



❖ AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN ❖

What is an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC)?

An ACEC is a parcel of BLM-administered land where special management attention is needed to protect *relevant and important* values from irreparable damage. ACECs are an administrative designation made by the BLM through a land use plan. ACECs may be proposed by the public or internally within BLM and are unique to the BLM; no other federal agency uses this form of designation.

Relevant and important values:

- Historical resources
- Cultural or scenic resources
- Fish and wildlife resources
- A natural process or system
- Natural hazards

The BLM has a set of criteria to determine when specific values may be considered relevant and important.

What decisions regarding ACECs are under consideration in this draft Resource Management Plan (RMP)?

- Does any given proposed ACEC meet the BLM’s criteria for *relevant and important* values and special management?
- Should the BLM continue managing the two existing ACECs within the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area (D-E NCA) (Gunnison Gravels and Escalante Canyon ACECs) as ACECs?
- Should the BLM designate new ACECs within the D-E NCA?
- What types of restrictions or actions need to be imposed to protect the *relevant and important* values in any new or existing ACECs?

The BLM’s range of alternatives for ACECs includes the following designations:

| | Alternative A (No-Action) | Alternative B | Alternative C | Alternative D | Alternative E (Preferred) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Number of ACECs | 2 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| Acreage of ACECs | 1,900 | 0 | 12,823 | 29,663 | 7,686 |

Where in the draft RMP should I look if I'm interested in ACECs?

- Chapter 2 (“Alternatives”), starting on page 31, contains details about which ACECs are being designated under each alternative.
- Appendix M describes the evaluation of all proposed ACECs in the D-E NCA.

Questions to consider when commenting on decisions in the draft RMP regarding ACECs:

- Is there any missing, incorrect, or inconsistent information in Appendix M, (Evaluation of Proposed and Existing Areas of Critical Environmental Concern)?
- What do (or don't) you like about the different alternatives for ACECs? Why?
- What do (or don't) you like about the ACEC management proposed under the preferred alternative? Why?