



FACT SHEET: Grand Junction RMP, ACECs, wilderness characteristics, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness Study Areas

ACECs

An “Area of Critical Environmental Concern,” or ACEC, is a designation that BLM can use to identify specific areas where special management is identified to manage specific resources.

ACECs are designed so that each has a specific set of management prescriptions necessary to protect the identified resource. The Draft RMP considers designating ACECs to protect such resources as rare plants, cultural resources, scenic values, unique fish or wildlife habitat and other sensitive resources. An ACEC designation is not required to protect these sensitive resources, but it does help identify the areas needing special management.

Specific management actions for each proposed ACEC begins on page 2-183 in Volume 1.

By alternative, the Draft proposes:

- Alternative A (current management): 5 ACECs totaling 28,900 acres
- Alternative B (Preferred Alternative): 13 ACECs totaling 106,000 acres
- Alternative C: 23 ACECs totaling 168,000 acres
- Alternative D: 5 ACECs totaling 33,200 acres

Wilderness Study Areas

The four existing Wilderness Study Areas totaling 96,500 acres would continue to be managed to preserve their wilderness characteristics under all alternatives. No new WSAs are proposed.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Outside of Existing WSAs

Under two alternatives, BLM would manage specific areas outside of existing WSAs to maintain their wilderness characteristics. These areas are described beginning on page 2-118 in Volume 1. Appendix F is the wilderness characteristics assessment.

Alternative B would manage 3 areas totaling 24,400 acres to protect their wilderness characteristics.

Alternative C would manage 12 areas totaling 171,200 acres to protect their wilderness characteristics.

Wild and Scenic River Suitability

BLM has identified 14 stream sections as eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. A full range of alternatives is considered in the Draft RMP, from determining none of the 14 are suitable for inclusion to determining all of the 14 are. The Preferred Alternative identifies one segment – a section of the the Dolores River -- as suitable. Only Congress can formally designate a segment as Wild and Scenic. Appendix C is the Draft Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report. Additional information is found on page 2-206 and Table 2-4 on page 2-219.