

How is an ACEC designated?

THE BLM'S PROCESS TO CREATE AND DESIGNATE AN ACEC

Step 1: Nomination:

BLM staff, other agencies, or members of the public may nominate ACECs at any time, but they are only designated during the BLM land use planning process. In addition, existing ACECs are reconsidered.

Step 2: Evaluation

Nominations for ACECs must meet relevance and importance criteria as defined in 43 CFR1610.7-2. This regulation considers only these criteria, and does not discuss management prescriptions.

Step 3: Consideration of Potential ACECs

Each area meeting the relevance and importance criteria must be identified as a potential ACEC and must be considered as RMP alternatives are developed. Each potential ACEC must be proposed for designation in at least one alternative in the draft RMP (BLM Manual 1613.2.22B). As RMP alternatives are developed, management prescriptions are fully developed. Management prescriptions may vary across the alternatives.

Step 4: Comment Period

The BLM publishes proposed ACECs in the draft RMP and associated environmental impact statement and must notify the public of proposals through a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. All comments are accepted on the proposed ACECs and associated management actions during the draft RMP comment period.

Step 5: Designation

Designation of ACECs occurs when the BLM signs the record of decision for the environmental impact statement and the RMP is approved.