

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The United States Department of the Interior (USDI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), has prepared this Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS). The purposes of this document are as follows:

- Provide direction for managing BLM lands (surface acreage) and federal mineral estate (subsurface acreage) administered by the BLM, under the jurisdictions of the Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO; formerly the Glenwood Springs Field Office [GSFO]) in Colorado.
- Analyze the environmental effects that could result from implementing the alternatives addressed in the EIS.

The original intent of this RMP revision planning process was to revise the respective land use plans for the BLM Kremmling Field Office (KFO) and the CRVFO in a single, joint RMP/EIS document. However, the BLM decided to separate the land use plans for these two field offices based on consideration of public comment and understanding that the decision process would benefit from separating these RMPs by field office. The affected lands in this RMP revision planning process have been managed under the Glenwood Springs RMP (BLM 1984a) and its associated plan amendments.

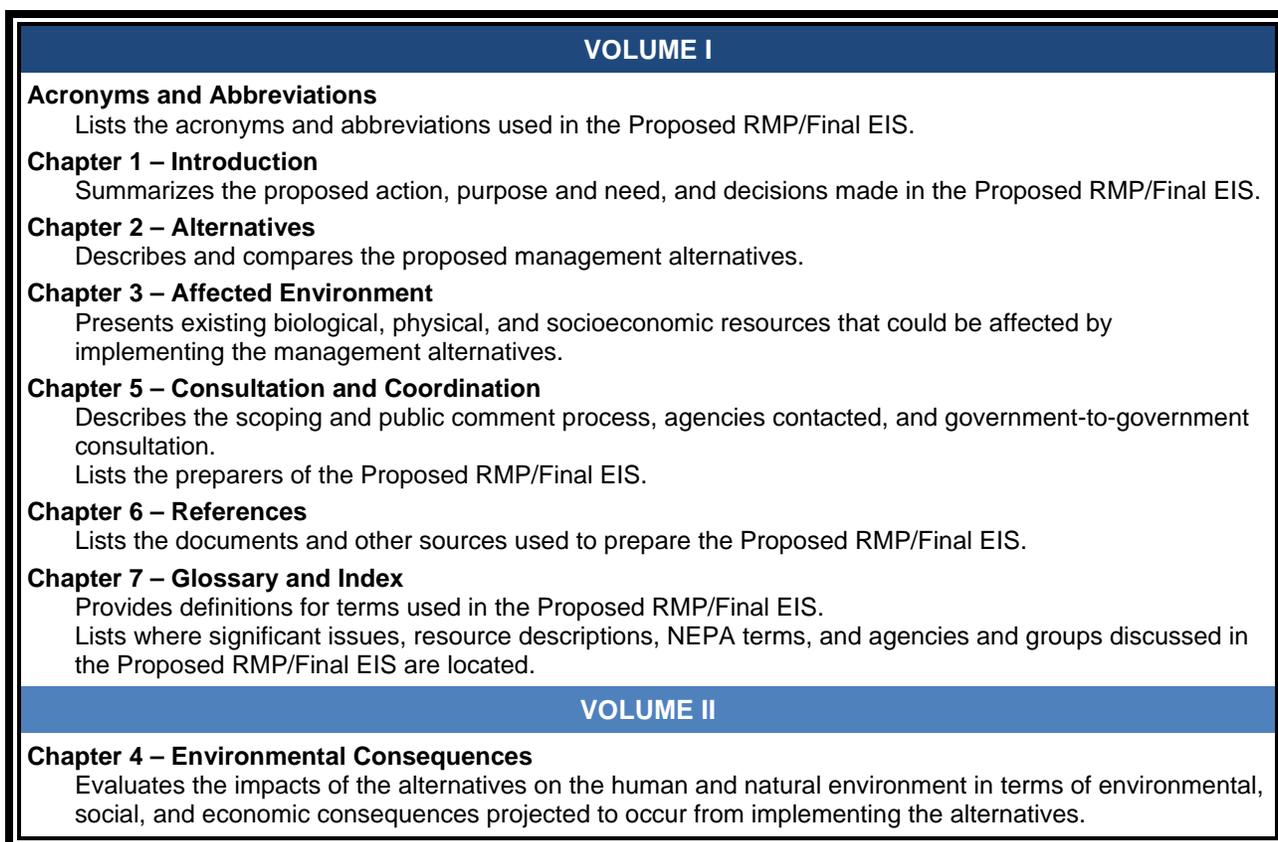
This Proposed RMP/Final EIS also incorporates and analyzes the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service's (USFS) White River National Forest (WRNF) Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) suitability study determinations for WRNF-managed segments of the Colorado River (Glenwood Canyon) and Deep Creek. Four of the eligible Forest Service river segments studied for suitability as part of this process are directly upstream or downstream to the same rivers that BLM is analyzing. Specifically, this study assesses the suitability of two Colorado River and two Deep Creek eligible segments on the WRNF. The BLM *Wild and Scenic Rivers Manual 6400* (BLM WSR Manual 6400), Section 4.3 Coordinated Studies and Other Planning Efforts states: "...The BLM shall invite and encourage other agencies to participate and/or provide technical assistance in a joint study concurrently with the BLM's RMP process."

The land use planning process is the key tool the BLM uses to manage resources and to designate uses on its lands, in coordination with tribal, state, and local government, land users, and interested members of the

public. Generally, decisions in an RMP Record of Decision (ROD) do not result in a wholesale change of management direction. Accordingly, this RMP incorporates new information and regulatory guidance that has been adopted since the previous plans, and provides management direction where it may be lacking or requiring clarification to resolve land use issues or conflicts. Current management direction that has proven effective and requires no change has been carried forward into this Proposed RMP/Final EIS and was considered throughout the analysis process.

The RMP was prepared using BLM planning regulations and guidance issued under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 US Code [USC] 1701 et seq.) and the *BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1* (BLM 2005a). An EIS is incorporated into this document to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Parts 1500-1508; CEQ 1978), and requirements of the *BLM NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1* (BLM 2008a). Because this Proposed RMP/Final EIS contains a broad range of information, Diagram 1-1 shows the types and locations of information found in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Diagram 1-1
How This Proposed RMP/Final EIS is Organized



VOLUME III	
Appendix A	– Maps
VOLUME IV (Provided in DVD)	
Appendix B	– Stipulations Applicable to All Surface-Disturbing Activities, Surface Use and Occupancy
Appendix C	– Final Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report
Appendix D	– Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Assessment for the CRVFO
Appendix E	– Evaluation of Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Appendix F	– Management and Setting Prescriptions for Lands Managed for the Protection of Wilderness Characteristics
Appendix G	– Best Management Practices and Conservation Measures
Appendix H	– Management and Setting Prescriptions for Caves
Appendix I	– Livestock Grazing Allotments
Appendix J	– BLM Standards for Public Land Health
Appendix K	– Recreation and Visitor Services Management Framework For Special and Extensive Recreation Management Areas
Appendix L	– Comprehensive Air Resource Protection Protocol
Appendix M	– Noxious and Invasive Weed Lists
Appendix N	– System Roads and Maintenance Levels
Appendix O	– Travel Management
Appendix P	– Oil and Gas Operations
Appendix Q	– Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group Management Plan
Appendix R	– Reasonable Foreseeable Development: Oil and Gas in the Glenwood Springs Field Office Administrative Boundary Area
Appendix S	– Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation
Appendix T	– Changes from Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Appendix U	– Biological Assessment and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation Documents
Appendix V	– Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Public Comments and BLM Responses

1.2 PURPOSE OF AND THE NEED FOR THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The CRVFO RMP provides broad-scale direction for the management of public lands and resources. RMP decisions may be changed only through the amendment or revision processes. The purpose of the revision to the current RMP is to ensure that public lands are managed in accordance with the intent of Congress, as stated in FLPMA, under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. This will be accomplished by establishing desired goals and objectives, allowable uses, and management actions needed to achieve the desired conditions for resources and resource uses. RMPs incorporate new data, address land use issues and conflicts, specify where and under what circumstances particular activities would be allowed on BLM lands, and incorporate the mandate of multiple uses in accordance with FLPMA. RMPs do not describe how particular programs or projects would be implemented or prioritized and funded; rather, those decisions are deferred to more detailed implementation-level planning.

FLPMA requires that the BLM “develop, maintain, and when appropriate, revise land use plans” (43 USC, 1712 [a]). There was a need to revise the CRVFO RMP in response to new issues that have arisen since the original plan was prepared in 1984 and to higher levels of controversy around existing issues. There was also the need to revise the RMP to allow for updated BLM management direction, guidance, and policy. In addition, new resource assessments and scientific information have become available to help the CRVFO revise previous decisions and address increased uses and demands on BLM lands (such as oil and gas development and recreation), as well as the protection of natural and cultural resources.

Examples of management challenges and demands on resources contributing to the revision of the current RMP include:

- Managing recreation and visitor services to provide a variety of recreation opportunities that maximize socioeconomic benefits for participants and communities while protecting natural and cultural resources
- Establishing and managing special designations to protect the natural and cultural resources, maximize recreational opportunities, and produce socioeconomic benefits
- Managing energy development, particularly regarding the designation of lands available for fluid minerals leasing and the application of lease stipulations, to protect cultural and natural resources and minimize user conflicts
- Managing vegetation to reduce hazardous fuel loading, to control and prevent the spread of invasive and noxious weeds, and to maintain a healthy forest ecosystem
- Maintaining wildlife habitats while managing for multiple BLM land uses
- Managing sagebrush habitat to reduce continued habitat loss and fragmentation
- Managing surface water and groundwater resources to maintain and improve habitat, improve water quality, protect drinking water sources, and help meet and maintain local and regional water delivery compacts
- Addressing increased population growth and concurrent developments ranging from “bedroom” communities to international tourist designations such as Aspen and Vail
- Addressing public concerns over scenic quality and open spaces
- Incorporating increased public interest in protecting natural and cultural resources

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

Lands within the CRVFO Administrative Boundary. The CRVFO is located in north-central Colorado and is an administrative unit in BLM Colorado’s Northwest District. The CRVFO administrative boundary comprises lands managed by the BLM, the USFS, the USDI Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), the US Department of Energy (DOE), and the State of Colorado. The CRVFO also includes private land. Together, the federal, state, and private lands within the CRVFO include over 2.9 million acres. Table 1-1 shows land ownership within the CRVFO administrative boundary and Figure 1-1 of Appendix A displays a map.

1.3.1 CRVFO RMP Revision Planning Area

Management decisions outlined in this RMP revision apply only to BLM-managed surface lands and to BLM-managed federal mineral estate that may lie beneath other federal, state, and private surface ownership with the exception of National Forest lands. Collectively this BLM-managed surface land and BLM-managed federal mineral estate are commonly referred to as BLM lands. No specific measures have been developed for private, state, or other federal lands, unless they overlay federal minerals, but given that these lands are interspersed with BLM lands, they could be influenced or indirectly affected by BLM management actions included in this RMP revision. BLM management authority on lands with a split estate (e.g., private surface underlain by federal minerals) is limited to activities, both surface and subsurface, related to exploration and development of the minerals. The BLM adopts the leasing requirements determined by other surface-managing agencies when leasing the mineral estate under their jurisdiction.

Table 1-1
Acres of Land Status within the CRVFO Administrative Boundary

Land Status	Acres	Percentage of Planning Area
BLM	567,000	19%
US Forest Service	1,499,700	52%
Bureau of Reclamation	1,600	<1%
Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)	20,200	<1%
State (other than CPW)	8,200	<1%
Department of Energy	200	<1%
Private	811,300	28%
Total	2,908,400	100%

Source: BLM 2008c

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
 CPW Colorado Parks and Wildlife
 CRVFO Colorado River Valley Field Office

Lands and federal mineral estate managed by the CRVFO within this RMP revision primarily extend across five Colorado counties: Eagle, Garfield, Mesa, Pitkin, and Routt, with only 100 acres of federal mineral estate in Rio Blanco County. Mineral status by county is shown in Table 1-2 and displayed in Figure 1-2 of Appendix A.

Table 1-2
Acres of Surface Lands with Federal Mineral Estate within the CRVFO RMP Revision Planning Area by County

Land Status	Eagle	Garfield	Mesa	Pitkin	Rio Blanco	Routt	Total
<i>BLM Surface Lands</i>	<i>231,700</i>	<i>203,000</i>	<i>9,900</i>	<i>27,500</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>33,100</i>	<i>505,200</i>
<i>% of Total</i>	<i>46%</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>7%</i>	
BLM Surface with Federal Minerals	223,300	202,600	9,900	27,400	0	32,500	495,700
Private Surface with Federal Minerals	63,100	76,300	5,500	19,400	100	26,800	191,200
State Surface with Federal Minerals	2,600	10,400	0	0	0	0	13,000
BOR with Federal Minerals	0	1,100	0	0	0	0	1,100
DOE with Federal Minerals	0	200	0	0	0	0	200
Total Federal Minerals	289,000	290,600	15,400	46,800	100	59,300	701,200

Source: BLM

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
 BOR US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
 CRVFO Colorado River Valley Field Office
 DOE US Department of Energy
 RMP resource management plan

Roan Plateau. Land Use Planning. The BLM has prepared this Proposed RMP/Final EIS to provide direction for managing BLM lands and federal mineral estate under the jurisdictions of the CRVFO. The Roan Plateau portion of the CRVFO planning area was not included in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The decision not to

include the Roan Plateau portion reflected the fact that the RMP amendment under which it is being managed was completed in 2008, and already included many of the newer management actions addressed for other portions of the CRVFO under Alternatives B through D of this RMP revision. In addition, the Roan Plateau RMP amendment has been under litigation since the Record of Decision (ROD) was approved in 2008. In June 2012, the US District Court remanded the Roan Plateau Resource Management Plan Amendment ROD, and ruled that BLM was deficient in analyzing air quality impacts and in failing to analyze an alternative that would have required the natural gas under the top of the Plateau be accessed from areas below the plateau through directional drilling. That court decision is currently under appeal by the interveners and plaintiffs.

National Wild and Scenic Rivers. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System stream suitability analysis for eligible Roan Plateau stream segments (East Middle Fork Parachute Creek Complex and East Fork Parachute Creek Complex) was included in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and is also contained in this document (Appendix C - Final Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report). Suitability determinations for eligible stream segments on the Roan Plateau have been deferred to the Roan Plateau planning area supplemental EIS. BLM will maintain eligible status for East Middle Fork Parachute Creek Complex and East Fork Parachute Creek Complex until a record of decision is entered for the Roan Plateau planning area. The suitability analysis for eligible Roan Plateau stream segments will be formally adopted by the BLM as a final suitability determination when the BLM State Director signs a ROD for the Roan Plateau plan. At that time, BLM will render a suitability determination using information and alternatives from this planning process, along with any new alternatives and information generated for the Roan Plateau planning area supplemental EIS.

White River National Forest. *National Wild and Scenic Rivers.* Consistent with BLM Manual 6400 – Wild and Scenic Rivers, the CRVFO invited the White River National Forest (WRNF) to participate in the CRVFO RMP revision process for the analysis of Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) because (1) Deep Creek was jointly analyzed by the BLM and the WRNF for eligibility in 1995, and (2) four of the eligible Forest Service river segments (see Appendix C) being studied for suitability are directly upstream or downstream of river segments that BLM is analyzing. The WRNF will use this Final EIS to make determinations on river segments on the WRNF. Those suitability determinations will be documented in a separate ROD.

Fluid Mineral Leasing and Development. While BLM is responsible for decisions related to leasing and developing federal mineral estate underlying lands administered by most other federal agencies, leasing and development of federal minerals involving surface lands administered by the USFS are subject to leasing decisions made in the appropriate USFS plan. In its plans, the USFS analyzes impacts from oil and gas leasing and development on National Forest System lands and describes where the USFS will or will not consent to leasing. The BLM is responsible for decisions related to drilling, completing, producing, and plugging and abandoning federal wells underlying National Forest lands. These implementation-level decisions are made through separate, site-specific planning and are not addressed in this plan.

1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

An RMP guides the management of BLM lands and federal mineral estate in a particular area or administrative unit and is usually prepared to cover the lands administered by a BLM field office. The CRVFO has revised its RMP for the BLM lands and federal mineral estate within its planning area boundary. As part of this RMP revision, published documents include a Draft RMP/Draft EIS, a Proposed RMP/Final EIS, and an approved RMP/ROD. The approved RMP/ROD will describe the following:

- Resource conditions goals and objectives
- Allowable resource uses and related levels of production or use to be maintained
- Land areas to be managed for limited, restricted, or exclusive resource uses, or for transfer from BLM administration
- Program constraints and general management practices and protocols
- General implementation schedule or sequences
- Intervals and standards for monitoring the RMP

The BLM uses a multi-step process (described in Table 1-3 and illustrated in Diagram 1-2) to develop and revise an RMP. The planning process is designed to help the BLM comply with provisions of both FLPMA, as amended, and NEPA.

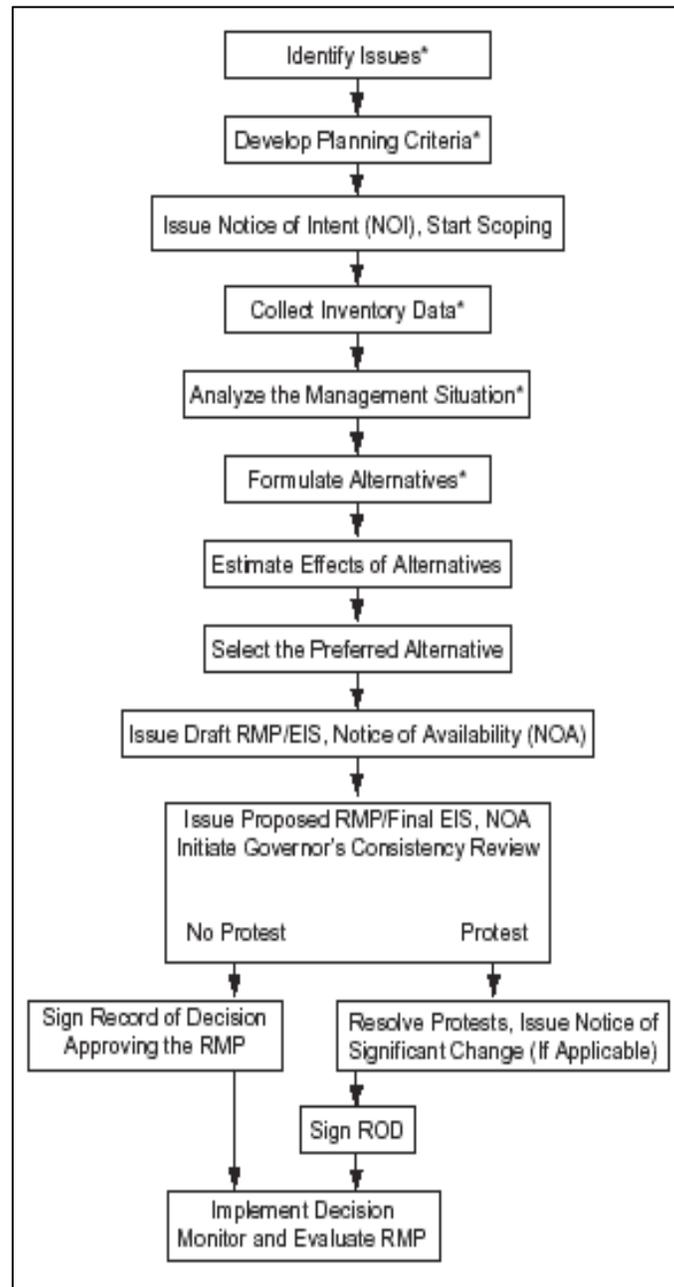
Table 1-3
BLM Planning Process

BLM Planning Process Step	Description	Timeframe
Step 1—Identify planning issues	Issues and concerns are identified through a scoping process that includes the public, Native American tribes, other federal agencies, and state and local governments.	March to May 2007
Step 2—Develop planning criteria	Planning criteria are developed to ensure decisions are made to address pertinent issues. Planning criteria are derived from applicable laws and regulations, other management plans, other agencies' programs, and public and agency scoping. The planning criteria may be updated and changed as planning proceeds.	March to May 2007
Step 3—Collect data and information	Data and information for the resources in the planning area are collected based on the planning criteria.	September 2013
Step 4—Analyze management situation	The current management of resources in the planning area is assessed.	March to August 2007
Step 5—Formulate alternatives	A range of reasonable management alternatives is developed to address issues identified during scoping.	September 2007 to November 2008
Step 6—Assess alternatives	The effects of each alternative are estimated.	November 2008 to August 2010
Step 7—Select preferred alternative	The alternative that best resolves planning issues is identified as the preferred alternative.	June 2010
Step 8—Select RMP	First, a Draft RMP/Draft EIS is issued and is made available to the public for a review period of 90 days.	Draft RMP/Draft EIS: September 2011
	After comments to the draft document have been analyzed, it is modified as necessary, and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS is published and made available for public review for 30 days.	2014
	A ROD is signed to approve the RMP.	2014
Step 9—Monitor implementation	Management measures outlined in the approved plan are implemented on the ground, and future monitoring is conducted to test their effectiveness. Changes are made as necessary to achieve desired results.	Ongoing after RMP approval

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM	US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management	RMP	resource management plan
CRVFO	Colorado River Valley Field Office	ROD	record of decision
EIS	environmental impact report		

Diagram 1-2
BLM Planning Process



* These steps may be revisited throughout the planning process and may overlap other steps.

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM	US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
CRVFO	Colorado River Valley Field Office
EIS	environmental impact statement
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
RMP	resource management plan
ROD	record of decision

FLPMA, considered to be the BLM's "organic act," mandates that the BLM prepare and maintain an inventory of public lands and their resources, as well as develop, maintain, and, as appropriate, revise plans by which public land uses and resources are managed. The Approved RMP will meet the BLM's statutory requirement as mandated by section 202 of FLPMA, which specifies the need for a comprehensive land use plan consistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Regulations specific to FLPMA (43 CFR 1600) provide a charter for BLM's management of public lands.

NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an EIS to evaluate the impacts proposed major federal actions could have on the "human environment" (i.e., the physical, biological, social, and economic environment in which humans live). Since implementation of a land use plan by the BLM is considered a major federal action, the BLM must prepare an EIS as part of the RMP process.

Regulations on implementing NEPA require federal agencies to consider a reasonable range of alternatives to a proposed action, a requirement designed to encourage an agency to identify alternative means of meeting its goals and objectives. This EIS evaluates the potential environmental consequences of four alternatives identified to serve as the RMP for the CRVFO, including a "no action" alternative, under which the current management would continue. NEPA requires agencies to consider a no action alternative in part to provide a baseline for the comparison of alternatives. Ultimately, the analysis of a broad range of alternatives in this EIS ensures a well informed decision on the management of public lands and its resources.

Master Leasing Plans

Another aspect of the planning process in areas with the potential for leasing of federal fluid minerals is the Master Leasing Plan (MLP) concept, introduced in "Washington Office Leasing Reform Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2010-117." The MLP concept promotes a proactive approach to planning for oil and gas development. Generally, the BLM uses RMPs to make oil and gas planning decisions, such as areas closed to leasing, open to leasing, or open to leasing with major or moderate constraints (lease stipulations) based on known resource values. However, additional planning and analysis can be necessary prior to oil and gas leasing because of changing circumstances, updated policies, and new information. Under IM2010-117, the BLM can reevaluate its leasing decisions in light of such changing circumstances. IM2010-117 lists multiple criteria for the BLM to consider when determining whether circumstances warrant such additional planning and analysis. An MLP is prepared when all four of the following criteria are met:

- A substantial portion of the area to be analyzed in the MLP is not currently leased.
- There is a majority federal mineral interest.
- The oil and gas industry has expressed a specific interest in leasing, and there is a moderate or high potential for oil and gas confirmed by the discovery of oil and gas in the general area.
- Additional analysis or information is needed to address likely resource or cumulative impacts if oil and gas development were to occur where there are:
 - Multiple-use or natural/cultural resource conflicts
 - Impacts to air quality
 - Impacts on the resources or values of any unit of the National Park System, national wildlife refuge, or National Forest wilderness area, as determined after consultation or coordination with

the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS); United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); or USFS

- Impacts on other specially designated areas

When the new guidance was issued, the BLM Colorado State Office conducted a review of possible areas where an MLP analysis would be beneficial and appropriate. Although no areas of the CRVFO met the four criteria, the current RMP revision contains a hard look at the impacts of oil and gas development. Thus, while preparation of an MLP was not required for portions of the planning area where oil and gas development has occurred or is expected to occur, the alternatives presented in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS contained the types and levels of analysis included in an MLP. Chapter 2 discussed the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. Chapter 3 provided an analysis of those resources and resource uses managed by the CRVFO, including resources and resource uses, and the current conditions and characterization of each resource and its use. The characterization of the resources and resource uses included indicators that assessed the resource condition, trends that expressed the direction of change between the present and some point in the past, and forecasts that predicted changes in the condition of resources given current management. Chapter 4 evaluated how each alternative would impact the environment.

1.5 SCOPING AND PLANNING ISSUES

The CRVFO provided numerous opportunities to the public, various groups, other federal agencies, Native American tribal governments and members, as well as state and local governments to participate meaningfully and substantively, and to give input and comments to the BLM during the preparation of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. Early in the planning process, the public was invited to identify planning issues and concerns for managing BLM lands and resources, and uses in the planning area.

1.5.1 Notice of Intent

The formal scoping period began with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2007.

1.5.2 Scoping Process

The NOI was provided for public consideration at the seven scoping open houses (described below), and was posted on the project website, <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/co/kfo-gsfo/>. The scoping period for receipt of public comments began with publication of the NOI on March 2, 2007, and ended May 2, 2007. The Scoping Report (BLM 2007b) documented the results of scoping by summarizing the individual comments received and describing the issues that were raised, and is incorporated here by reference.

A postcard was mailed to members of the public, agencies, and organizations on March 27, 2007. The postcard informed the recipients about the scoping process and the scheduled open house scoping meetings, and gave them various alternative methods to submit written comments. The BLM compiled the mailing list from over 850 individuals, agencies, and organizations that had participated in past BLM projects, those requesting to be on the mailing list, those who had attended public meetings, and those who may have had an interest.

CRVFO conducted a joint public scoping process with the neighboring Kremmling Field Office due to similarity of some issues, such as Colorado River management. Seven joint RMP public scoping meetings were held in the joint planning area in 2007: Rifle and Granby on April 10, Carbondale and Kremmling on April 11, Gypsum and Walden on April 12, and Glenwood Springs on April 25. The BLM provided the local

media with timely press releases announcing the time, location, and purpose of the meetings. The format for the scoping meetings featured informal, one-on-one discussions between BLM representatives and members of the public.

Additionally, on May 18, 2007, the BLM prepared a newsletter and distributed it via email and US mail to over 1,050 members of the public, representatives from agencies, and organizations. The newsletter summarized the scoping meetings, provided information on data collection workshops for future trails and routes, and gave overall information about the planning process. Trails and routes data collection workshops were held separately (in June 2007) from the scoping meetings, and gave individuals, and agency and organization representatives, an opportunity to provide the BLM with data and missing information on existing trails and routes. (For additional information on public participation, see Section 1.7 Collaboration later in this chapter and Chapter 5 Consultation and Coordination.)

1.5.3 Issue Identification

Issue identification is the first step of the nine-step BLM planning process (see Table 1-3 above.) A planning issue is a major controversy or dispute regarding management of resources or uses on BLM lands that can be addressed in a variety of ways, which is within the BLM's authority to resolve.

In September 2005, the BLM prepared an analysis of the management situation (AMS) or preliminary planning analysis for the RMP/EIS. The AMS, used by the BLM interdisciplinary team to initiate the planning process, highlighted anticipated planning issues identified by CRVFO staff. Based on the lands and resources managed in the planning area, preliminary issues fell into eight preliminary issue categories in the plan analysis. The comments received during the scoping process were analyzed, and a scoping summary report was finalized in August 2007 (BLM 2007b). Four new issues were identified from public input during the scoping process.

A planning issue statement was developed for each of the 12 planning issue categories. Each statement summarized the issues and concerns heard for each category during scoping. The 12 planning issue statements were as follows:

Key Issues

- 1. Recreation demand and uses**—What recreation opportunities are desired by participants and where will those recreation opportunities be emphasized, especially on BLM lands near communities? What management actions and allowable decisions are needed to produce those desired recreation opportunities, reduce user conflicts, protect natural and cultural resources, and maximize individual, community/social, economic and environmental benefits?
- 2. Special designations**—Where are special designations appropriate to protect unique or distinctive resources, and how should existing special designations be managed to protect the natural and cultural resources and maximize recreation opportunities and socioeconomic benefits?
- 3. Energy development including air quality**—Which areas should be open to energy development, particularly oil and gas leasing, and what constraints should be used to protect cultural and natural resources and to minimize user conflicts?

4. **Wildlife including special status species**—How will land use activities be managed to maintain and improve terrestrial and aquatic habitats in a scattered land ownership pattern, while maintaining multiple-use land management?
5. **Sagebrush habitat and sagebrush-dependent species**—How will sagebrush habitat be managed to reduce continued habitat loss and fragmentation?

The second group was composed of other planning issues that would have a smaller impact on the development of alternatives.

6. **Travel management and transportation**—How will transportation be managed to protect natural and cultural resources, provide motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities, reduce user conflicts, enforce route designations and closures, and improve public access?
7. **Lands and realty**—What opportunities exist to make adjustments to public land ownership that would result in greater management efficiency, in appropriate and agreeable levels of public access, and in increased public and natural resource benefits?
8. **Wildland urban interface**—How will BLM lands in urban interface areas be managed (e.g., recreational shooting, camping, public land developments) to provide benefits desired by the public? What BLM decisions are needed to ensure consistency with future land use plans in neighboring communities?
9. **Rangeland health/upland management**—How will the BLM manage livestock grazing on its lands while protecting, managing, restoring, and using natural and cultural resources?
10. **Vegetation**—What actions or restrictions will be needed to reduce dangerous fuel loading, to control and prevent the spread of invasive and noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species, and to maintain healthy forest ecosystems?
11. **Water/riparian**—What measures will be implemented to protect water resources, especially riparian areas, from the effects of other uses?
12. **Cultural resources**—How can the BLM protect and conserve cultural resources, and where do interpretation opportunities exist?

1.5.4 Issues Considered but Not Analyzed Further

During scoping, several issues were raised that were not appropriate to address in the RMP revisions, namely administrative/policy issues, implementation issues, and issues outside the scope of the RMP. Examples of the administrative or policy comments received included a request that the BLM promote family ranching, and a request that the BLM develop new recreation classifications. Only a few comments on implementation issues were received, most of which were requests for toilets at trailheads, particularly near the Thompson Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). One comment was received that was considered a planning issue outside the scope of the RMP. In this comment, the respondent urged the BLM to restrict or try to completely stop subsurface oil and gas and other leasing on Forest Service and other lands.

The *RMP Scoping Summary Report* (BLM 2007b) provides a comprehensive list of issues outside the scope of the RMP. This report is available on the RMP revisions website, www.blm.gov/rmp/co/kfo-gsfo/.

1.5.5 Other Elements Not Addressed in this RMP Revision

Based on a preliminary evaluation by the BLM, the following elements were determined not present within the planning area or otherwise not relevant, and were dismissed from further consideration in this analysis:

- Prime and Unique Farmlands—In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the BLM determined that no prime or unique farmlands or farmland of statewide or local importance occur on BLM lands in the CRVFO. None of the actions proposed in this RMP revision would disturb farmlands.
- Wild Horses and Burros—Herd areas are limited to areas of public lands identified as being habitat used by wild horses and burros at the time of passage of the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (Public Law 92-195). In Colorado bands of wild horses are scattered in four wild horse herd management areas: Piceance Basin/East Douglas Creek, west of Meeker; Little Book Cliffs, northeast of Grand Junction; Sandwash Basin in the northwestern part of the state; and Spring Creek, southwest of Montrose. No herd areas were identified within the CRVFO RMP planning area.

1.6 PLANNING CRITERIA AND LEGISLATIVE CONSTRAINTS

FLPMA is the primary authority for the BLM to manage public lands. This law establishes provisions for land use planning, land acquisition and disposition, administration, rangeland management, rights-of-way, and designated management areas, and for the repeal of certain laws and statutes. NEPA provides the basic national charter for environmental responsibility, and requires the consideration and public availability of information on the environmental impacts of major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. In concert, FLPMA and NEPA provide the overarching guidance for all activities on BLM-managed lands.

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-2) require the development of planning criteria to guide land use planning. Planning criteria are the parameters, standards, or other guidelines developed by BLM managers and interdisciplinary team members, with public input, for use in forming judgments about plan-level decisionmaking, analysis, and data collection. Planning criteria are designed to streamline and simplify planning actions, and may be adjusted during RMP development based on management concerns and the results of public scoping.

The BLM developed preliminary planning criteria before public scoping meetings to establish the parameters or “ground rules” for making planning decisions and to guide decisionmaking by program. These criteria were introduced to the public for review in April 2007 at all scoping meetings. At the scoping meetings, the BLM encouraged the public to provide comments and suggest additions to these criteria through written correspondence and at the RMP revisions website, www.blm.gov/rmp/co/kfo-gsfo/. No comments were received on the preliminary planning criteria during the scoping period, March 2 to May 2, 2007.

The planning criteria were as follows:

- Decisions in the plan will be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, and federal agencies, as long as the decisions conform to federal laws and regulations that direct resource management on BLM lands.
- The plan will recognize valid existing rights.

- The BLM will recognize the specific niche that federal lands provide, both to the nation and to the surrounding community. A successful plan will be one that is responsive to both national and community needs.
- Public participation will be encouraged throughout the process. The BLM will collaborate and build relationships with tribes, state and local governments, federal agencies, local stakeholders, and others in the community. Collaborators are regularly informed and offered timely and meaningful opportunities to participate in the planning process.
- Results of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act inventory will be integrated into land use planning and energy use authorizations.
- The plan will identify Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), will designate off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas, and will complete defined travel management networks for each field office.
- The plan will treat both environmental protection and energy production as desirable and necessary objectives of sound land management practices and not as mutually exclusive priorities.
- For all stipulations developed and for improvement of lease stipulations in terms of consistency and understanding, the BLM Colorado State Office and the BLM field offices will use the Uniform Format for Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations prepared by the Rocky Mountain Regional Coordinating Committee in March 1989 (RMRCC 1989). Lease stipulations will be reviewed for consistency with neighboring field offices and states. Where there are discrepancies, efforts will be made to achieve consistency.
- The plan will incorporate the *Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado* (BLM 1997a) and will lay out a strategy for ensuring that proper grazing practices are followed. Grazing will be managed to maintain or improve the health of the BLM lands to enhance resource conditions in permitted operations.
- The BLM will identify existing and potential utility corridors (which include existing rights-of-way that can be considered for additional facilities and thus be considered a corridor if not already so designated); it also will identify existing and potential development sites, such as energy development areas (for example, wind energy sites) and communication sites.
- The BLM will reevaluate lands selected for disposal and acquisition based on current information.

1.6.1 Relationship to BLM RMP Amendments and Implementation-Level Plans

Since the *Final Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, Glenwood Springs* (BLM 1984a) was developed, it has been necessary to amend it to respond to new planning issues and conditions. As the RMP guidance is put into practice on the ground, implementation-level (activity-level) planning is directed by the RMP and BLM policy and program-specific guidance. Table 1-4 identifies approved plan amendments and implementation-level plans.

Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment and EIS. In addition to the CRVFO RMP revision, the BLM is also considering other decisions that could amend the CRVFO RMP. A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register in December 2011 which announced that the BLM would evaluate greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) conservation measures in 68 planning areas across the West. The Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment and EIS considers whether or

Table 1-4
RMP Amendments and Implementation-Level Plans

RMP Amendments
Amendments to Glenwood Springs RMP (BLM 1984a)
Amendment for Colorado Oil and Gas Leasing and Development (BLM 1991a)
Amendment for Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado (BLM 1997b)
Final Resource Management Plan Revised ROD (BLM 1988)
Amendment for Castle Peak Travel Management Plan (BLM 1997c)
Amendment for Red Hill Management Plan (BLM 1999a)
Supplemental Amendment for Colorado Oil and Gas Leasing and Development (BLM 1999b)
Amendment for Oil Shale Revocation (BLM 2001a)
Amendment for GSFO Fire Management Plan (BLM 2002a)
Amendment for the Roan Plateau Planning Area, ROD 1 of 2 (BLM 2007a)
Amendment for the Roan Plateau Planning Area, ROD 2 of 2 (BLM 2008b)
CRVFO Implementation-Level Plans
Bocco Mountain SRMA OHV and Recreation Management Implementation Plan (BLM 1999c)
Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan for Oil and Gas Operators (BLM 2007c)
GSFO Programmatic Weed EA (BLM 2008d)
GSFO Fire Management Plan, Wildland Fire Management, and Prescriptive Vegetation Treatment Guidance (BLM 2002b)
Red Hill SRMA Implementation Plan (BLM 2000a)

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM	Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
EA	Environmental Assessment
GSFO	Glenwood Springs Field Office
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
RMP	resource management plan
ROD	record of decision

not the BLM should incorporate new conservation measures into RMPs for the five field offices within the Northwest District in Colorado and on the Routt National Forest. The Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Draft Amendment and Draft EIS, issued on August 16, 2013, proposed amending the Colorado River Valley RMP to incorporate appropriate conservation measures for greater sage-grouse. The Draft also indicated there could be conservation measures contained in the CRVFO RMP that the BLM considers protective of greater sage-grouse and/or greater sage-grouse habitat that the BLM would choose not to amend. Final decisions on how to manage greater sage-grouse and their habitat, including decisions for the CRVFO planning area, will be made in the Record of Decision for the Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment and EIS. It is the BLM's goal to issue the ROD for the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Amendment by the end of 2014. Thus, this RMP revision does not consider all applicable conservation measures for greater sage-grouse as directed by BLM IM No. 2012-044 since those measures are simultaneously under consideration in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment and EIS.

1.7 COLLABORATION

The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in preparing NEPA analyses are disclosing relevant information early in the analytical process; applying available technical expertise and staff support; avoiding duplication with other federal, state, tribal, and local procedures; and establishing a mechanism for addressing

intergovernmental issues. In addition to formal scoping, the BLM implemented an extensive collaborative outreach and involvement process that included coordinating a community assessment, coordinating with cooperating agencies, and working closely with Colorado BLM's Northwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC). These efforts are summarized below, and additional information regarding collaboration with governments, agencies, and tribal representatives is provided in Chapter 5, Consultation and Coordination.

1.7.1 Community Assessment

The community assessment process began in the fall of 2006 when the BLM held 19 small-group discussions with representatives from local governments in north-central Colorado. The BLM gathered input from community representatives about their vision for the landscape and the benefits they seek from public lands, identified strategic planning options, and laid the foundation for an ongoing collaboration with communities for the RMP effort. Results of this process were published in the *North-Central Colorado Community Assessment Report* (BLM 2007d), available on the project website, <http://www.blm.gov/rmp/co/kfo-gsfo/>.

1.7.2 Intergovernmental and Interagency Collaboration

The cooperating agency role derives from NEPA, which calls on federal, state, and local governments to cooperate with the goal of achieving “productive harmony” between humans and their environment. The CEQ's regulations implementing NEPA allow federal agencies to invite tribal, state, and local governments, as well as other federal agencies, to serve as cooperating agencies in the preparation of environmental impact statements. In 2005 the BLM amended its land use planning regulations to ensure that staffs at all levels – state office, district office, or field office – engage their governmental partners consistently and effectively through the cooperating agency relationship whenever land use plans are prepared or revised. In May 2012, the BLM released a *Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners* as a reference for managers and BLM partners in understanding the commitments, roles, and responsibilities of the BLM and cooperating agencies during land use planning and project development. This guide is available online at http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/NEPS.Par.93370.File.dat/BLM_DeskGuide_CA_Relationships.pdf.

On November 29, 2006, the BLM invited local, state, federal, and tribal representatives to participate as cooperating agencies for the RMP revision. The following agencies with jurisdiction, special expertise, or interest in the RMP revision process agreed to participate as cooperating agencies:

- USFWS
- WRNF
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources
- Colorado River Water Conservation District
- Denver Water Board
- Eagle County
- Garfield County
- Grand County*
- Jackson County*
- Pitkin County
- City of Glenwood Springs
- City of Rifle
- Town of Basalt
- Town of Carbondale
- Town of Eagle
- Town of Granby*
- Town of Gypsum
- Town of Hot Sulphur Springs*
- Town of Kremmling*
- Town of New Castle
- Town of Parachute
- Town of Silt

* Predominantly worked with the KFO

The CRVFO and the cooperating agencies developed and entered into memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that set forth the roles and responsibilities for collaborative planning and production of an EIS for the

RMP. These agencies agreed to “work with the BLM, sharing knowledge and resources, to achieve desired outcomes for BLM lands and communities within statutory and regulatory frameworks” (BLM 2005a).

Between April 2007 and June 2010, a total of 14 cooperating agency meetings were conducted at the CRVFO. These meetings focused on identifying and defining the planning issues and the alternatives development process for the CRVFO.

Between April 2012 and September 2013, the CRVFO held six more cooperating agency meetings and gave one socioeconomic presentation. The meetings focused on the social and economic analysis, public comments received by the BLM on the Draft RMP/EIS, proposed decisions and alternatives that the BLM anticipated analyzing in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, and other land management topics of interest to the participants.

1.7.3 Tribal Relationships and Native American Trust Assets

Consultation with American Indian tribes is part of the NEPA scoping process and is a requirement of FLPMA. Tribal consultation regarding the CRVFO RMP revisions began in April 2007 and is ongoing. American Indian tribes and organizations consulted to date are as follows:

- Colorado Commissioner of Indian Affairs
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- Uintah and Ouray Tribal Business Council

The unique political relationship between the US government and federally recognized American Indian tribes is defined by treaties, statutes, executive orders, judicial decisions, and agreements. This relationship has created a special federal trust responsibility, involving the legal commitments and obligations of the US toward American Indian tribes, tribal lands, tribal trust resources, and the exercise of tribal rights.

American Indian trust resources are legal interests in assets held in trust by the federal government for federally recognized Indian tribes or nations or for individual Indians. These assets can be real property, physical assets, or intangible property rights. Examples are lands, minerals, water rights, hunting and fishing rights, other natural resources, money, or claims. The BLM has no trust administration responsibilities in the CRVFO.

1.7.4 Resource Advisory Council

A RAC is a committee established by the Secretary of the Interior to provide advice or recommendations to BLM management (BLM 2005a). The BLM gave the Northwest Colorado RAC an initial presentation on the RMP process in November 2006. At a May 2007 Northwest Colorado RAC meeting, the BLM gave an additional presentation on the scoping and travel management process. In 2007, the Northwest Colorado RAC formed a subcommittee of people with diverse interests who were from the local area and directly affected by the decisions in the CRVFO RMP revision. Using its local expertise, the subgroup’s task was to provide recommendations and advice to the Northwest Colorado RAC regarding the planning effort. The Northwest Colorado RAC could use the information to make its own recommendations, or directly forward the recommendations to BLM. The group met more than 20 times since 2007.

Between November 2007 and June 2010, a total of 14 RAC subgroup meetings were conducted. The RAC subgroup focused on all aspects of the range of alternatives to be considered in the RMP revision. Recommendations developed by the subgroup were presented formally for discussion to the Northwest Colorado RAC at the May 22, 2008, meeting of the full Northwest Colorado RAC. The Northwest Colorado RAC voted to forward recommendations from this subcommittee to the BLM regarding the range of alternatives considered in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS.

The group met five more times during the summer of 2012 to discuss a working draft of the Proposed RMP and find areas where the diverse group could reach consensus. The meetings focused on the social and economic analysis, public comments received by the BLM on the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, management topics of interest to the participants, and discussions on proposed decisions/alternatives that the BLM was anticipating analyzing in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

The result of those meetings and follow-up email interactions are described in the points of consensus section below, which includes responses and recommendations concerning key topics, issues, and locations. Additional information about the format and process follows the points of consensus section. In most instances, these comments are presented in the context of location. Others speak to more general policy and management details.

The Northwest Colorado RAC voted in September 2012 to forward the subgroup recommendations below to the BLM for consideration in development of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Points of Consensus Received from the BLM Northwest Colorado RAC

1) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

- a) Support BLM-proposed final-plan management details for East Eagle and Hardscrabble-Mayer Gulch ACECs.
- b) Partial recommendations for Thompson Creek ACEC:
 - Support BLM-proposed management details for ACEC.
 - Include frequent and active monitoring, particularly of recreation uses, to ensure ACEC specific purposes and features are protected.
- c) Support BLM-proposed management details for Blue Hill ACEC.
- d) Support BLM-proposed management details for McCoy Fan Delta ACEC.
- e) Support BLM-proposed management details for Deep Creek ACEC, highlighting existence of protections for BLM sensitive Harrington's penstemon.
- f) Support BLM-proposed management details for Lyons Gulch ACEC.
- g) Support BLM-proposed management details for Sheep Creek ACEC.
- h) Support BLM-proposed management details for Glenwood Springs Debris Flow ACEC.
- i) Support BLM-proposed management details for Grand Hogback ACEC.
- j) Support BLM-proposed management details for Mount Logan Foothills ACEC, including careful monitoring and mitigation of oil and gas development impacts (primarily related to threatened and endangered plants).

2) Special Recreation Management Areas

- a) General support of BLM-proposed final-plan management details for Hardscrabble SRMA, with several recommended refinements and clarifications:
 - Maintain separation of Hardscrabble SRMA and Hardscrabble-Mayer Gulch ACEC, both for management approaches and for uses. Restrict recreational access in ACEC to existing trails, and in manner that otherwise ensures continued health and expansion of Harrington's penstemon populations and habitat.
 - Firmly maintain standards (included in BLM-proposed final plan) of travel limited to existing designated routes, and continued separation of motorized and mechanized routes.
 - Provide due process for considering new routes (including rare-plant protection guidelines).
 - Confirm new maps, expanding Recreation Management Zone (RMZ) 2 at the west end and expanding RMZ 1 on the east side.
- b) General support of BLM-proposed final-plan management details for Upper Colorado River SRMA, so long as that designation and management (which generally overlies the upper Colorado River wild and scenic-eligible segments and corridors) defer to the management and protection of the wild and scenic corridor and values.
- c) Support for establishing The Crown SRMA, with the following clarifications and details:
 - Acknowledge that recreation levels are likely to increase within the SRMA.
 - Retain winter-months closure to protect wildlife.
 - Include in Proposed RMP/Final EIS language and in appendix/best-management-practices supplement directing managers to (as part of SRMA implementation):
 - Reduce conflicts among various users.
 - Particularly accommodate mechanized, motorized, foot, and grazing (specifically during spring-summer use periods).
 - Consider techniques and options including--
 - Approve general or selective trail closures during grazing periods with further discussion/public input on specifics of this concept.
 - Enforce use only on authorized trails.
 - Prohibit dogs (generally or seasonally or by location).
 - Identify carrying capacities (for individual uses and for composite uses).
 - Establish public process for route planning and for changes in route density, locations, and numbers in order to accomplish the points enumerated above.
 - Include paragraph directing continued protection of Harrington's penstemon.
 - Avoid BLM marketing of the area for non-local recreation use.
- d) Support of BLM-proposed management details for Red Hill SRMA, with clarifications:
 - May serve as successful prototype for effective high-use management, community involvement, volunteer support, and popular locally accessible recreation.
 - Emphasize management for wildlife in southwestern portion.
 - Do not extend recreation routes across current private-land inholding, important for wildlife security area (identified by Colorado Parks and Wildlife [CPW]).
 - Do not allow new user-built ("bandit") trails.

3) Other Recreation

- a) Support BLM-proposal details for management of Fisher Creek, with priority emphasis on maintaining and improving habitat, population health, and hunting for big game.
- b) Generally support BLM-proposed management details for Silt Mesa Extensive Recreation Management Area (ERMA), with refinements:
 - Provide some motorized all-terrain vehicle (ATV) route or routes, and provide some nonmotorized route or routes (primarily horseback use), with details to be clarified in travel management implementation process.
 - Consider some new trails in the northwestern portion, but none in the eastern portion.
 - Discuss further whether to include full-size motor vehicles on motorized routes (above) in the travel management implementation process. No consensus was reached on this topic.

4) Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group Management Plan

- a) Support implementation of the stakeholder group management plan, as included in Alternative 2B of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, as the means of protecting the stream condition and outstandingly remarkable values on the upper Colorado River, as identified in the BLM's *Final Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Report for Kremmling and Glenwood Springs Field Offices, Colorado, March 2007* (BLM 2007f). This recommendation includes a deferral of decisions concerning wild and scenic suitability for these river segments (as did the stakeholder group management plan [described below], and Draft RMP/Draft EIS Alternative 2B).

5) Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability

- a) Recommend a finding of wild and scenic suitability for Deep Creek (scenic values, caves).
- b) Recommend a finding of wild and scenic suitability for Abrams Creek (providing better and more reliable protection for rare Class-A purity of cutthroat trout).

6) Lands Managed for the Protection of Wilderness Characteristics

- a) Recommend that all lands managed for the protection of wilderness characteristics identified in Eagle/Upper Colorado River Area--Castle Peak [east] Addition and Pisgah Mountain—should be managed to maintain and preserve those characteristics, following the prescriptions and policies included in the BLM-proposed final plan.
- b) Support continued protective management of existing wilderness study areas at Castle Peak and Bull Gulch, following the prescriptions and policies included in the BLM-proposed final plan and in other relevant BLM guidance and standards.

7) Greater Sage-Grouse

- a) Support BLM-proposed management details for greater sage-grouse (including dropping of Greater Sage-Grouse ACEC) to maintain and increase sage-grouse populations—pending anticipated Northwest Colorado RMP amendment process implementing additional protection measures for sage-grouse and habitat.

8) Travel Management

- a) Generally support BLM-proposed management in not mapping or labeling administrative-only routes as open to general public use, with practical route-by-route adjustments to that general policy.

9) Format and Process

The RAC subgroup reviewed key materials evolving from the RMP process, including:

- a) Extensive background and data presentations from BLM staff
- b) Draft RMP/Draft EIS range of alternatives
- c) Summary of public comments on Draft RMP/Draft EIS
- d) Working copy of BLM-proposed RMP provisions
- e) Key topics, issues, and locations highlighted by RAC subgroup members (or by BLM staff)

This review was conducted simultaneously in two contexts: 1) detailed management alternatives and proposals by resource; and 2) composite management alternatives and proposals by location—dividing the field office into three primary geographical areas. The resulting discussions especially focused on specific high-use or otherwise notable specific places.

The RAC subgroup did not prepare recommendations on every aspect of the pending RMP, but the recommendations above addressed the more visible, and in some cases contentious, topics and locations.

1.7.5 Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group

In February 2011, the Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic stakeholder group delivered to BLM and USFS a proposed *Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group Management Plan* that provided a management alternative for Colorado River Segments 4, 5, 6, and 7. Colorado River Segments 4 and 5 are located within the KFO planning area, and are addressed in the KFO RMP effort. Colorado River Segments 6 and 7 are located within the CRVFO planning area, and are addressed in this RMP effort. The stakeholder group represents a diverse range of interests, including local governments, East Slope and West Slope water user organizations, environmental and recreation organizations, and private landowners. The group had worked together since 2008 to develop their management plan. The goal of the plan was to protect the outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) identified in the BLM and USFS Eligibility Reports for Segments 4 through 7 of the Upper Colorado River, while simultaneously providing certainty and flexibility for the water users who rely upon diversions from the Upper Colorado River.

The stakeholder group asked the BLM to consider adopting their management plan as part of its RMP. The intent was to use cooperative management strategies in multiple arenas, including flow management, water quality management, fisheries and recreation management, and responses to new water development projects. The stakeholder group developed the plan in consultation with the Colorado Water Conservation Board, CPW, and BOR. The BLM and USFS accepted this plan for impact analysis as part of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. That impact analysis appeared under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Alternative B2 in Chapter 4 of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. The entire text of the management plan was provided for public review and comment in Appendix Q of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS.

Between the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and Proposed RMP/Final EIS, the stakeholder group continued to develop more details for portions of the plan that had been broadly stated in the original submission to the BLM and USFS. In addition, the stakeholder group began to implement studies that would further the group's understanding of the condition and trends of the outstandingly remarkable values, and that would examine potential relationships between flow rates, water quality, and the ORVs. The stakeholder group also responded to the BLM and USFS regarding concerns raised in public comments and by agency staff on the proposed management plan.

The Executive Summary of the *Draft Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report* was included in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS as Appendix C. The draft suitability report contained an analysis of the proposed management plan and the impacts of deferring any suitability determination for Colorado River Segments 4, 5, 6, and 7, as requested by the stakeholder group. It also contained BLM and USFS analysis concerning Wild and Scenic Rivers Alternative B1, in which Colorado River Segments 4, 5, 6, and 7 would be determined to be suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS).

The *Final Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report* is published with this Proposed RMP/Final EIS (Appendix C). The final report contains a discussion of why the BLM and USFS decided to adopt the proposed stakeholder group management plan. The agency decision was based upon BLM and USFS review of whether the plan would enable the agencies to meet their legal responsibilities under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, public comments on the management plan, and which management approach was most likely to maintain and enhance the ORVs.

1.8 RELATED LAND USE PLANS

BLM planning regulations require that its RMPs be consistent with officially approved or adopted land use related plans of other federal, state, local, and tribal governments, to the extent those plans are consistent with federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands. Plans formulated by federal, state, local, and tribal governments that relate to managing lands and resources are listed below. All of them were reviewed and considered as the CRVFO RMP/EIS was developed.

1.8.1 Federal Plans

- *Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in 11 Western States* (DOE and BLM 2008)
- *National Fire Plan* (DOI and USDA 2000)
- *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the White River National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (US Forest Service 2002)
- *2012 Oil Shale and Tar Sands Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* (Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior 2012)
- *Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Solar Energy Development in Six Southwestern States* (Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; Department of Energy; and the Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior 2012)

1.8.2 State Plans

- *Colorado Division of Wildlife Strategic Plan* (CDOW 2006)
- *Division of Wildlife Data Analysis Unit Plans* (CDOW, undated)

1.8.3 Local Government Plans

- Eagle County Open Space Plan (Eagle County 1979)
- Eagle River Watershed Plan (Eagle County 1996)
- Eagle County Master Plan (Eagle County 2005)
- Eagle Area Community Plan (Town and County of Eagle 2008)

- Town of Basalt Master Plan (Town of Basalt 2007)
- Down Valley Comprehensive Plan (Pitkin County 1987)
- Pitkin County Land Use Policy Guidelines (Pitkin County 2002)
- Crystal River Valley Master Plan (Pitkin County 2003)
- Garfield County Comprehensive Plan 2030 (Garfield County 2010)

1.9 DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

1.9.1 Distribution of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS

The formal public comment period for the CRVFO Draft RMP/Draft EIS began on September 16, 2011, with the publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register*. The NOA, advertisements in local newspapers, and a newsletter (sent to all those agencies, organizations, and members of the public that were on the project distribution list) announced the availability of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and listed the time and place for the scheduled BLM open house meetings.

Copies of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS were distributed to those that had previously requested copies and to those that submitted requests subsequent to the publication of the NOA. The Draft RMP/Draft EIS was also available for download from the BLM's project website.

1.9.2 Comment Period and Open House Meetings

Under CEQ regulations, the public comment period must last for at least 45 days. Initially, the BLM set an extended 90-day public comment period that lasted until December 15, 2011. Before the end of the comment period, BLM had received multiple requests to extend the comment period. BLM extended the comment period to January 17, 2012, and then, upon receipt of additional requests, extended it again to February 29, 2012. The total comment period encompassed 166 days.

The BLM hosted three open house meetings to provide the public with opportunities to ask questions about the project and planning process, to meet the RMP team members, and to offer comments. (See Table 1-5 Draft RMP/Draft EIS Open House Schedule and Attendance.) The open house format was chosen over the more formal public meeting format to encourage broader participation and to allow attendees to ask questions of BLM representatives in an informal one-on-one setting.

Table 1-5
Draft RMP/Draft EIS Open House Schedule and Attendance

Venue	Location	Date	Attendance
BLM Colorado River Valley Field Office	Silt	October 6, 2011	30
Eagle Public Library	Eagle	October 11, 2011	56
Town of Carbondale–Community Room 2	Carbondale	October 12, 2011	117
Total			203

Note: All meetings were scheduled from 3:00 to 7:00 PM.

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
EIS	environmental impact statement
RMP	resource management plan

1.9.3 Comment Collection and Analysis

At the open house meetings, written comments were accepted by the BLM. Comment forms were provided for those submitting immediate comments. All written comments received by BLM were logged, categorized, evaluated, and considered in the preparation of the Proposed RMP. Methods of submitting comments included comment forms, letters, facsimiles, and email. Most comments were submitted electronically via the BLM project website and email.

Over 30,000 written submissions were received. As comment documents were received, they were assigned a unique identifying number. Several campaigns of form letters were also submitted to BLM. These were generated by different organizations. Individuals were given access to these form letters, and could either submit the letter individually, or submit the letter collectively through the organizations. These form letters were numerous but essentially identical, with identical comments. Where an individual altered the comments in the form letters or made additional comments, these comments were noted as individual comments and were treated like all other distinct comments, as described below.

Exclusive of the form letters, there were over 1,600 distinct written submittals. Out of these submissions, over 5,000 distinct comments were identified for review by BLM specialists and managers.

1.9.4 Comments by Issue Category

Each of the 5,000 distinct comments was coded according to comment categories. The categories included each resource, resource use, and special designation discussed in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, as well as NEPA and RMP procedural issues. Table 1-6 presents the number of distinct comments for each of the categories. The categories with the most comments (over 10 percent each) were Recreation and Visitor Services, Alternatives, Oil and Gas Leasing, and the RMP/NEPA Process. Comments that just expressed approval of, or disapproval of, an individual alternative or action were noted; however, no response was necessary. Since many distinct comments were coded to multiple comment categories, the total comment response workload was actually much greater than the number of individual comments.

Table 1-6
Number of Comments per Category

Comment Category	Number of Comments	Percentage of Total
Air Quality	413	3.3%
Climate Change	18	0.1%
Soils	44	0.4%
Water Resources	398	3.2%
Vegetation	154	1.2%
Fish and Wildlife	659	5.3%
Special Status Species	200	1.6%
Cultural Resources	20	0.2%
Paleontological Resources	4	0.0%
Visual Resources	60	0.5%
Wildland Fire Management	10	0.1%
Lands Managed for the Protection of Wilderness Characteristics	120	1.0%

Table 1-6
Number of Comments per Category

Comment Category	Number of Comments	Percentage of Total
Cave and Karst Resources	17	0.1%
Forestry	13	0.1%
Livestock Grazing	99	0.8%
Recreation and Visitor Services	1,622	13.0%
Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management	921	7.4%
Lands and Realty	129	1.0%
Minerals	526	4.2%
Oil and Gas Leasing	1,435	11.5%
Renewable Energy	64	0.5%
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	156	1.3%
Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas	96	0.8%
Wild and Scenic Rivers	102	0.8%
National Trails and Scenic Byways	1	0.0%
Transportation Facilities	505	4.0%
Social and Economic Concerns	882	7.1%
Public Health and Safety	272	2.2%
Environmental Justice	0	0.0%
Cumulative Impacts	72	0.6%
Alternatives	1,469	11.8%
RMP/NEPA Process	1,252	10.0%
Scope of EIS	376	3.0%
Consultation and Coordination	363	2.9%
TOTAL	12,7472	

Acronyms and Abbreviations:

EIS	environmental impact statement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
RMP	resource management plan

1.9.5 Comment Response

While each person's viewpoint was diligently considered, the comment analysis involved determining whether a comment was substantive or non-substantive in nature. According to NEPA, the BLM is required to identify and formally respond to all substantive public comments. On the basis of CEQ regulations, a substantive comment does one or more of the following:

- Questions, with a reasonable basis, the accuracy of the information and/or analysis in the EIS.
- Questions, with a reasonable basis, the adequacy of the information and/or analysis in the EIS.
- Presents reasonable alternatives other than those presented in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS that meet the purpose and need of the proposed action and address significant issues.
- Questions, with a reasonable basis, the merits of an alternative or alternatives.

- Causes changes in or revisions to the proposed action.
- Questions, with a reasonable basis, the adequacy of the planning process itself.

Non-substantive comments simply state a position in favor of, or against, an alternative or a management action proposed in an alternative; merely agree or disagree with BLM policy; provide information not directly related to issues or impact analyses; or otherwise express an unsupported personal preference or opinion. The BLM has reviewed and considered all non-substantive comments, but has not provided formal responses to such comments. Although non-substantive comments, including personal preferences and opinions, may be considered by the decision maker as he or she chooses, they generally do not affect the analysis.

All identified comments were distributed by comment category to the appropriate resource specialists in the CRVFO or BLM Colorado State Office for review. The BLM considered every comment, whether it came repeatedly from many people with the same message(s) or from a single person raising a technical or personal point. In analyzing comments, the BLM emphasized the content of the comment rather than the number of times a comment was received.

A single comment that addressed multiple issues was coded for several specialists to review. For example, a comment that related to water quality, fisheries, and recreational fishing was coded for a review by a hydrologist (water resources), a biologist (fisheries), and an outdoor recreation planner (recreational fishing). Sometimes it was necessary to do an interdisciplinary comment review and response involving all the specialists.

During the review of the comments, it was noted that many of the substantive comments concerned identical or very similar issues. In these cases, a collective response was developed for a similar group of comments. The comment summaries and responses, along with comment letters, are presented in Appendix V.

After the comment review was completed, the CRVFO staff worked as an interdisciplinary team and with BLM managers to evaluate the responses and make any appropriate changes to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The CRVFO also discussed many of the substantive public comments and BLM responses with the cooperating agency representatives and with the Northwest Colorado RAC (including the RAC subgroup).

1.10 CHANGES FROM DRAFT RMP/DRAFT EIS

Changes to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS were largely made in response to public comment on the Draft RMP/Draft EIS, cooperating agency review, resource advisory council reviews, USFWS consultation, and extensive internal BLM reviews of the Draft RMP/Draft EIS and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Throughout development of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, editorial changes were made to improve clarity and technical changes were made to correct errors. New information on resources or resource use was added. New program policies were recognized. Geographic information systems (GIS) information (e.g., acreage figures and associated quantifications) was updated as follows:

- Surface ownership data were updated per geographic coordinate database standards and land exchange information available since the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. This resulted in recalculating datasets, with totals reflecting these corrections.

- Datasets used in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS were refined with new surface ownership and federal mineral ownership layers for more accurate and specific totals.
- Some datasets were corrected because of mapping errors due to inaccurate datasets, unknown sources, or outdated information.

The more noteworthy changes made to Chapter 2, including Alternative B (Proposed RMP), are presented below, while a more complete description of changes to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS is presented in Appendix T.

Air:

- The proposed management action “Require that 100 percent of new compressors at BLM-authorized centralized compression facilities are powered by electricity, including renewable energy sources” was not technically feasible as a requirement because sufficient electrical voltage is not currently available.
- An implementation action for the Comprehensive Air Resources Protection Protocol (CARPP) has been included (Appendix L) to implement an adaptive management strategy for protecting air resources, monitoring air quality and tracking emissions for comparison against the most recent regional air quality model results.

Soils:

- The GIS information for stipulation CRV-CSU-1 presented in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS under Alternatives B, C, and D was incomplete. Stipulation CRVFO-CSU-1 proposed in Alternative B and stipulation CRV-CSU-1 proposed in Alternatives C and D, was corrected in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS to include fragile and saline soils based on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil description and surveys regardless of slope. This change increased the acres covered by this controlled surface use (CSU) stipulation to 338,100 BLM surface acres/119,700 acres of federal mineral estate. The description of stipulation CRVFO-CSU-1 was also revised to capture other sensitive soil parameters as well as to better explain the application and the purpose of the CSU stipulation.

The NRCS defines fragile soils as having shallow depth to bedrock, minimal structure and organic matter in the surface layer, and textures making them easily detached and eroded by wind and water. The following soil/slope characteristics are indicative of a potentially fragile soil:

- Erosion hazard rating of high or very high
- Surface texture that is sand, loamy sand, very fine sandy loam, fine sandy loam, silty clay, or clay
- Depth to bedrock less than 20 inches
- K-factor (soil erodibility potential) greater than 0.32.
- Soils with saline characteristics (i.e. Mancos shale parent geology).

Water:

- The no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation CRVFO-NSO-3 for municipal watersheds and public water supplies now includes protections of any public water supply that has completed (or is in the process of being completed) a Source Water Assessment through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) source water protection program. The original stipulation

applied to the entire sixth-level watersheds that provide municipal water for just the towns of Rifle and New Castle. Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-3 prohibits surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within (1) the primary zone of a source water protection area for a permitted public water system, or (2) 1,000 horizontal feet of either side of a classified surface water supply stream segment (measured from the average high water mark) for a distance of 5 miles upstream of a public water supply intake with the classification “Water Supply” by the State of Colorado used as a public (municipal) water supply.

- A CSU stipulation, which complements the NSO stipulation, has been included to protect (1) the secondary zone of a source water protection area for a permitted public water system, or (2) greater than 1,000 horizontal feet but less than 2,640 horizontal feet of a classified surface water supply stream segment (as measured from the average high water mark of a water body) for a distance of 5 miles upstream of a public water supply intake with the classification “Water Supply” by the State of Colorado.
- The NSO stipulation CRVFO-NSO-5 for perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and aquatic dependent species has been revised to combine protections for water quality, wetlands, riparian zones, aquatic wildlife, and shorebird habitat, into a single NSO stipulation for perennial water bodies and riparian zones. The benefit has been to minimize the number of overlapping stipulations pertaining to live water resources and to improve implementation of the stipulation.

Vegetation:

- The CSU stipulation that covered riparian and wetland vegetation to a distance of 500 feet from the edge of the riparian and wetland zone was replaced with (1) an NSO stipulation CRVFO-NSO-5 which applies within 328 feet (100 meters) from the edge of riparian vegetation and (2) a CSU stipulation CRVFO-CSU-4 which applies from 328 feet to 500 feet beyond the riparian vegetation. The benefit of the revised stipulation is to improve protection for riparian vegetation and function.

Fish and Wildlife - Fisheries and Other Aquatic Wildlife:

- The map of the NSO stipulation for the protection of fish hatcheries did not match the description in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. The stipulation CRVFO-NSO-6 for fish hatcheries and the corresponding GIS data/map have been corrected.
- To the extent possible, timing limitations were changed to be consistent with the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s (CDOW’s) “Actions to Minimize Adverse Impacts to Wildlife Resources,” October 2009.
- The NSO stipulation CRVFO-NSO-5 for perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and aquatic dependent species has been revised to combine protections for water quality, wetlands, riparian zones, aquatic wildlife, and shorebird habitat into a single NSO stipulation for perennial water bodies and riparian zones. The benefit has been to minimize the number of overlapping stipulations pertaining to live water resources and to improve implementation of the stipulation.

Fish and Wildlife - Terrestrial Wildlife:

- The condition of approval to protect migratory bird nesting areas is more accurately presented as a timing limitation in Chapter 2 Table 2-2 of the Final EIS.

- To the extent possible, timing limitations and other seasonal restrictions were changed to be consistent with the CDOW's "Actions to Minimize Adverse Impacts to Wildlife Resources," October 2009.
- The footnote "Under mild winter conditions, the last 60 days of the seasonal limitation period may be suspended after consultation with CPW" has been removed from the management action closing areas to motorized and mechanized travel to protect wintering big game and other wildlife species. It was put in this section in error in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS. It is applicable to the timing limitation stipulation CRVFO-TL-2 but not for public use restrictions. The notation now correctly states "Under severe winter conditions, the winter closure may be extended if requested by the CPW."
- The NSO stipulation CRVFO-NSO-7 for priority wildlife habitat was revised to include state wildlife areas (CRV-NSO-10 in the Draft EIS). The benefit has been to minimize the number of similar stipulations pertaining to the protection of terrestrial wildlife habitat and to improve implementation of the stipulation.
- References to desert bighorn sheep have been removed because no desert bighorn sheep populations reside within the administrative boundaries of the CRVFO, and CPW has no plans to introduce them.

Special Status Species - Fish and Other Aquatic Wildlife:

- The NSO stipulation CRVFO-NSO-5 for perennial streams, water bodies, riparian areas, and aquatic dependent species; has been revised to combine protections for water quality, wetlands, riparian zones, aquatic wildlife, and shorebird habitat into a single NSO stipulation for perennial water bodies and riparian zones. The benefit has been to minimize the number of overlapping stipulations pertaining to live water resources and to improve implementation of the stipulation.

Special Status Species – Plants:

- Based on USFWS consultation, the NSO stipulation for the Mount Logan Foothills ACEC was changed from CRVFO-NSO-9 to CRVFO-NSO-28. Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-9 constrained surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within 200 meters (656 feet) of known occupied habitat for listed plants. The change to stipulation CRVFO-NSO-28 also constrains surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within the unleased portions of the ACEC. These unleased areas may contain potential habitat for Colorado hook less phacelia, or Parachute penstemon that is currently unoccupied or has yet to be surveyed. The change provides protection for potential habitat from surface-disturbing activities and reduces habitat fragmentation.
- The NSO stipulation with a 100-meter buffer around all BLM sensitive plants has been replaced with a revised stipulation, CRVFO-NSO-10, that provides a 200-meter buffer (656-feet) for those BLM sensitive plants that occur within ACECs.
- The CSU stipulation CRVFO-CSU-6 providing a 100-meter buffer (328-feet) around Harrington's penstemon habitat outside ACECs has been expanded to include all BLM sensitive plant species outside ACECs.

Special Status Species – Terrestrial Wildlife:

- After consultation with the USFWS, Canada lynx landscape linkages were designated as right-of-way (ROW) avoidance areas (including renewable energy sites such as solar, wind, hydro, and biomass development). Linkage areas provide landscape connectivity between blocks of habitat. Linkages

offer broad areas of habitat where animals can find food, shelter, and security. Connectivity provided by linkage areas can be degraded or severed by human infrastructure such as high-use highways, subdivisions or other developments (USFS 2008a).

Cultural Resources

- Administrative access was requested for tribal purposes. The CRVFO provided administrative access on designated routes to tribal cultural departments and tribal members for the collection of appropriate natural resources needed to maintain traditional lifeways, recognizing resource concerns.
- Plant gathering was requested for tribal uses. The CRVFO included a management action to identify tribal plant gathering needs and establish tribal protocol for gathering materials for cultural and religious purposes.

Wildland Fire Management:

- An objective has been added relating to fire regime condition class.

Lands Proposed for the Protection of Wilderness Characteristics :

- Deep Creek unit boundary has been adjusted to better match up with ACEC and WSR boundaries. This change will offer administrative and managerial consistency within Deep Creek canyon across similar management designations and identifications.

Livestock Grazing:

- Allotment information, including animal-unit months (AUMs) and acreages, has been updated.
- Actions by grazing allotment are displayed in Appendix I.

Recreation and Visitor Services:

- In Alternative B the boundaries and the recreation management zones for the Hardscrabble-East Eagle Special Recreational Management Area (SRMA) have been revised based on: public comment, consultation with Eagle County and the Town of Eagle on future recreation development and the goal of reducing overlap with the Hardscrabble-East Eagle ACEC.
- In Alternative B the boundaries of the Gypsum Hills ERMA have been expanded based on public comment for motorized recreation activity opportunities and lack of conflict with other resources/resource uses.
- In Alternative B the boundaries of the New Castle ERMA have been revised to reduce conflicts with other resources (e.g., priority wildlife habitat) and focus recreation use and development adjacent to the Town of New Castle.
- In Alternative B the boundaries of the Upper Colorado River SRMA have been revised to reduce potential conflicts with management objectives for special designations (e.g., ACECs, wilderness study areas [WSAs]) and identifications.

Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management:

- In Alternative B route designations for ATVs were revised to include utility-type vehicles of varying widths. This change will make BLM travel designations more consistent with revised travel designations on the WRNF.

Lands and Realty:

- WSAs were included in the list of areas to be petitioned for withdrawal from locatable exploration or development in the Draft EIS but were removed from the Final EIS because of guidance found in *BLM Manual 6330 – Management of BLM Wilderness Study Areas*, which addresses lands and realty actions within WSAs. It states, “ Unless a WSA or portion of a WSA was “previously withdrawn from appropriation under the mining laws, such lands shall continue to be subject to such appropriation during the period of review unless withdrawn by the Secretary under the procedures of section 204 of...[FLPMA]...for reasons other than preservation of their wilderness character.” Existing withdrawals may be renewed if the withdrawal is still serving its purpose. No new withdrawals may be made except withdrawals that can satisfy the non-impairment criteria.”

Coal:

- The Proposed RMP differs from the Draft RMP, which did not make a determination regarding the absence of potentially developable coal resources but instead assumed that future exploration, leasing, and development would be unlikely. Under the approach of the Draft RMP and current management, proposals for future leasing and development of federal coal resource would be limited to the Grand Hogback, designated as open and suitable for coal leasing and development. Under the Proposed RMP, a proposal for leasing and development would be analyzed in an RMP Amendment/EIS to evaluate its suitability/unsuitability for mining. If found suitable, the same process would then be applied as under current management and the Draft RMP to determine whether it is acceptable for further consideration for coal leasing and development. Therefore, the outcomes of the two processes are likely to be the same for any coal resource identified as suitable for mining, with the outcomes being affected primarily by the subsequent application of Screen 2 (multiple resource use) given the resource values along the Grand Hogback.

Fluid Minerals:

- The estimated well and pad numbers were removed from proposed decisions in Chapter 2 - Table 2-2 to correctly convey that the range of alternatives presented in the Draft EIS, along with the corresponding assumptions, were only for the purpose of analyzing a range of potential oil and gas development scenarios. The different well and pad numbers and associated mitigation measures were not intended to represent caps on development under the different alternatives, although some public commenters interpreted them in that way. Similarly, the well and pad numbers and assumptions incorporated into the Chapter 4 – Environmental Consequences analysis in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are not management decisions and do not represent caps on development. These numbers and assumptions just provide a basis for analyzing impacts of fluid minerals development on other resources or resource uses.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern:

- In light of new information regarding the occurrence of important paleontological resources, the boundaries of the McCoy Fan Delta ACEC have been expanded.
- The Deep Creek ACEC boundary has been adjusted to match the WSR boundary and the boundary of lands being managed to protect wilderness characteristics (Deep Creek unit). This change will offer administrative and managerial consistency within Deep Creek canyon across similar management designations and identifications.

- The Grand Hogback ACEC was carried forward in Alternative B-Proposed RMP, but the size of the ACEC was reduced to address concerns regarding potential management conflicts with the (1) development of fluid minerals in an area with a high potential for oil and natural gas and (2) the ability of proposed NSO and CSU stipulations to adequately protect resource values (e.g., scenic, geologic, cultural, wildlife) without requiring a special management designation.
- The initially proposed Dotsero Crater ACEC was dropped from consideration for ACEC designation because proposed management for steep slopes and VRM classes was considered adequate to protect the resource values without requiring a special management designation.
- The boundaries of several other ACECs were adjusted slightly to respond to public comments to make boundaries more identifiable on the ground (using roads, drainages, ridgelines, or change in vegetation type) or to coincide with land ownership boundaries, where feasible.
- After consultation with the USFWS, the NSO stipulation for the Mount Logan Foothills ACEC was changed from CRVFO-NSO-9 to CRVFO-NSO-28. Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-9 constrained surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within 200 meters (656 feet) of known occupied habitat. The change to CRVFO-NSO-28 constrains surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within the unleased portions of the ACEC. These unleased areas may contain potential habitat for Colorado hookless cactus, DeBeque phacelia and Parachute penstemon that has yet to be surveyed. The change provides protection for potential habitat from surface-disturbing activities which could cause habitat fragmentation.

Wilderness Study Areas:

- *BLM Handbook H-8550-1, Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review*, has been superseded by *BLM Manual 6330 – Management of Wilderness Study Areas*. (July 13, 2012).

Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- The Deep Creek WSR boundary on BLM lands has been adjusted to match: (1) the USFS Deep Creek WSR boundary along canyon rim and (2) to match with the boundary of lands being managed to protect wilderness characteristics (Deep Creek unit) and (3) Deep Creek ACEC management boundaries. This change will offer administrative and managerial consistency within Deep Creek canyon across similar management designations and identifications.
- BLM Manual 8351 has been replaced by *BLM Manual 6400 – Wild and Scenic Rivers – Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, Planning, and Management*. (July 13, 2012).
- The US District Court for the District of Colorado has remanded the 2008 Roan Plateau Plan back to the BLM for further analysis that will appear in a supplemental EIS. Suitability determinations for eligible stream segments on the Roan Plateau have been deferred to a supplemental EIS. BLM will maintain eligible status for East Middle Fork Parachute Creek Complex and East Fork Parachute Creek Complex until a record of decision is entered for the Roan Plateau planning area. At that time, BLM will render a suitability determination using information and alternatives from this planning process, along with any new alternatives and information generated for the Roan Plateau planning area supplemental EIS.