

Grand Junction Field Office Draft Resource Management Plan Review

Abandoned Mines and Minerals Quick Guide

If you are most interested in **Abandoned Mines and Minerals**, below are some possible items of interest:

- The proposed mineral withdrawals and closures along the Dolores River will not impact existing mining claims.
 - Under some alternatives, our Field Office would petition some of the areas for withdrawal from mineral entry, but the Secretary of the Interior makes the final decision regarding the withdrawals.
 - The withdrawal along the Dolores River in alternative B is being proposed to protect rare plants.
 - The larger withdrawal along the Dolores River in alternative C is being proposed to protect riparian areas and plants.
 - The withdrawals only apply to **locatable minerals** (gold, silver, uranium, copper, and other metallic and uncommon variety minerals).
 - In both alternatives B and C the Dolores River ACEC would be closed to recreational mining activity, but that only applies to gold prospecting outside of the existing mining claims. The closure does not apply to activity occurring on existing mining claims.
 - In alternative C three areas could be designated along the Dolores River allowing recreational placer mining activity, if the existing mining claims are dropped.
- **Salable minerals** are sold by contracts or permits and include sand and gravel, decorative stone, building stone and other common varieties of rock.
- **Solid leasable minerals** are sold through leases and include coal, potash, and phosphate. There are also two DOE uranium leases within the GJFO boundaries. There are more DOE uranium leases on BLM to the south on the UFO and Tres Rios FO areas.
 - DOE is currently working on a DEIS for issuance of new uranium leases. BLM has been given the opportunity to review and comment.
- There are a few hundred abandoned mines within the GJFO boundaries. Most of these are uranium/vanadium underground mines, but others include underground coal mines, amethyst mines, stone quarries, and copper mines and/or prospects. All but a few of the known sites have been reclaimed and/or mitigated. About 150 bat gates have been installed in adits to allow bats in and out of the underground workings, but keep people out. Most of the large waste rock piles have also been re-shaped and re-vegetated.
 - There were no alternatives generated for AML work, because existing policy and guidance drives us to reclaim future sites when found if funding is available.