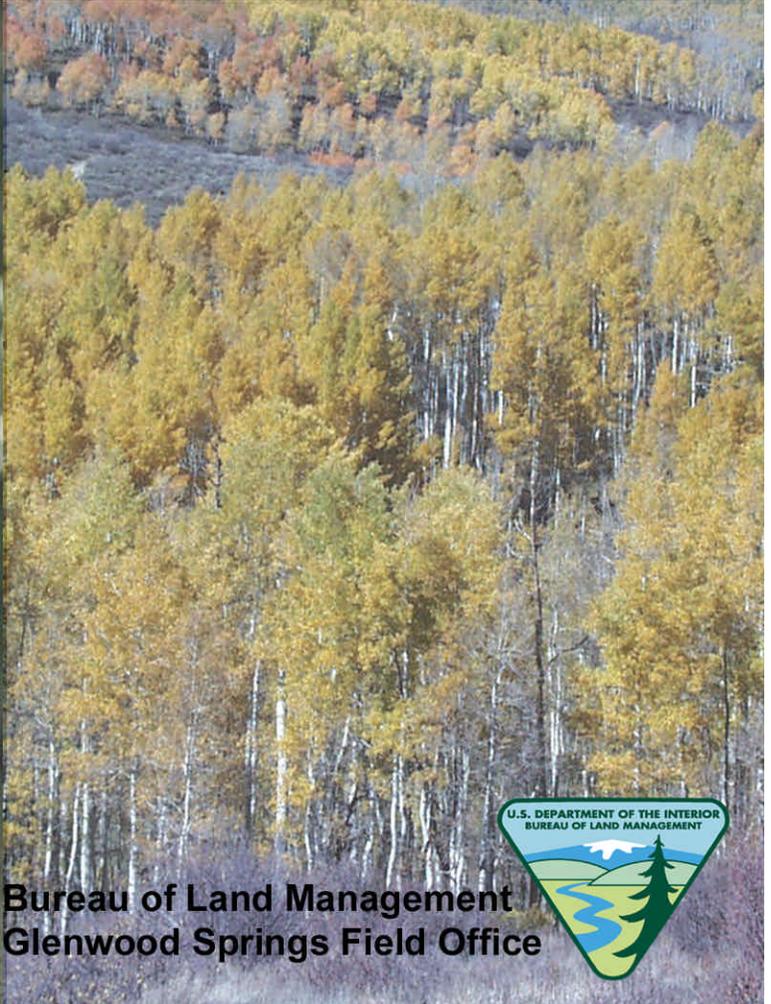
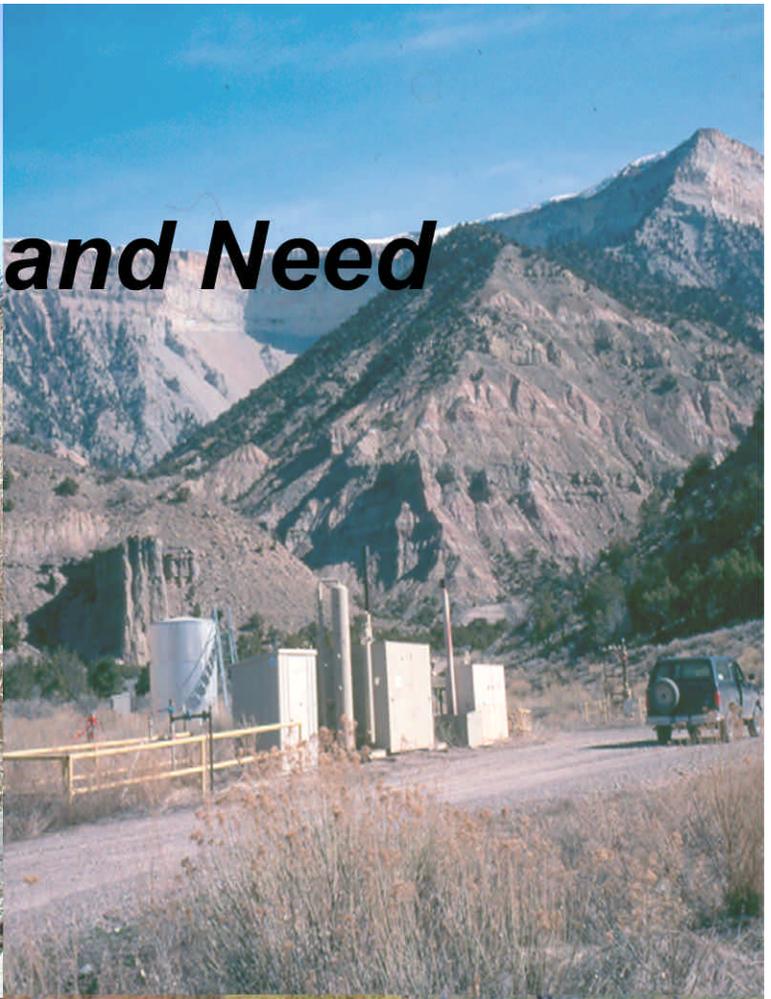
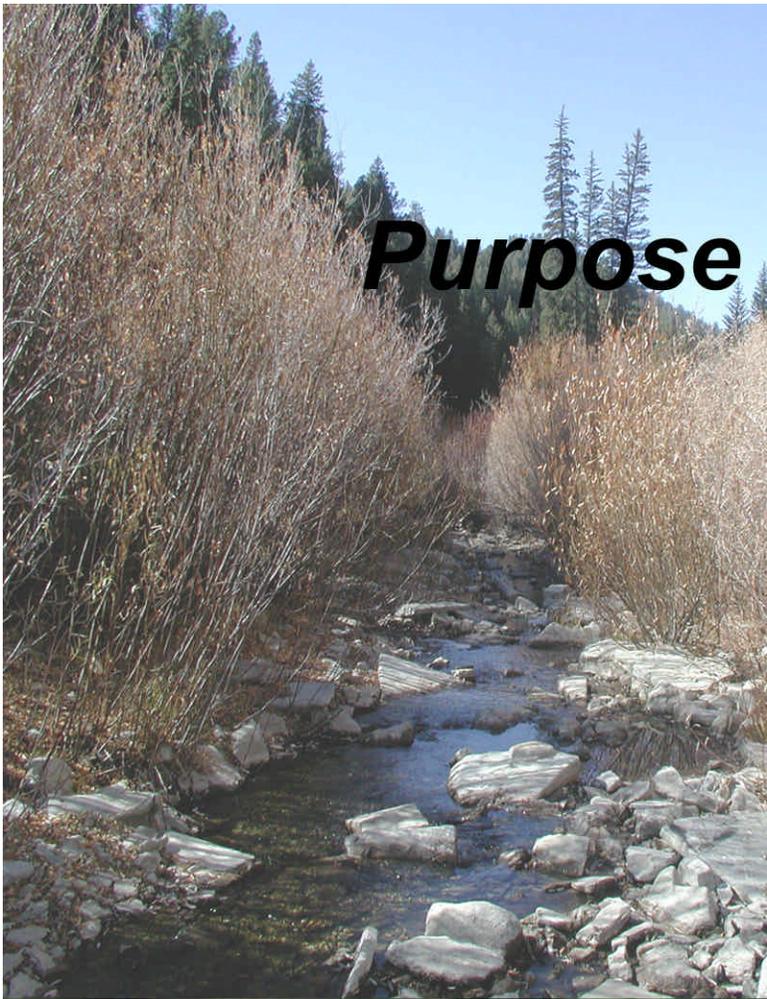


Purpose and Need



**Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Field Office**



1 PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE RMPA/EIS

This Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (RMPA/EIS) evaluates the environmental consequences of updating existing RMPs for the Glenwood Springs Resource Area (GSRA) and White River Resource Area (WRRRA) as they pertain to the Roan Plateau Planning Area (Planning Area) of west-central Colorado. Figures 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 show the Planning Area in relation to Colorado, land ownership status, and topography, respectively. Figure 1-3 also shows the location of the line used to differentiate areas referred to throughout this RMPA/EIS as “above the rim” versus “below the rim” or “atop [on top of] the plateau” versus “below the rim.” This line (“the rim”) represents the top of the Roan Cliffs.

The U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is updating these plans in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Existing plans are being amended to incorporate lands for which management has been transferred to BLM, and to incorporate periodic amendments of existing RMPs to guide public land management for all public lands within BLM’s jurisdiction. These BLM administered public lands include Federal surface and subsurface estate, and Federal subsurface estate overlain by private surface estate.

Management of the Planning Area is currently guided by the following documents, which in some cases provide overlapping and outdated direction:

- Glenwood Springs Resource Area Oil and Gas Leasing and Development Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS), January 1999 (BLM 1999a), hereafter referred to as the 1999 FSEIS

- Glenwood Springs Resource Area Oil & Gas Leasing & Development Record of Decision (ROD) and RMP Amendment, March 1999 (BLM 1999b), hereafter referred to as the 1999 ROD and RMPA
- Glenwood Springs Resource Area RMP , January 1984 (Revised July 1988)(BLM 1988a), hereafter referred to as the 1988 GSRA RMP
- White River Resource Area RMP (BLM 1996a). [The ROD was issued in July, 1997, and the document is hereafter referred to as the 1997 WRRRA RMP.]
- Operational Management Plan for Naval Oil Shale Reserves 1 and 3 (DOE 1988)
- Colorado Public Land Health Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact (BLM 1997a)

The Planning Area comprises a total of 127,007 acres, including 55,354 acres in former Naval Oil Shale Reserves (NOSRs) 1 and 3. The NOSRs were formally transferred to BLM from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in 1998. The primary reason for this RMPA/EIS is that the portion of the Planning Area within NOSRs 1 and 3 has never been the subject of a coordinated planning process and is currently managed under the guidance of DOE’s Operational Management Plan, the 1988 GSRA RMP, and the 1997 WRRRA RMP. These documents provide inconsistent land use management guidance based on conditions that existed when they were prepared 15 years ago.

In recent years, the Planning Area and nearby areas have been subject to rapid human population growth and greater than previously anticipated oil and gas development. These factors cause competing pressures on land use management that warrant a consistent, coordinated planning approach. Updating the existing RMPs will also permit BLM to incorporate the required Colorado Public Land Health Standards and Guidelines for Livestock

Grazing and Travel Management Designations into their land management program. Another reason to amend the RMPs is that FLPMA requires BLM to inventory public lands, giving priority to the designation and protection of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

In response to the requirements of FLPMA to develop an RMP for all BLM lands and the social and environmental factors mentioned above, BLM developed five alternatives, each comprising different levels of environmental protection, resource management, and opportunities for oil and gas development. The RMPA/EIS evaluates these five alternatives on Federal lands within the Planning Area.

FLPMA provides the authority for BLM to formulate land use plans and requires that an RMP guide management decisions. FLPMA states that BLM land management shall be guided by the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. In addition, FLPMA Section 302(a) requires that where a tract of land has been dedicated to a specific use according to law, such as Public Law 105-85 that transferred NOSRs 1 and 3 to BLM, the tract shall be managed in accordance with the provisions of FLPMA. The primary purpose of this RMPA/EIS is to ensure that BLM manages the Planning Area in accordance with FLPMA as well as all other applicable laws and regulations.

This chapter of the RMPA/EIS describes the purpose for amending the RMP. It presents BLM's goals and objectives for the amendments. It also explains the need for the amendments by describing the environment and social context in which BLM manages the Planning Area and the laws, regulations, and planning policies that contribute to BLM's approach to managing public lands under its jurisdiction. This section also gives an overview of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process with which this RMPA/EIS conforms, the RMPA/EIS schedule and a summary of the issues addressed in this RMPA/EIS that were identified through the scoping process.

Chapter 2, Alternatives, describes the five alternatives evaluated in detail in the RMPA/EIS. It also discusses the alternatives selection process and the alternatives that were considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.

Chapter 3, Affected Environment, describes the current physical, biological, human, and land use environments of the Planning Area. The description provides a baseline against which to compare the impacts of the alternatives. The baseline described in this Chapter represents environmental and social conditions in the Planning Area at the time this document was being prepared.

Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, evaluates how and to what extent baseline conditions would be altered by each of the five alternatives. These changes include direct and indirect; onsite and offsite; short-term, temporary, and long-term; and adverse and beneficial impacts; both individually and cumulative to other impacts.

Chapter 5, References, lists the sources of information used in preparing this RMPA/EIS. Not all references presented are cited in the text.

Appendices A through H provide supporting information for the chapters described above. A List of Acronyms is provided following the Table of Contents.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE ACTION

The purpose of amending the existing RMPs for portions of the Planning Area is to provide an integrated plan that guides future site-specific analysis and decisions in accordance with the following goals and objectives:

- Implements BLM's mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.
- Facilitates management of the natural resources of the Planning Area for multiple-use and long-term value, recognizing that

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the mix of permitted and allowable uses will vary from area to area and over time.

- Complies with the provisions of Public Law 105-85 transferring the approximately 55,354 acres within NOSRs 1 and 3 from the Department of Energy to the Department of the Interior.
- Ensures a consistent, coordinated approach to managing lands within the Planning Area.

To achieve these goals, BLM has established the following objectives for the RMPA:

- Identify desired outcomes and allowable uses and actions that restore and maintain the health of the land; preserve natural and cultural heritage; reduce threats to public health, safety, and property; and provide for environmentally responsible recreational and commercial activities.
- Evaluate the need for designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) for areas that contain resource values that meet BLM's criteria for relevant and important values.
- Evaluate the need for designation of SRMAs or other special management determinations, as applicable, such as for stream segments eligible for designation as Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs), Watershed Management Areas (WMAs), areas having wilderness characteristics, Research Natural Areas (RNAs), and Back Country Byways.
- Establish travel designations that replace interim travel designations on transferred lands and affirm or change travel designations on lands in the rest of the Planning Area.
- Establish conservation measures for all species listed as threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or sensitive. Conservation measures are designed to prevent the need for listing of additional species and to improve the condition of all special status species and their habitats to a point where their special status recognition is no longer warranted. (See August 30,

2000, Interagency Memorandum of Agreement for Programmatic Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation and BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Management.)

- Use recommendations and information from land health assessments (H-4180-1, Land Health Standards) to develop direction that enhances or restores physical function and biological health and achieves land health standards at the watershed scale.
- Recognize valid existing rights including oil and gas leases, mineral leases, mining claims, and lands and realty actions.
- Integrate the management of the Planning Area with the GSRA and WRRRA by applying management techniques that are successful in other portions of these areas.

These goals and objectives are based on the direction provided by numerous laws, mandates, policies, and plans, including:

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)
- Public Law 105-85 (Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1998)
- Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended
- Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing and Reform Act of 1987
- Endangered Species Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and other environmental laws
- BLM Planning Regulations (40 CFR 1600)
- BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (Handbook H-1601, Updated January 5, 2001)(BLM 2001a)
- BLM Manual 1613 (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern)(BLM 1988b)
- BLM Manual 6840 (Special-Status Species Management)(BLM 2001b)

- BLM Public Land Health Standards, H-4180-1 (BLM 1997a)

1.3 NEED FOR THE ACTION

1.3.1 Transfer of NOSRs 1 and 3 from DOE to BLM

Public Law 105-85 (the “transfer act”) transferred management authority of NOSRs 1 and 3 from the DOE to USDI in 1998. A total of 55,354 acres of land were involved in the transfer, comprising 36,362 acres in NOSR 1 and 18,992 acres in NOSR 3. These lands were added to the 18,248 acres of BLM land (including Federal surface or mineral estate) previously in the Planning Area. The primary need for the current RMPA/EIS process is to develop an integrated land use plan that incorporates the transferred NOSRs into the remainder of BLM land in the Planning Area and establishes a unified set of goals, objectives, and land use or management actions.

The transfer act states, “Beginning on the date of the enactment of this section, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the Secretary of the Interior shall enter into leases with one or more private entities for the purpose of exploration for, and development and production of, petroleum (other than in the form of oil shale) located on or in public domain lands in Oil Shale Reserves Numbered 1 and 3 (including the developed tract of Oil Shale Reserve Numbered 3). Any such lease shall be made in accordance with the requirements of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) regarding the lease of oil and gas lands and shall be subject to valid existing rights.” (Section 3404 Public Law 105.85)

In addition, the act stipulates that the transferred lands be managed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable laws that guide BLM’s management efforts.

Another provision of the transfer act mandated that the developed track of NOSR 3 (below the rim) be leased within one year. At the time the NOSR was transferred, a planning process was

underway to evaluate increasing levels of oil and gas development in the western portion of the GSRA. As a result of the short timeframe mandated to lease NOSR 3 and the similarity in ecological characteristics of the area below the rim to adjacent BLM lands, an area of 12,029 acres within NOSR 3 (“the production area”) was folded into that planning process. On March 24 1999, a ROD approved the RMP Amendment as analyzed in the 1999 FSEIS, pertaining to the 12,029 acres in the production area of NOSR 3. The remaining lands in NOSR 3 and the lands in NOSR 1 would be subject to an additional planning process, specifically this RMPA/EIS process.

The currently unleased portion of the NOSRs is the primary focus of this RMPA/EIS. Most of this area lies above the Roan Cliffs and generally corresponds to the highland area known as the Roan Plateau. This area was managed historically by BLM, although under the authority of DOE and in accordance with the DOE’s Operational Management Plan (OMP)(DOE 1988). The OMP specified the administrative procedures and resource management direction for the areas.

1.3.2 Demographic and Economic Changes in the Planning Area

The rate of population growth of Garfield County has been faster than that of Colorado and the nation since 1970 (Sonoran Institute 2002). The I-70 corridor, where most of the population is concentrated, is growing for several reasons including an influx of residents attracted to the rural character of the area. While the economy of the area has traditionally been based on ranching, hunting and related services, and oil and gas development, the influx of new residents from outside of the area has brought different expectations about the future development of the Planning Area. Opinions expressed during public scoping for this document indicate that some prefer a low level of development and others would prefer that the RMP Amendments emphasize commodity production. Conflicting community goals for the Planning Area contribute to the need for an open, coordinated planning process.

1.3.3 Oil and Gas Leasing

The 1999 FSEIS addressed increasing levels of oil and gas development in the western portion of the Glenwood Springs Field Office (GSFO) “Region 4,” including the production area of NOSR 3. Oil and gas leasing decisions, lease stipulations, and mitigation measures for public lands were included in the subsequent ROD of March 24, 1999.

At the time the 1999 FSEIS was prepared and the ROD issued, much of Region 4 had already been leased. The ROD established lease stipulations, but those stipulations apply only to new leases and are enforceable only to the extent they are consistent with the existing lease rights granted or can be applied as Conditions of Approval (COAs) during the permitting process. The portion of the Planning Area in NOSR 1 and the remainder of NOSR 3 differ from the production area in that the lands have not already been leased for oil and gas production. Increasing demand and subsequent increases in drilling of wells for oil and gas development in western Colorado has resulted in the need for a management plan that facilitates orderly economic and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources using balanced multiple-use management.

1.3.4 Interim Travel Designations

BLM land use planning regulations require the designation of public lands as open, closed, or limited for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use (43 CFR 8342.1). The purpose of travel designations is to protect fragile and unique resource values from damage by OHVs while providing opportunities for this type of use where appropriate. Permanent travel designations have not yet been made for the transferred lands (NOSRs 1 and 3), but interim closures and restrictions were established and published in the Federal Register on July 3, 2000 (volume 65, no. 128, pages 41081 – 41082).

The interim management included closing the NOSRs to cross-country motorized and mechanized travel and restricting OHV travel to designated routes. These interim measures did not apply to other BLM lands in the Planning Area. For purposes of impact analysis, this RMPA/EIS assumes that for Alternative I the interim closures and restrictions will be vacated and that permanent designations for NOSRs 1 and 3 will allow cross-country OHV travel throughout the Planning Area.

1.3.5 Wilderness Character and Roadless Inventory

A wilderness inventory of the transferred NOSR lands was conducted in 1998, 1999, and 2000 to determine whether they contain the characteristics of wilderness as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964. All other lands within the Planning Area had already been inventoried. The information contained in the wilderness inventory for the transferred lands has been considered in the development and analysis of alternatives.

Three areas (totaling 21,382 acres), found by BLM to contain wilderness characteristics, are being considered for management to maintain their wilderness characteristics within the range of alternatives. This Draft RMPA/EIS includes an analysis of alternative management prescriptions for these three areas. On April 14, 2003, a settlement agreement was reached between the Department of Interior and the State of Utah, Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, and the Utah Association of Counties. Consistent with that settlement and subsequent policies issued by BLM, the Draft RMPA/EIS does not consider the designation of new Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) or the classification or management of BLM lands as if they are, or may become, WSAs. However, alternatives for the protection and management of wilderness characteristics are considered in two alternatives.

1.3.6 New Information from Land Health Assessments

Land health assessments were conducted in portions of the Planning Area atop the plateau in 1999 and in the eastern portion of lands below the rim in 2001. These assessments were conducted in accordance with BLM statewide standards that describe the natural resource conditions needed to sustain public land health as adopted by BLM in Colorado and approved by the Secretary of the Interior in February 1997. Information included in the assessments used to support this analysis, and ultimately the selection of a resource management plan amendment alternative, address upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, special status (threatened, endangered, candidate, or sensitive) species, and water quality.

1.4 PLANNING AREA

The Planning Area contains 73,602 acres of Federal land and is generally bounded on the east by State Highway (SH) 13, on the south by the Colorado River, on the west by Parachute Creek, and on the north by the line between Township 4 South and Township 5 South of the Sixth Principal Meridian. A small area in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area extends into Rio Blanco County (Figure 1-2). Of the entire 73,602 acres of public land within the Planning Area, a total of 68,447 acres of lands with BLM surface and 4,455 acres with private surface but Federal minerals are managed by the GSFO. A small portion of the site (320 acres) is managed by the White River Field Office (WRFO) out of Meeker in Rio Blanco County.

The Planning Area includes both public and private lands, although the RMP guides only BLM efforts on the public lands that it administers. About 58 percent of the Planning Area is public land; the proportion of public land is higher for the area on top of the plateau than for the area below the rim.

The relationship between the Planning Area and the entire area managed by the GSFO is shown

in the insert on Figure 1-2. The total area managed by the GSRA includes 568,000 acres. The WRFO manages about 1.5 million acres.

1.5 AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires that Federal agencies give appropriate consideration to environmental impacts in all their decision-making processes. BLM is the lead agency (as defined in NEPA) for the proposed action and is therefore responsible for preparing an EIS that evaluates the effects of amending the RMPs and conforms to the guidance set forth in the Act. BLM will use the evaluation in this EIS to make an informed selection of resource management options and amend the two RMPs.

The resource management plan amendments and their ultimate implementation are the sole responsibility of BLM. However, other agencies have jurisdiction under other laws to which BLM must adhere, and/or have special expertise or knowledge that is required for complete analysis and coordination of the alternatives. BLM is consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) regarding potential adverse effects of the RMPA/EIS.

BLM has entered into Cooperating Agency agreements with Garfield County, Rio Blanco County, the City of Rifle, the Town of Parachute, and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, which includes the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. BLM has also consulted with Garfield, Mesa, and Rio Blanco Counties and the towns of Rifle and Parachute.

1.6 BLM LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS

FLPMA mandates that public lands under the jurisdiction of BLM be managed according to land use plans that are developed with public input through a coordinated planning process. FLPMA further mandates that BLM lands are to

be managed on the basis of “multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law.” The set of regulations that implement FLPMA is found in 43 CFR Part 1600. These regulations outline the interdisciplinary, cooperative approach that BLM must take to preparing, maintaining, and using resource management plans, amendments, and revisions. The planning process outlined in these regulations consists of the following steps, not necessarily undertaken in a linear fashion:

- **Identify Issues** – BLM conducted public meetings and invited written comments early in the planning process. Comments from interested agencies and the public helped BLM identify key issues (i.e., concerns, conflicts, or opportunities pertaining to the management of public lands).
- **Develop Planning Criteria** – Planning criteria are the considerations that guide the overall planning process, the development of a reasonable range of alternatives, and analysis needed to address the planning issues. Planning Area planning criteria were formulated based on applicable laws and regulations, land use plans, coordination with other agencies, and public input.
- **Collect and Consolidate Data** – Based on the issues identified and the planning criteria, BLM reviewed and evaluated available data, including results of field surveys, published and unpublished studies, and consultations with staff from other agencies and organizations.
- **Prepare an Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS)** – The AMS provides a baseline for developing and evaluating management alternatives. It describes existing management plans and documents, current management approach, site characteristics and setting, resource condition and capabilities, and opportunities. The AMS for the Planning Area was published August 2002.
- **Formulate Alternatives** – BLM planning team reviewed the issues raised during scoping by the public, other agencies, and within BLM. Based on the AMS, planning criteria, and goals and objectives of the RMP Amendments, five alternatives were formulated for detailed analysis. These alternatives describe a reasonable range of management options to assist decision-makers and the public in understanding the positive and negative consequences of future actions in the Planning Area.
- **Estimate Effects** – Each of the (five) alternatives is evaluated for its potential environmental consequences. The analysis addresses short-term (temporary) and long-term, onsite and offsite, direct and indirect, and positive (beneficial) and adverse (negative) impacts expected to result from each alternative. The analysis addresses these impacts individually as well as cumulative to past, present, or reasonably anticipated future impacts.
- **Select the Preferred Alternative and Conduct Public Review** – BLM planning regulations require that a preferred alternative be identified in the Draft RMPA/EIS. However, the final selection of an alternative is likely to be different from any of the five alternatives analyzed, instead including some elements from one or more other alternatives to reflect public and other agency input. This input will be captured during a 90-day public comment period following the publication of the Draft RMPA/EIS. The public comments and other input will be considered in the proposed plan (i.e., the final preferred alternative), which will be evaluated, described, and published in the Final RMPA/EIS adopted by BLM.
- **Prepare the Record of Decision (ROD)** – BLM’s Colorado State Director will issue a decision documenting the completion of the environmental review and adoption of the proposed RMP Amendment. The ROD will be signed after conclusion of a 30-day

protest period that follows publication of the Final RMPA/EIS.

- **Monitor and Evaluate** – Once the preferred alternative is implemented, BLM will monitor and evaluate how well the plan is guiding the Planning Area toward the desired resource condition. If management issues are not being resolved or desired conditions not being met, the RMP may be further amended or revised within the constraints of valid existing rights.

1.7 NEPA PROCESS, DECISION-MAKING, SCHEDULE, AND PROTESTS

The NEPA process is intended to provide BLM with a detailed account of the environmental consequences that are associated with the alternative management plan amendments for the Planning Area. Regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)(40 CFR 1500 et seq.) provide guidance for all Federal agencies to comply with NEPA. BLM's NEPA handbook provides the specific guidance for BLM implementation of NEPA.

Any person who participated in the planning process may protest an RMP Amendment within 30 days of the date of the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS containing the amendment published in the Federal Register by EPA. The protest may raise only issues that were submitted for the record during the planning process. Protests must be in writing and addressed to BLM Director. Letters of protest must fulfill the content requirements established in 43 CFR 1610.5-2 (a). The protest must contain:

- the name, mailing address, phone number, and interest of the person filing the protest;
- a statement of the part or parts of the plan and the issues being protested;
- a copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that the protesting party submitted during the planning process or a statement of the date they were discussed for the record; and

- a concise statement explaining why the protestor believes that the State Director's decision is wrong.

After the public comment period on the Draft RMPA/EIS, a Proposed Plan Amendment/Final EIS will be prepared. A 30-day protest period (no-action period) will follow the Notice of Availability for the Final Environmental Impact Statement. In early 2004, the State Director will issue a ROD that sets forth the specifics of the resource management plan alternative selected.

1.8 SUMMARY OF SCOPING ISSUES

1.8.1 Overview of Scoping and Issue Identification Process

NEPA requires that Federal agencies hold an open and early process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in an environmental impact statement and for identifying the significant issues that could be associated with the action. The term "scope" is defined as the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an EIS.

BLM initiated formal scoping for this RMPA/EIS on November 16, 2000, with a notice in the Federal Register inviting the participation of affected Federal, State, and local agencies, any affected Indian tribe, the proponent of the action (BLM), and other interested persons. The formal scoping period ended on January 31, 2001. A public open house was held on December 13, 2000, during which BLM accepted verbal comments. BLM received written comments throughout the period.

An additional public comment period, publicized by legal notices, was held for 30 days beginning October 14, 2002. During this comment period, BLM summarized amended planning criteria and preliminary alternatives and requested additional comments on the scope of the RMPA/EIS. During this period, BLM held public meetings in Rifle on October 22, in Parachute/Battlement Mesa on October 23, and in Glenwood Springs on October 24, 2002.

Beginning in November 2001, BLM launched a public website with information about the planning process for Planning Area. An additional public website was created on December 4, 2002, to provide specific information on the RMPA/EIS process.

Based on the comments received during scoping, BLM identified environmental issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The scoping comments also guided BLM in determining the appropriate depth of analysis for each issue and which issues were outside of the scope of the proposed action. As discussed in Chapter 2, the issues identified during the scoping process were taken into consideration during alternative formulation.

The following subsections identify issues raised during scoping, including those considered in the RMPA/EIS and those eliminated.

1.8.2 Planning Issues Considered in this RMPA/EIS

Table 1-1 summarizes issues raised by interested parties and agency staff during the scoping process. It also lists the planning criteria used in developing this Draft RMPA/EIS. These issues were considered in formulating the alternatives, and the evaluation of those alternatives, in this RMPA/EIS. Table 1-2 summarizes BLM's planning criteria as applied to the process.

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Table 1-1. Planning Issues Raised by Interested Parties and BLM Staff during Scoping

Primary Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil and Gas Development • Wilderness and Roadless Areas • Recreational Opportunities • Travel and Transportation • Influences of Changing Population, Growth, and Development to Public Lands • Fish and Wildlife Habitat • Livestock Grazing Management • Visual Aesthetics • Economic Benefits from Gas Leasing, Grazing, Recreation, and/or Tourism • Ecological Richness/Uniqueness/Diversity
Related Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed, Water Resources, and Water Pollution • Vegetation/Forest Management • Air Quality • Local Quality of Life/Livelihoods • Loss of Traditional Uses and Activities • Maintaining Current Activities, Setting, and Management • Areas/Routes Open for Motorized Use, Mountain Bikes/Seasonal Restrictions • Protection of Rare and Sensitive Species • Protection of Natural Features • Protection of Paleontological/Archeological Resources • Wildland Fire and Prescribed Fire Management • Conflicts between Users • Rights-of-Way, Communication Sites, Utility Corridors • Reclamation of Unneeded Routes, Improvements, and Human Impacts • Meeting Land Health Standards • Livestock Grazing Carrying Capacity and Conflicts • Soils/Erosion • Reclamation of Spent Shale Pile and DOE Facilities
Implementation Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting Trails to Rifle • Level of Maintenance on Routes • Recreational Facilities • Signage • Litter and Trash Dumping • Livestock Distribution and Improvements • Enforcement of Regulations • Gas Development Spacing, Directional Drilling and Stipulations • Partnerships/Involving Users in Implementation • Habitat Improvement Projects • Gas Development Mitigation
Planning Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfirming Existing RMP Decisions • Multiple-Use Management • Increased and Changing Demands of Public Lands • Sustainability • Cumulative Impact of Oil and Gas Development • Balance of Recreational Opportunities • Intent of Transfer Legislation • Need to Revise Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario for Gas Leasing

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Table 1-2. Planning Criteria Used by BLM in Developing and Implementing the RMPA/EIS

Area of Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The planning process will address all BLM-administered lands, including lands with Federal surface and/or mineral estates within the Planning Area. This area can generally be described as being between Parachute Creek, SH 13, and the Colorado River, totaling 73,602 acres of Federal lands.
Decisions to be Made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish travel designations that replace interim travel designations on transferred lands and affirm or change travel designations on lands in the rest of the Planning Area. Establish conservation/mitigation measures if any, and as appropriate, for all species listed as Sensitive, Candidate, Proposed, Threatened, or Endangered in order to prevent the listing of Sensitive, Candidate, and Proposed Species. Adopt measures as appropriate to conserve species currently listed as Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act (see August 30, 2000, Interagency MOA for Programmatic Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation). Adopt, modify, or discard previous land use planning decisions as appropriate. Identify areas, conditions, and criteria where resource activities and development (oil and gas development, range improvements, vegetation treatments, recreation developments and other surface-disturbing activities) are appropriate. Designate special management areas, if any and as appropriate, including Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs). Establish management prescriptions for those areas BLM has determined to contain wilderness characteristics. Provide management direction to maintain, enhance, or restore physical function and biological health and achieve Land Health Standards at the watershed scale. This may include adoption of the Standards for Public Land Health and Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado.
Process Criteria of Note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, manuals, handbooks, and policies, including but not limited to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Public Law 105-85 (Defense Authorization Act of 1998), Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended, Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing and Reform Act of 1987, Endangered Species Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and other laws. Provide for a balance and diversity of resource uses while realizing that some uses may not be compatible and may not be offered within the Roan Plateau area. Base decisions on the relative values of resources present, not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return (Planning Regulations, 43 CFR 1600) in development of management prescriptions. Recognize valid existing rights. Use multiple geographic scales to assess the results of various alternatives that may differ from the Planning Area for analysis, appropriate to specific resources and to address complex issues. Consider budget when analyzing the feasibility of implementation.

**Figure 1-1
General Location Map
Roan Plateau RMPA/EIS**



Nebraska

Kansas

Wyoming

New Mexico

Utah

