



COLORADO SOUTHWEST RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 20XX-XX

Resolution in Support of the Range of Alternatives for the Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan

WHEREAS: The Uncompahgre Field Office is revising its Resource Management Plan, and

WHEREAS: The Southwest Resource Advisory Council has assigned a sub-group to assist the BLM develop the range of alternatives for the plan, and

WHEREAS: The Southwest Resource Advisory Council sub-group has agreed that the range of alternatives is adequate.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Southwest Resource Advisory Council approves the range of alternatives for the Uncompahgre RMP.

Passed, approved and adopted October 26, 2012.

Received by Designated Federal Officer

Lori Armstrong, Southwest District Manager

Kathleen Welt, Chair

Southwest Resource Advisory Council



BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Partners Across The West

COLORADO SOUTHWEST RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 20XX-XX

Resolution in Support of the Range of Alternatives for the Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan

WHEREAS: The BLM Uncompahgre Field Office is revising its Resource Management Plan (RMP), and

WHEREAS: The Southwest Resource Advisory Council (SWRAC) has assigned a sub-group to assist the BLM in developing the range of alternatives for the plan, and

WHEREAS: The ~~Southwest Resource Advisory Council~~ SWRAC sub-group has met numerous times and has agreed that the range of alternatives for the RMP is adequate.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Southwest Resource Advisory Council ^{accepts} supports the work of the SWRAC sub-group and recommends approval of ~~the range of alternatives for the Uncompahgre RMP— as agreed by the SWRAC subgroup.~~ and recommends the BLM move forward w/ the range of alternatives and prepares a better summary.

Passed, approved and adopted October 26, 2012.

Received by Designated Federal Officer

Lori Armstrong, Southwest District Manager

Kathleen Welt, Chair

Southwest Resource Advisory Council

Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan Background Information

Background

The BLM Uncompahgre Field Office is currently operating from two old Resource Management Plans (RMP) dated 1985 and 1989. Management actions, policy, activities, population growth, public expectations, and other factors have changed a great deal since 1989, which necessitate revising the older plans.

The planning area is the Uncompahgre Field Office, excluding the Gunnison Gorge NCA and the Dominguez-Escalante NCA; the Gunnison Gorge NCA has its own RMP, and Dominguez-Escalante NCA is currently developing their RMP.

Colorado Southwest Resource Advisory Council Subgroup

The Colorado Southwest Resource Advisory Council subgroup was formed to advise the Southwest Resource Advisory Council regarding the Uncompahgre RMP revision. The subgroup has 11 members; 3 are RAC members. The individuals on the subgroup represent a broad range of interests and have specific knowledge of the field office.

The subgroup participated in the planning process and assisted the BLM with creating a range of reasonable alternatives for the RMP/EIS. The subgroup convened 10 times between May 27, 2010 and June 22, 2012. The subgroup reviewed and commented on management alternatives as BLM developed and refined them. On June 22, 2012 the Resource Advisory Council subgroup approved the range of alternatives as a reasonable range.

Public Scoping

The BLM began the scoping process with seven open houses in January and February 2010 to provide the public with opportunities to become involved, to learn about the project and the planning process, to meet the Uncompahgre RMP team members, and to offer comments. Scoping meetings were held in an open house format to encourage participants to discuss concerns and questions with BLM staff representatives.

The seven scoping open houses were held in Hotchkiss, Delta, Montrose, Ridgway, Norwood, Naturita and Telluride. Open house meetings were attended by 369 individuals.

Although public scoping meetings began in January 2010, the formal scoping period began with publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on February 25, 2010. The Notice of Intent notified the public of the BLM's intent to develop an RMP for the UFO. A copy of the Notice of Intent was also posted on the project Web site. The scoping period for receipt of public comments ended March 29, 2010.

Development of Management Alternatives

BLM held several internal meetings between May 2010 and April 2012 to formulate and refine management alternatives. The SW-RAC subgroup and Cooperating Agencies reviewed and advised on alternatives as BLM

formulated and refined them. Alternative A is “No Action”, which would continue using the existing 1985 and 1989 Resource Management Plans. Alternative B is more conservation oriented, alternative C is more resource use and production oriented, and alternative D is a balanced approach.

Introduction and Affected Environment Chapters

BLM had the RAC subgroup review draft chapter 1 (Introduction) and draft chapter 3 (Affected Environment) and provide comment. The Affected Environment chapter describes the situation within the planning area as it now exists. It covers all resources and resource uses.

Schedule

BLM State Office review of the Draft RMP/EIS Oct 29 – Nov 21, 2012

BLM Washington Office review of the Draft RMP/EIS Dec 31, 2012 – Feb 25, 2013

Public review and comment of the Draft RMP/EIS April 5 – July 4, 2013

Public review and protest period of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS February 2014

Signed Record of Decision August 2014

(Note: any of the dates could change due to many factors, many of which are beyond the control of Uncompahgre Field Office.)

Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan -- Alternatives

Alternative A: No Action

Alternative A meets the requirement that a no-action alternative be considered. This alternative continues current management direction and prevailing conditions derived from existing planning documents. Goals and objectives for resources and resource uses are based on the San Juan/San Miguel RMP and Uncompahgre Basin RMP, along with associated amendments, activity and implementation level plans, and other management decision documents. Laws, regulations, and BLM policies that supersede RMP decisions would apply.

Goals and objectives for BLM-administered lands and mineral estate would not change. Appropriate and allowable uses and restrictions pertaining to activities such as mineral leasing and development, recreation, timber harvesting, construction of utility corridors, and livestock grazing would also remain the same. The BLM would not modify existing or establish additional criteria to guide the identification of site-specific use levels for implementation activities.

Alternative B

Alternative B emphasizes improving, rehabilitating, and restoring resources and sustaining the ecological integrity of habitats for all priority plant, wildlife, and fish species, while allowing appropriate development scenarios for allowable uses (such as mineral leasing, locatable mineral development, recreation, communication sites, and livestock grazing). It particularly targets the habitats needed for the conservation and recovery of federally listed, proposed, or candidate threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Goals and objectives focus on environmental and social outcomes achieved by sustaining relatively

unmodified physical landscapes and natural and cultural resource values for current and future generations. This alternative would establish the greatest number of special designation areas such as ACECs and special recreation management areas, with specific measures designed to protect or enhance resource values. Appropriate and allowable uses and restrictions would be contingent on minimizing impacts on natural and cultural resources.

Alternative C

The appropriate mix of uses on BLM-administered lands and mineral estate would be based on making the most of resources that target social and economic outcomes, while protecting land health. Management direction would recognize and expand existing uses, and accommodate new uses to the greatest extent possible. The appropriate development scenarios for allowable uses (such as mineral leasing, locatable mineral development, recreation, communication sites, and livestock grazing) would emphasize maximizing resource production in an environmentally responsible manner, while maintaining the basic protection needed to sustain resources. Appropriate and allowable uses and restrictions would emphasize social and economic outcomes, while mitigating impacts on land health.

Alternative D: Agency Preferred

Alternative D is the agency-preferred alternative, which emphasizes balancing resources and resource use among competing human interests, land uses, and the conservation of natural and cultural resource values, while sustaining and enhancing ecological integrity across the landscape, including plant, wildlife, and fish habitat. This alternative incorporates a balanced level of protection, restoration, enhancement, and use of resources and services to meet ongoing programs and land uses. Goals and objectives focus on environmental, economic, and social outcomes achieved by strategically addressing demands across the landscape.