



United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management



Grand Junction Field Office
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506

In Reply Refer To:
1610 (CO-130)

March 31, 2009

Dear interested party:

This month, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO), completed a Wild and Scenic River Eligibility study. This study was completed as part of the Grand Junction Resource Management Plan (RMP) revisions and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that such a study be completed whenever Federal agencies revise their land use plans.

The final eligibility report can be found at www.blm.gov. The report details which river and stream segments on BLM-administered public lands within the GJFO meet the criteria to be eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation. The eligibility phase of the study is solely an inventory designed to identify outstanding river-related values, and it does not examine competing uses for the identified river segments.

The BLM is now beginning the second phase of the Wild and Scenic River study called the suitability phase or suitability study. The suitability study is the process of determining whether each segment identified as eligible would be a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system. During the initial stage of the suitability process, the BLM is considering a number of suitability criteria such as manageability of each segment, land ownership, use tradeoffs and conflicts, usage levels, and availability of other methods for protecting values, to name a few (see the complete list of criteria in Attachment #1).

Public input is critical for developing a thorough draft suitability analysis. At this time, the BLM is soliciting data from the public regarding each of the eligible stream segments. The most helpful data to BLM is information that directly addresses each of the suitability criteria identified in Attachment #1. The BLM will then use this data in making draft suitability determinations during the draft alternatives analysis process. Please send us your data regarding the eligible stream segments of interest to you by May 29, 2009. While BLM will accept opinions on whether specific segments are suitable, information regarding each of the suitability criteria will be relied upon most heavily in making the draft suitability determinations. When the Draft RMP/Draft EIS is published (tentatively scheduled for Spring of 2010), the public will have 90-days to comment on the draft suitability determinations.

Included for your information is a Question and Answer document regarding Wild and Scenic Rivers Analysis and Water Rights/Water Projects (Attachment #2).

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Bailey at (970) 244-3047.

Sincerely,

Catherine Robertson
Grand Junction Field Manager

Attachments:

- 1 – Wild and Scenic River Suitability Criteria
- 2 – Questions and Answers on Wild and Scenic River Analysis and Water Rights/Water Projects

cc:

Roy Smith (CO – 930) w/attachments