Chapter 1
Introduction

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1-1 Uncompahgre RMP Planning Area
1-2 Federal Mineral Estate

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

	Full Phrase
ACEC	area of critical environmental concern
ATV	all-terrain vehicle
AUM	animal unit month
BLM	United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
BMP	best management practice
BOR	United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
CARMMS	Colorado Air Resources Management Modeling Study
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNHP	Colorado Natural Heritage Program
CPW	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
CSU	controlled surface use
decision area	public lands and federal mineral estate managed by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
DOE	United States Department of Energy
DOI	United States Department of the Interior
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
ERMA	extensive recreation management area
ESA	Endangered Species Act of 1973
federal mineral estate	subsurface mineral estate administered by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
FMP	fire management plan
Forest Service	United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
FWFMP	Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IMPLAN	impact analysis for planning (model)
IMPROVE	Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments
ISA	instant study area
NCA	National Conservation Area
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NGD	no ground disturbance
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
NL	no leasing
North Fork area	North Fork Alternative Plan area (63,390 acres of BLM-administered surface estate and 159,820 acres of federal mineral estate) (Figure 2-1)
NPS	United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NSO	no surface occupancy
NWSRS	National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS *(continued)*

	Full Phrase
OHV	off-highway vehicle
ORV	outstandingly remarkable value
PFC	proper functioning condition
PFYC	Potential Fossil Yield Classification
PILT	payment in lieu of taxes
planning area	Uncompahgre Field Office boundary, including all lands, regardless of land ownership, except the Gunnison Gorge NCA Planning Area and the Dominguez-Escalante NCA
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns in effective diameter
PM_{10}	particulate matter smaller than 10 microns in effective diameter
RMA	recreation management area
RMP	resource management plan
ROD	record of decision
ROW	right-of-way
SRMA	special recreation management area
SRP	special recreation permit
SSR	site-specific relocation
TL	timing limitation
UFO	Uncompahgre Field Office
US	United States
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
VRI	visual resource inventory
VRM	visual resource management
WSA	wilderness study area
WSR	wild and scenic river
WUI	wildland urban interface

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The United States (US) Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this draft resource management plan (RMP) revision and environmental impact statement (EIS). This document provides direction for managing public lands and federal mineral estate under the jurisdiction of the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) in Colorado and analyzes the environmental effects that could result from implementing the alternatives addressed in the RMP. The affected lands are currently managed under two separate land use plans and plan amendments: portions of the San Juan/San Miguel Planning Area RMP (BLM 1985) and the entire Uncompahgre Basin RMP (BLM 1989a).

This RMP has been 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 1701 et seq.) and the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1 (BLM 2005a), as amended. An EIS is incorporated into this document to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), DOI NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46), and requirements of the BLM's NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1 (BLM 2008a).

The land use planning process is the key tool used by the BLM to manage resources and designate uses on BLM-administered lands in coordination with tribal, state, and local government; land users; and interested members of the public. Generally, an RMP does 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, including conflicts. Current management direction that has proven effective and requires no change has been carried forward into this RMP and will be considered throughout the analysis process. Major issues to be addressed in the RMP revision include the following:

- Managing vegetative resources, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, water resources, and special management areas, while maintaining biological diversity and native species populations.

- Managing energy and minerals resources.
- Managing human activities and uses.
- Managing or adjusting land tenure, withdrawals, and utility/energy corridors.
- Managing and protecting cultural, historical and paleontological resources, and Native American religious concerns.
- Managing the effects of population growth and an expanding urban interface on management of BLM-administered lands and resources, including authorized and permitted land uses, while considering community values and needs.

To help navigate this document, **Diagram 1-1** (Document Organization and Contents Overview) provides an outline of the RMP/EIS and describes the information found within each section. All maps for the RMP/EIS are provided in **Appendix A** (Figures). The management alternatives are presented in **Chapter 2** (Alternatives) and are supported by the stipulations contained in **Appendix B** (Restrictions Applicable to Fluid Minerals Leasing and Other Surface-disturbing Activities).

1.1 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Uncompahgre RMP is to provide broad-scale direction for the management of public lands and resources administered by the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office that are within the planning area. The RMP presents desired outcomes, which are expressed in terms of goals and objectives for resource conditions and uses. It also establishes the allowable uses, management actions, and special designations that will enable the BLM to achieve the desired outcomes.

Management direction presented in the Uncompahgre RMP adheres to statutory requirements and is in accordance with principles of multiple use and sustained yield, as mandated by the provisions of the FLPMA, which establishes public land policy and sets forth the requirement for the BLM to develop, maintain, and when appropriate, revise or amend land use plans for the management of public lands. The RMP guides the Uncompahgre Field Office in the implementation of subsequent management actions within the planning area.

BLM regulations require that existing land use plans be revised when necessary to address current resource conditions, changes in circumstances (e.g., evolving demands on resources), and new or revised national-level policy (43 CFR 1610.5-6). Management direction for lands in the Uncompahgre planning area was contained in the 1985 San Juan/San Miguel RMP, 1989 Uncompahgre Basin RMP, and subsequent amendments. Since the 1985 and 1989 plans and amendments were completed, new information, revised laws and policies, emerging issues, and changed circumstances and resource conditions generated the need for a revised land use plan.

Diagram 1-1
Document Organization and Contents Overview

VOLUME I

Acronyms and Abbreviations
Lists the acronyms and abbreviations used in the RMP/EIS.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Summarizes the proposed action, purpose and need, and decisions to be made in this RMP/EIS.

Chapter 2: Alternatives
Describes and compares the proposed management alternatives.

Chapter 3: Affected Environment
Presents existing biological, physical, and socioeconomic resources that could be affected by implementing the management alternatives.

VOLUME II

Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences
Evaluates the impacts of the alternatives on the human and natural environment in terms of environmental, social, and economic consequences projected to occur from implementing the alternatives.

Chapter 5: Consultation and Coordination
Describes the scoping and public comment process, agencies contacted, and government-to-government consultation, and lists the preparers of the RMP/EIS.

References
Lists the documents and other sources used to prepare the RMP/EIS.

Glossary
Provides definitions for important terms used in the RMP/EIS.

Index
Identifies where in the RMP/EIS significant issues, resource descriptions, NEPA terms, and agencies and groups discussed can be found.

VOLUME III

Appendices
A Figures *(on the CD located in the back pocket of the RMP/EIS)*
B Restrictions Applicable to Fluid Minerals Leasing and Other Surface-disturbing Activities
C BLM Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado
D Ecological Emphasis Areas
E Livestock Grazing Allotments and Allotment Levels
F Summary of the Uncompahgre Planning Area Wilderness Characteristics Inventory: 2011 Update
G Best Management Practices and Standard Operating Procedures
H Colorado BLM Comprehensive Air Resource Protection Protocol
I Drought Management
J Description of Recreation Management Areas
K Bighorn/Domestic Sheep Risk of Association Modeling
L Coal Screening Criteria for the Uncompahgre Planning Area
M Travel Management
N Legal Descriptions of Lands Available for Disposal
O Summary of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Report
P Summary of Draft Wild and Scenic River Suitability Report
Q Air Emissions Inventory

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

The Uncompahgre RMP planning area includes BLM; US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service (Forest Service); US Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS); State of Colorado lands; and private property. It totals approximately 3.1 million acres in Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties in southwestern Colorado. The planning area also includes 2,234,670 acres of federal mineral estate.

The Gunnison Gorge and Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Areas, while within the UFO boundary, are not within the planning area and are not part of this planning effort. **Table 1-1** (Land Status within the Uncompahgre RMP Planning Area) and **Figure 1-1** (Uncompahgre RMP Planning Area) highlight the ownership pattern of the planning area. This RMP does not make any decisions for the BLM Gunnison Gorge or the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Areas, which are managed under separate RMPs.

Table 1-1
Land Status within the Uncompahgre RMP Planning Area

Agency	Acres
Bureau of Land Management	675,800
Forest Service	1,248,390
National Park Service	27,130
State (including Colorado Parks and Wildlife)	20,110
Private	1,125,350
City	680
Total	*3,097,460*

Source: BLM 2012a

The Uncompahgre RMP decision area includes 675,800 acres of BLM-administered lands, which includes withdrawn lands. While there are over 2.2 million acres of federal mineral estate in the planning area, there are 971,220 acres of federal mineral estate in the decision area[1] (**Figure 1-2** [Federal Mineral Estate]). Management direction and actions outlined in the RMP apply only to BLM-administered lands and to federal mineral estate under BLM jurisdiction within the decision area.

The Curecanti National Recreation Area is withdrawn to the US DOI, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and managed by the NPS under a Memorandum of Understanding between NPS and BOR. Curecanti National Recreation Area is within the decision area until legislation supersedes; locatable minerals have not been withdrawn and are managed by the BLM, and the area is not closed to fluid minerals leasing or mineral materials disposal.

Federal mineral estate within the decision area includes mineral estate underlying BLM-administered lands, privately owned lands, city lands, and State-owned lands. The BLM adopts

[1] Although minerals beneath National Forest System lands are part of the federal mineral estate they are not part of the RMP decision area.

the leasing requirements determined by other federal surface-managing agencies when leasing the mineral estate (while within the planning area, it is outside of the decision area). To lease minerals beneath surface lands administered by the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service), the BLM must receive consent to lease from the Forest Service, and incorporate any accompanying stipulations required by forest land use plans or forest-wide programmatic leasing analyses.

All proposed actions to access or recover federal mineral estate in the decision area, regardless of surface estate ownership, will be managed consistent with all proposed actions to access federal mineral estate from federal lands.

1.3 PLANNING PROCESS

The process for developing, approving, maintaining, and amending or revising the RMP was initiated under the authority of Section 202(f) of FLPMA and Section 202(c) of NEPA. The process is guided by BLM planning regulations codified in 43 CFR 1600 and Council on Environmental Quality regulations codified in 40 CFR 1500 and has two tiers: 1) the land use planning tier; and 2) the implementation tier.

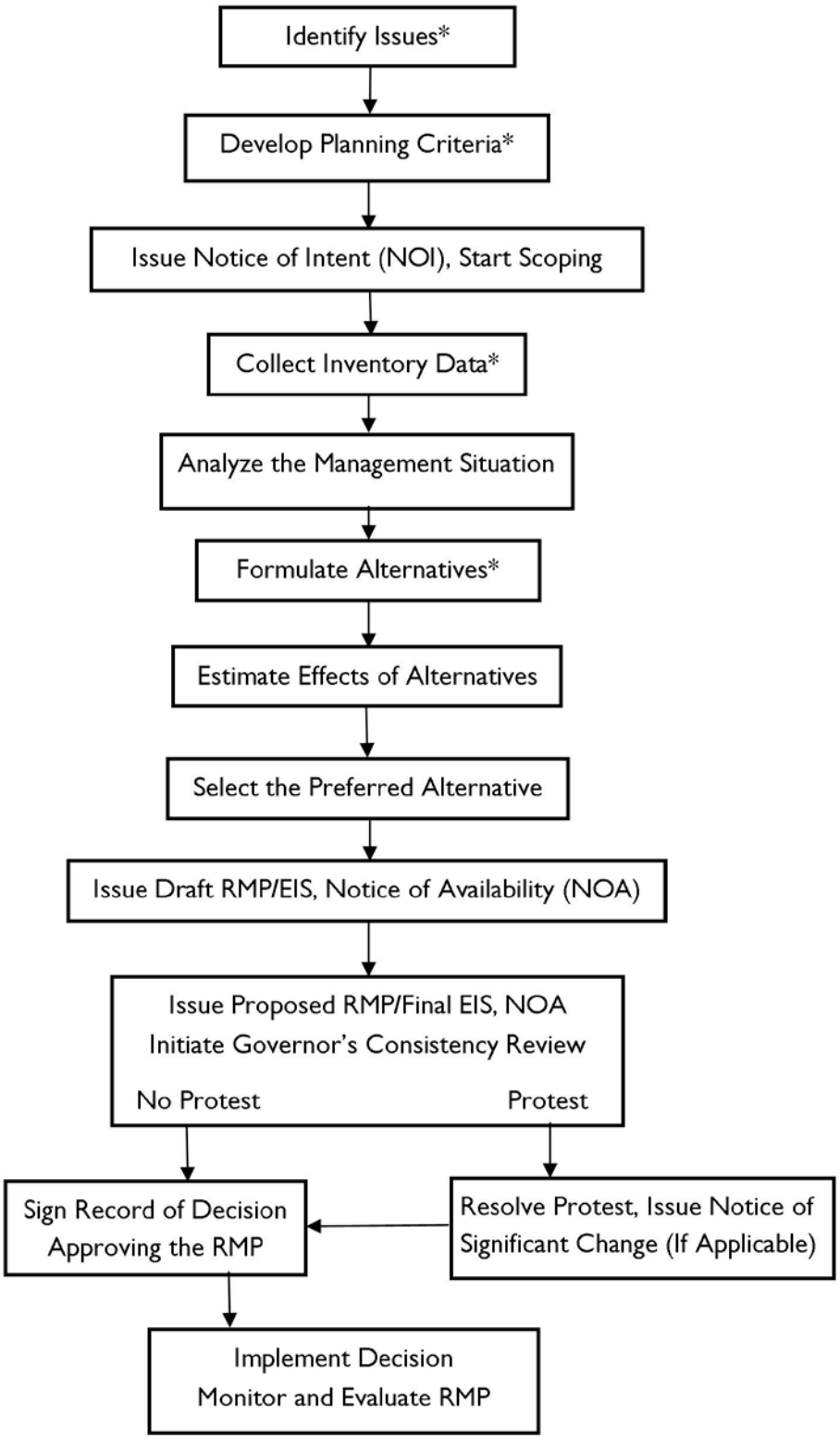
In the land use planning tier, the BLM develops the RMP. The RMP prescribes the allocation of and general future management direction for the resources and land uses of BLM-administered lands in the Uncompahgre planning area. The RMP then guides the implementation tier, which includes site-specific implementation planning and daily operations. Activity or implementation planning converts the resource and land use decisions of the RMP into site-specific implementation decisions for smaller geographic units of BLM-administered land within the Uncompahgre RMP decision area. Implementation decisions identified as a result of the implementation plan require site-specific planning and NEPA analysis. Implementation planning includes elements such as recreation area management plans, fluid mineral development activities, and interdisciplinary or coordinated activity plans that issue various land and resource use authorizations. Implementation planning can also include identification of specific mitigation needs and development and implementation of other similar plans and actions.

As part of this RMP revision, published documents will include a draft RMP/EIS, a proposed RMP/final EIS, and an approved RMP/record of decision (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

Preparation of an RMP involves interrelated steps, as illustrated in **Diagram 1-2** (BLM Planning Process) and described in **Table 1-2** (BLM Planning Process).

Diagram 1-2
BLM Planning Process



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

Table 1-2
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, Indian tribes, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and internal BLM staff.	January 2008 to March 2010
Step 2—Develop planning criteria	Planning criteria are created to ensure decisions are made to address the issues pertinent to the planning effort. Planning criteria are derived from a variety of sources, including applicable laws and regulations, existing management plans, coordinating other agencies' programs, and the results of public and agency scoping. The planning criteria may be updated and changed as planning proceeds.	January 2008 to March 2010
Step 3—Collect data and information	Data and information for the resources in the planning area are collected based on the planning criteria.	Ongoing
Step 4—Analyze management situation	The current management of resources in the planning area is assessed.	September 2009 to June 2010
Step 5—Formulate alternatives	A range of reasonable management alternatives is developed to address issues identified during scoping.	May 2010 to April 2012
Step 6—Assess alternatives	The effects of each alternative are estimated.	April 2012 to October 2012
Step 7—Select preferred alternative	The alternative that best resolves planning issues is identified as the preferred alternative.	April 2012 to October 2012
Step 8—Select RMP	First, a draft RMP/EIS is issued and is made available to the public for a review period of 90 days. After comments to the draft document have been received and analyzed, it is modified as necessary, and the proposed RMP/final EIS is published and made available for public review for 30 days. The BLM signs a ROD to approve the RMP/EIS.	Draft RMP/EIS: 2016 Proposed RMP/Final EIS: estimated 2017 Approved RMP/ROD: estimated 2018
Step 9—Implementation Monitoring	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

1.4 SCOPING AND PLANNING ISSUES

The policy of the BLM is to provide opportunities for the public, various groups, other federal agencies, Native American tribal members, and state and local governments to participate meaningfully and substantively by providing input and comments during the preparation of the RMP/EIS.

Public involvement is a vital and legal component of both the RMP and EIS processes. Public involvement vests the public in the decision-making process and allows for full environmental disclosure. Guidance for implementing public involvement under NEPA is codified in 40 CFR Section 1506.6, thereby ensuring that federal agencies make a diligent effort to involve the public in the NEPA process. Section 202 of FLPMA directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish procedures for public involvement during land use planning actions on BLM-administered lands. These procedures can be found in the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) (BLM 2005a). Public involvement for the Uncompahgre RMP/EIS includes the following four methods:

- Public scoping before NEPA analysis begins to determine the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the RMP/EIS
- Public outreach via newsletters, news releases, and RMP project Web site (http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo/uncompahgre_rmp.html) updates
- Collaboration with cooperating agencies (participating federal, state, and local governments), tribal governments, and the BLM Colorado Southwest Resource Advisory Council
- Public review of and comment on the draft RMP/EIS, which analyzes likely environmental effects and identifies the BLM's preferred alternative

The public scoping phase of the process has been completed and is described in **Section 1.4.1** (Scoping Process) below. The public outreach and collaboration phases are ongoing, while public review of the draft RMP/EIS is occurring for 90 days following its publication. Information about the RMP/EIS process can be obtained by the public at any time on the project Web site at http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo/uncompahgre_rmp.html. This Web site contains background information about the project, a public involvement timeline and calendar, maps and photos of the planning area, and copies of public information documents released throughout the RMP/EIS process.

1.4.1 Scoping Process

The BLM began the scoping process with seven open houses in January and February 2010 to provide the public with opportunities to become involved, to learn about the project and the planning process, to meet the Uncompahgre RMP team members, and to offer comments. Scoping meetings were held in an open house format to encourage participants to discuss concerns and questions with BLM staff representatives. The scoping meetings were attended by 369 individuals.

On December 24, 2009, the BLM mailed a newsletter announcing the start of the scoping period for the Uncompahgre RMP/EIS to more than 390 individuals from the public, agencies, and organizations who participated in past UFO activities, currently hold use permits, or requested to be included on UFO distribution lists. The newsletter provided the dates and venues for the original six scoping open houses (in Hotchkiss, Delta, Montrose, Ridgway, Norwood, and Naturita) scheduled in January 2010. The seventh open house in Telluride was added in response to a special request from the San Miguel County Commissioners. The newsletter included an insert with a comment form for submitting scoping comments, and described the various methods for submitting comments, including dedicated e-mail and postal

addresses. The newsletter was posted on the project Web site (http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo/uncompahgre_rmp.html) and was available at scoping meetings.

In addition to the newsletter, information about the scoping period, the original six scoping open houses, and submitting scoping comments was provided in a press release dated January 5, 2010 and posted on the project Web site. The information was also publicized with display advertisements in six local newspapers in December 2009 and January 2010 and a flyer posted in various public locations throughout the planning area.

Although public scoping meetings began in January 2010, the formal scoping period began with publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register on February 25, 2010 (75 *Federal Register* 8739-8740, February 25, 2010). A copy of the Notice of Intent was also posted on the project's Web site. The Notice of Intent notified the public of the BLM's intent to develop an RMP for the UFO. The scoping period for receipt of public comments ended March 29, 2010.

During the scoping period, the BLM received 214 unique written submissions and 13 different form letters containing a total of 2,496 unique comments. Detailed information about the comments received and the public outreach process can be found in the Uncompahgre RMP Revision Scoping Summary Report, finalized in July 2010 (BLM 2010a). A summary of the issues identified during public scoping and outreach is included in **Section 1.4.2** (Issue Identification).

Refer to **Section 1.6** (Collaboration) and **Chapter 5** (Consultation and Coordination) for additional information on other public participation opportunities.

1.4.2 Issue Identification

Issue identification is the first step of the nine-step BLM planning process (**Table 1-2**). A planning issue is a major controversy or dispute regarding management of resources or uses on BLM-administered lands that can be addressed in a variety of ways.

In September 2008, the BLM completed a preparation plan for the RMP revisions/EIS. This plan, used by the BLM interdisciplinary team to initiate the planning process, highlighted anticipated planning issues developed by the team internally. Based on the lands and resources managed in the planning area, preliminary issues fell into six categories. The comments received during the public scoping process were analyzed, and a scoping summary report was finalized in July 2010 (BLM 2010a). Issues raised during scoping were consistent with the planning issues developed during the internal, preplanning phase. A planning issue statement was developed for each of the six planning issue categories. Each planning issue statement summarizes the issues and concerns heard for each category during scoping. The six planning issue statements are presented in **Table 1-3** (Planning Issue Statements).

1.4.3 Issues Considered but Not Further Analyzed

During scoping, several concerns were raised regarding issues that would not be addressed in the RMP, including administrative/policy issues, implementation issues, issues outside the scope of the RMP, and issues that have already been addressed through other BLM activities. The Uncompahgre RMP Scoping Summary Report (BLM 2010a) provides a comprehensive list of issues outside the scope of the RMP.

Table 1-3
Planning Issue Statements

Issue	Resource Category	Planning Issue Statement
1.	• Soil, air, and water resources • Special management areas • Vegetation (including riparian and wetland areas and noxious weeds) • Fish and wildlife • Special status species • Drought management and climate change	How will vegetative resources, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, water resources, and special management areas be managed, while maintaining biological diversity and native species populations?
2.	• Non-renewable energy development • Renewable energy development • Minerals and mining	How will energy and minerals resources be managed?
3.	• Recreation • Travel management • Livestock grazing • Visual resources • Noise • Forestry • Wildland fire management	How will human activities and uses be managed?
4.	• Lands and realty	How will land tenure, withdrawals, and utility/energy corridors be managed or adjusted?
5.	• Cultural resources • Paleontological resources • Native American religious concerns	How will cultural, historical, and paleontological resources and Native American Religious Concerns be managed and protected?
6.	• Socioeconomic and environmental justice concerns • Public health and safety	How do population growth and an expanding urban interface affect the management of BLM-administered lands and resources, including authorized permitted land uses, while considering community values and needs?

The largest proportion of public comment centered around three issues: special designation areas (30.5 percent), notably wilderness, wilderness study areas (WSAs), and wild and scenic rivers; recreation and travel management (25 percent); and non-renewable energy development (10.3 percent).

1.5 Planning Criteria and Legislative Constraints

The FLPMA is the primary authority for the BLM's management of public lands. This law provides the policy by which BLM-administered lands will be managed and establishes provisions for land use planning, land acquisition and disposition, administration, range management, rights-of-way, designated management areas, and the repeal of certain laws and statutes. The NEPA

provides the basic national charter for environmental responsibility and requires the consideration and public availability of information regarding 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 administrating all BLM activities.

Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and guidelines that help to guide data collection and alternative formulation and selection in the RMP-development process. In conjunction with the planning issues, planning criteria ensure that the planning process is focused. The criteria also help guide the final plan selection and provide a basis for judging the responsiveness of the planning options.

The BLM developed preliminary planning criteria before public scoping meetings to set the side boards for focused planning of the Uncompahgre RMP revision and to guide decision making by topic. These criteria were introduced to the public for review in January and February 2010 at all scoping meetings. The public was encouraged to comment on, and suggest additions to, these criteria at the meetings, through written correspondence, and at the Uncompahgre RMP revisions Web site (http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo/uncompahgre_rmp.html). The planning criteria are:

- The proposed RMP will comply with FLPMA and all other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- Impacts from the management alternatives considered in the revised RMP will be analyzed in an EIS developed in accordance with regulations at 43 CFR 1610 and 40 CFR 1500.
- Lands covered in the RMP will be public land and split estates managed by the BLM. No decisions will be made relative to non-BLM administered lands (except when decisions regard federal mineral estate).
- For program-specific guidance of land use planning level decisions, the process will follow the Land Use Planning Manual 1601 (BLM 2000a) and Handbook H-1601-1, Appendix C (BLM 2005a), as amended.
- Broad-based public participation will be an integral part of the planning and EIS process.
- The planning team will work cooperatively with the State of Colorado, tribal governments, county and municipal governments, other federal agencies, the Southwest Resource Advisory Council, cooperating agencies, and all other interested groups, agencies, and individuals.
- Decisions in the RMP will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, and federal agencies, as long as the decisions are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal law, and regulations applicable to public lands.
- The BLM will consult with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). The RMP will recognize the State's responsibility and authority to manage wildlife.

- The BLM will recognize the Office of Surface Mining's responsibility and authority to regulate coal activities.
- The BLM will recognize the State's responsibility for permitting related to oil and gas activities and in regulating air quality impacts.
- The BLM will recognize the State's responsibility for permitting related to uranium, coal, and sand and gravel activities, and in regulating water quality impacts.
- The National Sage-grouse Strategy (BLM 2004a) requires that impacts on sagebrush habitat and sagebrush-dependent wildlife species be analyzed and considered in BLM land use planning efforts for public lands with sagebrush habitat in the planning area.
- The RMP will recognize valid existing rights.
- The planning process will incorporate BLM Colorado Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (BLM 1997; **Appendix C**).
- The BLM will follow guidance in Instruction Memorandum 2012-169, Resource Management Plan Alternative Development for Livestock Grazing, when developing a range of alternatives for livestock grazing.
- Wilderness study areas will continue to be managed according to BLM Manual 6330, Management of Wilderness Study Areas (BLM 2012b) until Congress either designates all or portions of the WSA as wilderness or releases the lands from further wilderness consideration. It is no longer the policy of the BLM to make formal determinations regarding wilderness character, to designate additional WSAs through the RMP process, or to manage any lands other than existing WSAs in accordance with BLM Manual 6330 (BLM 2012b).
- The planning process will involve American Indian tribal governments and will provide strategies for the protection of recognized traditional uses.
- Any location-specific information pertaining to cultural resources (either map, description, or photo) is proprietary to the BLM and will not become the property of any contractors working on the EIS or attached to any document (paper or electronic), nor is this information subject to any public release or Freedom of Information Act requests (36 CFR 7.18).
- The RMP will include adaptive management criteria and protocol to deal with future issues.
- A reasonable foreseeable development scenario for fluid minerals, mineral potential reports for coal and other minerals, and a renewable energy potential report will be developed from analysis of past activity, production, and other sources, which will aid in developing alternatives and in the environmental consequences analysis.
- Data in the Colorado Plateau Rapid Ecological Assessment will be considered as appropriate.

Additional planning criteria received in public scoping comments included incorporation of the Conservation Agreement or Strategy for Colorado River Cutthroat Trout.

All management direction and actions developed as part of the BLM planning process are subject to valid existing rights and must meet the objectives of BLM's multiple-use management mandate and responsibilities (FLPMA Section 202[c] and [e]). Valid existing rights include all valid lease, permit, rights-of-way, validated mining claims, or other land use rights or authorizations in effect on the date of approval of this RMP. Although the courts may recognize adjudicated Revised Statute 2477 rights-of-way as valid existing rights, current BLM policy does not allow BLM to consider unadjudicated Revised Statute 2477 claims as valid existing rights. The current moratorium precluding the BLM from processing Revised Statute 2477 claims is still in effect, making Revised Statute 2477 assertions a legal issue beyond the scope of this planning effort.

1.5.1 Relationship to BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs

Since the San Juan/San Miguel RMP (BLM 1985) and Uncompahgre Basin RMP (BLM 1989a) were developed and approved, it has been necessary to amend them to provide additional land management direction. As the land use plan guidance is put into practice on the ground, implementation-level planning is directed by BLM policy and program-specific guidance. **Table 1-4** (RMP Amendments and Other Documents Considered for Implementation-level Planning) identifies approved plan amendments incorporated into the existing land use plans. These plan amendments provide a perspective of the many management considerations pertinent to the decision area.

1.6 COLLABORATION

The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in the preparation of NEPA analyses include 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. Additional information regarding collaboration with governments, agencies, and tribal representatives is provided in **Chapter 5**.

1.6.1 Cooperating Agency Collaboration

A cooperating agency is any federal, state, or local government agency or Native American tribe that enters into a formal agreement with the lead federal agency to help develop an environmental analysis. More specifically, cooperating agencies "work with the BLM, sharing knowledge and resources, to achieve desired outcomes for public lands and communities within statutory and regulatory frameworks" (BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 [BLM 2005a]). The benefits of enhanced collaboration among agencies in preparing NEPA analyses include the following:

- 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
- Establishing a mechanism for addressing intergovernmental issues

Table 1-4
RMP Amendments and Other Documents Considered for Implementation-level Planning

Amendments to the San Juan/San Miguel 1985 RMP
Colorado Oil and Gas Leasing and Development EIS (BLM 1991a)
EA for the Proposed Area of Critical Environmental Concern and Special Recreation Management Area on the San Miguel River (BLM 1993a)
EA for Off-highway Vehicle Designations (BLM 2010c)
Amendments to the Uncompahgre Basin 1989 RMP
EA for Fire Management (BLM 1992a)
EA for Land Disposal (BLM 1994a)
EA for Gunnison Travel Interim Restrictions (Forest Service and BLM 2001)
EA for Uncompahgre Field Office Dry Creek Travel Management Plan (BLM 2009a)
EA for Off-highway Vehicle Designations (BLM 2010c)
Record of Decision for Implementation of a Wind Energy Development Program and Associated Land Use Plan Amendments (BLM 2005b)
BLM Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Weed EIS on 17 Western States (BLM 2007a)
Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States (BLM 2008b)
Approved Resource Management Plan Amendments/Record of Decision for Designation of Energy Corridors on Bureau of Land Management-Administered Lands in the 11 Western States (US Department of Energy and BLM 2009)
Approved Resource Management Plan Amendments/Record of Decision for Solar Energy Development in Six Southwestern States (BLM 2012c)
Implementation-Level Plans
Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement for the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area, Montrose District, Colorado (BLM 1989b)
Wilderness Study Report: Montrose District (BLM 1991b)
Mesa Creek Coordinated Resource Management Plan (BLM 1993b)
Withdrawal for Protection of Townsend's Big-eared Bat Maternity Roosting Sites (BLM 2008c)
Uncompahgre Field Office Fire Management Plan (BLM 2008d)

The primary role of cooperating agencies is to provide input during the EIS process on issues for which they have a special expertise or jurisdiction. The representatives meet with the lead agency periodically throughout the EIS process to discuss issues as a group. Cooperating agencies are expected to participate in the EIS process at the earliest possible time, including during scoping, and are available to enhance the interdisciplinary capability of the lead agency by providing needed information throughout the NEPA process.

On January 23, 2009, the BLM invited 40 local, state, federal, and tribal representatives to participate as cooperating agencies for the Uncompahgre RMP revision. The BLM invited one additional agency in March 2013. Eighteen agencies are participating in the RMP as designated cooperating agencies and have signed Memoranda of Understanding with the UFO (**Table 1-5** [Cooperating Agency Participation]).

Table 1-5
Cooperating Agency Participation

Agencies and Tribes Invited to be Cooperators	Agencies that Signed MOUs
US DOI, Fish and Wildlife Service	✓
US DOI, Bureau of Reclamation	✓
US DOI, National Park Service – Black Canyon National Park	
Forest Service – Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests	✓
Forest Service – San Juan National Forest	
USDA, National Resource Conservation Service – Colorado State Office	
USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	
US Department of Energy	
Western Area Power Administration	
Colorado Department of Natural Resources (Division of Parks and Wildlife, Natural Heritage Program, State Forest Service, Reclamation Division, Mining and Safety)	✓
Colorado Department of Transportation	
Colorado State Historical Preservation Office	
Delta Conservation District	✓
Delta County	✓
Gunnison County	✓
Mesa County	
Montrose County	✓
Ouray County	✓
San Miguel County	✓
City of Delta	
City of Montrose	✓
City of Ouray	
Town of Cedaredge	✓
Town of Crawford	
Town of Hotchkiss*	✓
Town of Mountain Village*	✓
Town of Naturita	
Town of Norwood	✓
Town of Nucla	✓
Town of Olathe	✓
Town of Orchard City	✓
Town of Paonia	✓
Town of Ridgway	✓
Town of Sawpit	
Town of Telluride	
Navajo Nation	
Northern Ute Indian Tribe	
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	
Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe	
Total	**20**

*Town signed MOU to be a cooperating agency. The MOU was subsequently terminated.

The BLM held a number of meetings with cooperating agencies at the UFO. Cooperating agencies were also encouraged to attend the scoping meetings and provide comments during the scoping period. These agencies were engaged throughout the planning process, including during alternatives development.

1.6.2 Resource Advisory Council Collaboration

A Resource Advisory Council is a committee established by the Secretary of the Interior to provide advice or recommendations to BLM management (BLM 2005a). A Resource Advisory Council is generally composed of 15 members of the public representing different facets. The members of the Colorado Southwest Resource Advisory Council, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to represent constituent public land users, provide input on public management issues to the Secretary of the Interior through the BLM's Designated Federal Officer, the Southwest Colorado District Manager. Recommendations are based on consensus building and collaboration. Topics addressed by the Resource Advisory Council include BLM land health standards and grazing guidelines and recreation.

A subgroup has been formed under the Southwest Resource Advisory Council to advise it regarding the Uncompahgre RMP revision. The individuals on the subgroup represent a broad range of interests and have specific knowledge of the field office. The Resource Advisory Council subgroup focused on all aspects of the RMP revision. Recommendations developed by the subgroup were presented formally for discussion to the Southwest Resource Advisory Council at the October 26, 2012, public meeting of the full Southwest Resource Advisory Council. The Southwest Resource Advisory Council accepted the range of alternatives as a reasonable range.

1.6.3 Collaboration and Consultation with Tribes

Consultation with American Indian tribes is part of the NEPA scoping process and a requirement of the FLPMA. Tribal consultation for cultural resources for the Uncompahgre RMP revision began through a Ute Ethnohistory Project, which involved three BLM field offices—Grand Junction, Uncompahgre, and Colorado River Valley—that are currently preparing RMPs. Cultural representatives from the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (Ute Indian Tribe) and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe attended a general planning meeting in November 2007. Representatives from the Southern Ute Tribe were invited but were unable to attend.

Subsequent consultation meetings at which RMP issues were discussed occurred in March, April, and August 2008, July and November 2009, and April 2010.

No written comments were received from tribal agencies during the scoping period; tribal concerns or issues have been typically presented in oral format. Government-to-government consultation will continue throughout the RMP process to ensure that the concerns of tribal groups are considered in development of the RMP.

Native American Indian tribes and organizations consulted to date are:

- Navajo Nation
- Northern Ute Indian Tribe
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe

The unique political relationship between the US government and federally recognized 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 Indian tribes, Indian lands, tribal trust resources, and the exercise of tribal rights.

1.7 RELATED PLANS

The BLM's planning regulations require that RMPs be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans of other federal, state, local, and tribal governments, so long as the RMPs are also consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to BLM-administered lands. Plans formulated by federal, state, local, and tribal governments that relate to management of lands and resources have been reviewed and considered as the RMP/EIS has been developed. These plans include:

1.7.1 City and County Plans

- Town of Cedaredge Master Plan (Town of Cedaredge 2005)
- City of Delta Comprehensive Plan Update (City of Delta 2008)
- Delta County Master Plan (Delta County 1996)
- Gunnison County Land Use Resolution (Gunnison County 2006)
- Gunnison County Energy Action Plan (Gunnison County 2009)
- Mesa County Master Plan (Mesa County 2000)
- Mesa County Noxious Weed Management Plan (Mesa County 2009)
- City of Montrose Comprehensive Plan (City of Montrose 2008)
- Montrose County Master Plan (Montrose County 2010)
- Town of Norwood Land Use Code (Town of Norwood 2008)
- Ouray Community Plan (City of Ouray 2004)
- Ouray County Master Plan (Ouray County 1999)
- Ouray County Land Use Code (Ouray County 2005)
- Ridgway Comprehensive Plan (Town of Ridgway 2012)
- Northwest Area Master Plan (Town of Ridgway 2008a)
- Ridgway Municipal Code (Town of Ridgway 2008b)
- San Miguel County Comprehensive Development Plan (San Miguel County 2008)

1.7.2 State Agency Plans

- Colorado's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CPW 2006)

1.7.3 Federal Agency Plans

National Park Service

- Curecanti National Recreation Area Final Resource Protection Study and Environmental Impact Statement (NPS 2008)

Forest Service, Colorado

- Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan for Oil and Gas Operators (Forest Service and BLM 2007)
- Forest Service Roadless Inventory and associated EIS (Forest Service 2001)
- Proposed Forest Plan for Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests (Forest Service 2007)

Neighboring BLM Offices

- Colorado River Valley Field Office RMP revision (in progress)
- Grand Junction Field Office RMP revision (in progress)
- Gunnison Field Office RMP (BLM 1993c)
- Moab Field Office RMP (BLM 2008e)
- Monticello Field Office RMP (BLM 2008f)
- San Juan Public Lands Center Land Management Plan (BLM and Forest Service) (in progress)

1.7.4 Other

- Dolores River Riparian Action Plan: Recommendations for Implementing Tamarisk Control and Restoration Efforts (Tamarisk Coalition 2010)
- San Miguel Watershed Plan (San Miguel Watershed Coalition 1998)
- San Miguel Basin Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (San Miguel Basin Gunnison Sage-grouse Working Group 2009)
- Migratory Bird Status Literature Review (Lambeth and Reeder 2009)
- Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan (Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Steering Committee 2005)
- Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats (Connelly et al. 2004)
- Colorado Sagebrush: A Conservation Assessment and Strategy (Boyle and Reeder 2005)
- Ecoregion-Based Conservation Assessment of the Colorado Plateau and Southern Rocky Mountains (Marshall et al. 2006)

- San Miguel/Lower Dolores River Project: Measures of Conservation Success (The Nature Conservancy 2008)
- Colorado Rare Plant Conservation Strategy (Neely et al. 2009)

1.8 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Implementation of the RMP would begin when the Colorado BLM State Director signs the ROD for the RMP. Decisions in the RMP would be tied to the BLM budgeting process. An implementation schedule would be developed, providing for systematic accomplishment of decisions in the approved RMP. The BLM would prepare supplementary rules in order to provide full authority to BLM Law Enforcement to enforce management decisions made in the approved RMP pursuant to the BLM's authority under 43 CFR 8365.1-6.

During implementation of the RMP, the BLM would prepare additional documentation for site-specific actions to comply with NEPA. This can vary from a simple statement of conformance with the ROD and adequacy of existing NEPA analysis to more complex documents that analyze several alternatives.

Implementation of the RMP would be monitored and periodically evaluated based on guidance in the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1 (BLM 2005a), as amended. Monitoring is the process of tracking and documenting the implementation (or the progress of implementation) of land use plan decisions. Evaluation is the process of reviewing the land use plan and the periodic plan monitoring reports to determine whether the land use plan decisions and NEPA analysis are still valid and how the plan is being implemented. As outlined in BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1, the plan would be periodically evaluated as documented in an evaluation schedule (at a minimum every 5 years) to determine whether revisions or amendments to the RMP may be necessary to accommodate changes in resource needs, policies, or regulations. Implementation-level decisions would be issued in order to fully implement the RMP.

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