

PURPOSE AND NEED 1

The decisions included in this resource management plan are taken from the proposed plan analyzed in the Proposed Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement, signed by the BLM Utah State Director on June 17, 1993. The resource management plan contains the land use decisions, terms, and conditions for guiding and controlling future management actions in the Diamond Mountain Resource Area (DMRA). All uses and activities in the resource area must conform with the decisions, terms, and conditions as described in this plan, or as amended.

This plan also describes the implementation, monitoring, and modification strategies needed to realize and evaluate the plan's decisions. It does not present information on environmental consequences, consistency reviews, or effects of the management. This information was previously covered in the draft and final environmental impact statements.

The RMP does not address the following proposals:

- Wilderness designations already analyzed in the existing Colorado and Utah Wilderness Environmental Impact Statements
- Uintah and Ouray and Uncompahgre Indian Reservation Boundary issues. (The Tenth Circuit Court ruling dated September 17, 1985, regarding the Indian Reservation boundary did not impose land ownership changes. Therefore, BLM's administration of the public lands has not been changed by the ruling. Future land use planning decisions on these public lands within the Uintah and Ouray and Uncompahgre Reservations will be made through the land use planning process in consultation and coordination with Ute Tribal government and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in

accordance with current laws, regulations, and policies.)

- Livestock grazing fees
- Mineral estate within National Forest System lands (BLM will issue mineral leases within NFS lands pursuant to the planning guidance contained in the 1986 Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended.)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

The Diamond Mountain Resource Area in the Vernal District of northeastern Utah, is responsible for management of BLM-administered lands and minerals in all of Daggett and Duchesne Counties, and that portion of Uintah County northwest of the Green River (see Map 1-1). Portions of the Ashley National Forest, the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, the Dinosaur National Monument, and the Ouray National Wildlife Refuge fall within the borders of the DMRA. However, lands and minerals within those entities are excluded from BLM planning authority. Also excluded from the plan are those lands and minerals of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation within DMRA borders held in trust for the Ute Tribe. There are, however, a few isolated tracts where BLM has acquired administrative responsibility for minerals (or portions of the minerals) subsequent to the formation of the reservation. In total, DMRA is administratively responsible for 854,000 acres of surface and subsurface lands.

Land ownership patterns within the resource area range from large blocks of BLM-administered public land to small, detached blocks with several owners. Ownership is further complicated by split-estate lands which cover

145,000 acres, or 17 percent, of the total BLM-administered lands within DMRA. Land ownership and surface administration responsibilities are displayed on Figure 1-1 and Map Packet #1.

BLM and the State of Utah share general responsibility for managing recreation use on those parts of the Green River crossing public lands. Current management of the upper Green River in Browns Park is guided by a 1985 management plan signed by the State of Utah, BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Reclamation.

GENERAL PLANNING CRITERIA

This RMP supersedes the following documents:

- Oil and Gas Developments, Myton Bench Environmental Assessment, 1976, as amended
- Land Exchange Amendment to Diamond Mountain Resource Area Management Framework Plans, 1986
- Off-Road Vehicle Designations, Vernal District, 1986 (DMRA Portion Only)
- Vernal District Oil and Gas Environmental Assessment, 1981 (DMRA Portion Only)
- Diamond Mountain Management Framework Plan, 1981
- Browns Park Management Framework Plan, 1981
- Ashley-Duchesne Management Framework Plan, 1984

The RMP supersedes the following documents for forage allocations:

- Three Corners Grazing Impact Statement, 1979 (Updated by Rangeland Program Summary, 1987)
- Ashley Creek Grazing Impact Statement, 1982 (Updated by Rangeland Program Summary, 1989)

The RMP supersedes the following documents for assignment of mineral leasing categories:

- Uintah Basin Synfuels Development EIS, 1983

- Utah Combined Hydrocarbon Leasing EIS, 1984

This RMP is for public lands and minerals management within the Diamond Mountain Resource Area as a whole. The RMP will be used as the basic planning document to guide management of and budget requests for the resource area until it is revised or rewritten.

This plan recognizes the existence of valid existing rights. Nothing in the management decisions would preclude those rights.

The RMP includes criteria by which future lands placed under BLM management, either through withdrawal revocation, exchange, or purchase, will be evaluated and brought under multiple use management.

Restrictions on use of resources or limitations on use of federal lands administered by BLM are considered only where an analysis shows a clear need and there is no practical way to avoid adverse impacts without them. Implementation of BLM activities and BLM permitted activities will be controlled through stipulations and monitoring for compliance with applicable Federal and state standards.

The RMP provides reasonable, feasible, and practical guidance for management of the public lands and resources within the entire resource area, assuming no unusual changes in personnel, budget, facilities, services, or scope of management.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Consultation, coordination, and public involvement have occurred throughout the process through public meetings, informal meetings, individual contacts, news releases, and *Federal Register* notices.

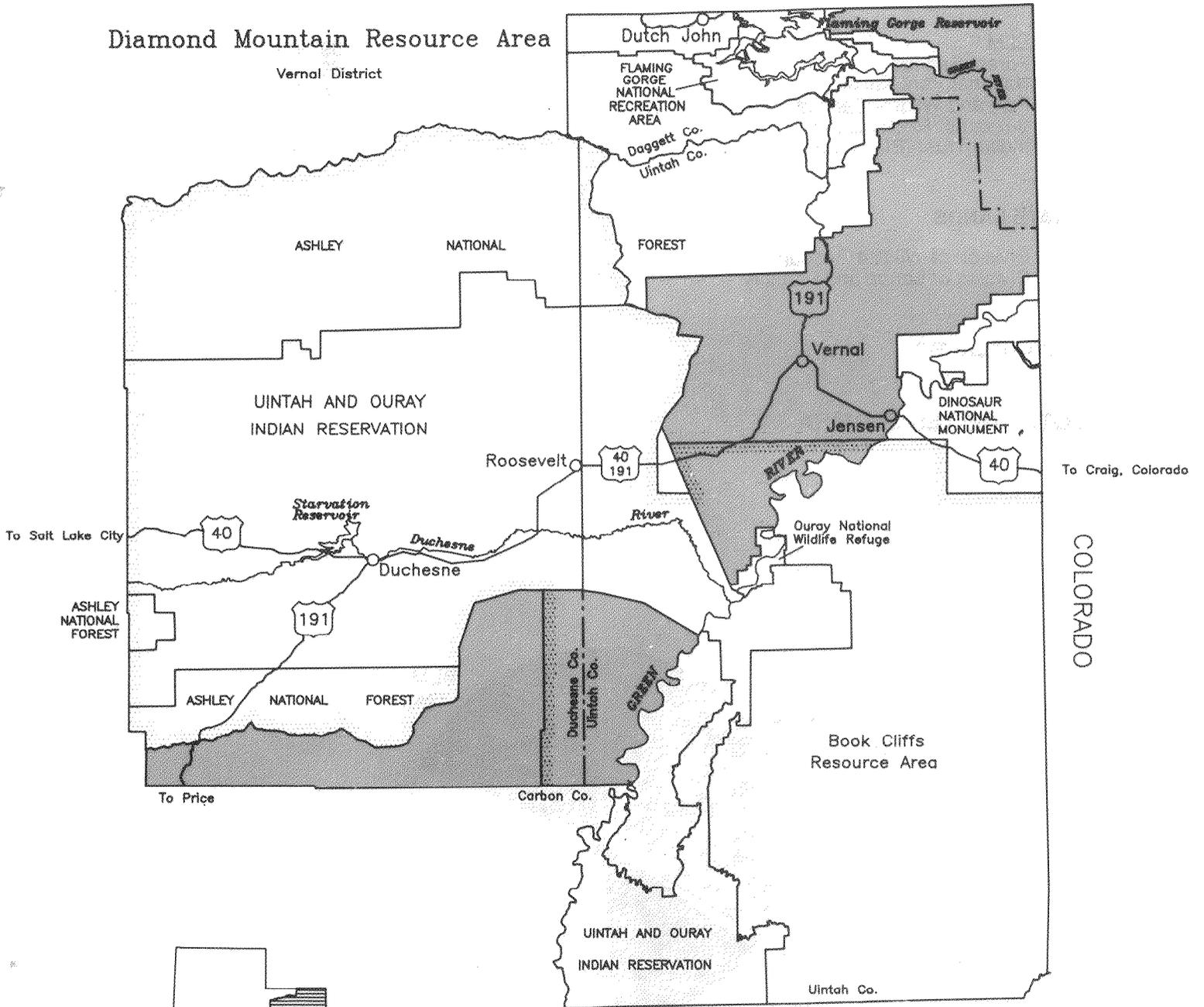
A notice published in the *Federal Register* in January 1989, indicated BLM's intention to prepare an RMP and requested information on resources and proposed future uses within the resource area. Public meetings were held during this time to inform the public of the planning project and solicit their questions and concerns. The draft RMP/EIS was filed with the EPA in December 1991. The EPA's notice of availability, published in the *Federal Register* of January 3, 1992, established the 90-day public comment period which expired on April 1, 1992. To facilitate review of the draft RMP/EIS, public meetings were held in Vernal, Salt Lake City, Duchesne and Manila, Utah, during this period. The proposed RMP/final EIS was filed with the EPA in August 1993.

Diamond Mountain Resource Area

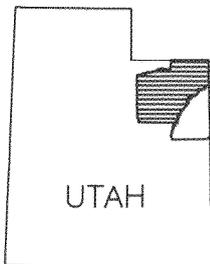
Vernal District

WYOMING

To Rock Springs, Wyoming



COLORADO



North



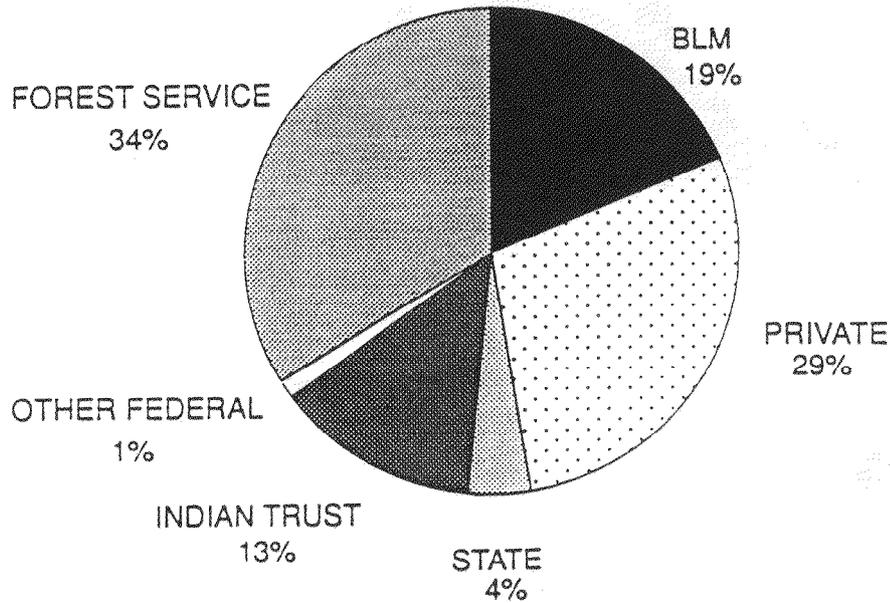
Core Area (Area of BLM Management Responsibility)



Indian Reservation Boundary - 10th Circuit Court Ruling

FIGURE 1-1
DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RESOURCE AREA
SURFACE LAND STATUS
 (rounded acreage)

FEDERAL LANDS		2,505,000
BLM	709,000	
Forest Service	1,266,000	
National Park Service	28,700	
Fish and Wildlife Service	8,300	
Bureau of Reclamation	4,000	
Indian Trust (BIA Oversight)	489,000	
STATE LANDS		160,000
Division of Wildlife Resources	17,000	
Division of Lands and Forestry	143,000	
PRIVATE LANDS		1,112,000
TOTAL ACRES IN DMRA		<u>3,777,000</u>



The EPA's notice of availability, published in the *Federal Register* of August 13, 1993, established the 30-day protest period which expired on September 13, 1993.

CONSISTENCY

This plan is consistent with plans and policies of State and local governments, of other Federal agencies, and of the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Land Management. The Governor expressed the support of the State of Utah in his letter dated January 26, 1994.

MANAGEMENT PRIORITY AREA CONCEPT

The Diamond Mountain RMP was developed using a concept of management priority areas or levels. These management priority areas were developed by grouping resource values into one of four management priority levels, identified in this document as levels 1 through 4, according to their sensitivity to disturbance or change. Those grouped into level 1 are those which are most sensitive to disturbance or change, while those grouped into the other levels are progressively less sensitive to disturbance or change.

After resource values were assigned to a specific level of management, all those that were assigned to each level were mapped to display their spatial distribution for analysis purposes. That is, all those resource values assigned to a given level were mapped and boundaries were drawn around each grouping of like values. In some cases, there was not a perfect fit so boundaries had to be adjusted to make the best overall fit possible. Because of the scale of mapping, it was not possible to precisely define boundaries on the ground or to map small inclusions or exclusions. Therefore, the mapped levels must be viewed as generic expressions of management intent, but in many cases will have to be

adjusted to fit the on-the-ground situation as site-specific implementation decisions are made (refer to Map Packet #2).

The style of management and the specific decisions on either use or protection have been tailored to fit the varying degrees of concern for use and protection under each level. Decisions relevant to resource values assigned to level 1 areas provide for the most protection with levels 2, 3 and 4 providing progressively less protection. All management decisions, however, are consistent with our management responsibilities under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and all relevant Bureau policies.

Each management level is further defined as follows:

LEVEL 1 identifies those lands requiring *the most restrictive management*. These lands generally would be closed to all activities, except those specifically devised to enhance those values which placed the area in level 1.

LEVEL 2 identifies those lands that require *careful management*. These lands would be open to activities that do not detract from those values which placed the area in level 2.

LEVEL 3 identifies those lands that are available for more *active management*. These lands would be open to most activities but they may be moderately constrained to protect those values which placed the lands in level 3.

LEVEL 4 identifies those lands that are available for *open management*. These lands normally would be open to all legal uses and activities with relatively few restrictions.

Table 1-1 provides a breakdown of the resource values and/or programs by management priority level.

TABLE 1-1: SUMMARY OF RESOURCE VALUES BY MANAGEMENT PRIORITY LEVEL

LEVEL	RESOURCE VALUE	SURFACE ACRES	SUBSURFACE ACRES	TOTAL ACRES
1	Most Restrictive Management:	6,900	1,600	8,500
	Upper Green River & floodplain Relict vegetation communities at Castle Cove, Lears Canyon & Red Mountain Developed recreation sites			
2	Careful Management:	82,800	3,800	86,600
	Riparian habitat in Browns Park, excluding the Green River (w/in 330' protective buffer) Crucial deer winter habitat in Browns Park Line-of-sight up to a 1/2 mile on the upper and lower Green River segments Sage grouse strutting grounds (with a 1,000' buffer) Sites eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark John Jarvie National Historic Site Semi-primitive nonmotorized areas Special status plant species habitat (federally-listed species) Pelican Lake & Special Recreation Management Area Active nest sites w/buffers for raptor species: Bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, peregrine falcon, and golden eagle Goose nesting sites at Pariette, with a 1/8 mile buffer, & waterfowl nesting habitat Red Mountain Potential Recreation Area			
3	Active Management:	507,200	85,800	593,000
	Dry Fork to Ashley Creek area w/in Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC Complex Floodplains & riparian habitat outside Browns Park (w/in 330' buffer) Crucial sage grouse nesting habitat (2-mile radius of strutting grounds w/in sagebrush vegetation types) Municipal watersheds Critical soils Eight Mile Flat potential black-footed ferret reintroduction area High potential paleontological resources Existing & potential bighorn sheep reintroduction areas, including lambing areas Antelope fawning areas on Antelope Flat Crucial deer & elk winter habitat Habitat for raptor species: Bald eagle, ferruginous hawk, peregrine falcon, golden eagle VRM Class II areas Special status plant species habitat (remaining areas)			
4	Open Management:	112,100	53,800	165,900
	All remaining BLM-managed/administered lands & resources			