

3-31-92

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 204 (BEERS)

204-1

Please refer to our response 10-1.

BLM
VERNAL UT

RE: CLOSURE OF RED MOUNTAIN

DEAR BLM,

LAST SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 1992 5 OF MY FRIENDS AND I RODE MOTORCYCLES ON RED MOUNTAIN. OUR PURPOSE WAS TO ASCERTAIN THE "DAMAGE" DONE BY OUR RIDING IN THIS AREA LAST FALL.

WE SPENT THE WHOLE DAY, AND THIS IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT WE FOUND.

- 1) FEW OF THE TRAILS WERE STILL VISIBLE BUT NOT HIGHLY VISIBLE
- 2) SOME TRAILS HAVE BEEN KEPT ALIVE BY GAME, MANY OF WHICH WERE GAME TRAILS ORIGINALLY.

MY QUESTIONS TO YOU... IS BLM SUPPOSED TO STAND FOR "PUBLIC" LAND MANAGEMENT? DO SOME SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS RATE HIGHER THAN OTHERS? CAN BLM ACTUALLY SHOW US THE DAMAGE WE HAVE DONE?

~~IF~~ I TRULY FEEL THAT I AM

204-1
Cont.

A RESPONSIBLE LAND USER. I DO
NOT LITTER, I TRY TO LEAVE THE
LAND BETTER THAN I FIND IT AND
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE CLOSURE
OF AN AREA THAT IS UNHARMED
BY MY USE.

Sincerely,

David Beers

PRESIDENT, VERNAL COALITION
FOR RESPONSIBLE LAND USERS

March 20, 1992

Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Ut. 84078

Subject: Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan Draft E.I.S.

I must commend you and your team for the comprehensive effort in creating the Draft EIS of the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan.

After close review of the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan, I favor Alternative E, although I have concerns about the following Topics:

Phosphate Leases in the Red Mountain-Dry Fork Complex.

This is a very unique area because of it's wide diversity of high quality resource values within a close proximity to an urban area. It will be very important to determine the best use of this land. To do this we must first identify the resources of the area. The resources of the Red Mountain-Dry Fork complex are:

1. Recreation (Hunting, Fishing, Camping, Picnicing, Hiking, Riding of Horses, Bicycles, Snowmobiles, and OHVs)
2. Scenic Vistas and Aesthetics
3. Riparian Areas
4. Wildlife Habitat (Including crucial winter range for Deer and Elk)
5. Cultural and Historical Resources
6. Watershed (Surface and Underground Aquafer)
7. Vernal Area Municipal Water Supply
8. Archeological and Paleontological Sites
9. Biological Diversity
10. Relict Vegetation

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 205 (PERRY)

205-1

Please refer to our response 112-1.

ACEC designation is in tune with the best use of these lands. In light of critical resource values identified in the ACEC nomination for this area, no alternative addresses the impacts to these resources should mining occur. Alternatives B, C, and E designate the Red Mountain, Dry Fork Complex as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. However, withdrawals for this area have not been considered. The potentially unacceptable impacts from mining in the Red Mountain-Dry Fork Complex are as follows:

1. Changes to Municipal Water Supply Aquifers
2. Changes to the 100 Year Flood Plain
3. Changes to Local Springs
4. Noise from Blasting and Equipment
5. Degradation of Scenic and Environmental Values
6. Degradation of Property Values

For these reasons mineral leasing is incompatible within 100% of the lands in the Red Mountain-Dry Fork Complex, a total of 25,800 acres. This area is mapped on page 2.111 of the Draft EIS for the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan dated November 1991.

The Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan should recommend withdrawal of mineral leasing for this area at the expiration of the current lease period.

Red Mountain

Motorized Travel should be allowed on Red Mountain, but restricted to existing roads.

Moonshine Arch

The area north of Steinaker Reservoir known as Moonshine Arch has suffered degradation due to motorized travel. This area should be closed to motorized travel.

Wild and Scenic River Designation on the Green River

I strongly support designation of the Green River Segments from Little Hole to the Colorado State Line, and Ouray to the Carbon County Line for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. The recreational and socioeconomic benefits of this designation cannot be overstated.

In Daggett County there is no doubt rafting the Green River is a major factor in the local economy. People come from all over the world to fish the river. Inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System would provide much needed facilities at Little Hole, Indian Crossing, Taylor Flat, and Swallow Canyon. Not to mention river camps in between. More importantly it would eliminate the threat of roads and dams in the river corridor.

The lower section is prime habitat for Colorado Squawfish, Humpback

205-2
205-3
205-4

Please refer to our response 10-1.
Please refer to our response 10-1.
Thank you for your support.

205-1
Cont.

5
235

205-2

205-3

205-4

205-4
Cont

Chubs, Bonytail Chubs, and Razorback Suckers. It is also used quite heavily as a white water rafting recreation area. River running is a major factor in the economy of Green River, Ut.

These rivers need to be protected to the best of our abilities. The BLM needs to take an active part in seeking Wild and Scenic River status for both of these areas.

Black Footed Ferrets

The current management plan allows 19,000 acres for reintroduction of Black Footed Ferrets in the Sunshine Bench, Shiner, Antelope Flat, Twelve Mile, and the Buckskin Hills. None of these areas are high priority oil and gas producing areas.

205-5

In the DMRMP Draft it is stated that it takes 125 acres of prairie dog town to sustain one ferret. If this is true then 19,000 acres should sustain 152 ferrets. This is probably more ferrets than we can expect to reintroduce during the life of this management plan.

5.236

Although I favor Alternative E, I cannot support the additional 14,000 acres of ferret habitat this alternative provides, in the high priority oil and gas producing lands south of Myton.

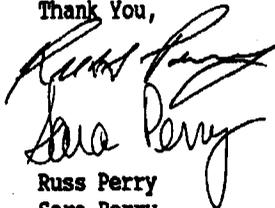
Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep

205-6

Your choices for Big Horn Sheep habitat are good, but I question the 10 mile buffer zone between Big Horn Sheep and Domestic Sheep.

I look forward to working with you in developing the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan.

Thank You,



Russ Perry
Sara Perry
11090 N. Dry Fork
Vernal, Ut.

205-5

Alternative A would allow for the reintroduction of black-footed ferrets in the Twelve Mile area which has been classified as a high potential oil and gas area. Guidelines for reintroduction of ferrets have been outlined in Appendix 2 of the document and define timetables and numbers. BLM anticipates the success of captive-raised ferrets would continue and that an ample supply would be available. The proposed plan has been changed to maintain 16,600 acres on Eight Mile Flat as the primary release site. If another potential area is determined to provide a better opportunity for a successful reintroduction, it would be selected and Eight Mile Flat removed from further consideration. Our most recent data indicates that Eight Mile Flat is the best site for reintroduction and it also happens to be a high oil and gas producing area.

205-6

Please refer to our responses 116-8, 110-10, and 178-11.

3/26/91

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 S. 500 E.
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Team:

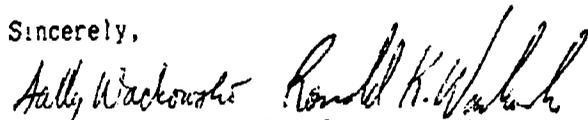
In regards to the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan, I support Alternative E. I support the Uintah Mountain Club's proposed improvements for Alternative E.

I am especially interested in more protection for the slickrock north of Steinaker reservoir. My family and I spend many evenings exploring that area, and often take visitors to moonshine arch. We are in the habit of taking trash bags to collect garbage found in the areas presently accessible by off-road vehicles. I would like to see the private lands at the access to this area acquired so it can be managed properly and closed to off-road vehicles. I have seen the stakes indicating your research into this area, and appreciate the interest.

I also appreciate the re-introduction of the bighorn sheep, and your plans for introduction of the black-footed ferret.

As a kayaker and canoeist, I have spent a lot of time on the Upper and Lower Green River, and would like to see these achieve Wild and Scenic Status. This is another local area where I am proud to take visitors.

Sincerely,



Sally Wackowski & Ronald Wackowski
1936 E. 1375 S.
Vernal, Ut 84078

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 207 (WACKOWSKI)

207-1 The Red Mountain recreation area, as outlined in the proposed plan, would include the slickrock country north of Steinaker Reservoir. A recreation management plan would be prepared for this area outlining specific management objectives to provide for numerous types of recreation activities while protecting the important resource values of the area. Also please refer to our response 79-2.

207-2 Thank you for your comments.

207-3 Thank you for your support.

207-1

207-2

207-3

Dear Jean Sinelear :

208-1

The Bureau of Land Management is planning to build a road up over Mames Hole and down into Lambson Draw. They are also planning to build a campsite in Bear Hollow. I think it is wrong, because it will allow people to drive through private land, and be a hazard to the environment.

208-2

First, the proposed road, and campsite are a hazard to the environment. There will be litter and pollution in the water, and people will tear up the roads and trails. Also the BLM is planning to burn two hundred acres of land. When Joseph Hacking, my great grandfather, owned that land he tried to burn. He waited until the weather was just right for burning. He had just gotten the fire started, and under control when a big gust of wind came up and the fire ran wild.

Second, the land where they plan to build the road, and campsite is private land. The land has been in the Hacking family for ninety-two years. Joseph Hacking used it to run sheep; and Grant Hacking, my grandfather, uses it to run his cattle.

Third, the Hackings have tried not to let it get over grazed. The many reservoirs have all been built by hand. They have also made sure that the fences are kept so that cattle can't stray.

In conclusion, all the care of the land has been done by a private owner. The Hackings have improved the water and kept the grazing under control. To let the Bureau of Land Management build a road through that land would be very wrong.

Sincerely,
Jennita Hall

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 208 (HALL)

208-1 Please refer to our response 12-1.

208-2 Please refer to our response 53-1.

5.238

March 29, 1992
Marcia Borton
644 E. 3050 S.
Vernal, Utah 84078

Team Leader Jean Sinclair
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 So. 500 E.
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Ms. Sinclair,

I would like to express my support for Alternative E of the Draft Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan. Even though the plan goes a long ways toward providing necessary protection of the land there are some modifications I would like to see made. The Uintah Mountain Club is sending you a list of changes and I support this list of changes they want to see.

One change that especially needs to be made is an increase in acreage of Level 1 and 2 Management Priority Areas. The amounts specified in Proposal E seem far too low. A reasonable

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 209 (BORTON)

209-1

Please refer to our response 61-1.

209-1
Cont.

Compromise between B and E is called for.

A special place of interest I would like to see protected is the Red Mountain Area north of Steenaker. This area deserves the maximum amount of protection possible. It should be restricted to nonmotorized travel only.

209-2

The beauty of the Red Mountain Area rivals that of most National Parks so we should ban the ORV's and take better care of it.

5.240

209-3

Another special interest of mine I would like to endorse is the reintroduction of bighorn sheep, black-footed ferrets, and river otters.

Overall, I think Alternative E is a good plan. If the BLM will make the changes proposed by the Uintah Mountain Club it can be even better and should do a good job meeting the needs of the many different users of the land.

Sincerely,
Marcia Barton

209-2

Please refer to our response 79-2.

209-3

Thank you for your support.

1671 North 3936 West
Vernal, UT 84078
March 29, 1992

Jean Sinclear
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District Office
170 S. 500 East

Dear Ms. Sinclear,

The Bureau of Land Management is trying to develop the Bear Hollow area and Mamas Hole area on Diamond Mountain. While I believe that developing the different mountainous areas of our country is important, I also believe that the development of private land should be left to the owner of that land. I feel that the proposed developments of the aforementioned areas are **WRONG**.

210-1 The proposed road would allow more people access to private land and this could prove hazardous to the surrounding vegetation as well as the cattle who live off that vegetation. The litter and pollution of the land will increase as more people gain access to it. A road will make it easier for people to travel through the vegetation and it will also increase temptation to travel off road, furthering the destruction of the precious grass necessary to sustain wildlife.

210-2 The proposed campsite in Bear Hollow will allow people to trespass on private land and possibly harm cattle and wildlife. Aside from that, I honestly don't think that anyone will use the campsite. The only time I ever see anyone camping up on Diamond Mountain is during hunting season and usually they stay in trail-camps.

I feel that the private owners of the Diamond Mountain land have used the land they own wisely, and that any interference in this care would be very wrong. Thank you for the time you have spent reading this letter and I hope you will take it into serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Amelia M. Hall

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 210 (HALL)

210-1 Please refer to our response 12-1.

210-2 Please refer to our response 53-1.

3-30-72

Diamond Mtn. Resource Manag. Plan
Dear Sir:

Being a Diamond Mtn. land
owner, I drafted my resource
management plan. It will
eventually interface with Private
land owners and I recommend
leaving the situation as is.

I don't think its necessary to
change the riparian area. Why can't
the river nature be left as it is?
As for wild life we don't need
any more, we have enough to
feed as it is.

B. Allen Bennion
726 N. 1500 West
Vernal, Utah 84078

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 211 (BENNION)

211-1

Thank you for your comments.

211-1

5.242

EXXON COMPANY, U.S.A.

POST OFFICE BOX 1600 - MIDLAND, TEXAS 79702-1600

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT
SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

RICHARD D. GODDARD
SUPERVISOR

April 2, 1992

Ms. Jean Sinclair
RMP/EIS Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
170 South 500 East
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Ms. Sinclair:

Exxon Company, USA appreciates this opportunity to offer comments on the Diamond Mountain Resource Area Draft Resource Management Plan (DRMP). Much of the Uinta Basin has been productive for oil and gas which has been beneficial to industry, the State of Utah and its citizens and the national economy. Although primary production has been in decline for many fields, much of the Uinta Basin continues to be of strong interest to companies with current producing operations and those interested in secondary recovery from existing fields and development of unconventional resources.

General Comment

Exxon is concerned about the selection of Alternative E as the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposed management direction for the next fifteen years. Based on our experience as producers in the Uinta Basin, we believe industry has generally had a positive and productive relationship with BLM, land-owners and land-users throughout our exploration and production activities. Unfortunately, this productive relationship is not reflected in the DRMP and may indeed be challenged by the Bureau's plan to impose new restrictions on the oil and gas industry throughout the Diamond Mountain resource area.

212-1 If Alternative E is implemented as proposed, industry faces a 54% decrease in the amount of acreage available for leasing with standard stipulations, an increase of 152% in the use of seasonal or special stipulations and an increase of 160% in the use of no surface occupancy stipulations. The net effect of these changes to the oil and gas industry is less opportunity at greater expense for exploration and development of federal energy resources in the Diamond Mountain Resource Area. Because maps that identify where specific lease stipulations will be applied are unavailable, it is impossible to determine how Alternative E affects Exxon's current interests.

Justification for Proposed Change in Management Direction

212-2 In spite of the dramatic shift in management direction proposed by the DRMP, the Diamond Mountain DRMP does not identify any specific problems, justification or need which clearly supports the Bureau's plan to impose more restrictive management for the oil and gas program. Indeed, several statements are made to

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 212 (EXXON, COMPANY, U.S.A., Goddard)

212-1 The restrictions outlined in the draft document and the proposed restrictions provided in this document would apply to new leases only. The draft document clearly states that nothing in the RMP would preclude valid existing rights. The priority management area map for the various alternatives provided in the map packet of the draft document provide a general spatial depiction of the alternative levels of management. Please refer to the generalized oil and gas category map provided in Map Packet #8. At the time the final RMP and Record of Decision are approved, a detailed map will be provided defining the oil and gas leasing categories and associated new stipulations, if applicable.

212-2 Wildlife information in Chapter 3 has been changed to specifically identify problems and the need for more restrictive management. For example the special status raptor section has been expanded to document loss of habitat from human activity. Restrictions on surface disturbing activities have been reduced 1.5 months in the proposed plan on deer and elk crucial winter range. This is an example of less restrictions in the proposed plan as warranted by a re-evaluation of current knowledge. In addition, antelope habitat restriction periods are the same in the proposed plan as current management, but offer the area manager the use of mitigation to neutralize negative impacts. Please refer to Map Packet #8 for a graphic depiction of these restrictions. Refer to Chapter 1 for clarification on how RMP decisions would effect split estate and existing leases. A map depicting producing fields and ancillary facilities was deemed unnecessary. Again, refer to Map Packet #8. These generalized leasing categories will be finalized and depicted, both in graphic and tabular form, in the RMP's Record of Decision. Please refer to Chapter 2, Management Guidance Common the Proposed Plan and the Alternatives, under minerals, for a discussion of how restrictions would be addressed on split estate lands.

212-2
Cont.

the contrary (Chapter 3, Affected Environment (page 3.11)) that, "General nesting and hunting habitat appear to be adequate....for raptors"; "Elk are common and their numbers increasing in all herd units within DMRA", and "Mule deer and sage grouse occur throughout the resource area". Additional DRMP discussion notes, "Reintroductions in 1971 and 1983 have resulted in antelope numbers achieving Utah Division of Wildlife's desired management level."

Exxon believes the Bureau should justify the need for change in the revised RMP. Maps identifying currently producing fields and ancillary facilities should be presented as well as maps which identify where standard, special and no surface occupancy lease stipulations will be applied. Because much of the federal acreage in the Uinta Basin is on split estate or held by production, discussion should be presented about how the Bureau will resolve conflicts arising from the Bureau's imposition of a more restrictive management scenario on private lands and in situations where leases predate the RMP.

Geophysical Operations

Aside from new leasing stipulations and prior rights, Exxon is also concerned about the RMP's proposals for geophysical operations and off-highway vehicle management. The discussion and intent for geophysical exploration management as presented in Table 2-13 (page 2.48) and Table 4-13 (page 4.67) are unclear and should be clarified. Both Tables appear to imply that operators can only conduct seismic programs on leased lands and only to the extent permitted by the lease stipulations. If this is the intent, the Bureau's assumptions are erroneous on two counts. First, it has been amply demonstrated by industry and BLM that geophysical operations are temporary and can be conducted with minimal or no on-the-ground imprint by utilizing a combination of data acquisition methods (conventional shothole, vibroseis, Poulter seismic and heli-portable drilling) and BLM conditions of approval which are tailored to local conditions and needs. Second, geophysical operations are routinely conducted (after BLM review and approval) on unleased lands or on leases held by other operators.

212-3

It is our view that geophysical activities are exempt from off-road vehicle restrictions. As such, Exxon is opposed to changes which would require conventional seismic operations to be confined to existing roads and trails and, would require all cross-country seismic to be conducted as heli-portable operations. All lands in the DMRA should be available for geophysical exploration.

Overstated Industry Impacts

212-4

We note references throughout the DRMP about impacts to resources and aesthetic values stemming from the oil and gas industry that appear to be somewhat biased. For example, discussion is presented on page 4.54 that industry activities degrade or compromise existing fish and wildlife habitats; similarly, discussion on page 4.57 states that oil and gas development on 150,900 acres would result in a drop of one recreation class. Conversely, the benefits accruing from the oil and gas industry are addressed only in the broadest terms without identification of actual figures for disturbed (or in-use) and reclaimed acreage and state revenues from production royalties, lease bonus and sales, severance or property taxes paid to the State of Utah.

212-3

An error in Table 4-18 of the draft has caused confusion between Table 2-13 and Table 4-18. Geophysical operations are discussed in Appendix 4. As discussed in this Appendix, geophysical operations "... may be conducted by bonded geophysical operators on BLM surface lands regardless of whether the mineral estate is leased or unleased,". Therefore, operators may conduct geophysical programs on both leased and unleased lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The wording of the proposed plan would allow geophysical activities to occur on level 3 and 4 lands with appropriate restrictions and on level 1 and 2 lands if determined to involve insignificant surface disturbance. OHV designations in this plan apply to casual OHV use. Permitted use, such as geophysical operations, can be allowed, provided the method used or resultant exploration would not cause significant surface disturbance.

212-4

The economic significance and importance of oil and gas resources to the Uintah Basin and to the State of Utah is stated on the oil and gas section of Chapter 3. The reasonable foreseeable oil and gas development and associated surface disturbance is listed in Appendix 4, Table A4-3. Further, Appendix 4 (Figure A4-1) and "Plugging and Abandonment Phase" discusses reclamation. The amount of oil and gas royalty and tax revenues which would be lost to the State of Utah and the federal government is analyzed and calculated for each alternative in Chapter 4.

5.244

The DRMP should be revised to eliminate the apparent bias and to include the specific information noted above. BLM should also draw attention to the fact that oil and gas projects are allowed to proceed only after BLM (and the public) reviews each proposal for impacts, identifies mitigation measures to be used if the project is approved, and attaches operating and reclamation requirements as conditions of approval.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Fernando Blackgoat of my staff at the address noted above or by telephone at (915) 688-7560 if you have any questions or if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Goddard

c: A. Benitez, Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association
J. Peacock, Utah Petroleum Association
J. M. Parker, Utah State Office

April 1, 1998

Bureau of Land Management
170 South 500 East
Vernal UTAH 84078

RE: Comments on Diamond Mountain Resource Area

In general, I agree that Alternative E is the most balanced. I do however have areas of concern with Alternative E which are enumerated below.

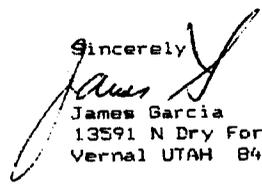
- 214-1 1. Dry Fork/Red Mountain west of the Taylor Mountain road, and the Red Mountain areas need to be withdrawn from Mineral Leasing. The reasons include the damage of subsurface water aquifers by active mining. These aquifers supply the culinary water through water wells to Dry Fork residences. Mining would change winter forage for Deer and Elk as well as the resident deer forage. Much of the habitat on the Dry Fork hillsides is mature Juniper which lacks wildlife forage in the understorey. This area needs to be strip chained or burned to provide varied vegetation. I would personally favor chaining with firewood being gathered and the remaining slash left to deteriorate and leach nutrients back into the soil without burning. The reaction of the area to the Archer Proposal would seem to make any of your Alternatives unacceptable as to Phosphate mining in this area.
- 214-2 2. The 10 mile buffer between reintroduced Big Horn Sheep and domestic grazing is excessive and should be 1-2 miles.
- 214-3 3. Bear baiting is not sport hunting and should be used only when excess bear numbers need to be reduced.
- 214-4 4. Cougar hunting should be restricted to a 5 day period per license. The lions should not be run for several days by dogs just to train the dogs during the middle of winter when most game is on near starvation diets. With current radio telemetry used to follow the dogs, this hardly constitutes sport.
- 214-5 5. More restriction of OHV to existing roads and trails with less destruction of ground cover and less interference to wildlife and small critters.
- 214-6 6. If Peregrine Falcons will nest in downtown Salt Lake City and other major metropolitan areas, the 1 mile restrictive nesting buffer is excessive and should be 1/4 to 1/2 mile at most.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 214 (GARCIA)

- 214-1 Please refer to our response 112-1.
- 214-2 Two hundred acres of pinyon-juniper are proposed to be burned and seeded in the Dry Fork Allotment, refer to Appendix Table A8-4 for the proposed plan.
- 214-3 Please refer to our responses 116-8, 178-11 and 179-39 concerning the need for buffers between domestic and bighorn sheep.
- 214-4 Please refer to our responses 114-34 and 116-9. Regarding your comment on cougar running. The BLM manages wildlife habitat; UDWR manages the wildlife populations. Therefore your concerns should be referred to the Division of Wildlife Resources.
- 214-5 Please refer to Table 2-15, under OHV, as well as the interim management OHV map provided in the Map Packet #10. We believe this plan provides for the protection of critical resource values while allowing OHV use within the resource area.
- 214-6 The one-mile nesting buffer around peregrine falcon eyries has been recommended by the USF&WS and UDWR who have management and expertise on wildlife. In this matter we accept their recommendations.

- 214-7 7. Areas reserved for Black Footed Ferret reintroduction are excessive. To the best of my limited research, Black Footed Ferrets have never been demonstrated to have ever existed in Utah. The impacts to Oil/Gas Leasing and Uintah Basin economics are not justified by the INTRODUCTION of a new species to the area. The successes of the captive breeding program make the 1997 target date seem ambitious.
- 214-8 8. Less acreage needs to be withdrawn from Oil/Gas Leasing, especially in the Myton Bench/Pariette Bench areas.
- 214-9 9. More acreage for Tar Sands development needs to be available.
- 214-10 10. The special Deer hunts in Dry Fork on BLM Administered Ground, should be delayed until the Fawns can survive without their harvested mothers, unless the object is harvest both fawns and does.

Sincerely



James Garcia
13591 N Dry Fork Canyon
Vernal UTAH 84078

5.247

214-7 Please refer to our response 176-6 concerning changes to the acreages proposed for reintroduction of black-footed ferrets. The Uinta Basin has been documented as historical range by C.N. Hillman and T.W. Clare, 1980, in Mustela nigripes, published by the American Society of Mammalogists, Mammalian Species No. 126. Please refer to our response 205-5 concerning the success of the captive breeding program and ferret habitat management guidelines.

214-8 The level 1 lands within the proposed Pariette Wetlands ACEC would be withdrawn from mining activity. This is a relatively small, albeit important, part of the entire Myton Bench. If you are referring to the proposed restrictions affecting oil and gas, we believe such restrictions are necessary to protect the critical resources values identified for the bench.

214-9 We believe we have allowed the greatest flexibility regarding exploration and development of tar sands within the resource area, while protecting and/or maintaining important resource values.

214-10 Again, your concern would be more properly addressed by the UDWR, the agency responsible for wildlife population management.

Heather Campbell
9122 E. Highway 40
P.O. Box 69
Jensen, Utah 84035

March 31, 1992

Jean Nitschke-Sinclear, Team Leader
Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan
Vernal District, Bureau of Land Management
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Jean,

I believe that Alternative E is the best alternative outlined in the Diamond Mountain RMP. Within that framework, there are several issues I would like you to address.

A positive step in land management is to address ecosystems as a whole rather than just address individual species within an area. Maintenance of diverse wildlife species and habitat is important to our area. The inclusion of the ACECs in Alternative E will help do that and I support their inclusion.

215-1 The Red Mountain ACEC does cause some conflict for OHV users in the area. The people using the area at the present time are a responsible group and would like to see the area remain open. As in so much in our lives, we are distrustful of future users, whether they be land managers or future OHV users who might be less responsible. If the option to close the area remains in the management plan, I would like to ask that you actively work with the current users in identifying problems and solutions so that closure will not be necessary. If a working discussion group is built into the plan, then future problems are less likely to arise.

215-2 Land ownership and access continues to present problems to private land owners in the area and I would like to encourage you to continue your efforts to consolidate land ownership patterns and avoid isolated tracts of public land where access must be through private land. In instances where that is unavoidable and causes problems for private landowners, fenced right-of-way corridors, while expensive, might reduce the impact on land owners and could avoid sensitive privately owned areas.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 215 (CAMPBELL)

215-1 Please refer to our response 79-2.

215-2 Access to public land would be acquired from willing sellers or givers. Please refer to Chapter 2 Management Guidance Common to the Proposed Plan and the Alternatives for criteria involving land transactions.

A few quick comments about issues which are being addressed more fully in other letters:

- 215-3 I don't think we need as much designated black-footed ferret habitat as Alternative E includes.
- 215-4 I'd prefer no new phosphate mineral leasing along the south slope of the Uintas, particularly in the Dry Fork Canyon area.
- 215-5 Moonshine Arch deserves some special protection.

In general, I'd like to commend you on the document you've prepared. It is well written and more readable than other documents prepared by Federal agencies in the past. The best way to address all of the issues before us is to become as well educated about them as possible and to maintain an open dialog between the land administrators and the public users. While that process is often slow and frustrating, it is most important to involve as many of us as is possible. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the process.

Sincerely,


Heather Campbell

215-3 Please refer to Table 2-15 for the proposed decision regarding black-footed ferrets. Under the proposed plan, only 1 site would be offered for reintroduction, thus reducing the acreage substantially.

215-4 Please refer to our response 112-1.

215-5 The road to Moonshine Arch has been closed under current management. Proposed management of the arch will be outlined in the coordinated activity plan for the proposed ACEC, if approved. A recreation-specific activity plan for the proposed Red Mountain recreation area also will be developed to outline specific management objectives and projects necessary to meet the recreational needs of the various recreation users, while enhancing or protecting the values that make this area so popular.

April 1, 1992

Penelope Smally, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Team;

I am writing concerning the Dimond Mountain Resouce Area Manaegment plan. I give my support to Alternative (A), realizing that C and D protects livestock grazing privileges much more than the other Alternatives. I also realize there must be a comprimise so I feel like plan A is the most reasonable. I would like to point out some discrepencys that may have influenced others to support plans B and E. I question the credibility of some of your resourser material, namly; Norman Bangerter as an economist, and M.M. Kingon the Big Horn Sheep, I will talk about this later in the latter.

Page 4.60 "cumulative increased wildlife use from 27,600 aum's to 40,000 aum's could result in livestock reductions (9000 aum's) which may result in a \$11,500 yearly loss to livestock industry. However this increase may also generate up to \$94,800 for the local commuinty! Was this a screen to get people to vote for Alternative E? I feel this is not correct. Everyone give a choice would elect to loss \$11,500 in order to make \$95,800. The annual grazing fee would generate about $9000 \times 1.92 = \$17,280$. Our operation last year generated about \$86,000 using about 2126 active aum's of which 75% of our operation depends on these aum's. $\$86,00 \times .75 = \$64,500$ The \$64,500 is what 2126 aum's generated which all went into our local economy, and the sheep prices was depressed. So therefore it took the full amount to pay operating expences we was unable to pocket any of it. Cattle operations did much better due to high cattle prices. The 2126 aum's divided into 9000 equals 4.23. $4.23 \times \$64,500 = \$272,835$. The 9000 aum's would have generated \$272,835 under the management of our operation. Seems that \$272,835 of confirmed procceds is much better than \$94,800 of projected earnings. I feel that an established industry is being sold out for the propects of a unknown speculation.

Inconsistance page 4.46 states that a 500 aum increase would be worth \$38,000 a year to livestock. Page 4.60 states 9000 aum's are worth \$11,500 to the livestock industry there should be a constant value per aum when judging the impact on the Alternatives.

The problem I have with the reintroduction of the Black Fooed Ferret is that of the possibility of loss of grazing privileges, forced animal classes, forced "use periods" that do not fit into our operation. Loss of the power to control praire dogs on agreculture lands and Ferrets killing domestic foul. I do feel that the Praire dog does nees a natural predator and the Ferret may be enough to contorl them and no farther control may be needed.

I feel like our grazing rights a private privileges and in order to obtain them we must buy them or spend money time, blood, and tears in order to improve the range to the extent that it will carry more livestock, just to fine that

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 216 (HOLMES)

216-1 Please refer to our response 104-2.

216-2 Please refer to our responses 90-1, 176-5 and 205-5, concerning black-footed ferret habitat management. Also please refer to Appendix 2 for further management guidelines concerning ferrets.

5.250

216-1

216-2

much of our work has been to increase the number of wildlife and not the livestock.

I feel that the Fish and Game Department is standing here with their hands out. If they want aum's transferred to wildlife let them buy the base property and permits and transfer them to wildlife. While paying the annual taxes and grazing fees. After all these aum's are only valued at \$9.19. I also disagree with this price. I have had to pay 4 times that amount for some of the ones we own ada Nile W. and Evelyn Holmes Family Trust. It will take that much to buy them from us. In our case the Big Horn Sheep is threatening our ability to maximize our profits and threatening a change from the class of livestock that we feel best suits our Alotment. The DWR should compensate the permittee for the protent dollars loss as long as the restrictions are in force. this should all be negotiated on the free enterprise system, instead of the gradual taking a few aum's here and a few there which has been used in the past. We find livestock aum's have been cut and wildlife increase. We feel like we are paying the total price for increased wildlife. Let recreations pay their share. I feel like the DWR and recreationast wants the grazing privileges we have had to buy, but instead of buying them, they want them given to them. We are also finding restrictions placed on us, (threat of increased grazing fees, limited repairean use, spectified animal class, and others,) these restriction make so we cannot make any money. This almost seems like a plan with the hope that we will not be able to continue, thusgiving up our grazing privileges "the DWR could thenuse them and get them for nothing" nad then neverhave to pay an annual grazing fee or the taxes on the private lands. Let them use the money generated by recreational use, to buy thebase property and grazing alotments or negociate trades or make agreement with the permittee. Many would cooperate if they did not feel like they were being shafted.

All through this document I felt the importance of agriculture has been played down. I think we had better remember who produces our food and what importants it plays in ourlives. Recreation is of no use or is not important to us ifwe are hungry or spending all our time trying to provide food for our familys. If we are short on money the first thing to go is the vacation.

To reduce jobs in rural Americ's would increase unemployment and the homeless. That is what would happen if we use our public land for recreational use only. It would put more people in the cities competing for jobs which would lessen the wages there. With less money for vacations would our public lands be used for recreation as much as they are today. The recreation services will replace a percentage of loss jobs loss by stopping grazing, mining and timbering, but not the total amount and then it would be seasonal.

I would like to state a fact in econmices. When supply exceed demand prices are low, when demand exceed supply prices are high. I realize that a small percentage of red mest is produced on public land. But is that small percentage large enough to create a "surplus or a shortage". I feel that everyone profits from grazing by cheaper food prices. Therefore

216-3 Under the proposed plan, livestock grazing preference is not reduced, but remains the same as current management. Wildlife forage allocations have been proposed to be increased in the same alternative and will be based on vegetation monitoring to insure that ample forage is available. Also please refer to our response 80-3.

216-4 Please refer to our response 3-24.

216-3

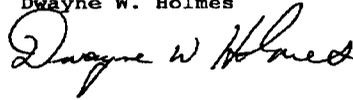
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216-4

- we have more to spend on recreation if the needed items cost less, more is spent on play. Will all resource set aside for recreation be utilized if we are spending all our paychecks on "necessities" food, clothing, housing, and transportation.
- 216-5 Recreation in our area has declined for the past 3 years. Will Seep Ridge Road change that or will the liability cost more than the benefits?
- 216-6 Does the Fish and Game have the ability to manage our wildlife it increase our "recreational use" We have had a steady decline in the quality of Deer, Pheasants, Quail, Chuckers, and Rabbit hunting, and will until we address the predation problem, we have.
- 216-7 Could the poorer quality of hunting and less wildlife be the reason for three years steady decline of recreational visitation?
- I question as to the extent of potential increase in the "recreational use"
- Do we become dependent on Foreign Nations to produce our food, like we did in the 70's and still are dependant on imported petroleum. Is there any need to be dependant on others when we have a renewable resource "Range Lands" All we need is the wisdom to harvest it. I feel that by utilizing the multiple use concept we can hunt, and observe wildlife, view fossils and formations, enjoy float trips and fish and also have a surplus of food that as Americans we have come to expect.

Thank you;

Holmes Bar-NE Ranch
By
Dwayne W. Holmes



216-5 The economic impacts of the proposed Seep Ridge Road, also referred to as the Ouray to I-70 highway, are addressed in the forthcoming environmental impact statement. While this proposed highway would cross Diamond Mountain Resource Area, none of it would be across public lands administered by BLM. Please contact the BLM Moab District to have your name added to the mailing list.

216-6 We agree that the quality of habitat has suffered recently, mostly from continued drought in the Uinta Basin. Our information indicates that the recreational visitation has not declined, but rather the success during the hunt has decreased. We continue to propose and complete range improvement projects to improve habitat, but this would never compensate for ample precipitation throughout the year. Please refer to our response 12-2. In our ADC program, we have allowed for predator control where we feel it is necessary and justified.

216-7 Our prediction of future recreation use is based on increases we have experienced over the past several years. We have no reason to believe this trend will not continue. We use visitor counts, traffic counter data, and information from other governmental agencies in making these predictions.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 217 (SIDDOWAY)

TO: Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
 Bureau of Land Management
 Vernal District
 170 South 500 East
 Vernal, UT 84078

FROM: Ralph Siddoway, land owner and Ashley Valley Farmer

RE: Diamond Mountain RMP

217-1 Please refer to our response 52-1.

From my point of view as a Rancher and Farmer ~~that~~ there are some short comings in it that I would like to call attention to. Not that I would take anything from this plan, because it is excellent and real scholars have prepared it, but I would like to put my point of view into try and point some of the short couings of the plan if I can from my point of view.

While the experts have been preparing this for two or three years, I have only had a chance to spend a very limited amount of time on it. There are many things I will not even touch upon, but just a few things that I would like the attention to the Bureau of Land Management where I think the plan could be improved.

Briefly this plan includes 3,777,000 acres of land which is comprised of property which is administered to by the Ashley National Forest, the State of Utah, Bureau of Land Management, Duchesne County, Uintah County, Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, Dinosaur National Monument and many private land owners, so we do have a problem of vested interests. Even the Indians were includes in this. The Uintah Ouray Indian Reservation is part of this plan. It needs be given consideration from many points of view. And it is with this in mind that I am going to try to give a point of view of at least of some of the Ranchers and Farmers.

It should be noted that 29% of the land included in this plan is privately owned land and any thing that is done by the Bureau of Land Management to change the present administration will effect most of these private land owners who are Farmers and Ranchers so we need to respect their rights also. Also many of these Ranchers are permittees on the Ashley National Forest so they will be affected from that point of view also. Then they are also lessers of state land and will be affected again for anything that this plan attempts to change from the degree

217-1

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217-1
Cont.

of the administration of the state lands in relation to the Bureau of Land Management Plans, so it will require a lot of giving and taking if this plan is to work.

217-2

Quite a lot of this plan has reference to wild life and live stock, which rightfully it should and that is a big part of what this whole area is all about. In fact, the whole Taylor Grazing Act in which we get all the authority to operate this land from states very clearly. The purpose of the Taylor Grazing Act is to stabilize the live stock industry. With that in mind I think we should look at the various changes which are recommended by this plan to see if they really do stabilize the live stock industry. Of course there are other purposes it has also, but from the Rancher and Farmer point of view the big majority of the public domain was used and still is used for grazing purposes and it should be used where it will benefit the live stock industry. The issues here involves many conflicting demands for consumptive and non-consumptive pieces of vegetation, the soil, the water, the water sheds, the timber, and graze land grazing so it needs to be approached with a view in mind that everybody can get something good out of this plan.

When we are talking about use of this land for grazing we should recognize that not only the vegetation is important but the water is important, and the water shed is important and much of the available water for use by live stock and wild life also is on private land and when you increase or decrease livestock or wild animals either one it will effect the burden that is put on the private land and so if you increase by a large of wild animals that you put on the Bureau of Land Management Land it automatically increases the amount animals that will be on private land. And whether this is just or not somebody needs to determine because if you 1/3 more Elk on the Diamond resources than it presently has then we are going to have many problems. The first problem is that in the view of many people there is not enough vegetation to carry this large number of Elk on the Diamond Mountain area without injury to the live stock industry and without injury to the deer population in fact the deer population has been hurt right now because they are in competition with the Elk. The Elk has increased real rapidly within the last few years, but you have noticed the deer have decreased, so you have got a problem there and we need to recognize that if you are going to increase the amount of elk by 1/3 then you automatically going to decrease the number of deer that are available and you are going to put quite a severe burden on the private land because even though you may develop excess feed on Bureau of Land Management Land, nobody is going to feed Elk. Those Elk will go where they want to go, and when they get thirsty they will go on private land, and if there is some

217-2

Impacts to private lands from possible increased wildlife use have been discussed under the cumulative impacts of the proposed plan and Alternative B in Chapter 4. Please refer to our response 12-2.

particular variety of feed on private land that they like they are going to get it. We saw that on the rim of Diamond Mountain in 1991, in the fall of 1990, and the winter of 1991 where on the rim of Diamond Mountain and a lot of money spent changing that surface from grazing to farm land. The deer have noticed that change and they have moved over there, but that wasn't nearly such a burden as when the Elk moved over there. These Elk are large powerful animals and you can't fence them out with an ordinary fence. It was real devastating to this new farm on Diamond Mountain when the Elk took over. Attempts were made to fence them out but they were not successful. It take a different kind of fence to control Elk than the farmers are used to is this area, and so it was a real hardship on this farming enterprise on the rim of Diamond Mountain and will continue to be a hardship on Diamond Mountain as it is developed into farming area. That should be recognizes to begin with that Elk are detrimental to farming and they are really difficult to control. In addition to that the Elk appears to have about as many animals on the area that we are speaking of as it can possibly control. In the winter of 1990 in January, February and March we saw the Elk invade the highways in Ashley Valley. Now for a long we have had deer on the state highways and they are a problem, but they are not near as severe a problem as the Elk are on the highway. The Elk are large and if you run into one of those Elk you just about demolish the car, but severely injure the passengers in the car much worse than the deer will do. And we did have on highways between Vernal and Jensen Elk on the highways that were a real problem, and that needs to be considered. And then when spring came these Elk stayed down in the Jensen and they didn't move back on the mountain area, so you have an invasion there. Where we have never had Elk before they have them. In fact when the elk first planted in the Vernal area sometime 1950 when they were planted here there was always heard of elk at Greendale that are native there, but there is not very many. There is not enough to hunt. So when the area was restocked by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources it was done with the approval of the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the private land owners, they all agreed to this but they also agreed that the heard would not be over 150 head. It many, many times that now and it has caused a problem and we need to recognize that before definitely increase that heard a lot. In the first place there is not room for that many elk in this area without conflicting serious injury on the highways, on the farmers and ranchers, on the deer population and those people who like to hunt deer. It should be recognized that that is one of the problems that has to be solved and since is responsible for seeing that the elk stay where they should stay then the problem usually becomes the problem of the

private land owner, like it did on Diamond Mountain in 1990. That problem needs to be solved or most likely the elk will not thrive there and be a problem to the land owner and the elk population until something is done to solve it. It will take more than just to solve this problem. It is a new problem for us and it will take a lot of ingenuity to keep these elk off the farming ground. If there not kept off the farming ground these elk can not prosper and neither can the farmers. It will a bad situation for both.

Now in the plan on page AB.19 it states that the existing livestock preferences exceed the current production of vegetation. That is not a very long statement but it contains a world of thought and must go into the regulation of wild animals before they are increased. There is even enough feed there to take of the livestock that are permitted there, and now if you come along and increase the number of wild animals, which will take even more feed, then you have infringed upon the private land owner again and that is just not right thing to do.

Of course the plan says that there will be planning, administration, there will be more feed produced on the BLM land, more water will become available, that is fine it should be, but that should be done first before the elk population is increased. Don't increase the elk and then try and increase the vegetation and the water resources. It just doesn't work that way. Have these resources available before you increase the elk and then if you are successful in increasing the elk there will be a hold for them to go to. If you do it the other way, increase the elk and then encroach more upon private land owners water and vegetation there is going to be trouble.

On page 1.6 there is a very significant statement on this plan. It states "Management concerns, issues and problems are discussed with the RMP. When existing or proposed management of one resource significantly contains or curtails existing or proposed use of another resource." That is certainly true. If you increase the number of elk for constraining or controlling the amount of use the private land owner can get from his own land and his own water. That needs to be taken care of. The agency does like to guide and require the land use allocations not now in place to be made through the planning process. But lets make those available before you increase the elk.

Sometimes the existing land use is already in conflict with the elk and the farms, and the elk and the cattle, and the elk and the sheep, because stated previously this plan already recognized there is a shortage of vegetation and when you have a shortage of vegetation for the live stock

217-3 General planning criteria, outlined in Chapter 1, directs wilderness designations already analyzed in the existing Colorado and Utah Wilderness EISs (completed in 1990) will not be addressed further. Impacts from designation or not as they affect the livestock industry are analyzed in detail in these statements. During the public scoping period at the beginning of this project, no new areas were identified for consideration as WSAs.

that is permitted there then you come and increase the amount of elk that are allowed to go on that, also you are just making a bigger problem than you have already got. If you are going to maintain a profitable and thriving grazing community for the livestock industry in this unit we must be aware of these problems. We must not cut down on the amount of water and feed the private land owner has developed for his own use and give it to the wild animals. In many cases the only place that the deer and the elk can water is on private land. Now that may be a hardship on the private land owners. And off of this, if you put another burden on them then it is going to make a real serious problem and it is not going to contribute to sustaining the livestock industry. If we are going to sustain the live stock industry lets look out for them while we put this plan into effect.

As the plan states on page 137. To the extent possible coordinate land use inventory, planning and management of public lands with the land use planning and management programs of other federal agencies, and the state and local government use. This must be done. While the plan provides for it, lets not over the plan. Lets not make it more difficult to graze this feed for the livestock industry as it already is, and not take any more of the ranchers water than we already do.

217-3 This plan does not address the wilderness designation that has been taken effect for the last ten years, which has been an encroachment upon private industry and private grazing. We shouldn't give them an added burden from this plan that will increase the burden that the wilderness area has already put on them. The livestock grazing has already lost 3800 animal units feed, since they were first permitted. That is quite a severe loss, and when you look at the other losses that are contemplated the other wilderness areas or other parks and withdrawal, and the other recreational demands that are made upon this land, the grazing area should not be reduced further than it already has been.

If the elk herds are increased by thirty or forty percent, who carries the burden of this?

1. The privately owned land owners, farmers and ranchers.
2. The United States Forest permittees who are licensed to feed on the forest.
3. BLM private allotment owners who are allowed feed and water on the BLM land.
4. The state land part of which are leased by private lessors will loose also.

These unreasonable proposed increases in wildlife will further burden the poor classes of people and the general public. By a decrease in the economic value to the general public which will be lost to them. And who will receive the benefits from this increase of elk herds, largely hunters from out of state. While the increase the revenues to the wildlife resource of the state of Utah it will not nearly compensate for the burden caused the private ownership of land owners and the grazing permittees of Utah and the decrease of economic value to the general public.

For the introduction of Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep. It also calls for a ten mile buffer zone around the introduction sight from domestic sheep. The twelve mile buffer zone was not documented from any literature but just stated by someone that was on the committee to write it. It seems to me that this is an awful big buffer zone. Wider than most allotments on the BLM. It is about the same distance the city dump to Brush Creek. What will happen to the buffer zone? Will that just be an increase in the amount of land that is allotted to the wild sheep or will the domestic livestock be allowed to trespass on that at will. Will it be fenced, or how will it be maintained as two buffer zones so that neither class of stock infringe upon the other. It seems rather out of range procedure to me to set aside such a large buffer zone as this. It may be that there should be a buffer zone, because we know that Big Horn Sheep carry disease which is transmitted to domestic sheep. It is quite possible that domestic sheep carry a disease that can be transmitted to the wild sheep. So it may be possible that we need a buffer zone. But from all the evidence that is at hand immediately I think that including the ten mile buffer zone between the two is ridiculous.

Included the Diamond Mountain Resource Area Management Plan there is some evidence that domestic sheep have infected wild sheep with disease. But there is also more evidence not included in the resource plan that the wild sheep have infected domestic sheep. It seems to me that wild sheep are going to infect domestic sheep. They should not be put on the range where domestic sheep can come in contact with them. The domestic sheep should not have the burden of leaving ten miles of vacant space between the sheep allotment and the wild sheep allotment. Something should be done to alleviate this. In fact, in the Salt Lake Tribune just recently there was an article where 100 Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Officials and Utah Natural Resource Officials were using airplane and helicopters to scan the area that they could determine if there was any poison scattered on range, and finding all the dead animals that they could and tried to detect if they had been baited for poison which would kill coyotes. If it is illegal to

217-4 Please refer to our responses 110-10 and 116-8. Please also refer to the discussion in Chapter 3 which documents the need for a buffer between domestic and bighorn sheep. The buffer zones would not be fenced and we would anticipate domestic sheep would be herded away from the zone, much like they are around adjoining grazing allotments. The allotments cited in Appendix 8 as exceeding current preference are few in number and are currently being resolved through agreements with the involved grazing permittees. Some allotments may need further monitoring before any adjustments are made.

poison coyotes it certainly should be illegal to poison domestic sheep. If wild sheep can be proved to carry disease to the domestic sheep then they should be excluded from the range just the same as poison should be excluded from being baited upon the open range so should wild animals be excluded from scattering their disease.

When the Taylor Grazing Act was passed in 1934, grazing allotments were organized and a significant decrease in the number of livestock that was permitted to run on the range was made. Many people were put out of business at this time. To make room for the livestock to graze the grazing that was there. It simply would not carry all the livestock that were being put on the grazing land and so there was a significant amount of sheep excluded and also cattle from running on the open range. At this time they also set up what they determined to be a fair share for the wild animals. They were given what was to be their fair share. Since that time there has been many times where this has been changed, and every time that I know of, where there has been an adjustment made the livestock have been decreased to make way for increase in the wild animals. This does not appear to me to be the way to solve a problem justly, maybe sometimes should be. I think this has been carried to an extreme and the livestock animals have been decreased to make way an increase in the wild animals more than the fair share of the time.

On page AS.17 of this plan, it has given a fair description of what has happened. It states now the livestock industry has been decreased and it has according to this report has been decreased 9%, and the wild animals have increased 25%. I am including this sheet just as it is printed in the resource area plan as part of my comment because it is significant to show that the domestic livestock have been imposed upon in my opinion to the advantage of the wild animals.

Also in this plan where it discussed the economic importance of the livestock industry in Uintah County. It seems to indicate that the livestock industry is an insignificant affair. It doesn't really amount to anything, and that what is really important is the wild animals in the county. I think this is erroneous and can not be substantiated by the facts, and we have some proof of this. Mr. Cheeny who was manager of the Uintah State Bank during the years 1940, 1950, and 1960 made a statement in 1950 is really significant. The Uintah State Bank at that time was the leading bank in the Uintah and Duchesne Counties. During the years of 1940 and 1950 the Uintah State Bank had deposits of more than all the other banks put together. And he made a statement that his own record that 3/4 of all

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the money they took in at the Uintah State Bank came either directly or indirectly from the livestock industry. It is true that that is not the case today, and it can't be the case as long as you keep pulling the livestock industry and adding the wild animal industry to the grazing area. But at that time it was a significant part the Uintah County. And it is today. It is reported that of the three counties that have grazing allotments in this area, that these allotments contribute \$54 million dollars to the wealth of these three counties. Which seems like a significant amount of money for the Diamond Mountain Resource Area to contribute to the agriculture of these three counties. Most of the money derived from agriculture in the basin is do to livestock. Most of which is spent here in the basin.

There is another significant part to this livestock contributing to the Uintah Basin and that is all the reservoirs and all the canal systems and all the irrigation systems that cost millions of dollars to install and to operate are dependant for the success of farming industries of livestock in the basin. True, some of the farm products can be exported but being 120 miles from the nearest railroad. It is impractical to try and export such crops as hay and grain. You just can't export hay and grain and compete with the outside world, so you have to feed it to the livestock that is here. That is what this livestock and farm industry have been based upon for the last almost 100 years. The farmers ~~sell~~ their hay and grain to the livestock people. The livestock people have been able to buy hay and grain produced here locally so they didn't have to import it. It is quite a unique operation, but when you disturb that and take the livestock off of this area, you are not only taking the livestock income away, but you are also taking the farm income to a great extent away from this place. It is not profitable to produce hay and grain in this area and export it. It cannot be done. But if it can be used to feed the livestock in this area where it compliments the livestock business, the livestock business compliments the farming business. This is a unique operation and has been for a hundred years and should still be that kind of an operation. It is profitable and contributes a lot to the economics of the whole area.

I would like to conclude my remarks about the resource management plan with this idea in mind. That the farmers, the merchants, the bankers, the county, the state and federal are all in this together. And if you can keep this working so that the livestock industry can be a prosperous industry it supplement the income from the farms, and the farms will supplement the income form the livestock industry and make this a productive unit as it has been in the past. And that is the way is should be operated: not exclude the livestock. If they have to exclude the livestock to permit wild animals it just won't work.

Ralph S. Sedgway

March 30, 1992

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Penelope Smalley, Team Leader;

I am amazed at the time and effort put into the making of the Diamond Mountain Resource Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement and shocked at the cost of such a thing. I feel there are some things that need to be relooked at, clarified, or included in the document. I'll list some of them and hope you will take note.

218-1 As Co-chairman of the Uinta Basin Riparian Coalition, I and the other members discussed the document in our last meeting. The members felt the approach to riparian areas was fairly proper but lacking in some areas, such as no specific mention to water rights, nor that managing riparian zones would have to consider the impacts on private property as well as federal range. Water rights need to be recognized since if the right has to do with irrigation, riparian restoration could have an impact on water delivery. The members of the coalition brought up the fact that all grazing impacts need to be addressed, to include wildlife, not just livestock; especially since Diamond Mountain neighbors the Ashley National Forest and they've seen some overgrazing by elk on streams.

218-2 Talking about grazing, on page 1.11 where wild horses are addressed, instead of saying, "Wild horses will not be addressed further in this plan.", the plan should read more like feral horses will be subject to the Wild Horse and Burro Act and will be removed at owners cost or sold to retain cost of removal.

218-3 To make a statement as found on page 4.23, "The livestock grazing industry in the Uintah Basin has insignificant economic impacts nationally.", is in my opinion not very proper. Since we are talking about Diamond Mountain, why not state Diamond Mountain resource area has no significance nationally. To use a figure such as \$9.19 as the cost of forage/AUM, and then say that it is the value brought into the local economy is an error in the use of the value of the forage since forage value and local economic value are not the same thing. On page 3.53 it's stated "Presently an AUM is valued at \$9.19 as determined by the Agriculture Statistic Service, USDA (1991)." I couldn't find mention to that figure anywhere in the Agricultural Statistic book and I looked cover to cover. I feel that using an assumed value on wildlife and recreation is improper when this document will have a 15 to 20 year impact on the area.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 218 (CHEW)

218-1 In Chapter 1 it states that valid existing rights take precedence over any management decisions depicted on the alternative maps. Water rights are considered "valid existing rights". Activity level projects will comply with NEPA procedures of which impacts to private property will be considered. In reference to wildlife use on riparian areas, please refer to our response 116-2. Significant impacts to riparian in the proposed plan are not expected, however, as part of Chapter 2 Management Guidance Common to the Proposed Plan and the Alternatives, under vegetation resources, it states: "Temporary adjustments in use due to effects of drought would be made to livestock and wildlife as shown needed by monitoring."

218-2 Again, please refer to Chapter 2 Management Guidance Common to the Proposed Plan and the Alternatives regarding management of wild horses within the resources area.

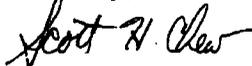
218-3 Please refer to our response 104-2.

218-4 Contrary to alternative B, I feel that bear baiting by permit is a proper activity to allow, as long as it is within DWR rules.

218-5 There are a lot of noxious weeds in the DMRA especially along stream corridors. I did not see anything in the document that addressed this problem. If some of the streams go to a wild and scenic status, would this limit chances to control the noxious weeds? Proper chemical treatment should be allowed in all forms of vegetation control.

218-6 I am concerned about some of the criteria talked about for the reintroduction of bighorn sheep. In everything I've ever read I've never seen anywhere that it is suggested there should be a 10 mile radius from domestic sheep. Recently there have been studies that show bighorns already possess the diseases that are of a concern of them acquiring from domestic sheep. History tells us that not very long ago people felt that domestic sheep were detrimental to cattle, and now everyone knows that common use of the range is beneficial for all animals.

Sincerely,



Scott H. Chew

218-4 Please refer to our responses 114-34 and 116-9.

218-5 The proposed plan provides a management decision for noxious weed; it is outlined in Table 2-15. The specific management prescriptions for weed control along the upper and lower segments of the Green River are also outlined in Chapter 2.

218-6 Please refer to our responses 116-8, 178-11 and 179-39 and new data added to Chapter 3 which should explain the need and justification for the buffer between domestic and bighorn sheep.

Vernal, Utah
April 29, 1992

Renelope Smalley
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South, 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Mrs. Smalley

This is my response to the Diamond Mountain RMP.

I realize the scope of the Draft Document is considerable and that there are many concerns and users affected by this plan.

My main concern is that it appears to me that no one with a true agricultural background assisted or had final say in the preparation of the Draft document. Several places the document refers to Agriculture and particularly livestock as a minor industry in the Uintah Basin. The tone of the document is that Wildlife and Recreation have first priority on BLM lands. The 1991 Utah Agricultural Statistics points out that the cash receipts of livestock in the three county area of the Uintah Basin is 54 million dollars. Certainly that is a significant amount. Livestock represents the most basic and probably the most stable industry we have in the Uintah Basin.

219-1
Cont.

Further livestock create new wealth to the economy each year, as opposed to wildlife and tourism competing for dollars that if not spent in the Uintah Basin will be spent some where else.

On pages 1.5, 1.9, 2.7, 3.5, 4.26, 4.27 statements are made that imply livestock and wildlife are not compatible. I feel that in most instances livestock and wildlife, if properly managed, can complement each other.

I see and am most familiar with the Red Mountain and Spring Creek allotments. I see and count the wildlife on these allotments quite frequently. In referring to Tables A2-1 on page A2.6 I feel that the wildlife AUM numbers are much closer to the objective numbers than what is shown as current numbers. The treatments for increasing AUM's should be accomplished before any increase in wildlife or livestock are permitted. Management of wildlife during March, April and May, when they are most detrimental to the range should be a concern. Objective wildlife stocking levels for this unit include 10 Moose AUM's. We have seen moose in this allotment but they always move out in just a day or two indicating they don't want to stay in this area.

219-2

219-2

Current and objective AUM levels noted in Appendix 2 were derived from UDWR herd unit estimates and broken out by allotment by BLM. These estimates are for use on BLM-administered land only, and do not account for wildlife use on state, other federal, or private lands. We recognize wildlife do not follow administrative boundary lines and that wildlife use depends on availability of forage and physical and terrain factors. This may account for the differences in numbers you have observed. Our concerns not limited to spring wildlife use, but their long term, year 'round patterns. This accounts for the proposed decision stating objective levels would be achieved only if monitoring indicated adequate forage was available and the vegetation was not being harmed. The allocation of forage for moose is to account for the occasional moose that use the allotment as you indicated.

219-2
Cont.

If they were to locate here on this allotment I think they would congregate at Starvation Lake which would probably create a problem there.

219-3

The same generalization could be made for the Spring Creek allotment. This allotment has an objective use for 50 # w/m for Big Horn sheep. I feel this allotment is too small for bighorn without because of human harassment by recreation vehicles and herding of cattle.

I appreciate this opportunity to contribute and hope these views can be considered in the final draft.

Sincerely,
Yours

Fyle Taylor
2271 N 1500 W
Vernal, Utah 84078

219-3

The allocation of forage for bighorn sheep in the Spring Creek Allotment would be for the Ashley Creek Gorge area. This potential habitat area would connect across the face of Dry Fork Mountain to Dry Fork Canyon and onto the adjacent Ashley National Forest area. We identified this area due to documentation as historical habitat. We recognize the problems you mentioned involving private land in the area. Due to these reasons, the Dry Fork area would probably be the lowest priority on our list for reintroduction efforts.

MARCH 31, 1992

PENELOPE SHALLEY, TEAM LEADER
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VERNAL DISTRICT
170 S. 500 E.
VERNAL, UTAH 84078

PREPARERS :

CURRENT MANAGEMENT PLAN A FOR MANAGING PUBLIC LANDS
IN THE DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RESOURCE AREA SHOULD CONTINUE.
MULTI-USE CONCEPTS WITH RANGELAND MANAGEMENT TO
MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE CONDITIONS MUST BE INCORPORATED
BUT NOT LEANING TOWARD A ONE USE OR FIRST
USE CONCEPT.

IF LIVESTOCK GRAZING MUST BE LIMITED AROUND BIG
HORN SHEEP HABITAT IT SHOULD BE DONE WITH
ALTER NATIVE GRAZING PLANS. BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS
EFFECT RELOCATION OF BIG HORN SHEEP COULD HAVE
ON LOCAL SHEEP PRODUCERS MUCH MORE RESEARCH IS
NEEDED BEFORE SUCH A LIMITATION ON GRAZING CAN
BE JUSTIFIED. SOME LOCAL RANCHERS COULD BE FORCED
OUT OF A LIFESTYLE THAT HAS EXISTED FOR FOUR
GENERATIONS.

THERE MUST BE RANGELANDS, WILDLIFE, RECREATION, TIMBER
SCENIC USE AND WITH A UNITED COOPERATIVE EFFORT
OUR PUBLIC LANDS COULD BE MANAGED, PROTECTED
AND IMPROVED WITH MULTI-USE PRACTICES FOR THE
GENERATIONS TO COME.

SINCERELY

Ernest J. and Linda E. Holmes

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 220 (HOLMES)

220-1

Please refer to our response 178-11.

220-1

5.2066

March 30, 1992

To Bureau of Land Management
Re Diamond Mt Resource Management Plan Draft

you deserve a lot of credit in your completion of the draft Diamond Mt Resource Management Plan. Completing a plan of this scope with the various issues and interests is not an easy task. You have also done a commendable job with public involvement. The recognition of the ACEC designation for Dry Fork Red Mountain Complex is a result of this process. Your recognition of this critical area to the basin and the philosophy of critical resource values that give ACEC ~~status~~ recognition is well developed. You state the value of this area to the future of the basin through recreation and other values that give the area ACEC designation cannot be over emphasized. Yet at the same time you make the assumption that leasing and development of phosphate is compatible and it is not. The integrity of the ACEC designation and identified values cannot be maintained with mineral leasing of phosphate. Phosphate development is incompatible with the special emphasis programs of recreation, wildlife and watershed being pursued by federal, state and local agencies. It is also incompatible with traditional uses of the land such as livestock grazing and water uses. As additional leasing development take place in the Break Creek and Spring Creek Area, as well as upper lower Dry Fork, phosphate development become a threat to residents in the quality of life of those people directly affected by proximity and the basin as a whole as traditions of uses of the area are deteriorated. In recognizing the best use of the land for the basin through ACEC designation, phosphate development is incompatible. The benefits to be gained by phosphate leasing & development are far outweighed by the quality of life the basin will experience by managing for those resources that give the area ACEC status. Your preferred alternative needs to withdraw phosphate leasing in those lands

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 221 (JOHNSON)

221-1

Please refer to our response 112-1.

221-1

5.267

Please refer to our response 61-2.

221-2

designated as the Dry Fork Red Mt AEC complex.

221-1
Cont.

The consequences of phosphate development to the identified resource values of the AEC were not adequately addressed. In withdrawing these lands, as needs to be done in the preferred alternative, the reasons should be clearly set out. These reasons are all contained in the AEC nomination.

221-2

One of the most critical reasons is the west of 191 is the Vernal Municipal watershed and the spring the supply water to the valley. The critical condition of the underground cavern system should be addressed in Affected Environment. Numerous publications exist on dye testing to show the underground water flows both east and west of Billy Forge. Any activity that would cause a failure in this system would threaten the municipal water supply. On two occasions last winter, blasting at Chevroon shook homes in Dry Fork. What level of blasting and how far west could cause changes in spring sources & possibly alter the entire underground water flows? Impacts to Watershed, residents, recreation, wildlife, Cultural Resources, ranching & the future of the basin are incompatible with phosphate development. The Red Mt area portion of the AEC east of 191, is receiving more use yearly and provides a scenic backdrop to the basin. The whole of the AEC, rightly recognizing a need to have a withdrawal from phosphate basing as part of the Mgmt plan for the area. There are some vague & inconsistent coverages of phosphate. Part of the plan talks about strip mining & overburden, part of it underground room & pillar mining. Actions have the whole area open under class 3 lands p. 4, 8 says mining activities would be confined to lands east of Brush Creek?

5.268

221-2
Cont.

The desire to work with the public on developing a plan for this Area is an exciting and great opportunity. But in order for a meaningful plan to be developed clear direction for the Area needs to be given & this involves the withdrawal of phosphate leases. Underground mining is unacceptable west of 191. This would not eliminate the threat to the underground water system.

A few other concerns with the preferred alternative:

221-3

Livestock Grazing: The NCEC nomination for the area recognized the value of livestock grazing & the need to continue this activity. Much of the rural makeup of the Ventana Basin is based on the ranching industry & this industry has been a stable economic force in the area. A higher priority needs to be given to the ranching industry and proper grazing levels. The ranching community should not be hit with a reduction of AUM's. Your assessment addresses the problems the ranching community is experiencing and to reduce AUM's would only add to the problem. Many ranches are incorporating recreation use in their operation such as cattle drives etc. Continued traditional ranching & modified recreation ranching are both a use that needs recognition. It would not be in line with the reasons for NCEC designation to favor increased wildlife numbers & recreation use at the expense of compatible traditional uses.

221-4

Also p 4.65 - Under the preferred Alternative No additional public access should be acquired. This would create impacts unacceptable to the other resource values. No new access should be acquired.

221-3

No reductions in livestock are proposed for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork area. Vegetation monitoring on the grazing allotments would be the basis for any future reductions.

221-4

Public access to public lands presently surrounded by private lands was identified as an issue during the scoping period. Public access would be acquired only from willing sellers or givers.

A very important recognition you gave to the 1978 American Indian religious Freedom Act and associated recognition in ACEC's to traditional Ute usage of the land really needs to be commended. This is the first planning document I have seen recognize not only the act but also the incorporation into the document. This is a highly commendable recognition. The Native American heritage is very much a part of our culture.

The western ranching heritage is also very much a part of our culture and needs to be recognized not only from the economic standpoint of the basin & individual ranchers but also its cultural significance. For every recreationist that is appalled at seeing ~~these~~ livestock grazing on public lands, there are many more that share a certain excitement in seeing these same animals.

5.270

221-5

I would also like to discourage the use of fencing riparian areas and instead look at other management options to improve riparian areas.

In conclusion you need to go back to the original ACEC Nomination for the Dry Fork Red Mt complex and to develop the management plan with emphasis on compatible resource values and

221-6

The plan also needs to allow for additional restrictions if it becomes necessary to protect resource values at risk i.e. additional closures for ORV's and other recreation use restrictions to protect riparian values etc. ~~Encourage~~ Encourage timing changes etc and other mgmt options to ranchers to reduce predator losses rather than current predator control methods. There are many opportunities for compatible uses to be worked out that have just shot up because of disagreements. The plan for Dry Fork Red Mt ACEC can provide a great opportunity

Thank you Darlene Johnson

221-5 Fencing of riparian areas is identified as only one management option to maintain and enhance riparian values.

221-6 We believe the management prescriptions for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC provide for the protection of important resource values; while allowing for reasonable development or use of compatible resources.

George R. Miller
2510 W. 1000 S.
Vernal, Utah 84078

March 27, 1992

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

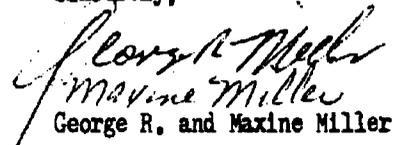
Dear Ms. Smalley,

As Diamond Mountain landowners of some 700 hundred acres which is used for summer grazing and recreation, we can't see the need to start opening up more roads. If anything, the existing ones need more work and maintainence.

Your draft is so complex and hard to read and understand it is difficult to form a good opinion in 90 days on what took a group of people and three years to prepare.

We would if anything have to favor Alternative A, at the same time we see no reason not to continue on the same level as in the past. We thought you were doing the job well enough as it was. We also hope that a few radical environmentalist groups are not trying to change your past policies and in doing so creating problems for the silent majority.

Sincerely,


George R. and Maxine Miller

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 222 (MILLER)

222-1
12-1.

Thank you for your comment. Also please refer to our response



Department of Energy

Western Area Power Administration
P.O. Box 11606
Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0606

MAR 31 1992

Ms. Penelope Smalley
Team Leader
Vernal District
Bureau of Land Management
170 South 500 East
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Ms. Smalley:

Thank you for the copy of the "Fall 1991 Draft Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)." Western Area Power Administration (Western) is very interested in the planning activities of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), particularly RMPs and EISs. We have reviewed the RMP and EIS and offer the following comments for your consideration:

5.272
223-1

1. Major transmission lines and pipelines are prominent linear facilities and could be represented on the maps for information and reference purposes to facilitate the review process.

223-2

2. Western owns, operates, and maintains the Flaming Gorge-Vernal Nos. 1 and 3 138-kV transmission lines across the Diamond Mountain Resource Area. These lines have been in existence since the early 1960s and constitute existing utility corridors. These existing corridors should be represented on the maps and those new corridors proposed under the respective alternative management plans should be considered as additional. The distinction between existing and proposed new corridors could be clarified in the RMP.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the Diamond Mountain RMP and EIS and hope these comments will be beneficial. If there are any questions, please telephone me at (801) 524-6375 (FTS 588-6375) or Lloyd Nelson at (801) 524-5869 (FTS 588-5869).

Sincerely,

James E. Tomsic
Assistant Area Manager
for Engineering

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 223 (DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION, Tomsic)

223-1 Thank you for your suggestion to include major transmission lines and pipelines on our maps. However, the myriad of information needed to be shown on all maps necessitated our including only the most essential data. In this the township/range grid, major roads and general topographic relief lines were considered sufficient information and reference guides for the general reader.

223-2 Only major corridor routes, whether existing or proposed, are shown on the priority management maps for the proposed plan and alternatives.

Chapter 5 - Coordination and Consultation



Chevron U.S.A. Inc.
6400 South Fiddler's Green Circle, Englewood, CO 80111, P.O. Box 599, Denver, CO 80201

J.F. Newville
Manager, Environmental,
Safety, Fire & Health

April 1, 1992

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District Office
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Ms. Smalley:

Chevron has some serious concerns with the Draft Diamond Mountain Resource Area RMP with regard to its impacts on oil and gas leasing and operations. Alternatives discussed other than A establish a disturbing trend toward greater restriction on acreage that has traditionally been available for exploration within this basin.

224-1 There is no justification furnished in the Draft to support the dramatic increase in highly restrictive seasonal stipulations in wildlife areas or for expanding protection zones for raptors and sage grouse, nor is there any documentation that current management of oil and gas leasing and operations has resulted in population decreases which warrant increasing restrictions.

The proposed seasonal restrictions could potentially restrict access to an area from December 1 to July 15, 7 1/2 months of the year! This would make things impossible from an operations standpoint.

224-2 Precluding geophysical exploration on 14,460 acres of high potential lands would also prevent any possible exploration or development of the area because most companies would be unwilling to fight for access to an area with no seismic evidence of hydrocarbons. This would all but lock out this area of the RMP.

224-3 Restricting access for maintenance and operations is unacceptable! We understand this as meaning that if our well went down during any of the proposed restriction periods, we couldn't get to the well to restore or increase production. Would this apply to existing producing wells within the area or would they be grandfathered?

The area discussed is a large piece of Utah acreage and we don't feel this document strikes a "balance" between the environmental and mineral resources of the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments and we look forward to seeing them addressed in the final document.

Sincerely,
J.F. Newville

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 224 (CHEVRON USA, INC., Newville)

224-1 Please refer to our response 212-2.

224-2 Under the proposed plan, level 3 and 4 lands would be open to geophysical exploration. Level 1 and 2 lands would be closed to significant surface disturbing geophysical activities. Refer to Table 2-15, under minerals.

224-3 The proposed plan has added or emphasized wording regarding maintenance and existing operations to most restrictions. Thus existing oil and gas activities would be allowed to continue at producing well sites.

March 30, 1992

Ms. Penelope Smalley
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District Office
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Re: Resource Management Plans/Environmental
Impact Statement - The Diamond Mountain
Resource Area

Dear Ms. Smalley:

C.W. McCoy Sheep Company is a closely held family corporation owned by the widow and sons of Clifton W. McCoy, son of Walter McCoy, who began grazing sheep on this public and private land in the late 1890's. The McCoy family has grazed livestock on these same lands for approximately 90 years. The following comments, general and specific were written by Paul W. McCoy, President and operator of the ranch, and John L. McCoy, Vice President.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

	<u>Page</u>
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2. THE EVALUATION OF LIVESTOCK AS AN ECONOMIC FACTOR IN THE DMRA IS GROSSLY UNDERSTATED; BUT THE EVALUATION OF TOURISM AS AN ECONOMIC FACTOR IN THE DMRA IS GROSSLY OVERSTATED.	3
3. THE PROPOSED WILDLIFE AUM OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOURCE STUDY HAVE ALREADY BEEN ATTAINED AND SHOULD NOT BE EXCEEDED.	6
4. NO INTRODUCTION OF SUCH ANIMALS AS THE BLACK FOOTED FERRET OR THE ANTELOPE IS WARRANTED.	10
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- 6. THE ALLOTMENT INFORMATION AS TO C.W. MCCOY SHEEP COMPANY IS ERRONEOUS IN MANY WAYS. 11
- 7. THE MAJORITY OF RIPARIAN AREAS IN THE DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RESOURCE AREA ARE ON PRIVATE LANDS. 12
- 8. MANY OF THE SOURCES USED TO COMPILE THE STUDY ARE INAPPROPRIATE. 13

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- 1. THE MANAGEMENT PRIORITY AREAS ARE AND WILL BECOME SINGLE USE CONCEPTS AND A WAY OF AVOIDING MULTIPLE USE ADMINISTRATION BY THE BLM.
 - (a) The Federal Land Policy Management act, 43 USC §1712 (c) (1) directs management of public lands for multiple use and sustained yield as FLPMA provides at §1702 (c).
 - (b) The use of MPAs artificially constrain the alternative uses for the lands in the DMRA in this document.
 - (c) We believe that implementation of the plan proposed in the EIS prejudices the property and livelihood of ranchers and other non-recreational and non-wild life users in the Resource Area and violate the principle of multiple use under which the BLM is required to conduct management actions and decisions.
 - (d) Areas of critical environmental concern: The MPA restrictions on these areas are in some ways more restrictive than wilderness areas: Wilderness can only be set aside as wilderness by Congress. Under what power does BLM take upon itself the ability to lock up these areas in the same way or more stringently than wilderness when these areas have not been decreed by Congress to have the criteria for wilderness or for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River Act. Truly these areas have scenic value and as they are currently being so managed by multiple use, will remain so. Due mainly because of the rough and inaccessible characteristics of the areas.
 - (e) FLPMA provides for multiple use of land for some or

225-1

Please refer to the Summary at the beginning of this document for an explanation of the management priority area concept.

all resources 43 USC §1702(C) it does not necessarily follow that any one resource is to be given priority over another.

- (f) Congress established the concept of "Principle or Major Uses" which, when terminated must be reported to Congress 43 USC §1712(e)(2). The uses included domestic livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and utilization. Mineral exploration and production, right of way. Outdoor recreation and timber production. 43 USC §1702(c)

2. THE EVALUATION OF LIVESTOCK AS AN ECONOMIC FACTOR IN THE DMRA IS GROSSLY UNDERSTATED; BUT THE EVALUATION OF TOURISM AS AN ECONOMIC FACTOR IN THE DMRA IS GROSSLY OVERSTATED.

- (a) As long time residents of the Uintah Basin, and persons who have been on Diamond Mountain for the elk and deer hunt every year since 1966, and members of a family which has grazed livestock on these lands for over 90 years, we were rather shocked to read the statement in the environmental statement by the Bureau of Land Management at page 3.53 wherein it stated that agriculture was the Uintah Basin's major economic base until the early 1900's. Agriculture was the Basin's basic economic support until after World War II, when the oil boom began to shift the economic emphasis in the basin from agriculture to oil. However, the oil and mineral extraction businesses have tended to have the effect of boom and bust upon the economy, and have caused severe economic stress in the Uintah Basin when they have declined suddenly, as recently as 1985. Agriculture on the other hand has remained a major factor in the economic base of the Uintah Basin and still remains so today.

- (b) A further erroneous statement is found at page 3:53 of the EIS:

"Today farm and ranch incomes account for approximately five percent (5%) of the tri-county's personal income."

- (c) No citation is made in the EIS as to the source of this information. An economic study from Dr. Donald Snyder of Utah State University in 1989 found in Research Report #129 of the Utah

225-2

The discussion of agriculture in the socioeconomics section of Chapter 3 has been changed. Please refer to our response 3-24.

225-1
Cont.

2.

5.276

225-2

Agricultural Experimental Station. The Size and Role of Agriculture in Utah and is readily available to any persons who inquire of Dr. Snyder shows that twenty-two and one-half (22.5%) of the Basin's economic activity in 1987 is attributable to agriculture. Thus it appears that the BLM understates the impact of agriculture by 400%, a difference which indicates that the EIS does not appear to be remotely accurate.

- (d) The role that agriculture plays is further denegated by the statement:

"Agricultural employment plays a minor role in Basin economy."

- (e) While such statements may be accurate from the records of the Department of Employment Security, many agricultural employees are not so registered. In addition, such statistics do not accurately reflect the economic activity of livestock ranchers, as the economic activity of ranches is, in general, carried out with relatively few employees. For the most part, the ranchers in the Uintah Basin live on or near their ranches and they and their families actively operate those ranches. There are very few absentee livestock operators which have lasted more than a few years. The major portion of the cash flow from agriculture is paid to the owners of the various ranches who in turn, spend these funds for petroleum products, supplies, equipment, vehicles, occasional employees, groceries and various items necessary to run a ranch.

- (f) The bias of the writers of this particular section is quite apparent when the above statements are read in conjunction with the statements relative to recreation appearing on page 3.52. Table no. 3-23 appearing on page 3.53 which purports to show the economic impact of tourists, hunters and others visiting the area.

- (g) This table is in part based upon the figure of \$25.00 per day for economic benefits, a statement attributed to Governor Norman Bangertter in 1989 in a welcoming address to a 1989 meeting of the Utah Section of the National Wildlife Society. Such a

statement is hardly what any statistician would call a reliable source or scholarly studied information upon which decisions of government should be based. The authors take great pains in compiling Table No. 3-23 to show the number of visits to the various areas of DMRA (for some reason, the number of visitors and hours are all in round numbers. Could it be that these figures are estimates?) These visitor hours are multiplied by the above political statement of \$25.00 per day for a supposed grand total of \$24.96 million, which number cannot be in any way verified. Apparently the authors felt that the sum of \$24.96 million, was a significant amount of money, even though it is an obvious guess.

- 225-2
Cont.
- 5-278
- (h) On the other hand, statistics kept by the Utah Department of Agriculture show that the sale of livestock brought in over \$54 million to the economies of Daggett/Duchesne/Uintah Counties in 1989. Why was this not a significant sum of money to the authors? Or is it insignificant because livestock generated it?
 - (i) From the foregoing it is apparent that the authors have grossly understated the economic impact of livestock raising in the Uintah Basin by ignoring statistics kept by the State of Utah for many years. Instead the authors chose to engage in speculation with respect to the impact upon the DMRA by attracting hunters, tourists and other visitors and thereby arrive at a figure that is 50% less than the proven economic impact of the livestock business upon the Uintah Basin and never once states the economic impact of the livestock business anywhere in the EIS statement.
 - (j) If, indeed, the statement in the last paragraph at page 3.53 is true that agriculture only provides 5% of the total income of the Basin and according to the Department of Agriculture it provided at least \$54 million in 1989, then the total income of the tri-county area must be in the area of \$920 million, which would be spread between mineral development and tourism, according to the statement of the EIS at page 3.52 that the income of the DMRS is from these three (3) sources. The 1989 gross income figures from mineral development

and extraction and the sale of minerals. However, the Gross Taxable Sales from all sources in the tri-county area including hotels and restaurants for 1989 were as follows:

Daggett:	\$ 7,095,635
Duchesne:	77,103,454
Uintah:	<u>156,126,866</u>
TOTAL:	\$ <u>240,325,955</u>

Source: Gross Taxable Sales By County and Major Industry, EDA, Tourism Study, Utah Office of Planning and Budget, Utah Department of Community and Economic Development, University of Utah, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, March 9, 1992.

(k) The above study was of taxable sales under Utah's Sales Tax. The sale of livestock from a ranch is not subject to such tax and was not included; however, the income from all tourism certainly is taxed and was included in these studies. The sums for food, lodging and other items used by all tourists for 1989 in the tri-county area barely approaches the amount of money attributed by the BLM to the DMRA. When the tourist attraction of Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge Dam and Recreation area, Ashley National Forest and other tourist attractions are considered; it is apparent that Table No. 3-23 is in no way accurate.

THE PROPOSED WILDLIFE AUM OBJECTIVES OF THE RESOURCE STUDY HAVE ALREADY BEEN ATTAINED AND SHOULD NOT BE EXCEEDED.

- (a) Antelope: (Diamond Mountain) We feel that antelope is not a species that is needed or wanted on Diamond Mountain, with fenced pastures, and private lands and BLM lands intermingled, and lack of winter habitat and conflicts with other wildlife.
- (b) Elk: (Diamond Mountain) We have needed a statement from the BLM as to forage available for elk since 1966. At that time a letter was sent out to permittees which allocated 100 elk for winter use and 50 elk for summer use. Elk population has exploded since that time to between 1000 to 1500 head depending on the severity of the winter and how good the summer is. The data on current use and objective use

225-3

Please refer to our responses 3-24, 104-3, 216-3, 219-2 and 225-6 concerning wildlife forage allocations. Antelope currently exist on Diamond Mountain on the Cooper Draw Allotment. They summer on Diamond Mountain and winter under Diamond Rim to the Jensen area. We recognize the problems associated with antelope and hope to work cooperatively with concerned individuals to resolve these problems. We believe elk issues on Diamond Mountain also can be resolved with the development of the herd management plan as required by the 1992 Utah State House Bill No. 25. The use of posted hunting units beginning in 1992 also offer the private landowner the option of obtaining an economic return for wildlife use on private land. We appreciate your information on current wildlife use on the allotments you are permitted to graze. We have completed prescribed burns in Dead Horse and Roller Draws in the past few years as examples of our commitment to resolve issues on allotments on Diamond Mountain. We will be working with you and UDWR during development of the allotment management plan. Of concern to us will be the development of additional water sources and other needed range improvements. Please refer to Appendix Table A8-3, which outlines proposed management opportunities for the Jackson-Crouse-Dry Hollow allotments. As discussed in Chapter 4, we recognize BLM's role in the ranchers' livestock operations.

225-2
Cont.

5.279

225-3

populations contained in the EIS is 30 years outdated. On many allotments where current use is expressed in AUMs and converted to herd numbers on a 12 month basis, we know without doubt the current head count being used by BLM is not correct and reflects populations in 1966 or 1967. The objective use as expressed in AUMs on most allotments in this document would meet with little objection from landowners and ranchers. By our estimates, the current herd would need to be reduced by half to be in line with the objective use expressed in the EIS. The AUMs available in the objectives is fairly accurate, however, the elk population shown as currently physically present is grossly in error.

Elk are presently adversely impacting rest rotation grazing systems, deferred systems and new burns, by being present all year long. Livestock grazing is being blamed for any resource damage occurring on forage because the BLM has consistently proposed lowering the livestock AUMs. However, Big Game have a continuous impact upon the range by staying in certain areas for long periods of time. Livestock on the other hand, can be and usually are managed so that they do not concentrate in one area for too long.

- (c) Big Game: Big game cannot be excluded from blame for causing damage to forage. BLM should be counting elk populations in a whole herd area and not stop as they have in the past at property lines, state lines, park boundaries, Indian reservations when counting, if the areas across these artificial boundaries are a part of the normal migration pattern of the wildlife herd.
- (d) Moose: The EIS shows no moose currently grazing on our allotments. Such a statement is not true. Moose have been present on Diamond Mountain and have been observed by these writers since 1971. There are 20 to 30 moose present on Diamond Mountain at different times of the year, winter and summer. Eight moose have been observed in the Jackson Draw area the last 3 elk seasons. Ranchers in these areas have not perceived them to be a problem. Primarily because moose do not seem to be in large herds, but are solitary in nature.

- (e) At page 8.5 is found table A2-1 which purports to set forth the current wild life use in AUMs by the numbers of deer, antelope, elk and big horn sheep. In the section involving Jackson/Crouse/Dry Hollow, which is one of the series of allotments which McCoy Sheep Company owns, the table shows the AUMs of elk at 211 for all three (3) of these allotments. It should be pointed out that all three (3) of these allotments have areas which elk feed on year round, so that the use by elk of those allotments will be for twelve (12) months. Those 211 head of elk convert over using a .75 conversion rate to 20 head of elk for the entire year for each of the three (3) allotments.
- (f) The conversion rate of .75 to convert the AUM figure to the elk numbers actually on the allotments, converts to 56.8 elk the year round on all of those allotments. By actual observation, we can document that we will have elk numbers approaching 100 elk on each one (1) of these allotments, ie. approximately 100 elk during the year in our Jackson Draw allotment, approximately 80 elk in our Dry Hollow allotment and a number roughly approaching that in Crouse Canyon. The number of elk and the number of elk AUMs which the BLM is showing in its table as presently using those allotments is totally inadequate and not based upon a proper determination of the actual number of elk grazing on those allotments.
- (g) Further, it is our position that we presently have upon these allotments more than the number of AUMs for elk, 512 shown in your column for the future objective wild life stocking levels on the Diamond Mountain area. The figures shown as objectives have already been met. No further increase in the elk population is necessary, and would cause hardship on the range land as shown below.
- (h) It is quite inconsistent for the BLM in the EIS to take the position that it is desirable to increase the wildlife on these three (3) allotments and at the same time make the comments that the department has made with respect to these permits made at page A8.18 in which each one (1) of these permits is shown as having a class one resource

225-3
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conflict/problem, that problem being the following:

"Existing water resources are insufficient to allow uniform distribution in the allotment as a whole or are unreliable. Some areas are being over-utilized near existing water; other portions of the allotment are not providing the number of AUMs authorized."

- (i) The BLM should not allow or encourage an increase in the number of wildlife grazing on these allotments so long as these conditions are present. Wildlife grazes near water resources and contributes to the above problem in the same manner as livestock. We might add that the proposed solution to this problem, ie: the development of water sources on BLM property further from the primary riparian areas was repeatedly proposed by our father, C. W. McCoy to the BLM, whose response was: "If you do it, it will be solely at your expense and risk." Despite such a negative reaction, we developed several springs and reservoirs on BLM lands totally at our own expense which benefit all wildlife as well as the livestock. We do need the further development of water sources further from the primary riparian areas.
- (j) Another aspect that the authors neglect to mention is that the matter of AUMs spent on public lands are generally a part of a year round system of livestock grazing that each rancher must have in order to maintain his overall operation. The AUMs in most cases grazed on public lands are merely a part of the year round livestock pasture rotation that is necessary to the successful livestock management and grazing management on a ranch.
- (k) An example of faulty economic reasoning is the analysis found at page 4.60 wherein the authors state that by increasing wild life from 27,600 AUMs to 40,000 AUMs would only result in livestock reductions of 9,000 AUMs and that such a loss would only result in \$11,500 yearly loss to the local livestock industry. No analysis whatsoever is shown to support such a conclusion. However, assuming that the 9,000 AUMs on BLM land is for a six (6) month period, that would result in a reduction in running capacity of a total of 1500 head of cows. The annual calf crop from those 1500

225-3
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head of cows, assuming 100 calves die or not be born, (which is excessive) would be 1400 head of calves; and those 1400 head of calves would have a minimum market value of \$450 each, for a minimum total loss to the livestock industry and local economy in cash flow of \$630,000.00, not the \$11,500.00 set forth in your analysis, a misstatement of \$618,500.00.

- (1) Further, the authors claim that the loss is to the "local livestock industry." Such a statement ignores the fact that this reduction in revenue is a reduction in revenue which the economy of the communities in the Basin as a whole would lose, not just the livestock industry.

4. NO INTRODUCTION OF SUCH ANIMALS AS THE BLACK FOOTED FERRET OR THE ANTELOPE IS WARRANTED.

- (a) No objective proof exists that the black footed Ferret was ever present in the DMRA. The proposed "reintroduction" is in fact an introduction of a species which will create more conflicts with multiple use than we now have.
- (b) Antelope would have difficulty dealing with the numerous fences in the DMRA, and further conflict with the elk herds and cattle now grazing on the DMRA. A substantial herd of antelope exists in Antelope Flats and other areas close to the DMRA and have not migrated into the DMRA probably because it is not suitable for their habitat.

5. NO FURTHER ACCESS ROADS SHOULD BE BUILT IN CROUSE/JACKSON DRAW/DRY HOLLOW ALLOTMENTS.

- (a) Access Roads: When new roads are planned on public land they meet with opposition because of environmental, wildlife, archaeological, considerations. We are opposed to any new roads on private land for some of the same reasons. However, because we are talking about private land, these considerations seem insignificant.
- (b) Access roads through private lands, if a need truly exists, should be accomplished by cooperative land exchanges. If that fails then the roads should be made entirely on public land, and pass the test of

225-4 Please refer to our response 214-7 regarding black-footed ferrets; response 176-5 regarding impacts to the local community; and response 225-3 above concerning antelope forage allocations.

225-5 Public access through private lands on Diamond Mountain Plateau to public lands on Diamond Mountain Plateau was an issue identified in the scoping period at the beginning of this planning project. BLM has an obligation to provide the general public with access to public lands. However, acquisition of such access through private lands would only be completed with willing sellers or givers, as outlined in Chapter 2.

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225-4

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225-5

225-5
Cont.

public comment before they are built.

- (c) No additional public access would be a positive, long term benefit for wildlife species sensitive to human activities in their preferred habitat. The development of further access roads is not needed in the Crouse/Jackson Draw/Dry Hollow areas.

6. THE ALLOTMENT INFORMATION AS TO C.W. MCCOY SHEEP COMPANY IS ERRONEOUS IN MANY ASPECTS.

- (a) Allotment Information contained in the EIS is erroneous in the following particulars:

(i) On page A8.6 Table A8-1, C. W. McCoy Sheep Company is listed as permittee on Marshall Draw allotment. We have never been the permittee on Marshall Draw.

(ii) We are listed as permittee on Jackson-Crouse-Dry Hollow allotments number 14812. The current season of use is not correct, our license reads; season of use as 05-05 to 11-10. The current acreage is incorrect; state lands are 1840 acres, instead of 2252 as published. On our Crouse property in the Allen Draw in Daggett County, the land status map shows: Sec. 16 T1S 25E SLM as a full state section. The NE 1/4; S1/2 Sec. 16 T1S 25 E SLM is owned by C. W. McCoy Sheep Co. Inc. since 1956, when it was purchased from DeJournette. This acreage is 480 acres. Taking 480 acres from the published 2252 acres would leave 1772 acres of state land, which is still not correct. On the land status map in Section 36 T1N 23E in Dry Hollow, it shows 160 acres of state land. There is 80 acres of state land in the South 1/2 of the SW 1/4 of Sec. 36 T1N 23E. Adding up Sec. 36 T2N R23E and Sec. 32 T2N R24E and the South 1/2 of Sec. 2 T1N R23E, all of which are in Jackson Draw, would be 1600 acres. That, and the 160 in Crouse and the 80 in Dry Hollow would add up to the 1840 acres that is currently leased from Utah State by C.W. McCoy Sheep Co., Inc. Adding the 480 from Crouse and 80 from Dry Hollow to the published private acres of 6344 would add up to 6904 acres, which is close to what we pay taxes on.

(iii) Our allotments have been monitored on cattle use for 20 years. An actual use study was conducted for

225-6

Referring to Table A8-3, conflict type #1 can occur whether sufficient AUMs are available or not. The Crouse Allotment has sufficient AUMs to meet livestock and wildlife requirements but water sources could be improved to better distribute both.

The paragraph referred to on p. 4.6 was printed in error. Please refer to our responses 52-2 and 104-3.

Corrections as noted have been made to Table A8-1 regarding the Jackson-Crouse-Dry Hollow Allotment.

225-6

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three years; 1974, 1975 and 1976 to establish percent of use, and carrying capacity for change of use from sheep to cattle. Of these years, 1974 was very dry, 1975 was very wet, and 1976 was very dry.

(iv) On our BLM allotments there are spring developments in the Dead Horse Draw, Whitey Roller Draw, (Crouse) Forkys Draw and Little Hole (Jackson). The two in Crouse were cooperative developments with BLM, DWR, and us. The two in Jackson Draw were constructed by C. W. McCoy prior to 1952, and are filed on by BLM. There are also 8 reservoirs that have been made prior to and after the Taylor Grazing Act, by ourselves.

(v) Our grazing allotments are in excellent condition taking into consideration the severe drought conditions that we have experienced in the last several years. Our private lands have been over utilized by wildlife during this drought to the extreme, because of watering places drying up on adjacent public lands. We must have a wildlife management plan to make our grazing systems work again. Objective wildlife stocking levels as published on Table A2-1 are a good way to start this process.

7. THE MAJORITY OF RIPARIAN AREAS IN THE DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RESOURCE AREA ARE ON PRIVATE LANDS.

(a) Riparian: The majority of riparian areas in the Diamond Mountain resource area are on private lands. The water on these lands have been developed and filed on for beneficial use in the State of Utah. When these lands were homesteaded by the first settlers the water was the most important consideration. These lands became the most productive lands in these areas and all life depends on, and are drawn to, these lush areas. Riparian, then, is of the utmost importance to the private landowners. Grazing allotments are dependent on riparian areas, and most allotments are used in conjunction with private lands. Plans to improve riparian areas on public land must include input by these landowners and water right holders. Water developments and land treatments to improve distribution of livestock and wildlife are the most effective way to improve riparian areas. Wildlife, also can impact riparian areas because they are present year long, and depend on the water and plants

225-7

Please refer to Chapter 3, riparian section, where it states most perennial streams, springs, and seeps are on private lands. Also see Chapter 4, under impacts to riparian habitat resources regarding concentrated wildlife use in riparian areas.

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225-7

grown by the water.

8. MANY OF THE SOURCES USED TO COMPILE THE STUDY ARE INAPPROPRIATE.

- (a) An examination of the references upon which the authors of the study shows that many of the references are unpublished masters theses, popular press items and at least one statement of a politician speaking before a wildlife group. None of these sources of information should or can be regarded as reliable scholarly sources of information upon which the administration of these public lands should be based, as they are not subjected to any peer review or any other process to guarantee the authenticity of the data or statements made therein.

CONCLUSION

It is apparent from the written text that the authors have not used proper financial and economic information to value the importance of livestock raising to the economy of the Uintah Basin, nor have they properly evaluated the economic loss caused to the local economy by reduction in livestock AUMs. They have further grossly understated the number of wildlife presently grazing on allotments and appear to recommend increases in wildlife upon these allotments while stating that these allotments are overgrazed near water sources when wildlife grazing is a part of the problem. In addition, the study recommends further public access roads while stating that such roads adversely effect wildlife. The recommendation as to riparian areas are mostly directed to areas of private ownership, which cannot and should not be affected without compensation. Further, the study is not based upon proper data or studies which have any proven basis, but is, in many areas based upon unpublished masters theses, guesses and statements of political candidates. Such erroneous information and reasoning, if retained, will serve as the foundation for improper policy decisions now and in the future, and should be removed from the BLM's analysis altogether. The Bureau of Land Management is a governmental entity and a quasi-judicial body when it makes decisions involving the administration of public lands as to the rights of the users thereof. A study is no better than the information upon which it is based. We have consulted with several range and economic experts who have reviewed these sources and find them to be totally inadequate sources and not

Please refer to our response 176-6.

225-8

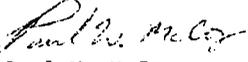
Chapter 2 - Coordination and Consultation

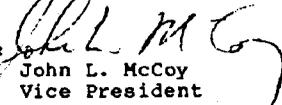
5 286

having the credibility needed for a study as important as the
DMRA-EIS.

Very truly yours,

C. W. McCOY SHEEP COMPANY:

By: 
Paul W. McCoy
President

By: 
John L. McCoy
Vice President

cc: Utah Bureau of Land Management
Washington Bureau of Land Management
Honorable Orrin Hatch, U.S. Senate
Honorable Jake Garn, U.S. Senate
Honorable William Orton, U.S. Congressman

DATE: March 30, 1992

TO: Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

FROM: Lynn Siddoway
319 North 850 West
Vernal, Utah 84078

RE: Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan

This letter is to respond to the proposed Diamond Mountain RMP. I do not mean to be critical of the BLM or BLM employees. I feel that Alternative E, the preferred alternative of the BLM, includes resource management methods that are too restrictive on livestock and especially sheep permits. This document presents very emotional issues and in my response I have tried to be constructive. There is not a permittee in the Resource Area that is not affected by this document. I feel that the document is a threat to my total sheep operation, because of the management of the habitat for the reintroduction of wildlife species, raptors and new vehicle recreation access roads.

I feel that Alternative E should not be adopted in its entirety, but should be integrated with other Alternatives and in some situations completely rewritten.

I realize that the Team was made up of just people trying to interpret laws and regulations. These interpretations, however, are subject to personal biases.

The Management Priority Area Concept used by the Team is a difficult concept to follow throughout the proposed RMP. Although the RMP asserts that the use of MPA is in the interest of multiple use, management directives of the BLM, but give emphasis to different resources. The exclusionary effect of an MPA is made clear by the conclusion that only uses compatible with the priority use will be allowed concurrently. The designation "Priority" use violates FLPMA explicit direction and the legislative history shows that Congress rejected the identical concept proposed by the Public Land Law Review Commission.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 227 (SIDDOWNAY)

227-1 We believe the management priority area concept, as discussed in the Summary section of this document, is compatible with the principles of multiple use. FLPMA states that the "...goals and objectives be established by law as guidelines for public land use planning, and that management be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law;...". It goes on to state: "...the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in this natural condition...". We have made every reasonable effort to provide for the multiple use and enjoyment of public resources within the resource area. However, we have outlined reasonable restrictions in those level 1 and/or 2 lands in those instances where critical resource values have been determined to need protection and/or careful management. In these level 1 and/or 2 lands, allowing uses that are compatible with the resource values that placed the land in these levels, we believe, is consistent with the intent and letter of FLPMA.

Section: Chapter 2 Alternatives

Page: Comments:

227-2 2.39 Black-footed Ferret habitat-Alternative E is not acceptable. Alternative D is preferred. The Sunshine Bench is high on the priority list. The Sunshine Bench is part of the S J Hatch allotment and is classified as in unsatisfactory range condition. The allotment is classified I. Managing to improve range conditions and create Black-footed Ferret habitat are in direct conflict because of the prairie dog communities. The Sunshine Bench is also used extensively as a livestock driveway. There is a considerable amount of private land near the Sunshine Bench. The small aircraft landing strip on the Sunshine Bench also has a lot of activity around the facility during the spring and fall months.

5.289 227-3 2.40 Wildlife Transplants-Alternative E is not acceptable. The management plans calls for introduction of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep. It also calls for a 10-mile buffer zone around reintroduction sites from domestic sheep. However the 10-mile buffer zone was not documented to any literature. The Desert Bighorn Council did in one of these transcripts recommend a 9-mile buffer, however this was not based on research it was just a recommendation. It seems that the size of the buffer zone should be based on topography and be highly dependent on the natural barriers that separate the species. In Nevada Bighorns have been successfully reintroduced with a 2-mile barrier. Although, the several times bighorn reintroduction is mentioned in the document only one time does the document describe all the factors that govern successful reintroduction. Because of the serious impact these releases would have on livestock permittees in these areas, very serious study and consideration should be given to these releases. I feel much more research is needed on the subject, as these releases are extremely expensive and can force me as a sheep operator out of business. If Bighorns are to be reintroduced it should be with the smallest buffer zone needed so as not to waste resources and lower the impact on me and other sheep producers.

227-4 Pronghorn Antelope introduction on Diamond Mountain is not acceptable. The RMP does not state how special habitat will be managed. The problems I have experienced within the Bookcliff Resource Area with Antelope I feel like I am supporting all of the Antelope I can afford to. Diamond Mountain is a poor area for introduction because of 1) miles of restrictive fencing, 2) lack of water, 3) vehicle access and 4) illegal hunting.

227-2 Please refer to our responses 90-1, 176-5, 179-3, and 205-5.

227-3 Please refer to our responses 179-22.

227-4 Please refer to our response 225-3.

227-5 2.41 Lands and Realty - Vehicle Access
 The 5 Alternatives are not acceptable. The public vehicle access into the Lambson Draw violate management alternatives of other parts of the RMP for wildlife Management. Increasing vehicle access into traditionally isolated low human use areas would negatively impact wild life and in particular, elk during the calving season. I have a verbal agreement with the UDWR to not graze the Lambson Draw until after June 10 to allow the cow elk to use the area as a calving ground. Public vehicle access into this area would have a very negative impact on 100 head of cow elk.

I believe that public vehicle access for recreational purposes is already in excess on Diamond Mountain. The public access into this area was put high on the priority list several years ago by a very biased BLM employee. Biases should not be in a scientific document.

5.290 227-6 2.46 The change of the grazing date from the traditional May 1 to April 1 on winter grazing permits is not acceptable. The critical date for spring grazing on winter grazing permits should not be the same for all permits. Each individual permit has many different variables. To make a exact date for removal of all livestock from all permits is not acceptable. This statement fails to recognize vegetation management as the main objective and any management objective should be thought of in terms of the best possible management strategy for that goal.

To put an April 1 date for removal of sheep from a winter sheep permit would have adverse effects on every permittee. Where would these displaced sheep go for one month?

227-7 2.116 Table 2-18 Alternative E Special Emphasis Areas
 The statement, Do not allow livestock grazing within Sears Canyon except for one day livestock trailing. No domestic sheep grazing would be allowed, is not acceptable. The team members are unsure where the boundry for the Browns Park Complex ends and on the maps it is impossible to identify. Until this boundry is clarified all livestock grazing would be iliminated within Sears Canyon.

227-5 Please refer to our response 12-1.

227-6 Please refer to our response 179-7.

227-7 The restricted use is below or north of the fence in Sears Canyon located at T1N, R24E, Sec. 23 SENW. This area is not part of the UDWR Management Area you are currently authorized to graze in. The area restricted to grazing is the steep canyon proper which presently receives only trailing use.

4.60

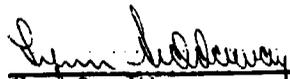
Under the heading Cumulative Impacts of Implementing Alternative E the statement:
Increasing vehicle access into traditionally isolated, low human use areas would negatively impact wildlife and, in particular, black bear and mountain lion habitat. although this alternative allows for the most miles of increased vehicle access, seasonal restrictions or designated road limitations would offset these adverse wildlife impacts.

Once these access roads have been built the impact to wildlife is almost permanent. The RMP is not consistant in that some areas it wants to close access and in others it wants to open access. The direct costs of these access roads will be tremendous. The taxpayers money could better be spent on sound management projects.

CONCLUSION:

The publicity given the RMP in the local newspaper and on the local radio stations has been a good public relations efforts to let the uninitiated public know what a good job the BLM is doing under difficult conditions. Unfortunately creating this perception seems to be the primary purpose of the BLM today, rather than managing resources with full respect for the right and needs of all affected people under conservations principles and letting the informed public make judgements based on the merits of your on-the-ground performance. At best, the document is ambiguous, at worst deliberately ambiguous and self-serving.

Sincerely,

 3/30/92
Sheep Permittee

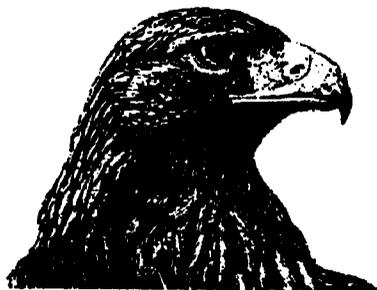
Member Grazing Advisory Board,
Diamond Mountain Sheep Representative

227-8

We agree with your analysis and have deleted the paragraph. We are attempting to improve the public's access to isolated public lands while maintaining some form of remoteness. In this attempt, foot access only has been proposed for Allen Draw, Hoy Mountain, and portions of Argyle and Nine Mile Canyon where few roads currently exist. Vehicle access has been proposed for Jackson Draw, Lambson Draw, and Warren Draw where road systems are developed and access across through private land is needed.

227-8

5.291



Land is an organism. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

There is no other way for land to survive the impact of mechanized man.

Aldo Leopold

UINTAH MOUNTAIN CLUB • P.O. Box 782 • Vernal, Utah 84078

27 March 1992

Ms. Jean Nitschke-Sinclear
Team Leader, Diamond Mountain RMP EIS
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

SUBJECT: Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan Draft EIS.

Dear Ms. Nitschke-Sinclear,

After thorough review of the Vernal District's draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan, the Uintah Mountain Club would like to submit its comments for the public record.

As the only active conservation group in northeast Utah, we are very conscious of our responsibility to speak out for the land. We are committed to responsible advocacy and dedicated to the preservation and protection of the ecological health and scenic beauty of the area we love. Far from being a "special interest group," we have no special interest other than sound resource management for the benefit of all the citizens of northeast Utah and the shareholders in the public lands across the nation. Although all our members benefit directly or indirectly from the commodity resources of the public lands, together we have put outside thoughts of personal profit and private goals to advocate balance and reason in the management of the public lands that are our common heritage.

It is interesting to note your quote from Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* on the frontispiece of the draft EIS. This landmark work of conservation literature has profoundly influenced this writer and serves as the guiding "manifesto" of the Uintah Mountain Club. It is the "ecological conscience" -- the land ethic -- to which you refer in your draft EIS that we invoke in both public land managers and in the community as a whole. But, as Leopold observed,

No important change in ethics was ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections, and convictions.

With this draft EIS, the BLM Vernal District has made a bold start toward balancing the material and spiritual needs of all our citizens. It mirrors the "internal change" that is occurring in our society and appears to signal a new emphasis in your agency on managing the land as an organism.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 228 (UINTAH MOUNTAIN CLUB, Durant)

The draft EIS and your preferred Alternative E is light years ahead of the last resource management plan completed by the Vernal District. However, while Alternative E is a big step in the right direction, there are several ways that it could be improved. Our comments will focus on ways in which the final EIS and your preferred alternative could be made better.

Whether your attempt to balance competing uses of the public lands withstands the onslaught of "one issue" groups will depend upon the professional commitment and collective will of your staff. The true "special interest" groups are easy to spot. Their concern over one issue betrays a lack of awareness of the ecological complexity of the land, a lack of sensitivity toward the spiritual, emotional, and material needs of other public lands users. Land as an organism--the land ethic--takes a back seat to their narrow agenda. We are confident that the Vernal District will maintain a steady course of wise, balanced resource management.

We sincerely appreciate the three years of work that went into this document. Your staff has been very helpful in meeting with our Natural Resources Committee to answer questions and clarify parts of the draft EIS. Your professionalism and dedication are clearly evident in the draft document. We look forward to a good "Final," and hope that you will seriously consider our comments and concerns in formulating the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan.

General

In general, this is a very good draft EIS. It is a comprehensive, ambitious, and innovative document that sets a new course toward enlightened public lands management on the Vernal District. The emphasis on riparian preservation and enhancement, rangeland improvement, protection of "special status" wildlife and plants, the introduction of once common indigenous species, the recovery of endangered species, the acquisition of water rights for instream flow, and the designation of Wild and Scenic rivers is a refreshing departure from previous management direction. The aspects of the draft EIS that we especially like are summarized on page 3 of our comments.

There are, however, several things about the draft that could be improved:

1-Lack of spectrum in Management Priority Areas. There are obvious inequities in Table 2-1 "Management Priority Areas by Alternative" on page 2.15. When three of the alternatives have 0 acres of Level 1 land, one alternative has only 6,100 acres, and the acreage of Level 1 land in a fifth alternative jumps sharply to 96,000 acres, there is not a smooth continuum or spectrum that one expects from an appropriate range of alternatives. Neither is a complete spectrum of Level 2 acreages demonstrated within the various alternatives. There is quite a jump from <1% of lands in Alternative D to 45% in Alternative B. The only other points between <1% and 45% are 6 and 11 percent for Alternatives A and E, respectively.

A middling compromise or "mix" of management strategies would put the Level 1 and 2 acreages in in Alternative E closer to a point halfway between the minimum and maximum acreages described in the other alternatives. This would put Level 1 lands in Alternative E closer to 48,000 acres, and Level 2 lands closer to 150,000 acres (half of Alternative B). After all, if you can find 414,600 acres of land suitable for Levels 1 and 2 designation in Alternative B, you surely should be able to find 207,300 acres of these lands in Alternative E.

2-The Ecological Systems Alternative is poorly named. Alternative B is no more "ecological" than Alternatives A or E, because the concessions you make to wildlife and recreation really have nothing to do with maintaining the ecological health and integrity of the land. The "protection zones" and stipulations you chose for Alternative B management add little if anything to the preservation and maintenance of riparian areas, endangered or special status species, or

228-1

Please refer to our response 103-1.

228-2

Alternative B's overall management theme would maintain or improve the condition of ecological systems. However, it is intended to do so by restricting commodity uses and limiting vegetation manipulation and grazing management. In essence, the alternative would generally let nature take its course with less intensive management and greater restriction to public resource users.

228-1

228-2

228-2
Cont.

biological diversity. Instead, labelling the alternative which imposes the most stringent and least understood restrictions on the livestock and hydrocarbon resource industries does nothing but give a bad name to ecology. We don't understand the stipulations and restrictions any more than they do! Barring people from the land for no good reason has nothing to do with the wise management of ecological systems.

228-3

3-The socioeconomic assumptions are simplistic and divisive. In Chapter 4 your characterization of social categories may "make for ease of analysis," but your assumptions are not helpful in describing the wide range of backgrounds and interests in our community. Can't "young newcomers" be "workers" or "business people"? In your analysis, "young newcomers" appear to be those city-bred busybodies who try to stop growth and development, while local folks, mostly natives, are just trying to scrape a living from the public lands. "Business people" appear to be for anything that brings in the bucks. In fact, the Uintah Mountain Club numbers all these groups among its members, and "where we're coming from" is our desire for balanced management between sometimes competing uses of the public lands. Your characterization reinforces the generalizations and misconceptions in our community concerning where traditional loyalties should lie. Though these loyalties and alliances still persist, we have seen enough exceptions in the last few years--coalitions and community projects--to undermine these comfortable assumptions.

228-4

4-None of the alternatives gives enough protection to the slickrock between Red Mountain and Highway 191. This is an area of incredible scenic, recreational, and cultural significance. It contains a beautiful arch, rare in this part of Utah. The rugged topography and diversity of landforms give a sense of solitude, remoteness and wonder to the recreationist. It is an exceptional resource when one considers that this ruggedly beautiful terrain reminiscent of the renowned Escalante canyon country is only fifteen minutes from town. The hiker in the middle of this ten-square-mile area can well imagine himself miles from the nearest road. This sense of insularity is important because one has to drive much further to other areas, with a relatively greater investment in time, to achieve this same sense of wildness and remoteness. In any case, this Navajo sandstone slickrock is great fun for the rambler afoot, and this area of the public lands is a favorite to hikers in our community.

Our advocacy for this area has been demonstrated many times in our letters to the Vernal District (see enclosed letters). In our letter dated March 7, 1991, and with our telephone calls, personal communications, and field trips to Moonshine Arch with BLM staff, we have demonstrated our concern for the proper management of this special area. Yet none of the alternatives in the draft EIS would effectively close the area to OHV use, which has been the single biggest threat to the integrity of the recreational, cultural and aesthetic values found there. The preferred alternative even designates most of the slickrock, including Moonshine Arch, as Level 3 lands! Our message is that this area should be given special status in all alternatives. We propose designating this area--extending from Red Mountain to Highway 191--as Level 1 lands, the area would be managed to preserve, protect, and enhance the exceptional values contained therein (see topo map). Part of the management would be to close all slickrock east of Red Mountain to OHV use. (The jeep trail and some, designated spurs off of that established trail on Red Mountain would be left open to OHV use.)

228-5

5-None of the alternatives would close the Ashley-Dry Fork area to phosphate development. There is a glaring absence in the management decision spectrum here! To propose no mineral leasing withdrawals or exclusion of phosphate development in any of the alternatives, even in the *Ecological Systems* alternative, gives a primacy to mineral development in an area with a host of competing, non-commodity values. The area is very important for its aesthetic values, recreation and archaeological potential, and crucial and critical deer and elk winter range. At least a couple of alternatives--B and E--should have emphasized these non-commodity values by recommending full or partial mineral withdrawals on these lands. It is our opinion that the sacrifice of these lands to just another phosphate operation cannot be mitigated. In any case, it is

228-3

Please refer to our response 167-2.

228-4

Please refer to our response 79-2.

228-5

Please refer to our response 61-2.

228-5 Cont. not reasonable to recommend phosphate development in all alternatives. BLM should also note the considerable public opposition that a proposal for phosphate mining has generated in this area.

228-6 6-There is inadequate emphasis on protection for archaeological and paleontological sites. In all alternatives except Alternative B there is no commitment to important cultural and paleogeologic sites (Table 2- 13, p. 2.34). Again, we're talking about an inadequate spectrum of management decisions. This does not reflect the regional and national importance of this area and the potential of this area to yield sites of exceptional educational and scientific significance.

228-7 7-No mention is made of the need for enforcement personnel and capabilities in the draft EIS. Perhaps this is not a topic of discussion for and EIS, but the fact remains that only a fraction of the goals and objectives of this plan can be realized without some means of monitoring and enforcement. OHV use is one example where periodic monitoring for compliance and enforcement of restrictions is necessary. Fossil and artifact collection is another. It would have been refreshing to have BLM make a written commitment to monitoring and enforcement in the text of the draft EIS. We urge you make that commitment and to strive to acquire the personnel needed to implement this plan.

The Uintah Mountain Club supports the adoption of Alternative E as the best of the alternatives presented in the draft EIS, but we do not support all of its specifics. Alternative E is a pretty good alternative, but could be much better. In addition to the major problems we have identified with the draft EIS, we have identified the following problems with Alternative E. Modifications of your present preferred alternative will produce a more balanced and visionary resource management plan than the current version of Alternative E.

1-There is not enough Level 1 and 2 acreage in the preferred alternative. It is difficult for us to believe that within an area boasting some of the richest scenic, cultural, and biological values in the state, that BLM can't find more than 6,100 acres (Level 1) requiring restrictive management nor more than 81,000 acres (Level 2) requiring "careful" management. It is certain that many areas have pre-eminent values, the essence of which should be preserved at the cost of full utilization of other resources.

The Uintah Mountain Club feels that some areas, by their nature, have resource values that are scarce enough, fragile enough, and unique enough to warrant "careful" management in every case. In a general way, we have characterized these areas in tabular form on page 6.

We strongly feel that some areas should never be designated less than Level 2 under the Management Priority Area concept. Areas endowed with the resources we have listed on page 6 contain values that should not be jeopardized by less than Level 2 management. In total, they probably represent less than twenty percent of the lands within the Diamond Mountain Resource Area. Yet if the Diamond Mountain RMP is to be an effective guiding document for land management into the next millennium, it must formally recognize and designate those areas that will require special care in management. Land management plans need flexibility. But they need flexibility as well. Otherwise a plan is not a plan, anymore than a budget is a budget if you don't stick to it.

BLM needs to designate more Level 1 and Level 2 lands, and commit itself to managing the resources within them with special care.

228-9 2-There are not enough mineral and agricultural withdrawals in Alternative E. Level 1 and 2 lands will certainly require some protective withdrawals. It is not important that the areas or the final acreage of withdrawals be determined at this time, although BLM will probably want to go ahead and designate some obvious withdrawals in exceptional areas.

228-6 Please refer to our responses 82-16 and 82-17.

228-7 We agree with your concerns for enforcement. You are also correct, the matter of enforcement personnel is not an issue for an RMP, but is an administrative concern.

228-8 Please refer to our response 61-1.

228-9 Thank you for your comments. We believe the amount of land proposed for mineral and agricultural withdrawal is sufficient to protect the critical resource values identified in the proposed plan as needing such protection.

228-9
Cont.

We refer to the need for withdrawals in our Table 1. Lands should and could be withdrawn at any time and where appropriate to preserve and protect unique and important resource values. The Diamond Mountain RMP should contain words to that effect.

228-10

3-Areas where off-highway vehicle use is excluded or restricted to designated roads and trails comprise only 10% of the resource area. Off-highway vehicles remain one of the single worst agents for the degradation of the public lands, and Alternative E would open 90% of the Diamond Mountain Resource Area to no or seasonal restrictions (Allowing driver discretion on the 97,000 acres of land with "existing roads and trails" is tantamount to designating no restrictions.) We prefer that BLM not hold itself to these acreage numbers before a Diamond Mountain Resource Area Travel Plan is developed. We anticipate that more lands may need the "designated roads and trails" restriction than are currently identified in Alternative E.

Lands that we feel should be reasonably closed to OHV use are listed in the right-hand column of the table on page 4 (see item 5)

228-11

4-The unroaded slickrock area east of Red Mountain is mislabeled. This ruggedly beautiful area is labeled "Semi-primitive *Motorized*" on the ROS Classes map on page 3.42. This corrugated, incised area of narrow canyons, pour-offs, and ledges can in no way be reasonably characterized as *motorized*. It is in every way best suited for hiking, rock scrambling, climbing, and quiet reflection. In our countless trips to the area we have seldom seen or heard vehicles. (This is not to say that we haven't seen the destruction from the attempts of OHV users to penetrate the area, or the unsightly mess--bear cans, glass, and assorted trash--they almost always leave behind!) But the fact that OHV users *have* used the area should not lead one to the conclusion that it is full of roads, trails or the usual OHV terrain. Neither should the draft EIS imply that OHV use is a frequent and traditional use of the area in a way similar to lands that we all recognize as being favorite OHV playgrounds.

We urge you to change the label on this area with the final revision of the EIS. The change to semi-primitive, *non*-motorized would be the accurate portrayal of ROS class of these lands.

228-12

5-There are no VRM Class 1 and few VRM Class 2 areas in Alternative. Perhaps we are not visual resource connoisseurs, but it appears to us that there are plenty of "...natural areas...where landscape modification should be restricted" (VRM Class 1) How about the Wilderness Study Areas? The Red Mountain-Moonshine Arch area? The Upper Green River Scenic River? Sears Canyon? It is unacceptable to ask us to believe that you were unable to find any VRM Class 1 areas on 800,000 acres of land in a corner of the state renowned for its scenic beauty.

We protest your assertion on page 3.70 that "There are not Class 1 areas within the resource area," and we strongly suggest that, at a minimum, you designate the Diamond Breaks and West Cold Springs WSA's and the Red Mountain-Moonshine Arch/Slickrock area VRM Class 1 in the final EIS.

228-13

We have provided specific critiques and suggestions for Alternative E in our Tables 1 and 2. The page layout of these Tables corresponds closely to the page layout of Tables 2-13 and 2-18 in the draft EIS. However, because we support and wish to improve Alternative E, we depict only a "revised, improved" Alternative E in Table 1. Suggested departures from the current version of Alternative E are shown in *italics*. Explanatory notes are included at these points.

Please refer to these two tables for specific comments on "Areawide Management Decisions" and "Management Prescriptions for Special Emphasis Areas."

5) 228-10

Our analysis reveals that OHV use would be closed, limited yearlong or seasonally on 58 percent of the resource. Please refer to the decision summary for the proposed plan in Chapter 2.

228-11

The ROS classes were established in 1980 and updated in 1990. Please refer to Appendix 5 for the Bureau's ROS class standards. In noting the social setting factor, the semi-primitive motorized class should have low to moderate user contact frequency. Semi-primitive nonmotorized areas should have light user contact ("...6 to 10 parties encountered per day...limited evidence of previous recreation use..."). The Red Mountain area is a highly popular recreation area for OHV users as well as foot hikers. It is the area's popularity and proximity to Vernal that accounts for the current ROS classification. Again refer to our response 79-2 regarding proposed changes to OHV use in the area from the draft document.

228-12

We are basing our VRM classes on the 1979 VRM inventory of the resource area conducted by Phillip E. Flores Associates, Inc., from Denver. This inventory was conducted in accordance with established Bureau standards and criteria.

228-13

Thank you for your extended comments and proposed alternative. We believe your letter covers your major concerns and we have attempted to respond completely to them. However, for the sake of brevity only these tables and alternative are not duplicated in this document; they are available for public review in the Vernal District Office.

5.296

Conservation and Consultation

ACEC's

228-14

We applaud the proposal to create five new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern in the preferred Alternative E. However, we feel that the Middle Green River segment should be included in a Lower and Middle Green River Segments ACEC, as that Special Emphasis Area is depicted in Alternative B. We suggest this for two reasons:

1. The riparian values of the Middle Green River segment are accentuated by the predominance of private lands in the area, making the riparian resource on public lands even more crucial to the general management scheme.
2. The habitat value for T and E species is significant. The riverside cottonwoods are important for migrating bald eagles. Endangered fish species also depend upon careful management of the riverine and riparian environs.

It is clear from our analysis that, even though these areas are of "critical environmental concern," Alternative E's Management Priority Area designations of some lands in these areas are inappropriate (see Table 2 in our critique). For example:

The Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC would not exclude phosphate mining from areas of critical watershed, crucial wildlife habitat, and exceptional scenic and recreational values. The entire ACEC with the exception of the relict vegetation community on Red Mountain is designated Level 3.

228-15

This designation means that the area "would be open to most activities" but that those activities would only be "constrained somewhat" to accommodate other resource values. But does this make sense? Is this what the community wants?

The community has already spoken loudly and clearly on the issue of phosphate mining in this sensitive area. The Uintah Mountain Club and other groups have shown their concern for the area by formally nominating it as an ACEC, with suggested management guidelines to protect irreplaceable and sensitive resources (see our letters dated 11/2/88 and 2/22/89). And BLM has repeatedly acknowledged the important non-commodity values of the area in correspondence and in personal communication with us. You have heard our earnest pleas to do something to stop the degradation to the slickrock around Moonshine Arch.

BLM has demonstrated the extraordinary sensitivity of the area in the draft EIS. Consider:

- Map 3-1 shows the area as a high density archaeological zone.
- Map 3-2 shows that it contains an historic trail, the Carter Military Trail.
- Map 3-3 shows that it is a high density paleontological zone.
- Map 3-5 shows that it is a high priority elk habitat.
- Map 3-6 shows that it is crucial mule deer habitat.
- Map 3-23 shows that it contains significant riparian areas.
- Maps 3-24 and 3-26 show that it has highly erodible soils in a critical watershed.
- Map 3-33 shows that it is an area of high visual sensitivity.

The transparent overlays for these maps show a clustering of important resource values in this proposed ACEC. But judging from the MPA designation of these lands, nothing seems to be of "critical environmental concern" in this area. Alternative E does not even specify "careful" (Level 2) management for the ACEC through Level 2 designation of sensitive lands. "Active" management by which potentially damaging activities are "constrained somewhat" (Level 3) just is not sufficient for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC. BLM needs to go back to the drawing board, and should designate substantially more Level 1 and Level 2 acres in this ACEC.

6

228-14 Our analysis found the river to have critical habitat for endangered animal species. However, because of the limited amount of public lands along the segment (20 percent) and opposition to designation by county governments and the Ute Indian Tribe, the middle segment of the Green River was dropped from further consideration. Please refer to Appendix 7.

228-15 The Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC has been modified to exclude phosphate mining between the areas of Ashley Creek Gorge and Dry Fork Creek. Such a modification is consistent with the public's wishes as expressed in the comment letters received. We believe the management levels proposed are consistent with the overall management theme of the proposed plan, adequately protects the critical resource values within this area, and allows the public to use the more abundant resources of this area.

228-15
Cont.

The Uintah Mountain Club has a specific proposal for the Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC. We hope that you will see the merits of our suggestions, as they are a logical extension of the comments and suggestions we have made to BLM over the years. In an improved Red Mountain-Dry Fork ACEC, BLM would incorporate the following management decisions:

- 1-Designate Red Mountain and all slickrock on BLM lands between Red Mountain and Highway 191 as Level 1. (see Map 1)
- 2-Designate lands east of Highway 191 and north of Red Fleet Reservoir, including the Red Fleet formations themselves, as Level 1. (see Map 2)
- 3-Designate lands between the Dry Fork Settlement and the Forest Service boundary, including Alma Taylor Hollow and the Springs, as Level 1. (see Map 3)
- 4-Designate all other lands in the ACEC as Level 2, to reflect their sensitive nature and importance to the quality of life in the Vernal area.
- 5-Leave the Jeep trail on Red Mountain open to OHV use and designate other, appropriate trails in the area for motorized use. Close the slickrock country between Red Mountain and Highway 191 to OHV use.
- 6-Withdraw the area from further mineral leasing.
- 7-Make the acquisition of State section 16 on Red Mountain and other State and private lands adjoining the Red Mountain-Moonshine Arch area the highest priority.
- 8-Make the acquisition of State and private lands at the mouth of Ashley Gorge a high priority.
- 9-Establish a network of hiking and horseback trails to enhance the recreational potential of this area so close to the community.
- 10-Establish interpretive facilities at cultural, paleontological, and geological sites.

Wildlife

228-16

We applaud BLM's wildlife initiatives in this draft EIS. Your proposals to introduce bighorn sheep, river otters, black-footed ferrets, and upland game birds are laudable. But we feel that there is room for improvement in Alternative E, and our specific comments are found in Tables 1 and 2.

Wild and Scenic River Status

228-17

A progressive move. Northeastern Utah enters the twentieth century! We totally support your proposed designation under Alternative E.

Riparian Areas

228-18

All riparian areas should be given Level 1 status because of their uniqueness, scarcity, and relative importance in the ecological scheme of things. We are pleased with the new emphasis BLM is placing on riparian areas.

Special Status Plant and Animal Species

228-19

Today's sensitive and Category 2 species are tomorrow's T and E species. All special status species need special protective stipulations and restrictions on potential habitat disturbing activities. Our suggestions are outlined in tabular form (see Tables 1 and 2).

7

228-16

Thank you for your support.

228-17

Again, thanks for your support.

228-18

We believe the critical riparian areas are afforded adequate protection in levels 1 and 2. Those riparian areas within level 3 will be afforded protection and management without adversely restricting uses on surrounding nonriparian areas.

228-19

We believe the proposed decision regarding special status plant species provides the protection needed to enhance the recovery of listed species, and to prevent the need to list category species.

8

OHV Use

228-20

The draft EIS does not adequately address the issue of mountain bikes. Mountain bike use is growing rapidly and restrictions may soon be needed to protect vegetation, fragile soils, and other resource values. BLM should also consider potential conflicts between mountain bikers and other recreationists. The Vernal District could draw on the experience of other BLM districts to develop a general management direction toward mountain bikes use. Mountain bike restrictions must be considered in the planning process and added to the final EIS/RMP. We feel that most Level 1 lands should be closed to motorized OHV and mountain bike use.

Recreation

228-21

5/29/99

We oppose developed recreation in the Red Mountain-Moonshine Arch area. This area is better suited to semi-primitive recreation. Trailheads for hiking and OHV use would be appropriate, but on-trail interpretative and directional signing are unnecessary and detract from the sense of remoteness and adventure.

The Vernal District should preserve all the primitive and semi-primitive, non-motorized lands it has. These represent a small percentage of the Diamond Mountain Resource Area, and they will become more precious and important as time goes on. It makes no sense to change the ROS of a primitive or semi-primitive, non-motorized area. The potential exists to change the character of the area--the solitude, the sense of remoteness, the wildness--far into the future. This would negatively impact the quality of life and the range of recreation opportunities for many public lands users who enjoy the non-motorized experience.

While 94% of lands on the Diamond Mountain Resource Area would be open to motorized recreation use under Alternative E, only 6 % would be free from OHV's. This is an imbalance in the ROS that should and must be corrected!

We strongly urge BLM to preserve all the semi-primitive, non-motorized lands in the resource area by adopting the acreage in Alternative B (see Table 2-13, p. 2.52). We further that it amplify the acreage in these lands by changing the inexplicable designation of the slickrock, "mini-Escalante" lands east of Red Mountain to semi-primitive, non-motorized status. (see map)

Summary

Alternative E is a big step forward in resource management for the Vernal District. There are some inconsistencies in the draft EIS and in Alternative E which should be corrected before the "Final" goes to press. These shortcomings are relatively few, but if they are not corrected they could have a profound influence on the integrity of the public lands in the Diamond Mountain Resource Area over the next 10-15 years. We are aware that increasing the total number of Level 1 and Level 2 acres will trigger other changes as well. But we insist that Alternative E relegates far too much land to MPA designations that don't specify "careful" management by definition. Increasing Level 1 and Level 2 acreage is the right thing to do, even if it means making some substantial--and bothersome--adjustments.

We urge the planning team to consider our comments and suggestions carefully. If implemented, they would not have a significant impact upon either the commercial use of the resource area or the opportunities for those who prefer motorized recreation. We hope that, in the final analysis, you will incorporate many of them into the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan.

228-20 Thank you for your comments. Recreation trails will be monitored and maintained. Should trails and/or their associated areas shown signed of overuse by OHVs, mountain bikes or foot traffic, corrective actions would be designed and implemented.

228-21 Again, we refer you to Appendix 5 which outlines the criteria used in classifying lands in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. Please refer to the proposed decision regarding management of the identified semi-primitive nonmotorized areas of the resource area. We believe we are in agreement with you. Referring to your concerns of OHV use on the Red Mountain slickrock area, please see our response 79-2.

Thank you for all your hard work and attention to our concerns. We look forward to working with you in making the new RMP a success.

Best regards,



Will Durant
Chairman, Natural Resources Committee

March 29, 1992

Jean Sinclair, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Regarding: Diamond Mountain Resource Area Management Plan and
Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Team Leader

We the under signed having had the opportunity to hike in
the Mame Hole/Bear Hollow area of Diamond Mountain, respectfully
request that nothing be changed by the BLM. If a change must be
made the we recommend that plan "C" be followed, resulting in the
least change possible.

Respectfully,

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 <u>Benjamin D. Hacking</u> | 11 <u>Mark Mugleston</u> |
| 2 <u>Nathaniel Jr. Hacking</u> | 12 <u>Brian Mugleston</u> |
| 3 <u>Adrienne J. Hacking</u> | 13 <u>Thomas S. Hacking</u> |
| 4 <u>Samuel B. Hacking</u> | 14 _____ |
| 5 <u>Joseph D. Hacking</u> | 15 _____ |
| 6 <u>David L. Mugleston</u> | 16 _____ |
| 7 <u>Carol Mugleston</u> | 17 _____ |
| 8 <u>Spencer Mugleston</u> | 18 _____ |
| 9 <u>Jane Mugleston</u> | 19 _____ |
| 10 <u>Julie Mugleston</u> | 20 _____ |

241-1

Thank you for your comment.

241-1

5 301

ROBERT F. FALLON, JR., M.D., F.A.C.S.

General Surgery

175 North 100 West, Suite 102
Vernal, Utah 84078
(801) 789-0878

March 31, 1992

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, UT 84078

Dear Ms. Smalley;

I am writing to comment on the Draft Diamond Mountain Resource Area RMP and EIS.

I have recently moved to Utah, but have lived in rural areas of New Hampshire, Vermont, California, Washington and New York. I am an environmentally conscious outdoorsman who lives in a wood house heated with hydrocarbons, surrounded by a fertilized lawn, that was built in a deer winter range, on a 100 year flood plain. I am a physician who could practice anywhere in the United States, but choose Vernal and North Eastern Utah because of the varied outdoor activities in an area with a reasonably diverse economy.

For these reasons, I support Alternative E as outlined in the RMP/EIS. Alternative E, to my mind, protects all of the resources in the area - the diverse outdoor recreational opportunities, the range and the economically vital extractive activities. It is vital that we utilize available range, water and minerals in a fashion that minimizes "impact" and maximizes long term preservation of the gifts we are guardians of.

243-1 I have not lived here long enough to have in-depth perspective on many specific issues. I do agree with the areas designated as ACEC's. I am concerned about allowing surface mining of phosphates west of the current mine between Red Mountain and Dry Fork. That is both magnificent country and vital game range.

243-2 I agree with the priorities for vehicular and foot access to areas outlined in Table 2-13 page 241.

243-3 I've heard rumors about a new road providing more direct access from Little Hole to Browns Park. Big Mistake. Some things are nice precisely because they are hard to get to, and access (and over utilization) ruins them.

243-4 I had trouble finding specific references in the RMP/EIS, but from my perspective of living in various places, water and riparian zones are vital to the environmental health of an area and these features would be vigorously protected.

Thank you for your efforts. Could you please add me to your mailing list for items relating to the RMP.

Sincerely,



Robert F. Fallon, M.D.

RFF/jre

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 243 (FALLON)

243-1 Please refer to our response 112-1.

243-2 Thank you for your support.

243-3 No formal proposal has been received regarding a Little Hole to Browns Park all-weather road. When such a proposal is received, a formal environmental assessment will be prepared to discuss and analyze the specifics of such a project.

243-4 Please refer to Table 2-15, for proposed decisions regarding riparian areas (decisions for the proposed plan are offered for comparison in this table). Also refer to Appendix 6 for the Utah State Riparian Area Policy.

Brent B. Hacking
18905 S.E. 43rd Street
Issaquah, Washington, 98027

BBH-05-92

(206) 746-0297

March 28, 1992

Penelope Smalley
Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah, 84078

Subject: Diamond Mountain Resource Area Resource Management Plan
and Environmental Impact Statement

Alternative of Choice: Alternative "C" Forage Production with
limitations

Dear Ms. Smalley

As an owner of property in the Mame's Hole-Bear Hollow area I am
totally against any development or burning in this area.

244-1

After reviewing and evaluating the alternatives, I could support
Alternative "C" with reservation. If you are talking about
burning 200 acres of BLM land it would be mostly on the top of
the mountains where the conifers and Quaking Aspens trees are
located. If you are talking about burning 200 acre of private
land then I am definitely not in favor of it.

244-2

The Mame's Hole - Bear Hollow area is currently closed to public
deer hunting. Thus helping to preserve nature. We do not want
large numbers of people walking over and destroying the plants
and land.

As a Civil Engineer I understand what it takes to build a road
into an area. My evaluation of what you are proposing in
regards to the road and visitor sites in the Mame's Hole - Bear
Hollow area is that you will be making an eye sore out of the
meadows and the hill sides. In the process of construction you
will end up taking out a lot of natural formation, springs, and
the best grazing land.

It sounds as though you are planning on putting reservoirs in the
tops of the mountains as most of the flat lands are privately
owned.

244-3

On the "Grazing Allotments and Major Roads" map it implies the
private land is under a BLM Grazing permit number.

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT LETTER 244 (Hacking)

244-1 The 200 acres designated in Table A8-4, for the Mame Hole-Bear
Hollow Allotment refers to pinyon-juniper proposed to be burned on BLM-adminis-
tered lands. The reservoirs would be built on public lands also. Any range
improvement work would be completed with the knowledge of the involved grazing
permittee.

244-2 Please refer to our response 12-1.

244-3 The Mame Hole-Bear Hollow Allotment is licensed on a percent
federal range basis and the private lands within the allotment, unless fenced, are
part of the grazing permit agreeing to the season of use designated and the numbers
of livestock permitted.

244-3
Cont.

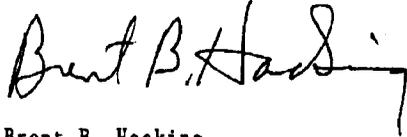
As a tax payer I am concerned that we are about to spend a large quantity of money to put a new road through a previously un-disturbed area when there are currently other road ways through the area. Why are we doing and what is the cost?

244-4

The report also seems to favor the recreationalist and sportman e.g. increasing the number of wildlife over cattle. Please be aware that people are still making their living off the Mame's Hole - Bear Hollow private land.

Once again, I would prefer that nothing be done in the Mame's Hole - Bear Hollow area.

Sincerely



Brent B. Hacking

244-4

Thank you for your comment.

6212 So. Orchard
Tacoma, Wa. 98467
March 28, 1992

Jean Sinclear, Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Regarding: Diamond Mountain Resource Area Resource Management
Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Team Leader,

As I have been looking at the Diamond Mountain Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS), I wonder why after all the years that Diamond mountain has been under the control of private ownership, with no adverse effect on the mountain, why it is necessary for the B.L.M to take over control of the area and access it to the public. If history is any indicator as soon as the general public has access to an area that area will soon be ruined, unless all of that area is regularly policed and maintained.

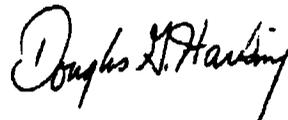
My main focus of concern is the Mame Hole-Bear Hollow area owned by Grant L. Hacking Family. For Forty-five years I have watched my father very carefully maintain and make improvements to this area. He has added several reservoirs in the valley below Mame Hole and enlarged the ones in Mame Hole and Bear Hollow. these reservoirs are used by cattle that he runs there and by the deer, elk and other wild animals that live in this area. He has put out salt for his cattle which has been used by the wild animals also. As we have hiked in the hills and driven along the county road we have counted an ever increasing number of deer, elk, rabbits, prairie dogs and other wild life. If this work and improvements had not been done by the private landowners, who truly care for the land, the wild life would not have been able to increase.

After I graduated from Uintah High School I had the opportunity to work for the U.S. Forest Service. One of our responsibilities was to go to the various campgrounds and perform maintenance on the facilities. We spent most of that summer repairing and keeping the facilities useable for the public. Some of the maintenance was for winter damage, most was for the use/abuse of the general public. If a road is built into Mame Hole/Bear Hollow and campgrounds constructed they would necessitate a great deal of money to construct them and even more to maintain them. It would also deplete the available grazing land for the cattle and wildlife. If the public has access to these areas they will drive the wildlife, who now co-exist with the cattle, out of their habitat with nowhere to go except into a steadily dwindling accessible area.

During the summer of 1991 we had the opportunity to go to Fantasy Canyon in the Red Wash area. As we were driving along the public access roads to the canyon, many of the once beautiful hillsides were scarred with the ruts of 4-wheel vehicles. These ruts not only detract from the beauty of the area, but also cause erosion, and a destruction of the few native plants that can grow in the area. If Mame Hole and Bear Hollow are opened up to public access, this same wanton destruction will occur in an area, where except for a few judicious improvements, the land is still the same as it has been for centuries.

My family and I are opposed to any "improvements by BLM" being done to the Mame Hole/Bear Hollow area. We would like to see it left as it is. For over a century the wildlife and cattle have co-existed with an increase in the numbers of wildlife. If "improvements" must be done, those proposed by plan "C" are the only acceptable one's. These "improvements" should only be done after very careful study and consideration of the Mame Hole/Bear Hollow area weather and terrain conditions.

Respectfully yours,



Douglas G. Hacking



JANET T. MILLIRAN

Tues, Mar. 31, 1992

P.S. I am very much opposed to the proposed new Highway which Sen. Bill Orrin backs — it duplicates the Colo. Road 50 miles East, + is a waste of Tax Dollars -- we don't have enough \$ in Utah to maintain our roads as is —

Mr. Ron Trogetad

Diamond Mountain Resource Area Manager

170 South 500 East

Vernal, UT 84078

Re: Diamond Mt. RMP

Dear Mr. Trogetad:

I am an Artist - Painter and Photographer -- and avid Flyfisher.

I favor your Alternative B. Alternative E does have some good features.

I applaud you for opposing bear baiting.

Always, I am appalled at chaining Pinyon Forests -- they are Forests, and just because they are Pinyon, they are no less important -- Pinyon Pine + Juniper grow where they do because the ecosystem is appropriate.

Cattle, in my opinion do not belong in Forests -

I am from Iowa + Minnesota, so I have a broader viewpoint. We are so used to a cow/cowboy mentality in the West, that we are allowing tremendous damage to our streams, habitat, etc -- + spending millions of dollars doing this -- money of the big Ranchers, who profit from our Taxpayer dollars are driving Cadillacs in large cities, etc -

Studio
2817 Brighton Point Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119

207. 20208

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 246 (MILLIKAN)

246-1

Please refer to our response 114-34.

246-2

Treatment of pinyon-juniper woodlands would be completed to improve the watershed condition, provide additional forage for both wildlife and livestock, and allow for a healthy, vigorous natural vegetation composition, of which pinyon-juniper play an important role.

5.307

246-1

246-2

(2)

Mar. 31, 1992 -

Obviously, cattle will remain in the West. But, please, let's not give them 9,000 more acres. And, if you do insist on this, please do so by fire, a natural phenomena.

246-3 ORV use -- All riparian areas should be closed to ORV use -- just designated roads, please. all ACECs + Wild + Scenic Rivers should be closed to mineral development.

246-4 I have flyfished out of Brown's Park, and I am amazed that you would consider allowing mineral entry around there, + the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC --- these areas should be closed to mineral entry. Category 1 + 2 lands should be closed to mineral entry, including Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, Same for Diamond Mountain, where the potential is low, anyway.

246-5 Your Dept. needs to consolidate land holdings on Diamond Mt., so as to retain control -- otherwise, with "Checkerboard" Holdings, issues become confused.

If you use Alternative E, please do improve it ~~at~~ along the above lines.

246-6 I support ACEC Recommendations, Wild + Scenic River study for all of the Green River, + no lease mineral recommendation on sensitive lands, + no chaining of Pygmy Forests
Yours truly -
Janet T. Miller

246-3

Please refer to our response 117-3.

246-4

In the proposed plan the areas adjacent to the upper and lower Green River would be recommended for withdrawal from mineral entry. Until the withdrawal is approved in Washington, the ACEC designation along the river would require a plan of operation prior to any surface disturbance greater than 5 acres.

246-5

Thank you for your support.

246-6

Again, thank you for your support.

Ron Trogstad
Diamond Mtn Resource Area Mgr
170 S 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

3/27/92

Dear Mr. Trogstad:

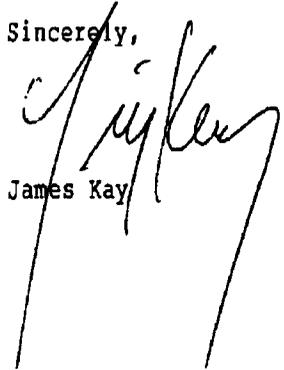
247-1

I'm writing to you to express my concern about the pending management decisions on the Diamond Mtn. area. I strongly support alternative B as the option which will most fully protect the valuable wilderness of this region. I would also like to urge the BLM to strongly oppose any bear baiting in this area. It's time our wildlife populations are freed from this senseless barbarism.

247-2

I support the ACEC recommendations and I would also like to see wild and scenic river status for this stretch of the Green River.

Sincerely,



James Kay

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 247 (KAY)

247-1

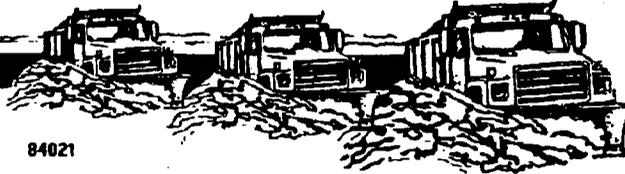
Please refer to our response 114-34.

247-2

Thank you for your support.



DUCHEсне COUNTY ROAD DEPT.



P.O. Box 356 Duchesne, Utah 84021 84021
801-738-2468

March 31, 1992

Jean Sinclair
Bureau of Land Management
Vernal District
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

Dear Ms. Jean Sinclair:

We are writing to you to comment on your Diamond Mountain Resource Area, Resource Management Plan and Environment Impact Statement. There are two areas that are important to the County the first being tar sands and the second sand, gravel, and shale pits.

We have found some discrepancies in the Assumptions on page 4.9 in the section called Tar Sands. The impact to Duchesne County was not expressed well enough, Tar Sands are a valuable resource to Duchesne County and a important product to the PUBLIC. If Duchesne County were allowed to receive tar sands in the Pariette then the County could save \$275,000.00 a year or more. It now costs the County \$200,000.00 to purchase tar sands from John E. Fausett for one year. It costs us \$75,000.00 or more to haul the product after it is crushed, to the job sites. The Fausett pit is in Whiterocks and approximately 26 miles from Roosevelt Utah. The farthest job site has the potential of being a distance of 73 miles from John E. Fausett's Tar Sands Pit.

In the Alternative E Plan there are no Tar Sands available in the Pariette area. In the Summary of Impacts on page 4.67 it states that:

Development of tar sands in the Pariette STSA would be precluded under this alternative. This would delay or preclude paving of roads in the area.

The County would like to see a small section opened to tar sands use on the Pariette STSA. We petition the BLM to reconsider and open up a few small test sections. The area we are most interested in is Section 30 T8S R18E S18&M. The County with the BLM has been on the site, there is an existing road to the site that needs little improvement to access the tar sands. The County Surveyor and County Road Department have prepared a plat with drill hole sections for exploration drilling. The BLM asked us to put off turning in our request for drilling until their

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 248 (DUCHEсне COUNTY COMMIS-
SION)

248-1 Your concern regarding possible development of tar sands, a leasable mineral, within the Pariette STSA has been clarified. Please refer to Tables 2-15 and 2-16 for proposed decisions involving tar sands in general land within the proposed Pariette ACEC, respectively. Please also refer to Map Packet #8, which portrays the generalized leasing categories for oil, gas and combined hydrocarbon activities. We would consider tar sands development on a site-specific basis, so long as individuals and/or habitat for special status plant species are not adversely affected.

248-1

(RMP/EIS) was completed. The County anticipated that the BLM in their Resource Management Plan would take into consideration all of the past work and time the County has put into this site.

Duchesne County crushes the tar sands and places them on the roads with graders, this has been quite successful for the county and is substantially cheaper than road mix. Paving roads provide safety to the public and helps the environment by reducing dust and erosion on the lands. Road maintenance is minimal after the road is paved thus reducing additional costs to tax payers.

Mineral Materials (shale)

248-2

The County depends on the BLM's "Free Use Permits" to place shale on the roads in out of the way areas, private lanes and low impact roads. The County Road Department uses shale as a beginning road base then they use gravel and cover it with tar sands. Having access to more than one shale pit is also important to the county because it cuts down on hauling mileage. The Road Department is able to maintain the roads in the areas near each shale pit to a higher standard because of the savings from minimal hauling mileage.

On the Alternative E Map we believe there are too tight of restrictions in the Nine Mile Area. There are few places that the soil is right for shale removal and that have access with minimal damage to the lands. It not only cuts down on hauling costs it also saves the tax payers money to have access to the shale pits. If the County didn't have the shale pits it would cost us an additional \$100,000.00 in one year to maintain the roads in the area.

We hope you will consider our needs as you prepare your final Plan. If we can be of any further assistance please let us know. You can call the County Road Department at 738-2468 and Leon Fillingim or Nancy Bird can answer any of your questions or will be happy to assist you in finding your answers.

Board of County Commissioners:
Duchesne County, State of Utah

By: *R. P. Reynolds*..... Date: *Mar. 31, 1992*.....

Chairman

Clint Spitzer.....

Member

Clint Spitzer.....

Member

248-2

Under the proposed plan, we have taken steps to consider the needs of the counties and other mineral material developers. Most restrictive areas in the Myton areas are on lands considered to be Category 2 (open with restrictions). A stated in the document, we recognize that in some instances seasonal restrictions may not be feasible for mineral material development. In those cases, we would consider other development options. Also, under the proposed plan we would consider allowing mineral material development on a site specific basis even in the most highly restricted areas in the resource area.

5311

March 31, 1992

Penelope Smalley, Team Leader RMP/DEIS
Veazee District, BLM-USDI
170 South 500 East

Dear Team Leader:

First, a thank you all for allowing a 90-day comment period, the comments should be more thoughtful and in-depth as a result. The usual 30-day agency period is just too short.

For the most part, I'm relying on the special interest groups to respond/comment on the technical ecologically and social-economic discussions and omissions in the DEIS. The volume of material, subjects, and alternatives are just too massive and intimidating for one individual in the general public to handle. However my overall impression of the statement is one of professionalism and quality craftsmanship.

I am just a little confused about the purpose of the Resource Management Plan (RMP) as stated on page 1.1 in the second and fourth paragraphs. The statement in the second paragraph seems to infer that decisions are being made. Then, in the fourth paragraph this statement is made "It is not a activity-specific plan intended to make specific program decisions for all individual resources; rather, it is designed to provide overall multiple-use objectives and management direction". What I'm hearing is that the RMP is only restating existing generalized public land policy and direction contained in law, regulations, and BLM manuals and that site-specific day-to-day commercial and non commercial use (and misuse) decisions will continue to be made without public review.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 249 (YOUNGER)

249-1 As stated in Chapter 1 the Diamond Mountain RMP is designed to give broad, general management for public lands within the resource area. The reasons why an RMP is necessary at this time are also presented. That the RMP is only "...restating existing generalized public land policy and direction..." is not quite accurate.

249-1
Cont.

I think we all know that policy and national guidance (direction) has not been the problem, it's been the lack of political will to implement and carry out the national direction at the state and local level. It looks like the current status quo will continue, what has changed by writing a subjective RMP that invites exceptions, modifications and deviations?

Two specific suggestions:

249-2

(1) Enlarge the Glossary Section to include additional technical and subjective words such as:
- Balance (page iii), ecological stability or management policy,
- Irreversible, a political or ecological decision?
and, there are many others,

249-3

(2) Each item in the Reference Section should be made available for public review in the Office of the State Director and the Vernal District Manager. Now, some may claim that this would be impractical but, to do other wise denies the general public full access to all the materials in the DEIS.

Sincerely,

Ronald J Younger
920 East 1500 South
Bountiful UT 84010-2138

249-2

The Glossary includes those words and phrases used commonly throughout the plan or where a precise meaning is inferred (i.e., carrying capacity). Where no definitions are provided, the commonly accepted dictionary definition is applicable.

249-3

The specific references cited in this plan are available for review at the Vernal District Office (also the office of the Diamond Mountain Resource Area).

DEAR MR. TROGSTAD

HAVING JUST READ THE WASATCH-CACHE
COUNT RMP, I AM SURPRISED THAT
THE DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RMP IS NOT NAMING
TO PROTECT THE WILDERNESS &
REFUGE AREAS. ALSO, IT SEEMS

LOGICAL TO UPDATE THE GRASSHOP

EISs... I DO COMMEND BLM'S STAND

AGAINST BEAR BAITING (WE ARE

CURRENTLY IN AN ONGOING DEBATE

ON AERIAL SHOOTING IN HERE).

PLEASE KEEP ME UPDATED ON YOUR

POSITION...

MICHAEL A. MARTIN
8081 S. SHORT HILLS DR.
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84121

RON TROGSTAD
DIAMOND MOUNTAIN RMP.

170 S., 500 E.

VERNAL, UT.

84078

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 250 (MARTIN)

For those that can't decipher Mr. Martin's red ink notecard:

"Dear Mr. Trogstad, Having just read the Wasatch-Cache RMP, I am surprised that the Diamond Mountain RMP is not naming to protect the wilderness and? refuge areas. Also, it seems logical to update the grazing EISs...I do commend BLM's stand against bear baiting (we are currently in an ongoing debate on aerial shooting up here). Please keep me updated on your position...thx! M.M."

250-1 Wilderness areas are discussed and analyzed separately in the Utah Wilderness EIS, published in 1990. No new wilderness areas were identified during the scoping period for this project. The RMP would apply to BLM-administered lands only, thus management of refuge areas would not be appropriate in this document.

250-2 Thank you for your comments. Please refer to our response 114-34.

250-1

250-2