



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

# 2025 Briefing Book

Colorado





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# BLM Colorado Facts

**8.3 million** BLM surface acres in Colorado • **27.1 million** BLM subsurface mineral acres in Colorado

## Energy



8,400 Producing Federal Oil & Gas Wells  
2,856 Producing Federal Oil & Gas Leases  
1.5M Producing Oil & Gas Acres  
6 Producing Coal Mines

## Recreation



606 Recreational Sites (45 are in the AHRA, managed jointly with CPW)  
7 Colorado Scenic & Historical Byways  
48 Special Recreation Management Areas  
3 Blue Ribbon Fisheries  
3 Fourteen-thousand-foot peaks

## National Conservation Lands: 1.2M acres



2 National Monuments  
3 National Conservation Areas  
5 Wilderness Areas  
54 Wilderness Study Areas  
1 National Historic Trail  
1 National Scenic Trail  
2 Congressionally designated Management Areas

## Heritage & Special Places



5 National Historic Landmarks  
1 National Historic District  
41 National Register of Historic Places Listings  
56,333 Cultural Resource Sites  
92 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern  
2 National Natural Landmarks

## Resources



5 million acres of Forest and Woodlands  
670 Fish and Wildlife Species  
38 Endangered, Threatened, & Candidate Species  
129 BLM Sensitive Species  
7.9 million acres of Small Game Habitat  
7 million acres of Big Game Habitat  
3 Wild Horse Herd Management Areas  
1 Wild Horse Range  
7.8 million acres Grazed by Livestock

## BLM HISTORY

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) roots go back to the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. These laws allowed for the survey, sale, orderly settlement, and governance of the original 13 colonies ceded to the federal government after the War of Independence. The geographer of the United States surveyed and numbered public lands into six-mile square townships.

As the United States acquired additional lands from Spain, France, and other countries, Congress directed the lands be explored, surveyed, and made available for settlement. In 1812, Congress established the General Land Office in the Department of the Treasury to oversee these federal lands. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed and the nation's land base expanded further west, Congress encouraged settlement by enacting a wide variety of laws, including the Homestead Act of 1862 and the Mining Law of 1872. Except for the Mining Law of 1872 and the Desert Land Act of 1877 (which was amended), all have since been repealed or superseded by other statutes.

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century marked a shift in federal land management priorities with the creation of the first national parks, forests, and national wildlife refuges. By withdrawing these lands from settlement, Congress amended the policy goals served by public lands and recognized the lands should be held in public ownership for other resource values.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Congress directed the Executive Branch to manage activities on the remaining public lands. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 allowed leasing, exploration, and production of selected commodities such as coal, oil, gas, and sodium on public lands. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 established the U.S. Grazing Service to manage the public rangelands, while the Oregon and California Act of 1937 required sustained yield management of the timberlands in western Oregon.

In 1946, the U.S. Grazing Service merged with the General Land Office to form the BLM within the Department of the Interior. When the BLM was created, there were more than 2,000 unrelated and often conflicting laws for managing the public lands. The BLM had no unified legislative mandate until Congress enacted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. In FLPMA, Congress declared BLM lands would remain in public ownership. Congress gave the BLM the term "multiple use management," defined

as "management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people."

## PUBLIC LAND STEWARDSHIP

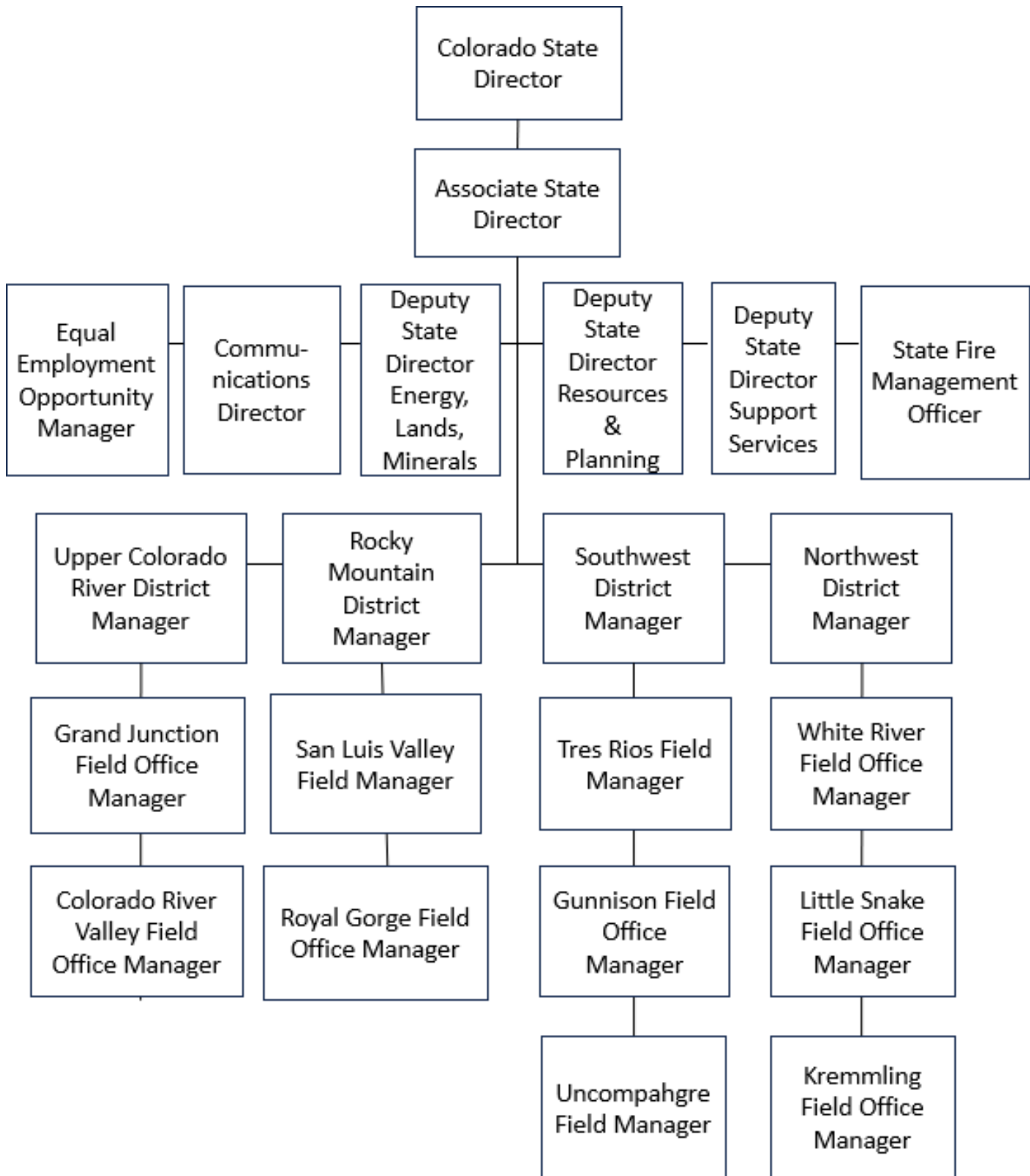
The BLM manages more than 8.3 million acres of public lands and more than 27 million acres of mineral estate in Colorado - concentrated in the western part of the state. BLM lands in Colorado range from alpine tundra, colorful canyons, and mesas in the southwest, to rolling sage covered hills in the northwest.

The public owns more than one-third of Colorado. BLM Colorado adheres to multiple-use management, managing public lands for both commercial and public uses based on sound science. The economic health of many Colorado communities is supported by ranching, energy development and tourism associated with public lands. Public lands offer recreational opportunities, cultural resources, resource and energy potential, and vast open spaces. Colorado's lands produce vast amounts of coal, oil, and natural gas to help meet the nation's energy needs.

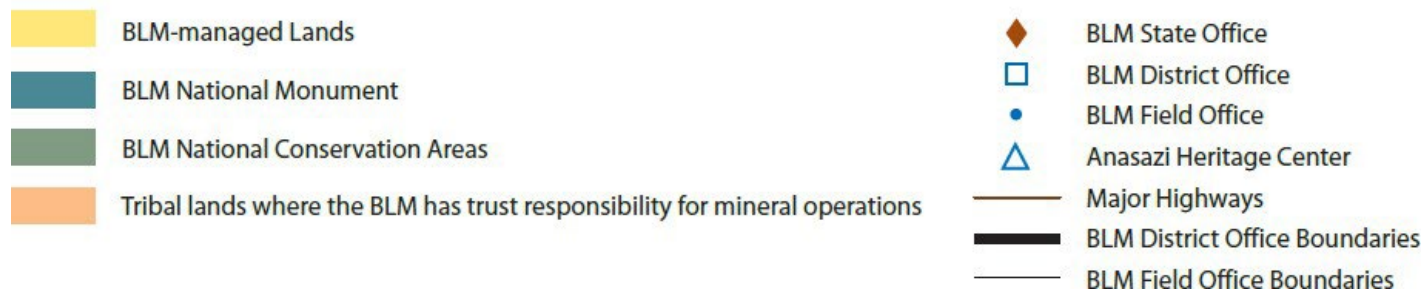
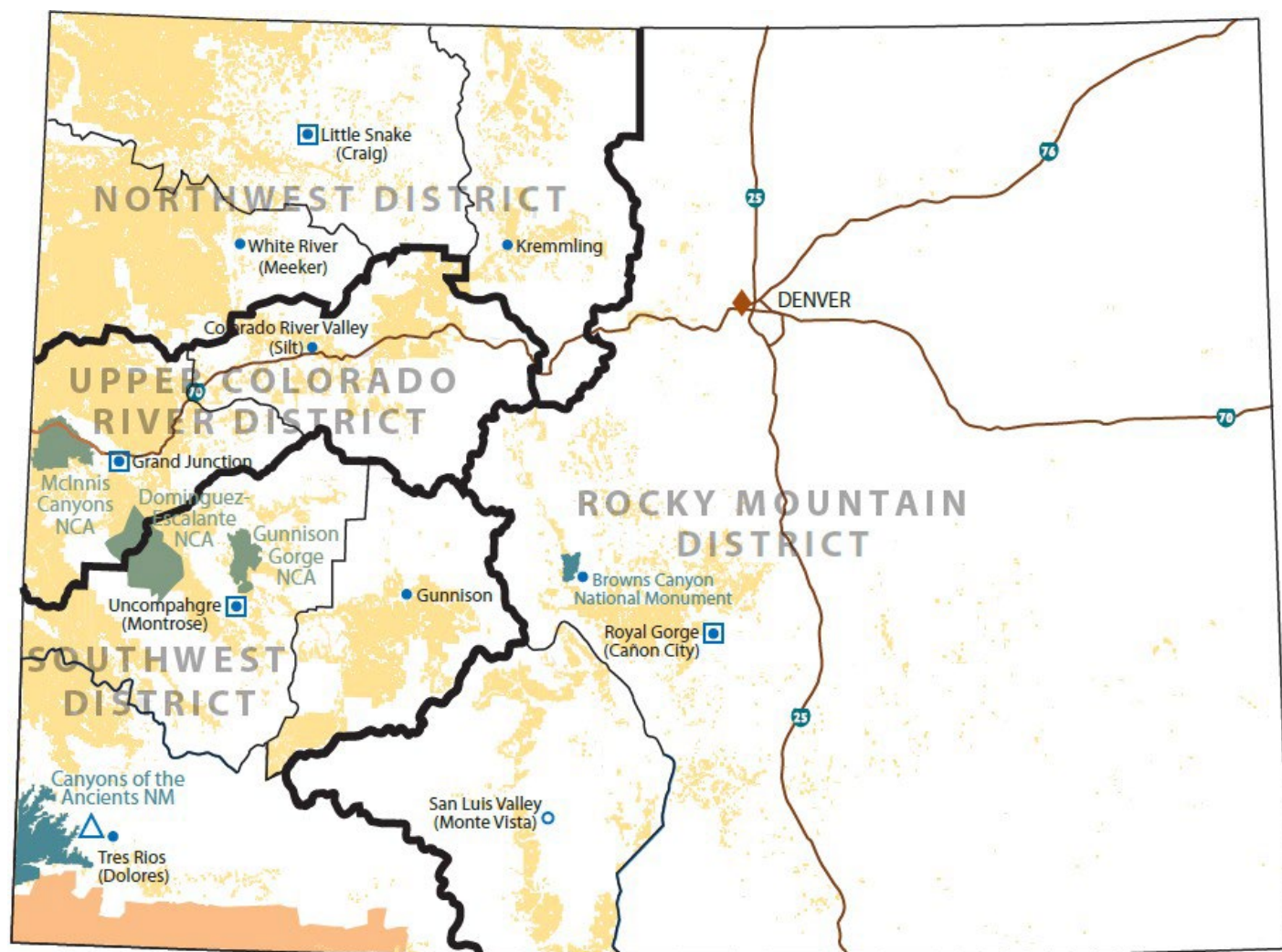
## FEDERAL LANDS AND MINERALS

Minerals on public lands include surface and associated federal mineral estate acreages, (the major portion of the BLM acreage), and surface-only (minerals owned by third parties). The federal split estate mineral acreages underlying non-federal surfaces are collected separately and include minerals transferred to the Department of the Interior jurisdiction from the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation. ("All Minerals" reserved in patents issued under the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916 comprise the major portion of this "split estate" acreage). Both compilations derive from lot-by-lot, 40-by-40, sections, townships, and county compilations of BLM-administered lands maintained for annual statistical report purposes and for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) annual reports (not all BLM lands are eligible for PILT payments). These acreages are updated when public lands/minerals are sold, exchanged, or acquired by purchase, donation, etc. Forest Service ownership acreages derives from their Forest-by-Forest, county-by-county annual statistical report. Some of these acreages are BLM estimates as some BLM-administrative boundaries within the forests do not have common boundaries with Ranger District or other Forest Service Management Units. Forest Service sales, exchanges, and acquisitions acreages are updated as information becomes available.

# BLM Colorado Organization Chart



# BLM Colorado Offices





# Colorado State Office

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www.blm.gov/colorado

## RECREATION

Recreation areas include National Conservation Lands, Special Recreation Management Areas, rivers, cultural heritage and natural resource attractions, off-highway vehicle areas, scenic byways, watchable wildlife areas, and places to hunt and fish. Recreation opportunities include heritage touring, sightseeing, rafting, canoeing, kayaking, climbing, mountain biking, hiking, OHV driving, fishing, camping, hunting, and skiing. Annually, BLM Colorado issues about 42,000 recreation use permits, and administers over 800 special recreation permits. The abundance and diversity of recreational opportunities and stunning landscapes on Colorado's public lands are a critical component of Colorado's outdoor heritage in numerous rural communities across the state and have helped to establish outdoor recreation as a critical component of Colorado's economic vitality.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The BLM's National Conservation Lands highlight some of the West's most spectacular public lands. These areas conserve, protect, and restore nationally significant landscapes recognized for their cultural, ecological, and scientific values. National Conservation Lands include national conservation areas, national monuments, national historic and scenic trails, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas and wilderness study areas. Colorado's National Conservation Land areas encompass more than one million acres — about one eighth of all BLM-managed land in the state.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Public lands in Colorado include archaeological, historical, and Native American traditional sites. Colorado's first inhabitants roamed the plains and mountains around 13,000 B.C. Hunter-gatherers were prominent across the landscape. After A.D. 150 farming and populations increased. The people of the Colorado Plateau in southwest Colorado followed the Ancestral Puebloan way of life, with intensive farming practices and multistory masonry pueblos. This region was abandoned in the late A.D. 1200s. By A.D. 1400, sparse bands of hunters and gatherers traveled through central-western and northwestern Colorado including the Numic-speaking Ute, Paiute, and Shoshone Tribes. Athapascan speakers, modern-day descendants of the Navajos and Apaches, lived in the Plains, followed by the Comanche, Arapahoe, and Cheyenne Tribes.

The Spanish first entered Colorado between 1664 -1689. In the early 1800s, fur trappers and traders worked along

the Arkansas and Platte Rivers. Following the Mexican War in 1848, the area became American territory. The discovery of gold in the Pikes Peak area spawned a gold rush in 1859, which brought the first large Euro-American population to settle in Colorado. Gold and silver mining expanded significantly. After the Homestead Act of 1862, agricultural settlement expanded, creating a demand for water. Cattle ranching became a significant industry in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mining continued to be a prominent industry into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Tourism became increasingly important and remains so today.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

BLM Colorado public lands have several internationally known paleontological sites including the Garden Park Fossil Area, one of the most significant localities for dinosaurs in the world, and the Kremmling Cretaceous Ammonite Locality, one of the largest concentrations of marine fossils in North America.

## WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

BLM Colorado's public lands provide habitat for about 670 species of fish and wildlife and 129 special status plants and animals, including 24 threatened and 14 endangered species. Approximately 3,352 species of plants are found in Colorado. Colorado is home to several invertebrates, including mollusks and crustaceans. BLM Colorado's goal is to maintain, enhance, and restore habitat to ensure the diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife species on public land. BLM Colorado's public lands are home to some of the nation's best fishing, with four gold medal trout waters and three blue ribbon waters. Public lands are also home to North America's largest elk herd and other big game species.

## WILD HORSES & BURROS

In 1971, Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act to protect and manage wild horses and burros on public lands. BLM Colorado manages three wild horse herd management areas: Piceance/East Douglas, Sand Wash Basin, and Spring Creek Basin; and one wild horse range: Little Book Cliffs. About 300 wild horses and burros are adopted each year in Colorado. Wild horses and burros are available through Mustang Heritage's Trainer Incentive Program (TIP), offered for adoption at the Cañon City Wild Horse Facility and occasionally in other areas of the state.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The BLM authorizes livestock grazing on approximately 7.8 million acres within Colorado. These lands support livestock management by more than 1,500 ranching operations on about 2,000 separate grazing allotments.

## AQUATIC RESOURCES

The BLM assesses and restores water quality conditions and manages water resources on public lands. Clean and adequate supplies of water promote healthy watersheds, provide habitat for fish and wildlife, maintain drinking water sources, sustain recreational use of surface water, and maintain healthy plant communities. BLM Colorado secures instream flow protection and water rights through the Colorado Water Conservation Board. BLM Colorado maintains water rights, water acquisitions, water rights-of-way, and water facilities. Three thousand miles of streams flow perennially on BLM-managed lands. BLM manages about 41,000 acres of lakes, ponds, and wetlands.

## AIR RESOURCES

BLM ensures all activities it conducts or authorizes comply with the Clean Air Act and other pollution control laws and regulations. BLM Colorado tracks regional emissions inventories, oil and gas development rates and production information, and air pollutant monitoring data. BLM Colorado is implementing the Comprehensive Air Resources Protection Protocol (CARPP), a document that identifies an adaptive strategy for proactively analyzing and protecting air resources. BLM Colorado funds the Colorado Air Resources Management Modeling Study (CARMMS) to predict air quality impacts and changing conditions from future energy development in the state. The CARMMS studies the impacts of oil, gas and mineral development by modeling air pollution, regional ozone formation, and air quality impacts from emissions.

## WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

Wildfire threats grow each year. From 2013-2022, BLM Colorado averaged 268 fires per year with an average of 30,343 acres of BLM land burned each year. During the same period, BLM CO completed an average of 23,100 acres per year of mechanical, chemical, prescribed fire and seeding treatments. The BLM integrates fuels management efforts with wildlife, forestry, range, and other programs to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness of treatments on the landscape. BLM has 16 community assistance recipients completing such work as supporting counties, fire protection districts, and non-profits with efforts to mitigate fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) complete wildfire protection plans, educating the public on wildfire prevention awareness, and providing financial

assistance for local fire training through grants or agreements. Adding additional recipients in FY24. There are four District fire programs in BLM Colorado: Northwest District Fire in Craig, Upper Colorado River District Fire in Grand Junction, Southwest District Fire in Montrose, and Rocky Mountain District Fire in Cañon City.

BLM Colorado hosts several fire suppression resources in the state during the fire season (May - September):

- 1 Interagency Hotshot Crew (20 people)
- 1 Wildland Fire Module (7-10 people)
- 7 Type-6 wildland fire engines
- 10 Type-4 wildland fire engines
- 1 Initial Attack Squad (5 people)
- 1 helicopter and staff for a 90-day contract
- 1 Large Air Tanker Base in Grand Junction
- 1 Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) reload base.
- A contingent of Great Basin Smokejumpers

## EMERGENCY STABILIZATION & BURNED AREA REHABILITATION

The Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation (ES&R) program focuses on mitigating wildland fires' impact on ecosystems and communities. ES&R includes rehabilitating burned landscapes, reseeding vegetation, protecting watershed quality, and preventing the spread of noxious weeds. On average, the BLM initiates ES&R treatments on six to ten fires annually. Colorado's extensive Wildland Urban Interface issues include invasive species, such as cheatgrass, and rugged terrain. ES&R actions involve aerial seeding, construction of temporary fences to prevent further damage, and soil stabilization.

## FORESTRY

BLM Colorado manages five million acres of forested land. More than 2.5 million acres are woodlands, dominated by pinyon pine, juniper and oak. The remaining forested acres consist of commercial tree species like ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine and Douglas fir. Wood products harvested include sawtimber, firewood, Christmas trees, post and poles, and biomass. Forested lands in Colorado tend to have low productivity rates, so management focus is to restore forest health conditions. BLM Colorado works cooperatively with the U.S. Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, and other partners to mitigate bark beetle-associated impacts and improve forest health.

## CADASTRAL SURVEY

The Cadastral Survey program is responsible for land surveys throughout Colorado, including a fiduciary trust responsibility on Indian lands, specifically the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Tribes. Cadastral surveying services support trespass identification, land exchanges and disposals, range allotment boundary identification, fuel hazard reduction, surveying of wilderness and congressionally designated area boundaries. Cadastral Survey is responsible for the



Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Dataset which depicts the location of BLM managed lands in the Corporate GIS. This depiction supports digital updates of Master Title Plats, oil and gas lease tracking, visual displays and updates for the 100K mapping. The Cadastral Survey program facilitates good management decisions by providing tribal and all Federal land management agencies with essential information on the location of ownership rights.

## LANDS & REALTY

The BLM's Lands and Realty Program manages a wide range of public land transactions, such as purchases, acquisitions, sales, exchanges, withdrawals, leases and permits, and right-of-way authorizations.

From enabling energy development to maintaining public land records, the lands and realty staff ensure that the public lands are working landscapes that are managed for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations. Our multiple-use mission enables us to continually facilitate commercial, recreational, and conservation opportunities on public lands.

Each year, thousands of people and companies apply to the BLM to obtain a right-of-way (ROW) grant on public land. A ROW is an authorization to use a specific piece of public land for a specific project, such as electric transmission lines, communication sites, roads, trails, fiber optic lines, canals, flumes, pipelines, and reservoirs. The BLM authorizes all ROW applications, at the authorized officer's discretion, as efficiently and economically as possible. Generally, a ROW is granted for a term appropriate for the life of the project.

Another important component of the BLM's land-management strategy is transfer of land ownership or land interests through purchases, donations, sales, exchanges and withdrawals. The BLM completes such transactions when they are in the public interest and consistent with publicly approved land-use plans. The BLM's land tenure activities improve management of natural resources through consolidation of federal, tribal, state and private lands; increase recreational opportunities and ensure public access to public lands; preserve open space and traditional landscapes; secure key property necessary to protect endangered species, promote biological diversity and preserve wildlife habitat and migration corridors; preserve archaeological, historical and paleontological resources; and implement specific acquisitions authorized by Congress.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Geothermal:** The BLM began issuing leases for geothermal development in 1974. In 2011, BLM's Royal Gorge Field Office offered the first geothermal lease in decades, leasing 800 acres in Chaffee County. In 2012, BLM Gunnison Field Office leased two parcels for

geothermal production totaling 8,353 acres. These three parcels are the only authorized geothermal leases on public lands in Colorado. In 2012, BLM released a final environmental assessment and proposed amendment to the 1991 BLM San Luis Resource Management Plan for geothermal energy leasing on BLM-managed lands.

**Solar:** In December 2024, BLM completed its "Utility-Scale Solar Energy Development PEID/RMPA" which updated policies, allocation areas, and mitigations for solar development across 11 states, including Colorado. BLM-Colorado has two Solar Energy Zones in San Luis Valley Field Office, one of which is leased. The BLM also has two applications for solar energy development in Grand Junction Field Office.

**Transmission:** Two major transmission lines with segments in NW Colorado are being constructed: TransWest Express, a 600kV DC project from Wyoming to Las Vegas, and Energy Gateway South, a 500kV AC project from Wyoming to Utah. In addition, BLM Field offices in Colorado have been actively working with all power companies on updating their existing overhead power line ROWs with approved vegetation management plans. Vegetation management methods (i.e. brushing, trimming, felling hazard trees) are being utilized to decrease wildland fire risk on public lands.

## FLUID MINERALS

In Fiscal Year 2024, Colorado received about \$165 million from royalties, rentals, and bonus bid payments for all federal oil and gas minerals. Oil and natural gas development from federal minerals on public lands is an important economic driver for Colorado's economy and tied to more than 25,000 jobs. BLM Colorado hosts up to four lease sales per year. The State of Colorado receives 49 percent of the proceeds of each lease sale. The BLM has a regulatory framework to guide leasing and development mandated by laws like the FLPMA, Mineral Leasing Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and Endangered Species Act. In 2018, the BLM implemented oil and gas leasing reform to simplify and streamline the leasing process, expedite the offering of lands for lease, and to ensure quarterly oil and gas lease sales are consistently held in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act, Executive Order 13783, and Secretary Order 3354.

## SOLID MINERALS

Colorado is one of the major solid mineral producing states in the country. Solid mineral production on BLM land in Colorado involves three distinct mineral categories: locatable, leasable, and saleable. Locatable minerals include gold, silver, gypsum (for drywall production), and uranium. Leasable minerals include coal, potash, and sodium. There are six producing coal mines in the state. Saleable minerals in Colorado include limestone, rip-rap, cut stone, moss rock, boulders, clay, construction aggregate and road base material. These

construction and landscaping materials are available through sales at fair market value, or through free use permits to local, county, state agencies and nonprofit organizations.

## ABANDONED MINE LANDS/ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

The Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) and Hazardous Materials Management (Hazmat) program closes or secures hazardous mine openings and cleans up contaminated sites on BLM-managed lands. Most work is done near the mining districts of the Upper Animas River, the Upper Arkansas River, Lake Fork of the Gunnison River, and the Colorado Plateau. The program maintains an inventory of known sites on BLM-managed land. Most of the sites are landfills and abandoned hard rock mines but abandoned uranium mines have grown by more than 200 per year since 2011. The program closes approximately 100 unsafe features annually and has completed 25 cleanup actions per the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). As of 2020, the BLM's AML inventory in Colorado contains more than 17,000 features. Nearly 3,000 features have been secured for public safety, remediated, or no action is required.

## OIL SHALE

Oil shale lands managed by BLM Colorado are part of the largest known concentration in the world - the Green River Formation. More than 70 percent of the formation is on public lands in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates the formation holds the equivalent of 800 billion barrels of recoverable oil.

## VETERANS GREEN CORPS

Veterans Green Corps empowers veterans to transition to civilian life by leveraging their leadership experience to meet conservation needs on public lands. BLM Colorado employs crews of trained veterans to work on outdoor-conservation projects on public lands. In 2018, the program supported eight weeks of crew work on a variety of Veterans Green Corps conservation projects.

## DIVERSITY INTERNSHIP PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Colorado Youth Corps Association administers the Diversity Internship Partnership Program with accredited Colorado youth corps using BLM funding. In 2021, BLM Colorado provided job opportunities for more than 620 individual young adults, using crew work weeks and 76 internships statewide. In 2021, youth provided 13,050 hours of labor.

## VOLUNTEERS

The thousands of hours volunteers donate each year make it possible for the BLM Colorado to accomplish unfunded conservation work while developing a local conservation ethic. In 2021, about 2,718 volunteers statewide donated about 99,475 hours at an estimated value of \$2.7 million.

# Colorado State Office Leadership



**Doug Vilsack**, State Director, [BLM\\_CO\\_StateDirector@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CO_StateDirector@blm.gov)

Doug has over 15 years' experience in natural resources and energy fields, including public, private, and non-profit positions. Doug previously worked at Colorado's Department of Natural Resources as Assistant Director. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resource management from Colorado College and a law degree from the University of Colorado Boulder.



**Brian St George**, Associate State Director, [BLM\\_CO\\_StateDirector@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CO_StateDirector@blm.gov)

St George, a 24-year BLM veteran, has been acting in the position since June 2024. Prior to rejoining BLM Colorado, he served as Deputy State Director for Resources and planning at BLM Headquarters. He has also served as a Natural Resource Specialist in the BLM's National Science and Technology Center in Lakewood and then served in various roles as a Planning Coordinator, Branch Chief for Planning, and Field Manager of the Gunnison Field Office.



**Steven Hall**, Communications Director, 303-239-3672, [sbhall@blm.gov](mailto:sbhall@blm.gov)

Steven has served as Communications Director since 2007. He started working for BLM in 2003 as the Western Colorado Public Affairs Officer, and later as the BLM Wyoming Communications Director. Steven previously worked as the Public Affairs and Marketing Director for Colorado State Parks. Steven has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Colorado Boulder.



**Tyko Isaacson**, State Fire Management Officer, 303-239-3687, [tisaacson@blm.gov](mailto:tisaacson@blm.gov)

Tyko started his fire service career in 1996 in Eastern Oregon. He has spent his last 25 years as federal employee with the U.S. Forest Service and BLM. Tyko worked for BLM Colorado in 2017-2020 as a Fire Management Officer and has served as the State Fire Management Officer since late 2024.



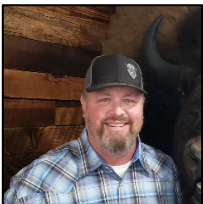
**Alan Bittner**, Deputy State Director Resources, 303-239-3768, [abittner@blm.gov](mailto:abittner@blm.gov)

Alan has worked for the BLM for 23 years and most recently served as Northern California's District Manager. During his BLM career, Alan has served as a biological technician, natural resource specialist, Assistant Field Manager and Field Manager. Prior to BLM, Alan worked in natural resources and earned a biology degree from Cornerstone University in Michigan.



**A.G. Elmadani**, Deputy State Director Energy, Lands & Minerals, 303-239-3923, [aelmadani@blm.gov](mailto:aelmadani@blm.gov)

AG is a Petroleum Engineer by profession and has been with the BLM for almost ten years. He began his BLM career as an intern at headquarters, then worked at the Farmington, NM Field Office, before transitioning to BLM Colorado. Prior to his current position, he served as the Associate Deputy State Director for Fluids and Minerals at BLM California. AG holds a bachelor's degree in Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering and a bachelor's degree in International Politics from Pennsylvania State University.



**Scott Swanson**, Special Agent-in-Charge, 303-239-3853, [saswanso@blm.gov](mailto:saswanso@blm.gov)

Scott started his law enforcement career 20 years ago with the U.S. Border Patrol. He previously served as the Region 4 Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge for Montana/Dakotas and Wyoming. He was also a BLM Special Agent in Grand Junction and Salt Lake City, served as the Utah State Chief Ranger, and was a BLM Ranger in California and Arizona. He earned a bachelor's degree from Mount Marty University prior to serving in the United States Army.



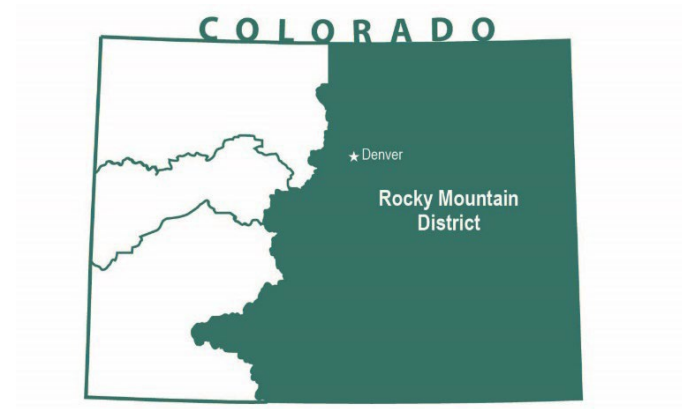
**Karren Haslam**, Deputy State Director Support Services, 303-239-3801, [khaslam@blm.gov](mailto:khaslam@blm.gov)

Karren's federal career started in the Air Force. After nearly a decade, she transitioned to a career in administrative services as an Information Receptionist with the BLM in Utah. Over the past 16 years, she served in various roles, including Fire Business Lead for the BLM West Desert District and the Utah State Office and most recently she served as the Assistant District Manager for Support Services in the Green River District.



# Rocky Mountain District

3028 East Main Street • Cañon City, CO 81212 • 719-269-8500 • 719-269-8599 fax



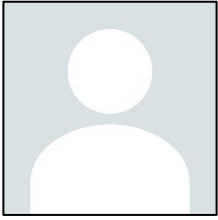
The Rocky Mountain District manages about 1.2 million surface acres and 9.07 million acres of subsurface minerals. The district is comprised of the Royal Gorge Field Office and the San Luis Valley Field Office.

The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA), part of the Royal Gorge Field Office, is co-managed with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and is one of the nation's most popular areas for commercial and private whitewater rafting, and premier guided and private fishing opportunities. Fishing and boating on the Arkansas River within the AHRA supports \$74 million in economic activity.

The Rocky Mountain District is home to the Wild Horse Inmate Program (WHIP) located in Cañon City and the Browns Canyon National Monument.

The Rocky Mountain District Fire covers about 1.2 million acres of BLM-managed lands within the Royal Gorge and San Luis Valley Field Office boundaries. The unit covers all BLM public land east of the Continental Divide to the Colorado-Kansas state line and from the Wyoming state line to the New Mexico state line. The unit works closely with the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Colorado Department of Fire Prevention and Control, counties, and numerous Fire Protection Districts. Eighty percent of all fires within the planning area are caused by lightning during the annual southwest monsoon. Fuels management includes mechanical, chemical, biological, and prescribed fire treatments, with approximately 2,500 acres treated annually.

# Rocky Mountain District Leadership



**Vacant**, Rocky Mountain District Manager, 719-269-8500



**Doug Mayes**, Royal Gorge Field Manager, (307) 275-6344, [dmayes@blm.gov](mailto:dmayes@blm.gov)

Doug came to BLM Royal Gorge as Field Manager in June 2024. Previously, Doug worked for the BLM Wyoming State Office in several roles including Database Administrator and Branch Chief for Renewable Resources. Before that he spent several years working for the Department of Defense in Natural Resource Management and Installation Master Planning. Doug has a bachelor's degree in geography from University of Northern Colorado and a master's degree in geography from University of South Carolina.



**Dale Culver**, San Luis Valley Field Manager, 719-850-3261, [deculver@blm.gov](mailto:deculver@blm.gov)

Dale joined the BLM in August of 2023 following a 25-year career in law enforcement with the National Park Service. In his most recent position, he spent eight years as the Chief Ranger at Great Sand Dunes National Park, where he served multiple times as Acting Superintendent. Dale has a bachelor's degree in recreation from Western Colorado University (then Western State College).

# Royal Gorge Field Office

3028 East Main Street • Cañon City, CO 81212 • 719-269-8500 • 719-269-8599 fax

## FACTS



- 666,127 surface acres
- 6,474,368 subsurface acres
- 86 recreation sites (23 developed, 18 picnic areas, 32 camping areas, 20 boat ramps)
- 2 Special Recreation Management Areas
- 6 Wilderness Study Areas (68,158 acres)
- 4 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways
- 1 National Scenic Byway
- 151,700 acres of woodlands (97,062 acres of forest land)
- 18 endangered, threatened, and candidate species (12 listed, 6 candidates)
- 487 miles of streams and rivers
- 570,000 acres grazed by livestock

Counties: Baca, Bent, Chaffee, Custer, Crowley, El Paso, Fremont, Huerfano, Kiowa, Lake, Las Animas, Otero, Park, Prowers, Pueblo, Teller, Adams, Arapaho, Boulder, Cheyenne, Clear Creek, Douglas, Elbert, Gilpin, Jefferson, Kit Carson, Larimer, Lincoln, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld and Yuma

## RECREATION

Located on Colorado's Front Range, the Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) works with partners and local communities to develop recreation opportunities. Due to these efforts, Salida is one of Colorado's top mountain bike destinations.

**Gold Belt Tour National Scenic Byway** retraces historic railroad and stagecoach routes from the Arkansas Valley to the Cripple Creek Gold Mining District. The Byway is managed through a partnership of 10 local, state, and federal agencies, and a nonprofit association.

**Shelf Road Recreation Area:** Huge limestone cliffs attract thousands of rock climbers annually, while the scenic beauty and designated trails attract mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers. The area is managed in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Field Institute.

**Texas Creek OHV Area:** The area's rugged terrain, spectacular views of the Arkansas River Valley and Sangre de Cristo Mountains, and proximity to U.S. Highway 50, attract thousands of motorized users.

**Guffey Gorge and Cache Creek:** These two areas have special management needs due to the high volume of visitors. Guffey Gorge is popular for its swimming hole surrounded by rock cliffs and Cache Creek is known for its recreational mining activities.

## ARKANSAS HEADWATERS RECREATION AREA

The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA) manages recreation along a 152-mile extent of the Arkansas River from the confluence of the Lake Fork and the East Fork of the Arkansas River near Leadville to Lake Pueblo State Park. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) manages the recreation under a Cooperative Management Agreement with the BLM and U.S. Forest Service. Formed in 1989, this partnership allows agencies to provide visitors with recreation opportunities and care for significant natural resources of the Upper Arkansas River Valley.

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area manages river-based recreation on the Arkansas River through Browns Canyon. In 2015, Browns Canyon National Monument was designated to protect cultural and natural resources. The BLM and U.S. Forest Service jointly manage the 21,589-acre monument, which was designated as an International Dark Sky Park in 2024.

Fees are collected at a number of self-service stations at recreation sites and campgrounds throughout the area. The AHRA visitor center includes the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association bookstore containing maps and books on the area and activities.

In a typical year, the AHRA issues commercial agreements to 47 boating outfitters, 15 walk and wade fishing companies, 28 photography companies and three shuttle companies.



## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The RGFO has six wilderness study areas (WSA).

**Lower and Upper Grape Creek WSAs:** These WSAs span a large portion of the Grape Creek WSA watershed: Lower Grape Creek WSA consists of 14,003 acres and Upper Grape Creek consists of 9,418 acres. Rugged peaks and inviting pools provide terrain for hikers, anglers, and hunters. There are no developed trails within these WSAs. Grape Creek's riparian corridor is also an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

**Beaver Creek WSA:** This 27,320-acre WSA has steep, remote granite canyons and valued for its wildlife and fish habitat. About 13,700 acres of the WSA are in the Beaver Creek ACEC.

**McIntyre Hills WSA:** This 16,734-acre WSA is rugged country on the south side of the Arkansas River canyon without developed trailheads or trails. A small portion of the WSA near the Arkansas River is within the Arkansas Canyonlands ACEC.

**High Mesa Grassland WSA:** This area covers 683 acres of public land and spans the rolling mesa and steep slopes of Table Mountain, locally known as Sommerville Table. The unit includes 17 species of native grasses and is within a research natural area and an ACEC.

**Browns Canyon WSA and National Monument** (22,000 acres) – from our website: Browns Canyon National Monument, including the Browns Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA), covers approximately 22,000 acres of federally and state-managed public lands in Chaffee County, Colorado. The area's unusual geology and roughly 3,000-foot range in elevation supports a diverse riparian corridor, granite

outcroppings, wooded drainages lead from the river to upland areas covered with aspen, limber pines, Douglas firs, and subalpine grasslands. The variety of terrain provides a wealth of geological, ecological and cultural and historic resources.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Sites and artifacts in the area range from more than 12,000 years old to 50 years old. Several historic mining districts are near Cripple Creek, Leadville, Querida (Westcliffe/Silvercliff), Central City/Black Hawk, and areas west of Boulder. Many of the historic reservoirs on the eastern plains still have BLM land underneath.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Three internationally significant fossil sites lie along the Gold Belt Tour National Scenic Byway: Garden Park Fossil Area, Indian Springs Trace Fossil Site and

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The Garden Park Fossil Area is important for its wealth of Jurassic fossil data. The area is a designated ACEC, National Natural Landmark, and Colorado Research Natural Area. The BLM partners with the Royal Gorge Regional Museum and History Center to develop educational experiences to increase access to these resources.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The RGFO manages wildlife habitats ranging from the Great Plains to the Continental Divide. The program uses monitoring and inventory data with landscape-scale datasets to assess impacts and prioritize projects. The program targets vegetation treatments to enhance big game habitat and monitors several federally listed and sensitive species including Mexican spotted owl, peregrine falcon, bald and golden eagles, Gunnison's prairie dog, boreal toad, Townsend's big-eared bat, and Brandegee's buckwheat.

## FORESTRY

Thirty-eight percent of the land managed by the RGFO is classified as commercial forestland or woodlands.

Primary commercial species are ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, white fir, lodgepole pine, aspen, and Engelmann spruce. Woodland species include pinyon pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, and one-seed juniper.

The RGFO forestry program issues special forest product permits annually, including personal use and commercial permits. There are about 10 small sawmills and several logging companies within the RGFO. Timber sales allow the forestry program to accomplish forest management projects, such as thinning and patch cuts, and support local industry. Ongoing forestry activities include forest inventory, seedling planting, regeneration surveys, timber stand improvement, and public education and outreach.

## LANDS & REALTY

The RGFO realty program has over 1,100 rights-of-way/land use authorizations. The RGFO is seeing an increase in applications for use of public lands within the field office due to its proximity to metropolitan areas along the Front Range. The RGFO has many areas of fragmented, small, isolated parcels of public lands surrounded by private lands, with split-estate ownership of surface and subsurface lands.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The RGFO administers 333 grazing permits/leases on 400 allotments for 35,144 Animal Unit Months. The rangeland program ensures grazing allotments meet standards related to Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado. The noxious weed management program inventories and treats acres for new weed infestation areas.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The RGFO manages approximately 2,800 oil and gas wells and ensures wells comply with federal regulatory requirements on drilling and production operations, including final abandonment of a well. The RGFO monitors and verifies production records to ensure accurate royalty payments to the federal government.

**Solid Minerals:** Solid minerals management includes hard rock mining, placer activities, aggregate quarries, gravel pits and uranium exploration. The RGFO manages more than 26 notices and 11 Plans of Operations under the Locatable Minerals Program. This includes gold operations in Lake and Boulder counties, small placer mining operations along from Cañon City to Leadville, and new operations for gold and uranium in Fremont County. The RGFO manages four common use areas and more than 25 commercial and noncommercial gravel pits and quarries.

**Abandoned Mine Lands:** The RGFO AML program involves both safety closure efforts and Superfund cleanup efforts that focus on historic mining districts, particularly west of Leadville. Safety closure efforts focus on closing hazardous abandoned mine openings in collaboration with the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety near Boulder, Westcliffe, and Buena Vista. The BLM collaborates with Trout Unlimited and the Fourmile Watershed Coalition to improve water quality in Gilpin and Boulder Counties.

# San Luis Valley Field Office

1313 East Highway 160 • Monte Vista, CO 81144 • 719-852-7074 • 719-852-0165 fax



## FACTS

- 500,280 surface acres
- 2,594,033 subsurface acres
- 4 recreation areas
- 3 Wilderness Study Areas
- 1 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway
- 26,127 acres of woodlands
- 11 endangered, threatened, and candidate species (3 listed, 2 candidates)
- 102 miles of streams and rivers
- 474,000 acres grazed by livestock
- 251,194 acres of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Counties: Saguache, Alamosa, Rio Grande, Conejos and Costilla

## RECREATION

The SLVFO hosts many recreation opportunities including camping, mountain biking, hiking, rafting, bird watching, hunting, fishing, OHV Use, horseback riding, and rock climbing. In 2010, the SLVFO completed a travel management plan, which restricts motorized and mechanized travel to designated roads and trails.

**Blanca Wetlands:** Blanca Wetlands is designated an Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society and a wetlands Key Site by the Intermountain West Joint Venture. Blanca Wetlands playa and marsh habitats support more than 170 species of birds and the state's largest population of breeding snowy plovers. Blanca Wetlands is an ACEC, for its recreation and wetland values. The nearly 3,500 acres of wetlands are an important migratory stopover and breeding site for millions of birds in the Central Flyway.

**Penitente Canyon Special Recreation Management Area:** This area is an internationally recognized climbing area, offering 300 sport-climbing routes, and includes an extensive trail system and a developed campground.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**National Scenic and Historic Trails:** The Old Spanish National Historic Trail (1829-1848) crosses BLM lands throughout the Valley.

The SLVFO also manages three WSAs. Black Canyon (1,202 acres), Papa Keal (383 acres) and San Luis Hills (10,871 acres).

**Black Canyon WSA (1,202 acres):** The Black Canyon WSA consists of the western side slopes and lower mountains of the Sangre de Cristo Range - an uplifted block

formed by faulting along the Rio Grande rift. Vegetation consists mainly of pine, fir, pinyon-juniper, and aspen. Fauna includes mule deer, elk, black bear, various smaller mammals, and various raptors.

**Papa Keal WSA (383 acres):** The Papa Keal WSA consists of the western-facing side slopes of the lower portion of the Sangre de Cristo Range. Vegetation consists mainly of juniper-pine, pinyon-juniper, rabbitbrush, and grasses. Fauna includes mule deer, elk, black bear, various small mammals, and various raptors.

**San Luis Hills WSA (10,871 acres):** The San Luis Hills WSA is characterized by a series of hills, which rise abruptly above the broad San Luis Valley. Vegetation, which is sparse due to the arid climate, consists mainly of low-growing desert shrubs and grasses, pinyon and juniper. Fauna is also sparse due to lack of water, but includes mule deer, antelope, various raptors, and various songbirds.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The SLVFO manages a rich cultural landscape that includes traces of mammoth hunters of the Late Pleistocene, Hispanic settlements, and the gold mining camps of Bonanza and Duncan. Stone structures throughout the Valley suggest a Puebloan influence, and culturally peeled trees reflect the migrations of the Utes and Jicarilla Apaches.

The Valley is famous for its Paleoindian sites, attracting researchers from universities around the country and the Smithsonian Institution. The SLVFO area is home to renowned rock art sites that are important to tribal partners. By 1600, the Spanish Empire had established itself in nearby northern New Mexico. Permanent settlement came in 1852 with the establishment of the community of San Luis, Colorado's oldest community, which brought Colorado's first water right.



**Mount Blanca:** The Sangre de Cristo Mountain range, including Mount Blanca and surrounding wetlands and playas on the valley floor, has significance to Native Americans and other cultures. The area is an important traditional resource collection area, the focus of traditional cultural importance for multiple tribes, and a critical viewshed.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The BLM's Elephant Rocks Area was habitat for Colombian mammoths that lived in the San Luis Valley during the Pleistocene Epoch (ca. 12,000 BC). In 2011, the vertebra of a young mammoth was found near Villa Grove in Saguache County. The last mammoths in the San Luis Valley died about 13,000 years ago.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The SLVFO manages wildlife habitat ranging from low-elevation wetlands, grasslands and shrublands to mid-elevation ponderosa pine forests and mixed conifer forests. The SLVFO lands provide crucial winter range habitat for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope and bighorn sheep, as well as important birthing areas. Federally threatened and endangered species in the area include Mexican spotted owl, yellow-billed cuckoo, southwestern willow flycatcher, Gunnison Sage-Grouse, Canada lynx, New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, and black-footed ferret.

## LANDS & REALTY

The Lands and Realty program manages a wide range of authorizations (right-of-way grants) issued for roads, pipelines, communication sites, power lines, fiber optics lines and irrigation structures. The authorized uses are issued to entities such as private parties, companies, and county, state, and federal agencies. The SLVFO pursues land and water acquisitions with willing sellers, funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The SLVFO collaborates with Conejos County Commissioners, Conejos County Clean Water, and numerous volunteers and local students to clean up dumpsites on public lands. The SLVFO also continues to collaborate with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and The Conservation Fund for land acquisition to benefit sportsmen's access and wildlife habitat.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

**Grazing:** The SLVFO manages 85 livestock grazing permits on 132 active grazing allotments for 28,519 Animal Unit Months, covering 474,000 acres. Classes of livestock grazing in the SLVFO are cattle and domestic sheep. Grazing allotments are monitored to ensure range conditions are meeting public health standards.

**Noxious Weeds:** The SLVFO uses an integrated approach to noxious weed control. Herbicides are the main mechanism for controlling weeds, but bugs and mechanical treatments are also used. The SLVFO partners with Saguache, Rio Grande, and Conejos counties and the Rio Grande National Forest to identify, map and control noxious weed infestations.

## SOIL, WATER & AIR RESOURCES

The Rio Grande is an important riparian system within the Lower Rio Grande study area. The BLM and partners collaborated on restoration planning that supports the ongoing effort of Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** Ninety-nine percent of the SLVFO managed lands are open to leasing. There are no producing oil and gas wells on federal mineral estate in the San Luis Valley.

**Solid Minerals:** BLM lands within the San Luis Valley host a historic operating turquoise mine. The "King Manassa" mine in Conejos County has been operating since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but turquoise from the site was a part of the ancestral Puebloan turquoise trade. The SLVFO manages commercial and noncommercial gravel pits and three Common Use Areas: Limekiln, Ojito, and Poison Gulch.

**Abandoned Mine Lands:** The SLVFO maintains an inventory of known hard rock abandoned mine lands on BLM public lands.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

The BLM identified three Solar Energy Zones (SEZ) in the San Luis Valley as well-suited for utility scale solar energy production. The Colorado renewable energy team has developed a Solar Regional Mitigation Strategy (SRMS) for Colorado SEZs, which identifies and mitigates impacts from potential future solar energy production to foster future solar development in the area. The renewable energy program funded several research projects, such as golden eagle movement in wind, solar, and transmission areas of Colorado, cultural surveys, and avian inventories.

## RESEARCH & COLLABORATION

The SLVFO is active in research and collaboration as part of the National Wind Erosion Research Network. The network consists of 13 instrumented research sites across the western U.S. to develop standardized approaches to understanding wind erosion processes and facilitate collaborative efforts in aeolian research and land management. The SLVFO manages one of two network sites in Colorado, which is one of four operated by the BLM nationally. The site requires the monthly collection and processing of sediment and dust samples and the quarterly measurement of vegetation and soil surface characteristics.

# Northwest District

2300 River Frontage Road • Silt, CO 81652 • 970-876-9000 • 970-876-9090



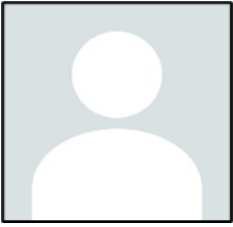
The Northwest District manages approximately 3.15 million surface acres and 7.01 million acres of subsurface minerals. The district is comprised of the Kremmling Field Office, Little Snake Field Office, and White River Field Office.

The Northwest District includes the Colorado River corridor along with the White and Yampa rivers. It is home to some of the largest deer and elk herds in the country, along with pronghorn, bighorn sheep and a wide variety of other wildlife. The Northwest District contains most of the Colorado range of the Greater Sage-Grouse.

The Northwest District includes some of the most productive oil and natural gas fields in the state, four coal mines, and vast deposits of oil shale.

Urban interface issues and increasing pressure on BLM lands from recreation and other uses is an ongoing management challenge.

# Northwest District Leadership



**Vacant**, Northwest District Manager



**Stephen Leonard**, Kremmling Field Manager, 970-724-3001, [sleonard@blm.gov](mailto:sleonard@blm.gov)

Steve most recently served as the BLM Colorado Wild Horse and Burro Lead since 2015. Before coming to Colorado, he was the Owyhee Field Manager for BLM Idaho. Steve served in the U.S. Army and earned a degree in biology from Boise State University.



**Kymm Gresset**, Little Snake Field Manager, 970-826-5089, [kgresset@blm.gov](mailto:kgresset@blm.gov)

Kymm is a native of Lake Andes, S.D., she comes to Craig from Albuquerque, N.M., where she was the Field Manager of the Rio Puerco Field Office. She has over 17 years of natural resource management experience with the BLM and the U.S. Geological Survey in Virginia, Colorado, Montana, and Idaho.



**Bill Mills**, White River Field Manager, 970-620-2410, [wmills@blm.gov](mailto:wmills@blm.gov)

Bill started his career with BLM in 2010 at the National Operations Center. He has held several positions in BLM Colorado: Colorado State Office Branch of Business Services, Rocky Mountain District Administrative Officer, and currently as a Field Manager in White River. Prior to his service in BLM, Bill served 20 years in the United States Air Force.

# Kremmling Field Office

2103 E. Park Avenue • P.O. Box 68 • Kremmling, CO 80459 • 970-724-3000 • 970-724-3066 fax



## FACTS

- 377,900 surface acres
- 2,232,460 subsurface acres
- 130 producing oil wells
- 198,900 acres priority habitat and 18,900 acres general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse
- 4 Special Recreation Management Areas: North Sand Hills (1,450 acres), Upper Colorado River (15,000 acres), Strawberry (7,900 acres), Wolford (25,700 acres)
- 1 Extensive Recreation Management Area: Headwaters (13,800 acres)
- 8 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- 3 Wilderness Study Areas (8,658 acres): Troublesome (7,946), North Sand Hills ISA (681), Platte River contiguous (31)
- 2 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways: Cache la Poudre-North Park Byway, Colorado River Headwaters Byway

Counties: Jackson, Grand, Larimer, Eagle, Summit

The Kremmling Field Office (KFO) has three regions: North Park, Middle Park, and the Laramie River Valley. North Park and the Laramie River Valley are on the east side of the Continental Divide.

## RECREATION

The KFO manages an outstanding combination of upland and water-based recreation resources. The area is popular for its proximity to Grand, Summit, Routt, and Eagle counties, and the Front Range metropolitan area. The KFO manages 30 miles of the Colorado River headwaters from Byers Canyon to State Bridge with some segments designated by the State of Colorado as Gold Medal fisheries. The Wolford Mountain SRMA provides 120+ miles of designated OHV routes and an open OHV play area, while the North Sand Hills SRMA has the only sand dune area in Colorado that is open to public OHV use, with designated routes and an open area on the dunes. Recreation activities include rafting, fishing, camping, hunting, mountain biking, hiking, OHV use, and horseback riding.

**Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA):** The area is popular for its proximity to Grand, Summit, Routt, and Eagle counties, and the Front Range metropolitan area. Most of the river corridor consists of Class I and II white water, with Gore Canyon offering a five-mile section of expert-only Class IV and V white water. The SRMA includes three primary public recreation areas along the Upper Colorado River: Pump House, Radium, and State Bridge. Annual visitation exceeds 90,000 people.

**North Sand Hills SRMA:** This OHV-use area has the only sand dune area in Colorado open to public OHV use.

Motorized travel is limited to the open sand dune complex and existing open roads and trails.

**Wolford SRMA:** The Wolford Mountain area offers a variety of recreational opportunities including hiking, wildlife viewing, picnicking, sightseeing, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain biking, camping and off-highway vehicle activities. The SRMA is located just north of Kremmling.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Troublesome Wilderness Study Area (WSA):** Consists of 7,946 acres of lodgepole pine forest. It is recommended as not suitable for wilderness designation.

**Platte River Contiguous WSA:** This 31-acre WSA on steep ground along the North Platte River in North Park is contiguous with the U.S. Forest Service's Platte River Wilderness. The WSA was recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

**North Sand Hills WSA:** Consists of 681 acres within a sand dune complex that includes open sand, aspen and sagebrush habitats located 15 miles northeast of Walden. It was recommended as not suitable for wilderness designation.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The cultural resource program coordinates and consults with the Tribal Councils of the three Ute Tribes, Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribes. The Yarmony Pit House site is the oldest documented habitation structure in Colorado from 6,200 years ago.



## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Hayden Expedition of 1869 recorded the first dinosaur bone collected in Colorado, a tail vertebrae from an Allosaurus. Extinct species from the Miocene Era related to the modern horse, camel, beaver, deer, and antelope have been discovered and excavated here.

**Kremmling Cretaceous Ammonite Locality:** This site is managed as a Research Natural Area and ACEC with about 125 fossil invertebrate species dating to 72.5 million years ago. The site features the world's highest concentration of Giant Ammonite fossils, along with ten new species of bivalves, gastropods and mollusks that were discovered there.

## WILDLIFE & ENDANGERED SPECIES

Public lands in the KFO support more than 300 species of fish and wildlife that inhabit 13 distinct habitat types from wetland bottoms to subalpine forest. Wetland habitat is important in North Park at the Hebron Waterfowl Area, managed with an emphasis on waterfowl habitat since the mid-1970s. In a 1999 land exchange, the BLM acquired 125 acres of land with adjudicated water rights, adjacent to the Colorado River, known as the Junction Butte Wetland Area. These two areas are managed as Watchable Wildlife Areas.

## LANDS & REALTY

The priorities of the lands and realty program are to acquire public access for recreational opportunities; retain public access, critical wildlife habitat, T&E species habitat, and riparian areas; and improve the management of existing public lands. The ROW program has an average of 10 proposals per year. The KFO is active in the compliance, monitoring and reclamation aspects of the ROW program. Resolving trespass issues is growing due to the land configuration and high use of public lands.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

**Grazing:** The KFO administers 142 livestock grazing permits on 256 allotments for 38,865 AUMs covering 328,100 acres of public lands in Middle Park, North Park, and the Laramie River area. The KFO improves the condition of rangelands through partnerships with permittees, local organizations, and other agencies. Compliance with the Standards for Public Land Health by implementing rotation-grazing systems maintains and improves range condition on public lands.

**Noxious Weeds:** The KFO uses an integrated approach to noxious weed control with herbicides as the main mechanism along with the use of biological and mechanical treatments. The KFO partners with Grand,

Jackson and Larimer counties to identify, map, and control noxious weed infestations.

## FOREST MANAGEMENT

Approximately 100,000 acres (about 30 percent) of the KFO is in forest or woodlands. Extended drought, pine beetle epidemic in the lodgepole pine forest, overmature stands, parasitic plants, and forest stands in need of thinning are a few forest management challenges.

## SOIL, WATER & AIR RESOURCES

The KFO manages lands in the headwaters of three major drainages: the Colorado, the North Platte and the Laramie rivers, and about 187 miles of perennial streams and 4,740 acres of wetlands.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The primary fluid mineral resources being developed are oil, carbon dioxide gas and methane gas. The KFO has a history of oil and gas drilling and production activity, with nearly 675 wells drilled since the early 1920s. Most of the wells are in Jackson County. New wells drilled over the next 20 years will be targeted at the Coalmont Niobrara Formation.

**Coal:** Commercial or industrial coal mining in North Park ceased and no mining activity is likely in the future. A large volume of mineable and marketable coal remains on federal lands in the McCallum area of North Park, but the lack of reasonable-cost transportation hinders use of this resource. There is some potential for methane gas in the near surface and deeper areas of the McCallum coal area.

**Locatable Minerals:** No significant future activity is anticipated. There may be interest in future drilling and exploration of gold placer claims on Independence Mountain in northwest Jackson County.

**Saleable Minerals:** Urbanization in eastern and southern Grand County and concentration of ownership in agricultural lands into single large ranches in Grand and Jackson counties yield long-term concerns about the availability of sand and gravel. Existing free-use pits are in their last years of material supply; closures and reclamation of the old pits are anticipated. Demands from Jackson and Grand County governments are expected to increase for free-use sand and gravel resources on BLM-managed lands. Continuing demand for decorative stone will likely drive additional sales and the permitting of the new areas.

# Little Snake Field Office

455 Emerson Street • Craig, CO 81625 • 970-826-5000 • 970-826-5002 fax



Counties: Moffat, Routt and Rio Blanco

## FACTS

- 1,303,540 surface acres and 2,679,492 subsurface acres
- 12 recreation sites (6 developed, 4 picnic areas, 4 camping areas)
- 7 Recreation Management Areas and 7 Wilderness Study Areas (79,738 acres)
- Potential habitat for 9 endangered, threatened, and candidate species
- 570,400 acres priority habitat and 479,700 acres general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse
- 303 miles of streams and rivers
- 1 wild horse herd management area (157,730 acres)
- 1.2 million acres grazed by livestock on 327 grazing allotments

## RECREATION

**Cedar Mountain:** The 880-acre area rises above the Yampa Valley providing panoramic views at elevations of 7,500 feet. Cedar Mountain offers a variety of recreational opportunities including scenic and wildlife viewing, hunting, hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding.

**Emerald Mountain Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA):** The 4,139-acre parcel southwest of Steamboat Springs, Colorado was acquired in 2007 through a land exchange with the Colorado State Land Board. The SRMA is managed as two separate management zones. Zone 1 is open for mountain biking, Nordic skiing, and hunting. Zone 2 provides opportunities for wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and similar non-mechanized activities.

**Sarvis Creek:** In 2014, this 35-acre property on the Upper Yampa River was purchased through a partnership among Western Rivers Conservancy, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and Yampa River Legacy Partnership. Sarvis Creek provides access to world-class fishing and wildlife habitat as well as the Hubbard Summer Place, a historic cabin included in the recreational cabin rental program.

**Irish Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC):** The 11,680-acre relatively remote and scenic canyon is designated as an ACEC because of its unique geology, scenery, plant species, and cultural resources. There is an interpretive exhibit and trail of ancient petroglyphs at the south entrance to Irish Canyon with other unmarked cultural sites in and around the area.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Cross Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA):** This 14,289-acre WSA offers spectacular views into Cross Mountain Canyon. The Yampa River in the canyon provides expert kayakers with white water found nowhere else in the region.

**Diamond Breaks WSA:** This 33,192-acre WSA is located southwest of Browns Park National Wildlife Refuge with recreation opportunities for wildlife viewing, hiking, backpacking, and hunting.

**Douglas Mountain Area WSAs:** Douglas Mountain lies north of the Yampa River and east of the Green River. There are four BLM wilderness study areas directly adjacent to the northern boundary of Dinosaur National Monument on Douglas Mountain: Ant Hills (4,237 acres), Chew Winter Camp (1,238 acres), Peterson Draw (4,998 acres), and Vale of Tears (7,039 acres). These remote WSAs consist of rugged hills and valleys on the flank of Douglas Mountain and are extensions of the landforms of Dinosaur National Monument to the south. The Douglas Mountain area offers opportunities for visitors to enjoy deer and elk hunting, camping, sightseeing, hiking, backpacking and horseback riding.

**West Cold Spring WSA:** This 14,744-acre site extends 20 miles west to east with rough and steep south-facing slopes. Draws and canyons cut the O-Wi-Yu-Kuts Plateau, forming a series of plateaus and ridges. Beaver Creek Canyon along the Utah border is an excellent area for hiking or backpacking.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

Archaeological work in northwestern Colorado provides evidence of a strong Paleo-Indian presence and extensive archaic habitation of the area. The presence of northern Fremont peoples has been defined through open sites, rock shelters, and rock art. Proto-Ute, Numic (Ute and Shoshone), and historic Ute peoples are evident in the archaeological record. Euro American historic archaeology is present from about 1820 A.D. to the early 21st Century and revolves around homesteading, ranching and mineral exploration.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Fossils encompass the geologic time scale from the Cambrian Period to the most recent. Fossils include Paleozoic invertebrates and a variety of ichnofossils. Fossils representing the Mesozoic and Cenozoic include vertebrate fossils representing dinosaurs, marine reptiles, land mammals, and invertebrates.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The LSFO provides habitat for fish and wildlife species in salt desert shrub, sagebrush steppe, pinyon and juniper woodlands, mountain shrub, aspen woodlands, and lodgepole pine forests. LSFO provides crucial winter range for elk, mule deer and pronghorn. LSFO manages habitat for many special status species including Greater Sage-Grouse, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, ferruginous hawk, Great Basin spade-foot toad, midget faded rattlesnake, northern leopard frog, Colorado pikeminnow, and razorback sucker. The LSFO actively manages Greater Sage-Grouse habitat and has about 50 Greater Sage-Grouse leks. Sixty leks occupy lands where LSFO manages federal mineral estate.

## WILD HORSES

Sand Wash Basin Herd Management Area:  
Home to the largest wild horse herd in Colorado, the approximately 160,000-acre basin is a large, scenic expanse of high desert country. The current population is estimated at approximately 400 wild horses.

## LANDS & REALTY

The lands and realty program manages ROW grants for transportation, communication, energy transmission, and oil and gas. The LSFO manages land tenure actions that include Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases, easements, acquisitions, disposals, and exchanges

when they are consistent with the Resource Management Plan.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The LSFO oversees one of BLM's largest grazing programs in Colorado with 23 percent of BLM Colorado's total AUMs, which includes 170 permits and leases on 327 allotments. Vegetation monitoring programs include the Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring program which provides a standardized process to collect quantitative information on the status, condition, trend, amount, location, and spatial pattern of vegetation resources.

## FIRE MANAGEMENT

Some natural fires caused by lightning are managed to benefit resources including wildlife, range ecology, vegetative diversity, and hazardous fuels. The fire management program handles prescribed burns and mechanical fuels treatment projects, which eliminate hazardous fuel conditions to benefit wildlife.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario forecasts more than 3,000 new wells could be drilled in LSFO over the next 20 years in Hiawatha, Powderwash, and Great Divide Areas. Most of the wells will be targeted at tight sand and shale formations containing natural gas.

**Solid Minerals:** LSFO contains economic deposits of coal, uranium, high purity limestone, and sand and gravel. Based on known occurrences and favorable geologic settings, the area has the potential for other significant deposits of these commodities, and other mineral resources, including oil shale precious and base metals, zeolites, construction stone, and clays.

The LSFO has the largest BLM coal program in the state of Colorado with more than 6.7 million tons of coal produced in FY 2018. The Colowyo Coal Company L.P., Trapper Mining Inc., and Peabody Twenty Mile Coal Company provide royalty revenues more than \$14 million annually, half of which are returned to the State of Colorado. The recoverable federal coal reserves for these mines are estimated at 203 million tons in addition to State, County, and private reserves.

# White River Field Office

220 E. Market Street • Meeker, CO 81641 • 970-878-3800 • 970-878-3805 fax



Counties: Rio Blanco, Moffat, and Garfield

## FACTS

- 1,456,507 surface acres
- 2,102,087 subsurface acres
- 14 recreation sites (2 developed, 2 picnic areas)
- 6 Wilderness Study Areas (80,190 acres)
- 8 endangered, threatened, and candidate species (7 listed, 1 candidate)
- 122,000 acres priority habitat and 180,200 acres general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse
- 36 BLM Sensitive Species
- 17 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- 1 wild horse herd management area
- 1,435,513 acres grazed by livestock
- 1 National Scenic Byway
- 1 National Historic District

## RECREATION

The White River Field Office (WRFO) is known for its big game hunting opportunities. Arguably, the nation's largest elk herd and impressive numbers of mule deer make their home in the WRFO. The area boasts more than 50 miles of the Dinosaur Diamond National Scenic Byway, which passes the western side of the field office and bisects the Canyon Pintado National Historic District. The WRFO provides a variety of dispersed recreational activities such as OHV riding and 4x4 routes. The WRFO is undertaking an extensive travel management process that will make route-by-route decisions over the next several years. Other recreational activities include camping, horseback riding, and hiking.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

The WRFO has six Wilderness Study Areas (WSA): Bull Canyon (12,982 acres), Willow Creek (13,315 acres), Skull Creek (13,039 acres), Oil Spring Mountain (18,245 acres), Black Mountain (10,188 acres) and the Windy Gulch (12,421 acres). All WSAs are open to foot and horse travel and allow for primitive types of recreational experiences.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Canyon Pintado National Historic District:** Features interpretive trails to seven rock art sites and one lookout site. These sites were created by the Ute and the Fremont-era.

**Dragon Trail:** Features four interpretive areas with rock art created by people who lived and moved through the area, spanning from 100 to 4,000 years ago.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Douglas Pass fossil area has a plethora of non-vertebrate fossils, such as leaves and small insects. The Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway crosses through the area and provides various heritage tourism destinations emphasizing the protection of dinosaur fossil resources.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The WRFO is home to an abundance of small game, small mammals, waterfowl, amphibians, reptiles, fish and predators. Threatened and endangered species include the bald eagle, Colorado pikeminnow, Canada lynx, and black-footed ferret. BLM sensitive species in the area include park rockcress, debris milkvetch, ephedra buckwheat, Utah genetian, narrow-stem gilia, Piceance bladderpod, narrow-leaf evening primrose, Rollins cryptanth, Graham's beardtongue, and White River penstemon.

## WILD HORSES

**Piceance – East Douglas Creek Herd Management Area:** This 195,000-acre HMA of rolling piñon and juniper woodlands is home to more than 840 wild horses. The best place to view the horses is from the rim of Cathedral Bluffs facing east.

## LANDS & REALTY

The WRFO manages 1,600 rights-of-way (ROW) for pipelines, roads, and power lines. Nearly half of those ROWs are for oil and gas. The WRFO has communication facilities, telephone and fiber optic lines, power systems,



water projects, R&PP leases, material sites, and easements. Most of projects are energy related.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The field office manages 118 grazing authorizations to graze livestock on 156 allotments for 117,694 AUMs. Allotments vary in size up to 142,825 acres with grazing capacities ranging up to 11,550 AUMs. Total federal acres grazed is 1,435,513 acres.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The WRFO manages a large portion of the Piceance Basin. The Energy Conservation and Policy Act (EPCA) identified the Piceance Basin of Colorado as one of five sub-basins in the continental United States with large reserves of hydrocarbon potential. The Piceance Basin contains considerable natural gas resources, the majority attributed to the highly productive Mesaverde Gas Play. The Rangely field is the largest oil field in Colorado. The ultimate recovery of oil from this area is expected to be close to one billion barrels.

In 2015, the WRFO completed an Oil and Gas Resource Management Plan Amendment to guide oil and gas development for the 1.7 million acres of leasable federal minerals it manages for the next 20 years. The Amendment includes proactive measures to allow responsible energy development in balance with other resources and uses, including the 357,800-acre Dinosaur Trail Master Leasing Plan. In October 2014, a dedicated energy team in the WRFO began managing the District's oil and gas programs.

**Oil Shale:** The Piceance Basin contains one of the richest oil shale resources in the world, with 1.5 trillion barrels of oil in place. The bulk of this resource lies within the WRFO boundaries. The three active oil shale research design and demonstration leases in Colorado are within WRFO boundaries. Companies holding leases continue to research whether this resource can be

unlocked in an economic and environmentally sound manner.

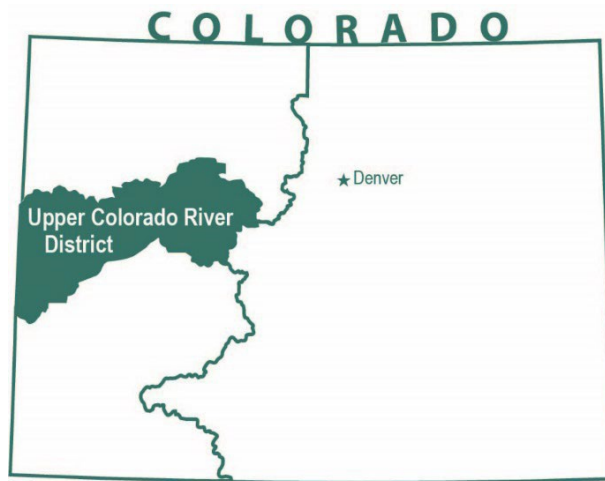
**Sodium:** More than 100,000 acres are available for sodium leasing. Currently, there are eight federal sodium leases containing 16,620 acres in the WRFO. Natural Soda Inc., (NSI) holds five of the leases (9,542 acres). NSI is the only company commercially mining Nahcolite for sodium bicarbonate in the Piceance Basin. NSI's sodium solution mine is in the Piceance Basin, southwest of Meeker.

Original consumption of the sodium bicarbonate was for flue gas de-sulfurization (FGD) in power plants, with the majority of the product is being sold as cattle feed additive. Other uses for sodium bicarbonate include waste treatment, pulp and papermaking, and refineries.

**Coal:** About 172,700 acres are suitable for coal mining. Blue Mountain Energy Inc. (BME) operates Deserado Mine on eight federal coal leases in Rio Blanco County. The mine portals and coal cleaning facilities are located seven miles east of Rangely, Colorado. About 9,266 acres in the eight federal leases and 11,029 surface acres are permitted. Modern mining equipment and longwall mining techniques are used in the production of the coal. A coal wash plant maximizes the recovery of the coal resources. Recoverable reserves within the leases are in two mineable coal seams and are estimated to be 52 million tons. Annual production is approximately two million tons of clean coal. The mine's output is committed to the 400 mega-watt Bonanza Power Plant owned and operated by Deseret Generation and Transmission Cooperative of Sandy, Utah. Construction of the Deserado Mine began in 1981 and coal production began in late 1982. Life expectancy of the Bonanza Power Plant is 40 to 50 years.

# Upper Colorado River District

2815H Road • Grand Junction, CO 81506 • 970-244-3000



The Upper Colorado River District manages approximately 1.85 million surface acres and 4 million acres of subsurface minerals and is comprised of the Colorado River Valley Field Office (located in Silt, Colorado) and Grand Junction Field Office.

The district includes public lands north and south of I-70 from the Utah border to just past Vail and encompasses seven counties. This area is home to some of the largest deer and elk herds in the country, along with pronghorn, greater sage-grouse and a wide variety of other wildlife.

The district includes two National Conservation Areas, McInnis Canyons and Dominguez-Escalante and is rich in recreational opportunities such as rafting and fishing on the Colorado, Eagle or Roaring Fork rivers, mountain biking at the North Fruita Desert, the Crown or on the Palisade Plunge Trail and hiking in one of the eight wilderness study areas.

The Grand Junction Field Office also manages the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range. The range is one of only three ranges in the United States designated specifically to protect wild horses and is an important area for wild horse conservation. It offers opportunities for public recreation while balancing ecological needs and conservation goals.

# Upper Colorado River District Leadership



**Greg Larson**, Upper Colorado River District Manager, 970-244-3000, [glarson@blm.gov](mailto:glarson@blm.gov)  
Larson has served as district manager since January 2021. Prior to joining the BLM, he served as a senior project manager and operations lead for Great Basin Natural Resources at a private consulting firm and as the Education and Land Manager for Swaner Nature Preserve in Utah. He has a master's degree in watershed science from Utah State University.



**Erin Jones**, Upper Colorado River Deputy District Manager, 970-244-3000, [ejones@blm.gov](mailto:ejones@blm.gov)  
Jones has served as deputy district manager since 2021. Jones has worked for the BLM for more than 20 years in California and Colorado with a background in wildlife biology and NEPA and land use planning. Her previous positions at BLM include natural resource specialist, state planning and environmental coordinator, and district planning and environmental coordinator.



**Stacey Colón**, Grand Junction Field Manager, 970-244-3070, [scolon@blm.gov](mailto:scolon@blm.gov)  
Colón became field manager in late June 2024. She started with the BLM in 2020 and served in various leadership roles. Prior to joining the BLM, Colón spent 20 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, starting out as a pilot and finishing her career as director of the environmental, safety, and facilities departments on two U.S. Marine Corps installations. She has a master's degree in environmental policy and management.



**Lisa Dawson**, Colorado River Valley Field Manager, (970) 876-9000, [edawson@blm.gov](mailto:edawson@blm.gov)  
Dawson has served as Field Manager since 2025. Dawson has worked for ONRR, the US Forest Service and the BLM for more than 15 years with a background Natural Resources Law. Dawson earned her Juris Doctor and Masters in Natural Resources Law from the University of Denver. Her previous positions at BLM include Branch Chief of Solid Minerals, Deputy District Manager and Acting District Manager.

# Grand Junction Field Office

2815 H Road • Grand Junction, CO 81506 • 970-244-3000 • 970-244-3083 fax



Counties: Mesa, Rio Blanco, Garfield and Montrose

## FACTS

- 1,278,010 surface acres
- 1,818,177 subsurface acres
- 31 recreation sites
- 5 Special Recreation Management Areas: Bangs Canyon, Dolores River Canyon, Grand Valley OHV, North Fruita Desert, Palisade Rim
- 6 Extensive Recreation Management Areas: Barrel Springs, Gateway, Grand Valley Shooting Range, Gunnison River Bluffs, Horse Mountain, North Desert
- 4 Wilderness Study Areas (96,651 acres)
- 2 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways: Unaweep/Tabeguache and Grand Mesa, and 1 National Scenic Byway: Dinosaur Diamond
- 575,000 acres of woodlands
- 10 endangered, threatened, and candidate species
- 5,600 acres priority habitat and 8,900 acres general habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse
- 290 miles of perennial streams and rivers
- 935,594 acres open to fluid mineral leasing
- 513,913 acres currently leased
- 1,184,781 million acres grazed by livestock

## RECREATION

**The North Fruita Desert Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA):** The SRMA includes an extensive multiple use designated trail system with specific emphasis trails for mountain biking, motorcycle, and foot and horse travel. A 111-unit fee area campground is located at the base of the Book Cliffs at the end of 18 Road. A trails master plan was completed in the spring of 2022 that authorized 29 miles of new mountain bike trails and the use of class 1 e-bikes on all bike routes.

**The Grand Valley Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area:** The 17-square mile area of barren hills of Mancos shale offers challenging rides for all types of vehicles and skill levels. Cross-country travel is permitted.

**Bangs Canyon SRMA:** The 57,000-acre SRMA has opportunities for mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, backpacking, hunting, motorcycling, rock crawling, and off-roading. The combination of slickrock surfaces, sand, and bentonite clay soils provide a diversity of travel surfaces and trail riding challenges.

**Gateway Area:** Located along the Dolores River, this area is accessible via the Unaweep/Tabeguache Scenic Byway. Recreation interest is growing due to the new Gateway Canyons Resort. Dispersed recreation use, including motorized activities, big-game hunting, backpacking, rafting, climbing, mountain biking, hiking and camping occurs throughout the area.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Demaree Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA):** Four large, north-south canyons dissecting the high-desert terrain between East and West Salt Creeks characterize the 22,713-acre WSA. Visitors can enjoy the solitude and scenic vistas of the La Sal Mountains in Utah, and Grand Mesa to the southeast.

**Palisade WSA:** The 26,743-acre WSA is located just north of Gateway. Vertical cliffs, deep rugged canyons, and rolling-to-flat desert valley bottoms dissected by gulches characterize the WSA.

**Sewemup Mesa WSA:** The 17,896-acre WSA is located south of Gateway along the Dolores River. Access to the top of the mesa is difficult, leaving it virtually untouched by humans. Recreation opportunities include hiking and horseback riding.

**Little Book Cliffs WSA:** Portions of the 29,299-acre area lie in the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range. This area contains opportunities for primitive recreation and wild horse viewing. Steep cliff walls on both sides characterize canyons in the Book Cliffs.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Calamity Camp:** A nationally significant uranium mining camp dating from 1913-1963 with log and stone residences and other camp structures.



## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Nine-mile Hill Boulders Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) is 87 acres partly designated to protect paleontological values in the Rabbit Valley area close to the Utah border.

The wild and scenic Dolores River is designated in part because of the outstandingly remarkable paleontological resource values along the river corridor.

Approximately 50 miles of the Dinosaur Diamond Highway National Scenic Byway crosses through the Grand Junction Field Office, including a stop in Fruita at the Museum of Western Colorado Dinosaur Journey.

Rabbit Valley Research Natural Area, Mygatt-Moore Quarry, and the Rabbit Valley Trail Through Time – The BLM partners with the Museum of Western Colorado to make this world-class paleontological research site a publicly available interpretation location. The museum is permitted with the BLM to manage the Mygatt-Moore working fossil quarry by maintaining the site, collecting and preserving any finds, and opening the quarry up to public visitation. A 1.5-mile interpretive trail loop called the “Trail Through Time” starts at the quarry and guides visitors along a series of interpretation panels that identify well-preserved dinosaur and plant fossils from sandstone members of the Jurassic Morrison and Dakota Formations.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

Red rock canyons, piñon-juniper woodlands, sagebrush parks, desert and mountain shrub lands, small stands of ponderosa pines, subalpine fir, aspen and Douglas fir pockets typify the public lands managed by the GJFO. These habitats are home to a multitude of species including mule deer, elk, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, black bears, mountain lions, peregrine falcons, wild turkeys, chukar partridges, sandhill cranes, sagebrush voles, Greater Sage-Grouse, and more.

Threatened and endangered species include Colorado hookless cactus, parachute beardtongue, DeBeque phacelia, greenback cutthroat trout, yellow-billed cuckoo, Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, bonytail, humpback chub, and Gunnison Sage-Grouse.

## WILD HORSES

**Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range:** This area encompasses more than 36,000 acres of rugged canyons and plateaus with hiking, horseback, and 4x4 trails. The best places for viewing horses are near the Coal Canyon Trailhead entrance, in the North Soda Area and around Indian Park.

## LANDS & REALTY

Currently, there are about 1,000 rights-of-way in the Grand Junction Planning Area. The office processes

about 35 new applications a year and several dozen assignments (transfers to new holders) and renewals. The program also handles land ownership adjustments through land exchanges, acquisitions and disposals.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

**Grazing:** The area is divided into 212 allotments used by 123 livestock operators. There are 66,135 active Animal Unit Months (AUM) associated with these allotments.

**Noxious Weeds:** The weed program utilizes mechanical, biological, and chemical control of weeds. The Dolores River Riparian Restoration Partnership remains the GJFO’s primary weed control focus. The GJFO targets tamarisk, Siberian elm, Russian knapweed, Russian thistle, and kochia along the riparian areas of the Dolores River.

## SOIL, WATER & AIR RESOURCES

Many types of soils exist in the GJFO because of the varying climatic, vegetative, topographic, and geologic conditions. Impacts on soil resources have resulted from energy development, grazing, recreation, natural processes, and other activities. Salinity is the greatest water quality concern in the valley and the GJFO area contains a large area with saline soils. The dry and steep nature of the area make it susceptible to erosion, while historic uses such as mining, grazing, oil and gas, and agriculture accelerated erosion in the area.

Major rivers include the Colorado, Gunnison, and Dolores rivers. Intermittent and ephemeral streams comprise most of the drainage system. Water quality concerns include salinity, selenium, and sediment, and are addressed by applying stipulations, mitigation, and BMPs when projects are proposed and implemented.

Area streams provide domestic and irrigation water. There are seven municipal watersheds and most large rivers deliver high priority water rights. The GJFO and state water rights staff have worked with Colorado Department of Natural Resources to obtain instream flows on most of the perennial streams in the area. The GJFO also is responsible for more than 250 diversion structures and associated water rights.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The GJFO manages approximately 1,067,500 acres of surface lands and approximately 1,235,600 acres of federal fluid mineral estate in Garfield, Mesa, Montrose, and Rio Blanco Counties. An October 2024 update to the 2015 GJFO Resource Management Plan closed 543,300 acres that were determined to have low or no known potential for oil and gas deposits to future fluid mineral leasing, except for areas with helium potential, which would remain open to leasing. Future fluid mineral leasing can occur in the remaining areas in the GJFO that are open to leasing, and approximately 513,913 of these acres are already leased for oil and gas development with

the highest production areas north and east of Grand Junction. The office conducts over 400 inspections each year to assure compliance with federal regulations and conditions of approval.

**Solid Minerals:** Solid minerals operations in the GJFO include hard rock mining for precious minerals, such as silicate and oxide gemstones, and industrial metals such as uranium and vanadium. Mining activities are permitted through the GJFO as either a notice for exploration or a plan of operations for mining. Currently there is no permitted mineral exploration, one permitted amethyst gemstone mine, and three permitted uranium mines. Two of the uranium mines are in reclamation, and one mine is in care and maintenance and working with the GJFO to resume operations in 2025. This mine has produced up to 1.10 million pounds (Mlbs) of uranium and 3.60 Mlbs of vanadium under various operators since the late 1970s.

**Saleable Minerals:** A variety of mineral material sold to the public for private or commercial use through designated community pits or through negotiated sale. The GJFO manages three community pits for public sale of sand and gravel that average in size of approximately 30 acres and one 5-acre common use area for collecting basalt stones. Two commercial sand and gravel pits are in the thick river alluvial deposits situated between the Colorado and Gunnison River corridors.

**Abandoned Mine Lands:** The GJFO manages the reclamation of abandoned mine sites to protect public health and safety in coordination with other BLM offices and federal and state agencies. Most of the reclamation work is concentrated in the southwestern part of the GJFO in the Uravan Mineral Belt and Uranium Mining District. The GJFO recently worked with the Department of Energy's Defense Related Uranium Mine program to close 52 physical safety hazards related to abandoned mines in this area.

# Colorado River Valley Field Office

2300 River Frontage Rd. • Silt, CO 81652 • 970-876-9000 • 970-876-9090 fax



Counties: Garfield, Mesa, Eagle, Pitkin, Routt and Rio Blanco

## FACTS

- 567,086 surface acres
- 2,188,028 subsurface acres
- 5 Special Recreation Management Areas
- 6 extensive Recreation Management Areas
- 14 developed recreation sites, which include six river access sites to the Colorado and Eagle rivers
- 5 Wilderness Study Areas (34,700 acres)
- 15 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Hubbard Mesa Off-Highway Vehicle Riding Area
- 188 grazing allotments with 112 grazing permits
- More than 800 rights-of-way and 37 communication sites
- Administers nearly 3,100 producing federal natural gas wells

## RECREATION

The Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) provides numerous opportunities for recreation activities on public lands adjacent to two resorts (Vail and Aspen); 11 communities; the Colorado, Eagle, and Roaring Fork rivers; I-70; and the White River National Forest. Recreation activities in this area include off-roading, fishing, wildlife watching, ballooning, white water rafting, hiking, kayaking, hunting, camping, biking, horseback riding, Off-Highway Vehicle riding, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Castle Peak Wilderness Study Area (WSA):** The approximately 19,000-acre WSA, which includes a recent addition of about 7,000 acres, is located eight miles north of the Town of Eagle. Castle Peak has steep rugged slopes and rolling hills, basins, and meadows. Many springs, small lakes and perennial streams are found in the area, providing aquatic habitat, and supporting trout. Expanses of Douglas fir, Engelmann spruce, aspen, sagebrush, and mixed mountain brush are found in the WSA.

**Bull Gulch WSA:** The 15,219-acre area is rugged with steep-sided canyons and gulches draining into the Colorado River. The WSA includes colorful sandstone cliff formations, landslide deposits, and volcanic instructions.

**Hack Lake WSA:** The five-acre area is in Garfield County northeast of Glenwood Springs. The WSA consists of two small parcels adjacent to the Flat Tops Wilderness. It sits on the points of two ridges flanked by steep, rugged cliffs with rocky outcrops and rockslides. Deer and elk hunting, horseback riding, and camping are

available in the area.

**Eagle Mountain WSA:** The 318-acre area is located in Pitkin County eight miles west of Aspen. The WSA is on rugged, steep mountain slopes and includes Eagle Mountain, a 9,937-foot peak. It is recommended for wilderness designation because of its proximity to the existing Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness on national forest lands.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Lookout Mountain Civilian Conservation Corps**

**Campground:** Picnic and campground at the top of Lookout Mountain near Glenwood Springs were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps around 1934-1936.

**Sutey Ranch:** A ranching homestead established in 1909 and acquired by the BLM through exchange in 2017. Many of the original cabins and outbuildings remain and provide a unique opportunity to view ranching life in the Roaring Fork Valley.

**Anvil Points:** The location of an experimental oil shale extraction facility beginning in 1944 and lasting through the 1960s. The site was the location of an N-T-U retort facility which included four adits, a compressor station, workshops and offices, and a town site.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

**McCoy Fan Delta Area of Critical Environmental**

**Concern (ACEC):** The 1,500-acre ACEC protects the geologic and paleontological values associated with fluvial and marine depositional events that occurred along the western margin of the Ancestral Front Range.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The CRVFO contains a wide array of diverse vegetation and ecosystems that provide habitat for fish and wildlife species including mule deer, elk, black bears, coyotes, mountain lions, red fox, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl.

Threatened, endangered or special status species include Canada lynx, razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, Mexican spotted owl, black-footed ferret, yellow-billed cuckoo, Colorado River cutthroat trout, Greater Sage-Grouse, northern leopard frog, Great Basin spade-foot toad, midget faded rattlesnake, Utah milk snake, roundtail chub, bluehead sucker, flannelmouth sucker, Uinta Basin hookless cactus, Parachute penstemon, DeBeque phacelia and Ute lady's-tresses, DeBeque milkvetch, Roan Cliffs blazing star, Adobe thistle, and Harrington's penstemon.

## LANDS & REALTY

The recent surge in natural gas drilling and production has resulted in the need for many new large and small energy related pipelines and access roads. These off-lease facilities are authorized as rights-of-way. Rights-of-ways related to the substantial CRVFO rural-urban interface are a major part of the CRVFO lands program. Municipal water tanks, utilities installations, and driveways and access roads to subdivisions are commonly requested. The CRVFO receives multiple proposals for land exchanges every year.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The CRVFO administers 192 grazing allotments with 145 grazing permits for 35,500 AUMs on 441,600 acres of public land. Cattle and sheep graze on allotments from salt bush to aspen/fir-dominated rangeland. Each year, 20 to 30 grazing permits are renewed or transferred, and about 200 grazing licenses are issued to grazing permittees. CRVFO continues to expand its virtual fence network, which currently covers over 600,000 acres with 3,000 collared cattle.

## SOIL, WATER & AIR RESOURCES

The CRVFO manages lands within the watersheds of three major riverine systems: the Colorado, Roaring Fork, and Eagle rivers. These rivers provide an important local and state resource downstream. The program works with water right holders and permittees to obtain state

and federal permits and review restoration plans. The program helped develop watershed plans within the CRVFO. The Rifle Creek Watershed Assessment helped assess water quality impairments since the creek was listed on the 303(d) list for impaired waters. Work with permittees on the Roan Plateau has been ongoing to improve riparian habitat and grazing management.

The BLM and partners have also carried out annual river clean-up efforts on Cattle Creek, Rifle Creek, and the Colorado River. Planning has begun on Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMP) for the Colorado and Eagle Rivers. The program has begun work on diversion structures within the CRVFO to help improve fish passage and entrainment, water right delivery, and improve overall stream health.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The Energy Policy Act of 2005 identified this field office to be one of seven interagency "pilot offices" for oil and gas permitting in the Rocky Mountain States. The CRVFO energy team manages the oil and gas programs in the Grand Junction and Uncompahgre field offices.

Since 1999, oil and gas development has increased due to better technology and a higher demand for natural gas. CRVFO contains approximately 2,300 producing federal oil and gas wells. The CRVFO processes the most applications for permit to drill in Colorado. Most of the oil and gas development within the CRVFO boundaries (about 80 percent) is on private land and minerals, where BLM has no jurisdiction. About 200,000 acres of the 773,000 acres of federal minerals within CRVFO is leased for oil and gas. CRVFO does not expect much new land to be leased over the next 20 years but expects continued development in the areas that are already leased.

**Solid Minerals:** The CRVFO manages solid mineral operations including gypsum, cinders, limestone, decorative stone, sand, and gravel.



# Southwest District

2505 S. Townsend Avenue • Montrose, CO 81401 • 970-240-5300 • 970-240-5367 fax



The Southwest District manages 1.75 million surface acres and 7.26 million acres of subsurface minerals. The district is comprised of the Gunnison Field Office, Uncompahgre Field Office, and Tres Rios Field Office.

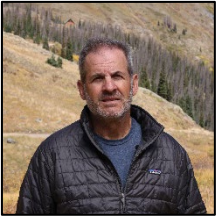
The district includes some of the most spectacular scenery in Colorado—from plateaus and mazelike canyons preserving an ancient cultural heritage to a deep river gorge concealing thunderous rapids and a Gold Medal trout fishery to sun-kissed adobe badlands up to the largest expanse of alpine tundra in the lower 48 states—the Southwest District offers a wealth of resources and opportunities for public use and enjoyment.

The Southwest District includes a number of specially designated areas, including the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area and Gunnison Gorge Wilderness, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Spring Creek Basin Herd Management Area, the Powderhorn Wilderness, a portion of the Uncompahgre Wilderness, and the southern portion of the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area and Dominguez Canyon Wilderness.

# Southwest District Leadership



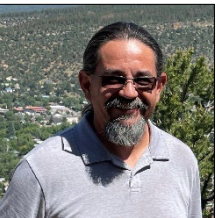
**Stephanie McCormick**, Southwest District Manager, 970-240-5300, [smccormick@blm.gov](mailto:smccormick@blm.gov)  
Stephanie has served as the Southwest District Manager since May 2018. Prior to her current position, she was the BLM Wyoming High Plains District Manager. Stephanie discovered her passion for public lands as a wilderness ranger with the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado in 1988. She joined the BLM in 2003 as an Associate District Manager.



**Jon Kaminsky**, Gunnison Field Manager, 970-642-4941, [jkaminsky@blm.gov](mailto:jkaminsky@blm.gov)  
Jon came on board as the Gunnison Field Manager in July 2021, having previously held the Assistant Field Manager position for the Lander Field Office in Wyoming and the White River Field Office in Colorado. He also served as a geologist/hydrologist in Lander and with the Challis Field Office in Idaho. Jon holds an undergraduate degree in Geology from Western Colorado University and a master's degree in Hydrogeology from Idaho State University.



**Dan Ben-Horin**, Uncompahgre Field Manager, 970-240-5338, [dbenhorin@blm.gov](mailto:dbenhorin@blm.gov)  
Dan joined the Uncompahgre Field Office in July 2024. He previously served as acting Assistant Field Manager for the Grand Junction Field Office, overseeing a complex and dynamic recreation program, and more recently as Field Manager for the Price Field Office in Utah. Dan holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Hofstra University and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, with a concentration in land use and environmental planning, from the University of Colorado Denver.



**Derek Padilla**, Tres Rios Field Manager, 970-882-7296, [dpadilla@blm.gov](mailto:dpadilla@blm.gov)  
Derek has been the Tres Rios Field Manager since May 2023. Prior to joining the BLM, Derek served for 11 years as the District Ranger for the Dolores Ranger District of the San Juan National Forest. Before relocating to Colorado in 2012, he served as a District Ranger in Cuba, New Mexico. Derek holds an undergraduate degree in Range Science from New Mexico State University and is an experienced agency administrator for prescribed and wildland fire.

# Gunnison Field Office

2500 E. New York Avenue • Gunnison, CO 81230 • 970-642-4940 • 970-642-4990 fax



Counties: Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, San Juan, Saguache, and Ouray

## FACTS

- 658,084 surface acres
- 2,215,336 subsurface acres
- 28 recreation sites (6 camping areas)
- 3 Recreation Management Areas: Alpine Triangle, Hartman Rocks, and Cochetopa Canyon.
- 3 mountain peaks above 14,000 feet in elevation—the only 14,000-foot peaks managed by BLM in the lower 48 states
- 2 Wilderness Areas (51,651 acres)
- 8 Wilderness Study Areas (66,878 acres)
- 3 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways: The Alpine Loop, The Silver Thread and The West Elk Loop
- 180,000 acres of forest land
- 3 endangered, threatened, and candidate animal species
- 500,000 acres of small game habitat
- 585,000 acres of big game habitat
- 2,690 miles of streams and rivers
- 582,718 acres grazed by livestock

Ecosystems managed by the Gunnison Field Office (GFO) range from dry sagebrush steppes at 7,000 feet to forests to 14,000-foot alpine tundra meadows.

## RECREATION

About 1.2 million visitors annually come to the Gunnison Basin to enjoy the beauty and recreation experiences on public lands.

**Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway:** The byway covers 96 miles of roads between the towns of Lake City, Ouray and Silverton. Depending on snow, the Loop opens late May/early June and closes in late October. A four-wheel-drive, high clearance vehicle or off-highway vehicle is required to traverse the entire route. The GFO manages four fee campgrounds, about 300 dispersed campsites, and 30 trailheads and points of interest.

**Continental Divide Snowmobile Trail:** During the winter, this trail offers 80 miles of groomed routes. A yurt system for skiers is also available south of Lake City.

**Hartman Rocks Special Recreation Management Area:** This popular 14,000-acre urban interface recreation area is a destination for mountain biking, rock climbing and singletrack motorized enthusiasts. The area has 45 miles of singletrack multiple-use trails, 45 miles of roads, about 100 campsites, and hundreds of rock climbing and bouldering routes. Other popular activities include horseback riding, cross-country skiing, fat biking, snowmobiling, hunting, and target shooting.

**Signal Peak Trail System:** In cooperation with local stakeholders advocating for non-motorized trails adjacent to the city of Gunnison and connecting to trails on Western Colorado University lands, a trail proposal was developed and approved in June 2018. The plan outlines a 14,000-acre trail system adding to an area historically used by recreationists to quickly access surrounding public lands, and provides for 21.6 miles of non-motorized trails.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Powderhorn Wilderness:** The GFO manages 47,865 acres of this 62,759-acre wilderness area, jointly managed with the U.S. Forest Service. Two high-elevation plateaus above 12,000 feet make up the largest expanse of alpine tundra in the lower 48 states. Volcanic deposits believed to be 5,000 feet thick in some areas created the plateaus.

**Uncompahgre Wilderness:** The GFO manages 3,786 acres of the Uncompahgre Wilderness, known as American Flats. Several forks of the Cimarron River rush out of the center of this wilderness area.

**Handies Peak WSA:** This 16,341-acre WSA is steep and mountainous with twelve peaks above 13,000 feet, including Handies Peak (14,048 feet), along with several alpine lakes.

**Red Cloud Peak WSA:** This 38,073-acre WSA is home to two 14,000-foot peaks, Redcloud Peak (14,043 feet) and Sunshine Peak (14,001 feet).

**American Flats WSA:** The 3,101-acre American Flats WSA is located on the south side of the larger Uncompahgre Wilderness. This WSA is characterized by its alpine tundra ranging from 11,000 to 13,000 feet.

**Whitehead Gulch (1,856 acres) & Weminuche (1,403 acres) WSAs:** These WSAs are remnants of study areas that were partially exchanged with the U.S. Forest Service in a boundary adjustment completed in 1983. They adjoin the 499,771-acre U.S. Forest Service-managed Weminuche Wilderness.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway:** This area provides a view into the history of the Lake City and Silverton mining era through stabilized and interpreted sites relating to the mining and life of the early settlers and miners of the San Juan Mountains.

**Sound Democrat Stamp Mill:** Located in Placer Gulch, the mill was built in 1905 to crush and process gold and silver/lead ore from the Sound Democrat Mine and the Silver Queen Mine.

**Old Spanish National Historic Trail:** This trail was pioneered in 1829 by Mexican traders as a horse and burro pack route that connected Santa Fe to Los Angeles. Approximately 42 miles crosses the GFO.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The region's varied ecosystems provide habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife including elk, deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mountain lions, bobcats, hawks, songbirds, and trout. Threatened, endangered, and candidate species include Canada lynx, Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, yellow-billed cuckoo, and Gunnison sage-grouse. The largest population of Gunnison sage-grouse is found within the Gunnison Basin.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing is broken into 104 active allotments serving 86 permittees and providing 35,669 Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of forage for domestic cattle, sheep and horses. The GFO balances grazing use with wildlife needs, the protection of riparian areas, and the maintenance of healthy ecosystems. The range program, in cooperation with Gunnison, Saguache and Hinsdale counties, controls invasive weeds in the area.

## MINERALS

**Solid Minerals:** Solid minerals management includes hard rock mining, placer activities, and gravel pit management. The San Juan Mountains located along the Alpine Loop had hard rock mines in the past. There are many placer claims along the waterways near Silverton and Gunnison where exploration for gold by panning and dredging occur seasonally. An active gold mine and an active silver mine are near Lake City. There is one active notice for exploration of semi-precious minerals near Silverton and four expired notices awaiting the completion of their final reclamation by the operators. Mineral materials (sand, gravel, fill, decorative stone, etc.) are available to the public and government agencies. There are five common use areas, two community pits, and one county borrow pit.

## LANDS & REALTY

The program issues and administers rights-of-way for phone lines, access roads and electric transmission lines across public lands. The program handles land ownership adjustments through land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals. The program also identifies and resolves trespasses on public lands.

## FORESTRY

The GFO is approximately 30 percent commercial forests and woodlands. Timber types include Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, aspen, Engelmann spruce/subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, blue spruce, juniper, and bristlecone pine. Approximately 200 forested acres per year are managed to reduce insect and disease outbreaks, improve wildlife habitat, reduce the effects of historic fire suppression, and meet demand for forest products.

## FIRE & FUELS MANAGEMENT

The GFO has completed extensive planning for a fuels project focused on the North Powderhorn area. Fuels specialists will employ various treatments on a range of vegetation types within and adjacent to the Powderhorn Wilderness to address changes in vegetation composition that have reduced the area's resilience to disturbances, including insects, fire, and other impacts related to climate change. The consideration of treatments within wilderness requires the preparation of Minimum Requirements Analyses, which are currently under way. Identify and recommend the minimum actions necessary for wilderness administration, per the 1964 Wilderness Act

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

The GFO includes one of only nine areas in Colorado identified as having the potential for commercially viable geothermal development. Nearly 9,000 acres on BLM, Gunnison National Forest, and private lands in the Tomichi Dome area were leased for geothermal activities.



# Uncompahgre Field Office

2465 S. Townsend Avenue • Montrose, CO 81401 • 970-240-5300 • 970-240-5367 fax



Counties: Montrose, Ouray, Delta, Gunnison, San Miguel, and Mesa

## FACTS

- 881,441 surface acres
- 2,362,650 subsurface acres
- 36 recreation sites (7 developed camping areas, 10 staging/trailheads, 5 developed day-use areas, 1 developed living classroom site and 1 historical site)
- 5 Special Recreation Management Areas
- 6 areas managed for wilderness values (5 Wilderness Study Areas, Tabeguache Special Management Area)
- 3 Colorado Scenic Byways: West Elk Loop, Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway, Unaweep-Tabeguache Scenic Byway
- 2 All American Roads: San Juan Skyway and the Grand Mesa Scenic Byway
- 465,151 acres of woodlands
- 11 endangered, threatened, and candidate species
- 3,120 miles of perennial streams and rivers
- 658,540 acres (UFO planning area) grazed by livestock

The Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) manages public lands within two ecologic provinces – the Southern Rocky Mountains and the Colorado Plateau – with vegetation ranging from salt-desert shrub (4,701 ft.) to alpine forest (11,449 ft.). The Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area and the southern portion of the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area lie within the UFO boundary. The UFO is adjacent to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and close to four Colorado state parks.

## RECREATION

The UFO manages recreation opportunities that include rafting, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting, motorcycle riding, ATV trail riding, four-wheel driving, rock crawling, rock climbing, wildlife viewing, and wildlife photography.

**Hanging Flume:** Located in a remote stretch of western Colorado above the San Miguel and Dolores Rivers, the Hanging Flume begins near the former town of Uravan and ends about 10 miles downstream. While much of the wood chute has been removed, portions of the flume remain attached to the sandstone cliffs by iron support rods, with small sections recently restored.

**Ridgway Area Trails:** The 1,130 acres of public lands just north of the town of Ridgway provides more than 25 miles of multi-use non-motorized singletrack trails.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

**Camel Back Wilderness Study Area (WSA):** This 10,680-acre WSA on the north slope of the Uncompahgre

Plateau is contiguous to the U.S. Forest Service's Roubideau Area and is characterized by steep canyons and extensive mesas.

**Adobe Badlands WSA:** The 10,320-acre WSA is characterized by abrupt sloping hills of Mancos shale dissected by rugged serpentine canyons. It overlaps with the Adobe Badlands ACEC.

**Dolores River Canyon WSA:** The UFO manages 13,340 acres of the 30,119-acre WSA. Deep serpentine sandstone canyons carved by the Dolores River and its tributaries characterize the WSA.

**Sewemup Mesa WSA:** The UFO manages 1,740 acres of the WSA. Broken, rocky slopes above Roc Creek characterize the UFO portion of the WSA.

**Needle Rock Wilderness Study Area:** This 80-acre area has the Needle Rock geologic feature—a dramatic, vertical, igneous rock core that dominates the area and is likely remnants of an ancient extinct volcano.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Hanging Flume:** Constructed over three years in the late 1800s, the Hanging Flume was listed as a historic site on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. In 1999, Colorado Preservation Inc. placed the structure on its annual list of the most endangered historic places in Colorado; and it was nominated and placed on the World Monuments Fund 2005 Watch List of most endangered sites.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The UFO supports a range of wildlife and plants and provides habitat for several threatened, endangered or candidate species, including the Gunnison sage-grouse, Colorado hookless cactus, bonytail chub, humpback chub, razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, Canada lynx, greenback cutthroat trout, black-footed ferret, Mexican spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, western yellow-billed cuckoo, Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, and clay-loving wild buckwheat.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

**Grazing:** Currently 619,500 acres (97 percent) within the UFO planning area are allocated for livestock grazing. The UFO has 231 allotments and 135 permittees. The allotments vary in size from 30 to 94,210 acres, with grazing allocations ranging from 1 to 4,255 AUMs in each allotment. Grazing occurs year-round, concentrated during spring and fall months. The U.S. Forest Service and BLM coordinate grazing management when a permittee uses lands managed by both agencies.

**Noxious Weeds:** The UFO is continually working on noxious weed and non-native plants. The grazing program includes a BLM seasonal weed crew and continues to work with partners to fight noxious weeds. The UFO continues to remove tamarisk and Russian olive along the Gunnison and Dolores rivers.

## SOIL, WATER & AIR RESOURCES

The UFO manages lands in five major river drainages—the Dolores, Gunnison, North Fork of the Gunnison, San Miguel, and Uncompahgre Rivers. More than 2,700 total stream miles (perennial, intermittent and ephemeral stream channels) are managed in the planning area. The UFO manages 107,000 acres of saline and selenium enriched soils primarily of the Mancos Shale and Paradox formations. Mancos Shale is a marine deposit that is highly erodible and drought affected. Air quality in the field office is classified as in attainment, except for the Telluride PM<sub>10</sub> Attainment/Maintenance Area. There are three Class I airsheds located within the field office.

## LANDS & REALTY

The UFO issues and administers rights-of-way for land uses such as roads, power lines, natural gas pipelines,

water lines, telephone lines, communication sites, and ditches and canals on public land. Utility corridors cross the UFO along major transmission lines including the TransColorado natural gas pipeline and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and Western Area Power Administration power lines. The program also handles land ownership adjustments through land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** Mineral development occurs in sedimentary strata associated with the Mancos Shale and within coal seams in rock formations of the Mesa Verde Group. These fluid mineral resources (primarily natural gas) are found in the same general locations as coal resources in the North Fork of the Gunnison River in Delta and Gunnison counties, and primarily within USFS-managed acreage. Development of fluid mineral resources is also minimally present in the west end of Montrose County. A low level of fluid mineral development has occurred in the UFO.

**Solid Minerals:** Coal mining has been an important industry in the North Fork Valley for more than 100 years. One coal mine remains in production. The royalty revenue paid to the federal treasury varies from \$8-12 million each year depending on production levels and sales price, with half the revenue returned to the State of Colorado. The UFO manages the surface and subsurface use for locatable mineral development for precious and industrial metals such as gold, silver, copper, uranium, and vanadium. These mining activities are permitted as exploration notices or mining plans of operation. There are four mining notices and two mining plans of operation in Montrose County. None of these projects have ongoing underground exploratory and development mining.

## FIRE MANAGEMENT

The UFO hosts the Southwest District Fire Management Unit, which works with the community to address wildfire risk reduction efforts across the region through prescribed burns, rehabilitation efforts, and education. Local partners include Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest (USFS), Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park (NPS), Curecanti National Recreation Area (NPS), and public land managers in the counties of Montrose, Ouray, Delta, Gunnison, San Miguel and Mesa.

# Tres Rios Field Office

29211 Hwy. 184 • Dolores, CO 81323 • 970-882-1120 • 970-882-6841 fax



Counties: Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, Montrose and San Miguel

## FACTS

- 460,536 surface acres
- 2,692,990 subsurface mineral acres (incl. CANM)
- Trust responsibilities for mineral management on 800,000 acres of Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute tribal lands
- 13 Recreation Management Areas: 3 within the field office (Cortez, Durango, and Dolores River); 10 within Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, Lowry Pueblo, Painted Hand Pueblo, Sand Canyon Pueblo, Squaw/Cross Canyons, Mockingbird Mesa, Rincon, Sand Canyon, Rock Creek, and Goodman Point)
- 5 Wilderness Study Areas: 50,334 acres
- 1 National Historic Trail: Old Spanish Trail
- 1 wild horse Herd Management Area: Spring Creek Basin
- endangered, threatened or candidate species
- 628 miles of streams and rivers
- 500,000 acres grazed by livestock

## RECREATION

**Dolores River:** The Dolores River flows more than 200 miles through southwestern Colorado, starting high in the San Juan Mountains and descending to the Colorado River near the Colorado-Utah border. Private permits are not required for boating. Bradfield Campground, Big Gypsum Valley and Dove Creek Pump Station are popular launch sites for rafting trips on the lower Dolores River. There are 16 barrier-free campsites, toilets, and five picnic sites.

### **Cortez Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA):**

The Cortez SRMA is comprised of two Recreation Management Zones (RMZ): Montezuma Triangle and Mudsprings. The Montezuma Triangle RMZ is managed for hikers, runners, and mountain bikers. The cornerstone of this RMZ is Phil's World, a nationally recognized mountain biking trail system. In addition, both the Aqueduct and Chutes and Ladders areas now have developed trail systems, with Aqueduct featuring 11 miles of trails open to Class 1 e-bikes. Summit has no developed trails or trailhead facilities to date. The Mudsprings RMZ emphasizes motorized trails and rock crawling, including "open" motorized recreation areas.

**Durango Urban Interface:** This area encompasses Animas City Mountain, East Animas Climbing Area, Grandview, Horse Gulch, Skyline, and Perins Peak. Recreation opportunities include biking, hiking, climbing, skiing, and snowshoeing.

## NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

### **Dolores River Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA):**

The TRFO manages 15,870 acres of the 30,119-acre WSA. The dominant topographic feature of this WSA is the 30-mile-long canyon of the Dolores River. Recreation opportunities include backpacking, hiking, photography, rock climbing and whitewater rafting.

**McKenna Peak WSA:** This 20,713-acre WSA includes Mancos Shale badlands and Mesa Verde Sandstone cliffs, canyons, mesas and rolling hills, with elevations ranging from 6,300 to 8,600 feet. McKenna Peak rises 1,000 feet from Disappointment Valley. The western third of the WSA is located within the Spring Creek Basin wild horse Herd Management Area.

**Menefee Mountain WSA:** This 7,340-acre WSA provides outstanding recreation opportunities for hikers, backpackers, and rock climbers. Elevations range from 6,500 to 8,600 feet on Menefee Peak, with steep canyons radiating from the ridge of Menefee Mountain.

**Weber Mountain WSA:** The 6,275-acre WSA provides recreation opportunities for hikers, backpackers, and rock climbers. Elevations range from 6,600 to 8,200 feet, with short steep canyons.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The prehistoric and historic periods span about 11,500 years. The area contains the archaeological record of some of the earliest agricultural societies in the region. The historic period brought Spanish and Euro-American explorers, trappers, miners, and settlers into the area.

**Gypsum Gap Rock Art Site:** This rock shelter contains 11 rock art panels featuring deer, elk, mountain sheep, corn stalks, deer hooves, and possibly bear paws.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

The Tres Rios Field Office provides habitat for black bears, elk, mule deer, turkey, desert bighorn sheep, peregrine falcon, dusky grouse, and several bat species. Additionally, there's habitat for sensitive and endangered designated under the Endangered Species Act, like the Mexican spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, bonytail chub, Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, razorback sucker, and Gunnison sage-grouse. There are 70,414 acres of Critical Habitat for Gunnison sage-grouse, with 40,308 acres occupied by the species.

Gunnison sage-grouse in the TRFO are part of two distinct satellite populations— Monticello-Dove Creek and San Miguel Basin.

## WILD HORSES

**Spring Creek Basin Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA):** This remote 22,000-acre HMA maintains a minimum of 50 adult horses and provides an example of a successful fertility control program made possible by partnerships with local organizations.

## FIRE MANAGEMENT

County operations plans are in place to work with local and state governments, fire prevention districts, and other federal agencies. The interagency fire management organization is responsible for 1.3 million acres of BLM and USFS lands and averages 106 wildland fires per year. They also conduct prescribed fire activities on 3,000-4,000 acres per year. Suppression activity averages 49 fires per year.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** The TRFO manages about 2.1 million acres of federal mineral estate and has trust responsibilities for mineral resources on 327,324 acres of Southern Ute and 553,000 acres of Ute Mountain Ute tribal lands. Existing oil and gas operations include 600 federal wells, 300 Ute Mountain Ute wells, and over 2,000 Southern Ute wells and 100 carbon dioxide wells located in the Northern San Juan and Paradox geologic basins of southwestern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico.

**Solid Minerals:** The TRFO includes a portion of the historic Uravan Mineral Belt, a major district for uranium

and vanadium resources in the United States. Uranium is used for nuclear fuel, while vanadium is used in steel alloys and for emerging grid-level storage battery technology. A complex of two related uranium-vanadium mines is presently idle, although a new plan of operations is under review and could bring both back into production with an increase in either commodity price. A third plan of operations is in the final stages of closure, along with one active and one pending exploration notice. TRFO presently has one pending and three active county free use gravel permits. One large commercial gravel pit and one small commercial flagstone quarry are currently in operation. TRFO has one active coal mine, for which the field office recently completed a 2000+ acre preference right lease. Due to its specific properties, coal from this mine is used for the manufacture of cement.

**Abandoned Mine Lands:** The highest priority for TRFO is to secure and complete physical safety closures for open mine shafts and other abandoned mine features that present immediate and potentially fatal safety hazards. Most recently the program included the signing and fencing of 45 features and the completion of physical safety closures for 54 abandoned mine features. TRFO, in conjunction with the Department of Energy's Defense Related Uranium Mine program, will begin inventories in FY21 that will lead to future signing, fencing, and closure projects.

## LANDS & REALTY

The TRFO's Lands and Realty Program is responsible for authorizing and administering rights-of-way for roads, power lines, telephone lines, gas and water pipelines, communication sites, commercial film permits, Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases, and other land use authorizations involving public lands. The program is responsible for land tenure actions, such as land exchanges, acquisition and disposals, and the resolution of trespass cases involving public lands.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

Rangelands comprise about 85 percent of the public land in the field office. Currently, the TRFO manages 74 active allotments on 324,061 acres providing 20,528 AUMs of forage for domestic cattle. In addition, TRFO provides grazing support to CANM's 23 active allotments on 147,601 acres for 7,250 permitted AUMs for domestic cattle.



# National Conservation Lands

The BLM's National Conservation Lands, also known as the National Landscape Conservation System, contain some of the West's most spectacular landscapes. BLM Colorado is home to 65 areas encompassing more than one million acres.

BLM Colorado manages two national monuments: Canyons of the Ancients National Monument and Browns Canyon National Monument. National Conservation Areas (NCA) are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public lands for the enjoyment of present and future generations. BLM Colorado's McInnis Canyons, Dominguez-Escalante, and Gunnison Gorge NCAs offer landscapes with exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archaeological, paleontological, historical, educational, or scientific resources.

BLM Colorado manages portions of two National Scenic and Historic Trails, both established through acts of Congress. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail runs through New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California. In Colorado, various branches of the Trail pass through the San Luis, Gunnison, Grand Junction and Tres Rios field offices. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail recognizes the land route traveled by traders between 19th-century Mexico and California. The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail provides spectacular backcountry travel for the length of the Rocky Mountains from Mexico to Canada.

In 1964, Congress established the National Wilderness Preservation System. BLM Colorado manages five wildernesses: Black Ridge Canyons, Dominguez Canyon, Gunnison Gorge, Powderhorn and Uncompahgre.

As was required by the passage of FLPMA in 1976, local BLM field offices identified relatively undeveloped areas with special ecological, geological, educational, historical, scientific, or scenic values that may be suitable for wilderness designation. These areas are known as Wilderness Study Areas. Until Congress determines an area's suitability, the BLM manages each area to a standard that will not impair its eligibility for future wilderness designation. BLM Colorado currently manages 54 Wilderness Study Areas.

# Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

## FACTS

- 176,000 surface acres
- 3 developed recreation sites and 3 picnic areas
- 3 Wilderness Study Areas (25,626 acres): Cross Canyon (11,674 acres), Cahone Canyon (9,189 acres), and Sego Lily (4,763 acres)
- 1 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway: Trail of the Ancients
- 127,895 acres leased for fluid minerals
- 23 grazing allotments

Counties: Montezuma and Dolores



Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) was designated on June 9, 2000, by Presidential Proclamation to protect cultural and natural resources.

## RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS

**Lowry Pueblo:** The most accessible archaeological site, with a parking area, accessible trail, interpretive signs, picnic tables and restrooms. The site has about 40 rooms, eight kivas, and a great kiva.

**Painted Hand Pueblo:** The site consists of a standing tower, room blocks, and kivas.

**Sand Canyon Trail System:** The Sand Canyon/East Rock Special Management Area provides 19 miles of popular hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails including the Sand Canyon, Rock Creek and East Rock Creek.

**Sand Canyon Pueblo:** Crow Canyon Archaeological Center excavated the Pueblo from 1984 to 1989 and 1991 to 1993, but the majority was left untouched to preserve the fragile structure.

**Wilderness Study Areas:** The four Wilderness Study Areas provide recreational uses including hiking, hunting, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, visiting archaeological sites, and dispersed camping.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

CANM contains the highest density of cultural resources in the United States. CANM is home to ten historic properties and one Archaeological District (Sand Canyon) that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, along with one National Historic Landmark (Lowry Pueblo).

More than 8,400 recorded sites reflect all components of past human life: villages, field houses, check dams, reservoirs, great kivas, cliff dwellings, shrines, sacred springs, sweat lodges, petroglyphs, and agricultural fields. Some areas have more than 200 sites per square mile.

## VISITOR CENTER AND MUSEUM

Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum is Southwest Colorado's premier archaeological museum, and features permanent and changing exhibits on ancestral Puebloan archaeology, regional history, Native American cultures, and natural resource. The museum hosts public activities with resources for teachers, special exhibits, and a research library.

There are approximately 3.8 million artifacts curated at the Visitor Center and Museum. Twenty-six Native American tribes have strong cultural ties with CANM.

## LANDS & REALTY

Since 2000, more than 9,000 acres have been acquired including a National Register-listed site and about 100 archaeological sites from the Archaic (3000 B.C.) to Pueblo III (A.D. 1300) periods.

## MINERALS

**Fluid Minerals:** About 77 percent of CANM, which is part of the Paradox Basin, is leased for oil and gas. Production comes primarily from the McElmo Dome field (containing carbon dioxide reserves) and the overlying Island Butte II, Cutthroat, and Canyon units (producing natural gas, condensate, and oil).

# McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area

## FACTS

- 123,739 acres
- 19 recreation sites (14 trailheads, 3 primitive campgrounds, 3 picnic areas, 3 interpretive trails)
- 6 Recreation Management Zones
- 1 Wilderness Area (70,377 acres, 5,107 acres in Utah)
- 4 endangered, threatened, and candidate species (4 listed)
- 114,000 acres grazed by livestock
- 14 grazing allotments
- 1 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway
- 1 National Historic Trail

County: Mesa County



The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act created the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (NCA) in 2000. In 2005, the name was changed through congressional legislation to McInnis Canyons in honor of Congressman Scott McInnis. The 2004 Colorado Canyons NCA Resource Management Plan guides management in the area.

## RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS

**Front Country/Urban Interface:** This area provides more than 25 miles of trails managed for foot travel and horse use. Motorized and mechanized use, camping, and recreational shooting are not allowed.

**Rabbit Valley:** These 24 square miles of high desert terrain provides recreation opportunities including camping, hiking, biking, motorized recreation, and hunting. More than 25 miles of trails provide access to additional trails in the Moab Rims area in Utah.

**Mack Ridge:** Mack Ridge offers opportunities for mountain bikers of all skill levels. The Kokopelli Loops are 35 miles of technical trails and include the origin of the Kokopelli Trail. The Kokopelli Trail is a system of single tracks, two tracks, and county roads that winds through 142 miles of remote desert sandstone and shale canyons before ending in Moab, Utah.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### **McDonald Creek Cultural Resource Management Area:**

This area lies within Rabbit Valley and was designated to protect its fragile, prehistoric archaeological sites.

**Old Spanish National Historic Trail:** Remnants of the trail are in the Rabbit Valley and McDonald Creek areas.

## PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Rabbit Valley includes the Mygatt-Moore paleontological quarry and the Trail Through Time paleontological interpretive trail. The quarry is believed to have been an ancient watering hole for dinosaurs. The Fruita Paleontological Area and the Dinosaur Hill historic quarry offer paleontological interpretation.

## WILDERNESS

**Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness:** This area is dissected by seven major red rock canyon systems that reach depths of almost 1,000 feet. Geological features include side canyons, spires, windows, giant alcoves, desert patina, and natural arches. Mechanized and motorized travel is not allowed within the wilderness boundary except where authorized.

## WILDLIFE

The NCA provides habitat for deer, elk, black bears, mountain lions, antelope, desert bighorn sheep, peregrine falcons, bald eagles, and Gunnison Sage-Grouse. Rabbit Valley was identified as an Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society.

# Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area

## FACTS

- 210,172 surface acres
- 1 wilderness (Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Area)
- 3 Special Recreation Management Areas (34,032 acres): Cactus Park, Gunnison River, Escalante Canyon
- 4 Extensive Recreation Management Areas (94,072 acres): Sawmill Mesa, Hunting Grounds, Ninemile Hill, East Creek
- 9 recreation sites (1 primitive campground, 1 day-use/picnic area, 5 trail heads, and 3 primitive boat launches)
- 13 grazing allotments



Counties: Mesa, Delta and Montrose

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 designated Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area (NCA). Local, regional and national interests supported its designation. In January 2017, a new resource management plan for the NCA and wilderness was completed.

## RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS

Recreational opportunities in the NCA include hiking, boating, horseback riding, OHV riding, fishing, hunting, sightseeing, wildlife photography, backpacking, mountain biking, and exploring archaeological sites. The canyons of the Gunnison River and Dominguez and Escalante Creeks provide opportunities for visitors to explore and learn about geologic, archaeological, paleontological, and historical resources. Bridgeport Bridge provides non-motorized access to waterfalls, historic areas, and Native American rock art sites in the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness.

**Escalante Canyon:** Escalante Canyon includes the Potholes Recreation Area, popular with kayakers and picnickers. The Escalante Canyon ACEC contains sensitive plant species, natural seeps, and several globally unique plant associations including hanging gardens of small-flowered columbine and Eastwood's monkeyflower. A 15-mile county road offers visitors a trip back to pioneer days through Escalante Canyon's "Red Hole in Time," with viewing access to historic cabins, rock walls with early settlers and Native American inscriptions, and geologic formations.

**Sawmill Mesa:** This area provides critical motorized links to the Uncompahgre National Forest. The Delta-Nucla/25-Mesa Road borders the NCA on the southeast

and connects Delta to Nucla and the Divide Road, which follows the spine of the Uncompahgre Plateau. This area is rich in history, providing the only access route for settlers in Escalante Creek to Delta in the 1800s and early 1900s.

**Hunting:** Dominguez-Escalante NCA provides outstanding hunting and fishing opportunities. Sportsmen and women pursue numerous fish and game species including desert bighorn sheep, rainbow trout, greenback cutthroat trout, elk, mule deer, black bear, mountain lion, turkey, waterfowl, chukar and quail.

## WILDERNESS

The sandstone canyons and pinyon-juniper covered mesas of the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness (66,216) offer excellent hiking opportunities. Little Dominguez Creek creates habitat for birds, mammals, and reptiles. Desert bighorn sheep were reintroduced to the wilderness. Hikers along the Big Dominguez Creek pass historic structures, traces of early miners and settlers. Rock art and wickiups are evidence of Native American use for hunting, shelter and travel corridor from the Gunnison River Valley to the Uncompahgre Plateau.

## CULTURAL & PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The red rock canyons and sandstone bluffs in the NCA contain geological and paleontological resources spanning 600 million years. Cultural and historic sites showcase the homesteading and agricultural history of the area. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail, a 19th Century land trade route, passes through the NCA.



# Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area

## FACTS

- 63,294 surface acres
- 1 Wilderness Area: 17,781-acre Gunnison Gorge Wilderness
- 10,000 acres of woodlands (pinyon-juniper), 20,000 acres saltbush, 16,000 acres sagebrush community, 18,000 acres grass/forb rangeland
- 21 recreation sites (6 developed, 3 picnic areas, 3 campgrounds, 5 primitive boat ramps, 3 river overlook sites)
- 3 Special Recreation Management Areas
- 18 miles of Gold Medal waters of the Gunnison River
- 3 listed endangered and threatened species
- 22,000 acres of big game habitat
- 46,000 acres grazed by livestock
- 1 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway: West Elk Byway



Counties: Montrose and Delta

Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (GGNCA) was designated in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Act of 1999 and has been certified as an International Dark Sky Park.

## RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS

**Flat Top-Peach Valley OHV Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA):** This 7,000-acre area contains more than 75 miles of designated trails, picnic areas, three OHV staging areas, a motorcycle/ATV training site, an award-winning OHV skills course, 2,700 acres of “open” riding areas and the southern terminus of the 20-mile multi-use, single-track Sidewinder Trail.

**Gunnison and North Fork Rivers SRMA:** This area contains a campground, universally accessible fishing pier, day use area, trailhead, three boat ramp sites, designated river campsites, an interpretive trail with rock art, dinosaur track site, jeep trails and the Eagle Rock Shelter archaeological site.

**Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Special Recreation Management Area:** This area has five Wilderness trailheads and 20 designated river campsites.

## WILDERNESS

The 17,781-acre Gunnison Gorge Wilderness includes 12 miles of the Gunnison River with Gold Medal trout fishing in a technical (Class III-IV) whitewater setting.

## CULTURAL & PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Findings from the Eagle Rock Shelter site shows continuous human occupation dating back nearly 13,000 years making this a nationally significant site. Dinosaur trackways have been found in the area dating to the Cretaceous age.

## WILDLIFE, THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES

Colorado Parks and Wildlife designated the Gunnison River as a Gold Medal trout fishery because of its robust rainbow, brown, and cutthroat trout populations. The east side of the GGNCA is home to a population of threatened Gunnison sage-grouse. The 2004 GGNCA Resource Management Plan designated three Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC): the Native Plant Community ACEC, the Fairview ACEC, and the Gunnison sage-grouse ACEC/Important Bird Area.

## RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

Grazing permits in the GGNCA contain special stipulations requiring a visual setback for livestock grazing activities of 500 feet from established recreational sites such as roads, trailheads, user areas, and fee collection sites.

## LANDS & REALTY

All forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal are prohibited. Rights-of-way applications and acquisitions are decided on a case-by-case basis.

# Browns Canyon National Monument

## FACTS

- 21,589 acres (9,783 acres managed by BLM, 11,805 acres managed by USFS)
- 2 developed campgrounds, boat ramps (managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife as a part of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area)
- 1 Wilderness Study Area (7,449 acres)



County: Chaffee County

The BLM and U.S. Forest Service jointly manage the 21,589-acre Browns Canyon National Monument (BCNM), located in south-central Colorado in the upper Arkansas River Valley. In 2015, BCNM was designated by Presidential Proclamation to protect cultural and natural resources. Colorado Parks and Wildlife, through the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA), manages river-based recreation on the Arkansas River through Browns Canyon.

## RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS

For centuries, the rugged granite cliffs, colorful rock outcroppings and mountain vistas attracted visitors from around the world. The monument provides excellent opportunities for hiking, boating, motorized use, camping, wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, and horseback riding.

**Ruby Mountain Recreation Site:** Managed by the AHRA, this site features a campground with restrooms, changing facilities, a boat ramp, and picnic sites.

**Hecla Junction Recreation Site:** This site is the primary location for taking boats out after floating through Browns Canyon. The area features a newly renovated campground with restrooms, changing facilities, a boat ramp, and picnic sites.

**Motorized:** The Turret Road (FS Rd. #184) off Aspen Ridge Road (FS Rd. #185) provides a rugged 4x4 experience. FSR 1434A is an ATV route that traverses BCNM's northern boundary.

## WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

**Browns Canyon WSA:** This 7,449-acre WSA is located between the towns of Salida and Buena Vista. The rugged topography includes canyons and gulches that open to ridge tops with views of the Arkansas River Valley and Sawatch Mountain Range. The primary

trailhead is located near the Ruby Mountain Recreation Site along Chaffee County Road 300. The entire WSA is within an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

## PLANTS & WILDLIFE

The BCNM is home to a wide variety of plant and wildlife species including Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, black bears, mountain lions, elk, mule deer, peregrine falcons, golden eagles, Northern goshawks, boreal owls, boreal toads, northern leopard frogs, Ute Lady tresses, Fendler's Townsend-daisy, Fendler's false cloak-fern, Bill's Neparrrya, and pale blue-eyed grass.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The story of the people living in the upper Arkansas River valley is told through sites and artifacts dating back 11,000 years. In 1858, the discovery of gold in Colorado brought an influx of people to the area, along with the need for transportation. While the Old Stage Road provided a route to Leadville for many years; it was very rugged, and the trip was long. The arrival of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad in 1880 allowed for easier access to the booming mining area around Leadville. Many interesting historic mining sites are still found throughout the BCNM.