

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Located in the Robledo Mountains of southern New Mexico lies a major deposit of Paleozoic Era fossilized footprints, plants, and wood dating back approximately 280 million years ago. Approximately 5,255 acres of these fossils located 10 miles northwest of Las Cruces, New Mexico are designated as the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument (PTNM) by the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009*.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to provide management guidance for the Federal land within the PTNM. These 5,255 acres are considered the **Planning Area**, while Doña Ana County, where the PTNM resides, is considered the **Analysis Area**.

BACKGROUND

In 1987, a major deposit of Paleozoic Era fossilized footprint megatracks was discovered in the Robledo Mountains by a local Las Cruces, Jerry MacDonald. The area is located in the BLM New Mexico Las Cruces District Office and covered by management outlined in the *Mimbres RMP* (1993). In 1990, Senator Jeff Bingaman and Congressman Joe Skeen introduced the **Prehistoric Trackways Study Legislation (S. 2684 and H.R. 4945)**. In 1993, the legislation was passed which allowed the BLM to contract with the Smithsonian Institution and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science to conduct a study and prepare a report on the significance of the trackways discovery. The report states:

“ . . . evaluation indicates the Robledo Mountains tracksites are the most scientifically significant Early Permian tracksites known. The diversity, abundance and quality of the tracks in the Robledo Mountains is far greater than at any other known tracksites or aggregation of tracksites. Because of this, the Robledo tracks allow a wide range of scientific problems regarding late Paleozoic tracks to be solved that could not be solved before.” (Lucas, Hunt, and Hotton III 1994)

Senator Bingaman introduced legislation in 2008 to designate the trackways area as a National Monument *“ . . . in order to conserve, protect, and enhance the unique and nationally important paleontological, scientific, educational, scenic, and recreational resources and values of the public land. . . .”* The Legislation was passed as part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (the Act or Legislation) and designated 5,280 acres as the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument (PTNM or Monument) administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The need for the PTNM Draft RMP/EIS is established by the enabling Legislation which requires that:

“Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a comprehensive management plan for the long-term protection and management of the Monument... The management plan shall describe the appropriate uses and management of the Monument, consistent with the provisions of the legislation”

The existing *Mimbres RMP* (1993) covering the Monument is inadequate to address the mandates of the enabling legislation. The purpose of the Monument RMP is to address resource management and public uses within the Monument as prescribed by Congressional legislation. The EIS will disclose to the public and BLM managers any impacts to the environment that would likely result from implementing the agency's Proposed Action or possible alternatives.

Proposed within Chapter 2 are two different types of decisions. Those decisions are either planning (broad overarching) decisions or implementation (on-the-ground) decisions. The *BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1* separates Planning (land use) Decisions for public land into two categories: desired outcomes (goals and objectives) and allowable (including restricted or prohibited) uses and actions anticipated to achieve desired outcomes. Implementation decisions are the BLM's final approval, allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Implementation decisions will always be denoted with an asterisk (*).

Legislative Provisions (see Appendix A for the full text of Prehistoric Trackways National Monument section of the *Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009*)

- Conserve, protect, and enhance the following resources and values: Paleontological, Scientific, Educational, Scenic, and Recreational.
- Shall only allow uses of the Monument that the Secretary determines would further the purposes for which the Monument has been established.
- Provide for public interpretation of, and education and scientific research on, the paleontological resources of the Monument, with priority given to exhibiting and curating the resources in Doña Ana County, New Mexico.
- Enter into cooperative management agreements or other instruments with interested parties or agencies, as appropriate, to coordinate and collaborate management of the Monument.
- Continue to manage that portion of the Robledo Mountains Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) within the Monument.
- Except as needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency, the use of motorized vehicles in the Monument shall be allowed only on roads and trails designated in this management plan for use by motorized vehicles.
- Subject to valid existing rights, any Federal land within the Monument and any land or interest in land that is acquired by the United States for inclusion in the Monument after the date of enactment of this Act are withdrawn from - (1) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws; (2) location, entry, and patent under the 1872 mining law as amended; and (3) operation of the mineral leasing laws, geothermal leasing laws, and mineral material disposal laws.
- Manage any land or interest in land that is acquired by the United States for inclusion in the Monument after the date of enactment of this Act in the same manner and degree as herein described for the rest of the Monument.

- The Secretary may allow grazing to continue in any area of the Monument in which grazing is allowed before the date of enactment of this Act, subject to applicable laws (including regulations).

ISSUES

The process for developing an RMP begins with identification of planning issues. Issues are areas of conflict or controversy between uses and management activities for a given area of public land that must be resolved in the RMP. The agency also addresses other basic environmental and management concerns to provide comprehensive management guidance for all resources within the Monument and to satisfy legal requirements.

The following are issues or areas of concern for the Monument. These were identified through internal scoping by resource specialists and/or raised by the public during scoping.

Issues Addressed

Paleontological Research and Protection

1. How will management actions address the legislative mandate of providing for resource protection and research of paleontological resources?
2. How will the management prescriptions address site protection and resource mitigation?

Education and Interpretation

1. How will the management actions address the legislative mandate of providing for public interpretation of, and education and scientific research on, the paleontological resources of the Monument, with priority given to exhibiting and curating the resources in Doña Ana County?
2. What types of education and interpretation are best suited to protection of the fossils? Onsite? Off-site?

Travel and Access

1. How can the BLM manage access to the Monument while protecting the resources?

Recreation

1. How will the BLM manage conflicts between motorized use and protection of Monument objects?
2. How will the BLM manage requests for special recreation permits?
3. How will the management actions address other various recreation opportunities such as camping, shooting, and fossil hunting while protecting Monument objects?
4. What opportunities will be available for visitor services and facilities?

Management Concerns

Wildlife, Livestock, and Vegetation

1. What management actions will protect wildlife and wildlife habitat?
2. How will livestock grazing be addressed within the Monument?
3. How will management of vegetative communities be addressed in the Monument?

Visual Resources

1. How will the BLM manage threats to scenic quality within the boundaries of the Monument?

Socio-economics

1. How will management actions impact economic and social opportunities in the community?

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A

Alternative A or the “*No Action Alternative*” represents the continuation of existing management, which is defined by the *Mimbres RMP* (1993) and the legislation designating the Monument, the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009*.

Alternative B

Alternative B represents a more restrictive public use approach of the Monument. This approach is more passive; human interventions with the resources are minimal and natural processes would continue at the current rate.

- All paleontological resources would be conserved for scientific research.
- Casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources would not be allowed.
- Trails and roads would be restricted to those already developed, and the Monument would be closed to all mechanized or motorized vehicles except those permitted for authorized use.
- A majority of the education and interpretation program would be off-site.
- The PTNM would be CLOSED to Special Recreation Permits (SRPs).
- Livestock grazing would not be allowed within the Monument.

Alternative C

Alternative C represents a moderate public use and resource management method of the Monument. This alternative allows for protection of the resources while allowing compatible public uses.

- Fossil localities deemed suitable for scientific research may be reserved for scientific research only. Localities appropriate for interpretation, educational, and recreational use may be developed.
- Closed to casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources.
- Collecting of common invertebrate fossils would only be allowed while in conjunction with BLM authorized interpretive or educational activities or programs.
- Interpretation and education would be enhanced on-site and off-site including a visitor contact station.

- Facilitated tours and self-guided interpretive activities would be developed.
- Motorized and mechanized travel within the Monument would be limited to designated routes and trails with a permit.
- Approximately 5.4 miles of designated routes would be closed.
- New routes or trails may be developed by the BLM to enhance visitor experiences and research opportunities.
- Commercial, competitive, and organized group activities would be managed through the SRP process.
- Grazing would be excluded at specific locations such as exclosures around campsites or in areas to protect paleontological resources if determined necessary.

Alternative D

Alternative D represents a maximum use approach to management of the Monument and the widest range of public uses of the resources while still following the constraints of the designating Legislation.

- Fossil localities deemed suitable for scientific research would be preserved and reserved for scientific research only. Localities appropriate for interpretation, educational, and recreational use would be developed for that use.
- Closed to casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources.
- Collecting of common invertebrate fossils would only be allowed while in conjunction with BLM authorized interpretive or educational activities or programs.
- Interpretation and education would be developed for the Monument both on-site and off-site as would a visitor center.
- Facilitated tours and self-guided interpretive activities would be developed along with an interpretive motor tour route.
- Motorized and mechanized travel within the Monument would be limited to designated routes.
- Approximately 4.0 miles of designated routes would be closed.
- New routes and trails may be developed to enhance visitor experiences and research opportunities.
- Competitive, commercial, and organized group activities would be managed through the SRP process.
- Current livestock management would continue in the Monument.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Table S-1 summarizes the impacts by resource by alternative for the PTNM. These impacts are fully discussed in Chapter 4.

The following resources have been found to have negligible or no impacts from any of the management alternatives proposed:

- American Indian Uses and Traditional Cultural Practices
- Riparian Areas
- Woodland Management
- Floodplains and Wetlands
- Geology
- Minerals
- Hazardous and Solid Wastes
- Prime or Unique Farmlands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

**TABLE S-1
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS BY RESOURCE BY ALTERNATIVE**

ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
<p>Casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources would lead to depletion of the resources.</p> <p>Off-site interpretation would increase protection through enhancing awareness, and leaving sites conserved in-situ for future research.</p> <p>Vehicles would continue to damage fossils through crushing, fracturing, or staining.</p>	<p>Closing the PTNM to the casual collection of fossils would reduce the loss of scientific-worthy vertebrate fossils, but would also reduce educational and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Off-site interpretation would protect resources by increasing awareness and leaving paleontological sites conserved in-situ for future research.</p> <p>Closure to motorized and mechanized travel would eliminate damage to fossils from this use.</p>	<p>Restricting the casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant fossils would reduce the loss of scientific-worthy vertebrate fossils.</p> <p>On-site education and interpretation would increase awareness of the resource but could increase the potential for looting.</p> <p>Closing certain routes would protect important exposed fossils from OHV activity.</p> <p>Development of visitor facilities could increase visitation and thereby result in increased stewardship, but vandalism and looting could also increase.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C except, both the beneficial and adverse impacts from on-site interpretation and facilities would be increased due to more development.</p>
EDUCATION AND INTEPRETATION			
<p>Scientific research would enhance education and interpretation through the discovery of new sites.</p> <p>Casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources would enhance the educational experience in the Monument.</p> <p>Limited facility and trail development would constrain the interpretive experience on-site.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>The closure to casual collection of fossils would limit the on-site interpretive experience.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Managing for lands with wilderness characteristics may limit new surface disturbing activities such as interpretative trails and signs in those areas (576 acres).</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>On-site interpretation, trails and facilities would be developed to enhance educational opportunities.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B except surface disturbing activities may be limited to 253 acres. The remaining 323 acres found to have wilderness characteristics, but not managed for those characteristics, may be impacted from potential surface disturbing activities.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Collecting common fossils in conjunction with a BLM activity would enhance the educational experience.</p> <p>The development of a motorized interpretive tour or a visitor center would enhance the experience of many visitors.</p> <p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics would not be managed for those characteristics, therefore development may occur and may impact the wilderness characteristics in those areas (576 acres).</p>

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SUMMARY OF IMPACTS BY RESOURCE BY ALTERNATIVE**

ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES			
<p>Annual visitation to the Monument area is 25,000.</p> <p>Casual collecting of common invertebrate and plant fossils provides a recreational opportunity.</p> <p>The lack of on-site visitor facilities limits the visitor experience and may reduce visitation from some groups.</p> <p>Target shooting could cause conflict between users.</p> <p>No planned improvement or maintenance of trails would limit recreation.</p>	<p>Annual visitation may be reduced by 5,625 visitors.</p> <p>Casual collection of fossils, Special Recreation Permits, and motorized and mechanized vehicle use would not be allowed, thus reducing the number of recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p>Annual visitation would increase to 37,500 people.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>On-site visitor facilities would enhance the visitor experience and may increase visitation.</p> <p>Closure to target shooting would reduce a recreational opportunity.</p> <p>Closure of a portion of the OHV trails would impact the extreme OHV users. Maintaining and developing trails and routes would enhance recreational opportunities.</p>	<p>Annual visitation would increase to 75,000 people.</p> <p>Collecting common fossils while in conjunction with a BLM activity would provide a recreational opportunity.</p> <p>A visitor center and a campground would create recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p> <p>A 1.4-mile portion of trail route would remain open providing an opportunity to access an extreme route.</p>
TRAILS AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT			
<p>Continued use of the existing 37.6 miles of designated trails provides an extensive route network with a variety of opportunities for motorized, mechanized, and pedestrian use and travel.</p> <p>Improvement or maintenance of existing routes has not been planned for, reducing the ease of access for educational and some recreational uses.</p>	<p>Closing the Monument to motorized and mechanized travel would reduce access to most visitors.</p> <p>Managing for lands with wilderness characteristics may limit new surface disturbing activities, such as trails and roads and routes in those areas (576 acres).</p> <p>Lack of improvement or maintenance of routes would reduce the ease of access and recreational experience for many visitors.</p>	<p>Limiting motorized and mechanized travel to 32.2 miles of designated routes would provide an extensive route network with a variety of opportunities for use.</p> <p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics, managed for those characteristics, may limit the new development of facilities, additional roads and routes and maintenance in those areas (253 acres). The 323 acres found to have wilderness characteristics, but not managed for those characteristics, may be impacted from potential surface disturbing activities</p> <p>Improved and maintained routes would enhance the visitor experience.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C, except 33.6 miles of routes would be designated.</p> <p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics would not be managed for those characteristics, therefore new trails, roads, and route construction may occur and may impact the wilderness characteristics in those areas (576 acres).</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

**TABLE S-1
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS BY RESOURCE BY ALTERNATIVE**

ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
AIR RESOURCES-- AIR QUALITY			
<p>Vehicle travel on designated trails has the potential to emit pollutants and cause dust.</p> <p>Surface disturbance from potential authorized rights-of-way could cause dust emissions.</p> <p>Mineral extraction could cause dust emissions.</p>	<p>Closure to motorized and mechanized use would reduce dust and emissions compared to Alternative A.</p> <p>Rights-of-way would not be allowed. Emissions would be less than Alternative A.</p> <p>No mineral extraction would take place. Emissions would be less than Alternative A.</p> <p>Managing for lands with wilderness characteristics may limit new surface disturbing activities, and potentially reduce dust emissions in those areas (576 acres), compared to Alternative A.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>The 323 acres of lands with wilderness characteristics, but not managed for them, may be subject to disturbing activities that increase dust emissions.</p> <p>Construction of facilities could cause emissions.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics would not be managed for them. Dust emissions may potentially increase due to surface disturbing activities in those areas (576 acres).</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
AIR RESOURCES -- CLIMATE			
<p>It is not possible to predict with certainty the potential emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) associated with the four alternatives, their potential impacts on temperature within the <i>Planning Area</i>, or related impacts on resources due to climate change. In general, trails and travel management, livestock grazing, and wildland fire generate GHG emissions that contribute to climate change and, in turn, may impact resources.</p>			
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
<p>The BLM would comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act thereby minimizing impacts to cultural resources.</p>	<p>Closure of the Monument to rights-of way, vehicular travel and other surface disturbing activities would greatly reduce the potential impacts to cultural resources.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A</p>

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ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
LANDS AND REALTY			
<p>Surface disturbing land use authorizations could take place.</p> <p>Commercial-scale renewable energy would be excluded.</p> <p>Authorizations would meet Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes I to IV.</p>	<p>Surface disturbing land use authorizations would be excluded from the PTNM.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>There would be no VRM impacts.</p> <p>Obtaining non-Federal minerals would eliminate split-estate issues.</p>	<p>Surface disturbing land use authorizations would be considered with the exception of lands managed for their wilderness characteristics.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>VRM I and II could limit land use authorizations.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative C</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p> <p>Same as Alternative B.</p>
LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS			
<p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics but not managed for those characteristics may be impacted (576 acres).</p>	<p>Managing for lands with wilderness characteristics would protect the wilderness characteristics in those areas (576 acres).</p>	<p>Lands found to have wilderness characteristics and managed for them may limit disturbance activities (253 acres). The remaining 323 acres found to have wilderness characteristics, but not managed for them, may be impacted from potential surface disturbing activities.</p> <p>Designation of the Monument as VRM I and II would help retain wilderness characteristics.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>VRM I and II designations may help to retain some of the wilderness characteristics found in the PTNM.</p>
LIVESTOCK GRAZING			
<p>Increased visitation could cause increased conflicts with livestock and recreational users.</p> <p>Vegetation treatments could improve forage and reduce competition.</p>	<p>There would be no direct impacts from livestock grazing in the Monument.</p> <p>Exclusion from grazing would require fencing and management adjustments in the Picacho Peak and Altamira allotments.</p> <p>Animal unit months (AUMs) would be reduced by a minimum of 456 for the two allotments.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Fences would be constructed to protect significant fossils as needed. Forage reductions would be based on the specific acres excluded.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A but using more effective techniques.</p> <p>Excluding improvements from 253 acres managed for wilderness characteristics may reduce the use of forage.</p>	<p>Same as Alternatives C with more anticipated interactions between visitors and livestock as visitor facilities and routes increase.</p> <p>Same as Alternatives A and C, but with more forage possibly improved.</p>

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ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS			
<p>Visitation to the PTNM would support 16 jobs and \$417,000 in labor income annually.</p> <p>Visitor facilities would not be constructed.</p> <p>Alternative A has the lowest levels of non-market economic values and the least support for social values related to preservation of ecological health and wilderness.</p> <p>Similar levels of employment and income would be supported.</p> <p>None of the decisions are expected to disproportionately or adversely affect environmental justice communities.</p> <p>Designation of 37.6 miles of roads and trails open to motorized and mechanized uses supports social values related to public land access and OHV recreation.</p>	<p>Visitation to the PTNM would support 4 jobs and \$94,000 in labor income annually.</p> <p>Economic benefits from facility construction would not be realized.</p> <p>Alternative B would support the highest levels of non-market economic values and social values related to protection of natural and cultural resources.</p> <p>Elimination of grazing would reduce labor income to ranchers.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A</p> <p>Closure to motorized and mechanized uses would reduce the quality of life for those who primarily value OHV recreation, but would make PTNM more of an attraction for others.</p>	<p>Visitation to the PTNM would support 24 jobs and \$626,000 in labor income annually.</p> <p>Development of visitor facilities would temporarily increase local employment and labor income during construction.</p> <p>Alternative C balances social values of access and motorized recreation with values related to ecological health and wilderness.</p> <p>Social and economic consequences of grazing are the same under Alternatives A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A but with a reduction in available routes for extreme OHV opportunities.</p>	<p>Visitation to the PTNM would support 47 jobs and annual labor income of \$1,251,000.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p> <p>Alternative D would support lower levels of non-market economic values and social values related to protection of natural and cultural resources.</p> <p>Same as Alternatives A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p>
SOILS			
<p>Excavations could cause highly disturbed areas. Casual collecting of fossils would have a minor disturbance.</p> <p>Soil disturbance would be caused by recreation, research, interpretation tours, camping, Special Recreation Permits, vehicular travel, right-of-way development, and range improvements.</p> <p>Spills of petroleum products could contaminate soils.</p>	<p>Surface disturbance would be reduced because casual collecting would be prohibited.</p> <p>Closure to vehicular travel and camping, no issuance of Special Recreation Permits, removal of grazing, and exclusion of surface disturbing land use authorizations would all benefit soils.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative B.</p> <p>Visitor facilities would displace and compact soils, increasing runoff and erosion rates.</p>	<p>Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>Same as Alternative C.</p>

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SPECIAL DESIGNATION -- AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)			
Manage as the Robledo Mountains ACEC.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
SPECIAL DESIGNATION-- RESEARCH NATURAL AREA (RNA)			
Management prescriptions of the RNA would be duplicated by the PTNM Legislation.	The RNA designation would be removed and replaced by the PTNM RMP decisions.	Same as Alternative B.	Same as Alternative B.
SPECIAL DESIGNATION -- WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA)			
The Robledo Mountains WSA would be managed to meet the non-impairment standard.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES			
Vehicle travel and dispersed recreation has the potential to temporarily displace special status species or injure slow moving species.	Closure to motorized and mechanized travel would reduce potential for injury of some species such as Texas horned lizard.	Same as Alternative A except development could increase temporary displacement of special status species or injure slow moving species.	Same as Alternative C.
Livestock watering sources would benefit special status species such as bats.	Elimination of livestock grazing could reduce forage competition and improve habitat for species such as burrowing owl and northern shrike.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Vegetation management would improve habitat for species associated with grasslands.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
VEGETATION			
Special designations would protect 789 acres from surface disturbing activities.	Same as Alternative A, but with an additional 576 acres managed as lands with wilderness characteristics.	Same as Alternative A except an additional 253 acres would be managed as lands with wilderness characteristics.	Same as Alternative A.
Use of trails and routes has the potential to remove or damage vegetation and spread noxious weeds.	Surface disturbing activities, e.g., Special Recreation Permits, OHV use, and rights-of-way, would be restricted to reduce the potential for damage to vegetation.	Development of new trails, routes, or facilities could remove vegetative cover in other areas.	Same as Alternative C except additional surface disturbance and vegetation removal is possible from facilities development.
Livestock grazing may remove 30 to 50 percent of key forage species and has the potential to introduce or spread weeds.	Elimination of livestock grazing decreases utilization of forage species favored by cattle.	Same as Alternative A	Same as Alternative A.
Vegetation treatments have the potential to shift species dominance and control weeds.	Treatment options would be limited for noxious weed control.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.

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ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C (PREFERRED)	ALTERNATIVE D
VISUAL RESOURCES			
VRM Class I designation would preserve the character of the landscape on 789 acres of the most scenic, natural appearing, and visually sensitive areas.	1,365 acres would be designated as VRM Class I as described in Alternative A.	1,042 acres would be designated VRM Class I as described in Alternative A.	789 acres would be designated VRM Class I as described in Alternative A.
VRM Class II would retain the existing character of the landscape on 907 acres.	3,912 acres would be designated VRM Class II as described in Alternative A.	4,213 acres would be designated VRM Class II as described in Alternative A.	4,465 acres would be VRM Class II as described in Alternative A.
The remaining lands would be designated as VRM Class III and IV, which allow more change in the visual character of the land.	Exclusion of livestock from the Monument could cause short-term visual impacts from fence construction.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Development of 368 acres of non-Federal minerals may impact the existing character of the landscape.			
WATER RESOURCES			
Surface disturbing activities may create nonpoint source pollutants that could transport to the Rio Grande, decrease infiltration, increase runoff, and alter water flow patterns.	Restrictions in surface disturbing activities would help soil stability and productivity, hinder erosion, and reduce nonpoint source pollution.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT			
Visitation and associated recreation activities could increase potential for human-caused wildfires.	Same as Alternative A except the reduction of some recreation activities would reduce the potential of human-caused wildfires.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
Vegetation treatments could cause an increase in fuel loading resulting in unwanted fire behavior.	Reduction in livestock grazing would increase fuels and the likelihood that a wildfire would carry.		
WILDLIFE			
Increase in visitation and recreation activities could temporarily displace wildlife.	Closure to travel would decrease potential injury and displacement of wildlife.	Same as Alternative A except increased displacement could occur around developed interpretation sites and facilities	Same as Alternative C, except prescribed fire could displace, kill or render habitat unsuitable but would have long-term benefits to habitat.
Vehicular travel has the potential to injure slow moving wildlife.	Removal of livestock would increase forage and cover for wildlife.		