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The Bureau of Land Management

Our Vision	To enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the balanced stewardship of America's public lands and resources.
Our Mission	To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.
Our Values	To serve with honesty, integrity, accountability, respect, courage, and commitment to make a difference.
Our Priorities	To improve the health and productivity of the lands to support the BLM multiple use mission. To cultivate community-based conservation, citizen-centered stewardship, and partnership through consultation, cooperation, and communication. To respect, value, and support our employees, giving them resources and opportunities to succeed. To pursue excellence in business practices, improve accountability to our stakeholders, and deliver better service to our customer.

BLM-UT-PL-08-01-1610

FES-08-29

UT-070-2002-11

On the Cover: The cover artwork is a pen and ink drawing of Lighthouse Rock in Desolation Canyon. The scene is inspired by a photograph taken by E.O. Beaman on August 11, 1871, during the second John Wesley Powell exploration of the Green River. The artist is Carrie Dean, BLM River Ranger.

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Utah State Office
P.O. Box 45155
Salt Lake City, UT 84145-0155
http://www.blm.gov

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

IN REPLY REFER TO:

UT-070-1610-011J

Dear Reader:

Enclosed is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Price Field Office. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared the PRMP/FEIS in consultation with cooperating agencies, taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. This PRMP/FEIS provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of BLM-administered lands and resources located in Carbon and Emery counties, Utah. The document contains both land use planning decisions and implementation decisions to guide the BLM's management of the Price Field Office. The PRMP/FEIS is open for a 30-day review and protest period beginning the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability of the FEIS in the *Federal Register*.

This PRMP/FEIS has been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). The PRMP/FEIS is largely based on Alternative D, the Preferred Alternative in the Draft RMP and EIS, which was released in July 2004. A Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS evaluating potential ACECs was released in June 2006, and a Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS evaluating non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics was released in September 2007. This PRMP/FEIS contains the proposed plan and potential impacts of the proposed plan. The alternatives presented in the Draft and Draft Supplement RMP/EIS are also provided for comparative purposes. Major comments received during the public review period of the Draft RMP/EIS as well as the Draft Supplements and responses to these comments are provided on an attached CD. To aid the reader, substantive changes made between the Draft RMP/EIS and the PRMP/FEIS are described in Chapter 1 and are detailed in Appendix Q.

Pursuant to BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this PRMP and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decisions within 30 days from date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. For further information on filing a protest, please see the accompanying protest regulations in the pages that follow (labeled as Attachment 1). The regulations specify the required elements of your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g. meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). To aid in ensuring the completeness of your protest, a protest check list is attached to this letter (labeled as Attachment 2). If your protest does not include all of the elements outlined in 43 CFR 1610.5-2 the BLM will not respond to your protest.

E-mailed and faxed protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, the BLM will consider the e-mailed or faxed protest as an advance copy and will afford it full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, please direct faxed protests to the attention of Brenda Hudgens-Williams- BLM protest coordinator at 202-452-5112, and e-mailed protests to: Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov.

All protests, including the follow-up letter (if e-mailing or faxing) must be in writing and mailed to the following address:

Regular Mail:	Overnight Mail:
Director (210)	Director (210)
Attention: Brenda Williams	Attention: Brenda Williams
P.O. Box 66538	1620 L Street, N.W., Suite 1075
Washington, D.C. 20035	Washington, D.C. 20036

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be mailed or made available electronically to all who participated in the planning process and will be available to all parties through the "Planning" page of the BLM national website (*http://www.blm.gov/planning*), or by mail upon request.

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process, through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) pursuant to 43 CFR, Part 4 Subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval allowing on-the ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations once the BLM resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and issues an Approved RMP and ROD. Implementation-level decisions in the PRMP/FEIS are indicated by *italic text* and an asterisk (*) in Chapter 2. The Approved RMP and ROD will also clearly identify the implementation decisions made in the plan that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals.

Sincerely,

Selma Sierra
Utah State Director

Attachment 1

[Code of Federal Regulations]
[Title 43, Volume 2]
[Revised as of October 1, 2002]
From the U.S. Government Printing Office via GPO Access
[CITE: 43CFR1610.5-2]

[Page 20]

TITLE 43--PUBLIC LANDS: INTERIOR

CHAPTER II--BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

PART 1600--PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING--Table of Contents

Subpart 1610--Resource Management Planning

Sec. 1610.5-2 Protest procedures.

(a) Any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of a resource management plan may protest such approval or amendment. A protest may raise only those issues which were submitted for the record during the planning process.

(1) The protest shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Director. The protest shall be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency published the notice of receipt of the final environmental impact statement containing the plan or amendment in the Federal Register. For an amendment not requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the protest shall be filed within 30 days of the publication of the notice of its effective date.

(2) The protest shall contain:

(i) The name, mailing address, telephone number and interest of the person filing the protest;

(ii) A statement of the issue or issues being protested;

(iii) A statement of the part or parts of the plan or amendment being protested;

(iv) A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and

(v) A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

(3) The Director shall promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision shall be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested.

(b) The decision of the Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Attachment 2

Resource Management Plan Protest
Critical Item Checklist

The following items *must* be included to constitute a valid protest whether using this optional format, or a narrative letter.
(43 CFR 1610.5-2)

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your **protest**, be advised that your entire **protest**--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your **protest** to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Resource Management Plan (RMP) or Amendment (RMPA) being protested:

Name:
Address:
Phone Number: ( )

Your interest in filing this protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of this plan?):

Issue or issues being protested:

Statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested:

Chapter:
Section:
Page:
(or) Map:

Attach copies of all documents addressing the issue(s) that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, <u>OR an indication of the date the issue(s) were discussed for the record</u>.
Date(s):

A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decisions is believed to be wrong:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

THE PRICE FIELD OFFICE PROPOSED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Bureau of Land Management
Utah State Office
Salt Lake City, Utah

Prepared by the
Price Field Office
August 2008

Selma Sierra
Utah State Director

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Price Field Office Planning Area
Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
Type of Action: Final, Administrative
Jurisdiction: Carbon and Emery Counties, Utah

Abstract: The Price Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS) describes and analyzes the Proposed RMP for the planning and management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Price Field Office. The Price planning area is located in central-eastern Utah and includes approximately 3,788,100 acres of land in Carbon and Emery Counties. Within the Price planning area, the BLM manages and administers approximately 2,479,000 acres of public land surface. The Proposed RMP is open for a 30-day protest period beginning the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS in the Federal Register.

The No Action and Alternatives A through E were presented in the Draft RMP/EIS released in July 2004 and in two Supplements released in 2006 and 2007. The **No Action Alternative** is a continuation of the current management direction contained in the two land use plans. **Alternative A** emphasizes active management for commodities, amenities, and services by providing maximum access and development of mineral resources, including, oil/gas and coal. Mineral development is given priority over other uses and resource considerations. **Alternative B** seeks to preserve the unique values of lands within the PFO while accommodating reasonable levels of use. This alternative would provide a moderate amount of mineral development; recreation would have a mix of motorized and primitive recreation opportunities. **Alternative C** includes management strategies to maintain, preserve and protect non commodity resources and to deemphasize production goals for resource uses. **Alternative D** (Preferred Alternative) is designed to provide for a variety of resource needs including maximizing mineral development in areas with the greatest potential for maximum resource recovery and targeting recreation management to provide for quality recreation settings, experiences, and benefits. **Alternative E** emphasizes preserving, protecting, and maintaining the wilderness characteristics of all non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, including closing these areas to mineral leasing and OHV use, excluding ROWs, and protecting undisturbed landscapes and providing opportunities for primitive and semi-primitive recreation. The BLM has the discretion to select the **Proposed RMP** by combining components of the various alternatives presented in the Draft RMP/EIS. The Proposed RMP is based on Alternative D of the Draft RMP/EIS, and has been modified by public comments, BLM review, and providing the best means to accommodate the widest range of public and agency concerns over resources and resource uses.

Protest Period: Protests must be postmarked or received no later than 30 days after publication of the EPA Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Refer to the instructions in the Dear Reader Letter for additional information on how to protest.

For Further Information Contact:
Bureau of Land Management, Price Field Office
Attn: Floyd L. Johnson, Assistant Field Manger
125 South 600 West
Price, Utah 84501
Telephone (435) 636-3600

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PREFACE

How to Use This Document

This section explains where information is located and provides an overview of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS is organized into two separate volumes, containing the following major chapter headings and information:

Volume I

- **Chapter 1, Introduction, Purpose and Need—**Introduces the purpose and need to which the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responding; provides an overview of the BLM planning process and statutes (laws), limitations, and guidelines BLM must adhere to in preparing an RMP; and presents the scope of issues the RMP must address in detail. It describes the relationship of this RMP with other plans. Finally, it identifies the major changes between the Draft RMP/EIS and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

- **Chapter 2, Description of Alternatives—**Describes management guidance common to all alternatives and alternatives considered but eliminated from further consideration. It also presents specific management actions proposed under the alternatives and a comparative summary of the impacts of each alternative. The Common to All Alternatives includes management actions that may be rules, regulations, laws, policies, or best management practices (BMP) that the BLM will implement regardless of the alternative selected. In addition to the No Action Alternative, which reflects current management, four action alternatives (A, B, C, and E) and the Proposed RMP are presented. These alternatives present a reasonable range based on guidance, policy, or scientific knowledge. In the Draft RMP/EIS, Alternative D was identified as BLM's Preferred Alternative. In the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, Alternative D has been modified based on BLM review and public comment to form the Proposed RMP. Management actions in the following categories are presented in tables, including goals, objectives, and common to all alternatives:

  - **Resources—**Include air quality; soil, water, and riparian; vegetation; cultural; paleontological; visual; special status species; fish and wildlife; wild horses and burros; fire and fuels; non-Wilderness Study Area (WSA) lands with wilderness characteristics; and fire, drought, and natural disasters.
  - **Resource Uses—**Include forest and woodlands, livestock grazing, recreation, lands and realty, and minerals and energy development.
  - **Special Designations—**Include WSAs, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Wild and Scenic Rivers, national historic trails, scenic and back-country byways, and national landmarks.
  - **Support—**Includes transportation and hazardous materials and waste.

- **Chapter 3, Affected Environment—**Describes the Price Field Office (PFO) and the existing environmental conditions that would be affected by the alternatives. This chapter is organized similarly to Chapter 2, except socioeconomic conditions are included.

Volume II

- **Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences—**Forms the scientific and analytic basis for the comparison of environmental impacts of the alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, as described in Chapter 2. Under each alternative, analysis is organized by resource (as described for Chapter 2) and socioeconomic conditions.

Volume III

- **Chapter 5, Consultation and Coordination—**Describes the scoping process and other past and planned agency consultation and public involvement activities. Chapter 5 also includes lists of the commentors who provided comments during one of the public comment periods, as well as a summary of responses to public comments.
- **List of Preparers—**Presents the names and qualifications of the persons responsible for preparing the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
- **Glossary—**Provides an alphabetized list of definitions for terms used in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
- **Acronyms—**Provides an alphabetized list defining acronyms and abbreviations used in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
- **References—**Provides details for references cited within the document. Most cited documents are reasonably available from other public sources such as libraries; many are available for public review at the PFO.
- **Appendices—**Contains documents the and information that support existing resource condition or situations, substantiate analysis, provide resource management guidance, explain processes, or provide other information directly relevant to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.
- **Maps—**Presents a visual representation of several Proposed RMP/Final EIS decisions, as well as background information to support the decisions and analysis. The maps are organized by chapter.
- **Attached CD—**Provides all comments and responses to the Draft RMP/EIS and the Price Supplemental Information and Analysis to the Price Field Office Draft RMP/EIS for ACECs and Supplement to the Price Field Office Draft RMP/EIS for Non-WSA lands with Wilderness Characteristics. There are a total of eight tables: two for each of the four public comment periods, one table is sorted by category and the other by commentor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 United States Code [USC] 4321 et seq.) and under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA, 43 USC 1701 et seq.), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed RMP/Final EIS) for public lands and resources administered by the Price Field Office (PFO) in Utah. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS includes an identification and analysis of the Proposed RMP for future management of the public lands and resources that are administered by the BLM's PFO. Public lands in the PFO are currently managed under two different land use plans (1983 *Price River Management Framework Plan* [MFP] and the 1991 *San Rafael Resource Management Plan* [RMP]). The new plan revision, which is called the Price Field Office Resource Management Plan (PFO RMP), and its accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), will provide management direction for public lands within the boundaries of the PFO. The PFO planning area comprises approximately 2,479,000 acres of surface estate and 2,723,000 acres of federal mineral resources underlying lands managed by the BLM, U.S. Forest Service, the State of Utah, and private entities.

The PFO is located in central-eastern Utah on the western portion of the Colorado Plateau and encompasses Carbon and Emery counties (Map 1-1). The BLM PFO is bounded by the Carbon-Duchesne –Utah County line on the north, the Green River on the east, the Emery-Wayne County line on the south, and County lines for Sanpete and Sevier counties to the west. The planning area shares boundaries with the Richfield Field Office, Salt Lake Field Office, Vernal Field Office, Moab Field Office, and Manti-La Sal National Forest as well as the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation.

The Proposed RMP/Final EIS resulted from public involvement and gathering the best available information. The BLM published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on November 7, 2001, to announce its intention to replace the Price River and San Rafael land use plans and prepare an EIS. The BLM provided extensive public and other agency involvement opportunities during the scoping process. Scoping meetings were held in six cities. The scoping process ended February 15, 2002. More information on the scoping process is presented in Chapter 5 and in the *Scoping Report for the Price RMP and EIS (2002)*. The information submitted by citizens and groups helped the BLM identify the issues that were addressed during this planning process.

Based on agency expertise and on issues raised by the public, the BLM prepared a Draft Resource Management Plan /Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft RMP/EIS) with a full description of the affected environment, a reasonable range of alternatives, and an analysis of the impacts of each alternative. The BLM published the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Price Draft RMP/EIS for public review and comment in the *Federal Register* on July 16, 2004. This initiated the 90-day public comment period; however, public requests extended the public comment period for another 45 days, which concluded on November 29, 2004. Four public meetings were held in August 2004 to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the Price Draft RMP/EIS. During the Draft RMP/EIS public comment period, approximately 60,000 comment letters were received.

The original NOA for the Draft RMP/EIS released July 2004 was augmented with a NOA published in the *Federal Register* on December 13, 2005, providing the public with information on Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) considered in the Draft RMP/EIS and specifically requesting public comments on the ACECs. Specifically, this NOA published information about each existing and potential

ACEC as required in 43 CFR 1610.7-2. This initiated a 60-day public comment period. During the ACEC public comment period, approximately 7,000 comment letters were received. Public comments submitted on this NOA were considered and responses prepared for inclusion in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Six months later the BLM published another NOA for the Price *Supplemental Information and Analysis to the Price Field Office Draft RMP/EIS for ACEC*s for public review and comment in the *Federal Register* on June 9, 2006. The supplemental information provided additional documentation regarding the disposition of ACECs nominated during scoping, provided a description of four additional potential ACECs that were not presented in the 2004 Draft RMP/EIS, and analyzed any potential impacts relating to the inclusion of these ACECs in Alternative C of the Price Draft RMP/EIS. This initiated the 90-day public comment period. During the Supplemental ACEC public comment period, approximately 25 comment letters were received. Public comments submitted on this NOA were considered and responses prepared for inclusion in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

A second NOI was published in the *Federal Register* on May 24, 2007, notifying the public that the BLM Vernal and Price Field Offices, Utah, were preparing a Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS to include a new alternative that provides management prescriptions and analysis to protect, preserve, and maintain wilderness characteristics on areas outside existing Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). There are multiple areas in the Price Field Office, outside of existing WSAs, that were found to have wilderness characteristics through previous inventory maintenance activities over the past twelve years. The BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H–1601–1) provides guidance for consideration of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in land use planning. The handbook provides that the BLM consider these lands and resource values in planning, and prescribe measures to protect wilderness characteristics. These characteristics include appearance of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, or outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

When completed, the BLM published the NOA for the *Supplement to the Price Field Office Draft RMP/EIS for Non-WSA lands with Wilderness Characteristics* for public review and comment in the *Federal Register* on September 14, 2007. The PFO Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS presented Alternative E which provided specific management actions to protect, preserve, and maintain the wilderness characteristics of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This new alternative ensured that: (1) consideration was given to wilderness characteristics; (2) an appropriate range of alternatives was considered for these lands; and (3) an adequate analysis was prepared from which to base future land use decisions. This NOA initiated a 90-day public comment period. During the public comment period, approximately 14,000 comment letters were received. Public comments submitted on this NOA were considered and responses prepared for inclusion in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

This Proposed RMP/Final EIS incorporates all of the information provided to the public as part of the Draft RMP/EIS. This includes the original Draft RMP/EIS, the ACEC Supplemental Information and Analysis, and the Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Supplement.

The Proposed RMP consists of a combination of all the alternatives, as well as information from the ACEC Supplement (June 2006), the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics supplement (September 2007), and Alternative D from the Draft RMP/EIS (which was used as the foundation for the Proposed RMP). The Proposed RMP/Final EIS does not carry forward, in whole, Alternative D (Preferred Alternative) from the Draft RMP/EIS. Alternative D (preferred alternative) in the Draft RMP/EIS has been replaced with the Proposed RMP. The Proposed RMP was crafted in response to public comments, internal comments, and coordination with cooperating agencies. The remainder of the alternatives from the Draft RMP/EIS were carried forward because the changes and clarifications were extensive and were better presented in their full context.

DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

Six alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, were analyzed in detail in the Draft RMP/EIS (2004), the ACEC Supplement (2006), and the Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Supplement (2007). The alternatives were developed to address major planning issues that were identified through public scoping and to provide management direction for resource programs. The Draft RMP/EIS alternatives and analyses are carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS only for comparative purposes and to correct some minor mistakes that were identified during the public comment period. The alternatives are as follows:

- **No Action Alternative** represents current management as outlined in the *1983 Price River MFP* and the *1991 San Rafael RMP* as modified by subsequent law, regulation, and policy. Of the alternatives, the No Action Alternative is the only one that would allow cross-country off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, continue the designation of 13 ACECs (266,660 acres), continue identification of four special recreation management area (SRMA) (956,380 acres), and manage all eligible wild and scenic river (WSR) segments (271 miles as Wild, 268 miles as Scenic, and 111 miles as Recreational) to protect their outstandingly remarkable values.

- **Alternative A** emphasizes active management for commodities, amenities, and services by providing maximum access and development of mineral resources, including oil, gas, coalbed natural gas, and coal, allowed by law. Mineral resource development is given priority over other uses and resource considerations to the extent possible. Of the alternatives, Alternative A would least restrict oil and gas leasing and mining, designate eight ACECs (164,330 acres, recommend no suitable WSR segments, and identify four SRMAs (1,018,740 acres), and prohibit cross-county OHV use and designate 2,430 miles of OHV routes.

- **Alternative B** seeks to preserve the unique values of lands within the PFO while accommodating reasonable levels of use. Alternative B would provide a moderate amount of mineral development, recreation would have a mix of motorized and primitive recreation opportunities, and approximately half the potential ACECs would be designated. Alternative B would designate 14 ACECs (521,630 acres), recommend 14 suitable WSR segments (78 miles as Wild, 93 miles as Scenic, and 103 miles as Recreational), identify five SRMAs (1,234,770 acres), and prohibit cross-county OHV use and designate 2,430 miles of OHV routes.

- **Alternative C** includes management strategies to preserve and protect noncommodity resources (e.g., wildlife habitat and water quality) and to deemphasize production goals for resource uses. There would be less active management of resources than under the other alternatives. Production of products from vegetation management in all habitats would be secondary to restoring vegetation and riparian areas. This alternative emphasizes dispersed and non-motorized recreation. Alternative C would protect all 38 eligible river segments as suitable WSRs (271 miles as Wild, 268 miles as Scenic, and 111 miles as Recreational, designate all 23 existing and potential ACECs (883,515 acres), identify five SRMAs (1,354,060 acres), prohibit cross-country OHV use, and designate 670 miles of OHV routes.

- **Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)** provides for a variety of resource needs throughout the PFO. It includes maximizing mineral development potential in areas with the greatest potential for maximum resource recovery and targeting recreation management in order to provide for quality recreation settings, experiences, and benefits in an environmentally appropriate manner. Alternative D would recommend 10 eligible river segments as suitable WSRs (123 miles as Scenic and 100 miles as Recreational, designate 15 potential ACECs (461,000 acres), identify five SRMAs (1,233,770 acres), and would prohibit cross-country OHV use and designate 917 miles of OHV routes.

- **Alternative E** emphasizes protecting/maintaining the wilderness characteristics of all non-WSA lands found to have wilderness characteristics, including closing these areas to mineral leasing and off-highway vehicles, excluding rights-of-way, and protecting undisturbed landscapes and opportunities for primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunities. Alternative E would protect all 38 eligible river segments as suitable WSRs (271 miles as Wild, 268 miles as Scenic, and 111 miles as Recreational), designate all 23 existing and potential ACECs (883,515 acres), identify five SRMAs (1,382,230 acres), and provide management for all 27 non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics (937,440 acres). Alternative E would prohibit cross-country OHV use and designate 513 miles of OHV routes, and impose the greatest restrictions on OHVs, oil and gas leasing and mining.

The alternatives were described in detail in Chapter 2 and analyzed in Chapter 4 of the Draft RMP/EIS and the two Supplements. Based on the Chapter 4 analysis, Alternative A was determined to have the greatest overall environmental impact, followed by Alternative D, Alternative B, No Action and Alternative C, respectively. Alternative E would have the least environmental impact and would provide the greatest protection for most elements of the affected environment. Conversely, Alternative A would provide the greatest opportunities and the least restrictions for developing energy and mineral resources; whereas No Action would least restrict OHV use.

THE PROPOSED RMP

The Proposed RMP (summarized in Table ES-1) consists of a combination of all the alternatives, using Alternative D from the Draft RMP/EIS as the foundation for the Proposed RMP, as well as information from the ACEC Supplement (June 2006) and the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics supplement (September 2007). The Proposed RMP was crafted in response to public comments, internal comments, and coordination with cooperating agencies.

Table ES-1 Proposed RMP Summary

Resource/ Resource Use	Proposed RMP
Air Quality	Manage all BLM and BLM-authorized actions to maintain air quality as prescribed by federal, tribal, state, and local laws and regulations. This management includes meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and ensuring that BLM-authorized actions continue to keep the area in attainment, meet Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) Class II standards, and protect Class I airsheds. Mitigate potential adverse impacts of site-specific actions, as identified in NEPA documents prepared at the time an action is proposed and as part of the state permitting process and PSD review.
Soil Resources	Restrict surface disturbing activities on slopes between 20 and 40 percent and prohibit surface disturbing activities on slopes greater than 40 percent.
Water Resources	Restrict surface disturbing activities with 330 feet of perennial and intermittent streams. Restrict surface disturbing activities within 660 feet of springs. Maintain or improve water quality and quantity through implementation of *Standards for Rangeland Health*.
Vegetation	Maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetation resources through implementation of *Standards for Rangeland Health* and other appropriate protection measures. Allow for vegetative treatments (i.e. mechanical, biological, manual, prescribed fire, or chemical).
Cultural Resources	Reduce imminent threats to significant cultural resources from natural and human-caused deterioration or potential conflicts with other resources.
	Allocate and manage cultural resource sites for scientific use, public use, conservation use, traditional use, and experimental use categories.
Paleontological Resources	Mitigate adverse impacts on vertebrate and significant non-vertebrate paleontological resources.
Visual Resources	Manage areas according to the following Visual Resource Management Classes: • Class I: 598,000 acres • Class II: 342,000 acres • Class III: 1,248,000 acres • Class IV: 291,000 acres
Special Status	Conserve and recover all special status species (SSS) and their habitats.

Table ES-1 Proposed RMP Summary

Resource/ Resource Use	Proposed RMP
Species	Employ strategies to avoid or reduce the fragmenting habitat. Manage oil and gas leasing as open subject to major constraints (NSO) within ½ mile of greater sage-grouse leks. Allow no surface disturbing or otherwise disruptive activities in greater sage-grouse crucial winter habitat from December 1 through March 14. Allow no surface disturbing or otherwise disruptive activities within 2 miles of a greater sage-grouse lek from March 15 to July 15 to protect sage-grouse breeding and brood-rearing habitat.
Fish and Wildlife	Maintain, restore, protect, and enhance habitats to support a diversity of fish and wildlife species.
Wild Horses and Burros	Manage wild horses and burros at appropriate management levels (AML) to ensure a natural ecological balance between horse and burro populations and wildlife, livestock, vegetation resources, and other resource values.
	Manage Range Creek Herd Management Area (HMA) with an AML of 75-125 horses; combine Sinbad and Muddy Creek HMA with an AML of 75-125 horse; manage the Sinbad burro HMA with an AML of 50-70 burros; and allocate 3,000 Animal Unit Months (AUM) for wild horses and 420 AUMs for wild burros.
Fire and Fuels Management	Manage fire and fuels to protect life, firefighter safety, property, and other critical resources and, where appropriate, to restore natural systems.
	Manage fire and fuels through treatments. Use the full range of treatment types, including prescribed fire; mechanical, chemical, biological, and cultural treatments; and wildland fire use.
Non-Wilderness Study Area Lands with Wilderness Characteristics	Manage the following 5 non-WSA areas with wilderness characteristic (97,100 acres) specifically to protect, preserve, and maintain their wilderness characteristics: (1) Hondu Country (20,000 acres) (2) Mexican Mountain (4,200 acres) (3) Muddy Creek/Crack Canyon (52,700 acres) (4) San Rafael Reef (3,300 acres) (5) Wild Horse Mesa (16,900 acres) With the following prescriptions: • Designate as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II • Limit motorized use to designated routes • Retain lands in public ownership • Designate as an avoidance area for rights-of-way (ROW) • Designate Hondu and Muddy Creek as open to leasing subject to major constraints (no surface occupancy [NSO]) all others as unavailable for leasing • Close to mineral material sales • Continue maintenance and use of existing facilities

Table ES-1 Proposed RMP Summary

Resource/ Resource Use	Proposed RMP
	• Prohibit private or commercial woodland harvest or seed collection • Healthy Lands Initiative projects could be considered if they improve the overall goals and objectives for managing the wilderness characteristics of these areas.
Forestry and Woodland Products	Provide forest and woodland products on a sustainable basis consistent with other land management objectives.
Livestock Grazing	Continue livestock forage allocations, with 99,520 active AUMs allocated for livestock grazing and 39,701 suspended AUMs. Authorize livestock grazing within the Range Creek allotment on a prescription basis. Set grazing season of use for Hondo, Red Canyon and McKay Flat allotments from October 16 to March 31. Upon voluntary relinquishment of the existing permit and preference for livestock allocations in the Green River and Rock Creek allotments, the BLM would stop authorizing livestock grazing.
Recreation	Four existing SRMAs would be maintained, with some boundary adjustments (1,116,240 acres). The Range Creek SRMA (40,700 acres) and the Nine Mile Canyon SRMA (24,300 acres) would be created. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) objectives would be used in these areas to manage the recreation setting and potential experiences. Three Recreational Management Zones (RMZ) would be designated in the San Rafael Swell SRMA and one in the Desolation Canyon SRMA. Large group camping sites would be designated as needed.
Travel Management	Manage areas according to the following travel management designations: • Open: 0 acres • Limited: 1,922,000 acres • Closed: 557,000 acres
	Designated routes: 1,276 miles
Lands and Realty	Retain public lands in federal ownership, unless disposing of a particular parcel would serve the national interest. Consider land tenure adjustments (e.g., exchanges and acquisitions) that meet identified criteria.
	Identify parcels for sale under Section 203 of the FLPMA.
	Review existing withdrawals to determine whether those lands are serving the purposes for which they were withdrawn.
	Continue existing withdrawals (328,600 acres) and recommend new withdrawals (92,700 acres).
Leasable Minerals	Identify lands available for oil and gas leasing and development subject to the following lease categories: • Open to leasing subject to the standard terms and conditions: 1,161,000 acres • Open to leasing subject to minor constraints (timing limitation, Controlled Surface Use [CSU]): 467,000 acres • Open to leasing subject to major constraints (NSO): 282,000 acres • Unavailable to leasing: 569,000 acres

Table ES-1 Proposed RMP Summary

Resource/ Resource Use	Proposed RMP
	Coal in the Emery, Wasatch, and Book Cliffs Known Recoverable Coal Resource Areas (KRCRA) would be available for further consideration for coal leasing and development, with the exception of a small portion of the Book Cliffs which underlies WSAs.
Locatable Minerals	Continue existing withdrawals (328,600 acres) and recommend new withdrawals (92,700 acres).
Mineral Materials (Salable)	Close areas to mineral materials disposal (820,000 Acres).
Wilderness Study Areas	Manage 11 existing WSAs (Map 3-28) in a manner that does not impair their suitability for designation as wilderness in accordance with BLM Handbook H-8550-1, *Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review* (IMP).
	Designate as VRM Class I.
	Designate closed to OHV use except for four routes in the Sids Mountain WSA.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Manage suitable river segments in a manner that would protect their outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classification, and free-flowing nature. River corridors of eligible rivers that are determined not suitable would be managed according to other resource decisions for the Proposed RMP. Suitable: Five segments of the Green River (62 miles as Wild, 60 miles as Scenic, and 8 miles as Recreational).
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Provide special management attention to relevant and important values, resources, natural systems, and hazards in designated ACECs. Potential ACECs that are not designated would have their relevant and important values protected by other resource decisions in the Proposed RMP.
	Designate 13 ACECs totaling 208,555 acres: • Big Flat Tops ACEC • Bowknot Bend ACEC • Dry Lake Archaeological District ACEC • Interstate 70 ACEC • Muddy Creek ACEC • San Rafael Canyon ACEC • San Rafael Reed ACEC • Segers Hole ACEC • Nine Mile Canyon • Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry • Heritage sites • Uranium Mining District • Rock Art ACEC.

Summary of Major Changes from the Preferred Alternative to the Proposed RMP

Internal review of and public comments on the Draft RMP/EIS, including the ACEC, and non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics Supplements have resulted in changes to the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Changes respond to a combination of public comments, meetings with cooperating agencies, internal review, and changes in BLM policy and management direction. A summary of major changes from the Preferred Alternative (Draft EIS) to the Proposed RMP (Final EIS) include the following:

- The Draft RMP/EIS Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) has been modified and renamed the Proposed RMP.
- Maps were updated to reflect changes in the Proposed RMP and to correct minor errors.
- Greater sage-grouse: More specific management prescriptions have been added.
- Fish and Wildlife: Big game map showing crucial habitat has been revised.
- Wild Horse and Burros: Appropriate management level (AML) for the Muddy Creek wild horse herd was increased, with a commensurate change in forage allocation.
- Livestock Grazing: The criteria-based voluntary relinquishment language has been revised.
- Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics: Five units (totaling 97,100 acres) would be managed to protect, preserve, and maintain their wilderness characteristics.
- Recreation: Create the Range Creek SRMA and decrease the size of the Desolation Canyon and Nine Mile Canyon SMRAs.
- Travel Management: Designated routes have been adjusted based on public input.
- Mineral and Energy Resources:
  - Locatable minerals map has been revised to show WSAs as not withdrawn, in accordance with the IMP.
  - For purposes of analysis in Chapter 4, the reasonably foreseeable development (RFD) assumption for oil/gas has changed and is now the same as Alternative A. The RFD definition has also changed from wells to well locations allowing for multiple wells per location.
- ACECs:
  - The Range Creek and Sids Mountain ACECs have not been carried forward.
  - The size of six potential ACECs has been reduced.
- Wild and Scenic Rivers: Two segments of the Green River through Desolation canyon would be suitable as “Wild” instead of “Scenic”, whereas the Green River segment near the town of Green River and the San Rafael River would be found not suitable for WSR designation.

A detailed list of all changes between the Draft RMP/EIS and the two Supplements and the Proposed RMP/Final EIS can be found in Appendix Q. The Proposed RMP was written using the Preferred Alternative from the Draft RMP/EIS as the starting point. Many of the changes made are within the range of alternatives considered in the Draft RMP/EIS; however, a few decisions are outside the range of alternatives considered in the Draft RMP/EIS. The following decisions in the Proposed RMP were not within the range of alternatives of the Draft RMP/EIS: increased restrictions to protect the greater sage-grouse, revised big game habitat map showing crucial habitat, and increased AML and forage allocation for the Muddy Creek wild horse herd. These are not considered significant enough to require the BLM to issue another supplemental draft for the following reasons: 1) additional restrictions on the greater sage-grouse habitat are minor because it would only apply to four leks, two of which are partially on private land, and a minimum amount of acreage would be affected; 2) the changes in crucial big game habitat acreage are small, so no adjustment to the impacts analysis is required and, waiver, modification, and exception criteria may be applied to applications for surface disturbing activities; and 3) the additional 300 AUMs allocated to the Muddy Creek HMA wild horse herd already existed and this action formally allocated them to wild horses.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Potential environmental consequences resulting from the Proposed RMP were analyzed relative to meaningful direct, indirect, short-term, and long-term impacts. The impacts of each alternative are summarized in Chapter 2 and described in Chapter 4. Also included in Chapter 4 is a discussion of cumulative impacts which could result from the Proposed RMP when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. The Proposed RMP would be considered by the BLM to be the environmentally preferable alternative when taking into consideration the human (social and economic) environment as well as the natural environment. The Proposed RMP is aimed at balancing protection and conservation of physical, biological, and cultural resources, while providing for commodity production and mineral extraction.

CONSULTATION

During the planning process, BLM coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), United States Fish Wildlife Service (USFWS), Native American tribes, cooperating agencies, and the public.

- **Consultation with State of Utah SHPO:** Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates a review process for all federally funded projects that will impact sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
- **Consultation with USFWS:** The Endangered Species Act (ESA) directs all federal agencies to work to conserve endangered and threatened species and to use their authorities to further the purposes of the ESA. Section 7 of the ESA, called "Interagency Cooperation," is the mechanism by which federal agencies ensure that the actions they take, including those they fund or authorize, do not jeopardize the existence of any listed species.
- **Coordination with Native American Tribes:** BLM is required by law to coordinate with Native American tribes in developing RMPs, to be consistent with tribal plans and protection of treaty rights, and to observe specific planning coordination authorities. In developing the Price RMP, BLM representatives met with representatives of the Hopi, Navajo, Paiute, and Ute Tribes.
- **Coordination with Cooperating Agencies:** In preparing the Price Draft RMP/EIS and Proposed RMP/Final EIS, BLM invited other federal agencies and state and local governments to participate as cooperating agencies. The State of Utah and Carbon and Emery counties each signed cooperating agency agreements and participated as members of the interdisciplinary team. Other federal agencies, including the United States Forest Service (USFS) and USFWS, also participated in the interdisciplinary team meetings.
- **Other Consultation:** The field manager, land use planner, and other staff communicated regularly with a variety of groups and individuals who were interested in the RMP. Such communication will continue through the Record of Decision (ROD) and plan implementation.

FUTURE ACTIONS, PROTEST PERIOD, RECORD OF DECISION, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The BLM Planning Regulations set forth the provisions applicable to protests (43 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 1610.5-2). A person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations cited above and who wishes to file a protest must file said protest within 30 days of the date that the NOA is published in the *Federal Register*. Additional information on protests is set forth in the “Dear Reader” letter of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The ROD will be the decision document for the approved

plan. The ROD will state the decision on the RMP, the reasons for the decision, identify all alternatives, and state compliance with applicable laws. The Approved RMP will provide guidance for all subsequent site-specific decisions and implementation and activity plans within the PFO. Many land use planning decisions are implemented or become effective upon publication of the ROD for the Approved RMP and may include desired conditions, land use allocations (allowable uses), or designations and special designations. These designations include the following:

- VRM class designations
- OHV area designations
- Areas closed and open to oil and gas leasing and the stipulations applied
- WSR suitability recommendations
- ACEC designations
- ROW avoidance/exclusion

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