural environment in all construction and maintenance. BLM would consult with The Nature Conservancy and Dugout Ranch prior to the construction of any trail on or near Dugout Ranch property.

Parking

Designated parking areas have been identified and would be developed according to the Indian Creek Corridor Parking Plan, Appendix A, to meet current and future parking demands. The actual location of the proposed designated parking areas will depend on the findings of cadastral, biological, and cultural surveys. Designated parking areas will be located as close to Highway 211 as safely possible. In areas where safety concerns arise, parking along the shoulder of Highway 211 would not be allowed. Signs would be posted in these areas. The BLM would work closely with the Utah Department of Transportation to design and develop transportation betterment projects along Highway 211. Effects on private property would be considered prior to construction of any new parking area.

Undesignated Dispersed Camping

Under this alternative, the restrictions of the 1998 closure notice on dispersed camping would be lifted, except within designated camping areas. Camping at Bridger Jack Mesa, Creek Pasture, Hamburger Rock, and Shay Mountain Vista would be restricted to designated sites when provided. All other areas within the Corridor would be open to dispersed camping. Closure of specific areas to dispersed camping would be addressed through RMP revisions or future emergency closures. BLM may close areas which:

- Can only be accessed by crossing private land,
- Are found to be in conflict with cultural/paleontological resources, or
- Are found to be in conflict with natural resources.

Sanitation and Garbage

A two year trial period pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for all areas without restrooms and garbage receptacles. If problems with human waste persist or increase, portable toilets would be required or restrooms would be installed in these areas.

The following standards would be applied and enforced during the trial period:

- Adherence to the Leave No Trace standards is required.
- Provision and use of bag system or portable toilet is required.
- Use of cat holes is prohibited.
- Leaving or burying toilet paper is prohibited.
- Packing out all trash and garbage is required.
- Screening or filtering of grey water is required before dumping.

The BLM would be responsible for educating the public on the above standards, enforcing the pack-in/pack-out policy, and determining the effectiveness of the policy. This may be accomplished by creating a new BLM climbing ranger position, or with assistance from others such as independent inspectors, academic field interns, or other partners. The BLM has identified the following benchmarks and monitoring measures to determine the level of compliance and effectiveness of the pack-in/pack-out policy:

- The BLM would conduct regular site visits to educate the public and enforce the pack-in/pack-out policy.
- The pack-in/pack-out policy would be determined to be working if regular inspections find that:
    - People have toilets or bags, and seem to be using them;
    - Toilet paper and/or evidence of human waste is not found in camping areas; and
    - Used toilet bags are not found in the area.
- The pack-in/pack-out policy would remain in place as long as:
    - The public thinks that it is working; and
    - The BLM thinks that it is working.

Quantitative criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the pack-in/pack-out policy and the Indian Creek visitors' compliance include:

- Number of users in violation of the policy
- Number of users in compliance with the policy
- Number of inspections conducted
- Water quality level (decline, improvement, maintain same level)
- Number of bags used (if provided by BLM or other group)

A total of two years will be used to assess and monitor the effectiveness of the carry out policy.

At the six month point of the trial period, the policy will be assessed and appropriate changes will be made to increase the effectiveness and compliance level of the policy.

At the end of the one-year trial period, the BLM will review the policy and monitoring methods, and make appropriate changes to increase the policy's effectiveness and the visitors' level of compliance.

After one year and a half of implementing the carry out policy, if the BLM determines that the policy is not effective and decides to implement a change in management (installation of toilets and charging fees) the public will be given adequate notice. There will be a six-month grace period for the visitors to modify their actions, and suggest alternative measures to ensure compliance with the pack-in/pack-out policy.

During the first two years visitors not abiding by the pack in pack out policy will be warned and BLM's efforts will concentrate on education and partnerships with climbing groups to bring about compliance at the end of two years.

Inspections and monitoring will be reasonable the first year following the pack-in/pack-out trial period. There will be a one year grace period after the end of the trial in which no citations will be written. After this time, visitors to the area not abiding by the pack-in/pack-out policy will be cited and fined.

Long-term monitoring of the level of compliance and effectiveness of the pack-in/pack-out policy is essential

Fires

Upon selection of this alternative, BLM would publish in the Federal Register a revised update to the l998 closure notice which would remain in effect until the completion of the ongoing Resource management Plan Revision. The revised closure would state the following in regards to fires and wood collection:

- Fire wood gathering in designated campgrounds or designated dispersed sites will be prohibited.
- Campers will be required to use fire rings where provided.

Campers will be encouraged to use Leave No Trace standards and to remove their ashes. The current RMP revision is considering a range of firewood gathering alternatives.

Pets

Dogs and other pets would continue to be allowed within the Indian Creek Corridor. If dogs become a nuisance to other users, or harass livestock or wildlife, they must be leashed. Dog waste must be buried or disposed of properly. BLM would provide information at kiosks about properly controlling pets and avoiding conflicts with livestock, wildlife, and other public land users.

Education

The BLM has identified the need for a climbing ranger, but funding is not currently available to support this additional staff. If a climbing ranger position is funded, education would be one of the primary responsibilities of this person.

Under this alternative, the BLM would expand education and outreach efforts in the Corridor. Information kiosks, signs, and brochures would provide the public with information which may include:

- Pack-in/Pack-out Policy and proper human waste disposal
- Leave No Trace practices
- Protection of cultural/paleontological resources
- Protection of natural resources
- OHV etiquette
- Camping etiquette
- Climbing etiquette
- Respect for private and public property
- Control of invasive and noxious weeds
- Pets
- Fire safety
- Purpose and use of user fees

These educational materials would be placed at various locations which may include:

- Newspaper Rock picnic area
- Parking areas
- Designated campgrounds
- San Juan County Visitors Center
- Canyonlands National Park Visitor Center
- Along Highway 211
- Monticello and Moab BLM Field Offices
- Local rock climbing shops in Moab, Telluride, and Durango

Materials will also be provided to the Friends of Indian Creek group for distribution among users of the Corridor.

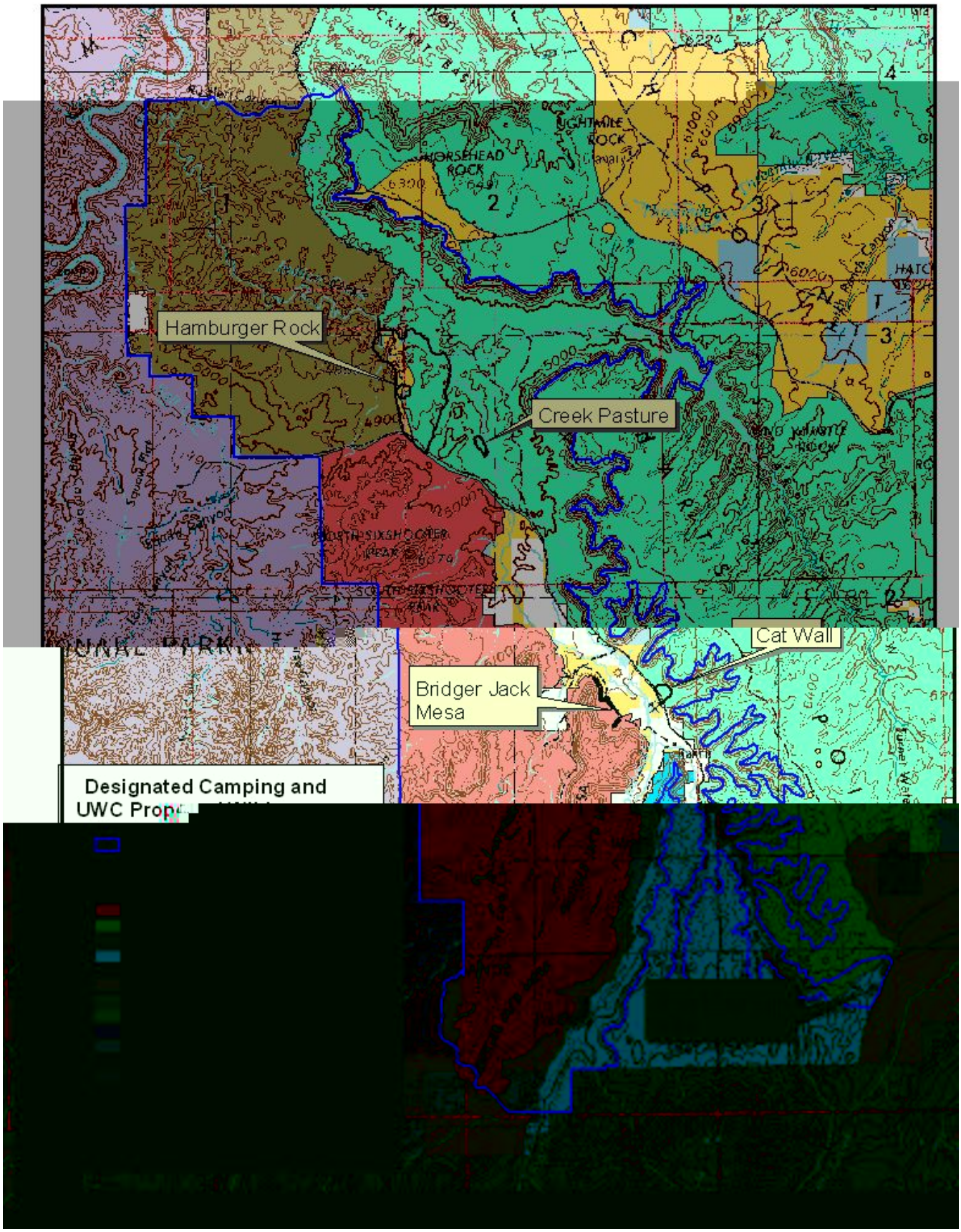
Fees

Fees would be charged according to the level of service provided at each site. In areas where the trial pack-in/pack-out policy for human waste is implemented, no fees would be charged. If it is determined that the trial policy is not working, fees could be charged to cover the installation and maintenance cost of toilets.

In areas where more developed facilities and services are provided, fees could be charged. These areas include Hamburger Rock Campground and Shay Mountain Vista Campground.

Preferred Alternative: Specific Areas

These management directions apply to specific sites within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area.


Hamburger Rock
Creek Pasture
Cat Wall
Bridger Jack Mesa
Designated Camping and
UWC Prop

Shay Mountain Vista Campground

This new designated campground could be developed and constructed following the Shay Mountain Vista Campground Site Plan, Appendix A. This site plan may include restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, garbage collection, fencing, campsite marker posts, gravel roads, delineated parking areas, and educational kiosks or signs. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials. This campground would operate under a fee system to cover cost of site facilities and services. This campground would provide camping opportunities for a range of users including tent and recreational vehicle (RV) campers. Campsite occupancy may be limited to posted numbers of vehicles and persons. Development of this site would be subject to biological and cultural survey findings.

Newspaper Rock

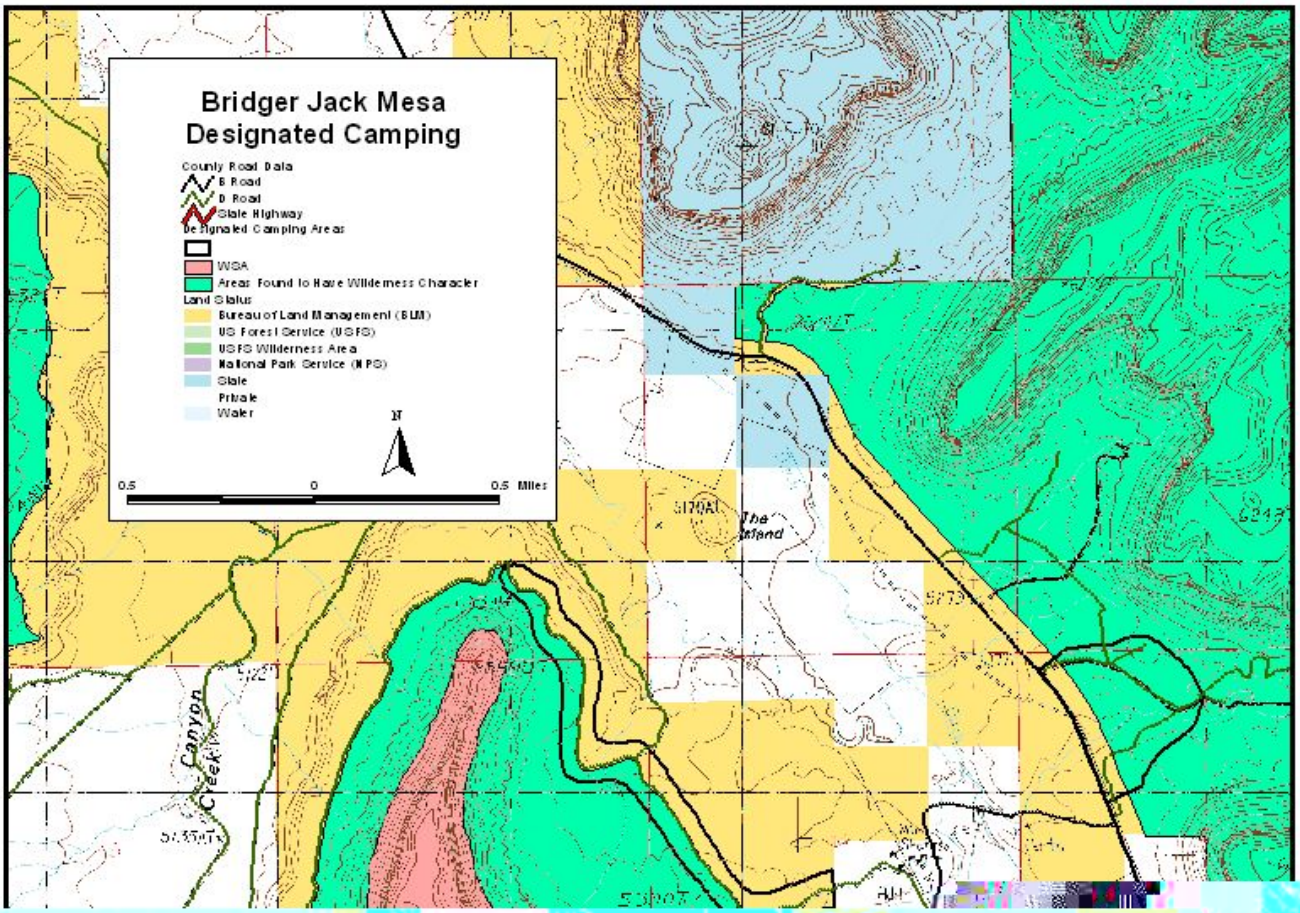
For the safety of the visitors that frequently use this area, designated camping in the Newspaper Rock corridor will be removed, pending the completion of a Federal Register Notice and the posting this closure. All formal campground facilities (picnic tables, fire rings, parking areas) will be removed. Due to flood danger dispersed camping would be prohibited in this area when the revised Federal Register Notice is published.

A new designated picnic area would be developed on the East side of Hwy 211 as outlined in the Newspaper Rock Site Plan, Appendix A. Existing restroom and parking facilities would be maintained and an educational kiosk or signs would be installed. If shade structures are constructed at the Newspaper Rock Day-use Area, they should be designed so that the views of Newspaper Rock from Highway 211 are not obstructed. No fees would be charged for use of this picnic area. Development of this site would be subject to biological and cultural survey findings.

Bridger Jack Mesa

This area would be designated and developed according to the Bridger Jack Mesa Designated Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan, Appendix A. The Bridger Jack Mesa campsites closest to Dugout Ranch would be relocated, and all other camping would be limited to designated sites, which are further from the ranch. Facilities at this site may include the installation of fire rings, educational kiosks or signs, delineated parking areas, and campsite marker posts, and toilets. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials. Campsite occupancy may be limited to posted numbers of vehicles and persons. Designating the campsites would also minimize the proliferation of new dispersed campsites and would provide more control over the camping that does occur here, both of which would minimize visual impact.

A two-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for handling human waste issues. If waste problems persist or increase, portable toilets would be required or restrooms would be installed. No fees would be charged for use of this area unless it is determined that restrooms are needed. At that point, options for covering the cost of installation and maintenance of restrooms would be explored. Development of this site would be subject to biological, cultural, and paleontological inventory and required consultation findings.


Bridger Jack Mesa
Designated Camping
County Road Data
B Road
D Road
State Highway
Designated Camping Areas
WSA
Areas Found to Have Wilderness Character
Land Status
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
US Forest Service (USFS)
USFS Wilderness Area
National Park Service (NPS)
State
Private
Water
N
0.5
0
0.5 Miles
The Island
Canyon
Creek

Donnelly Canyon

This area would be developed according to the Donnelly Canyon Recreation Area Site Plan, Appendix A. Adequate parking and restroom facilities are the primary needs for this area. The placement and location of these facilities is dependent on land ownership boundaries. A request has been placed on the BLM cadastral survey list, and the BLM is currently working to secure funding for this survey.

In addition to a parking area and restroom, the Donnelly Canyon site plan may include the installation of educational kiosks or signs, and the establishment of recreational access trails as outlined in the Rocky Mountain Field Institute study. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials. No fees would be charged for use of this area. Development of this site would be subject to biological, cultural, and paleontological inventory and required consultation findings.

Cottonwoods

Camping in the Cottonwoods area would not be designated. Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. No facilities or services would be implemented, and therefore, no fees would be charged. A one-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for this area. If at the end of the trial period, this policy is not found to be effective, a recommendation would be made to the RMP to close this area to dispersed camping.

The BLM has not determined if the public has legal access to this area. If surveys determine that access to this area requires the crossing of private land, a recommendation to the RMP would be made to close this area to camping.

Superbowl

Camping in the Superbowl area would not be designated. Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. No facilities or services would be implemented, and therefore, no fees would be charged. A one-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for this area. If at the end of the trial period, this policy is not found to be effective, a recommendation would be made to the RMP to close this area to dispersed camping.

Creek Pasture

This area would become a designated camping area and would be developed according to the future Creek Pasture Designated Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan, Appendix A. Facilities at this site may include the installation of fire rings, picnic tables, educational kiosks or signs, delineated parking areas, campsite marker posts, and toilet facilities. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials. Campsite occupancy may be limited to posted numbers of vehicles and persons. Designating the campsites would also minimize the proliferation of new dispersed campsites and would provide more control over the camping that does occur here, both of which would minimize visual impact.

Fencing would be required to protect cultural resources near this site. A ywo-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for human waste. If human waste becomes a problem, portable toilets would be required or restrooms would be installed. No fees would be charged for use of this area unless it is determined that restrooms are needed. At that point, fees would be charged to cover the cost of installation and maintenance of restrooms. Development of this site would be subject to biological and cultural survey findings. Riparian areas would be fenced to prevent deterioration of stream banks as necessary.

Hamburger Rock

This campground would continue to provide designated camping opportunities for the public and would be improved according to the Hamburger Rock Campground Site Plan, Appendix A. Existing facilities and services including restrooms, fire rings, and picnic tables would be maintained and improved. Tent pads, a staging area, and educational kiosks or signs may be included in improvements to this area, but no new campsites would be developed under this alternative. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials. Campsite occupancy may be limited to posted numbers of vehicles and persons. This campground would operate under a fee system to cover cost of site facilities and services.

Similar to the Bridger Jack Mesa Designated Camping Area expansion, the BLM has identified Hamburger Rock as another area for potential expansion as demands for camping spaces increase over time. This expansion may include adding an outer ring of campsites around Hamburger Rock. Preliminary site design drawings have been developed, but the actual layout would be dependent on cultural, biological, and visual impact surveys.

Indian Creek Falls

Existing designated camping which is impacting cultural resources would be removed upon completion of the closure notice extension. If previously disturbed camp sites in this area can be found that do not conflict with cultural sites the BLM may designate these as campsites. The existing restroom and educational kiosk at this site would be maintained unless found to be in conflict with cultural resources. Self pay fees could be charged for camping in this area. Existing dispersed camping would be allowed if found not to be in conflict with cultural resources, but camping here would not be encouraged. This plan recommends that options for developing a management agreement with the State Institutional Trust Lands Association be addressed in the current San Juan RMP revision effort. Such an agreement would be helpful since a large part of this area lies within State ownership.

2.2.4 Alternative Comparison Matrix

The following table provides a summary comparison of the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this Environmental Assessment.

Table 4. Alternative Comparison Matrix

AREA/TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A—NO ACTION	ALTERNATIVE B—PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Area-Wide		
Rock Climbing	▪ Climbing in the Indian Creek Corridor would be open to the public with minimal regulations and restrictions. ▪ The establishment of new routes and placing of bolts and anchors would be allowed. ▪ There would be no regulations for fixed anchors. ▪ The use of chalk would be allowed. ▪ No climbing would be allowed on routes which may impact cultural resources. Routes would be closed if they are found to be impacting cultural/paleontological resources, and anchors on these routes would be removed. ▪ The BLM would seasonally close climbing routes which adversely impact nesting raptors and post those closings.	▪ Climbing in the Indian Creek Corridor would continue to remain open to the public. ▪ The establishment of new routes and placing of bolts and anchors would be allowed. ▪ Climbers should refrain from placing bolts where removable protection is a safe and feasible alternative. ▪ All fixed anchors must be camouflaged to minimize visual impact. ▪ The use of white chalk is allowed, but rock-colored chalk is encouraged. ▪ Alteration of the rock surfaces by gluing, chipping, or chiseling is not allowed. ▪ No removal of vegetation is allowed. ▪ No climbing would be allowed on routes which may adversely impact cultural resources such as rock art. Routes would be closed if they are found to be impacting cultural/paleontological resources, and anchors on these routes would be removed. ▪ The BLM would seasonally close climbing routes which adversely impact nesting raptors and post those closings.
Trails	▪ BLM would evaluate and develop access trails to popular recreational sites as identified in RMFI study and its updates. ▪ Individual environmental review under NEPA would not be required for trail building efforts identified in the RMFI study and its amendments. ▪ The development of any trail is subject to cultural and paleontological inventory and required consultation, and biological clearance surveys.	▪ BLM would evaluate and develop access trails to popular recreational sites as identified in EA Appendix D and the RMFI study, including any subsequent updates. ▪ Individual environmental review under NEPA would not be required for trail building efforts identified in the RMFI study and its amendments. ▪ The development of any trail is subject to cultural and paleontological inventory and required consultation, and biological clearance surveys.
Parking	▪ Parking would continue in user-created turn-outs along Highway 211, and on busy days, cars would be allowed to park along the roadside. ▪ No established parking areas would be identified or improved.	▪ Designated parking areas have been identified and would be developed in conjunction with UDOT. ▪ In areas where safety concerns arise, parking along the shoulder of Highway 211 would not be allowed. ▪ Signs would be posted in these areas.

AREA/TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A—NO ACTION	ALTERNATIVE B—PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Undesignated Dispersed Camping	▪ Undesignated dispersed camping will be allowed upon selection of this alternative and lifting of the 1998 closure notice. ▪ Campgrounds would not be further developed, and no new dispersed camping areas would be designated. ▪ As needed, closure of areas toersed cam	

AREA/TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A—NO ACTION	ALTERNATIVE B—PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Fees	▪ Fees would be charged according to the level of service provided at each site. ▪ Fees could be charged for use of Hamburger Rock, and Indian Creek Falls Campgrounds. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of any other area.	▪ Fees could be charged according to the level of service provided at each site. ▪ Fees could be charged for use of the Shay Mountain Vista Indian Creek Falls, and Hamburger Rock Campgrounds. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of any other area as long as the pack-in/pack-out policy remains in place. If at any point, the BLM feels that the pack-in/pack-out policy is no longer working, fees could be charged to cover the costs of toilet facilities.
Site-Specific		
Shay Mountain Vista Campground	▪ This campground would not be developed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area.	▪ This new designated campground would be developed and constructed following the Shay Mountain Vista Campground Site Plan. ▪ This site plan may include restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings, garbage collection, fencing, and educational kiosks or signs. ▪ The campground would provide a range of camping opportunities ranging from tent sites to RV sites. ▪ This campground could operate under a fee system to cover cost of site facilities and services.
Newspaper Rock	▪ All camping and picnic tables and fire rings at the Newspaper Rock campground would be removed and this area would be rehabilitated. ▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed to continue at this site. ▪ The existing restroom would be maintained. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area.	▪ All camping and picnic tables and fire rings at the Newspaper Rock campground would be removed and this area would be rehabilitated. ▪ A new designated picnic area would be developed on the East side of Hwy 211 following the Newspaper Rock Site Plan. ▪ Existing restroom and parking facilities would be maintained and an educational kiosk or signs would be installed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this picnic area. ▪ Due to flood danger dispersed camping would be prohibited in this area when the revised Federal Register Notice is published.

AREA/TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A—NO ACTION	ALTERNATIVE B—PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Bridger Jack Mesa Designated Dispersed Camping Area	▪ This area would not be designated as a dispersed camping area, and no specific campsites would be identified. ▪ No pack-in/pack-out policy would be implemented nor would toilets be installed. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area. ▪ This area would continue to receive heavy dispersed camping use.	▪ This area would become a Designated Dispersed Camping Area and would be developed according to the Bridger Jack Mesa Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan. ▪ Facilities at this site may include the installation of fire rings, educational kiosks or signs, campsite marker posts, and delineated parking areas. ▪ If funding is available toilets could be installed. Otherwise a two-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for handling human waste issues. If waste problems persist or increase, portable toilets would be required or restrooms would be installed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area unless it is determined that restrooms are needed. At that point options for covering the cost of installation and maintenance of restrooms would be explored. ▪ Campsites closest to The Dugout Ranch would be relocated.
Donnelly Canyon Recreation Area	▪ This area would continue to be one of the most heavily used climbing and recreation sites within the Corridor. ▪ No designated parking areas would be established, and users may frequently park along Highway 211 and on private property. ▪ No restrooms would be installed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area.	▪ This area would continue to be one of the most heavily used climbing and recreation sites within the Corridor. ▪ A parking area would be developed here subject to an agreement with The Dugout Ranch. ▪ A restroom, educational kiosks or signs, and access trails would be developed or installed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area.
Cottonwoods	▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. ▪ No pack-in/pack-out policy would be implemented nor would toilets be installed. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." ▪ No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees would be charged for use of this area.	▪ Camping in the Cottonwoods area would not be designated. ▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. ▪ A mandatory pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for this area. ▪ No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees could be charged for use of this area.
Superbowl	▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. ▪ No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees would be charged for use of this area. ▪ No pack-in/pack-out policy would be implemented nor would toilets be installed. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes."	▪ Camping in the Superbowl area would not be designated. ▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. ▪ A mandatory pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for this area. ▪ No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees would be charged for use of this area.

AREA/TOPIC	ALTERNATIVE A—NO ACTION	ALTERNATIVE B—PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Creek Pasture Designated Dispersed Camping Area	▪ Dispersed camping would be allowed, but not encouraged. ▪ No facilities or services would be provided, and therefore no fees would be charged for use of this area. ▪ No pack-in/pack-out policy would be implemented nor would toilets be installed. Most human waste would be buried in "cat holes." ▪ This site would continue to have light use, as most people would choose to camp at the nearby Superbowl area.	▪ This area would become a designated campground and would be developed according to the Creek Pasture Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan. ▪ Facilities at this site may include the installation of fire rings, picnic tables, educational kiosks or signs, campsite marker posts, and delineated parking areas. ▪ As funding and need warrant toilets could be installed, otherwise a one-year trial pack-in/pack-out policy would be enforced for human waste. If human waste becomes a problem, portable toilets would be required or restrooms would be installed. ▪ No fees would be charged for use of this area unless it is determined that restrooms are needed. At that time fees would be charged to cover the cost of installation and maintenance of restrooms. ▪ This site would experience increased use as campers would be encouraged not to camp at Superbowl.
Hamburger Rock Campground	▪ This area would continue to provide limited designated camping. ▪ Camping opportunities would be limited to the existing sites, and no new picnic tables or fire rings would be installed. ▪ The restrooms at this site would continue to be maintained as they are now, and no improvements would be made to their design or construction. ▪ This site would continue to have heavy use, and fees would be charged on an honor system for use of this area.	▪ This campground would continue to provide designated camping opportunities for the public. ▪ Existing facilities and services would be maintained and improved. Tent pads, a staging area, and educational kiosks or signs would be developed. ▪ This campground would operate under a fee system to cover cost of site facilities and services. ▪ The BLM is also considering expansion of this campground to include an outer ring of campsites around Hamburger Rock.
Indian Creek Falls Campground	▪ Existing designated camping which is impacting cultural resources would be removed. ▪ If 2-3 previously disturbed camp sites in this area can be found that do not conflict with cultural sites the BLM may designate these as campsites. ▪ The existing restroom and educational kiosk at this site would be maintained unless found to be in conflict with cultural resources. ▪ Self pay fees could be charged for camping in this area. ▪ Existing dispersed camping would be allowed if found not to be in conflict with cultural resources, but camping here would not be encouraged.	▪ Existing designated camping which is impacting cultural resources would be removed. ▪ If 2-3 previously disturbed camp sites in this area can be found that do not conflict with cultural sites the BLM may designate these as campsites. ▪ The existing restroom and educational kiosk at this site would be maintained unless found to be in conflict with cultural resources. ▪ Self pay fees could be charged for camping in this area. ▪ Existing dispersed camping would be allowed if found not to be in conflict with cultural resources, but camping here would not be encouraged.

3.0 Affected Environment

This chapter describes the existing environmental resources of the area that would be affected by the alternatives if they were implemented. This description, combined with the description of the No Action Alternative in Chapter 2.0 and the predicted effect of the No Action Alternative in Chapter 4.0, establishes the baseline condition against which the decision makers and the public can compare the effects of the proposed action and the agency-preferred alternative.

The issues identified in scoping which may be affected by the proposed action are brought forward for detailed analysis in Chapters 3.0 and 4.0.

3.1 General Setting

The Indian Creek Corridor is located 50 miles southwest of Moab, and 30 miles northwest of Monticello, Utah. The landscape of the Indian Creek corridor is dominated by the Chinle talus slopes and Kayenta and Wingate cliffs that form the gateway to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park. Other dominant landforms include mesa tops and the canyon bottomlands.

This is a semi-desert environment, and the vegetation and wildlife have adapted to high summer temperatures, cold winter nights, and very little precipitation. There are two ephemeral streams which run through the Corridor, Indian Creek and North Cottonwood Creek. Extensive riparian areas border these streams and the associated vegetation provides shade and habitat for the area's wildlife.

The Indian Creek Corridor has historically been a relatively remote area with few visitors. This has changed dramatically over the last decade because of the extraordinary resources and recreational opportunities the Corridor provides. Rapidly increasing popularity of the area has increased the impact of humans on the Corridor environment, and has created a demand for additional visitor services and facilities.

Additionally, all visitors to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park pass through the Indian Creek Corridor on Highway 211. As popularity of the Park increases, so does the visitation to the Corridor.

The BLM Interdisciplinary Team held several meetings to discuss the impacts of the proposed action on the critical elements of the human environment, as well as other elements. If it was determined that the proposed action may impact an element, the element was carried forward for detailed analysis in Chapter 4.0. These elements are discussed below.

3.2 Issue 1: The extent to which uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect natural resources

3.2.1 Vegetative Resources

The vegetation in the Indian Creek Corridor can be divided into three groups: riparian, upland, and relict plant communities.

Riparian vegetation is found alongside Indian Creek and North Cottonwood Creek, the only two ephemeral streams, which flow through the corridor: Fifty percent (50%) of the riparian areas in both Indian Creek and North Cottonwood Creek are in properly functioning condition (PFC), and the other fifty percent (50%) are functioning at risk (FAR). Identified impacts were associated with drought conditions, impacts from adjacent roads, and overall area management. These riparian areas contain Narrowleaf Cottonwood (Populus angustifolia) and Fremont cottonwood (Populus fremontii) plant associations, with Fremont Cottonwood occurring more frequently at lower elevations.

The uplands are semi-desert habitats typical of lower to middle elevations of the Colorado Plateau. The majority of the planning area is dominated by the desert shrub vegetation type which includes blackbrush (Coleogyne ramosissima), shadscale (Atriplex confertifolia), fourwing saltbush (Atriplex canescens), Indian ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides), sand dropseed (Sporobolus cryptandra), and galleta grass (Hilaria jamesii). Scattered pinyon pine (Pinus edulis) and Utah juniper (Juniperus osteosperma) are confined primarily to the slopes of the canyons and along the mesas. These upland plant communities are associated with relatively low precipitation amounts and specific soil characteristics.

The planning area also includes some “relict”, or “near relict”, vegetation areas that generally represent pre-settlement condition. These areas are located in areas with limited human disturbance, such as the tops of Bridger Jack Mesa and Lavender Mesa. These relict, or near relict, areas provide important base line information to scientists and land managers in evaluating rangeland health and management practices for livestock grazing.

3.2.2 Soil Resources

The soil in the Corridor is very permeable and does not hold water well. This, coupled with limited precipitation, limits vegetative cover to plants which are drought tolerant. Additionally, the soils in the Corridor tend to be highly erosive when disturbed. Wind erosion is the primary concern. In field visit conducted on February 26, 2004, very little if any erosion was identified. There was some erosion occurring on one of climbing access trails which could be mitigated with trail hardening. Most of the soils in the high concentration areas have been compacted; this eliminates the vegetation but is not an erosion problem.

Many soil surfaces of the lower-elevation sites are covered with cryptobiotic soil, a highly fragile “living skin” that helps slow erosion processes and also provides a source of nitrogen to the desert plants. In places where this soil crust is damaged, the underlying soil layers are highly susceptible to wind. Soils types in the Indian Creek Corridor include: Rock Outcrop, Moenkopie, Hoskinnini, Thoroughfare, Sheppard, and Nakai.

The major portions of the proposed Shay Mountain Vista ca

The phone call report for this incident is included in the project record. Invasive weeds are aggressively controlled in a collaborative effort with San Juan County. Both the BLM and San Juan County will patrol the grazing allotments for new infestations, and the area near the haystack has been added to the San Juan County Weed Manager's "hit list" for future control actions.

3.2.4 Water Quality

Water is not plentiful in the planning area but several perennial water sources exist. Perennial streams are found in Indian Creek, Lavender and Davis Canyons, and in Cottonwood Canyon Springs and seeps occur in various locations but are not common. Seasonal water sources include potholes and intermittent streams. Within the planning area boundary are numerous stock ponds, springs and irrigation ponds. These are important and necessary for resident and migratory species. In drought years, these water resources are valuable to both wildlife and livestock.

Although it is not public land, the Dugout Ranch irrigation lake is important to migratory avians. In particular, this water body is frequently utilized by migratory waterfowl and shore birds. Both ducks and geese have been observed to nest here. In 1996, white faced ibis (approximately 25 birds), along with other shore bird species, inhabited this reservoir for several weeks during the fall and spring migrations.

Stream sampling has been conducted by the BLM and State of Utah along Indian Creek since the 1970s. Sampling work included macro-invertebrate surveys, stream habitat surveys, and water quality tests (both field and lab parameters). A section of Indian Creek is currently listed as "impaired" by the State of Utah, meaning the data indicates a problem in meeting state water quality standards. The parameters of concern are pH and phosphorous. The stream segment listed runs from Newspaper Rock to the stream headwaters. More detailed information on water quality sampling methodology and findings is located in the Indian Creek Corridor project record.

3.2.5 Riparian and Wetland Resources

The entire Indian Creek and North Cottonwood drainages have extensive riparian areas. The vegetative composition changes significantly between upper and lower Indian Creek due to in part in changes in the availability of water. Scattered riparian areas are found in other canyons such as Davis and Lavender Canyons in the planning area. There are many resource uses within the riparian areas including those of recreation, livestock grazing, and wildlife. All these uses influence the vegetative composition of the riparian zones.

A riparian demonstration area has been established in Indian Creek upstream from the private lands known as the Kelly Ranch. Grazing use has been excluded from within the fenced lower section of the area since 1988. Several types of stream bank stabilization actions are being monitored for effectiveness.

The vegetation component within the riparian exclosure has improved since 1988. Vegetation species composition, plant vigor, reproduction, availability for wildlife species usage and reproduction success have increased for all desirable woody and herbaceous plant species within this riparian exclosure over the last seventeen years.
Cutbanks are revegetated and healing, and streambanks are now densely vegetated with willow (Salix spp.), rush (Juncus spp.), sedge (Carex spp.), and saltgrass (Distichlis stricta) Grazing use outside the exclosure was reduced from several weeks to one week each spring and fall. Although recovery is not as dramatic, streambanks above the exclosure are also recovering. Indian Creek is still exhibiting higher than acceptable sediment deposition within the creek bed. Two other exclosures were established upstream from the one described above in 2003. These two exclosures touch the boundary of the Manti-LaSal National Forest, and will provide riparian rehabilitation as observed in the initial exclosure.

The riparian area within the Shay Canyon ACEC is functioning at risk, mostly due to recreational use. There is heavy human impact from camping, both in the camp area across from Newspaper Rock and throughout upper Indian Creek from numerous scattered dispersed camping areas. In the scattered 12 acres where camping is currently occurring, there is little or no vegetation. In areas away from camp sites, vegetated streambanks are covered with diverse species.

A recent drought trend could alter the riparian conditions in the area. It is also likely that the riparian conditions could change in the future due to the reintroduction of beaver in the spring of 1997. These changes would include the loss of some trees due to beaver tree harvesting activities, and the hoped for creation of beaver dams within Indian Creek.

3.2.6 Floodplains

In 1983, the Division of Water Resources conducted a floodplain study for the area around Newspaper Rock. This study found that, for the most part, that a 100-year flood would generally be contained within the stream channel. The study identified two areas where the 100-year flood would overflow the stream channel: at the southern and northern ends of the Newspaper Rock area. This study found that the Newspaper Rock campground, only proposed at that time, would not be located within the 100- or 500-year floodplains.

A second floodplain study, conducted by the BLM Moab Field Office in 1997, had different findings. This study surveyed seven cross-sections of the Indian Creek floodplain to determine the water elevations of the 2-, 5-, 10-, 25-, 50-, and 100-year flood occurrences. This study determined that the entire Newspaper Rock campground is located within the 100-year floodplain, and one site even fell within the floodplain of a 2-year flood occurrence.

Annual precipitation in the Corridor ranges from eight to eleven inches. July, August, and December are typically the wettest months. Summer rainstorms are common in July and August. The heavy rainfall associated with these storms contributes to frequent flash floods.

On August 3, 2003, a flash flood of Indian Creek closed Highway 211, and did significant damage to the Newspaper Rock Campground. The flood hit the area between the switchbacks and Shay Canyon. The stretch of Highway 211 from Mile 6 to Mile 8 and adjacent areas was washed out or covered in mud and debris. Shay Canyon was not flooded, but the hiking trail there was severely washed out.
The parking lot at Newspaper Rock was washed over with runoff but the silting was minimal. The campground was flooded and a section of the road and a culvert were nearly washed out. Picnic tables and fire rings were buried with silt from the flood. The unimproved camping areas just up-stream from the Campground were flooded, taking out part of a fence and leaving a large amount of mud over the entire area.

3.2.7 Visual Resources

The Indian Creek Canyon landscape and vegetation possess a diversity of colors, shapes, and textures. Spectacular canyons with precipitous cliffs of Wingate Sandstone leading to expansive mesa tops characterize this area. Narrow ribbons and isolated islands of bright green riparian vegetation along the canyon bottoms contrast with the more muted tones of desert shrub vegetation and scattered juniper trees.

Because of outstanding scenic quality the upper Indian Creek ACEC and the Shay Canyon ACEC are managed for Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class I to preserve the existing character of the landscape. The remainder of the Indian Creek Corridor is managed for VRM Class II to retain the existing character of the landscape.

The management objectives for Visual Resource Management Classes I and II are as follows:

Class I Objective--The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.

Class II Objective--The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

3.2.8 Wildlife and Habitat Resources

Wildlife species are diverse within the planning area. A herd of approximately 100-200 head of elk (Cervus elaphus) winter on the west bench of Bridger Jack Mesa and the surrounding area depending on the severity of the winter. Critical mule deer (Odocoileus heminous) winter range lies to the east and south of the Indian Creek area, but numerous mule deer do winter and migrate through the planning area. Desert bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis nelsonii) use the talus slopes in Lockhart Basin, south and east of Needles Overlook into Harts Draw. Bighorn rams have been documented to occasionally frequent the planning area.

Limited raptor surveys have found a number of nesting raptors, including golden eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus), prairie falcon (Falco mexicanus), peregrine falcon (Falco peregrinus), American kestrel (Falco sparverius), Cooper's hawk (Accipiter cooperii), red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), and great-horned owl (Bubo virginianus). Numerous wild turkey (Meleagris gallopavo) inhabit the area. The Indian Creek riparian bottomlands is the key area where these birds spend the majority of their time. Wild turkey nests have been found within 400 yards of Newspaper Rock.

Other avian species which may occur in the Indian Creek Corridor include the following:

western yellow-billed cuckoo	(Coccyzus americanus)
white-faced ibis	(Plegadis chihi)
chukar	(Alectoris chukar)
mourning dove	(Zenaida macroura)
Canada goose	(Branta canadensis)
pinyon jay	(Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus)
rock wren	(Salpinctes obsoletus)
canyon wren	(Catherpes mexicanus)
dark-eyed junco	(Junco hyemalis)
finch	(Carpodacus spp.)
mountain bluebird	(Sialia currucoides)
horned lark	(Eremophila alpestris)
sparrow species	(Spizella spp.)
black-headed grosbeak	(Pheucticus melanocephalus)
lazuli bunting	(Passerina amoena)

Numerous other species of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and neotropical migrant birds pass through the planning area. These migratory birds rest, feed, and nest within the planning unit, especially at the Dugout Ranch irrigation reservoir and within the Indian Creek riparian zone.

The white-faced ibis, along with other shore bird species, are frequently observed within the planning area during their annual fall and spring migrations. Game birds include chukar, mourning dove, species of duck, Canada geese, and wild turkey.

Mammals which commonly inhabit the planning area include:

raccoon	(Procyon lotor)
ringtail cat	(Bassariscus astutus)
desert cottontail rabbit	(Sylvilagus audubonii)
black-tailed jackrabbit	(Lepus californicus)
deer mouse	(Peromyscus maniculatus)
white-tailed antelope ground squirrel	(Ammospermophilus leucurus)
bat	Order Chiroptera
coyote	(Canis latrans)
bobcat	(Felis rufus)
mountain lion	(Felis concolor)
black bear	(Ursus americanus)
red fox	(Vuples vulpes)
beaver	(Castor candensis)

Beaver were released within their historic range in the spring of 1997. The area of release included private and National Forest lands within, or adjacent to the planning area. Numerous other species of mammal are observed at different times of the year, but are not being identified within this planning document.

Numerous species of reptile inhabit the planning area. Indigenous reptile species include, but are not limited to, the western rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis), side-blotched lizard (Uta stansburiana), sagebrush lizard (Sceloporus graciosus), collared lizard (Crotaphytus collaris), western whiptail (Cnemidophorus tigris), and Great Basin gopher snake (Pituophis melanoleucus).

Amphibian species known to inhabit the planning unit include, but are not limited to, the red spotted toad (Bufo punctatus), Woodhouse's toad (Bufo woodhousei), Great Basin spadefoot toad (Scaphiopus intermontanus) and tiger salamander (Ambystoma tigrinum). Amphibian surveys conducted by USGS in 2003 found red spotted toad tadpoles and metamorphs from Newspaper Rock north to Hog Canyon. Red spotted toadlets and tadpoles were also found up and downstream from the falls area.

Indian Creek is the only stream fishery in the Monticello Field Office Area which has been known to be inhabited by species of trout. This fishery has contained both Yellowstone cutthroat (Oncorhynchus clarki bouvieri) and rainbow trout (Salmo gairdneri), along with hybrids of these species which have traces of the Colorado River cutthroat trout (Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus) within their genetic code. This stream has received light recreational fishing pressure.

BLM and UDWR recent surveys have not found that Indian Creek supports a trout fishery on BLM lands. Because of recent drought conditions, low annual precipitation for the area, and upstream diversions, it is not likely that Indian Creek would maintain sufficient in-stream flow to support Colorado Cutthroat in the near future.

There are a number of impacts to wildlife occurring in the Newspaper Rock area. Big game such as mule deer and elk use the corridors along Indian Creek as migration routes. Due to the narrowness of the canyon bottom at this point big game are reluctant to travel through this area when campers are utilizing the area around Newspaper Rock. These animals are frequently encountering campers, children at play, and loose dogs along the creek bottom.

Wild turkey nesting has been disrupted within the Newspaper Rock area due to visitors harassing hens on the nest resulting in losses to reproductive success. Wild turkey have been poached by visitors in this section of Indian Creek. In addition, wild turkey have habituated to campers and frequently scavenge camping sites for food scraps within this area.

3.2.9 Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
The bald eagle winters throughout the Monticello Field Office area from November 1 through March 31. They can be observed foraging along highways and are most often seen around large water sources such as Lake Powell, the San Juan and Colorado Rivers, and Recapture Reservoir. The rivers and adjacent riparian and upland areas provide forage such as fish, waterfowl, small mammals, and carrion from deer and sometimes livestock. There have been no known nesting bald eagles within the Monticello Field Office area. Migratory, wintering bald eagles are occasionally observed flying or perching within some of the general locations of the Indian Creek Corridor.

Mexican Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*)
In Utah, Mexican spotted owls (MSO) have a strong association with steep canyon terrain that is cooler and often more humid than surrounding areas. The habitat consists of clumps or stringers of trees and/or canyon walls containing crevices, ledges, or caves. MSOs may also be associated with riparian areas. There is designated critical habitat and potential breeding habitat according to the 1997 and 2000 Habitat Models developed by Spotskey and Willey within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area. Appendix B provides a map of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated Mexican spotted owl critical habitat.

Surveys to determine the presence of MSOs has been conducted according to USFWS protocol in 2002 and 2003 in Donnelly, Shay, Hog, and Titus Canyons and along Indian Creek. No MSOs were detected during these surveys. The first of a two year survey for Mexican spotted owls around Bridger Jack Mesa was completed in 2004. No owls were detected during the survey. The landscape, high rims with no canyons, lack of riparian vegetation, and very small pockets of trees indicates that this area does not possess the habitat features typically associated with areas where the owl has been found breeding. If owls are found in the area after the second year of the survey or anytime in the future mitigation may be needed.

There are no other threatened or endangered plant species known to occur within the planning area. A copy of the USFWS consultation completed for this proposal can be found in the Project Record.

Tuhy's breadroot *(Pediomelum aromaticum var. thuyi)*
Tuhy's breadroot is currently on the BLM Sensitive Plant list for Utah. Tuhy's breadroot occurs in the PJ Blackbrush community. It grows on sandstone in the Kayenta formation on relatively flat surface, reddish soils on mesa tops. It occurs on the bench of South Six Shooter Peak.

3.2.10 Livestock Grazing
The Indian Creek Corridor includes parts of two grazing allotments; Hart Draw (Bar MK Ranch) and Indian Creek (Dugout Ranch). Both allotments are permitted for cattle (cow-calf operations) and a few head of horses used to work the cattle. Season of use is fall – winter – spring with use usually beginning as early as mid September and ending in mid June. Cattle and horses are confined to specific pastures at various times during the permitted use period.

3.3 Issue 2: The extent to which uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect cultural resources

3.3.1 Cultural and Historic Resources

The geographic area that the Indian Creek Corridor Plan (ICCP) includes has about 250 known, recorded cultural sites. Based on average site density numbers obtained from survey date within the ICCP plan boundary and adjoining National Park Lands, this number most likely represents about 30% of the total number of cultural properties present (Tipps and Hewitt, 1989; Thompson, 1979; Shearin, 1998, 1999). These cultural resources include several site types such as rock art, lithic reduction loci, structural habitation and storage, proto-historic Native American camps and historic Anglo including sites associated with the cattle industry, oil and gas exploration and minerals mining. Human use and occupation of this area spans the range of identified cultural occupations for Southeastern Utah including Paleo-Indian: 10,000-7,000 BC, Archaic Period: 7,000 BC-500 AD, Late Prehistoric Period: 500 AD-1300 AD, Proto-historic Period: 1300 AD-1850 AD, Historic: 1850 AD-1950 AD (Tipps and Hewitt, 1989).

3.3.2 Paleontologcial Resources

Within the ICCP area, narrow mesas (Bridger Jack and Lavender) extend northeastward between tributaries to Indian Creek. Erosion along these canyons (North Cottonwood Creek, Lavender Canyon, and Davis Canyon) has exposed sedimentary rocks ranging in age from Permian to Jurassic. These rocks were deposited in environments ranging from marine and marginal marine to continental. The mesas are formed by the Jurassic age Glen Canyon Group which is comprised of; Navajo Sandstone, the Kayenta Formation and the Wingate Sandstone. Below the Wingate cliff and outcropping in stair step fashionare, the Triassic age Chinle and Moenkopi Formations; and the Organ Rock Tongue and Cedar Mesa Sandstone of the Permian age Cutler Group (McDougal, 2000). Several geological formations from the Triassic Period of the Mesozoic Era have locations where vertebrate fossils and dinosaur track-ways have been identified. These include track-ways for Late Triassic bipedal theropods in the Chinle Formation and vertebrate fossils in the Permian Formation of the Paleozoic Era (Stokes, 1986; DeCourten,1998).

3.4 Issue 3: The extent to which visitor services should be provided to meet the needs of the users

3.4.1 Recreation Values

In recent years, visitation to the Indian Creek Corridor has increased significantly due to its association with Canyonlands National Park and the outstanding recreational, scenic, cultural and biological opportunities of the land itself. Public lands administered by the BLM in the Indian Creek Corridor have become a destination for rock climbers, mountain bikers, campers, hikers, sightseers, OHV riders, and others seeking an opportunity to recreate in a stunning red rock setting.

The upper Indian Creek Corridor near Newspaper Rock has become an internationally-known rock climbing destination. Technical rock climbing has been on-going for the past 30 years in Indian Creek. While numerous outstanding climbs are scattered throughout the upper and middle sections of the corridor, the climbing use has been concentrated on private and public land at the mouth of Donnelly Canyon. Donnelly Canyon was previously a main focus point for trail stabilization and maintenance, and revegetation efforts. There are two existing parking areas for climbers at this location. There is a question about whether these parking areas are located on private or public property. A request has been submitted for a BLM cadastral survey. The rapid increase in the popularity of climbing during the last ten years, coupled with national and international publicity about climbing in Indian Creek, has caused a dramatic increase in this activity. The climbs in this area have been featured in numerous climbing magazines and publications, and there are currently at least five book publications that highlight and describe climbing routes in the area. Probably the most popular climbing route in the Corridor, Supercrack, is likely located on private ground.

A number of trails access particular climbing routes. To reduce compaction and/or erosion and multiple social trails, some of these trails have been hardened and continue to be maintained by volunteer groups in conjunction with the BLM. There are other trails in the area that are not specific to rock climbing, including the Shay Canyon trail, the Hog Canyon trail, and a variety of dispersed trails throughout the Corridor.

Recreational use of the area includes a wide range of activities in addition to rock climbing. Sightseeing along State Highway 211 is another common recreational use. Popular stops include Newspaper Rock (in 1999, the visitation at Newspaper Rock was approximately 60,000 visitors) and several undeveloped pullouts along this state-designated Scenic Byway. A small portion of visitors with a special interest in rock art visit other locations in the area. Camping at semi-developed and undeveloped sites are concentrated in a number of locations including along the riparian zone of Indian Creek Canyon, adjacent to Newspaper Rock, along the Lockhart Basin Road in lower Indian Creek, at the base of Bridger Jack Mesa, in the Superbowl area, along North Cottonwood Creek, and in Davis and Lavender Canyons. OHV users, mountain bikers and rock climbers usually camp in these areas.

The heaviest recreation use occurs in the spring when temperatures are relatively moderate. Recreation use increases again in the fall though it does not approach the peak use of the spring. With the exception of sightseeing, recreation use is relatively light during the hot summer months.

Increased maintenance of the Lockhart Basin road by the San Juan County Road Department has allowed for greater use of the lower Indian Creek area. OHV use is concentrated in lower Indian Creek adjacent to the Lockhart Basin Road. The area around Indian Creek Falls is particularly popular with OHV users. OHV users often visit in large family groups with a majority of this use occurring in the spring. Increasing mountain bike use has been observed along the Lockhart Basin Road, from Hurrah Pass on the north to Utah 211 on the south.

This route is touted as an excellent mountain biking trip and as an alternative to the White Rim Trail in Canyonlands National Park.
The majority of the visitors to public lands in the area specifically visit the area because they not only enjoy the resources, but they have a preference for the less restricted recreational experience provided by the BLM.

Existing recreation facilities are limited to the interpretive site and semi-developed campground at Newspaper Rock; the semi-developed camping areas at Hamburger Rock and near Indian Creek Falls; and the store, gas station, restaurant, and camping facility operated by the state lessee at Needles Outpost. Needles Outpost is operated on a seasonal basis from spring through fall.

Visitation to the Needles District of Canyonlands increased steadily up into the early 1990's, with a peak of 178,171 visitors in 1993. Visitation has dropped off since then; 2003 total visitation to the Needles district was recorded at 123,027 visitors. 2004 figures recorded 70,447 visitors at the Needles Visitors Center with 60,402 cars going through the entrance station. Visitation to Canyonlands National Park is seasonal in nature. Spring is the peak season with a second lesser peak in the fall. Visitation drops during summer months, and winter is the slowest.

The Squaw Flat Campground, the only developed campground for this section of the National Park, contains 27 sites. Squaw Flat Campground is typically full from mid March through the end of May, and from the end of September through October. The remainder of the year Squaw Flat Campground is not full and there is no need for visitors to find alternate camping locations. There is virtually no difference in visitation between weekends and weekdays throughout the year. Most visitors to the Needles District are on spring break or vacation. Visitation increases on holiday weekends in the spring and fall, but there is no significant increase in visitation on holidays the remainder of the year. When the Squaw Flat Campground fills, NPS recommends a variety of options:

1) Camping in the Needles backcountry (backpacking or 4-wheel-drive vehicle camping).

2) Camping at the Needles Outpost (a privately owned campground 1.5 miles from the visitor center).

3) Camping at one of the developed BLM campgrounds such as Hamburger Rock, Newspaper Rock, or Windwhistle.

4) Staying in one of the private campgrounds in Moab and Monticello.

This information is also posted on bulletin boards and at the Needles Entrance Station. During periods of peak visitation when Squaw Flat Campground is full, many visitors choose to camp at Hamburger Rock or along the Lockhart Basin Road, as this is the closest public land to the park. However, the NPS does not maintain any statistics documenting the number of visitors choosing to camp in this area.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is the BLM's framework to inventory, plan, and manage recreational opportunities. The ROS is divided into six classes, ranging from essentially natural, low-use areas (resource-dependent recreational opportunities) to highly developed, intensive use areas (facility/vehicle-dependent recreational opportunities). Each class is defined in terms of three principal components: the environmental setting, the activities possible, and the experiences that can be achieved.

The primary factor in determining ROS classes is the setting. This describes the overall outdoor environment in which activities occur, influences the types of activities, and ultimately determines the types of recreation that can be achieved. Activities are not completely dependent on opportunity class, and most can take place in some form throughout the spectrum. However, general activities can be characterized for each ROS class. For each person, her/his recreational experience depends on the environmental setting and individual differences based on background, education, sex, age, and place of residence.

Except for the Shay Canyon, Indian Creek, Bridger Jack Mesa, and the Lavender Mesa ACECs, and the WSAs, the Indian Creek Corridor is managed under the Semi-Primitive Motorized ROS classification.

The San Juan RMP's stated management objects for recreation are to: "manage public lands to preserve most ROS P-class areas and protect most ROS SPNM class areas in accordance with RMP goals; to designate all of SJHA as open, closed, or limited for ORV use, depending in part on ROS classes and on the need to protect other values in specific areas; and to recognize critical environmental values in specific areas."

ROS Classes

Primitive
This setting is characterized by a large-sized area of about 5,000 acres or more, lying at least 3 miles from the nearest point of motor vehicle access. It is essentially an unmodified natural landscape, with little evidence of others and almost no on-site management controls. Activities include overnight backpack camping, nature study and photography, back country hunting, horseback riding, and hiking. The experience provides visitors with a chance to achieve solitude and isolation from human civilization, feel close to nature, and encounter a greater degree of personal risk and challenge.

Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized
This setting consists of about 2,500 acres lying at least ½ mile from the nearest point of motor vehicle access. The area is predominantly a natural landscape. Where there is evidence of others, interaction is low, and few management controls exist. Activities include backpack camping, nature viewing, back country hunting (big game, small game, and upland birds), climbing, hiking, and cross-county skiing. The experience provides for minimal contact with others, a high degree of interaction with nature, and a great deal of personal risk and challenge.

Semi-Primitive Motorized

This setting consists of about 2,500 acres within ½ mile of primitive roads and two-track vehicle trails. The area has a mostly natural landscape with some evidence of others (but numbers and frequency of contact seem to remain low) and few management controls. Activities include hunting, climbing, vehicle trail riding, back country driving, mountain biking, hiking, and snowmobiling. The experience provides for isolation from human civilization, a high degree of interaction with the natural environment, and a moderate degree of personal risk and challenge.

Roaded Natural

This setting consists of areas near improved and maintained roads. While these areas are mostly natural in appearance, some human modifications are evident, with moderate numbers of people, visible management controls, and developments. Activities include wood gathering, downhill skiing, fishing, off-highway vehicle driving, interpretive uses, picnicking, and vehicle camping. The experience provides for a sense of security through the moderate number of visitors and developments, but with some personal risk-taking and challenges.

Management Objectives for ROS Classes

Objectives for a specific class contain minimum guidelines and standards as well as directions concerning the type of activities, physical and social settings, and recreational opportunities to be managed for.

Primitive

The primitive class is managed to be essentially free from evidence of humans and on-site controls. Motor vehicle use within the area is not permitted. The area is managed to maintain an extremely high probability of experiencing isolation from others (not more than three to six encounters per day) and little to no managerial contact. Independence, closeness to nature, self-reliance, and an environment that offers a high degree of challenge and risk characterize this class. Back country use and management of renewable resources is subject to the protection of back country recreational values.

Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized

Semi-primitive non-motorized areas are managed to be largely free from the evidence of humans and onsite controls. Motor vehicle use is not permitted (except as authorized). Facilities for the administration of livestock and for visitor use are allowed but limited. Project designs stress the protection of natural values and maintenance of the predominantly natural environment. Areas are managed to maintain a good probability of experiencing minimum contact with others, self-reliance through the application of back country skills, and an environment that offers a high degree of risk and challenge.

Back country use and management of renewable resources are dependent on maintaining naturally occurring ecosystems. The consumption of renewable resources is subject to the protection of back country recreational values.

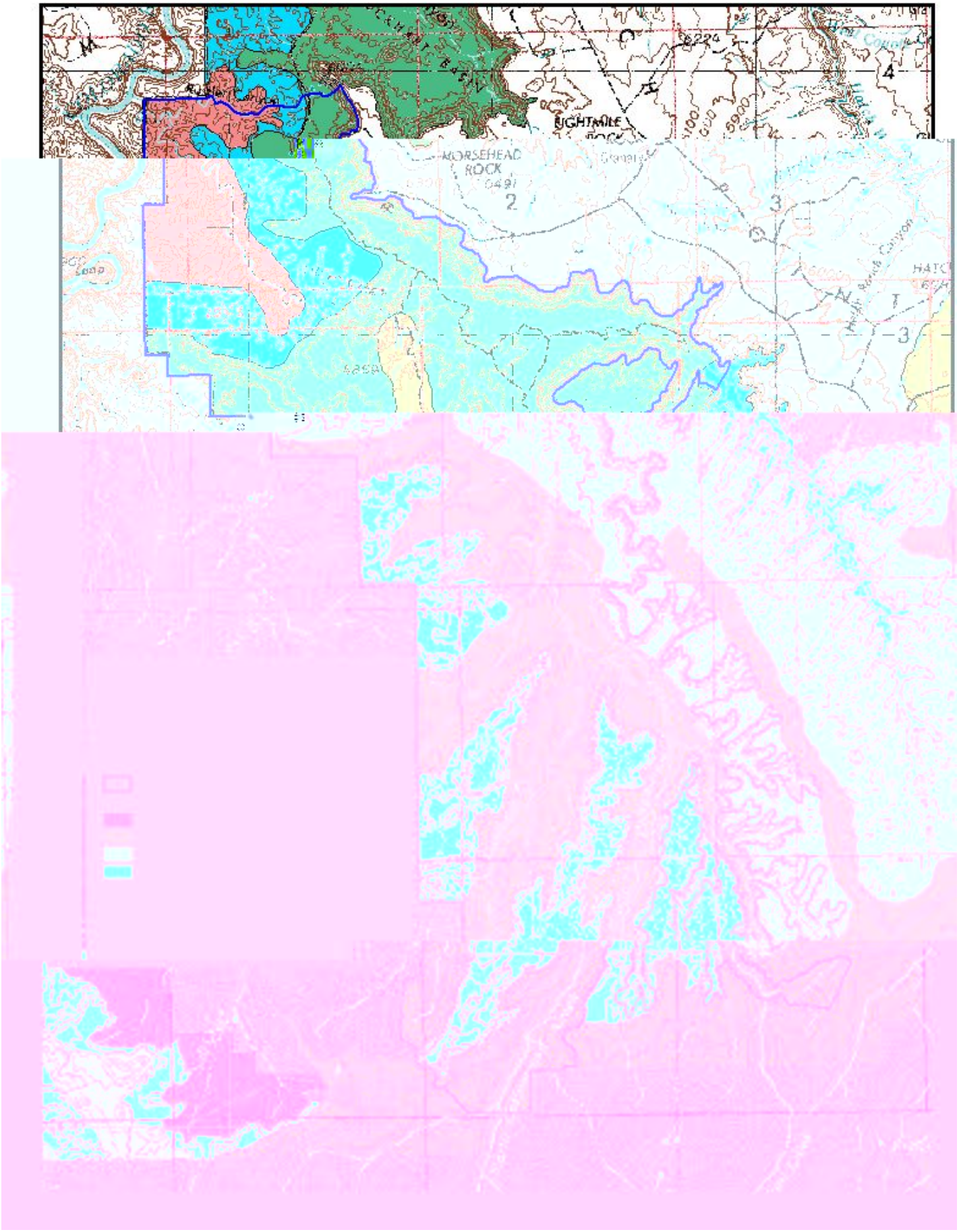
Semi-Primitive Motorized

These areas are managed to provide a natural appearing environment. Evidence of humans and management controls are present but subtle. Motor vehicle use is allowed, but the concentration of users should be low. On-site interpretive facilities, low-standard roads and trails, trailheads, and signs should stress the natural environment and be the minimum necessary to achieve objectives.

The consumption of natural resources is allowed. Effort is taken to reduce the impact of utility corridors, rights-of-way, and other surface-disturbing projects on the natural environment. Frequency of managerial contact with visitors is low to moderate.

Roaded Natural

Roaded natural areas are managed to provide a natural-appearing environment with moderate evidence of humans. Motor vehicle use is permitted and facilities for this use are provided. Concentration of users is moderate with evidence of others prevalent. Resource modification and use practices are evident but harmonize with the natural environment. Placement of rights-of-way, utility corridors, management facilities, and other surface-disturbing activities would be favored here over placement in semi-primitive non-motorized and semi-primitive motorized areas. The consumption of natural resources is allowed except at developed trailheads, developed recreational areas and sites, and where geological, cultural, or natural interests prevail. Frequency of managerial contact with visitors is moderate.


LIGHTMILE
HORSEHEAD
ROCK
2
3
4

3.4.2 Safety

As popularity of the area grows, so do safety and fire hazards. With such limited precipitation, the vegetation in the Indian Creek Corridor is extremely dry for much of the year and highly susceptible to fire. A few years ago there was a fire along Indian Creek which had the potential to cause serious damage to Dugout Ranch facilities and farmlands. The fire was contained before such damage could occur.

Limited parking within the Corridor poses additional safety concerns. On the busiest weekends in the Spring and Fall up to 100 cars can be seen parked along Highway 211 at the mouth of Donnelly Canyon. Other popular sites have comparable parking issues. Cars parked along the highway can block the vision of drivers passing through, posing a risk to people and animals walking around or between these cars. Additionally, people often park on both sides of the highway, requiring people to walk across the highway to reach recreation sites.

Another safety concern in certain areas within the Corridor is the existence of hazard trees, or trees which are no longer stable and may fall at any time. For example, Superbowl is one of the most popular camping areas with extensive hazard tree issues. The cottonwood trees in this area are very old, and their roots are not reaching enough water to continue to grow. There are safety concerns with designating campsites or picnic areas under such hazards.

Flooding is another hazard which could pose risks to Indian Creek visitors. Flash floods are common in Utah's red rock country, and have occurred in the Indian Creek Corridor. Most recently, a flood in August 2003 closed Highway 211, and caused significant damage to the Newspaper Rock Campground. For the safety of the visitors that frequently use this area, camping in the Newspaper Rock corridor will be prohibited upon completion of a Federal Register Notice posting this closure.

Rock climbing, one of the main recreational activities in the Indian Creek Corridor, is an inherently risky sport. Safe anchoring and climbing practices are the responsibility of climbers visiting the area. Search and rescue activities are coordinated though the San Juan County Sheriff's Office.

3.4.3 Socio-economics

The Indian Creek Corridor contains two agricultural operations, the Bar MK Ranch and the Dugout Ranch. Agriculture makes up a very small part of San Juan County's economic base. Of the 4,235 employed county residents, only 53 individuals hold farming, fishing, or forestry occupations. These resource-based industries make up only 7.3 percent of San Juan County's total economy. Although agriculture does not play a major role in San Juan County's economy today, it has been an important industry for the area since its settlement. The Bar MK and Dugout Ranches are two of the larger ranching operations in the area. The economy of the County is primarily service oriented. The largest sectors of employment are educational, health and social services (28.1 percent); and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services (13.2).

Despite the fact that San Juan County's economy is struggling, visitation to the region is increasing every year. As noted above, recreation is the second largest industry in the County. The skyrocketing popularity of Indian Creek is an example of this.

Although OHV riders, hikers, and other users also frequently use this area, rock climbers have become one of the largest user groups in the Corridor. In the spring and fall seasons, hundreds of climbers can be found camping in the Corridor. Although this user group may not provide substantial support to San Juan County's economy directly, they spend millions of dollars on outdoor equipment produced in Utah, which supports the regional economy. Because the climbing user group is so large and well organized, it is expected that the BLM would face some resistance if this plan does not meet the needs of climbers.

Increased visitation is always accompanied by increased impacts to resources. Changes in management of the Indian Creek Corridor have not kept pace with the popularity and increases in visitation to the Corridor. Visitors to the Corridor like things the way they are, but management changes will be needed in order to protect preserve the unique resources that make this area special. Significant portions of the public, including climbers and ranchers, are asking for a change in management direction. Public comments indicate that the BLM is already not meeting current demands for services and facilities, and these demands and needs will only increase in the future.

Changes in management are needed to bring recreation use under greater management control in order to decrease recreation related impacts to sensitive resources. Proactive management practices would have an overall positive effect on recreation within the Indian Creek Corridor, and would ultimately provide a safe and healthy visitor experience.

Improvements in management and increasing visitor services would require resources. Without charging fees, the development of additional visitor services would be extremely limited. There is a high demand for facilities and services in certain places in the Corridor, and scoping comments indicated that most visitors would support fees if some services were received. On the other hand, many users prefer not to pay fees. It is important that free options are provided in the Corridor. The amount charged in certain areas should correlate directly to the level of services and facilities that are provided for the users.

Local climbers, The Access Fund and some climbing equipment manufacturing companies have banded together to form a Friends of Indian Creek organization. They are very interested in maintaining climbing in Indian Creek as well as assisting the BLM in the management of the area.

4.0 Environmental Consequences

This chapter summarizes the physical, biological, social and economic environments of the affected project area, and the potential changes to those environments due to implementation of the alternatives. It also presents the scientific and analytical basis for comparison of alternatives presented.

4.1 Introduction

Under the No Action Alternative (Alternative A), the Indian Creek Corridor would continue under current management. There would be no change to the location, designation, or establishment of campsites, trails, restroom facilities, parking areas, or recreation sites. There would also be no change to the management of water quality, soil erosion, vegetative cover, wildlife, riparian or wetland areas, or scenic quality. Likewise, there would be no change to the management of cultural resources in the planning area. A Federal Register notice would be published which closes Newspaper Rock Campground and Indian Creek Falls Campground to designated camping due to flood danger and impacts to cultural resources.

The BLM's proposal (Alternative B) involves several area-wide and site-specific management directions intended to help meet the BLM's objectives of protecting natural and cultural resources while providing a variety of safe visitor opportunities for the users of the Corridor. These include: implementing site plans for designated campgrounds, developing parking areas, and outlining specific considerations for the management of natural and cultural resources and activities occurring within the Corridor.

The alternatives are analyzed below for their direct, indirect and cumulative effects on the issues identified in Chapter 2.0, and on the critical elements identified in Chapter 3.0.

Direct effects are those caused by the action and occurring at the same time and place of the proposed event. For example, in this EA direct effects are considered those caused by the development of a campground on a previously undeveloped area or an area that is currently used for another purpose.

Indirect effects are those caused by this action, but occur later in time or farther removed in distance, yet are still reasonably foreseeable. For this EA, indirect effects are caused by implementation of the action, but are farther removed in space (throughout the entire Monticello Field Office Area) and time (perhaps over years) from the actual time of implementation.

Cumulative effects are those which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. Cumulative effects and reasonably foreseeable future actions are discussed in Section 4.5.

4.2 Issue 1: The extent to which uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect natural resources

As noted in Chapter 2, the analysis of the environmental consequences associated with each alternative is based on issue-specific "evaluation criteria." For ease of reference, these criteria are reprinted below.

> Evaluation Criteria used to compare alternatives includes a qualitative description of the extent to which each alternative may affect:
>
> - Vegetative cover
> - Soil erosion
> - Water quality
> - Riparian and wetland areas
> - Visual resources
> - Wildlife and wildlife habitat
> - Threatened, endangered, or candidate species
> - Livestock grazing

4.2.1 Alternative A: No Action Alternative

4.2.1.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

Vegetative Resources:
Vegetative cover would be impacted by the No Action Alternative. Current uses and activities within the Corridor are having an impact on this resource, and if no action is taken their impacts on vegetative cover would expand.

Dispersed camping is currently occurring in several areas, and as popularity of the Corridor grows, these dispersed camping areas will most likely expand into previously undisturbed vegetated areas. Vegetation is being lost to campsite spread, social trailing from campsites, spreading of climbing social trails and creation of additional undeveloped campsites. Establishment of official climbing access trails identified in EA Appendix D and in the Rocky Mountain Field Institute study would occur under this alternative and would help to minimize additional impacts to vegetation. Dispersed camping would continue and no new designated camping areas would be established to remove any of this dispersed camping.

The limited parking areas within the Corridor are expanding with use, and the impact on vegetation is consequently expanding along with them. Invasive weeds are becoming more established in these areas, and would continue under the No Action Alternative. Uncontrolled parking would continue to adversely impact both vegetative cover and soil stability. Access trails to popular recreation sites have been created by the users. As these informal trails are used more frequently they are expanding and posing greater impacts on vegetation.

No impacts would occur to vegetation at the proposed Shay Mountain Vista Campground as it would not be developed under the No Action alternative.

Soil Resources
Changes in protective surface crusts and vegetation resulting in exposed surfaces makes these soils more susceptible to wind and water erosion. Compaction and loss of vegetation in dispersed camping areas, trails, parking areas results in accelerated soil erosion (beyond the natural range of variability and soil loss) at these locations. This can lead to degradation of the general site and loss of long-term soil productivity over time, depending on the extent of the impacts. Expanding parking areas and uncontrolled dispersed camping will lead to some loss of soils. Establishing designated access trails will help limit some soil loss.

Invasive Species
Invasive species would become a greater issue over time under the No Action Alternative. Uncontrolled camping and pioneering of new campsites and parking areas would spread invasive species. Developing official access trails to hiking and climbing areas would help minimize the spreading of these species.

Water Quality
Water quality in the corridor would continue to decline gradually under the No Action Alternative. Water quality may be impacted over time by unrestricted camping, improper disposal of human waste, and increased soil erosion. Indian Creek would likely remain on the States Impaired Waters list, and fisheries habitat would continue to decline.

Riparian and Wetland Resources
There is currently little to no understory vegetation in the Newspaper Rock camping area due to camping and vehicle parking associated with camping. Limitations on camping, such as removing designated camping from Newspaper Rock would have a positive impact on riparian and aquatic habitat by allowing the closed site to revegetate and become a viable part of the riparian habitat. Allowing dispersed camping to continue uncontrolled would continue to add to riparian degradation.

Floodplains
The floodplains at Newspaper Rock would continue to decline or remain at a stable state of sparse vegetation and the continued disturbance. Removing designated camping from this area would help to restore the floodplain conditions. The majority of the floodplains throughout the Corridor would not be impacted by dispersed camping because most have sparse vegetation and are not the most desirable camping areas.

Visual Resources
Impacts to visual resources caused by uncontrolled dispersed camping would continue. As campsites, parking areas, and trails expand they will negatively impact the visual quality of the area over time. Unrestricted rock climbing equipment and practices (webbing and chalk color) may also visually detract from the landscape. Closure and rehabilitation of campsites in the upper Indian Creek Canyon riparian area would enhance visual resources.

Wildlife and Habitat Resources
Wildlife habitat resources associated with recreation and camping in the Newspaper Rock area would continue to decline in quality and quantity. The negative impacts due to human/wildlife interactions, because of the narrow corridor and the large amount of wildlife species that rely on riparian habitat, would continue into the future. Impacts that have occurred in the past to nesting raptors, big game, and wild turkey would continue. The current decline in wildlife habitat condition within the area of Newspaper Rock could accelerate as the effects of the current situation brought about by recreation camping are compounded over time. Wildlife species would avoid this important habitat with increasing dispersed camping compounded over time.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species
Designated critical habitat for Mexican spotted owl could deteriorate over time with uncontrolled recreation and camping in the area. Reduction of the quality of habitat could reduce the quantity of prey species available for Mexican spotted owls and bald eagles that may forage in the area.

Livestock Grazing
In most of the planning area, recreation activities including camping have little effect on livestock operations. The exception is the area used for camping north of Bridger Jack Mesa. The camping area is within one of the pastures of the Indian Creek allotment which is generally stocked with horses and used to trail cattle to and from the Dugout Ranch and the Lavender Canyon and West Bridger Jack Bench pastures. Dogs in the recreation camps sometimes chase the horses in the pasture. Due to the relatively confined area of the pasture, driving cattle through the pasture is made more difficult as cattle have to travel through or near campsites, vehicles, and dogs.

4.2.2 Alternative B: Preferred Alternative

4.2.2.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

Vegetative Resources

Vegetative cover within the Corridor would improve overall with implementation of the Preferred Alternative. Although dispersed camping will be allowed to continue throughout the Corridor, the majority of negative impacts on vegetation will be minimized and controlled with designation of several new campsites. Designation of campsites would help contain camping activity within the designated sites. This would prevent the spreading and expansion of sites, and minimize new impacts to vegetative cover, thereby allowing some previously impacted areas to rehabilitate.

Similarly, designation of parking areas and access trails would also help contain impacts, prevent the spread and expansion of camping areas and trails, minimize new impacts to vegetative cover, and allow previously impacted areas to rehabilitate.

There would be some loss of vegetative cover associated with development of the Shay Mountain Vista Campground as proposed in the Preferred Alternative. Development of this campground would require 4,500 feet of road, and would require 4.6 acres of total disturbance with the construction of the access road, campsites, and loop road. Some pinyon and juniper tress would be removed to construct the campsites and loop road. Installing toilets would require some grading and surface disturbance.

Removing camping from the Newspaper Rock area would mitigate any loss of vegetation as a result of construction of the new Shay Mountain Vista Campground. Currently, the vegetative cover at Newspaper Rock Campground is in poor condition. As camping is removed, this area would be revegetated with riparian vegetation along the Creek. Vegetative cover in this area would, therefore, improve with the removal of the Newspaper Rock Campground.

Trail construction would result in a minimal amount of vegetation and habitat loss. The beneficial impacts of trail development from limiting foot travel include reduced impacts to vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Soil Resources

Designation of campsites, access trails, parking areas, and the removal of camping from Newspaper Rock would limit the proliferation of dispersed activities, contain the existing surface disturbance and minimize the expansion of new disturbance, which in turn would result in decreased overall soil compaction and resultant erosion. Restoration of disturbed areas and elimination of continued disturbance will increase the potential for natural revegetation and recovery, further reducing soil compaction impacts.

Trail construction would result in a minimal amount of soil compaction and very little dust. The beneficial impacts of trail development from limiting foot travel include reduced impacts to cryptobiotic soil.

Invasive Species
Dispersed camping will continue throughout the corridor and this will likely spread some invasive species. However, designating access trails, official camping areas, and official parking areas will all reduce the threat of spreading invasive species.

Water Quality
Any improvements to the conditions in riparian zones, floodplains, and uplands would help improve stream and water quality conditions. Water quality would improve by restricting camping, designating parking areas, and developing access trails. The Preferred Alternative would help in removing Indian Creek water from the State's Impaired Waters list through designation of camping areas, parking and trails, and through implementation of the pack-in/pack-out policy for human waste.

Riparian and Wetland Resources
Development of the Creek Pasture Designated Dispersed Camping Area may impact riparian habitat. However, it is currently being used as a dispersed camping area and there could potentially be no change in riparian habitat status. Adequate fencing (i.e. pole fence on the creek bank) around this camping area would prevent vehicle access along the stream banks and into the stream bed, and would substantially reduce impacts to riparian habitat, and fisheries habitat may improve. The riparian zone in this area is marginal because of lack of perennial water.

Limitations on camping, such as removing camping from Newspaper Rock and fencing off the riparian areas of Creek Pasture, would have a positive impact on riparian and aquatic habitat by allowing closed sites to revegetate and become a viable part of the riparian habitat.

Floodplains
Most of the floodplains would improve or increase in vegetation because of the limitation on dispersed and designated camping sites away from the floodplain. The floodplains throughout the Corridor would not be impacted by dispersed camping because most have sparse vegetation and are not the most desirable camping areas.

Visual Resources
Several of the actions proposed would have a positive impact on visual resources in the Corridor. Closing camping at the Newspaper Rock campground and revegetating would have an improving effect on the visual quality of this area. Designating campsites and requiring campers to use designated sites. In some areas of the Corridor would stop new campsite "pioneering," which creates new visual impacts. It could also cause additional impacts in some areas as well if campers disperse into previously unused areas.

Most campers are camping in previously disturbed locations so new disturbance should be minimal. Restrictions on rock climbing, such as encouraging rock colored chalk and neutral webbing, would improve visual quality.

Designating campgrounds would create some impact on visual quality in the immediate camping area. Placement of fire rings at the Bridger Jack Mesa campground would not create a significant overall impact on the visual quality of the area since the changes would be minimal and specific to the camping area.

Improving Hamburger Rock with new tent pads and restrooms would have minimal visual impact. This site is already heavily developed, and improved facilities would not create a sharp contrast to the existing visual conditions. However, if an outer ring of campsites is constructed here, there would be impacts to the visual quality of the existing campsites. The views from these campsites currently look out to the cliff walls which would be obstructed by an outer ring of campsites.

Designating Creek Pasture as a dispersed camping area would not have a large effect on the visual quality of the area. No new facilities or services are proposed here, and the current visual conditions would continue.

The new picnic area at Newspaper Rock is similarly not anticipated to create any significant visual impacts. This area is already heavily developed, and the picnic area would not create a sharp contrast to the existing visual conditions. Any minor impacts created by the picnic area would be offset by the closure and rehabilitation of the Newspaper Rock Campground.

Development of the Shay Mountain Vista Campground would also not cause significant visual impacts. This proposed campground is located above the canyon floor and would not be easily visible from Highway 211 or the rest of the Corridor. The design of the campground will be done in such a manner to mitigate visual impacts to the surrounding area, particularly the view from the Harts Draw road and Highway 211. Also, the campground itself will be designed to retain as much of a natural setting as possible by utilizing the natural features of the mesa top and leaving as much vegetation in place as possible. There would be some impact on site from surface disturbance and construction of the campground.

The development of some of the existing turn-out parking areas along Highway 211 would not have substantial impact on visual resources. The installation of restrooms at Donnelly Canyon, and the placement of information kiosks throughout the Corridor would create a slight impact on visual resources. Site-specific developments would employ design components to mitigate visual impacts, taking into consideration color, texture, height, orientation, and materials.

Designating Bridger Jack Mesa Dispersed Camping Area would have some visual impact to the Dugout Ranch. Use of this area and nighttime campfires has previously impacted the Ranch's views; although, from the Ranch headquarters this area is approximately ¾ mile away and is difficult to see. Restricting camping to designated sites would help to minimize these impacts by limiting the number of people camping there and restricting the location of the campsites; however, the general site area would continue to be visible from the Ranch.

Wildlife and Habitat Resources

Wildlife habitat would improve as a result of implementing the Preferred Alternative. Specifically, removing camping from the Newspaper Rock campground and rehabilitation of the site would have a positive effect on many of the wildlife issues currently occurring in this area. Big game migratory routes along Indian Creek would open up, with potential contact between visitors and these animals reduced, thereby allowing easier access to the area by wildlife. Additionally, impacts to streamside riparian habitat along Indian Creek would be minimized, which would provide improved habitat for wildlife over time.

The existing Newspaper Rock Campground is located within a golden eagle and peregrine falcon nesting territory. Conflicts between visitors and nesting raptors in this area would be minimized with removal of camping, enhancing the protection of these birds. Likewise, wild turkeys have been disturbed by camping occurring at this site. Removal of camping would also improve conditions for the turkeys.

Development of the new Shay Mountain Vista Campground would have a minimal effect on deer winter range since this area is on the edge of the species' preferred pinyon/juniper and sagebrush habitat, and also on the edge of winter range heavy use areas. Construction of this site would impact 4.6 acres of deer winter range habitat. It could be expected that deer use of the areas within and close to the new campground would decline.

Removing camping from the riparian area along Newspaper Rock would increase riparian habitat, increase potential fish and amphibian habitat, and may contribute to an increase of quality potential threatened and endangered species habitat.

Removal of unnecessary social trails would have an increased benefit to habitat.

Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species

The Preferred Alternative may have a positive effect on threatened, endangered, and candidate species. Designating and controlling camping in areas where surveys show there are currently no threatened or endangered species would decrease the chance of people camping in an area that is being used and is important habitat for these species. Designating and controlling camping would also increase habitat quality in areas for potential bald eagle and Mexican spotted owl and their prey where camping is no longer occurring.

Development of the new Shay Mountain Vista Campground would have no effect on threatened, endangered, or candidate species or their potential habitat.

The parking area #17 is approximately 2,000 to 3,000 feet from the location of the Tuhy's breadroot. There is a rock cairned trail that leads up to and around South Six Shooter Peak. Access to the mesa top is fairly steep so OHVs or vehicles are not anticipated to be an issue. If hikers stay on the marked trail the sensitive plant would not be disturbed.

Livestock Grazing
Development of the Shay Mountain Vista Campground would have little effect on the grazing operation in the Hart Draw allotment as cattle have not habitually concentrated in or trailed through that specific area. Development of the Creek Pasture Campground would likewise have little impact on grazing in the Indian Creek allotment for the same reasons. Development of the Bridger Jack Mesa Campground would continue the same types of impacts to the grazing operation as noted in the No Action Alternative. However, by limiting the number of designated campsites and therefore putting a cap on the number of camps, the impacts would not increase from levels similar to the present.

4.3 Issue 2: The extent to which uses in Indian Creek are managed to protect cultural resources

Evaluation criteria used to compare alternatives include:

- A description of the extent to which each alternative ma

A potential negative impact to cultural resources will be the result of removing the restriction on dispersed camping within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area. The possibility will still exist for some cultural sites to be impacted by dispersed recreational camping.

Paleontological Resources
The No Action Alternative would allow the current uncontrolled potential impacts to paleontological resources to occur. Without conducting record searches for potential locations for paleontological resources they could be adversely impacted through expanding campsites, trails, and parking areas.
A potential negative impact to paleontological resources will be the result of removing the restriction on dispersed camping within the Corridor. The possibility will still exist for some paleontology sites to be impacted by dispersed recreational camping.

4.3.2 Alternative B: Preferred Alternative

4.3.2.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

Cultural Resources

Level 3 cultural surveys have already been completed in the following areas: Newspaper Rock Parking Area, Hamburger Rock, Creek Pasture, Bridger Jack Mesa.

The Preferred Alternative would have a positive impact on cultural resources by providing more control over visitors to selected cultural sites. In particular, removing rock climbing routes impacting rock art, and removing camping from Indian Creek Falls would help protect cultural resources. Additionally, trail construction, by limiting foot travel, would minimize impacts to cultural and paleontological resources. This positive impact would be achieved, as time and resources allow, by:

- Providing educational materials on how to minimize damage when visiting sites and the potential consequences of vandalizing cultural sites,
- Working with climbing clubs and associations to disseminate information about cultural resource protection for cultural resources near or on climbing routes,
- Identifying cultural sites for protection and removing conflicting uses,
- Closing climbing routes impacting cultural resources, and
- Conducting an inventory of cultural resources within the Corridor and establishing protection measures if necessary.

A potential negative impact to cultural resources will be the result of removing the restriction on dispersed camping within the Indian Creek Corridor planning area. This negative impact will be moderated by the mitigating measures outlined above for achieving a positive impact, but the possibility will still exist for some cultural sites to be impacted by dispersed recreational camping.

Paleontological Resources
The Preferred Alternative would have a positive impact on paleontological resources by providing more control over visitors to certain areas where the potential exists, or does exist for paleontology. This positive impact would be achieved by:

- Providing educational materials on how to minimize damage when visiting paleontology sites and the potential consequences of vandalizing paleontological sites,
- Working with clubs and organizations to disseminate information about protection of paleontological sites
- Identifying paleontology sites for protection and removing conflicting uses,
- Conducting an inventory of paleontological resources within the Corridor and establishing protective measures if needed.

A potential negative impact to paleontological resources will be the result of removing the restriction on dispersed camping within the ICCP area. This negative impact will be moderated by the mitigating measures outlined above for achieving a positive impact, but the possibility will still exist for some paleontology sites to be impacted by dispersed recreational camping.

4.4 Issue 3: The extent to which visitor services should be provided meet the needs of the users

Evaluation criteria used to compare alternatives include:

- A description of the impacts of campsite alternatives on users and uses
- A description of the impacts of restroom alternatives on users and uses
- A description of the impacts of trail alternatives on users and uses
- A description of the impacts of fees on visitor services, users, and uses.
- A description of the impacts of parking on visitor services, natural and cultural resources, and users.

4.4.1 Alternative A: No Action Alternative

4.4.1.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

Recreation
Under this alternative, dispersed camping throughout the planning area would continue and may expand into areas not previously impacted. No new campsites would

Safety
Parking along the highway would continue to pose safety concerns to pedestrians and those driving through the area.

On a busy spring or fall day, both sides of Highway 211 frequently have 100 or more visitors cars parked on or near the highway along the base of popular climbing cliffs especially in the vicinity of Donnelly Canyon. This poses a risk to visitors crossing the road as well as restricting the possible traffic lane which could lead to motor vehicle accidents and or injured pedestrians. The Utah Department of Transportation has expressed concern about the parking and pedestrian traffic crossing the highway. To the BLM's knowledge no motor vehicle accident or pedestrian/vehicle accident has occurred in this area due to parking congestion.

Flash flood danger to dispersed campers would remain especially in the Newspaper Rock Area. Flash flood warning signs would be posted at Newspaper Rock to warn campers of the danger in this area. Removing designated camping from this area would minimize safety risks for many campers; however, dispersed camping would still be allowed in this area and may be affected by flooding.

4.4.2 Alternative B: Preferred Alternative

4.4.2.1 Direct and Indirect Effects

Recreation
The Preferred Alternative would bring recreation use under greater management control in order to decrease recreation related impacts to sensitive resources. The alternative would have an overall positive effect on recreational uses within the Indian Creek Corridor.

Sightseeing along Highway 211, could be enhanced by educational kiosks placed at specific locations along the highway. Educational materials on a variety of topics would enhance the visitor experience by educating them on the val

Encouraging trial pack-in/pack-out policies for human waste would have a positive effect on the natural environment at these sites and would ultimately provide for a safer and healthier visitor experience. With the exception of the developed campsites at Hamburger Rock, and Indian Creek Falls, the majority of campers in this area are climbers. Some have expressed an interest in seeing designated camping in this area and an equally vocal group wants to see no changes whatsoever.
The Preferred Alternative attempts to balance these conflicting opinions by providing a variety of camping experiences.

The Shay Mountain Vista Campground would be designed to provide safe large-vehicle camping opportunities for visitors, which are currently limited, as well as tent sites. This type of RV camping is currently limited to Hamburger Rock. The Shay Mountain Vista Campground is located in pinyon, juniper, sagebrush vegetation which is different than the vegetation around other designated campgrounds in the Corridor. This campground would include visitor services, such as toilets and possibly garbage disposal, which are currently offered only in limited locations in the Corridor. Providing camping in this area may increase use of the Harts Draw area and Hart's Point.

Moving or removing camping from the Indian Creek Falls area could disappoint and displace some users, but at this point there are only three designated sites there that would be impacted. If replacement sites not posing conflicts with cultural resources are found, there would be no net difference in camping availability in this area. Much of the use that occurs in this area is day use. If camping was removed entirely from this site, day users would not have to feel as though they are intruding on someone else's space and would be able to more freely enjoy the area. Closing camping in this area is supported by many other visitors to the Corridor as indicated by scoping comments. If this alternative were selected, visitors could use the nearby Hamburger Rock Campground as an alternate site

Designating and building access trails is supported and requested by many Corridor users. By designating hiking trails and access trails for climbers, BLM can reroute trails that conflict with other resources, maintain trails at a level of development required for sustained use, and limit or stop trail proliferation. Designating access trails would have a negligible adverse impact on Corridor users, and may contribute to the safety and ease of the climbers reaching their objectives. Most users are respectful of the need to protect natural resources and would be willing to use designated trails and allow closed trails to be rehabilitated.

Charging fees for camping at Hamburger Rock Campground and Shay Mountain Vista Campground could displace some users of the area. Fees would not be charged for use of any of the other areas in the Corridor unless in the future it was decided that additional facilities (toilets, picnic tables, water, garbage collection) were needed and could be provided. Scoping comments indicated that most visitors support charging fees if they are provided some services in return.

There is a high demand for such facilities and services in certain places in the Corridor, which can only be provided with additional funding. Fees charged would help cover the installation and maintenance costs of these facilities.

Providing designated parking at trailheads and climbing access routes allows for concentrating impacts to a specific site rather than dispersed impacts over a greater area. It also allows for information and educational materials to be placed at locations where users would see them. Additionally, designated parking and limiting parking along Highway 211 would enhance the safety of pedestrians and visitors driving through the Corridor. Some users may not like designated parking areas, as it could make Indian Creek feel like a more developed area. Building any additional parking alongside Highway 211 where people are already parking on both sides of the road, would reduce the feeling of development. Graveling these parking areas rather than paving them could also reduce the feeling of development.

BLM currently has authority to close climbing routes for natural or cultural resource protection. Climbing, for the most part, would continue in the same manner that it has in the past. There would be an impact to climbers if routes are closed due to conflicts with cultural resources, although this would impact a very small percentage of the existing climbing routes, and could happen regardless of the alternative selected in this document. Additionally, there could be an impact on climbers in the spring if particular routes are closed for raptor nesting. From previous reports, the areas that have seen nesting are near Cat Wall and on portions of Bridger Jack Mesa.

Safety

Closing the Newspaper Rock Campground would relocate many users and disappoint some repeat users. Campers enjoy being close to the stream, under the cottonwoods, and the feeling of being in a narrow canyon. However, visitor safety is currently at risk because camping is located within the Indian Creek floodplain, which has experienced two 100-year floods in the last two years. Removing designated camping from this floodplain would enhance visitor safety. Flash flood warning signs would be posted at Newspaper Rock to warn campers of the danger in this area.

Users displaced from this site would likely be evenly divided between using the new Shay Mountain Vista site and other designated campgrounds within the Corridor. Additionally, a new picnic area would be developed next to Newspaper Rock providing new day use opportunities in the area. Locating the picnicking area on the same side of Highway 211 as the parking for Newspaper Rock would enhance visitor safety by eliminating the need for visitors to cross the highway.

Discouraging visitors from camping at Superbowl, a current undesignated dispersed camping area, could displace some recreational users. These visitors would be encouraged to use the Hamburger Rock or Creek Pasture camping areas instead. These alternate sites do not have degree of hazard tree issues that the Superbowl site does, and therefore provide a safer environment for campers than exists at Superbowl. Prior to designating Creek Pasture as a designated camping area, a hazard tree analysis would be completed. The Creek Pasture site is currently being used, but designation and possible installation of a toilet could dramatically increase the level of use of this area.

4.5 Cumulative Impacts and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Cumulative effects are those which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time. In this EA, impacts from OHVs have not been included in the analysis of cumulative impacts because a new closure notice will extend restrictions on OHVs until completion of the RMP. Oil and Gas leasing/extraction has similarly been excluded from this analysis as it will not be affected directly, indirectly, or cumulatively by the proposed action.

Although Highway 211 is a State Road, the right-of-way for the road itself is held by the National Park Service. BLM is not aware of either Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) or Park Service having any plans in the near or more distant future of expanding the road. UDOT projects are usually forecasted five years into the future. BLM is not aware of any plans for Highway 211 other than maintenance, repair and betterment.

4.5.1 Alternative A: No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would result in an overall gradual decline in the quality and health of natural resources in the Corridor.

The overall impact of the No Action Alternative on recreation is that it provides no vision for the future of Indian Creek as a recreation area. It provides no limits to how much recreational use is too much.

The existing situation cannot continue forever without increased damage to the natural and cultural resources of the Corridor. At some point, increasing use would require changes to management of the area to prevent further loss and damage to natural and cultural resources. By choosing the No Action Alternative those changes are just put off until a later time. The No Action Alternative would result in an overall decline in the quality of natural, cultural and paleontological, and recreational resources, and overall visitor satisfaction in the Corridor.

Specifically, loss of vegetation throughout the entire Corridor would continue and the rate of loss would increase. Soil erosion would continue to occur under this alternative, and the impacts of soil erosion may have long-term effects on vegetation and wildlife habitat in the Corridor. Water quality would decline over the long–term due to current and continued dispersed camping and increasing sanitary problems resulting from human wastes. This would reduce potential fish habitat. As recreation continues to increase in the Corridor, the impacts to riparian and wetland areas associated with uncontrolled camping would increase. Wildlife habitat would continue to decline in quality and quantity under this alternative due to impacts from camping and the presence of visitors in the wildlife corridors. Habitat for threatened, endangered, and candidate species and their prey would continue to decline. Fewer wildlife would use the Indian Creek Corridor for foraging and nesting, and the loss of this potential habitat may have an impact of the success of the species in the region.

The No Action Alternative would result in an overall loss of unique cultural resources and the important information they contain. Impacts to cultural resources from recreation and other uses would likely increase.

Under the No Action Alternative, increasing popularity of the Corridor and all associated impacts could eventually result in a less appealing recreational experience for all visitors. Increasing recreational use without any additional facilities, education, and on-site management controls would result in resource congestion and damage and increased conflicts with livestock grazing operations. This would adversely affect the recreation experience of many visitors. If Canyonlands National Park were experiencing increased use it could also increase the demand for overflow camping in the Indian Creek Corridor.

Closing the Newspaper Rock area to camping and closing or relocating the three Indian Creek Falls sites will take serious steps towards the protection of cultural and paleontological resources, wetlands and riparian areas, vegetation and wildlife habitat, and visitor safety. Closing and rehabilitating the Newspaper Rock campgrounds would decrease adverse impacts to visual resources within the corridor. The No Action Alternative would result in improved wildlife and habitat conditions, specifically, in the Newspaper Rock camping area where conflicts exist between campers and raptors, big game, and wild turkey.

4.5.2 Alternative B: Preferred Alternative

The overall impact of the Preferred Alternative on recreation is that it provides a long-term vision for the future of Indian Creek as a recreation area. It provides for a stepped approach to management of recreational uses in the Corridor allowing for increasing regulation as it becomes needed. A more assertive management plan for natural and cultural resources will help to ensure their protection. Closing the Newspaper Rock area to camping and closing or relocating the three Indian Creek Falls sites will take serious steps towards the protection of cultural and paleontological resources, wetlands and riparian areas, vegetation and wildlife habitat, and visitor safety. Although some users would be adversely affected by the closing of the Newspaper Rock and Indian Creek Falls camping areas, the overall visitor experience would be enhanced by designating camping sites, trails, parking, and moving camping sites which have safety risks.

The Preferred Alternative would maintain and eventually result in an overall improvement of the quality of natural, cultural and paleontological, and recreational resources, and overall visitor satisfaction in the Corridor.

Specifically, the Preferred Alternative would maintain the quality of cultural resources in the Corridor through surveying use areas and designating specific parking and camping areas which do not negatively affect cultural resources. Strengthened management prescriptions for recreational use, visitor education, and signing would help to minimize impacts to cultural and paleontological resources. Cultural resources would be managed for their protection and preservation.

Vegetative cover within the Corridor would improve overall with designation of campsites, parking areas, and access trails. Any loss of vegetative cover as a result of developing the Shay Mountain Vista Campground would be offset by the substantial improvements to vegetation quality along the stretch of Indian Creek flowing through the closed Newspaper Rock campground.

The proposed action would result in decreased soil compaction, and resultant erosion, by removing camping from riparian areas, designating campsites, and developing access trails. The proposed action would result in displacing some soil impacts to upland or areas less susceptible to soil erosion, while removing impacts from sensitive riparian areas. Designating campsites and developing access trails is expected to decrease overall disturbance within the corridor resulting in improved long-term soil conditions.

The Preferred Alternative may improve water quality by decreasing recreational use in riparian zones, which may also help remove Indian Creek from the State Impaired Waters list, and allow for higher quality fisheries and wildlife habitat. The proposed action would result in improved riparian and wetland conditions by removing camping from Newspaper Rock and designating campgrounds away from streams.

Closing and rehabilitating the Newspaper Rock Campground would decrease adverse impacts to visual resources within the corridor. Cumulatively, there would be a limited amount of visual impact created by signs, informational kiosks, and a restroom at Donnelly Canyon.

The Preferred Alternative would result in improved wildlife and habitat conditions, specifically, in the Newspaper Rock camping area where conflicts exist between campers and raptors, big game, and wild turkey. This alternative could assist in the recovery of threatened, endangered, and candidate species such as Mexican spotted owls, peregrine falcon, and bald eagles. Following recovery plans, habitat for these species and their prey could improve and the Indian Creek Corridor may be used more frequently by these species.

The Preferred Alternative would result in an overall improvement of the quality of recreational resources and visitor satisfaction in the Corridor. Camping use patterns by climbers and other recreational users may change if these users choose not to use the designated campsites. This may increase camping in other areas, or push campers onto areas that are not currently being used and create conflicts with livestock grazing operations. Designating campsites in the Bridger Jack Mesa camping area would continue the conflicts that presently occur with the livestock grazing operation but may help prevent them from escalating. Developing the Shay Mountain Vista Campground may increase use of the Hart's Draw and Hart's Point area.

4.6 Mitigation and Monitoring

4.6.1 Mitigation

Because this is an agency proposal, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the alternatives.

4.6.2 Monitoring

As time and funding allow monitoring efforts for all of the following will resources will occur. Partnerships with the NPS, SITLA UDOT, climbing advocacy groups, private companies, outdoor schools and individual interested climbers are being established to increase this effort.

Natural Resources

- Conduct raptor nesting inventories as needed. Use this data to implement seasonal closure plans for rock climbing routes.

- Assign specific monitoring for impacts on vegetation, soils, and water quality from camping. Continue monitoring of water quality in Indian Creek and other water sources, as time and funding permits. Use this data to evaluate the impact of camping and recreation use patterns on natural resources. Make adjustments to recreation management as needed to minimize impacts.

- As funding allows, increase monitoring of riparian areas throughout the Corridor by gathering information about current riparian plan communities through baseline transects, establishing potential and desired plant communities for the areas based on ecological conditions, and monitoring changes in the vegetation over time through photo plots and permanent transects in specific sections of Indian Creek. Coordinate riparian monitoring with The Nature Conservancy. Use this data to evaluate the effectiveness of management directions on improving the health of riparian areas.

- As time and funding allows, BLM staff would continue to patrol the Indian Creek Corridor and talk with users about standards for protection and preservation of cultural and natural resources. Use feedback from users to improve education.

Cultural/Paleontological

- Upgrade monitoring of cultural/paleontological resources by law enforcement personnel. Schedule ranger visits to the planning area as appropriate for the season. Develop specific resource and visitor monitoring tasks to be conducted on these patrols. Require rangers to summarize monitoring results, incidents, and violations. Use additional staff as needed for visitor contact and resource protection.

- Use information collected through monitoring to determine whether cultural/paleontological resources are being impacted by the Corridor users, and whether additional protection measures are necessary.

- As time and funding allows, BLM staff would patrol the Indian Creek Corridor and talk with users about standards for protection and preservation of cultural/paleontological and natural resources. Use feedback from users to improve education efforts.

<u>Recreation</u>

- Summarize overall visitor trends within the planning area on an annual basis using National Park Service, Utah Department of Transportation, and BLM data.

- Identify ways in which partners can assist with monitoring. Pursue additional partnerships to assist with monitoring.

- Assign specific monitoring tasks for sanitation and aesthetic problems created by improper disposal of human waste, rock climbing locations and associated impacts, locations of seasonal raptor nesting sites and associated route closures, and the impacts of recreation use upon highway safety.

- The BLM would conduct regular site visits to educate the public and enforce the pack-in/pack-out policy for trash and human waste. Information collected during these visits would be used to evaluate the level of compliance with the pack-in/pack-out policy.

- The pack-in/pack-out policy would be determined to be working if regular inspections find that:

  - People have toilets or bags, and seem to be using them;

  - Toilet paper and/or evidence of human waste is not found in camping areas; and

  - Used toilet bags are not found in the area.

- Monitoring tasks would be established to evaluate the impacts of the proposed action on camping use patterns to determine if camping is being displaced to areas which were not previously used.

- Assign specific monitoring to determine whether the needs of the users are being met. This could occur through satisfaction surveys, informal visits with users, and other forms of user feedback.

The BLM would continue to cooperate with The Nature Conservancy and other land holders to determine if actions taken by the BLM are effective, and how changes can be made, if necessary.

5.0 Consultation & Coordination

5.1 List of Preparers

Bureau of Land Management, Monticello Field Office

Sandra Meyers
Patrick Madigan
Scott Berkenfield
Todd Berkenfield
Andrew Boone
Jeff Brown
Paul Curtis
Maxine Deeter
James Carter
Brad Colin
Dave Himmerich
Ted McDougall
Nick Sandberg
Summer Schulz
Nancy Shearin
Rob Sweeten
Gary Torres
Tammy Wallace

Bureau of Land Management, State Office

Robin Fehlau
Greg Thayne
Kate Kitchell
Steve Knox
Shelley Smith
Lauren Mermejo

Consultants and document Preparer

Ralph Becker, Bear West
Laura Hanson, Bear West

5.2 Persons, Groups, and Agencies Consulted

Agencies and Local Governments

Canyonlands National Park
City of Rocks National Reserve
Joshua Tree National Park
Manti-La Sal National Forest
Red Rocks Canyon Recreation Area
San Juan County Commission
San Juan County Public Lands Council
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
United States Geological Survey
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Utah Mitigation Reclamation and Conservation Commission
Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Yosemite National Park

Tribes

The Hopi Tribe
The Pueblo of Zia
The Pueblo of Acoma
The Pueblo of Zuni
The Navajo Nation
The White Mesa Ute Tribe
The Southern Ute Tribe
The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Others

Sue Bellagamba, The Nature Conservancy
Zeb Dalton, Bar MK Ranch
Mark Hesse, Rocky Mountain Field Institute
Jason Keith, Access Fund
Heidi Redd, The Dugout Ranch

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Appendices & Attachments

Appendix A—Specific Area Site Plans

Shay Mountain Vista Campground Site Plan

Shay Mountain Vista Campground would be a designated campground, which would provide a more developed camping experience for visitors to the Indian Creek Corridor. This campground would provide camping facilities for both tent and recreational vehicle (RV) campers. The existing Newspaper Rock campground is located in a floodplain and has numerous conflicts with natural resources. This campground would provide a safer alternative to camping in the Newspaper Rock area. The Shay Mountain Vista Campground would operate under a fee system to cover the costs of development, installation, and maintenance of the facilities and services provided.

This campground has the potential for approximately 40 sites.

Facilities provided at this campground may include:

- Restrooms
- Garbage collection
- Picnic tables
- Fire rings
- Gravel roads
- Delineated parking areas
- Campsite marker posts
- RV camping spaces
- Tent camping spaces

Newspaper Rock Day-Use Area Site Plan

The Newspaper Rock Day-Use Area would be a designated area, which provides a scenic resting stop for visitors to the Indian Creek Corridor and Newspaper Rock. This day-use area would include picnic tables, and the existing parking lot and restroom facilities. This day-use area would provide a safer alternative to picnicking on the West side of Highway 211, which is located in a floodplain and would require users to cross the highway to reach their cars, restrooms, or Newspaper Rock. No fees would be charged for use of this day-use area.

Facilities provided at this day-use area may include:

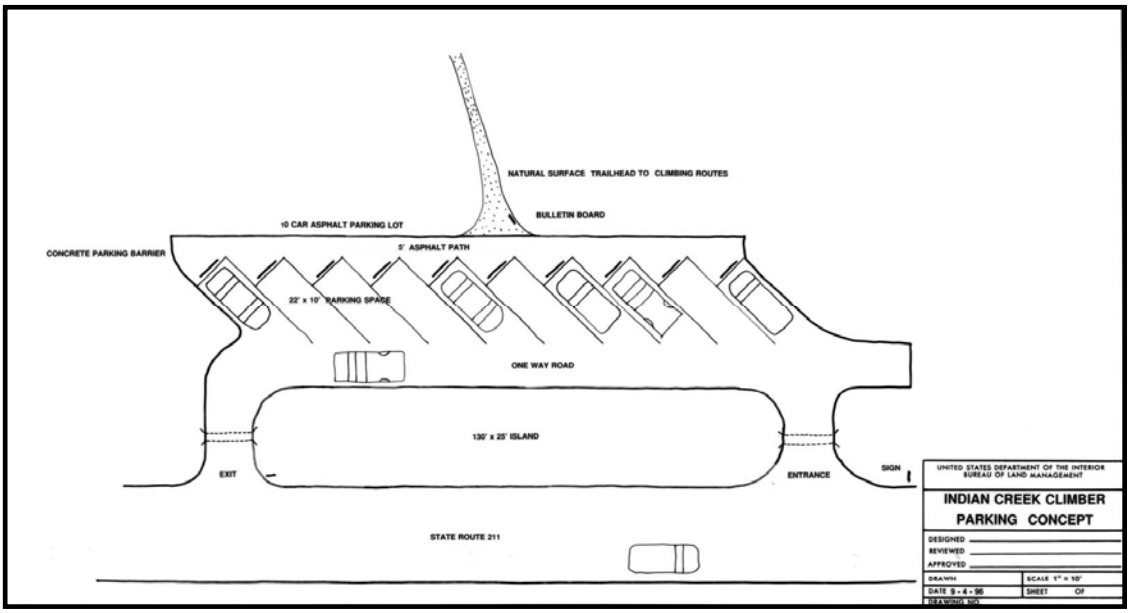
- Existing Restrooms
- Picnic tables
- Existing parking lot

Donnelly Canyon Recreation Area Site Plan

The Donnelly Canyon Recreation Area would be a designated day-use area that would provide safe parking areas and a restroom for rock climbers in Donnelly Canyon. No fees would be charged for use of this area. On busy weekends, up to 100 cars have been counted parked along Highway 211. People often park on both sides of the highway, which means than many people have to cross the road. The following graphic illustrates a possible parking area design, however the actual design and placement of the parking area depends on the findings of a cadastral survey. The present landownership boundaries are unclear. A second parking option would be constructing a flat parking area above grade from Highway 211, and closer to the cliffs.

Facilities provided at this recreation area may include:

- Restrooms
- Delineated parking areas



Bridger Jack Designated Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan

The Bridger Jack Designated Dispersed Camping Area would provide visitors to the Indian Creek Corridor an undeveloped camping area while minimizing impacts to the natural and cultural resources of the area. Facilities at this area would be limited, and a trial pack-in/pack-out policy for human waste and garbage would be enforced for one year. If the BLM determines that the pack-in/pack-out policy is not effective, permanent restrooms would be installed and fees would be charged to cover the associated costs.

This designated dispersed camping area has potential for approximately 30 sites with room for expansion as demands increase.

Facilities provided at this camping area may include:

- Fire rings
- Delineated parking areas
- Campsite marker posts
- Tent camping spaces
- Pack-in/pack-out policy or toilets

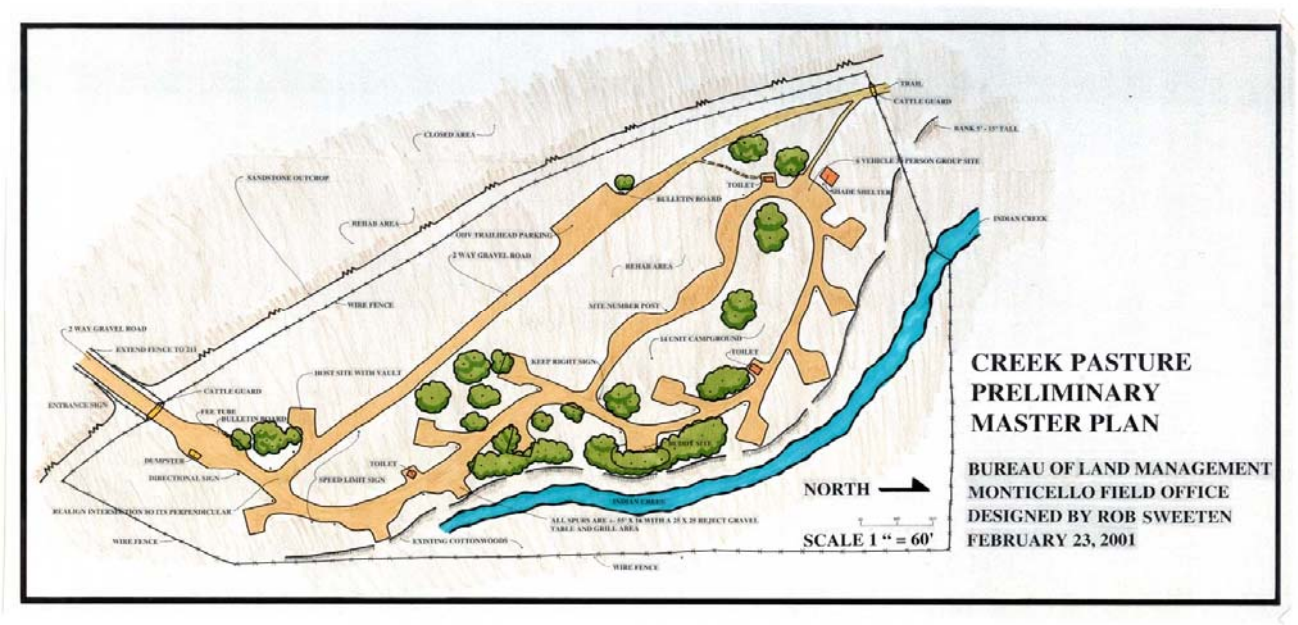
Creek Pasture Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan

The Creek Pasture Designated Dispersed Camping Area would provide visitors to the Indian Creek Corridor an undeveloped camping area while minimizing impacts to the natural and cultural resources of the area. Facilities at this area would be limited, and a trial pack-in/pack-out policy for human waste and garbage would be enforced for one year. If the BLM determines that the pack-in/pack-out policy is not effective, permanent restrooms would be installed and fees would be charged to cover the associated costs. Fencing would be required to protect cultural resources near this site. Riparian areas would be fenced to prevent deterioration of stream banks as necessary.

This designated dispersed camping area has potential for approximately 20 sites.

Facilities provided at this camping area may include:

- Fire rings
- Delineated parking areas
- Campsite marker posts
- Tent camping spaces
- Pack-in/pack-out policy or toilets



Hamburger Rock Campground Site Plan

The Hamburger Rock Campground would be a designated campground providing a more developed camping experience for visitors to the Indian Creek Corridor. This campground would provide camping facilities for both tent and recreational vehicle (RV) campers. This campground operates under a fee system to cover the costs of development, installation, and maintenance of the facilities and services provided.

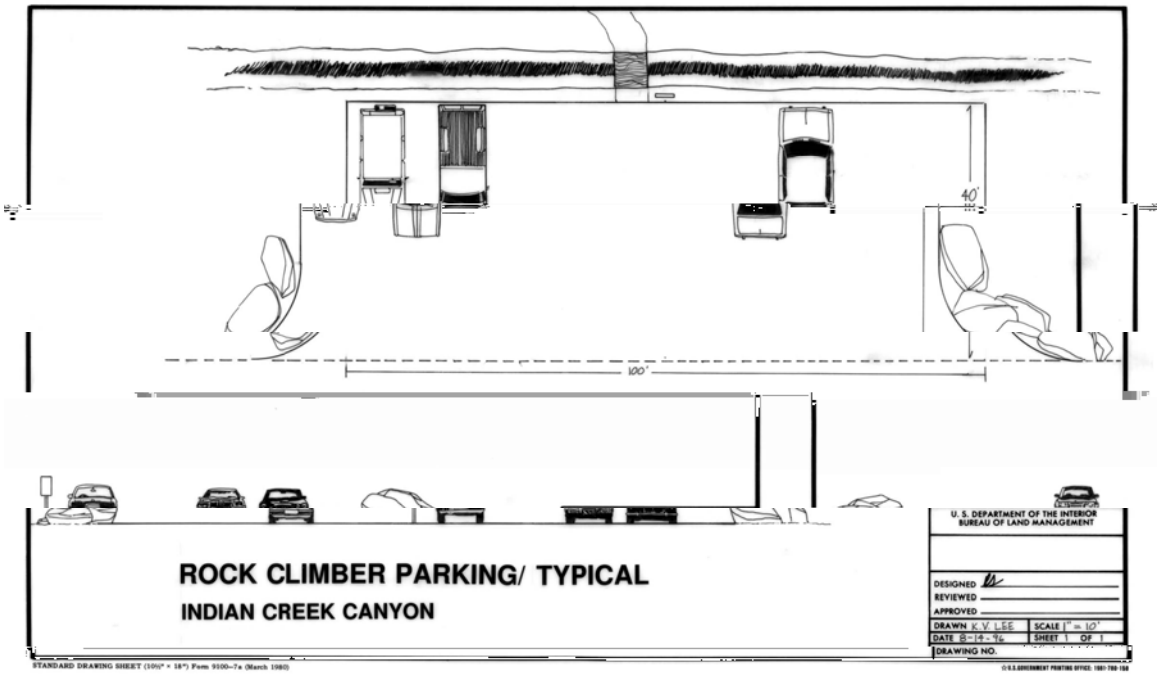
This campground currently has eight sites with room for expansion as demands increase. The BLM has also considered developing an outer ring of campsites at this campground to accommodate more visitors. Preliminary site design drawings have been developed.

Facilities provided at this campground may include:

- Restrooms
- Picnic tables
- Fire rings
- Delineated parking areas
- Campsite marker posts
- Tent camping spaces

Indian Creek Corridor Parking Plan

The Indian Creek Corridor Parking Plan designates 18 parking areas to be maintained or developed to meet current and future parking demands. Parking along Highway 211 within the Corridor would be limited to these 18 areas. In areas where safety concerns arise, parking along the shoulder of Highway 211 would be prohibited; signs would be posted in these areas. The BLM is working closely with the Utah Department of Transportation to design and develop these parking areas as betterment projects.



The Indian Creek Corridor Parking Plan includes designating the following 18 parking areas within the planning area:

1) Newspaper Rock
   This is the existing paved parking lot at Newspaper Rock. This parking area provides parking for approximately 20 vehicles, and serves those stopping to view Newspaper Rock, use the Newspaper Rock day-use picnic area, or use the restrooms.

2) Sundance Wall (Friction Slab)
   This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 2-3 vehicles and provides parking for rock climbers on the Sundance Wall and sightseers stopping to view a small petroglyph panel.

3) Shay Canyon
   This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 2-3 vehicles, and provides parking for hikers headed into Shay Canyon to view a petroglyph panel and set of fossilized dinosaur tracks. Indian Creek is undercutting the road in this area, and BLM would coordinate development of this parking area with repair efforts for this section of Highway 211.

4) Blue Gramma Wall
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates approximately 5 vehicles and provides parking for Blue Gramma Wall and overflow parking for Donnelly Canyon.

5) Donnelly Canyon
This is a proposed BLM-created parking area which would accommodate up to 100 vehicles. This parking area would provide parking for rock climbers on the Supercrack Buttress and other routes in Donnelly Canyon. A cadastral survey is needed to determine the actual ownership lines in this area. If this location is found to be on private property, development of this parking area would be subject to an agreement with The Nature Conservancy.

6) Donnelly Canyon
This parking area is a user-created turnoff along Highway 211. It accommodates 5-6 vehicles and provides parking for rock climbers on the Supercrack Buttress and other routes in Donnelly Canyon. A cadastral survey is needed to determine the actual ownership lines in this area. If this location is found to be on private property, development of this parking area would be subject to an agreement with The Nature Conservancy.

7) Fringe of Death Canyon
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 1-2 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers in the Fringe of Death Canyon.

8) Fringe of Death Canyon
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 1-2 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers in the Fringe of Death Canyon.

9) Boulder Garden
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 4-5 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers bouldering on the numerous boulders that have fallen from the cliffs above.

10) Power Wall and Scarface Wall
This parking area is a large, flat, gravel parking area along Highway 211. It accommodates over 20 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers on the Power and Scarface Walls.

11) Reservoir Wall
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 8 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers on the Reservoir Wall.

12) Cat Wall
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 5-6 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers on the Cat Wall.

13) Fin Wall and Broken Tooth Wall
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 6-8 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers on the Fin and Broken Tooth walls.

14) Bridger Jack Camping
This includes a series of scattered user-created turn-offs. Together they accommodate over 20 vehicles at a time, and provide parking for campers in the Bridger Jack Designated Dispersed Camping Area. Additional parking for campers in this area is included in the Bridger Jack Designated Dispersed Camping Area Site Plan.

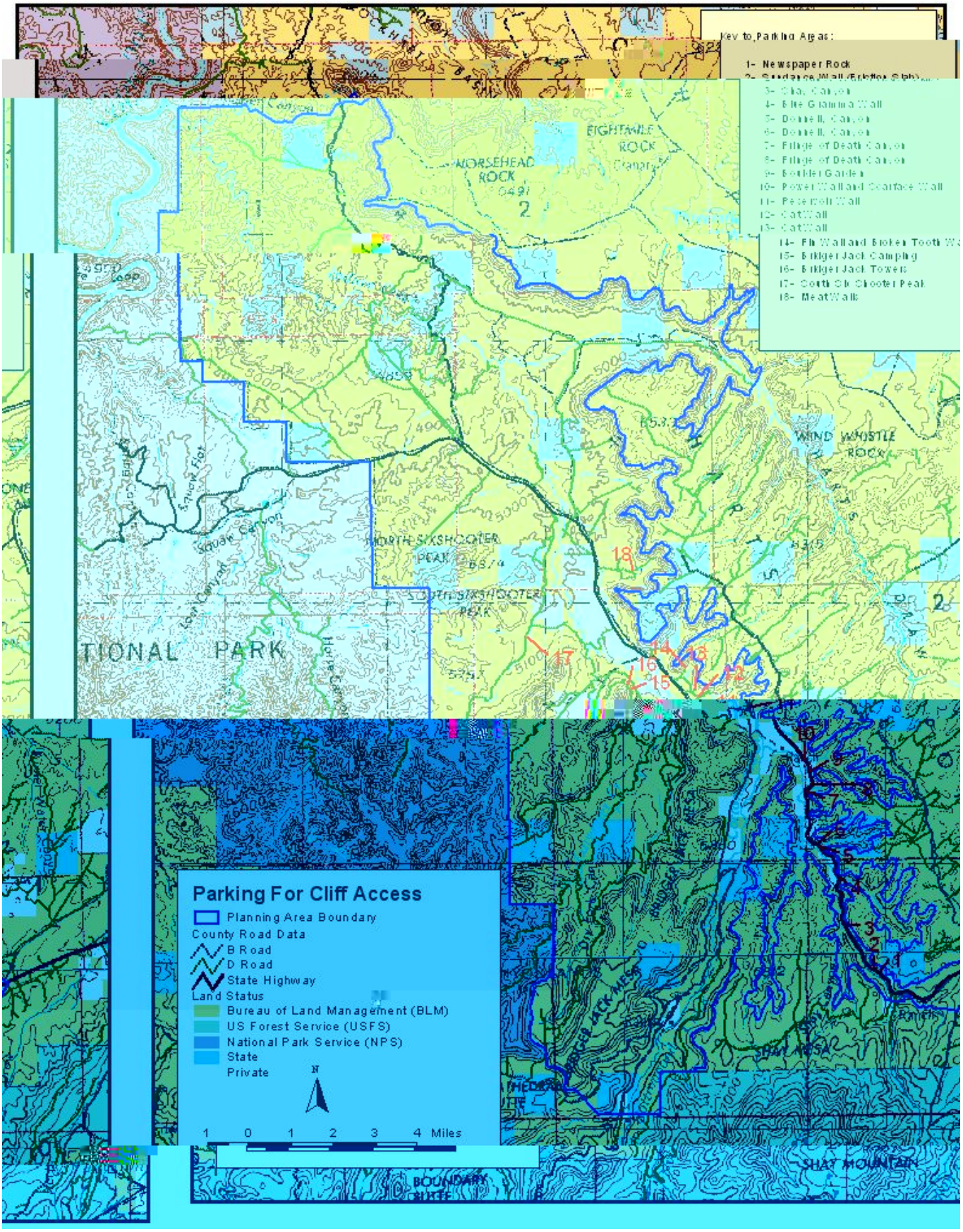
15) Bridger Jack Towers
This includes several scattered user-created turn-offs. Together they accommodates 10 vehicles, and provide parking for rock climbers on the Bridger Jack Towers.

16) South Six Shooter Peak
This parking area is located in a wide natural dry wash, which is subject to occasional flooding. It accommodates dozens of vehicles at a time, and provides parking for rock climbers climbing South Six Shooter Peak .

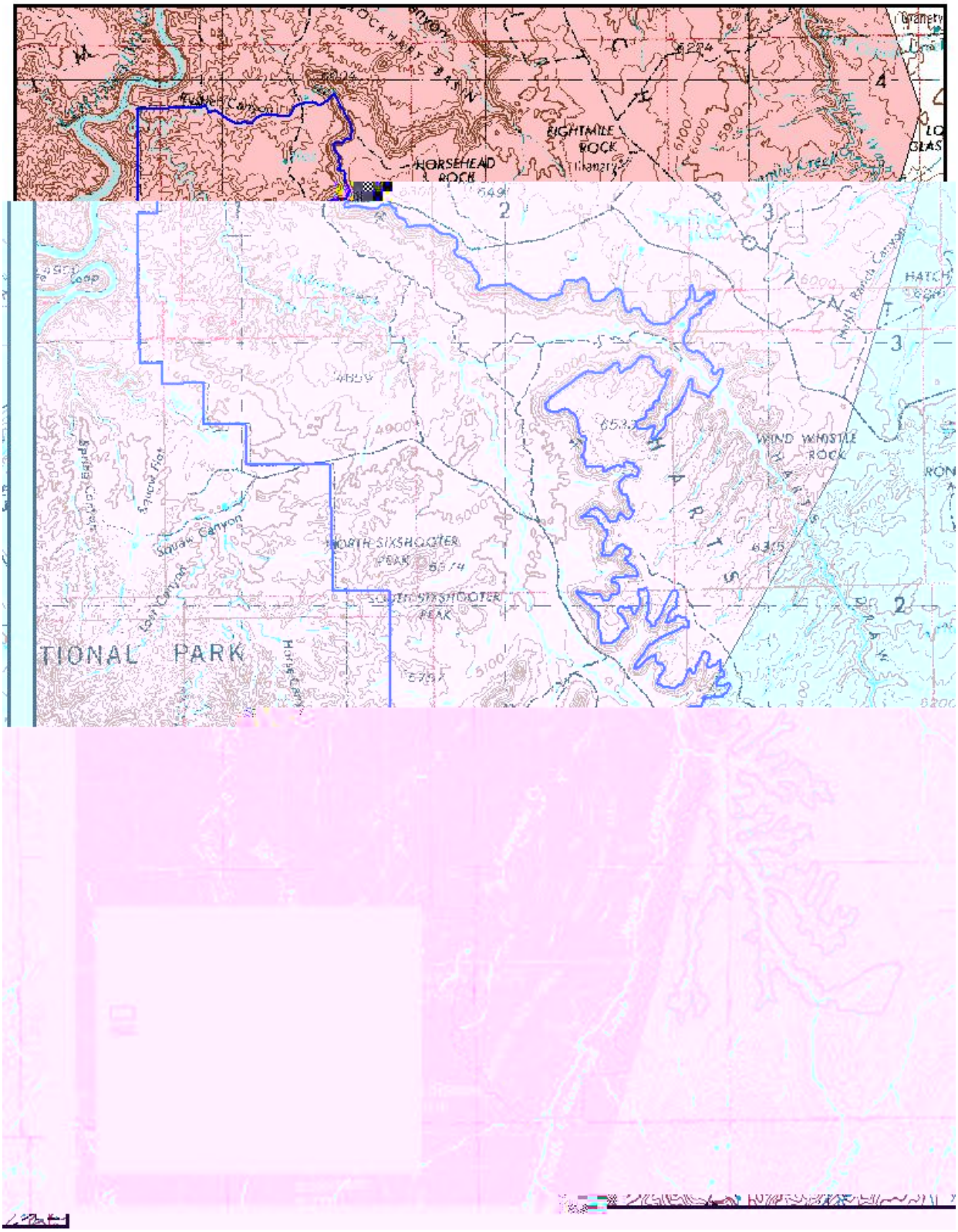
17) Meat Walls
This parking area is a user-created turn-off along Highway 211. It accommodates 5-6 vehicles, and provides parking for rock climbers on the 1st, 2nd, and Original Meat Walls, the Tenderloin Wall and the Sacred Cow Wall.

The location of the 18 parking areas in the Indian Creek Corridor Parking Plan are shown on the following map.

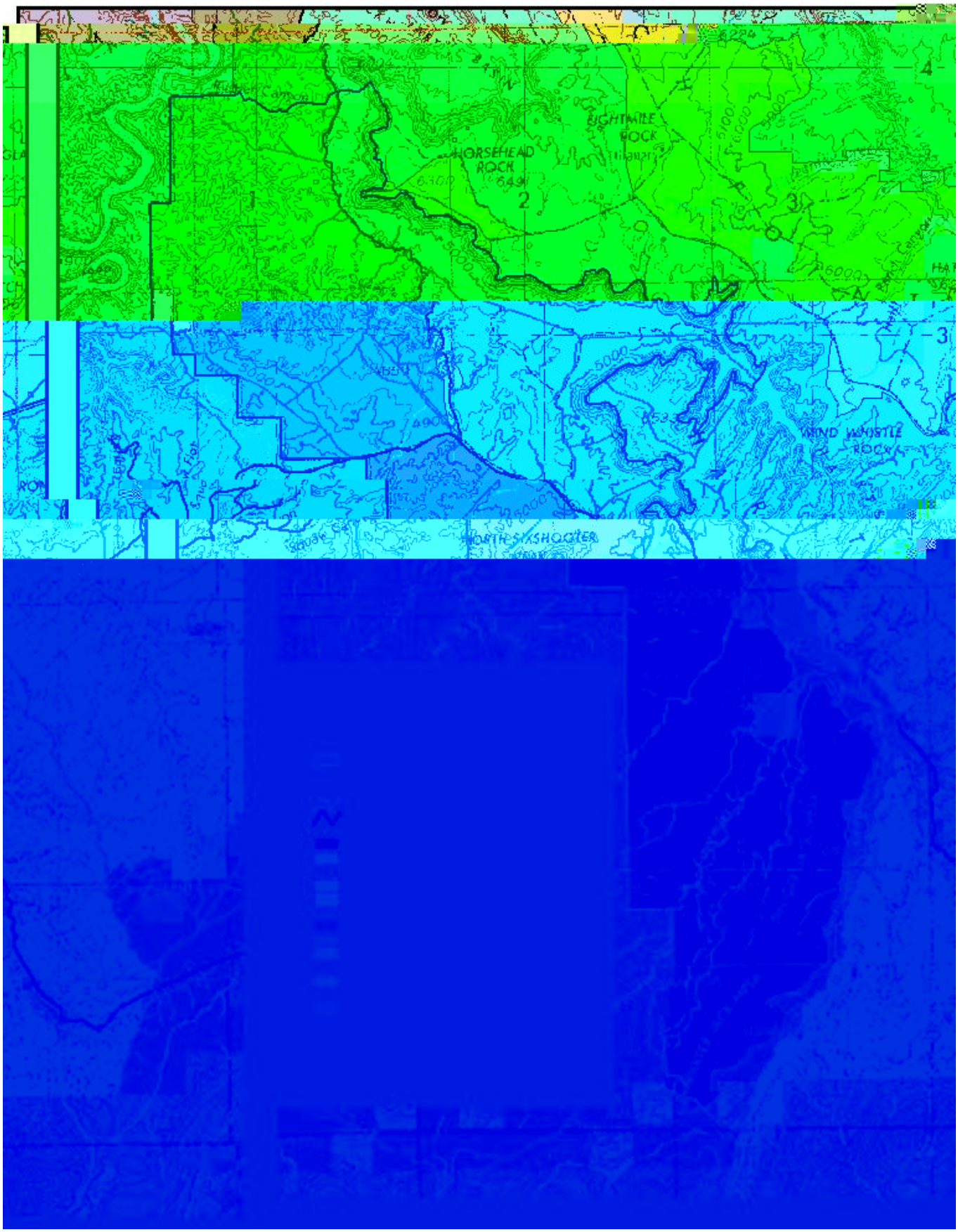
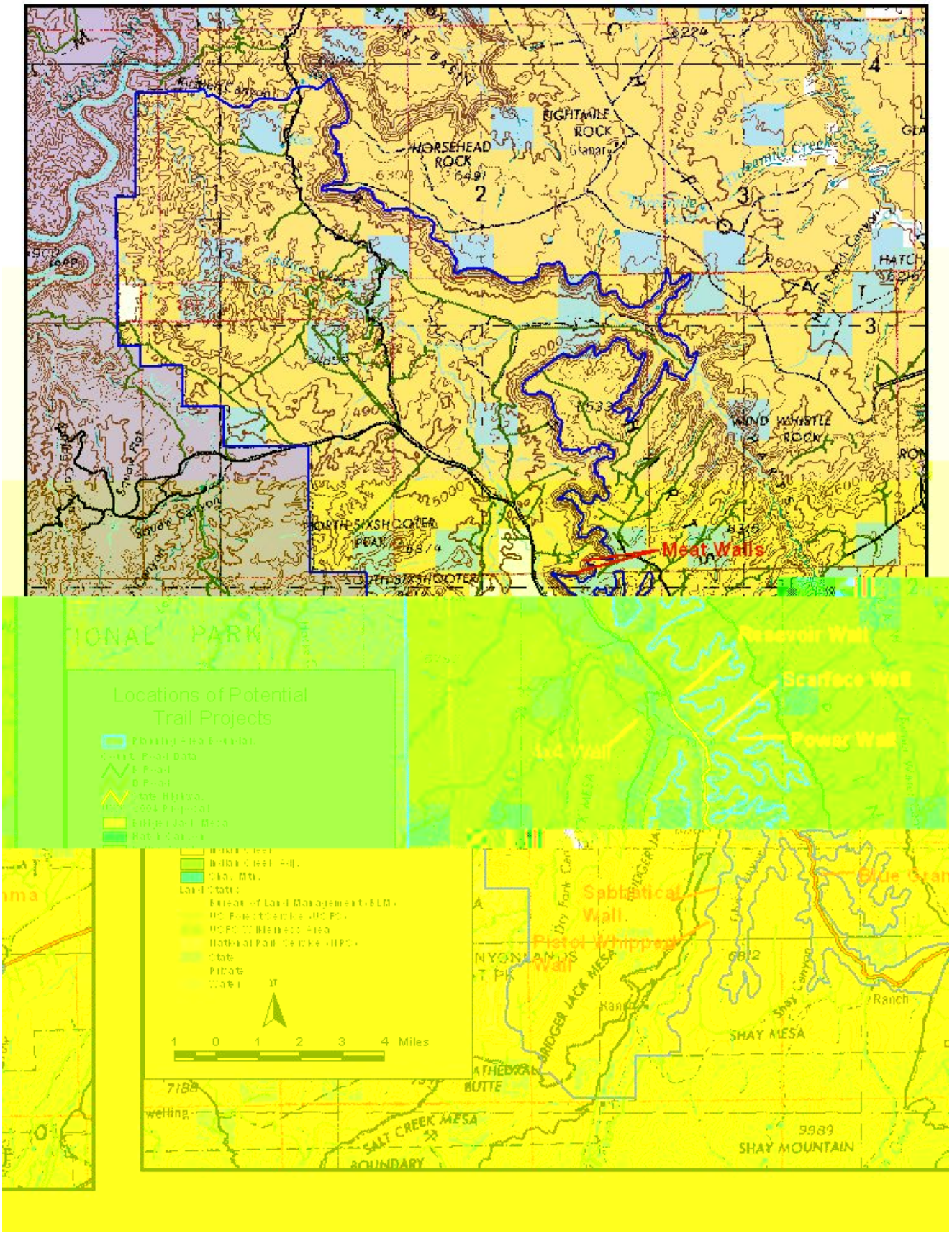
Appendix A—Specific Area Site Plans



Appendix B—Critical Mexican Spotted Owl Habitat



Appendix C—Wilderness Proposals in the Indian Creek Corridor



Appendix D—Existing and Proposed Trails in the Indian Creek Corridor