

## APPENDIX 1—SUMMARY OF THE AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN REPORT

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Appendix 1 summarizes the process used for evaluating nominations for areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) considered in developing the Richfield Resource Management Plan (RMP). The ACEC Evaluation Report, Richfield Resource Management Plan, January 2005, includes full documentation of the process. This report can be viewed at the Richfield Field Office.

In brief, BLM staff and cooperators evaluated 26 nominations for ACECs, totaling 1.6 million acres within the Richfield Field Office (RFO) and portions of the Price Field Office. Of these, 16 areas totaling 886,810 acres within the RFO, plus additional acreage within the Price Field Office, met the criteria for relevant and important values and were identified as potential ACECs.

Management actions under the Proposed RMP include designating and managing the North Caineville Mesa ACEC and the Old Woman Front ACEC. Three of the four existing ACECs (South Caineville Mesa ACEC, Gilbert Badlands ACEC, and Beaver Wash ACEC) would not be designated. These three existing ACECs are mostly within Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), and the relevant and important values would be protected under the provisions of the Interim Management Policy (IMP). Resource decisions under the Proposed RMP and existing laws, rules, and regulations would protect the relevant and important values of the other potential ACECs.

### BACKGROUND

BLM is directed by law, regulation, and policy to consider designating and protecting ACECs when developing land use plans (LUP).

#### The Law: Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976

*In the development and revision of land use plans, the Secretary shall...give priority to the designation and protection of areas of critical environmental concern.*

—Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), Title II, Sec 202(c) 3

*The term “areas of critical environmental concern” (often referred to as “ACECs”) means areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.”*

—FLPMA, Title I, Sec 103(a)

#### The Regulation: 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1610.7-2

To be a potential ACEC, both of the following criteria shall be met:

*Relevance:* There shall be present a significant historic, cultural, or scenic value; a fish or wildlife resource or other natural system or process; or a natural hazard.

*Importance:* The above described value, resource, system, process, or hazard shall have substantial significance and values. This generally requires qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern.

## The Policy: BLM Manual 1613

BLM Manual 1613 provides direction for identifying, analyzing, designating, monitoring, and managing ACECs. Key points are as follows:

- The ACEC designation indicates to the public that the BLM recognizes that an area has significant values and has established special management measures to protect those values.
- Designation of ACECs is made only through the resource management planning process, either in an RMP itself or in a plan amendment.
- To be designated as an ACEC, an area must require special management attention to protect the important and relevant values.
- Potential ACECs are identified as early as possible in the planning process.
- Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when plans are revised.
- Members of the public or other agencies may nominate an area for consideration as a potential ACEC. BLM personnel are encouraged to recommend areas for consideration as ACECs.
- No formal or special procedures are associated with nomination.
- An interdisciplinary team evaluates each resource or hazard to determine if it meets the relevance and importance criteria. The field manager approves the relevance and importance criteria.
- If an area is found not to meet the relevance and importance criteria, the analysis supporting that conclusion must be included in the RMP and associated environmental impact statement (EIS).

## EVALUATION PROCESS

### Existing ACECs

Four ACECs total 14,780 acres within the RFO: Beaver Wash, North Caineville Mesa, and South Caineville Mesa ACECs, which were established in 1982, and the Gilbert Badlands ACEC, which was established in 1986 (see Table A1-1 below). As required by BLM policy, evaluations for the existing ACECs were reviewed in developing the new RMP. All were found to meet the criteria for relevance and importance.

**Table A1-1. Existing ACECs Within the Richfield Field Office**

	ACEC Name	Public Land Acres	County
1	Beaver Wash	4,800	Wayne
2	Gilbert Badlands	3,680	Wayne
3	North Caineville Mesa	2,200	Wayne
4	South Caineville Mesa	4,100	Wayne
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,780</b>	

## ACEC Nominations

Thirty ACECs were nominated during scoping for the Richfield RMP. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), the Nature Conservancy (TNC), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), three Utah residents, and a BLM employee submitted nominations. Of these, RFO staff evaluated 26 areas totaling 1.6 million acres (shown below in Table A1-2 and the Nominated ACEC Map). The remaining four—Antelope Valley/Sweetwater Reef, Cedar Mountain, Molen Reef, and Mussentuchit Badlands—are primarily within the Price Field Office, with small acreages within the RFO. Price BLM staff evaluated them during development of the Price RMP. Some nominations overlap other nominations, and some nominations overlap the existing ACECs. Nominations were evaluated in accordance with BLM Manual 1613, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. Values meeting the relevance and importance criteria were carried forward into the potential ACECs. See Nominated ACEC Map below.

During the public comment period on the Draft Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/DEIS), the RFO received suggestions for additional ACECs. The nominated Wild Horse and Burro ACEC was considered but not found to possess relevance and importance values. In addition, other ACECs were suggested, but not enough information was supplied to assess the proposals for their relevant and important values.

**Table A1-2. Nominated ACECs**

	Nominated Area	Public Land Acres	County(ies)
1	Bull Creek Archaeological ACEC	67,809	Wayne and Garfield
2	Bullfrog Creek Drainage	149,370	Garfield
3	Caineville Wash	55,552	Wayne
4	Dirty Devil Drainage	371,257	Emery, Wayne, Garfield
5	Factory Butte	39,130	Wayne
6	Fish Creek Cove/Cockscomb	1,752	Wayne
7	Fremont Gorge/Miners Mountain	27,145	Wayne
8	Fremont Valley Gateway	34,314	Wayne
9	Gilbert Badlands	105,588	Garfield and Wayne
10	Granite Creek Drainage	29,639	Garfield and Wayne
11	Horseshoe Canyon Drainage	72,281	Emery and Wayne
12	Kingston Canyon	22,324	Piute
13	Little Rockies	60,515	Garfield
14	Lower Muddy Creek Drainage	82,703	Emery and Wayne
15	Mount Hillers	38,527	Garfield
16	No Man Mesa	315	Garfield
17	North Wash Drainage	50,865	Garfield
18	Notom-Bullfrog Scenic	53,783	Wayne and Garfield
19	Old Woman Front	326	Sevier
20	Parker Mountain	107,809	Wayne, Piute, and Garfield

21	Quitcupah Creek/Trough Hollow	26,888	Sevier and Emery
22	Ragged Mountain/Slate Creek Drainage	49,695	Garfield
23	Rainbow Hills	3,995	Sevier
24	Sevier Canyon	8,889	Piute and Sevier
25	Thousand Lake Bench	38,467	Sevier and Emery
26	Upper Sweetwater Drainage—Tarantula Mesa	63,162	Garfield and Wayne
27	Wild Horse and Burro	77,255	Wayne
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,639,355</b>	



## Potential ACECs

Following the evaluation of relevant and important values, 16 areas totaling 886,810 acres were identified as potential ACECs. (See Table A1-3 and Potential ACEC map below.) Potential ACECs were determined in three ways:

- The potential ACEC is the same as the nominated ACEC because some or all of the values determined relevant and important are found throughout the nominated area.
- The potential ACEC is smaller than the nominated ACEC because the values determined relevant and important are found in only parts of the nominated area.
- The potential ACEC is composed of all or parts of several nominated ACECs because values determined relevant and important were found in adjoining nominated areas.

**Table A1-3. Potential ACECs**

	Area Name	Acreage	County(ies)
1	Badlands Scenic and Natural Processes ACEC. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gilbert Badlands ACEC, 3,680 acres</li> <li>• North Caineville Mesa ACEC, 2,200 acres</li> <li>• South Caineville Mesa ACEC, 4,100 acres</li> </ul>	88,900	Wayne
2	Bull Creek Archaeological ACEC	4,800	Wayne
3	Dirty Devil Scenic Cultural and Wildlife ACEC. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaver Wash ACEC, 4,800 acres</li> </ul>	205,300	Wayne and Garfield
4	Fremont Gorge/Cockscomb Cultural and Scenic ACEC	34,300	Wayne
5	Henry Mountains Scenic and Wildlife ACEC. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Man Mesa Potential ACEC, 315 acres</li> </ul>	288,200	Wayne and Garfield
6	Horseshoe Canyon Scenic and Cultural ACEC	40,900	Wayne
7	Kingston Canyon Riparian and Mule Deer ACEC	22,100	Piute
8	Little Rockies Scenic and Wildlife ACEC	49,200	Garfield
9	Lower Muddy Creek Scenic and Plant ACEC	16,200	Wayne
10	Old Woman Front Relict Vegetation ACEC	330	Sevier
11	Parker Mountain Sagebrush-Steppe ACEC	107,900	Wayne
12	Quitcupah Archaeological ACEC	180	Sevier
13	Rainbow Hills Natural System ACEC	4,000	Sevier
14	Sevier Canyon Riparian and Mule Deer ACEC	8,900	Piute and Sevier
15	Thousand Lake Bench Vegetation ACEC	500	Wayne
16	Special Status Species ACEC	15,100	Wayne
	<b>Total</b>	<b>886,810</b>	



## EXISTING AND POTENTIAL ACECs SUMMARY STATEMENTS

The following is a summary of the existing and potential ACECs in the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP)/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

### North Caineville Mesa ACEC

The North Caineville Mesa ACEC encompassing 2,200 acres would continue to be managed as an ACEC for the relevant and important value of relict vegetation.

### South Caineville Mesa ACEC

The South Caineville Mesa ACEC encompasses 4,100 acres, located entirely within the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA. The relevant and important value is the relict vegetation found on top of the mesa. The South Caineville Mesa ACEC would not be designated. The management of the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA pursuant to the IMP would provide adequate protection for the relevant and important value of relict vegetation.

### Beaver Wash Canyon ACEC

The Beaver Wash Canyon ACEC encompasses 4,800 acres, 99 percent of which is located within the Dirty Devil WSA. The relevant and important value is its desert riparian ecosystem. The Beaver Wash Canyon ACEC would not be designated. The management of the Dirty Devil WSA pursuant to the IMP, along with other decisions for the protection of riparian values and travel management, would provide adequate protection for the relevant and important value of its desert riparian ecosystem.

### Gilbert Badlands Research Natural Area ACEC

The Gilbert Badlands Research Natural Area (RNA) ACEC encompasses 3,680 acres located entirely within the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA. The relevant and important value is the badlands geology. The Gilbert Badlands RNA ACEC would not be designated. The management of the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA pursuant to the IMP would provide adequate protection for the relevant and important value of badlands geology.

### Badlands Potential RNA ACEC

The Badlands Potential RNA ACEC, which encompasses 88,900 acres of public lands in the Caineville area of eastern Wayne County, includes the existing North and South Caineville Mesa ACECs and Factory Butte. The relevant and important values of the area are scenic, special status plant species, natural processes (wind erosion), riparian, and relict vegetation values. The Badlands Potential RNA ACEC would not be designated. The existing North Caineville Mesa ACEC (2,200 acres) would continue to be designated to protect the relict vegetation relevant and important value. The management of the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA (46 percent of the ACEC) pursuant to the IMP would provide adequate protection for the relevant and important values within that area. Resource decisions related to riparian protection zones, special status species (SSS), and restricting off-highway vehicle (OHV) use to designated routes and a small managed open area would also provide protection to relevant and important values. Cross-country OHV use would continue to be allowed within a portion of the potential ACEC. Although some impact may occur on the relevant and important values of scenery and natural processes (wind erosion) within the OHV open area, the potential for impacts is within a very small portion of the

total ACEC acreage. The demand for the specialized OHV recreation opportunities available at this site and the historic use were considered when making this decision.

### **Bull Creek Potential ACEC**

The Bull Creek Potential ACEC encompasses 4,800 acres of public lands located in Wayne County several miles south of Hanksville. The relevant and important value is cultural resources (archaeological). The Bull Creek Potential ACEC would not be designated. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for cultural and travel management, would adequately protect the relevant and important cultural values without designating the area as an ACEC.

### **Dirty Devil/North Wash Potential ACEC**

The Dirty Devil/North Wash Potential ACEC includes the Dirty Devil River and side canyons and totals 205,300 acres. It is located southeast of Hanksville in Wayne and Garfield counties. Relevant and important values are scenic, cultural, paleontological, wildlife (bighorn sheep), and SSS (plant species and the Mexican spotted owl). The Dirty Devil/North Wash Potential ACEC would not be designated. Sixty-four percent of the potential ACEC is within WSAs where management under the IMP would protect all relevant and important values from surface disturbing activities. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as other resource decisions within the Proposed RMP for Visual Resource Management (VRM), fish and wildlife, and travel and minerals management would adequately protect and/or mitigate potential impacts to relevant and important values. The proposed RMP decisions would provide adequate protection to the relevant and important values without designating the area as an ACEC.

### **Fremont Gorge/Cockscomb Potential ACEC**

The Fremont Gorge/Cockscomb Potential ACEC is located on public lands west of Capitol Reef National Park in the Torrey-Teasdale-Grover area of central Wayne County. The potential ACEC totals 34,300 acres. Relevant and important values are cultural, scenic, riparian, plant, and wildlife (mule deer). The Fremont Gorge/Cockscomb Potential ACEC would not be designated. The Fremont Gorge WSA and Fremont Gorge suitable wild and scenic rivers would provide protection within 13 percent of the area. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, and other resource decisions within the Proposed RMP, such as VRM designations, protection of crucial deer habitat from cross-country OHV use and surface disturbance, would provide protection for relevant and important values, reducing or eliminating potential impacts to the potential ACEC. Resource decision included in the proposed RMP would provide adequate protection to the relevant and important values without designation of the area as an ACEC.

### **Henry Mountains Potential ACEC**

The Henry Mountains Potential ACEC is located in the Henry Mountains south of Hanksville and totals 288,200 acres. Relevant and important values are scenic, wildlife (bison and mule deer), SSS (Townsend's big-eared bat, ferruginous hawk, burrowing owl, hole-in-the-rock prairie clover, Dana's milkvetch, Barneby milkvetch), and ecological values (riparian areas and relict vegetation). Forty-five percent of the potential ACEC is within the Mount Hillers, Mount Pennell, and Bull Mountain WSAs, as well as the southern portion of the Mount Ellen/Blue Hills WSA where management under the IMP would protect all relevant and important values from surface disturbing activities. Other resource decisions under the Proposed RMP such as VRM Class I and II, limiting OHV use to designated routes and seasonal/spatial restrictions, would provide adequate protection the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Horseshoe Canyon Potential ACEC**

The Horseshoe Canyon Potential ACEC includes Horseshoe Canyon, a tributary to the Green River, and totals 40,900 acres. It is located in northeastern Wayne County. Relevant and important values are scenic, cultural (Cowboy Cave), SSS (Townsend's big-eared bat), and riparian. Ninety-two percent of the potential ACEC is within the Horseshoe Canyon North and Horseshoe Canyon South WSAs where management under the IMP would protect all relevant and important values. Other resource decisions under the Proposed RMP such as VRM Class I and II, travel, and minerals management would provide adequate protection for the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Kingston Canyon Potential ACEC**

The Kingston Canyon Potential ACEC encompasses 22,100 total acres of public lands located in the side canyons north and south of the Sevier River between the towns of Kingston and Antimony in Sevier County. Relevant and important values are mule deer, mule deer habitat, and riparian areas. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for riparian protection zones, seasonal/spatial restrictions on surface disturbances, and travel management would adequately protect the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Little Rockies Potential ACEC**

The Little Rockies Potential ACEC totals 49,200 acres located in the southeast corner of Garfield County. It includes the entire Little Rockies National Natural Landmark—a National Park Service designation. Relevant and important values are scenic, wildlife (bighorn sheep), SSS (Townsend's big-eared bat and hole-in-the-rock prairie clover), and ecological (riparian) values. Seventy-six percent of the potential ACEC is within the Little Rockies WSA. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for riparian protection zones, seasonal and spatial restrictions on surface disturbances, non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, and travel management, would protect adequately the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Lower Muddy Creek Potential ACEC**

The Lower Muddy Creek Potential ACEC, located along Muddy Creek north of Hanksville, totals 16,200 acres of the RFO, with additional acreage to the north in the lands that the Price Field Office manages. The discussion here is limited to the RFO portion. Relevant and important values of this potential ACEC are scenic, SSS (Wright fishhook cactus and Heil's beavertail cactus), and riparian. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as resource decisions within the Proposed RMP for travel and minerals management that limit surface disturbance, would provide adequate protection to the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Old Woman Front Research Natural Area Potential ACEC**

The Old Woman Front Research Natural Area Potential ACEC is located in eastern Sevier County, adjacent to the Old Woman Plateau Research Natural Area on the Fishlake National Forest. It encompasses 330 acres. Designating this area as an ACEC would complement the adjacent Forest Service RNA and provide a logical topographical boundary for the area. The relevant and important value of the area is its relict vegetation.

## **Parker Mountain Potential ACEC**

The Parker Mountain Potential ACEC, which totals 107,900 acres, is located in western Wayne County on the Awapa Plateau. Relevant and important values are sagebrush-steppe habitat and SSS (greater sage grouse, Utah prairie dog, and pygmy rabbit). Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for fish and wildlife, travel, and leasable minerals management, would adequately protect the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Quitcupah Potential ACEC**

The Quitcupah Potential ACEC is located in eastern Sevier County along Quitcupah Creek and totals 180 acres. Relevant and important values are cultural resources and riparian values. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for riparian protection zones and travel management under the Proposed RMP, would adequately protect the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Rainbow Hills Potential ACEC**

The Rainbow Hills Potential ACEC, located just east of Richfield, encompasses the colorful Arapien Shale outcropping. It totals 4,000 acres of public lands. Relevant and important values are mule deer, mule deer habitat, special status plants (Utah phacelia, Arapien stickleaf, Wards penstemon, rainbow rabbitbrush, Sigurd townsendia, and Glenwood milkvetch), and the naturally functioning ecosystem. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for fish and wildlife, fire and fuels, and travel management under the Proposed RMP, would provide protection for the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Sevier Canyon Potential ACEC**

The Sevier Canyon Potential ACEC, totaling 8,900 acres of public land, encompasses the gorge bordering the Sevier River located between the towns of Marysvale and Sevier. Relevant and important values are mule deer, mule deer habitat, SSS, and riparian areas. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for riparian protection zones, fish and wildlife, fire and fuels, and travel management under the Proposed RMP, would provide protection for the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## **Special Status Species Potential ACEC**

The SSS Potential ACEC encompasses documented locations of SSS identified in the evaluations of the various ACEC proposals. In total, this represents 15,100 acres of public lands. Relevant and important values are the following SSS: Winkler pincushion cactus, Wright fishhook cactus, last chance townsendia, Rabbit Valley gilia, Cronquist wild buckwheat, Creutzfeldt flower, Wards penstemon, Basalt milkvetch, Bicknell milkvetch, hole-in-the rock prairie clover, Dana's milkvetch, Barneby milkvetch, Psoralea globemallow, Heil's beavertail, Jane's globemallow, flat-top wild buckwheat, Townsend's big eared bat, Allen's big eared bat, big free-tailed bat, fringed miotis, ferruginous hawk, bald eagle, burrowing owl, long-billed curlew, southwestern willow flycatcher, Williamsons sapsucker, northern goshawk, greater sage grouse, bluehead sucker, flannelmouth sucker, round-tail sucker, leatherside chub, and desert night lizard. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for SSS, travel, and minerals management under the Proposed RMP, would provide protection for the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## Thousand Lake Bench Potential ACEC

The Thousand Lake Bench ACEC is located in southeastern Sevier County, south of Interstate 70 and east of Thousand Lake Mountain. It is 500 acres, located in several small areas. Relevant and important values are cultural resources, SSS (bald eagle, last chance townsendia, and Wright fishhook cactus), and riparian areas. Existing laws, rules, and regulations, as well as management decisions for riparian protection zones and travel management under the Proposed RMP, would provide protection for the relevant and important values of the potential ACEC without designation of the area as an ACEC.

## RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE CRITERIA—AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN NOMINATIONS

### The Task

The task of evaluating the ACEC nominations was assigned to a subteam of the land use planning interdisciplinary team. The subteam's job was as follows:

1. Identify the potentially relevant values in the nominations.
2. Evaluate the potentially relevant values to determine which, if any, are truly relevant, based on criteria.
3. Evaluate the relevant values to determine if they are important, based on criteria.
4. Identify suggested special management needed to protect relevant and important values.
5. Map the area(s) of relevance and importance. These maps define the potential ACECs that will be considered in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).
6. Evaluate existing ACECs to determine if they should be retained, dropped, or modified in the new RMP.

The evaluation was conducted based on guidance in BLM Manual 1613, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

### 1) Identifying Potentially-Relevant Values

The subteam reviewed each of the 26 ACEC nominations to identify potentially relevant values. Only the values identified in the nominations were evaluated for relevance.

### 2) Determining Relevance

Potentially relevant values were evaluated based on guidance in 43 CFR 1610.7-2, "Designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern," and BLM Manual 1613, "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern."

#### Historical, Cultural, and Scenic Values

A historic or cultural value was determined relevant if the staff archaeologist determined it to be significant.

A scenic value was determined relevant if it was:

- Inventoried as Class A Scenery by the BLM.
- Otherwise judged relevant by the staff visual resource specialist (rationale provided).

## **Fish and Wildlife Values**

The nominated fish and wildlife resource was judged relevant if it or its habitat was documented as present within the nominated area.

Sources of information:

- Utah Natural Heritage Program Database, operated and maintained by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
- UDWR habitat maps for game species
- USFWS habitat data maps, recovery plans, and other information
- Staff specialist knowledge (rationale provided).

## **Natural Processes or Systems**

Nominated natural processes or systems (e.g., plants, riparian areas, geologic processes) were considered relevant if they were present within the nominated area and included the following:

- Endangered, sensitive, or threatened plant species (documented occurrences within nominated area)
- Rare, endemic, or relict terrestrial, aquatic or riparian plants, or plants communities (documented occurrences within nominated area)
- Rare geological features.

Sources of information included the following:

- Utah Natural Heritage Program Database, operated and maintained by the UDWR.
- UDWR habitat maps for game species
- USFWS habitat data maps
- Riparian area inventory
- Existing management plans
- Wilderness inventory information
- National Natural Landmark Areas Survey (1980)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) data
- Staff specialist knowledge (rationale provided).

## **Natural Hazards**

Nominations were considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **3) Determining Importance**

Only values determined relevant were evaluated for importance. The value, resource, system, process, or hazard described as relevant usually had to have substantial significance and values to meet the importance criteria.

## **Significant Qualities**

For a relevant resource (or value, system, process, or hazard) to be judged important, it had to have more than locally significant qualities, which gave it special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern, especially compared with any similar resource.

Historic and cultural—A relevant historic or cultural resource was determined more than locally significant if it was:

- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places
- Otherwise judged more locally significant as a result of federal laws, regulations, and national BLM policies that mandate consideration and protection of cultural resources.

Scenic—A relevant scenic resource was determined more than locally significant if it was:

- A national, state, or local scenic designation such as state scenic highways, federal scenic highways, and All-American Roads and BLM backcountry byways
- Otherwise judged more locally significant by the staff recreation specialist (rationale provided).

Fish, wildlife, and plant resources—A relevant fish, wildlife, or plant resource was determined more than locally significant if it was a species that was protected under federal law, regulation, and BLM national policy that mandates the consideration and protection of species:

- Special status species, including:
  - Federally listed threatened or endangered species
  - BLM sensitive species
  - State of Utah species of concern
- Endemic to nominated area
- Otherwise judged more than locally significant by staff wildlife biologist (rationale provided).

Riparian resources—All riparian areas were judged more than locally significant by National BLM policy.

Natural hazard—A relevant natural hazard was more than locally significant if staff specialists so determined (rationale provided).

### **Special Values and Threats**

The relevant resource (value, system, process or hazard) was important if it had qualities or circumstances in the nominated area that made it:

- Fragile
- Sensitive
- Rare
- Irreplaceable
- Exemplary
- Unique
- Endangered
- Threatened, or
- Vulnerable to adverse change.

Determinations of special values, threats, and vulnerability to adverse change were made by staff specialists, case-by-case, based on professional knowledge and supporting documentation.

## National Priority

The relevant resource (or value, system, process, or hazard) was determined important if it warranted special protection to:

- Satisfy national priority concerns
- Carry out the mandates of FLMPA.

Historic and cultural—Protection of cultural resources is a national priority; therefore, any cultural resource identified as relevant was also determined to be important.

Scenic—A relevant scenic resource that also carried national designations such as federal scenic highways and All-American Roads and BLM backcountry byways was determined important.

Fish, wildlife, and plants—A relevant federally listed threatened or endangered species was also determined important (because of the Endangered Species Act).

Riparian resources—All riparian areas are considered more than locally significant by BLM policy; hence, they meet the importance criteria.

## Safety and Public Welfare

A relevant resource (or value, system, process, or hazard) was considered important if it had qualities that warranted highlighting it to satisfy public or management concerns about safety and public welfare.

## Threat to Life and Property

The resource (or value, system, process, or hazard) poses a significant threat to human life and safety or property.

## 4) Special Management

Suggested special management was developed to address, mitigate, or prevent identified threats.

## 5) Mapping Potential ACECs

Values identified as relevant and important provided a basis for the potential ACECs. Occasionally, the potential ACEC's boundary was the same as the nominated area. In other cases, the boundary of the potential area was somewhat smaller than the nominated area. Yet, in other cases, an identified relevant and important value (e.g., Class A Scenery or crucial bison or mule deer habitat) crossed the boundaries of several nominated ACECs and the potential ACEC then took a new shape and a new name. The potential ACECs will be carried into Alternative C in the DEIS of the RMP. Other alternatives will consider lesser or no acreages for ACEC protection. All will be evaluated in the DEIS.

## 6) Evaluation of Existing ACECS

Evaluations of the four existing ACECs—Beaver Wash Canyon, Gilbert Badlands, North Caineville Mesa, and South Caineville Mesa—were reconsidered. The relevance and importance values of all were determined to still be valid.

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