

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



Celebrating 75 Years of the BLM

Reimagine Your Public Lands – 245 Million Acres of Possibilities





Agenda

8:00 a.m. Meeting Begins

8:10 a.m. Housekeeping and Introductions

8:30 a.m. Opening Remarks

9:00 a.m. Field Trip Overview

9:30 a.m. Field Manager Updates

- UCRD – CRV, GJFO, McInnis Canyon NCA, D-E NCA
- NWD – LSFO, WRFO, KFO

11:00 a.m. Dominguez Escalante National Conservation Area RAC
Responsibilities and Business Plan Discussion

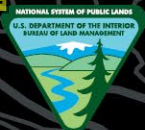
12:00 p.m. Lunch

1:15 p.m. WRFO Travel Management Plan Discussion

2:00 p.m. Public Comment

2:30 p.m. Closing Comments / Open Discussion

3:00 p.m. Adjourn



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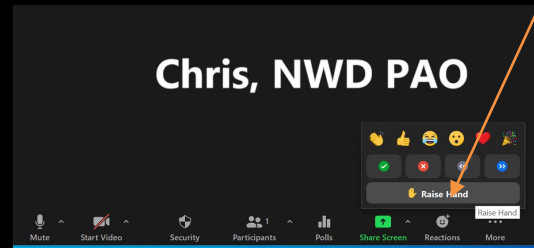


Celebrating 75 Years of the BLM

Reimagine Your Public Lands – 245 Million Acres of Possibilities

Zoom Protocol

- Use the “Raise Hand” feature under the “Reactions Tab” to make a comment or ask a question – prevents members from talking over each other.



- Please keep your microphone off unless participating in a question/discussion.
- Please keep your video **ON** during sessions; **OFF** when taking a break.
- Utilize “Gallery View” to see multiple member screens .
- Utilize “Presenter View” to highlight speaker.





**NATIONAL
CONSERVATION
LANDS**

Dominguez-Escalante
National Conservation Area



DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE

NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

RAC Responsibilities

Northwest Resource Advisory Council

October 20, 2021



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Dominguez-Escalante
National Conservation Area



DISCUSSION TOPICS

NCA OVERVIEW

RMP HIGHLIGHTS

ADVISORY COUNCIL CONTRIBUTIONS

RAC RESPONSIBILITIES DISCUSSION

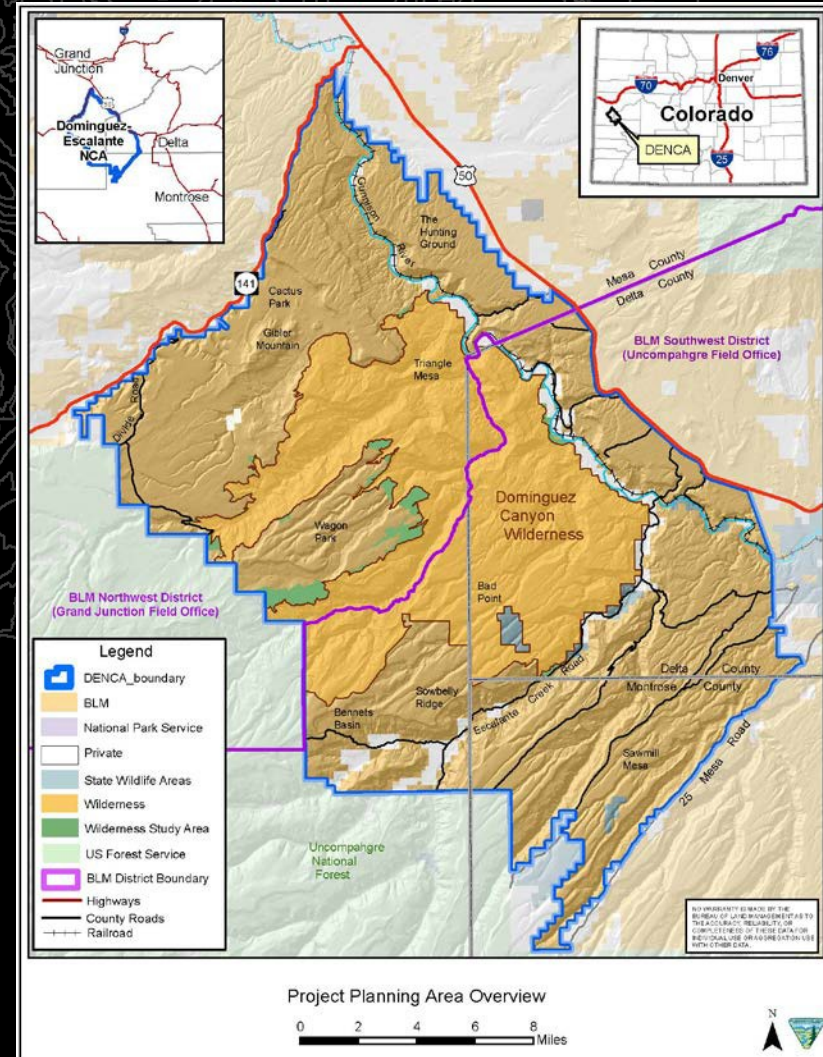




WHAT IS THE NCA?

Land Status	Total
BLM	210,172
State of CO	1,965
Private	6,256
Total	218,393

- > Designated by Congress in 2009
- > Dominguez Canyon Wilderness: 66,280 acres
- > 2 Field Offices: Uncompahgre, Grand Junction
- > Three counties: Mesa, Delta, and Montrose
- > Resource Management Plan approved January 2017

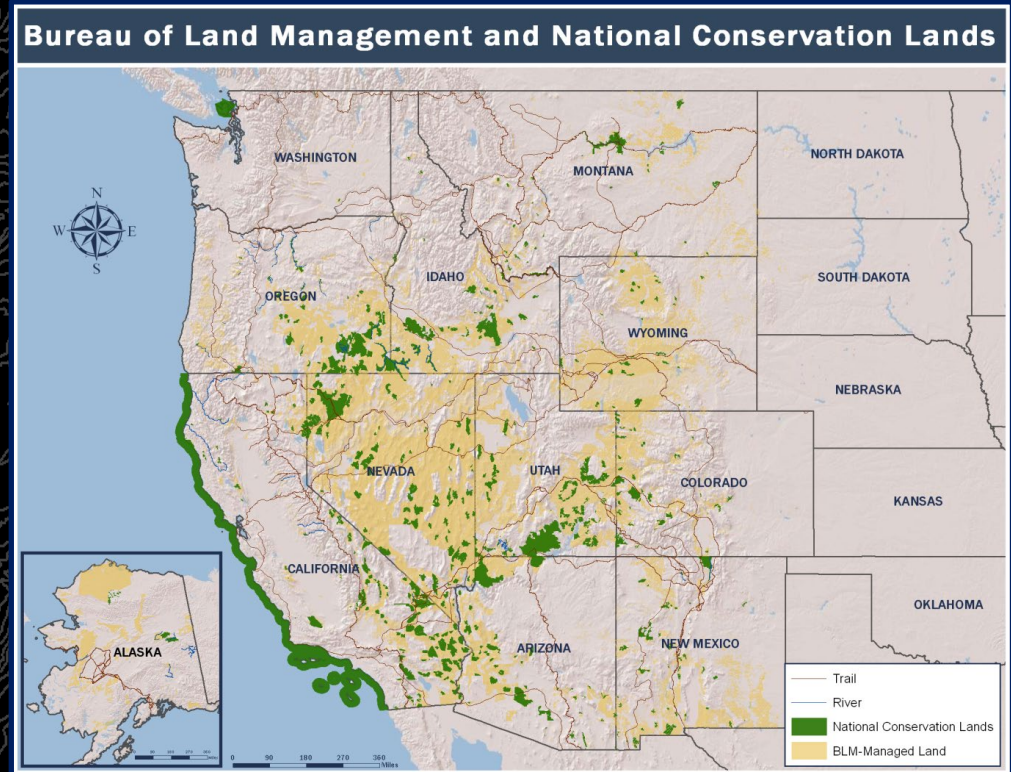




WHAT IS THE NCA?

Part of BLM's National Conservation Lands

- One of 17 NCAs
- 6 similarly designated areas
- 28 National Monuments
- Wilderness Areas & Wilderness Study Areas
- National Scenic & Historic Trails



NCL Mission: To conserve, protect, and restore these nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations



TIMELINE

- > 1999 & 2000 with support of Mesa, Delta, Montrose county commissioners Congress designated McInnis Canyons and Gunnison Gorge NCAs
- > Summer 2006—Mesa St. College, Mesa, Delta, Montrose county commissioners, and Public Land Partnership initiated public community discussions on legislative options for managing the Dominguez-Escalante Special management Area
- > Summer 2007—All counties reached a consensus on recommending NCA and wilderness providing that historic ranching be preserved, no federal reserved water right, wilderness would not be larger than WSA
- > Spring 2009—Omnibus Public Lands Act designated D-E NCA and Dominguez Canyon Wilderness





2009 OMNIBUS PUBLIC LANDS ACT

Designated the NCA and Wilderness:

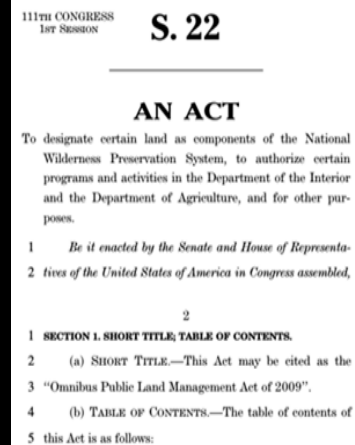
- > Withdrew NCA from mineral entry and leasing laws

Directed BLM to develop a RMP:

- > Developed with extensive public input
- > Only allow uses that further the purposes for which the NCA is established
- > Include a comprehensive travel management plan that limits motorized travel to designated roads and trails

The BLM shall:

- > Form an advisory council with specific guidelines for representation
- > Administer grazing leases or permits according to applicable laws and regulations in the NCA and Wilderness





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DESIGNATED PURPOSES OF THE NCA

Archaeological
Cultural
Educational
Geologic
Historic
Natural
Paleontological
Scenic
Scientific
Recreational
Riparian
Water
Wildlife
Wilderness





TIMELINE

- > August 2010—BLM issued Notice of Intent to prepare DRMP/DEIS
- > November 2010—D-E Advisory Council (AC) Formed
 - > 1st meeting January 5, 2011
- > May-September, 2013—Public comment on Draft RMP
- > October 2013-June 2016—BLM analyzed comments, made changes to the Proposed Plan, and prepared the Final EIS
- > July 2016 - Proposed RMP/Final EIS for 30 day protest period and 60 day Governor's consistency review
- > January 2017 - Approved RMP/Record of Decision signed by BLM Colorado State Director
- > January 2018 - D-E Advisory Council charter expired by law

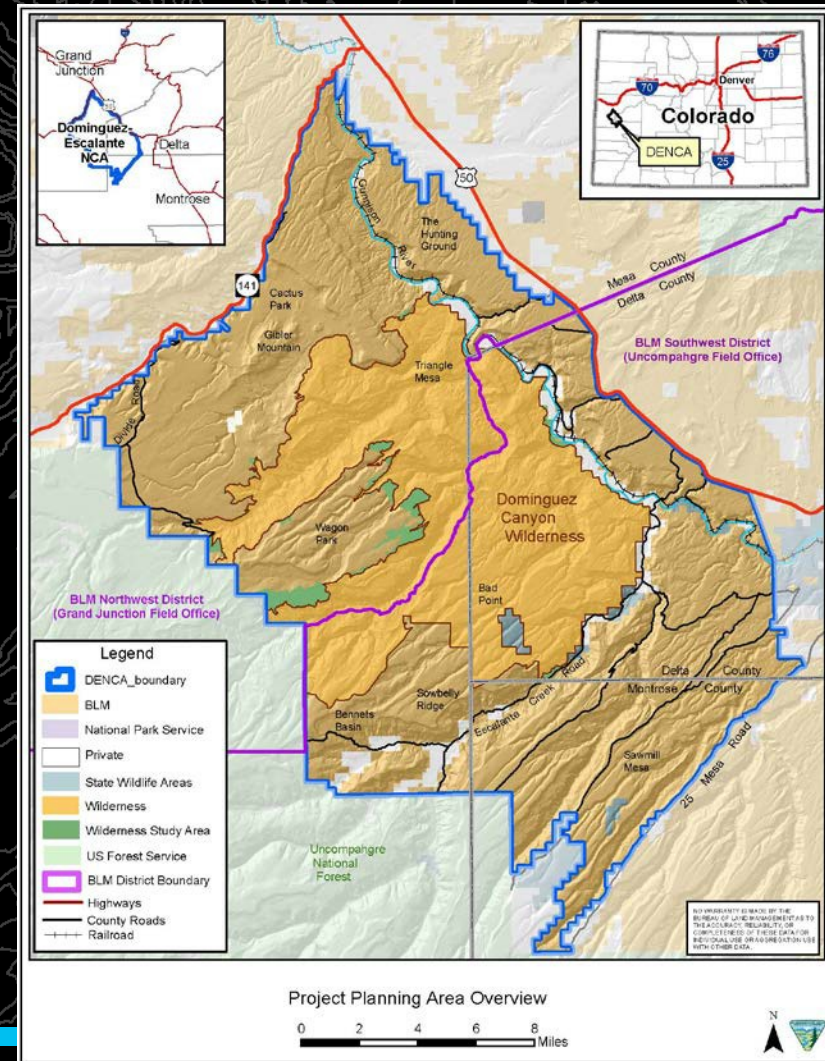




DISTRICTS AND RAC BOUNDARIES

March 2019 – NCA Manager and D-E AC members briefed Southwest RAC on the NCA and did a “handoff”

October 2020 – BLM Colorado realigned district boundaries splitting D-E NCA between the Southwest and Northwest RACs





DISTRICTS AND RAC BOUNDARIES

RAC	SW	NW
Districts	1	2
Field Offices	3	5
NMs/NCAs	2.5	1.5
Surface Acres	1.75 M	5M
Sub Surface Acres	7.26M	11.1M

Virtually all D-E NCA issues will be cross boundary. How do we handle those?





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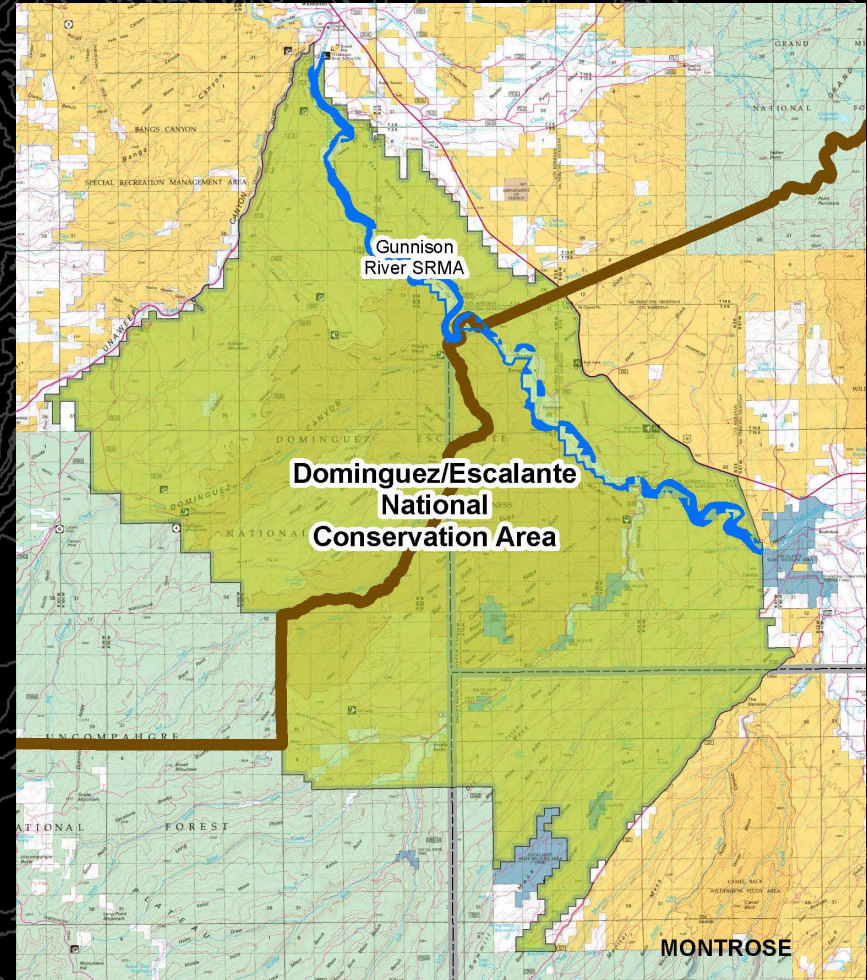
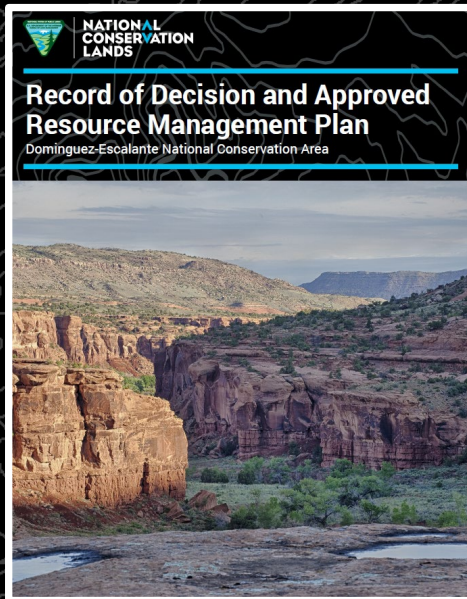


DISTRICTS AND RAC BOUNDARIES

Challenges:

Example -

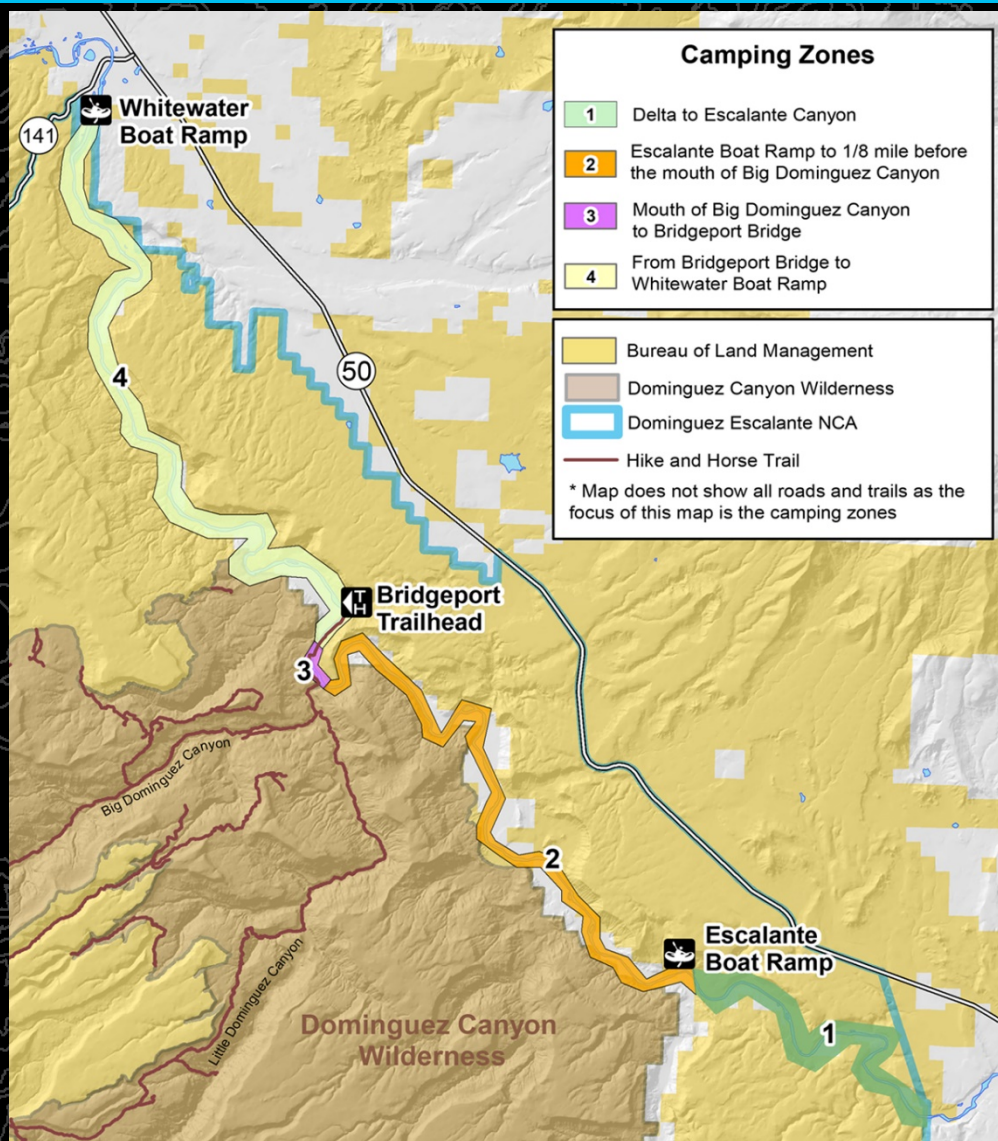
Gunnison River allocation system





NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area





RMP-Decisions

Implementations in 2020

- RMP decision to require overnight boaters to obtain a permit.
- Soliciting comments.

Planning for Implementation

- Designate campsites from Delta to Whitewater.
- Achieve an allocation of ~50% commercial, ~50% private at the mouth of Big Dominguez.
- Considering the entirety of campsites for reservation and fee.





D-E NCA Advisory Council

D-E Advisory Council sunsetted in January 2019 when NCA manager presented a handoff from the D-E Advisory Council to the Southwest Resource Advisory Council.

D-E Advisory Council on Gunnison River

- Identified this area as needing “intensive management of recreation” where it is important to manage for outcomes and settings.
- Recommendations pertaining to the following:
 - Managing use at the mouth of Big Dominguez
 - Increasing supply of camps along the river
 - Consider effect of increase in use
 - Consider permit systems before resources are damaged by over-use



Why

- These are decisions from the RMP.
- Conveys the rules of the river.
 - Enhances awareness and protection of recreation resources.
 - Permit provides far greater objective data on use.
- Limiting camping
 - Reduce inadvertent trespass
 - Protect resource conditions along the river.
- Reservation system could be desirable, based on comments so far.
- Fees could help pay for facilities required for increased use.

CONDITIONS OF USE

1. This permit does not authorize any type of commercial activity.
2. Group size, including dogs, will be 25 or less.
3. Dogs will be restrained on a leash less than 6 feet at high use areas (mouth of Big Dominguez Canyon and boat ramps).
4. Campsites and boat launches will not be used by jet boaters from May 1 through Labor day.
5. All members of your group will use a washable, leak-proof, reusable portable toilet system, or an EPA-approved carry-out bag system (all used bags must be stored in a water-tight container), to capture and pack out all solid human waste.
6. All solid human waste will be disposed of off public lands in accordance with applicable regulations.
7. All fires will be contained within a metal firepan with at least a 2-inch lip around its outer edges that is sufficient to capture all fire ash.
8. All fire ash, trash, leftover food, and litter will be packed out and appropriately disposed of off public lands.
9. No surface disturbing activities will occur (e.g. leveling tent pads, digging for firepans, etc.).
10. Only driftwood will be gathered for campfires.
11. Glass containers are prohibited.



Next Steps

- Continue requiring permits and improving compliance (~50-70% last year).
- Continue soliciting comments (45 and counting).
- NEPA
 - Review sites with specialists for other resource concerns.
 - Research historic commercial use along the river, develop allocation proposals.
 - Formal comment period
- Business Plan for Fees
 - Will brief RAC and seek approval



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Question

Given that most D-E issues are cross boundary, how should BLM efficiently seek RAC guidance for D-E projects?





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Travel Management Update

White River Field Office





Meeting Objectives

- Update on the status of travel management planning in WRFO
 - ❖ WRFO Strategy for Travel Mgmt Planning
 - ❖ Travel Route Inventory
 - ❖ Overview of the Travel RMPA
 - ❖ Cultural Resources & Programmatic Agreement
 - ❖ Travel Management Plans & Next Steps



BLM Travel Mgmt Planning

Two Levels of Planning

- ❖ Land Use Planning (RMP Amendment) → Areas
- ❖ Implementation Planning (6-7 Travel Management Plans) → Individual Routes

Comprehensive

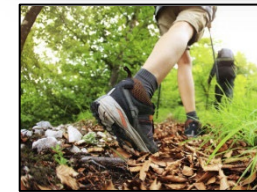
❖ Motorized



❖ Mechanized

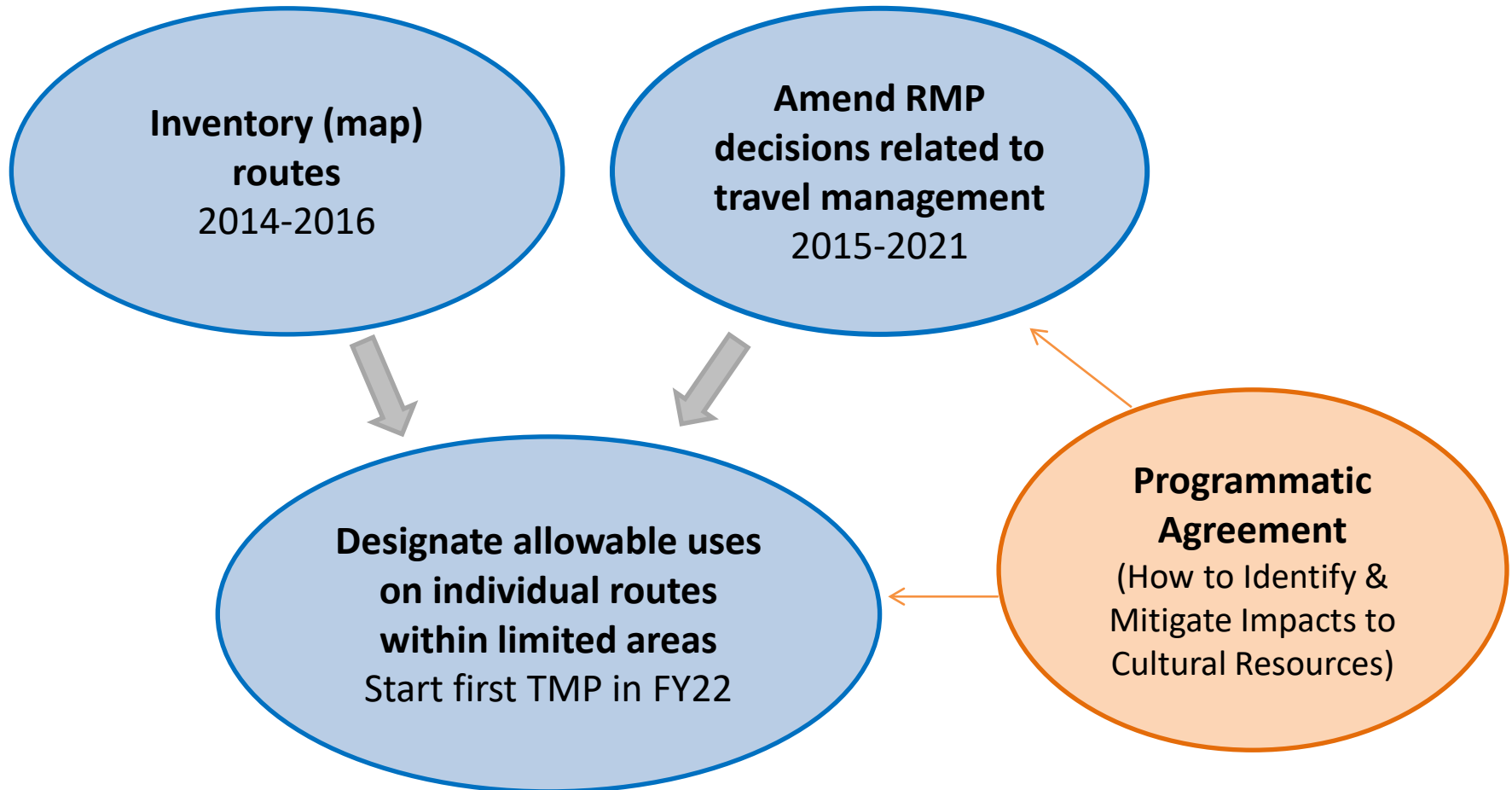


❖ Non-motorized, non-mechanized





WRFO Strategy for Travel Mgmt Planning





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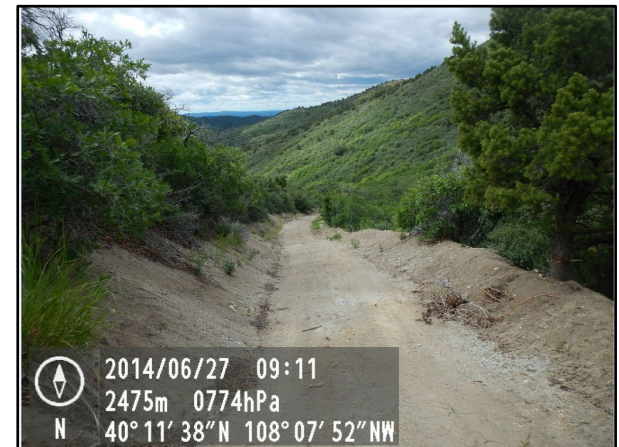


Travel Route Inventory



Travel Route Inventory

- Conducted over three years (2014-2016)
- Provided opportunities for public review
- 4,516 miles of routes on BLM land with 9,675 geo-referenced photos
- Notes on surface type, route width, construction method, use class (4wd), use level, and public access
- “Existing routes” in Travel RMPA = Routes in 2014-2016 Inventory





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Travel RMPA



Top 5 Things to Know About the WRFO Travel RMPA

1. Motorized vehicles and bikes/E-bikes required to stay on designated routes
2. Vehicles allowed (only) to pull off route to park
3. Both motorized vehicles and bikes are included in route density estimates
4. Non-motorized areas mostly overlap with areas already restricted for oil and gas development (ROW exclusion/avoidance areas and NSO/CSU)
5. Includes additional designation criteria to guide route designations (consistent approach among TMPs)



Public Involvement

- Scoping (NOI in October 2015)
- Public & RAC Subgroup Review of Prelim. Alts (August 2016)
- Public Review of Draft RMPA/EA and FONSI (August 2018)
- BLM Responds to Comments & Develops Proposed RMPA
 - Cooperating Agency Review of Proposed RMPA (May 2019)
- Proposed RMPA/EA and FONSI
 - 30-day Public Protest Period (July 2019)
 - 60-day Governor's Consistency Review
- Issue Decision Record/RMP Amendment (June 2021)



NW RAC Subgroup

Subgroup assisted in evaluation of the preliminary alternatives.

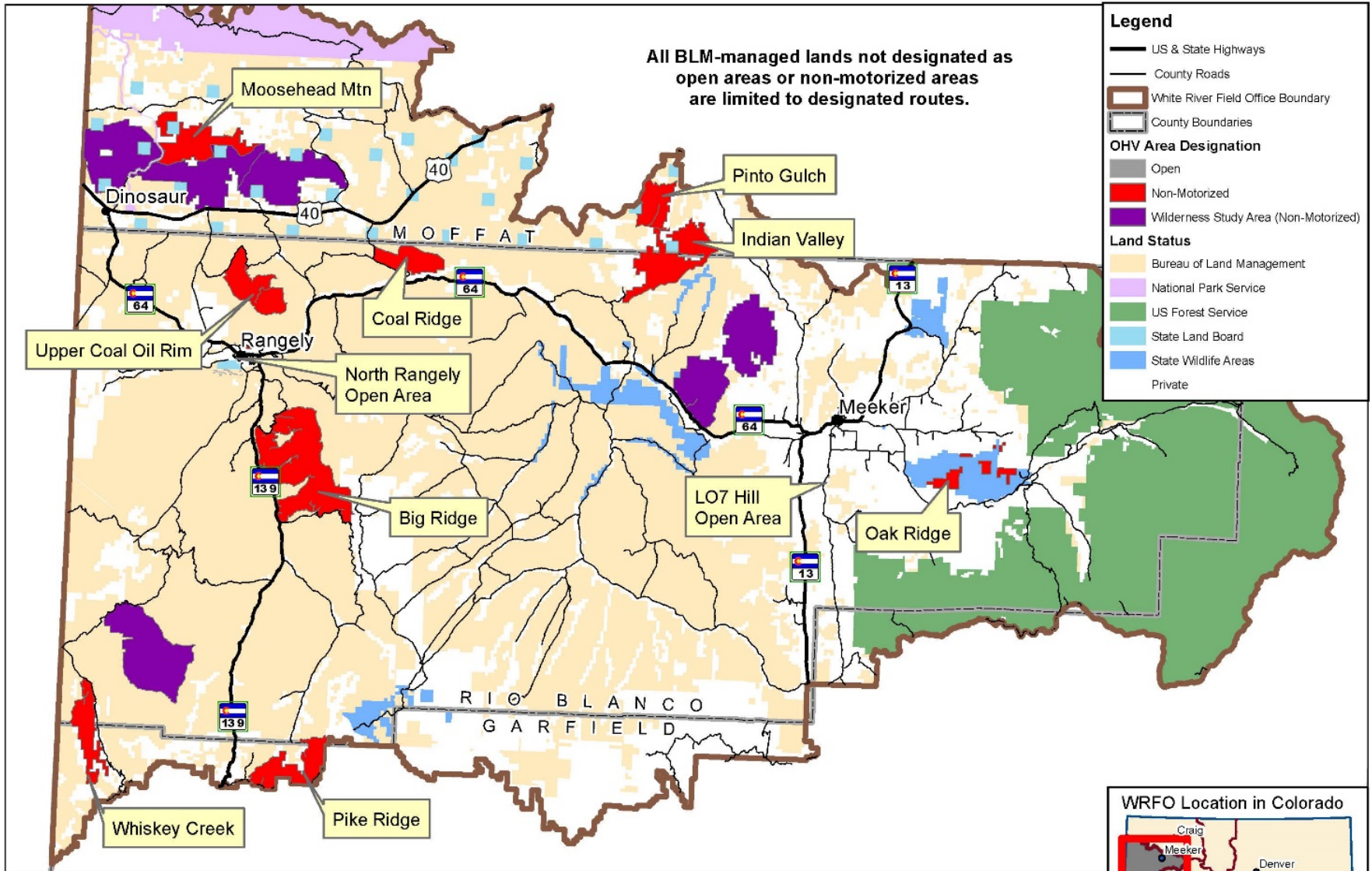
User Group/Interest	Category	Name	Agency/Group	Town
Livestock Grazing Permittee	1	Jerry Oldland	N/A	Rifle, CO
Oil & Gas	1	Annette Garrigues	Williams	Parachute, CO
Motorized (OHV)	1	Alvin Jones	Wagon Wheel OHV Club	Meeker, CO
Motorized (OHV)	1	Brad Casto	N/A	Rangely, CO
Motorized (OHV)	1	David Bray	Yampa Valley Trail Riders	Craig, CO
Special Recreation Permit Holder (Outfitter)	1	Monty Elder	Rim Rock Outfitters	Rangely, CO
Wilderness/Roadless Areas	2	Soren Jespersen	The Wilderness Society	Craig, CO
Sportsmen (Hunters/Anglers)	2	Nick Payne	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	Denver, CO
Sportsmen (Anglers)	2	Aaron Kindle	Trout Unlimited	Denver, CO
Environment/Wildlife	2	Sasha Nelson	Conservation Colorado	Craig, CO
Non-Motorized (Hiker/Biker)	2	Roy Wedding	N/A	Meeker, CO
Non-Motorized (Hiker/Biker)	2	Don Peach	N/A	Rangely, CO
Equestrian	2	Diane Mobley	White River Riders Saddle Club	Meeker, CO

OHV Area Designations (Motorized)

All BLM-managed lands not designated as open areas or non-motorized areas are limited to designated routes.

Legend

- US & State Highways
- County Roads
- White River Field Office Boundary
- County Boundaries
- OHV Area Designation**
 - Open
 - Non-Motorized
 - Wilderness Study Area (Non-Motorized)
- Land Status**
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - US Forest Service
 - State Land Board
 - State Wildlife Areas
 - Private



0 5 10 Miles



BLM - White River Field Office
220 E. Market St.
Meeker, CO 81641

Map by: HS 9/2019

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WRFO Location in Colorado





Why use “non-motorized” terminology?

- A “closed area” is defined as “an area where off-road vehicle use is prohibited” (43 CFR 8340.05-(h))
- “Non-motorized” avoids confusion with the public that BLM-managed public lands areas are closed to all uses (allowed to hike, bike, horseback ride, etc)
- Many local State Wildlife Areas are “*closed to all public use*” (seasonally)
 - Jensen, Oak Ridge, Colorow Mtn, and Bitterbrush SWAs





Non-Motorized Areas

- Provide 9 large areas (>3,000 acres) for non-motorized hunting
- Displaying these areas on a map makes it easy for those members of the public looking for this experience to plan where to go
- Closure of routes accessible by the public (WRFO):
 - Six areas: No new route closures
 - Pinto Gulch, Coal Ridge, Upper Coal Oil Rim: Total of ~15 miles closed (out of ~4,500 miles of BLM routes)



Open Areas for Unique Experiences

LO7 Hill
(Future Skills Course)



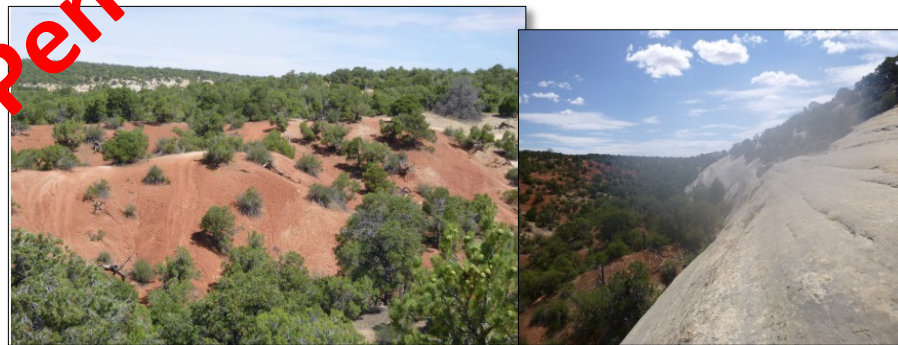
North Rangely
(Hill Climb)



Rock Crawling Park



North Dinosaur
(Diverse Terrain)



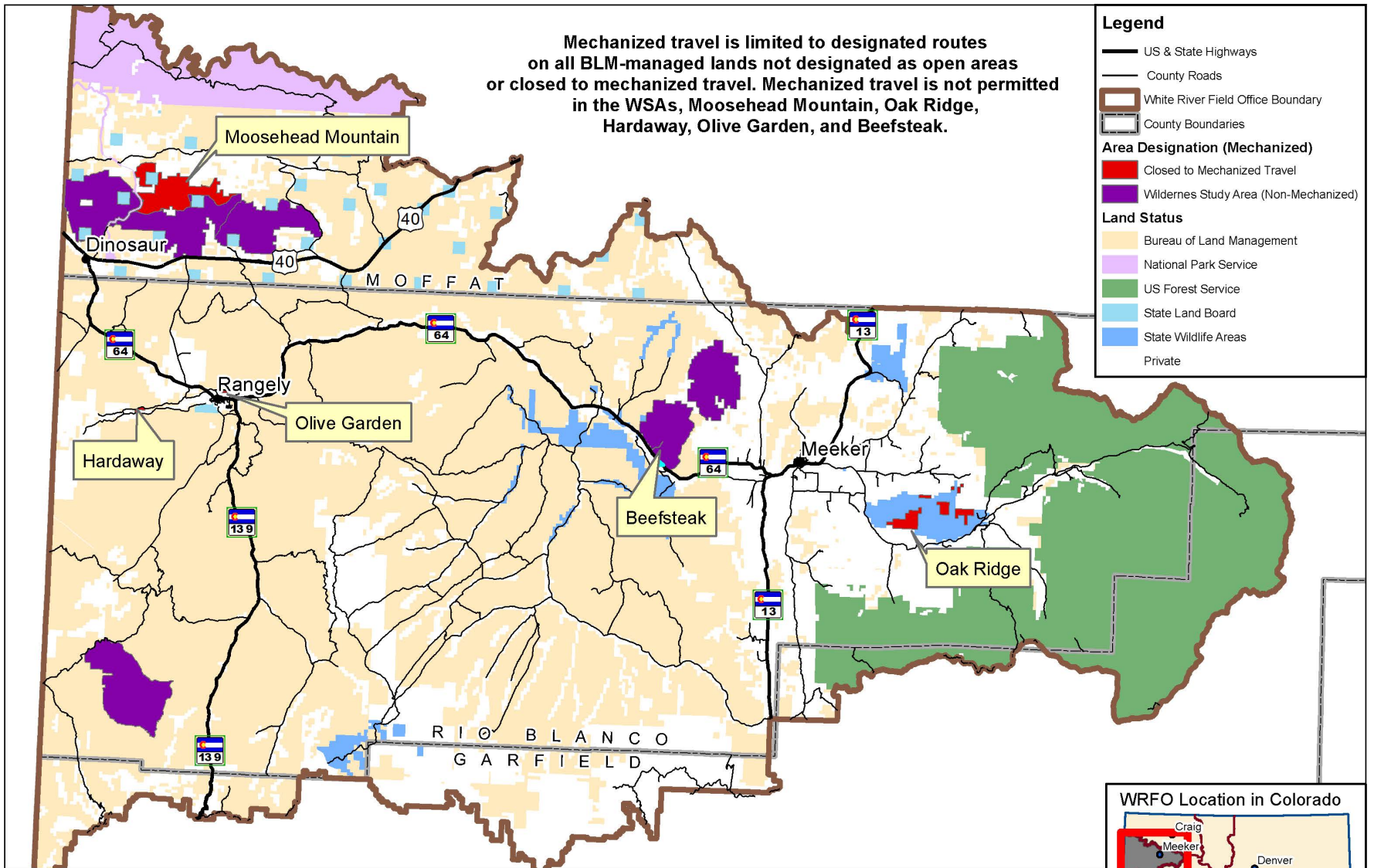
Pending Cultural Surveys

Area Designations (Mechanized Travel)

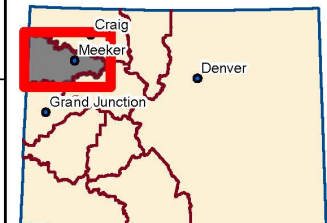
Mechanized travel is limited to designated routes on all BLM-managed lands not designated as open areas or closed to mechanized travel. Mechanized travel is not permitted in the WSAs, Moosehead Mountain, Oak Ridge, Hardaway, Olive Garden, and Beefsteak.

Legend

- US & State Highways
- County Roads
- White River Field Office Boundary
- County Boundaries
- Area Designation (Mechanized)**
 - Closed to Mechanized Travel
 - Wilderness Study Area (Non-Mechanized)
- Land Status**
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - US Forest Service
 - State Land Board
 - State Wildlife Areas
 - Private



WRFO Location in Colorado



0 5 10 Miles



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220 E. Market St.
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Map by: HS 10/20/2019

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Over-the-Snow Motorized Travel

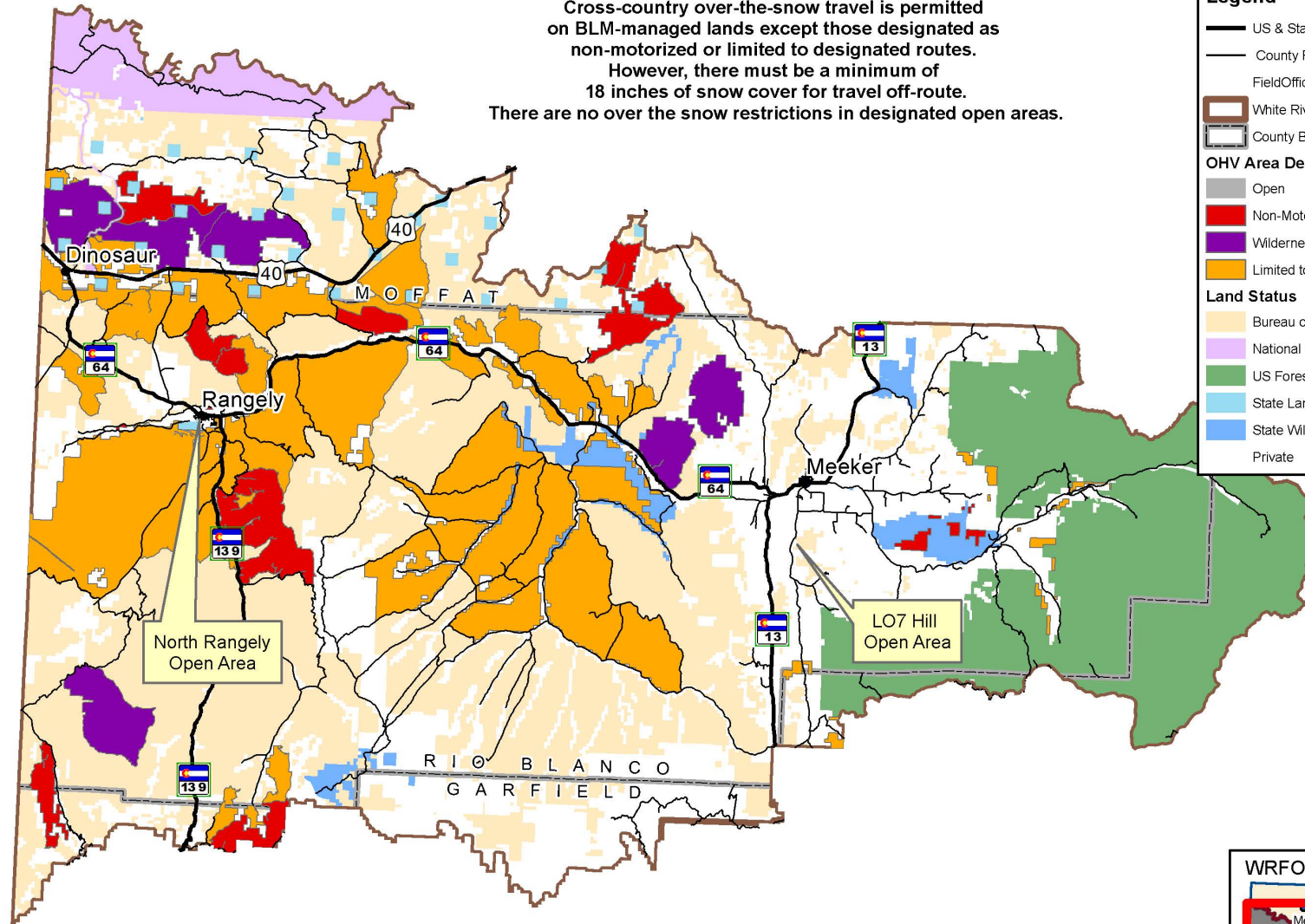
- Non-motorized areas (year-round)
- Limited to designated routes
 - ❖ Big game severe winter range
 - ❖ Canada lynx habitat (Threatened Species under ESA)
 - ❖ Some lands with wilderness characteristics (solitude)
- Cross-country travel = minimum of 18 inches of snow cover
 - ❖ No snow limit for travel on routes
 - ❖ Protects sensitive resources (such as cultural sites and special status plants) from inadvertent damage

OHV Area Designations (Motorized Over-the-Snow)

Cross-country over-the-snow travel is permitted on BLM-managed lands except those designated as non-motorized or limited to designated routes. However, there must be a minimum of 18 inches of snow cover for travel off-route. There are no over the snow restrictions in designated open areas.

Legend

- US & State Highways
- County Roads
- FieldOffice_Mask
- White River Field Office Boundary
- County Boundaries
- OHV Area Designations (Over-the-Snow)**
 - Open
 - Non-Motorized
 - Wilderness Study Area (Non-Motorized)
 - Limited to Designated Routes
- Land Status**
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - US Forest Service
 - State Land Board
 - State Wildlife Areas
 - Private



0 5 10 Miles

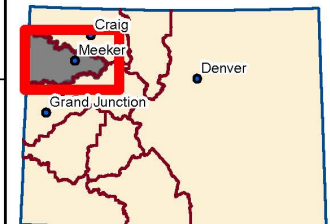


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Map by: HS 12/30/2019

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WRFO Location in Colorado





Route Density

- Concept in the 1997 RMP but never implemented because route-by-route planning wasn't completed
- Reduce “regulations” in the 2021 RMPA by simplifying implementation
 - ❖ Analysis tool and not an “allocation”
 - ❖ Focus only on big game (drop overlapping management for ferret management areas and East Douglas Creek ACEC)
 - ❖ Use the same simplified big game seasonal range map as used in the 2015 Oil & Gas RMPA (no overlapping ranges)
 - ❖ Not applied in the Rangely Oil Field



Route Density

- Use route density to avoid seasonal area closures
 - ❖ Provides for public access and recreation
 - ❖ Reduces impacts to big game (sensitive times of the year)
- Options for lowering route density include: closing routes, limiting to administrative use, or seasonally closing individual routes during sensitive times of the year

Current Route Density Estimates (Miles/Square Mile)			
GMU	Summer Range	Severe Winter Range	General Winter Range and Winter Concentration Areas
10	1.4	3.1	2.1
11	2.3	2.3	1.7
21	1.8	2.4	2.0
22	2.8	2.5	2.1
Target	1.5	1.5	2.5



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Cultural Resources



Programmatic Agreement (PA)

- WRFO has over 700 sites traversed by routes and over 3,300 sites within 100 meters of a route
- Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act requires consultation when BLM actions may affect historic properties
- Historic Properties = Eligible for listing on National Register of Historic Places
- Programmatic Agreements
 - ❖ Complex projects or phased undertakings
 - ❖ Effects cannot be predicted in advance
 - ❖ PA identifies processes to determine effects and to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse effects to historic properties



Colorado Travel Mgmt PA

Consulting Parties

- Signatories:
 - BLM Field Offices: WRFO, Little Snake, Tres Rios, Uncompahgre
 - ACHP
 - SHPO
- Invited Signatories:
 - Tribal Government: 27 Federally recognized Indian tribes
- Invited Concurring Parties:
 - Federal and State Government: CPW, NPS, U.S. Forest Service
 - Local Government: 15 counties and towns
 - Other: 11 organizations

Consulting Parties: Evaluate routes, mitigation options, and prioritization

Predictive Model Working Group: BLM, SHPO, Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists, Southern Ute Indian Tribe



Identification of Cultural Resources

Historic

- 100% of historic sites identified through records search (GLO, topo quads, archival data)

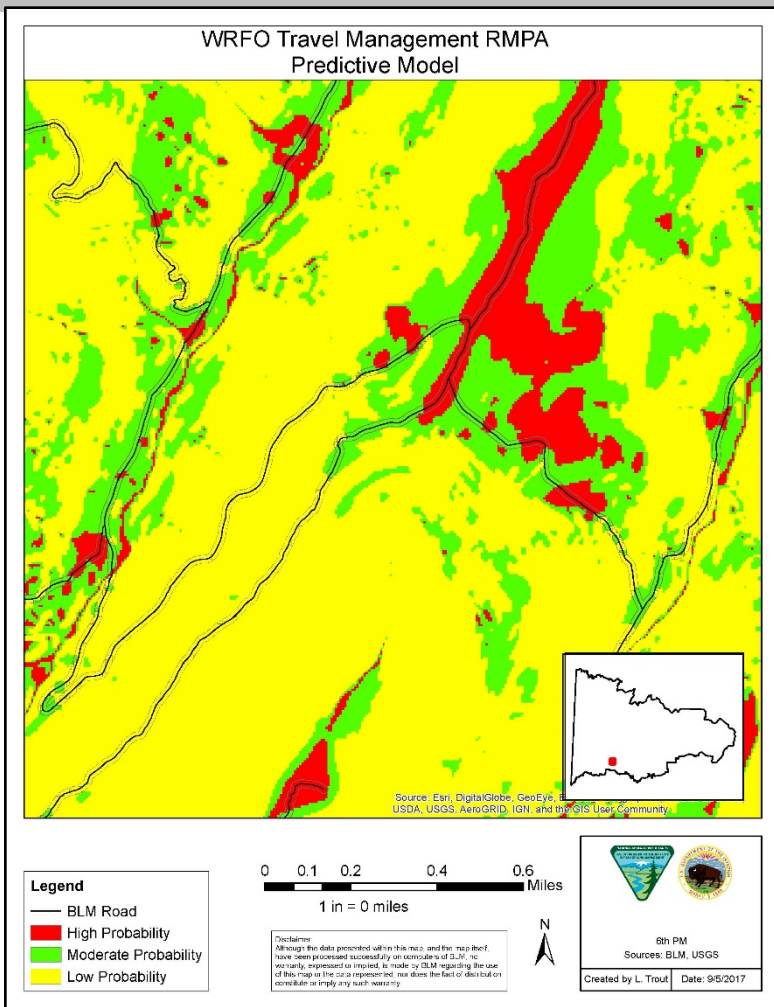
Prehistoric

- Predictive model to identify which areas are high, medium, or low probability for cultural resources
- Model inputs include:
 - ❖ Distance to water
 - ❖ Elevation
 - ❖ Slope & Aspect
 - ❖ Vegetation & Soils

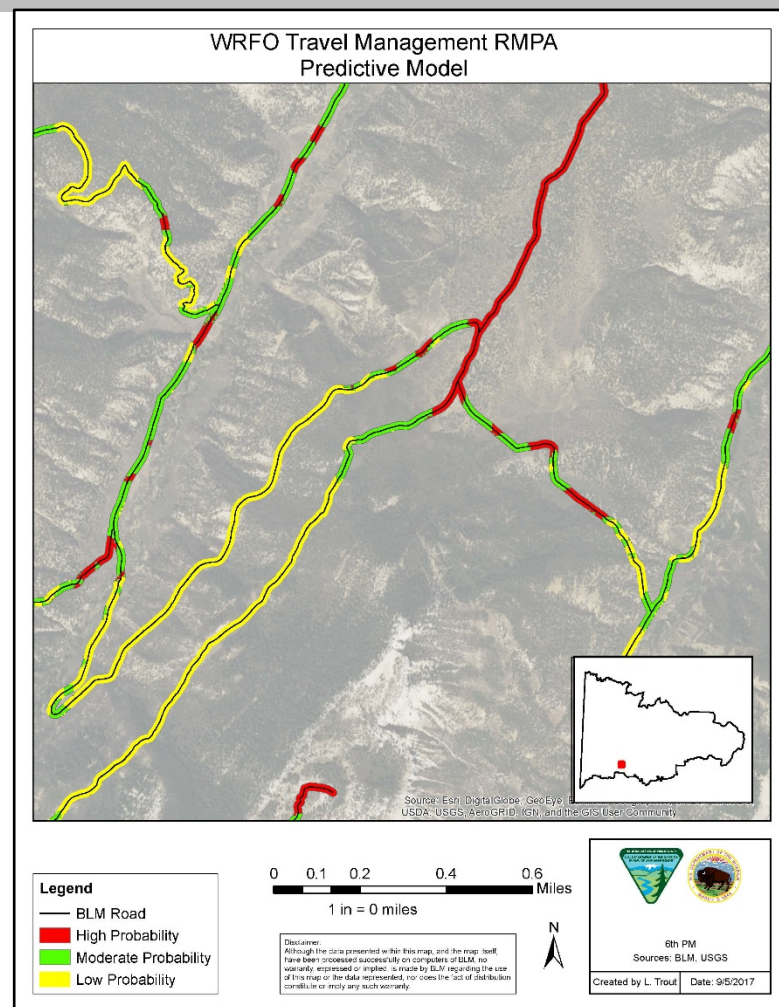


Predictive Model

High, Med, Low Areas



Survey 100ft Corridor





Survey Requirements for Prehistoric Cultural Resources

- 100% of routes in high probability areas
- 10% of routes in medium or low probability areas
- Percentage of routes surveyed will vary by TMA

Category	Acres in TMA 2 (100ft Routes)	Percent Surveyed	Total Survey Acres
Low Probability	294	10%	29
Medium Probability	1,808	10%	181
High Probability	2,486	100%	2,486
Total	4,588	59%	2,696

Surveys to be completed within 10 yrs of PA or TMPs



Example Mitigation Options

- Access/Route Designation
 - ❖ Close or Re-route
 - ❖ Limit Vehicle Type or Season of Use
- Data Recovery or Site Recording
- Periodic Monitoring
- Physical Barriers (Fences, Boulders)
- Public Education
 - ❖ Responsible Trail Use
 - ❖ Vandalism/Looting
- Site Stabilization or Erosion Control



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Travel Management Plans



Strategy to Complete Travel Management Plans

Cultural Surveys ➡ NEPA (Contractor) ➡ Implementation

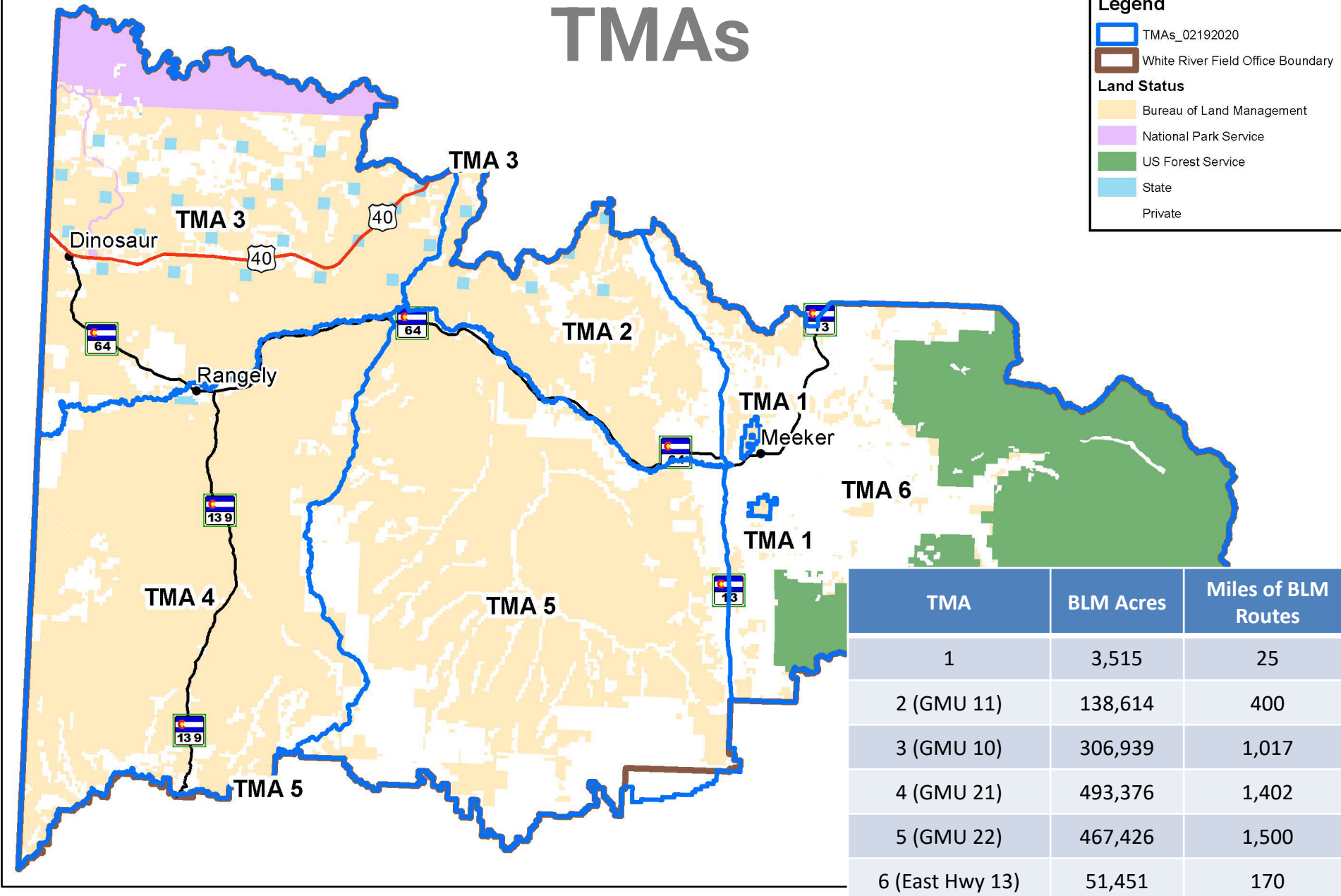
- Divide 1.5 million-acre WRFO into 6 TMAs
 - ❖ Boundaries based mostly on GMUs (big game route density)
- Prioritize areas associated with open areas or trail systems
 - ❖ LO7 Hill and Anderson Gulch (TMA 1)
 - ❖ Rangely Rock Crawling Park Open Area & Associated Routes
- Issue decisions on North Dinosaur and Rangely Rock Crawling Park open areas in conjunction with or prior to associated TMPs



TMA

Legend

- TMA_s_02192020
- White River Field Office Boundary
- Land Status**
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - US Forest Service
 - State
 - Private



TMA	BLM Acres	Miles of BLM Routes
1	3,515	25
2 (GMU 11)	138,614	400
3 (GMU 10)	306,939	1,017
4 (GMU 21)	493,376	1,402
5 (GMU 22)	467,426	1,500
6 (East Hwy 13)	51,451	170



Schedule for Specific Areas

Component	Cultural Surveys	NEPA	Implementation
North Rangely Open Area	Complete	Complete	In progress
LO7 Hill Open Area	Complete	Complete	In progress
Rangely Rock Crawling Park Open Area	615 acres (contracted - July 2022)	Priority #2	TBD
North Dinosaur Open Area	150 acres (need funding - 2022)	#4 (Concurrent with TMA 3)	TBD
TMA 1 – LO7 Hill and Anderson Gulch	Complete	Priority #1	TBD
TMA 2 (GMU 11)	2,696 acres (contracted - July 2022)	Priority #3	TBD
TMA 3 (GMU 10)	3,289 acres (contracted – Dec 2022)	Priority #4	TBD
TMA 4 (GMU 21)	Spring 2023 (mostly funded)	Priority #5	TBD
TMA 5 (GMU 22)	TBD	Priority #6	TBD
TMA 6 (East Hwy 13)	TBD	Priority #7	TBD



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Questions?



Tests of the Model in WRFO

- Model Tests Conducted in TMA 4
 - High concentration of sites (Dragon Road, Canyon Pintado NHD)
- **Test #1: Threshold Analysis**
 - Used ~1,200 known cultural sites to “test” the model
 - Results:
 - 70% in high probability
 - 23% in medium probability
 - 7% in low probability
- **Test #2: Validation Survey (June 2021)**
 - 640-acre survey in an area never surveyed
 - Equal distribution of low, med, high probability areas within the block
 - Results: Inconclusive (only found four isolated finds)



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Celebrating 75 Years of the BLM

Reimagine Your Public Lands – 245 Million Acres of Possibilities

Closing Remarks

