

Comments of the Draft RMP/EIS by Commenter Type

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Form Letter 1	FL1	AT28 (AT-U)	The preferred alternative (as written) does not lay out a basic foundation for future land use decisions by broadly imposing restrictive measures to limit industry's ability to access lands for environmentally responsible oil and gas leasing, exploration and development.	Appendix K of the RMP outlines the stipulations (for all surface disturbing activities) that allow for development without undue, unmitigated, or irretrievable impacts to environmental resources. These stipulations allow for industry to conduct oil and gas exploration and development across the vast majority of lands within the Vernal Planning Area.	
Form Letter 1	FL1	AT29 (AT-V)	The preferred alternative needs to ensure the number of wells in the RFD document is not a cap on development for the planning area by including flexibility in the planning process to allow for increased activity due to price spikes or new discoveries without invalidating existing lease rights.	The RFD is not a planning criteria but rather a measure of surface disturbance based upon a best estimate at the time the RMP is prepared. The RFD presented in the EIS is not intended as a limit the number of individual wells within the planning area. It is used as a relative measure of development for the purpose of impacts analysis. The RFD allows for collocation and retirement and reclamation. As additional information is obtained over the life of the RMP, the RFD can be recalculated and amended as necessary.	
Form Letter 1	FL1	AT30 (AT-W)	The preferred alternative should fully analyze the socioeconomic impacts of the restrictions placed on oil and natural gas development. The analysis should reach further than the immediate planning area and include the impact on natural gas users nationwide.	Socioeconomic impacts from all resource decisions are discussed in Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS. Section 4.12.3.4 discusses the impacts to minerals development from special designations. NEPA does not require that the analysis reach beyond the planning area. CEQ Regulations for implementing NEPA state that the environmental impact statement shall succinctly describe the environment of the area(s) to be affected or created by the alternatives under consideration.	
Form Letter 1	FL1	AT31	The preferred alternative should reduce the cumulative	Layering of program decisions is not optional for	

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		(AT-X)	and overlapping prescriptions that unduly restrict development, in some cases to narrow the window of time, including unnecessary special designations (ACEC, VRM, SRMA, etc...)	BLM, but is required by the FLPMA, 1976 and National BLM planning and program specific regulations. The FLPMA directed that management of public lands be on the basis of multiple use (Section 102(a) (7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. For example, 43 CFR Group 2500 provides guidance and requirements for Disposition; Occupancy and Use of public lands; Group 2800 for Rights-of-way; Group 3400 for Coal Management; Group 6000 for Designated Wilderness, and Group 8200 for Natural History, part 8351 for Wild and Scenic Rivers. Multiple-use management requires a balancing of the mandates for these separate programs. The RMP will include the decisions required for each program, and BLM will ensure that the allowable uses and allocations are compatible and meet the objectives of the selected plan.	
Form Letter 2	FL2	AT1	Adopt the Great Dinosaur/Book Cliffs Heritage Plan.	<p>The Great Dinosaur/Book Cliffs Heritage Plan was considered and elements of this plan have been incorporated into the alternatives.</p> <p>See comment responses GC68, TR13, TR22, and TR29.</p>	
Form Letter 2	FL2	AT45 (AAT-2)	<p>While BLM does recognize 275,000 acres as having or likely to have wilderness characteristics, it offers no alternatives that manage these areas to protect and enhance their wilderness character.</p> <p>I urge you to develop a management plan that protects</p>	See comment responses AT1 and AT3.	

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			these 275,000 acres and those included in the citizens' proposal. Please prohibit all motorized travel off designated routes and all forms of mineral extraction or development in these areas.		
Form Letter 2	FL2	SD249 (ASD-5)	BLM should take appropriate actions to protect 720,000 acres of the Utah Wilderness Coalition's (UWC) Citizen Proposed Wilderness Lands -- areas such as Upper Desolation Canyon, Desbrough Canyon, White River, Dragon Canyon, Sweetwater Canyon, Moonshine Draw, and Bull Canyon.	See Response to Comment SD1-I-1.	
Form Letter 2	FL2	TR34 (ATR-2)	BLM should establish a reasonable balance of recreation and wilderness protection in its transportation plan. No routes should be left open unless they serve some legitimate and identified purpose, and all off-road vehicle trails not designated "open" in the citizens' Heritage plan should be closed.	See comment responses TR18, TR29, and TR36. BLM considered the heritage plan in the preparation of their travel options outlined in the RMP.	
A. John Davis	FLA-1	GC51 (GC-J)	I support multiple use on public lands.	Comment noted.	
A. John Davis	FLA-1	SD107	The Draft needs to provide a true justification for ACEC's and SRMA's, and limit the areas closed to oil and gas development to those areas where other resource values clearly and demonstrably outweigh the value of resource development.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
A. John Davis	FLA1-1	SO23	The economic analysis is way off the mark on the positive economic contributions of the O&G industry. For instance, companies have budgeted \$800 million in capital for Utah in the next 12-14 months.	The commenter does not indicate how the analysis is "way off the mark" or how the projected capital investments of oil and gas companies would change the existing analyses. As such, the BLM cannot respond to this comment.	
Kaylene Gardner	FLA1-10	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach	

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			measures that curtail energy development.	"country-wide."	
David Deal	FLA1-12	ME108 (ME-T)	For this country to have to face the possibility of importing natural gas when the USGS notes there to be decades if not centuries of supply reflects a pandering to special interest groups that hurt the poor and the small business owner more than anything else.	Comment noted.	
Jay Orr	FLA1-13	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Christopher Jones	FLA1-14	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
John Kawcak	FLA1-15	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	
Glen Jameson	FLA1-3	ME103 (ME-O)	The energy loss that will result from wasting gas resources will require that they be replaced by less clean energy sources. The use of some common energy like coal will have a far more adverse impact on the environment.	Comment noted.	
Laura Lindley	FLA1-4	ME104 (ME-P)	Development of natural gas is an appropriate multiple-use of federal lands and should be encouraged. We urge you to clarify in the FEIS that the RFD is an analysis tool, and not a cap on permissible development within the Vernal Resource Area.	Comment noted.	
Chris Malan	FLA1-5	ME105 (ME-Q)	I believe that responsible development of our natural resources is critically important to the continued health of our nation. Please clarify and consider the comments of IPAA and PLA as you formulate the final EIS/RMP.	Comment noted.	
Debra Stanberry	FLA1-6	ME106 (ME-R)	In light of climbing costs of fuel sources and the increasing number of individuals living on fixed	Comment noted.	

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			incomes with hard choices to make, it is more important than ever to be able to access these domestic fuel sources to supply power in the most economic fashion.		
Robert L. Bayless, Jr.	FLA1-7	ME107 (ME-S)	Please speed up the process for clearing protested leases and approving APD's.	Comment noted.	
Jim Felton	FLA1-8	ME108 (ME-T)	For this country to have to face the possibility of importing natural gas when the USGS notes there to be decades if not centuries of supply reflects a pandering to special interest groups that hurt the poor and the small business owner more than anything else.	Comment noted.	
Bill Barrett	FLA1-9	ME109 (ME-U)	Not allowing energy development in one of the most prolific hydrocarbon basins in the US runs contrary to the BLM charter of many uses.	Comment noted.	
Bill Barrett	FLA1-9	SO38 (SO-G)	I urge the RMP to fully consider the negative social and economic impacts that reach country-wide to any such measures that curtail energy development.	The commenter provides no specifics as to what these negative impacts might be that reach "country-wide."	

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State of Utah	G-1	AQ1	Table 3.2.5 Sensitive Areas to Be Considered in the Analysis: Brown's Park NWR and Ouray NWR are managed by the USFWS not the NPS.	Table 3.2.5 of the 2004 Air Report has been revised to clarify that the Brown's Park NWR and the Ouray NWR are managed by the USFSW and not the NPS.	X
State of Utah	G-1	AQ2	The Uintah Basin is not within the air shed for which monitoring data is available in your document. Use of data from the Wasatch Front, an area which often has exceedances from local sources, is inappropriate.	BLM defers the selection of background air quality monitoring data to the Utah DEQ.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ3	Additionally, the data used does not reflect the recent increase in oil and gas development emissions and associated increase in traffic-related emissions and fugitive dust. Baseline data from a Uintah Basin sources is required to accurately model the effects.	See comment response AQ2.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ4	Also at question is the wind direction which may vary depending upon area of the Vernal Planning Area (VPA).	It is not clear what the commenter is referring. Predictive Meteorological Model (MM5) data as well as numerous surface, upper air, and precipitation data stations were used in the analysis.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ5	Additional emission sources that were not mentioned include operations at oil wells such as the incidental flaring of produced gas, oil and gas production equipment, the Bonanza Power Plant and residential uses during the winter when inversions occur.	Flaring, completion, and drilling emissions were included in the analysis. The Bonanza Power Plant was assumed to be represented by background air quality monitoring data. Residential sources are assumed to be represented in the back-ground monitoring data.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ6	The Goal of an Implementation Plan is listed, but receives no further mention.	Commenter does not provide enough information to respond to. The implementation plan will be completed after the Record of Decision for the plan is issued.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ63	The State of Utah is concerned that emissions generated by the drilling and processing of oil and gas wells in the Uinta Basin were not given more	The impact of oil and gas operations was a main focus of the air quality assessment.	

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			consideration.		
State of Utah	G-1	AQ64	The Vernal draft RMP and EIS does not address the cumulative impacts of the sources of air pollution throughout the area. One oil or gas well analyzed by itself might have a negligible effect on the surrounding air quality, but hundreds or thousands of wells in the area, collectively, will have a large impact. With approximately 6300 new wells anticipated during the RMP time frame, these emissions should be considered cumulatively.	As required by CEQ regulations, a cumulative analysis was performed, which took into consideration the effects of past, present and reasonable foreseeable actions, including oil and gas development.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ65	<p>Recent data regarding emission factors from wells in adjoining state indicate that average gas wells produce over one (1) Ton per year of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) per barrel per day (BPD). Associated equipment (dehydrators, heaters, etc.) produce over 10 Tons per year VOC per million cubic feet per day (MMCFD) and approximately one Ton per year of NOx per well per year. Oil wells produce on the average of 100-200 pounds of VOC per year per BPD.</p> <p>The draft RMP and EIS air quality analysis does not include any information regarding the impact of the proposed alternatives on ozone. VOC and NOx have been found to be precursors to the formation of ozone. Ozone is a National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) and must be addressed in this analysis.</p>	<p>EPA Region VIII, in their comments on the Roan Plateau RMP DEIS, said:</p> <p>“Running a regulatory ozone model such as RPM-IV for purposes of the DEIS is impractical, and we understand that BLM’s national Science & Technology Center may be reactant to estimate potential ozone impacts with a conservative method such as VOC/NO point source screening tables.”</p> <p>This topic will be discussed further in a future meeting with the State of Utah and the Utah DEQ. Given the above, it is not clear how a possible ozone analysis would be done. This topic will be discussed at a forthcoming meeting with the State of Utah.</p> <p>See comment response AQ54.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ66	The 1990 Clean Air Act requires all states to write State Implementation Plans that address regional haze. The thousands of tons of pollution generated by projects proposed in this RMP could easily impact visibility in	NOx emissions were included in the analysis and potential visibility impacts were estimated. See comment response AQ65 regarding VOCs and ozone.	

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			Class I areas in Utah and neighboring states. The RMP must address the effects of VOC and NOx emissions on regional haze.		
State of Utah	G-1	AQ67	The state requests a cooperating agency working group be assembled to work through these issues before the Final EIS is completed.	BLM had an initial meeting with the State of Utah to hear their concerns on the air quality section of the RMP DEIS on June 24, 2005. The State expressed a desire for further meetings to discuss some issues in more detail. These meetings were held in May and June 2008 as part of the Four Corners Task Force.	
State of Utah	G-1	AQ7	Cumulative effects should be quantitative and include past and existing emissions and particulate sources. To make projections, data on emissions is available from industry sources.	A cumulative air quality analysis was performed. Please see Chapter 4 of the DEIS and Chapter 5 of the Air Quality TSD.	
State of Utah	G-1	CR20	The State of Utah is concerned by the open-ended nature of the comment on page 2-7 which states that the BLM, as part of its normal management of cultural resources, will "reduce or eliminate imminent threats from natural or human-caused deterioration or conflict with other resources." What imminent threats? How will conflicts with the unstated threats be resolved? How cost-effective is it to reduce or eliminate natural deterioration? Most importantly, how will the balance between cultural resources protection and other legitimate resource uses be achieved, and how does this balancing process differ from the normal Section 106 consultation process involving the State Historic Preservation Office? The state asks the BLM to consider the language recently added to the state historic law concerning the need for balance in the protection of cultural resources and to clarify the intent of this proposed management statement.	The statement on page 2-7 of the Draft RMP refers to the BLM's ongoing policy of cultural resource stewardship and adherence to the mandates of federal legislation such as, but not limited to, the National Historic Preservation Act. While Section 106 of the Act requires the BLM to consider the avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of impacts to National Register-eligible resources, Section 110 requires the BLM to pro-actively manage for preservation such resources, as known to exist, under their jurisdiction. This management requires addressing threats/impacts to the resources that compromise their eligibility for the National Register. These threats may come from human-caused disturbances or natural processes. The feasibility and cost effectiveness of ameliorating natural deterioration would be assessed on a case-by-case basis and in consideration of whether or not the deterioration is altering the characteristics of the resource that render it eligible for the National	

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				<p>Register.</p> <p>Note: The text from page 2.7 of the Draft RMP is now located in Table 2.1.4 (Cultural Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under Management Common to All Alternatives.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	CR21	<p>Proposed cultural resources protections listed on page 2-43 indicate that oil and gas leasing would be "subject to timing and controlled surface use stipulations or no surface occupancy to protect cultural sites" for various areas within the VFO. No stipulations related to this are discussed in Appendix K. Please, clarify this proposal. How do timing restrictions protect cultural sites? How do these "stipulations" fit in with the Section 106 protection process, which involves the SHPO and discussions at the time of a proposal about mitigation methodologies? We are concerned that the BLM is prejudging cultural resource mitigation strategies through the use of unnecessarily restrictive stipulations.</p>	<p>Appendix K in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised regarding stipulations for cultural resources.</p> <p>Timing restrictions can aid in the protection of cultural resources from indirect effects caused by such things as increased on-site erosion from altered run-off patterns resulted from rutted roads created during wet weather conditions and increased site sedimentation from fugitive dust accumulation in dry conditions; however, these protections are expected to be limited. The primary focus for protection of cultural resources is not on seasonal restrictions but on surface disturbance restrictions under the controlled surface use and no surface occupancy stipulations.</p> <p>Under all alternatives, the stipulations for CSO and NSO would be applied to leases in which there are specific cultural resources that have been found through the Section 106 process to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and for which the mitigation, as necessary, has been identified as avoidance through the Section 106 consensus process. Protective measures for cultural resources are part of standard lease terms applicable to all surface disturbing activities.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	CR22	The discussion of the effects of minerals decisions on	The presumption of the RMP/EIS is that the BLM	

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			<p>cultural resources (page 4-44) states, "short-direct effects would entail surface disturbance and even destruction of archaeological sites and features if relevant cultural resource laws and agency guidelines are not followed, or if errors occur during the development process." The next sentence indicates that long-term direct effects include the "physical alteration or elimination of archaeological sites as they are mitigated through data recovery or other on-site means when avoidance of the sites is not possible." These descriptions are muddled and compare apples and oranges. The first sentence states that cultural resources will be affected by a failure to follow the law. Because the provisions of the final RMP are approved under the general assumption that the BLM and others will follow the law, including the Section 106 process, does this sentence mean therefore state that there are no short-term effects from mineral development? The second sentence implies there are unspecified difficulties with data recovery as a mitigation tool. If avoidance of a site is not possible, data recovery and other mitigation processes are employed to eliminate the adverse impact of the planned disturbance. Therefore, the resultant physical alteration or elimination of the site is not a negative effect. The State of Utah believes the discussion of impacts to cultural resources that is currently in the document represents a bias away from the correct implications of Section 106 and cultural resource mitigation.</p>	<p>and BLM authorized undertakings will comply with federal legislation, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and therefore, short-term effects on individual cultural resources determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places would be minimal, if not non-existent. However, the RMP/EIS recognizes that occasional errors do occur wherein resources slated for avoidance are inadvertently impacted or previously unidentified resources, such as those below the ground surface, are encountered during construction in an area that was inspected for surface evidence of cultural materials. It is to these types of situations that the RMP statement in your comment refers.</p> <p>Data recovery is used to mitigate adverse effects to individual cultural resource sites, and therefore, is not considered to be an adverse effect to the subject site itself. However, data recovery that results in the elimination of the physical manifestation of the site does indeed alter in the larger cultural landscape by removing a component of it.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	FM5A	<p>The State of Utah supports Alternative A for fire management, which allows prescribed burning on approximately 156,425 acres per decade. An aggressive fire program is essential for habitat restoration efforts underway in the VFO.</p>	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	FM6	<p>We are pleased with the extent of current</p>	Comment noted.	

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			on-the-ground coordination with BLM regarding fire management and the National Fire Plan. There is nothing that causes us concern regarding the proposed fire management categories. With respect to Wildland Urban Interface areas, we note that the Argyle Canyon area is not included. The Fire Management Categories for the Argyle Canyon area are appropriate.		
State of Utah	G-1	GC26	Some of the information presented in Table S.3 Alternatives Comparison, page S-4, and is not found in Table 2.3 Alternatives, page 2-57. Table S.3 indicates that the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are recommended, in all Alternatives, for Wild and Scenic River designation. However, these segments are not identified in Table 2.3.	The segments have been identified in Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	GC37	Figure 1 displays land ownership in the VFO. The map correctly identifies UDWR managed lands in the Book Cliffs and Diamond Mountain areas. However, the figure does not show UDWR managed lands in Duchesne and Wasatch counties.	Wasatch County is outside the boundaries of the Vernal Field Office. Consequently, UDWR managed lands for Wasatch County are not depicted in Figure 1. Utah SITLA and UDWR lands are given the same color key. Some UDWR lands in Duchesne County are not discernable due to the map scale.	
State of Utah	G-1	GC38	Actions contemplated in the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs are of concern to the State Engineer because of their potential effect on Utah's Colorado River depletion allotment. Under the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact, Utah is allotted a depletion of 1,369,000 acre-feet per year from the Colorado River system. The actions contemplated by the BLM would increase the amount of water depleted. These depletions would be charged against Utah's allotment. To promote the most efficient use of Utah's allotment, the BLM should identify and implement actions in which water saving can achieved to balance out their expected depletion increases. Actions such	<p>The actions BLM is contemplating are intended to improve the watershed.</p> <p>Because the State of Utah has jurisdiction over water, any action BLM takes that would require getting a water right would be subject to approval by the State of Utah.</p> <p>Actions such as the eradication of non-native species would be activity level planning prepared in conjunction with the goals and objectives contained in the RMP.</p>	

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			as the eradication of non-native phreatophytes and the removal of unneeded water impoundments should be explored and included in this RMP.		
State of Utah	G-1	GC39	All maps should color only the lands managed by BLM. It is confusing and misleading for the reader to have large blocks colored as in Fig. 29 - VRM. The map may represent how the BLM recognizes the view shed, but it is not representative of the area over which the BLM has control.	BLM will work with contractor to change the maps. However, the maps contained in the document can be used by individual readers to correspond to larger, more detailed maps as needed. The maps contained in the document are intended only to show the broad scale landscape level decisions that would be implemented through the RMP.	
State of Utah	G-1	GC40	All maps need to have township-range descriptions. It is difficult to locate areas without identifiers.	Township and range information cannot be added to the maps at the scale used without obscuring underlying information. The maps contained in the document can be used by individual readers to correspond to larger, more detailed maps as needed. The maps contained in the document are intended only to show the broad scale landscape level decisions that would be implemented through the RMP.	
State of Utah	G-1	GC41	The shaded relief background used in Fig 1-37 makes some of the figures difficult to interpret. Figures that depict a multitude of assets, such as Minerals and Energy (Figs. 15-18) are complicated and hard to decipher. A more useful background would be a land ownership background, which includes township and range boundary lines.	See comment response GC39.	
State of Utah	G-1	HZ2	The RMP should address hazardous materials issues that may arise due to proposed oil, gas, and mineral development. Management of waste water withdrawn to recover methane resources should also be addressed. No waste waters should be discharged until a UPDES permit is obtained. Such discharges must not exceed 1200 mg/l TDS under current rules. However, salinity in the Colorado river would be much	The discussion of the potential impacts from hazardous materials associated with minerals and energy development can be found in Section 4.5 of the PRMP/FEIS. Language acknowledging the potentially hazardous nature of wastewater resulting from methane	X

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			<p>improved if no waters exceeding 300 mg/l TDS were discharged. Such waters should also be managed to prevent thermal loading to surface waters. No waters which exceed 270C, nor which raise the temperature of the receiving water body 40C or more, shall be discharged to a warm water fishery. No waters which exceed 200C nor which raise the temperature of the water body 20C or more shall be discharged to a cold water fishery.</p>	<p>recovery operations has been added to the section.</p> <p>As described in Section 3.5, the BLM adheres to EPA policy regarding hazardous materials, which includes wastewater discharge.</p> <p>Any permit requestor would have to meet the requirement of either the State or EPA, as appropriate, in order to be issued a permit. The proposed language specific to permitting requirements is not necessary as permit requirements may change in the future. Also, the permit requirements are associated with State of Utah requirements, and EPA has primacy over a large area of the Field Office in this program, not the State.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LG67	<p>Statements such as "though [range] improvements could have adverse impacts if livestock move into areas that have received little grazing in the past" (page 2-100 under Alternative A) are inappropriate and too general to fit the on-the-ground situation. The State of Utah requests that the parties involved in range improvements work toward a real analysis of impacts at the time of range improvement proposals, and that this impact statement in the DEIS be revised.</p>	<p>The analysis in question is conducted at a programmatic (landscape) level. Additional impact analyses are conducted for rangeland improvements that have the potential to affect resources at the time the improvements are proposed and their specific location and nature are known. The statement cited in the comment is located in Table 2.2.16 (Riparian Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS and merely summarizes anticipated impacts of the general scope of rangeland improvements on special status species. More information about these impacts can be found in Section 4.15.2.4.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LG68	<p>Statements about the impacts of various levels of grazing in the "Nine Mile Acquired Area" (page 2-105) in relation to scenic values appear to have no basis in fact, and are too general. The impacts are tied to</p>	<p>Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management) in the PRMP/FEIS for the Proposed Plan column has been revised to read as follows:</p>	X

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			<p>grazing levels described as "elimination," "limited," and "unlimited," and postulate effects of "preserve," "partially preserve," and "diminish" scenic quality. What are these statements based on? Are the effects of grazing being tied to VRM classifications, and if so, where is the supporting analysis? Are the effects of grazing being tied to the BLM's riparian policy, and if so, where is the consideration of the mitigation measures? The State of Utah requests that the BLM improve on this analysis, and discuss real on-the-ground issues in light of the BLM's riparian policy, no on unsupported assumptions.</p>	<p>"Livestock grazing could be allowed in the Nine-Mile Acquired Area if such use is controlled, of short duration, and would not detract from recreation and/or riparian values along the river and is in accordance with the Green River Allotment Management Plan administered by the Price Field Office"</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LG69	<p>Page 2-18 outlines action common to all alternatives for livestock and grazing. The UDWR would like to suggest some additional management practices to be included in this section. Permittees using dogs in connection with their grazing operations in black-footed ferret recovery areas should be required to show proof that they have had them vaccinated for distemper.</p>	<p>See comment response SS73.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LG70	<p>Page 2-16 discusses criteria for changing class of livestock. The UDWR suggests incorporation of the following phrasing: Cattle are preferred within 10 miles of bighorn sheep habitat areas.</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the</p>	

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				adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	LG71	Livestock grazing seasons of use alternatives are discussed on page 2-48. The UDWR generally supports the seasons of use as outlined in Alternative A. However, we urge the BLM to consider converting critical/crucial deer winter range areas to the area 4 grazing system, May 1 to June 1. Periodic spring grazing in sagebrush areas can promote browse growth and limits competition with wintering big game animals.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LG71A	Under all alternatives, many critical/crucial deer winter ranges are categorized as area 6 grazing, which allows for winter use. The UDWR recommends the season of use be moved to a spring grazing system in these areas. This management scenario is consistent with goals outlined by the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development Group who define habitat restoration as 1) active management (i.e., restoration), and 2) passive management (i.e., changes in grazing programs, etc.). The BLM, as a partner in this group, has the obligation to lead the effort for range restoration through the application of appropriate land use activities.	Area 6 already provides for a spring grazing treatment between March 15 – April 30. After April 30th, the graminoid species are in the critical growth period where the risk of decreasing perennial grass species increases, providing the opportunity for invasive species to increase which would defeat the obligation to lead the effort in range restoration through the application of appropriate land use activities.	
State of Utah	G-1	LG72	It is unclear if this is referring to the few allotments which are solely on river bottoms or if this refers to any allotment which has a river in it. If this refers to any allotment which has a river within its boundaries, then there is a potential for discontinuing grazing on many	The Grazing in River Corridors subsection to Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management) in the PRMP/FEIS refers to considering discontinuing livestock use in river corridors following the voluntary relinquishment of a permit. It does not	

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			allotments with trust lands within them and inhibiting TLA's ability to collect revenue from these lands.	state that entire allotments would be retired. The BLM only manages the lands under its jurisdiction and does not have the authority to make management decisions pertaining to non-Bureau lands. As such, the BLM would not make blanket decisions that would apply to TLA lands.	
State of Utah	G-1	LG73	Introducing bison to the area would create unnecessary conflict with cattle operations in the area, including damage to fences. These bison would be competing with other ungulates and removing feed from trust lands without compensation to the agency. TLA would not support a bison introduction without compensation either in direct payment or hunting tags if the herd became a huntable unit.	Bison emigration or reintroduction would only be considered under those alternatives that allow for it and in cooperation with UDWR.. The Proposed Plan would follow the Book Cliffs Bison Management Plan.	
State of Utah	G-1	LG74	Rangelands should be managed to control soil erosion to prevent the soil erosion rate from exceeding the tolerable (T) rate as determined through USDA/NRCS. Resources should be managed such that T is not exceeded from rangelands nor from roadways nor roadcuts, nor from riparian areas within rangelands.	The RMP adopts the Utah Rangeland Health Standards under all alternatives. These standards include specific management goals related to soil erosion. The BLM, by adhering to these Standards, would be managing to meet these soil erosion goals. See Management Common to All, Soil and Water Resources, for specific management prescriptions related to preventing undue soil erosion.	
State of Utah	G-1	LR16	The State of Utah requests that language be added to the final RMP/EIS that is broad enough to cover likely scenarios for land exchange between the BLM and the Trust Lands Administration (TLA) without having to do plan amendments.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p>	

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				<p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LR16A	<p>In this regard, the state recommends the BLM establish several "classes" of land, such as the following: lands the BLM would never consider available for exchange, such as historic sites or, special land formations; TLA lands the BLM would like to acquire for consolidation of management purposes, such as lands in Wilderness Study Areas or certain special designation areas; areas the BLM would like to dispose of for various reasons, such as small BLM parcels surrounded by TLA or fee lands; and all other lands, which should be considered available for exchange between these governmental agencies. These various classes should be broadly defined so that, when the time comes to consider an exchange, the initial step involving consideration of the public interest is considered accomplished and no plan amendment is therefore required.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS outlines general categories of land or situations in which land exchanges would be considered under the RMP.</p> <p>There is always the opportunity of the State to have a land exchange done legislatively, which would not have to adhere to the RMP criteria, but it is hoped that BLM would have input into the parcels proposed for exchange and acquisition.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	LR17	<p>Land exchanges/acquisitions actions common to all alternatives (pg 2-16) should include an additional consideration. Lands with critical habitat values for big game and sensitive, threatened, and endangered wildlife species should only be considered for disposal or exchange after wildlife stipulations are worked out among UDWR and the parties to the exchange.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives, note that lands containing T&E species habitat would be retained in federal ownership. Table 2.1.7 also identifies that exceptions may be considered for exchanges, but the agency BLM would consult with for T&E habitat is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	ME22	<p>The DEIS/RMP fails to analyze the impacts on oil & gas development [of special designations] and comply with EPCA and IMs directing incorporation of EPCA into RMPs. It requires that management restriction be the least restrictive necessary to protect documented</p>	<p>The integration of EPCA into the RMP is discussed in Section 1.12. EPCA does not prohibit the use of special designations or multiple overlapping prescriptions, but requires that these prescriptions are the minimum necessary to maintain sustained</p>	

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			and supportable needs.	yield. The BLM believes it has met this mandate and has only identified special designations where such designations are necessary.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME69	In general, the DRMP and the associated mineral report correctly identify the occurrence of the energy and mineral commodities in the VFO planning area, but significantly underrate the oil and gas development potential of the planning area. This failure to properly assess the potential for oil and gas development leads to a skewed analysis of impacts from other activities on these resources of the state.	Section 4.1.2 presents information about the [RFD] assumptions. Tables 4-1 through 4-4 shows information about potential development over the life of the plan. Section 4.8.2 presents information about mineral's impacts under alternatives.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME70	Although the RFD appears to have been developed using generally accepted technical principles, the forecast for development is conservative to the point of being painfully low based upon the anticipated drilling proposals that have been submitted by industry to date. The RMP is intended to last 15-20 years, allowing only about 300 wells on average per year to be drilled under the maximum RFD under Alternative B. The current rate of filing for drilling permits statewide is running about 25% ahead of 2004, giving a potential of 1,375 permits statewide for 2005. The VFO will continue to be the focus of 80-85% of this activity, bringing a possible total of 1,170 new drilling applications for the VFO in 2005. Given this projection, the maximum RFD of roughly 6,500 wells under Alternative B could be permitted within the next 5.5 years. Further, this does not account for any accelerated industry activity with higher oil and gas prices, or improved and enhanced recovery.	See comment response ME7.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME71	Oil and gas are not really treated as natural resources in this document, instead, the development of oil and gas is viewed as a negative impact to other natural resources. This comes to light in the Socioeconomics	See comment response ME65.	

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			<p>section where there is no mention of the costs imposed on oil and gas development as a result of restrictions due to protection of other resources such as visual, recreation, wildlife, etc. All time delays, access restrictions, and mitigation measures cost money – and ultimately could curtail oil and gas development. This reality is not addressed in the document.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	ME73	<p>The DRMP implies that only those lands that fall along the course of known gilsonite veins, as depicted on the minerals and energy maps, would be available for prospecting and leasing even though the preferred alternative allows for prospecting and leasing of gilsonite veins not shown on the DRMP maps. For clarification, the maps should show a larger contiguous block of lands which includes all known gilsonite leasing areas that are open to gilsonite prospecting and leasing and not just the veins which may be visible on the surface.</p>	See comment response ME25.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME74	<p>There is increasing interest in the development of tar sands and oil shale deposits as changing demands and technology are elevating the importance of this resource. Given the potential economic value of these resources and their known presence in the VFO, placing a high priority on these commodities in the final RMP is warranted.</p>	All decisions related to oil shale and tar sands leasing in this PRMP/FEIS are being deferred to the ongoing PEIS for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing. For more information please see Section 1.10.9.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME75	<p>There is considerable renewed interest in reopening the White River Mine and the use of existing stockpiles as well as in reopening the tar sands mine and plant near Vernal. Given that these commodities require large acreage for development and given that the extraction technique will create large areas of surface disturbance, it would be prudent to consider how the development of these resources would impact other management prescriptions. While it is likely that</p>	See comment response ME74.	

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			development of oil shale resources of the Uinta Basin will take place over many decades, it is important to envision how this development might proceed and ensure that management impediments on this resource are not included in the RMP without proper attention given to the impacts to future development.		
State of Utah	G-1	ME76	The RMP/DEIS should incorporate the information gathered during the BLM's 2001 and 2005 calls for information and comments on coal resources in the VFO. The State of Utah will have more comments to provide once this information on coal resources has been incorporated into the document and has been reviewed.	The Vernal Field Office put out a call for information and comments on coal resources in a Federal Register notice dated March 8, 2005. No comments were received.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME77	State of Utah plans, as outlined by state law, look for certain analysis to be performed by the BLM as part of its analysis of the impacts of the management prescriptions proposed as part of the RMP. For example, Utah Code Section 63-38d-401(8)(m)(D) through (H) require the BLM to consider all restrictions and moratoria on mineral exploration or production to determine whether the restrictions are still necessary, or can be modified or eliminated. BLM is asked to demonstrate that any restrictions proposed are the least restrictive necessary, and is asked to analyze whether any "no-surface occupancy" restrictions effectively sterilize fluid minerals and gases under the area because directional drilling is not feasible from an economic, ecological, or engineering standpoint. The state cannot locate any such analyses in the draft RMP, and would ask the BLM to work with the state to insure that such analyses are conducted prior to the FEIS for the plan.	See comment response ME22.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME78	The State of Utah encourages the BLM to adopt a maximum development scenario.	Comment noted.	

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State of Utah	G-1	ME79	The BLM needs to establish and define their monitoring program that will ensure compliance on any level of total surface disturbance related to deer and elk winter ranges.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME80	Please, clarify the analysis for spacing patterns on oil and gas development to ensure accurate assessment of projected impacts. Table 4.1 on page 4-3 lists disturbance levels, but does not specify the spacing level used in the analysis. Analysis for Section 4.15 and 4.19 assumes a 160-acre spacing pattern for wells. Current leases allow for 40-acre spacing in some fields. Use of the 160-acre spacing level for analysis purposes may lead to an underestimation of the impacts to wildlife from disturbances and habitat fragmentation, which would occur in areas under a more intense spacing order. Allowable spacing under all alternatives should be identified, and analyses must be consistent with the actual and proposed spacing patterns.	Establishing spacing for oil and gas development is beyond the scope of the RMP since spacing is reflective of reservoir parameters. BLM establishes spacing for Federal and Indian trust mineral estate utilizing the processes of the State of Utah Board of Oil, Gas, and Mining in reaction to requests submitted by industry.	
State of Utah	G-1	ME81	The stipulation regarding no surface disturbing activities on crucial elk calving and deer fawning habitat from May 15-June 30 cannot be found in the management common to all section or in Appendix K. Please, clarify that this timing restriction be will be implemented in all alternatives and list it in Section 2.4.18.2.8	Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS) under the subsection entitled Habitat Protection states: “In order to protect crucial elk calving and deer fawning habitat, exploration, drilling, and other development activity would not be allowed from May 15 through June 30. Maintenance of producing wells would be allowed.”	
State of Utah	G-1	ME82	The State of Utah favors the option of granting a variance to seasonal stipulations related to wildlife, as long as the UDWR is consulted on a case-by-case basis as each variance is considered, and that the UDWR concurs with each variance before it is granted. If variances are granted, a monitoring program must be in place to assess cause and effect from an overall	Comment noted.	

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			herd unit basis.		
State of Utah	G-1	ME83	If the concern with wells is the total amount of surface disturbance allowed, has the BLM considered using well pads rather than the term "wells" to allow for possible additional drilling of multiple wells from the same pad, if it is economically feasible to do so.	See comment responses ME47, ME88, ME173 and ME174.	
State of Utah	G-1	PR18	The BLM is required by FLPMA, Section 202(c)(9), BLM regulation 43 CFR § 1601.0-5(c), and Utah Code Section 63-38d-401, et. esq., to consider the planning efforts of local and state governments and make its planning documents consistent with them. The RMP is inconsistent with state and local plans in many instances, which we comment upon as resource-specific issues.	See comment response PR3.	
State of Utah	G-1	PR19	The State of Utah requests that the policies and plans indicated by Utah Code Section 63-38d-401, et. esq., be shown in the listing of other plans to which the RMP has a relationship.	The addition has been made as suggested.	X
State of Utah	G-1	RE16	The State of Utah opposes the closing of the Dry Fork Canyon Recreation Area to the shooting of firearms as this would limit hunting opportunities, and existing laws and regulations already prohibit the discharge of firearms near buildings and on roads.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	RE17	The UDWR proposes adding an additional recreation management action to the RMP. We encourage the BLM to ensure all developed recreation sites have bear-proof garbage containers and signs warning of the dangers of feeding bears.	The BLM declines to implement the proposal. The BLM may install bear-proof garbage containers in the future based on site specific evaluations. The BLM also will conduct an education program as stated in Table 2.1.13 (Recreation Resource) in the PRMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	RE18	The UDWR supports not improving or developing motorized trails (pg 2-52). Frequent and repeated motorized use in critical wildlife habitats may permanently displace animals and fragment habitat.	Comment noted.	

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State of Utah	G-1	RE19	The alternatives clearly list surface acres that will be designated as closed, open, or limited with regards to OHV travel. In each alternative, a given number of miles of routes in the "Limited" category is also listed. This is extremely misleading. According to BLM staff, travel planning has yet to be done, and is scheduled for sometime in the next two years. The Draft gives the impression to the OHV user that all the miles noted on the map are designated for OHV use when that is not the case.	As stated in Table 2.1.15 (Recreation – Trail Maintenance and Development), the BLM would make future OHV route adjustments in areas designated as Open and/or Limited based on access needs, recreational opportunities, and natural resource constraints. For purposes of analysis, County travel plan maps were used to identify existing roads and trails. See comment response RE20.	
State of Utah	G-1	RE20	Designated "Open" areas have little if any logical basis. The areas appear to have been randomly selected, and are not bounded by any geophysical feature that would allow an OHV user to readily identify whether or not he/she is indeed within the Open area. The Division would suggest that BLM expand the open areas to the edges of predetermined boundaries. Those boundaries could be natural features (i.e., streams, ledges, washes, etc) or man made (roads, canals, etc).	BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1, Appendix C authorizes management to defer delineating a travel management network. Based on this authorization, the travel management plan will be completed within five years of the signing of the ROD for the Final EIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	RW18	The riparian strategies developed under alternative A are supported by UDWR (page 2-53). Healthy riparian systems are a limited habitat type in the VFO and support a great diversity of wildlife populations. These strategies will benefit sensitive species such as Colorado River cutthroat trout. The RMP should further define how often monitoring will occur. Monitoring is critical for these management strategies to be successful.	See comment response RW8.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD122	As part of the required analysis of the effects of the management requirements for other aspects of the proposed RMP on special designations, including ACECs, the DEIS states that the proposed plan's ACEC "management focuses on protecting specific,	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	

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			<p>identified relevance and importance values." The statement is incomplete because it fails to focus on the parallel statutorily required analysis concerning effects from authorized multiple-use activities, which may cause irreparable damage to those relevant and important values. The statement should read that the plan's proposed ACEC management provisions will "protect and prevent irreparable damage to specific, identified relevance and importance values."</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD123	<p>The discussion of ACEC management contains the general statement that ACECs would benefit from the "special management attention they would receive if designated." Special management attention is more than a coincidental benefit that flows from designation, it is a fundamental prerequisite to designation. The BLM must make a determination for each potential and proposed ACEC that special management attention is required to protect the identified relevant and important values. From the information in the DRMP, the State of Utah cannot determine the nature of the required special management attention for any of the potential or proposed ACECs.</p>	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD124	<p>The DRMP indicates that the lack of designation of some potential ACECs may place the relevant and important values "at some risk of irreparable damage during the life of the plan." This statement is completely backward. BLM must first make a determination that a threat of irreparable damage from some authorized multiple-use activity exists, and is directed toward the identified relevant and important value in order to complete the fundamental requirements for an ACEC. The identification of required threat of irreparable damage cannot be supported from simple hypothetical musings postulating that the lack of the very management</p>	See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.	

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			structure (ACEC) BLM is trying to justify may result in damage to the resources.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD125	<p>The State of Utah cannot find in the DRMP/DEIS any analysis for ACECs of the differentiation between special management and standard multiple-use management, the level and type of multiple-use an area can sustain without risk or threat of irreparable damage to relevant and important values, what measures can be taken to protect the relevant and important values without placing restrictions on other resource uses, and whether or not designations other than ACEC will afford the protection determined necessary through the evaluation process. BLM Manual Section 1613.33E allows the BLM to decline to designate an ACEC where standard or routine management practices are sufficient to protect the resource or value from risks or threats of damage/degradation.</p>	<p>The potential ACECs brought forward for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD126	The DEIS fails to analyze the balance between ACEC designation and the value of other multiple-uses. The potential benefits of ACEC designation versus other resource uses is not evaluated for any of the potential and proposed ACECs.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD127	The State of Utah is concerned that the BLM views potential and proposed ACECs as convenient vehicles to generally focus agency management attention on an area, rather than a very focused management tool with strict criteria for creation.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD128	The State of Utah is concerned that the discussions and analyses of potential and proposed ACECs in the DRMP/DEIS don't meet the standards required by either state or federal law. The discussion as it is fails to provide sufficient information to allow the purpose and need for each potential ACEC to be ascertained, and the impacts of its potential designation to be determined; the present discussion is merely a recitation that certain natural features or processes within the area are, a priori, important and relevant because of a simple regurgitation of the regulatory requirements, and no cogent and coordinated examination of the proposed management scheme exists. There is no discussion of the factors leading to a determination that the required important and relevant values are, in fact, important on a regional scale, as there is no discussion of the nature of the region to which the factors within the potential and proposed ACEC can be compared. Nor is there an application of the facts to the statutory requirements, instead there is only a restatement of factors which are part of the statutory and regulatory requirements that need to be demonstrated in order to create an ACEC.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	

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			Finally, the statutory requirement to determine the probability of irreparable damage to the important and relevant values is completely AWOL. See comment SD129 for an example of the superficial nature of ACEC analysis.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD129	The discussions about the proposed relevance and importance of each potential and proposed ACEC contained in Appendix G contain three references to the "lush riparian vegetation" which is "rare" in the area. All of the areas to which these statements refer are located along the Green River and are part of the main watershed system of the area – the Green River drainage. In this generally arid area, all riparian areas are important and tend to look lush. What is the regional significance of these three riparian areas? How do they compare to riparian areas in the proposed and potential Bitter Creek ACEC? Further, given the BLM's general nationwide policy of protection for riparian areas because all riparian areas are important, what is the threat to these three areas that cannot be met through the protections offered by the nationwide policy, and how will the special management attention for these three riparian areas be different from the nationwide protections?	The differences between how the riparian areas would be managed as ACECs, and how they would be managed if not designated as ACECs, are discussed in Chapter 4.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD130	The analysis indicates that ACECs may benefit from "fire resources, soil and watershed actions, and vegetation resources (including riparian areas and woodlands)," yet be negatively affected by mineral activities and OHV use. No explanation is given for these statements. Vegetation, fire, and soil treatments may affect the appearance of the land as much as mineral development, yet the end result is healthier vegetation. The bias against mineral development is evident, because no mention is made concerning the balance of uses which results in the extraction of	The distinction between fire resources, soil, watershed, and vegetation management actions and minerals activity and OHV use is that changes to the character of the landscape, including visual appearance, for the former category of actions are of far shorter duration and more consistent with the management objectives of ACECs than those of the latter category of actions. Also, see Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	X

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			resources useful to society versus the potential benefits of the ACEC, and because the analysis fails to recognize the effect of proper mineral mitigation measures upon the ultimate effect on the relevant and important values. The state requests the BLM revisit these superficial analyses, consider mitigation part of the determination of effect, and consider the balance of uses as required.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD131	As the pros and cons of each potential and proposed ACECs, and those of SRMAs or WSRs, are weighed, the BLM should avoid any recommendations which unduly restrict continued vegetation and wildlife treatment practices, uses associated with school trust lands, mineral development, and other management needs of state agencies.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD132	Existing ACECs must be reviewed for sufficiency and necessity prior to being carried forward in the new RMP. The simple statement in the RMP that the existing ACEC designations have been effective is insufficient and does not meet the requirements of the BLM's own Manual. There is no discussion as to whether it is the management of certain areas as ACECs or other laws and regulations that has protected the relevant and important values of these areas.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD133	The State of Utah is concerned that none of the Alternatives in the DRMP and EIS presented a "no ACEC" position, thereby indicating in a more detailed manner the need for all proposed and potential ACECs. The state would ask the BLM to correct this deficiency.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD134	The State of Utah is concerned that this potential and proposed ACEC does not meet the statutory requirements for an ACEC as no significant information	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	

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			<p>about the area, or the need for the ACEC is given. The importance criteria discussion is merely a recitation of the requirements found in the BLM Handbook for qualities the BLM should find in an area in order to determine the existence of importance criteria.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD135	<p>Alternatives A and C provide for restricted wood-cutting in the old-growth pinyon pine area of 160 acres, which is justified to protect these irreplaceable resources. But the management prescriptions for the proposed ACEC also provide for "enhancing habitat utilizing forest manipulation and tree spraying." Presumably "forest manipulation and tree spraying" would not occur in the area of the 1200 year old trees. Where would it occur? Forest manipulation and tree spraying are tools in the normal multiple-use regime for BLM lands. How does this simple statement of a proposed management requirement constitute a "detailed explanation" of special management for the resource, and what exact purpose does it serve? Because this management prescription is not for the old trees, the State of Utah is obligated to ask exactly what resource is to be protected by the BLM's management prescriptions from exactly what type of threat which may produce irreparable damage in what manner? Further, because the area of the old-growth trees is only 160 acres, why is ACEC management needed for the other acres of the proposed and potential ACEC?</p>	<p>Vegetation/habitat treatments would occur throughout the rest of the ACEC.</p> <p>More detailed management provisions meeting the overarching parameters established through the RMP would be included in an ACEC management plan prepared for this ACEC.</p> <p>See comment response SD8-G9.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD136	<p>The list of proposed management prescriptions for this area says that oil and gas leasing will be managed by timing and controlled surface use, except for the old tree area, which would be managed using no-surface occupancy provisions, and a Natural Area which would be managed as closed to leasing. Which category of leasing is this for the larger area – Category 1, 2, 3, or 4? What timing stipulations would be necessary in the</p>	<p>See Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS which describes under which alternative the Bitter Creek ACEC would be established.</p> <p>Please compare Figures 11-18 with Figures 22-24</p>	

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			<p>ACEC? What controls on surface use? Is there a reason the Natural area is closed to leasing, as opposed to the use of no-surface occupancy? NSO provisions allow drainage of fluid resources from under the area, while no-leasing may cause the creation of an area sterilized from drainage larger than the 400 acres involved. How is oil and gas leasing, and possibly exploration and production a threat that may produce irreparable damage to the 160 acres of old growth trees, cultural resources, or the wetlands which are cited as relevant and important values for this area?</p>	<p>to see the stipulations applying to the vast majority of lands within these proposed ACECs.</p> <p>Timing buffers within the ACECs would be implemented primarily for the protection of special status species and wildlife. Controls on surface use would be related to such factors as fragile soils and steep slopes, visual resources, and wildlife and special status species habitat. Please, see Appendix K for more information about the nature of proposed timing and controlled surface use stipulations within the planning area.</p> <p>See comment response SD27-G-22.</p> <p>The Natural Area is the Book Cliffs Instant Study Area and is managed under the IMP for wilderness. The area must be closed to mineral development as per regulation.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD137	<p>There is no discussion about the geographic extent of the wetlands or the perched watertable. Do the wetlands extend throughout the entire 147,000+ acres of the potential ACEC? If not, how much acreage do they cover, and what is the nature of the other lands within the proposed area? The State of Utah is concerned that the proposed ACEC is much, much larger than necessary to protect the identified important and relevant values.</p>	<p>The wetlands do not extend throughout the entire proposed Bitter Creek ACEC but are localized in smaller areas. Other relevant and important values identified for this proposed ACEC are discussed in Chapter 3 and Appendix G includes cultural/historical resources, watersheds, and ecosystems/habitat for special status species. These other relevant and important values extend throughout the area identified for this proposed ACEC.</p> <p>See comment response SD14-G13.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD138	The proposed management prescriptions for this area	VRM classifications are not tied specifically to	

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			include Class 1, 2, or 3 VRM designations. The location of each proposed VRM classification, as illustrated on the maps is not tied to any of the relevant or important values discussed as the qualification reasons for the ACEC, leaving the reader to wonder what resources are being threatened by what type of threat which will cause irreparable damage in what manner?	<p>ACEC values but are tied to the visual inventory for the planning area and to recreation management decisions.</p> <p>The relevant and important values for these ACECs include an old growth pinyon forest, cultural resources, important watersheds, and a critical ecosystem for wildlife and migratory birds.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD139	The proposed and potential Coyote Basin ACEC is proposed solely for white-tailed prairie dog complexes. The DRMP indicates the prairie dog is relevant because it is "vulnerable to adverse change from a variety of current causes." What causes? What vulnerability? The reasoning means that the prairie dog had been petitioned for listing under the provisions of the ESA, a petition which was recently denied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	<p>Based upon an analysis of and response to the public comments, BLM has dropped the designation of Coyote Basin in the Proposed Plan.</p> <p>Prairie dogs are extremely susceptible to the plague, and the white-tailed prairie dog has suffered large-scale population decline as a result.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD140	A common problem with prairie dog complexes is the plague. How will ACEC management prevent this problem?	ACEC designation will not, in and of itself, address the issue of plague in prairie dog colonies. The integrated management plan for the area as well as the research conducted under the Research Natural Area designation and in cooperation with other agencies and organizations will recognize the risk of plague and implement measures to manage it where possible.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD141	Proposed management prescriptions for this ACEC include noxious weed control, restoring natural fire regime, maintaining or enhancing ferret habitat, and establishing a research and monitoring program. The analysis fails to show how the control of noxious weeds is important as a special management prescription for	The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and	

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			<p>the prairie dog (the reason for the ACEC), independent of the BLM's stated desire to control noxious weeds everywhere. What is special about the noxious weed control in the area under discussion? Further, what does natural fire and enhancement of ferret habitat have to do with the prairie dogs?</p>	<p>Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD142	<p>There is no discussion anywhere about the potential for irreparable damage requiring the creation of this ACEC. This information must be included in the document. The State of Utah believes this proposed ACEC is a solution looking for a problem and strongly opposes it. The state Division of Wildlife Resources, which has jurisdiction over prairie dogs as a wildlife species, sees no need for this proposed ACEC.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD143	The discussion of the relevant and important values of the proposed Nine Mile Canyon ACEC is inadequate in that it does not provide an actual description of said values, but rather it offers merely a recitation of the regulatory requirements for the nature of those values. How are these values significant in a regional context? What specifically are the qualities to be protected and managed through the ACEC?	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD144	This proposed ACEC is described as an extension of an ACEC designated by the Book Cliffs RMP. Do the lands within the proposed extension lands have the same qualities as the land within the existing ACEC? Where are the extension lands in relation to the existing ACEC? Figures 22-24 give some indication but not a lot of detail.	The lands within the proposed extension area contain the same relevant and important values as the existing ACEC. The proposed extension is located at the west end of the existing ACEC. The expansion area is represented by the difference between the proposed Nine Mile Canyon ACEC boundaries illustrated in Figures 22 and 24.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD145	The State of Utah does not believe the BLM has adequately justified the need for this ACEC designation to protect cultural resources given that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act already affords these resources protection and consideration such as mitigation. The BLM is also proposing an archaeological district for the cultural resources and did not analyze the need for the ACEC against the protection afforded by both Section 106 and an archaeological district. Further, the BLM has not identified any special management necessary for the area beyond the normal cultural resource management BLM would employ.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD146	The Main Canyon ACEC is proposed by the BLM to protect cultural resources and "natural systems." What natural systems – what does this mean?	Natural Systems are defined under 45 FR 57318 as "Living or nonliving parts of the natural environment, considered either as discrete individual elements or as group or classes of such individual elements, and the behaviors, actions, and interactions of such elements or changes to them. The central features	

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				of such a system or process may, for example, be communities of living plants, and vital components of their habitat, or such non-living structures as geological formations, which exemplify a natural process or system."	
State of Utah	G-1	SD146A	What is the threat of irreparable harm to these "systems"? Under the ACEC some activities such as OHV use would be closed or otherwise restricted and portions of the area would be managed as VRM I (which also restricts acceptable surface uses).	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD146B	Because these restrictions have the potential to close portions of the area to oil and gas development, the State of Utah is concerned that the potential to protect natural systems, without further clarification of the specific management provisions, will constitute management for non-impairment, in violation of state law and the case of Utah v. Norton.	See Response to Comment SD16A-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD147	The State of Utah requests an actual accounting and detailed description of the relevant and important values for this ACEC rather than a restatement of the regulatory requirement for the necessary quality of values in order for an ACEC to be designated.	See Response to Comment SD16A-G-22. Appendix provides specific information for each existing and nominated ACECs. Reports for Relevance and Importance may be reviewed in the Administrative Record.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD148	Much of the area proposed for this ACEC is within the Winter Ridge WSA. What is the relationship between the two? Why is an ACEC necessary for the WSA lands?	See Response to Comment SD104-G-3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD149	The DRMP indicates that special management attention for this ACEC would include "permitting surface disturbance activities found to be	The commenter is correct in the inference that surface-disturbing activities that contradicted the goals and objectives of this ACEC would not be	

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			complimentary or compatible with the goals and objects of the ACEC.” Presumably those not found compatible would not be approved? What are the goals and objectives of the proposed and potential ACEC?	approved. The goals and objectives of this ACEC are to manage for the maintenance and enhancement of the area's important cultural/historical/traditional resources and natural systems. See Appendix G and Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD150	The State of Utah does not believe the BLM has adequately justified the need for this ACEC designation to protect cultural resources given that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act already affords these resources protection and consideration such as mitigation. The BLM has not identified any special management necessary for the area beyond the normal cultural resource management BLM would employ or what the threats of irreparable harm are.	See Response to Comment SD125-G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD151	The State of Utah requests that the BLM re-examine and re-justify the need for this ACEC, especially in light of the proposed SRMA for the same area.	See Response to Comment SD104-G-3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD152	The VRM classification of I or II proposed for this area could prevent necessary prescribed burns or other vegetative management necessary for range and forest health, or the economic use of any state trust lands within the area.	No VRM classification prevents necessary vegetation treatments, including prescribed burns, which are considered short-duration visual disruptions. No BLM management decisions, including VRM classifications, apply to state trust land inholdings. The BLM cannot impose any restrictions or limitations on lands not under its jurisdiction. The BLM must also provide for reasonable access to such inholdings.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD153	The BLM has failed to provide adequate justification of the proposed ACECs as the discussions of each ACEC do not include specific details or analysis of the	Threats to relevant and important values vary by alternative. Any of the alternatives may be selected, even if there are risks or threats of damage to	

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			<p>identified relevant and important values in a regional context, nor do they include any substantive description of the threats of irreparable harm or elucidation of specific management needs to prevent said harm. The BLM has also failed to demonstrate why the ACECs are necessary relative to other protections afforded to identified values through other designations or laws.</p>	<p>relevant and important values resulting from that alternative. See Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Also, see Responses to Comments SD27-G-22 and SD50-G-25.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD154	<p>The State of Utah believes that the BLM has not sufficiently divulged the proposed management prescriptions for the river segments discussed in the DRMP/DEIS, as required by the draft document stage by BLM Manual Section 8351.32C. The information found in the document on pages 4-211 through 4-214 consists simply of general statements about concerns, rather than an evaluation of identified impacts. Further, support for the alleged concerns cannot be found in the document.</p>	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25,G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD155	<p>The DRMP/DEIS does not contain the information necessary to demonstrate that the values identified for each proposed WSR segment are river-related, "outstandingly remarkable," or significant on a regional basis as required by the guidance Process and Criteria (1996) adopted by the BLM and other regional federal agencies or BLM IM 2004-196. The State of Utah requests that the BLM review these eligibility determinations with the state and local governments, in order to fully explore the rationale for each.</p>	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25,G-1.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD156	<p>The statement on page 2-57 that river segments found to be eligible during the current RMP preparation process would continue to be managed to protect their eligibility under the "no-action" alternative (Alternative D) is not an accurate representation of federal law and does not comply with BLM policy and direction, or state</p>	See Responses to Comments SD1-I-1 and SD59-G-25,G-1.	

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			law. BLM Manual 8351, Section 33 requires the BLM to assess in the RMP whether or not each river segment identified as eligible is also suitable for inclusion in the NWSR System. The Manual also states that if suitability cannot be determined as part of the RMP, a separate EIS may be required to make that determination. The projected schedule for completing the suitability evaluation should be set forth in the RMP. Alternative D, as represented on page 2-57, is therefore unacceptable and does not meet the requirements of BLM policy or state law.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD157	The information under Section 3.14.3.2, page 3-84, should more fully and accurately represent the specific management requirements found in Manual Section 8351.32C, particularly regarding valid existing rights.	Chapter 3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to expand the discussion of management requirements for rivers determined eligible for the NWSRS to include the more detailed information outlined in Manual 8351, Section .32C.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD158	The meaning of the statement "to the extent that the BLM has the authority to do so" found on page 3-84 (Section 3.14.3.2) needs to be clarified.	This statement merely refers to the fact that the BLM does not have the authority to impose restrictions on non-Bureau landholders within areas found eligible and suitable for WSR designation, nor does it have the authority to usurp legal water rights or trump the requirements of other agencies with authority over certain waterways. The BLM does not believe the statement requires clarification in the document as it already, as written, acknowledges there are limits to BLM's authority with regards to waterways and water-related issues.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD159	The majority of the proposed ACECs encompass and isolate parcels of state trust lands. Management prescriptions applied to federal lands can significantly impact the land management goals of the Trust Lands Administration. The presence of trust lands within a designated ACEC can significantly impact the intent of the designation. The state, TLA, and BLM must ensure	State inholdings may or may not currently have access, depending upon whether or not existing vehicle routes lead to them. Under different alternative scenarios, existing routes may be proposed for closure. The BLM's policy, as required by the Cotter decision (State of Utah v. Andrus, 10/1/79), is that "the State must be allowed access	

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			that any proposal by the BLM providing for restricted use of the public lands does not impact the economic potential of or interfere with TLA's ability to effectively manage its lands. These impacts must be analyzed and a plan of action to mitigate them proposed.	to the State school trust lands so that those lands can be developed in a manner that will provide funds for the common school" This decision confined the issue of access to situations directly involving economic revenues generated for the school trust. The recreation restrictions do not prohibit the State from reasonable access to its lands for economic purposes through separate permit authorization as specified by the Cotter decision. Routes to State sections may not have been identified for recreational purposes due to resource conflicts or actual route conditions.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD160	The vast universe of acronyms and jargon begins to overwhelm the reader of the DRMP when the reader tries to understand the difference between an ACEC, VRM management area and now, a Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). This is especially true if the reader compares Figures 21 through 24, and immediately notices that ACECs and SRMAs are proposed for the same geographic areas. The DRMP/DEIS does not define the reasons for the proposed SRMAs, nor the functional difference between an ACEC and an SRMA.	Definitions of SRMAs and ACECs are provided in the Glossary. Additional description of SRMAs is provided in Section 3.10.1. Information about the specific SRMAs included in the alternatives can be found in Chapter 3.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD161	What does the "integrated activity plan" that would be prepared for each SRMA according to pages 2-51 and 2-52 include besides recreation? Does this plan consider and include other resource uses?	Activity Plans are defined under the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 as: "A type of implementation plan; an activity plan usually describes multiple projects and applies best management practices to meet land use plan objectives. Examples of activity plans include interdisciplinary management plans, habitat management plans, recreation area management plans, and allotment management plans."	

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				<p>This would include SRMAs.</p> <p>Furthermore, H-1601-1 further states:</p> <p>“Upon approval of the land use plan, subsequent implementation decisions are put into effect by developing implementation (activity-level or project-specific) plans. An activity-level plan typically describes multiple projects in detail that will lead to on-the-ground action. These plans traditionally focused on single resource programs (habitat management plans, allotment management plans, recreation management plans, etc.). However, activity-level plans are increasingly interdisciplinary and are focused on multiple resource program areas to reflect the shift to a more watershed-based or landscape-based approach to management. These types of plans are sometimes referred to as “integrated or interdisciplinary plans,” “coordinated resource management plans,” “landscape management plans,” or “ecosystem management plans.” A project-specific plan is typically prepared for an individual project or several related projects.”</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD162	<p>How does the proposed Brown's Park ACEC differ from the Brown's Park SRMA? What is the specific goal of the SRMA that is not accomplished by the ACEC? Conversely, if the ACEC is not appropriate for the area to address the management needs, what is the need for the SRMA? The State of Utah asks that the BLM respond to these issues for each proposed SRMA/ACEC combination, especially the proposed Nine Mile SRMA.</p>	<p>SRMAs are not special designations but rather are management tools for the maintenance and enhancement of recreational opportunities. ACECs are a special designation and provide for the focusing of special management attention on the maintenance and enhancement of relevant and important resource values that may not be related to recreation, and, therefore, would not be managed under a recreation management plan.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD163	The discussion about the proposed Brown's Park	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	

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			<p>SRMA on page 2-52 [of the DEIS] indicates that a portion of the area would be managed for primitive recreation, and closed to "surface disturbing activities, except for activities that complement recreation values." The reference to "surface disturbing activities" is unclear and vague. What exactly are "surface disturbing activities"? Movement of livestock? Movement of wildlife? Seismic survey equipment? Cadastral survey equipment? The definition is important as the total management regime proposed by the BLM for this area has strong elements of non-use or non-impairment, including VRM I classification for some portions of the area. It would appear that the BLM is trying to manage this area for non-impairment, in violation of the ruling of Utah v. Norton.</p>	<p>The Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603's non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD164	<p>The discussion of this SRMA on page 2-51 [of the DEIS] indicates the activity plan would focus on maintaining a "frontier mystique of adventure and discovery," which is further defined to mean "unconfined recreation, limited facilities." What does this mean, especially in light of the fact that 90% of the area is leased for oil and gas?</p>	<p>Much of the area encompassed by the Book Cliffs SRMA is/would be leased under timing and controlled surface use stipulations (with standard stipulations also in place) that would provide for development options compatible with the BLM's recreation goals. Portions of the SRMA would also be closed to leasing, including the Winter Ridge WSA and an area designated for primitive recreation opportunities.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD165	<p>This SRMA is proposed to be managed for "cultural values and scenic quality." How is this different from the ACEC proposed for the same area?</p>	<p>See comment response SD162 regarding the distinction between SRMAs and ACECs. The cultural values and scenic quality of the area contribute to its recreational appeal and use. These same resources have values beyond recreational use, including scientific, experimental, educational, and traditional value.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD166	<p>Alternative A increases the acreage of the Nine Mile SRMA from 44,181 to 81,168. How is this increase justified and why is such a large area necessary?</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	SD167	<p>The White River SRMA (western part) would be managed as no surface occupancy. How is this different from the ACEC proposed for the area? The State of Utah has concerns that the establishment of an SRMA outside of the 1/2-mile wide river corridor is inappropriate due to the demonstrated lack of recreational activity beyond the corridor. Why is it necessary outside the river corridor? Is it even necessary to have an SRMA in the area in light of the proposed WSR designation on the west segment of the White River SRMA? How are the proposed WSR and SRMA designations related to each other?</p>	<p>A review of Table 2.3, Recreation-shows those NSO stipulations are not proposed in direct correlation to the SRMA. Rather, Table 2.1 and Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction. (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS clearly indicates that management of the ACEC would include NSO for the western portion of the area.</p> <p>The SRMA and WSR designations are two separate types of management tools. SRMAs are not special designations but tools for integrated management of recreational opportunities in areas of high recreation use. WSR designations are special designations intended to recognize particular river related values, which may include recreation, that require special management consideration and action.</p> <p>WSR management would only apply to one-quarter mile from center-line on each side of the river. Recreation use occurs outside of this narrow corridor and has therefore the BLM has proposed an SRMA in two alternatives.</p> <p>Also, see comment response SD8-G-9.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD168	<p>Section 3.14.2.1 on page 3-80 discusses the Coyote Basin ACEC. Black-footed ferrets were released in 1999 under 10j status designation. However, this section is vague on that point. It only mentions ferrets as being raised for release but does not mention that ferrets are already successfully reproducing in the wild. The document fails to mention that the UDWR is also</p>	<p>Chapter 3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify 10j status of black-footed ferrets in Coyote Basin.</p>	X

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			cooperating with the Vernal BLM and Utah State University in continuing the research project relating to the recovery of black-footed ferrets.		
State of Utah	G-1	SD169	Alternative C proposes to identify as suitable a 22-mile reach of Argyle Creek from its headwaters to the Carbon County line. Said reach would be tentatively classified as "Recreational." A reading for the rationale of such a recommendation in Chapter 4, sections 13 and 14 fails to yield any specifics. More information on the values to be protected will be helpful.	More information on the ORVs for Argyle Creek can be found in Appendix C: Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification, and Review.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD56	The discussions concerning potential recommendations for addition to the Wild and Scenic River System in the draft RMP and EIS are confusing, contradictory and incomplete, and do not meet the requirements of federal or state law or BLM policy and direction. The counties believe it is imperative that the BLM properly disclose the reasons and rationale for determinations of eligibility and suitability for proposed additions to the NWSRS, and to fully meet the requirements of state and federal law in doing so.	Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD57	<p>The counties are concerned that the designation of stream segments as "Wild & Scenic" could jeopardize the ability of local communities, industry, farmers, Indian tribes, and other water users to appropriate and develop water and to get change applications approved in order to meet their future water needs. Fundamentally, the counties are concerned that Wild & Scenic River designations would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. limit the ability of communities to develop water needed for future growth 2. limit additional industrial growth including oil shale development 	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			3. limit additional agricultural growth 4. affect water right settlements with the Northern Ute Tribe 5. affect completion of the Central Utah Project 6. affect operation of Flaming Gorge Reservoir 7. reduce funding to the Colorado River Salinity Control Program, or affect agreements already in place for the Endangered Fishes Recovery Program		
State of Utah	G-1	SD59	<p>State plans, as outlined by State law (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a) through (b)), expand upon the requirements of the WSR Act by delineating the necessary analysis which must be conducted on river segments considered for possible inclusion in the NWSRS. These state requirements are not in opposition to the federal requirements, but are designed to fully flesh out studies that the federal agencies should perform, in order to assure that the full and complete nature of the proposal is made public. State law expands upon the requirements for study by requiring that river segments proposed for inclusion in the NWSRS contain water at all times, that the river segment contain an outstandingly remarkable value which is significant within a physiographic regional context, that the rationale and justification for the determination of the outstanding value is fully disclosed, all segments considered eligible are evaluated for suitability of designation, a “suitable” or “not suitable” decision is made for each segment, and that studies of the effects of designation on uses within the river corridor, and upstream and downstream from the corridor are analyzed and disclosed.</p>	<p>The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM’s wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by</p>	

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				BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD60	State law requires the BLM to fully disclaim any rights to water in the segments recommended for inclusion in the NWSRS as a result of adoption of the final Resource Management Plan. (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a)(viii)c)). Although there is language on page 4-210 which discusses in-stream flows, this language does not address this State statutory requirement directly. Additionally, the paragraph at the top of page 2-28 which states that the BLM will develop additional and maintain existing water rights” is unsupported. We suggest that the BLM provide more detail and specifics for this statement, and more affirmative language clearly disclaiming any water rights.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD61	We have concerns regarding the language at page 4-210 which passively mentions the Colorado River Compact. Under the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact, Utah is allotted a depletion of 1,369,000 acre-feet per year from the Colorado River system. Obviously, the Compact is of major significance to the state and any actions that may affect the compact are of concern. Utah Code §63-38d-401(8)(a)(x)(A)and(B) require clear demonstration that including rivers in the NWSRS and terms and conditions for managing such rivers will not impair or otherwise interfere with interstate compacts.	Section 13(e) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act says: “Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by any States which contain any portion of the national wild and scenic rivers system.”	
State of Utah	G-1	SD62	We are concerned that the BLM is not stating, in a full and complete manner, the authority for protection of river segments while studies pursuant to Section 5(d) of the Act are underway and protection until Congress may act upon any recommendations made in planning documents pursuant to BLM planning authority.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD63	The draft RMP indicates on page 2-29 that “new river segments found suitable” would be managed in	Actions Common to all for Wild and Scenic Rivers have been moved to Table 2.1.19 (Special	X

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			<p>accordance with the “Wild and Scenic River Act to prevent non-impairment of outstandingly remarkable values.” We do not find the term “non-impairment” in either the Act or BLM policy direction. The Wild and Scenic Rivers guidelines of federal agencies indicate that Section 10(a) of the Act is interpreted to provide for a “nondegradation and enhancement policy for all designated river areas.” However, this provision does not apply to rivers found suitable for recommendation during planning processes. The counties are concerned the statement of management found on page 2-29 is too simplistic, doesn’t meet the intent of the statements found on page 3-84 or page 4-210, and fails to give the stakeholders or the public sufficient notice of criteria or process the BLM intends to employ as part of the proposed management for the river segments determined to be suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. We request that the BLM revise the document to address these concerns.</p>	<p>Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS. The Actions Common to All have been revised to more clearly define how BLM intends to manage segments determined suitable as a result of this planning process. The correct phrasing should be “prevent impairment” instead of “prevent non-impairment.”</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD65	<p>The discussion of Upper and Lower segments of the Green River in the draft RMP is incomplete. BLM assumes that the rationale, findings and protective management identified in the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs, completed in the 1980’s still applies. Numerous significant recreation related facilities (i.e. campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, vehicle parking), and other types of development, are now present along the Green River corridor, particularly the Upper segment. Much of this development has occurred since the Diamond Mountain RMP was completed and the ROD was signed. This development may affect not only the determination of suitability for these segments, but the current classification of “scenic” for the segment as well. The counties oppose simply carrying over the Upper and</p>	<p>The Upper and Lower Green River Segments were identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy</p>	

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			<p>Lower segments of the Green River as recommended additions to the NWSRS from the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs. The counties believes that the BLM must consider all new information which has developed since the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs were finalized, to determine whether the segment still qualifies and should still be recommended, and to meet the requirements of the State law.</p>	<p>Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p> <p>“In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values...”</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD66	<p>Table 5 includes “[m]anageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values” as a “Suitability Consideration.” However, in the “Consideration Applied” column which is supposed to provide the information about manageability, the document simply states “[m]anageability ... and other means of protecting values would be extrapolated from the impact analysis for the Vernal RMP/EIS.” This analysis goes nowhere as an explanation, and is inadequate to meet the requirements of Federal law and BLM Manual 8351, and further, is not supported by the impact analysis information presented on pages 4-210 through 4-215.</p>	<p>Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD67	<p>The draft RMP provides only cursory acknowledgment of the White River Dam project and fails to adequately represent its significance, and characterizes the impacts of an eligibility or suitability determination, and associated “protective management” on the proposed project in a contradictory manner. Statements found on pages 4-212 and 4-213 illustrate the cursory analysis, as follows: “...a suitable decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with the continuation of an existing permit for a dam site” and t]he suitability decision for Segment 1 of the White</p>	<p>Alternatives B and D are part of the range of alternatives. There is an existing right of way for a dam on the White River in segment 1. Segment 1 was carried forward for analysis purposes under the wild and scenic river situation.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	X

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			<p>River would result in the discontinuance of the existing permit for the dam site.” The White River is also described as part of Alternative D, on page 2-57, as follows: “[u]nder this alternative, suitability findings would not be made and eligibility would continue with BLM applying protective management to the free flowing nature, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classification of the river.” The discussion of Alternative D on page 4-214, reaffirms that Segment 1 of the White River “would remain eligible.” However, in a contradictory manner, the discussion also states, “Segment 1 has been identified for a potential dam site.” Subsequently, the last paragraph on page 4-214 concludes the description of Alternative D, as follows: “Under this alternative, the continued eligibility decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with continuance of the existing permit for the dam site. Because this permit would continue under this alternative, the free-flowing nature of Segment 1 would not be maintained and this segment would no longer be eligible as a Wild and Scenic River.” Further, Appendix C, Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification and Review does not include any information regarding the White River Dam Project.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	SD69	<p>The discussion of Alternative B on page 4-213 includes the following statement, “If acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek are grazed, the outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values would be more at risk than with Alternatives A and C”. Unfortunately, nowhere in the draft RMP and EIS is there other mention of this apparent concern, or other information that would enable the reviewer to grasp its relative significance. We strongly object to this unsupported assertion that grazing threatens the ORVs in the area, especially on</p>	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.	X

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			lands that may be acquired. Grazing can be managed to protect cultural and riparian values. The BLM needs to carefully explain the potential difficulties of this area, and analyze them in terms of proper mitigation, rather than making unsupported blanket statements such as this. In addition, the discussion of Alternative A at pages 4-211 and 4-212, contains no reference to any "acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek."		
State of Utah	G-1	SD70	As a matter of clarification, the document, at page S-3, refers to sections of rivers, ranging from one to six rivers, which are recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation. Throughout the remainder of the document, the discussion of wild and scenic rivers refers to segments of rivers, rather than separate individual rivers. The confusion is immediately apparent when the reader looks to Table S.3, as directed by the text on page S-3. Clarity could be achieved by indicating the number of segments associated with the rivers, i.e., "Alternative C ... recommends 9 segments of six rivers."	Table S.3 of the Executive Summary in the PRMP/FEIS has been corrected and the issue clarified regarding the number of rivers and river segments.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD71	The information at page 2-29 does not fully characterize proposed interim management of WSRs, because the discussion of management of eligible segments, found at page 3-84, is not presented here. We recommend that information similar to that found at page 3-84 be included at page 2-29.	Chapter 2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to be consistent with the information found in Section 3.14.3.2 regarding WSRs.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SD72	The information presented in Table 2.3, at page 2-57, does not include the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River. Additionally, the descriptions of the Alternatives, in Table 2.3, should reflect either a finding of "suitable," or a finding of "non-suitable," as BLM policy directs. (See BLM Manual 8351.33A).	<p>The Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are discussed in Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives, where it states:</p> <p>"Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green</p>	

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				<p>Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative classifications until such time that a designation decision is made.”</p> <p>Also as stated in Appendix C, determination of whether or not each eligible segment is suitable will be made in the Record of Decision for the Vernal RMP.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SD73	The RMP, at Table 2.3 and elsewhere, must include information regarding management of segments found to be “non-suitable,” as directed by Manual Section 8351.53B, which states “[f]or river segments determined nonsuitable in the RMP, the river shall be managed in accordance with the management objectives as outlined in the RMP.”	The management objectives for the RMP are outlined in Chapter 2 Management Common to All. All segments would be managed under riparian objectives.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD74	Table 2.5 Summary of Impacts, at page 2-99, does not adequately characterize the impacts associated with wild and scenic river recommendations. The counties suggest that the impacts be more fully described.	The impacts of special designations, including wild and scenic rivers, on each resource program are discussed in Chapter 4.	
State of Utah	G-1	SD78	Page 4-143 discusses the possibility of closing some SRMA areas to mineral leasing and establishing no-surface occupancy zones in others. It states that closing SRMAs to mineral leasing would have direct, long-term, beneficial impacts on recreation resources by preserving natural, undisturbed qualities of these recreation areas. Does closing the areas to leasing go beyond SRMA management prescriptions? Page 4-52 states “all SRMAs would be managed according to the philosophy of multiple-use.” Can the recreation goals described here be accomplished without no-surface occupancy stipulations? Does this conflict with the policy directives of EPCA and the Presidents National Energy Policy?	Closures of portions of SRMAs are related to one of two factors: WSA lands within SRMAs and areas to be managed for primitive recreation opportunities, including associated high scenic value. A comparison of Figures 11-14 and 21 will shown that the vast majority of proposed SRMA areas are open to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy stipulations. The BLM would only enact closures or non-standard stipulations where opening an area to leasing or leasing under standard stipulations would be incompatible with other resource values and management goals for the area. The BLM believes the SRMA alternatives and accompanying stipulations are consistent with EPCA and the NEP.	

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				Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9, concerning a range of reasonable alternatives.	
State of Utah	G-1	SO25	The State of Utah is concerned about the inadequacy of baseline data used in the socioeconomic analysis. The BLM Planning Handbook (Appendix D) provides specific areas to be considered when incorporating social science into the planning process. Social science information should include economic, political, cultural and social structure of not only the counties within the VFO, but also the region and the Nation as a whole. The DEIS fails to do this.	This information has been included in the Section 3.12 in the PRMP/FEIS.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO26	The RMP makes broad statements about the socioeconomic profile of the planning area, broken down into discussions about each of the three counties, however, the draft seems to lack a detailed analysis of the situation on the ground. For instance, in the Socioeconomic section of Chapter 3, the draft includes only two conclusions regarding the region's history, geography, and economics; first, the majority of the planning area sustain a rural/small town lifestyle, second, the counties are economically dependent on the development of the physical resources within the VFO. According to the BLM Planning Handbook, social values, beliefs, and attitudes; how people interact with the landscape; and sense-of-place issues should also be included. The VFO should elaborate on the socioeconomic baseline for the planning area and review it for inaccuracies.	Section 3.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the information made in the comment.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO27	The DRMP fails to thoroughly analyze the social and economic impacts of the alternatives. The draft only analyzes the socioeconomic impacts of Lands and Realty, Forage, Minerals, and Recreation and OHV	The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include further analysis of effects on socioeconomics from proposed management actions of other resources,	X

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			<p>decisions. Additional resource management decisions, however, have the potential to have an impact on state and county economies, specifically special designations. Notably missing is an economic analysis of the lost shared mineral revenue from federal lands that have an economic impact on the community as well as other mineral sharing programs within the state. The development of mineral resources on federal lands and state trust lands would be negatively impacted by overly restrictive management prescriptions imposed by special designations. In its economic impact analysis, the RMP has excluded the significant state and local revenues generated through a variety of taxes paid that would be impacted by special designations.</p>	<p>including special designations.</p> <p>Please see response to SO3 regarding state trust lands.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SO28	<p>During the scoping process, Uintah County provided the BLM with two studies related to the economic significance of mineral development, specifically oil and gas, in the Uintah Basin. These studies were Economic Impact Analysis of the Drilling and Completion of a Natural Gas Well in the Uintah Basin by the Utah Energy Group and The Uintah Basin Industry Impact Study by Pam Perlich of the University of Utah. The RMP fails to reflect the information contained in these documents. The State of Utah requests that the BLM review these studies and incorporate their findings into the RMP.</p>	<p>The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the recent State-commissioned study on the impact of the oil and gas industry on the Uintah Basin.</p>	X
State of Utah	G-1	SO29	<p>Daggett, Duchesne, and Uintah Counties have estimated that up to 80% of the local economy is dependent directly or indirectly on access to, and utilization and extraction of natural resources on the public lands. The BLM is required by its own Planning Handbook, Section H-1601-H, and IM 2002-167 to assess the degree of local dependence on public land resources, and use this information as part of the</p>	<p>BLM feels that the intent of IM 2002-167 and the Planning Handbook have been implemented. See comment response SO2 regarding these same data sources.</p> <p>The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reference to the USU social survey on attitudes of residents on</p>	X

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			decision-making process. The state is concerned that these requirements have not been met within the draft RMP and EIS. This issue should be examined in more detail.	public land management.	
State of Utah	G-1	SO30	Sections of the socioeconomic impacts analysis are overly generalized to the point that social and economic impacts specific to the planning area are not apparent. For example, in the "Lands and Realty" portion of the "Impacts Common to All" section, long term beneficial effects on the social goals of communities are described by accommodating community growth and development when it is determined that accommodating social goals is in compliance with other goals and objectives of the proposed plan. The portion of the plan does not reference specific areas of the DRMP/DEIS where this occurs or direct the reader to any specific management decisions that provide for community growth. The section is vague and unspecific and should reflect specific management prescriptions in the plan rather than general statements.	Section 4.12.2.2 has been rewritten in the FEIS, and the BLM believes that this revision addresses the commenter's concerns.	X
State of Utah	G-1	SS23	The RMP must recognize all state and local sage-grouse plans as well as the WAFWA guidelines (Connelly et al., 2000). The RMP should discuss the need to cooperate with UDWR in creating conservation agreements and strategies for other state-sensitive wildlife species.	<p>In Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) in the PRMP/FEIS, Alternative C proposes to manage the sage grouse under Connelly's Guidelines. Alternative A proposes to manage the sage grouse under the Strategic Management Plan for Sage Grouse (State of Utah, June 2002).</p> <p>In Table 2.1.21 under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Action Alternatives, it states:</p> <p>"BLM will work with UDWR and other partners to</p>	

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				implement conservation actions identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy) (UDWR, 2005), which identified priority wildlife species and habitats, assessed threats to their survival, and identified long-term conservation action needs (per WO IM 2006-114).”	
State of Utah	G-1	SS24	Special status species alternatives begin on page 2-60. Alternative A represents the BLM’s Best Management Practices (BMPs) that compare to USFWS guidelines for seasonal and spatial buffers, occupied nest protection, and unoccupied nest protection. The UDWR is concerned that not incorporating these guidelines may contribute to the decline of special status raptor species, including Ferruginous Hawks. A substantial portion of Ferruginous Hawk range in the Uintah Basin is already leased, therefore the three year unoccupied nest protection proposed under alternative B for existing leases may not be adequate to protect Ferruginous Hawk populations. The UDWR received a copy of a letter from the USFWS to the BLM dated October 15, 2003 expressing the same concerns regarding Ferruginous Hawk populations in the Uintah Basin. Any modifications to the spatial and seasonal buffers outlined in the BMPs should only be made after following the three criteria outlines in alternative A, and after consultation with the UDWR and the USFWS.	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) in the PRMP/FEIS provides a range of raptor guidelines for seasonal and spatial buffers, occupied nest protection, and unoccupied nest protection as described in the various alternatives.	
State of Utah	G-1	SS25	Colorado River cutthroat trout (CRCT) reintroductions are discussed on page 2-61. The UDWR supports reintroduction of CRCT in several streams as outlined in the Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Colorado River Cutthroat Trout (<i>Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus</i>) in the State of Utah. Stream protection provided under the BLM’s riparian guidelines should be implemented on CRCT streams. Future documentation	Comment noted.	

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			(if any) of impacts to CRCT streams should trigger higher levels of silt management and grazing control.		
State of Utah	G-1	SS26	The UDWR's Utah Sensitive Species List was revised in February 2005. The BLM should incorporate the new list into the RMP and adopt these species as BLM State Sensitive Species. The RMP should have flexibility in this adoption process, as the states sensitive species list will change periodically.	IM UT-2007-078 updated the Utah BLM State Director's Sensitive Plant and Animal Species Lists as defined in the BLM 6840 Manual (Special Status Species Management).	
State of Utah	G-1	SW19	Alternatives A and C indicate "Old fields would be irrigated and existing ditches and diversion structures would be restored on acquired lands in Bitter Creek and Rat Hole Drainages." This wording gives the impression that said lands are not being irrigated at present. If such is the case, and the lands have not been irrigated for five consecutive years, then the underlying water rights may be lost through non-use (See Sec. 73-1-4 UCA). The BLM is advised to review the above referenced section of the law and take appropriate action to confirm the legal status of the underlying water rights.	The review of the status of the water rights of individual users is outside the scope of this document. However, the BLM does review water rights on a regular basis as a matter of ongoing land management.	
State of Utah	G-1	SW20	The paragraph at the top of page 2-28 states that the BLM will "Develop additional and maintain existing water rights." We would appreciate more detail and specifics on this statement.	<p>The Bureau has need for water rights for present and future use. These may include livestock, wildlife, public use, or conservation.</p> <p>Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives has been revised to clarify the statement as follows:</p> <p>"BLM implements multiple types of water uses on public lands that require water rights from the State of Utah, such as livestock watering, wildlife watering and habitat, wild horse watering, recreation facilities,</p>	X

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				<p>and fire suppression. BLM will continue to implement actions to maintain its current water rights for these purposes, such as filing proofs of beneficial use, filing diligence claims, changing existing water rights to fit new uses and projects, and filing protests as necessary to protect existing BLM water rights. BLM will also file for new water rights in accordance with and when allowed under state water law procedures. Situations in which BLM will file for new water rights include locations where existing water rights are insufficient or not in place to support the water use, or when existing water rights cannot be changed to support the water use on public land. “</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	SW21	<p>Need enhanced management direction for vegetative resources and watershed values. Lands should be managed to: a) control soil erosion to prevent the soil erosion rate from exceeding the tolerable (T) rate as determined through USDA/NRCS; b) control runoff loading of dissolved or suspended pollutants; c) enhance management direction for the inventory and protection of riparian areas in accordance with current BLM policy; and d) establish standards for riparian management including: i) width of riparian vegetated buffers which may vary with perennial or intermittent streamflow, cubic feet per second of streamflow, and with adjacent topography; ii) minimum ground cover percentage; iii) recommended standards for summer stream shading, though these will vary with site orientation of the stream and adjacent topography; iv) recommended native vegetative species and varieties to encourage in riparian areas; v) listing of noxious weeds and invasive species and varieties to reduce or exclude from range, forest, or riparian lands; vi) appropriate consideration for water quality concerns</p>	<p>The BLM's approach to land management through the RMP is consistent with the general outline provided in the comment.</p> <p>The tables in Chapter 2 of THE PRMP/FEIS outline the BLM's goals, objectives, and management actions common to all alternatives for the resources described in the comment. The reader will find that these goals, objectives, and actions are consistent with the spirit of the comment, if not the specific details.</p>	

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			<p>related to activities on public lands, including but not limited to, the requirements mandated by the Clean Water Act and the state water classifications in the 303D state water inventories, as well as at-risk water quality due to naturally occurring formations; vii) appropriate conservation or restoration of at-risk watersheds; viii) appropriate management of numerous special status vegetative species in order to prevent additional listings of populations; ix) appropriate management of numerous special status vegetative species and their suitable habitats in order to protect, restore, and/or recover those species or varieties; and x) promoting the provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Unified Federal Policy for a Watershed Approach, and the Colorado River Basis Salinity Control Act.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	TR16	<p>Travel alternatives are discussed on page 2-62. The UDWR supports decommissioning and restoring newly permitted roads and trails following completion of permitted use.</p>	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	VE4	<p>The State of Utah strongly requests that the BLM expand its discussion in the EIS allowing for a long-term and aggressive vegetative reclamation program using a wide variety of vegetation treatment tools. The BLM needs to specifically identify some of these tools that are currently omitted in its review of vegetation management in the West (in the DEIS), i.e., use of herbicide for cheatgrass control and chaining for better pinyon-juniper management. Without the use of a full vegetation management toolbox, the BLM will not be able to conduct effective restoration on a scale sufficient to stop or reverse the current rate of sagebrush steppe loss, nor will they be able to provide meaningful mitigation for development. The long-term vegetative reclamation program must be a collaborative</p>	<p>Table 2.1.23 (Vegetation Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS provides for vegetation treatment (specific to noxious weed control) under all alternatives using fire, mechanical, biological, or chemical means without specifying any individual management tool that would fall under one of these broad categories. This section also refers to management of vegetation in general terms without specifying individual techniques. This provides the BLM the opportunity to select from the entire range of available tools to undertaken vegetation treatments in the most appropriate way for the location and vegetation in question.</p>	

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			effort involving the BLM, livestock operators, the oil and gas industry, and wildlife advocates if it is to be successful.		
State of Utah	G-1	VE5	The EIS should expand the discussion on development of a mitigation bank as discussed between the BLM, Uintah County, the State of Utah (DWR), and industry representatives in order to ensure that this opportunity is maintained as an option.	The concept and implementation of a mitigation bank is completely voluntary. The BLM cannot require lessees and permittees to participate. However, the concepts involved in a successful mitigation-banking program include reclamation or habitat enhancement projects, which are addressed in the RMP.	
State of Utah	G-1	VE6	We are concerned that the alternatives for rangeland improvements found on page 2-51 may not allow enough acreage for such improvements to occur, especially since the Vernal District has experienced catastrophic mortality of sagebrush steppe communities. The numbers of acres in the Uintah Basin (>200,000 acres) requiring pinyon/juniper removal, sagebrush rehabilitation, and cheatgrass control far exceed the figures presented in each of the alternatives. We encourage the BLM to add flexibility to the RMP to allow for additional rangeland improvement if target acreages are met prior to the next revision of the RMP.	The acreage figures presented in Table 2.3 to which the comment refers are specific to projected rangeland improvements. Vegetation treatments are also included under other resource programs. Table 2.1.23 (Vegetation Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS commits to the restoration or rehabilitation of up to 200,000 acres of sagebrush steppe communities under all alternatives. Additionally, the acreages provided within the individual alternatives are projections used for comparison purposes and do not represent absolute caps on the numbers of acres of vegetation that the BLM may treat.	
State of Utah	G-1	VE7	This paragraph should be changed to read: "Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush are declining..." The UDWR recommends adding discussion regarding the recent sagebrush mortality in the RMP.	Section 3.16.1.3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the following: "Wyoming and mountain big sage are declining...Beginning in the late 1990s, drought accelerated the decline which resulted in a sage die-off and die-back. Some areas had sagebrush mortality while others had re-growth on the sagebrush in subsequent years.	X
State of Utah	G-1	VE8	Plateau®, green stripping, and use of non-natives must	See comment response VE4.	

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			be considered in Section 3.16.2 for control of invasive species and noxious weeds.		
State of Utah	G-1	VI26	We are concerned about the lack of real discussion in the Draft EIS about the management of visual resources. The proposed management prescriptions laid out on page 2-62 do nothing more than indicate the aggregate amount of acreage to be managed in each VRM management class. The management “common to all” discussion on page 2-36 indicates only, in one simple sentence, that the objectives for each specific visual resource management class, outlined in BLM Handbook H-8410-1, and repeated on page J-3, would be implemented.	Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) of the PRMP/FEIS Section 2.4.16.1 identifies the Goals and Objectives for visual resource management. Section 3.17 provides a discussion of the affected environment regarding visual resources. Section 4.17 provides a discussion of the environmental consequences for visual resources.	
State of Utah	G-1	VI27	We are concerned about the apparent lack of an updated visual inventory. This ties in with the rationale for the “Sensitivity Level Analysis” required by BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1.III.A. - Factors to Consider. Many of these factors change over time, and a simple rollover of an older inventory would not accurately reflect these adjustments. In addition, the lack of updated inventory information makes interpretation of the differences between the inventory and management classes impossible to determine. The draft RMP needs to fully explain how the visual inventory was accomplished, so that differences in visual management prescriptions proposed in the various Alternatives may be compared to the inventory classes. This indicates to the reader exactly how the VRM management classes are assisting in the resource management goals of each Alternative.	See comment response VI7A. Some major travel corridors were elevated in their visual sensitivity, (which is one of the criteria in visual sensitivity rating), because of the increase in use and visitation. Two areas were re-inventoried because of both the dramatic increase in oil and gas activity and the perceived increase of both user numbers and attitude perception toward natural landscapes. As a result of the re-inventories, both areas were elevated in VRM rating as seen in Figures 29 and 32 which are reflected in Alternatives A and D respectively. The alternatives provide a range of VRM classification from which management can select from for the final RMP and the VRM classification within the final RMP will be consistent with general overall management direction.	
State of Utah	G-1	VI28	The maps on Figures 29-32 are hard to interpret	The BLM acknowledges that the scale of Figures	

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			<p>concerning the VRM management classes, as the figures are not specific enough to determine the exact geographic location of most of the boundary lines. Because of this, the counties cannot determine if the criteria for VRM inventory have been correctly followed, and exactly where, on-the-ground, the BLM proposes to change management from one class to another, except for certain geographical areas which fully correspond to other proposed management designations.</p>	<p>29-32 may not provide sufficient detail to delineate VRM boundary lines for the various classifications; however, electronic files are well defined and provide sufficient detail.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	VI29	<p>The draft RMP purports to discuss the impacts of various resource management decisions on visual resources, but, in actuality, this discussion is either misleading or circular and non-responsive. As an example of a misleading statement, the discussion of VRM resources on pages 3-117 to 3-118 lays out the management criteria and requirements for the four VRM management classes. The discussion indicates that currently the only areas in the VFO managed as VRM management class I are Wilderness Study Areas, and one WSA equivalent, an Instant Study Area. It continues by stating that minerals exploration and development “is not presently exceeding VRM class objectives” throughout the Vernal Field Office, due to proper visual mitigation methods. Yet on page 4-122 the document indicates that VRM management classes I and II “allow little or no alteration to the line, form, color and texture that characterize the existing landscape,” thereby raising the potential for greater impacts to minerals development. On page 4-123, the analysis clearly states that an increase in the number of acres of VRM Classes I and II would lead to a direct decrease in the number of available well locations, thereby leading to less production (and royalties). We ask for clarification of the correct standards for VRM</p>	<p>Minerals exploration and development are presently occurring in areas not designated has high VRM classes but in areas of lower VRM classification (Class IV to be specific—see Figure 32), where greater levels of visual intrusion are tolerated. Smaller areas are designated as VRM Class III and Class II, wherein slightly higher restrictions on visual alteration exist and visual mitigation measures are used. As such, the DEIS statements referenced in the document are not contradictory. Under Alternatives A and C, changes in VRM classification across the VFO would increase the number of acres under Class I and II designation (with more VRM Class I under Alternative C than A). More of these VRM Class I and II areas would overlap with areas desirable for minerals and energy exploration and development. As such, under these alternatives, there would be greater impacts on minerals and energy development through increased restrictions related to visual resources management.</p>	

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			management in the VFO, and that the VFO analyze VRM I and II designations as a possible withdrawal of the mineral resources.		
State of Utah	G-1	VI30	We are concerned that the draft RMP is not specific about the sources and goals of many of the special management designations available to it, leading to circular and non-responsive reasoning in the analysis. For example on page 4-284 the impacts analysis for visual resources and special designations indicates that visual resources will be protected by designation of ACECs and Wild and Scenic River designations. This analysis proceeds under the general presumption that ACECs and WSR segments are “good” for visual resources, but fails to indicate the management prescriptions which actually accomplish this goal.	Table 2.1.18 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS provides information about the management foci for each proposed ACEC or special designation. Many of these foci, such as controlling noxious weeds, limiting OHV use to designated routes, and establishing controlled surface use stipulations on minerals and energy exploration and development would reduce visual intrusions and alteration of the landscape. Such an outcome would be beneficial to the preservation of visual resources. Also, designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and through the ACEC process confers a level of resource management that protects and preserves the important and relevant values of an area from the potential effects of actions that would otherwise be permitted by the RMP. In general, emphasis is given to protecting the aesthetic, scenic, wildlife, historic, archaeological, unique or distinctive, and/or scientific features of these areas.	
State of Utah	G-1	VI31	Which designation - ACEC, WSR, SRMA or VRM management - is being proposed for the protection of visual resources? The VRM discussion mentions the others, while the ACEC discussion mentions the use of VRM classifications. This lack of clarity in proposed management prescriptions doesn't meet the requirements of full disclosure under the provisions of NEPA, and doesn't allow us to determine whether or not the BLM is proposing duplicate prescriptions, contrary to the provisions of state law, and the BLM's Manual on designation of ACECs.	Visual resources benefit from a variety of different special management designations, not just VRM classification. While VRM classification is specific to visual resources, ACEC, WSR, and SRMA designation can also consider visual resource values, and the management goals of such designations typically include actions that afford protection to visual resources as an ancillary benefit. Overlapping of program decisions is not optional for	

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				<p>BLM, but is required by the FLPMA, 1976 and National BLM planning and program specific regulations. The FLPMA directed that management of public lands be on the basis of multiple use (Section 102(a) (7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. For example, 43 CFR Group 2500 provides guidance and requirements for Disposition; Occupancy and Use of public lands; Group 2800 for Rights-of-way; Group 3400 for Coal Management; Group 6000 for Designated Wilderness, and Group 8200 for Natural History, part 8351 for Wild and Scenic Rivers. Multiple-use management requires a balancing of the mandates for these separate programs.</p> <p>BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (Appendix C, H-1601-1). The required decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the RMP. The RMP will include the decisions required for each program.</p> <p>See comment response VI29.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	VI32	<p>The counties and State of Utah cannot support any proposed VRM class management specifications that will prevent habitat enhancement, fuels reduction, and prescribed fire activities from occurring in the VFO. The RMP must choose VRM management classes which allow vegetation and habitat treatments that improve wildlife habitat and reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fire events.</p>	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and</p>	

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				<p>inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p> <p>See also comment response VI1. No VRM classification precludes limited management actions, which may include fuels reductions, prescribed fire, and/or habitat enhancements. VRM Class I and II require that these management activities be conducted in ways that have minimal impact on visual resources over the long term.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	VI38	State statute recognizes the need to protect the scenic resources of the state, and suggests that the BLM consider using VRM Class I management only for inventoried Class A scenery, or the equivalent, but also suggests that the BLM balance this type of protection against the needs of the other legitimate multiple-uses of the land. BLM Manual H-8410 provides that	<p>BLM IM-2000-96 (Use of Visual Resource Management Class I Designation in Wilderness Study Areas) states;</p> <p>“ . . . all WSAs should be classified as Class I, and managed according to VRM Class I management</p>	

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			Inventory Class I should only be assigned to those areas where a management decision has been previously made to maintain a natural landscape.	objectives until such time as the Congress decides to designate the area as wilderness or release it for other uses. If a WSA is designated as wilderness, the area would continue to be managed as VRM Class I.”	
State of Utah	G-1	VI39	Some of the proposed VRM boundaries follow the boundaries of old Wilderness Inventory Areas (WIAs), causing concern that these provisions for VRM management are substitutes for non-use or non-impairment standards, in contradiction to state law and the case of Utah v. Norton.	<p>See comment response VI1B</p> <p>The BLM is required to apply management prescriptions based upon a balanced consideration of resource values and land use needs. The BLM has done this independently of previous designations within the planning area. It is, however, no surprise that old WIAs were identified for areas with high visual resource values. The BLM cannot ignore these values simply because they fall within areas of former WIAs. Further, the BLM does not manage for non-impairment but for multiple-use and sustainable yield.</p> <p>Finally, the Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM’s authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603’s non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	VI40	The State of Utah is concerned about the need for VRM Class I management within WSAs. The non-impairment management standards within WSAs is	See comment response VI38	

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			<p>very strict, protecting the wilderness character and characteristics until Congress makes a decision, yet allows for certain activities. The BLM has not demonstrated any need for the VRM classification within the WSAs, and has not analyzed how permitted activities within the WSAs, as limited as they may be, may be affected by the VRM classification. The state requests the BLM identify a real world need for the classification prior to its establishment.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	VI41	<p>The proposed stipulation for VRM Class II Management is described on page K-10 within Appendix K. The wording for the proposed stipulation is simply a restatement of the descriptions found in Appendix J, and offers no further clarification to the reader about the BLM's intentions to manage under the VRM Class II designation. The State of Utah is concerned that the wording will constitute a severe restriction on legitimate multiple-use activities, especially in light of the wording on page 4-122; restrictions severe enough to constitute management under non-impairment standards. The state looks forward to working with the BLM and local government to clarify the management prescriptions for VRM II under this proposed stipulation.</p>	<p>See comment response VI1 and VI1E</p> <p>As stated in Appendix K (now J), the BLM's VRM Class objectives clearly describe the level of disturbances allowed within each VRM Class. Site-specific project-level activities are beyond the scope of the RMP's programmatic EIS. However, site-specific analyses of impacts to and mitigation of scenic quality and the landscape would be conducted through other site-specific NEPA processes and documents.</p> <p>The commenter should note that oil and gas activities have been performed in VRM II areas. The use of mitigation techniques such as low profile tanks, low gloss matching paints, winding roads, staining disturbed rock cuts, careful placement in relation to the Key Observation Points and other techniques have allowed both the construction and production of oil and gas as well as the protection of view sheds.</p> <p>The alternatives provide a range of VRM classification from which management can select</p>	

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				from for the final RMP and the VRM classification within the final RMP will be consistent with general overall management direction.	
State of Utah	G-1	VI42	Appendix K contains a second proposed stipulation concerning the Book Cliffs on page K-10. The stipulation indicates that no surface occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed for a distance north of Highway 40 east of the Green River. This area is near Blue Mountain, not really all that close to the Book Cliffs. The state requests clarification of this, and a further description of what "no surface disturbance" means. No livestock? No hiking?	<p>The reason for Blue Mountain being included within the Book Cliffs Planning area is because the boundary for the Book Cliffs Resource Area was defined as those lands both east and south of the Green River. Both "No Surface Disturbance" and "No Surface Occupancy" definitions can be found on in the Glossary.</p> <p>The referenced stipulation is an existing decision from the Book Cliffs RMP, which is the reference to the Book Cliffs. Please note that this stipulation was not carried forward in Alternatives A-C. If carried forward in the final RMP, reference definition of "No Surface Disturbance" in the Glossary.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	VI43	Because a VRM management class is to be established only after a management decision is made, and the VRM proposed management regime lacks significant analysis and a range of alternatives, the State of Utah requests that a review of all detailed VRM analysis and proposed management decisions be undertaken in cooperation with the state and local government before the FEIS/FRMP is completed.	<p>See comment responses VI1F and VI-36 above.</p> <p>The range of alternatives for VRM classification as shown in Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) of the PRMP/FEIS does provide a sufficient range of options for VRM designation from low proportions of VRM I and II designations under Alternatives B and D to high proportions of those same designations under Alternatives A and C.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	WF100	Placement of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the White River drainage would cause undue conflict with domestic sheep operations and would be harmful to the bighorn sheep. If domestic sheep were prohibited from the area to accommodate the bighorn sheep, TLA would lose a revenue source. Since cattle would not be an appropriate livestock kind for most of these allotments, a switch in livestock kind would not be	BLM management decisions do not apply to state trust lands.	

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			available to make up for the loss. Compensation may be required if this occurs.		
State of Utah	G-1	WF101	In this paragraph, the demand for forage resources is equated to the total average actual use. This is erroneous. The "Actual use" numbers more accurately reflect current climatic trends and what was allowed by BLM range staff, nor the demand for forage. During the 10-year period of which this paragraph refers, 5 of these had severe drought conditions and livestock operators were often not allowed to turn out onto the range. For many other reasons permittees are occasionally not allowed to take full use of permitted AUMs, thus, the actual use does not reflect demand for forage. Each year TLA staff have many requests by BLM permittees looking for forage because BLM staff had denied the operator full use of their permits.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF70	The RMP does not apply enough focus on meaningful mitigation for habitat loss. The seasonal closures and other stipulations proposed for minerals development are the primary tools used to reduce oil and gas development impacts on wildlife. Without meaningful mitigation, however, these stipulations do not enhance, and may not fully protect the long-term viability of wildlife populations. The alternatives have been modified in regards to raptor management. All alternatives now propose to manage raptors under the August 2006 Best Management Practice for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats in Utah.	The commenter does not provide any additional information on or a definition of what constitutes "meaningful mitigation."	
State of Utah	G-1	WF71	The discussion of increases in forage allocations are inconsistently presented in Alternative A for all localities. The State of Utah believes that adequate forage must be provided for wildlife to meet the public's desire for the enjoyment of wildlife species.	The commenter does not indicate what the inconsistencies are. As such, the BLM is unable to address this comment. See Table 2.1.6 (Forage All Localities) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF72	The final RMP should adopt the Utah Strategic	The management actions for protection of sage	

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			<p>Management Plan for Sage-Grouse in conjunction with a full set of mitigation tools and habitat improvement techniques. Application of site-specific modifications to these guidelines should only be made with the full concurrence of the UDWR. Additionally, sage-grouse mitigation and stipulations should be consistent with the current draft BLM Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy. The final RMP must provide for adoption and implementation of an approved local sage-grouse conservation plan and strategy, currently being prepared by USU Wildlife Extension, local landowners, industry, governments, and agencies. Provisions should be made within the RMP for the adoption of future revisions of approved guidelines, strategies, stipulations, and plans as they become available.</p>	<p>grouse were based on the State of Utah Strategic Management Plan for Sage Grouse (Alternatives A and B), and Connelly's Guidelines to Manage Greater Sage Grouse Populations and their Habitats (Section 4.15.2.5).</p> <p>In addition, Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS states:</p> <p>"BLM would continue to work with USFWS and others to ensure that plans and agreements are updated as necessary to reflect the latest scientific data."</p> <p>Table 2.1.21 further states:</p> <p>"Section 2.4.13.4.2.2 states that "In collaboration with the USFWS, DWR, and other partners, develop habitat management plans or conservation strategies for sensitive species."</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	WF73	<p>The draft RMP does not contain any stipulations or mitigation measures to protect or enhance sage-grouse brooding and winter habitats in the planning area as outlined in the Utah Strategic Management Plan for Sage-Grouse. These guidelines should be incorporated, where appropriate, in all alternatives and practices including grazing, vegetation treatments, fire management, and oil and gas development.</p>	See comment response WF72.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF74	The State of Utah is concerned from both a wildlife and	Comment noted.	

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			<p>mineral development perspective about the effects of the density of mineral development on wildlife species. The state asks the BLM to participate with it, local government, and industry to find the best balanced approach between access to resource development and meaningful mitigation for wildlife. The state specifically asks the BLM to work with it as the final RMP and EIS are prepared to ensure that enough flexibility is maintained to accomplish this goal.</p>		
State of Utah	G-1	WF75	<p>The State of Utah requests that the proposals to limit to surface disturbance to 560 acres per township within critical/crucial deer winter range be kept open for further discussion.</p>	<p>Section 4.3.2.11.3 in the PRMP/FEIS (Alternative C) includes the 560 acres surface disturbance proposal as part of the range of alternatives.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	WF76	<p>In areas such as the Book Cliffs, where summer range is a limiting factor for mule deer, impacts and disturbances to the range should be minimized or mitigated in the same manner as winter ranges.</p>	<p>The commenter does not provide any additional information or explanation to substantiate the assertion regarding mule deer summer range.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	WF77	<p>The UDWR is concerned that several plans, guidelines, assessments, and databases used in development of the RMP EIS were omitted, used in outdated form, or not fully integrated into the draft. The latest version of the UDWR's critical/crucial wildlife distribution maps should be used, with reference to adoption of future updates as they become available. Resource assessments completed by either the UDWR or the BLM not referenced in the document include 2002 range trend studies, sage-grouse habitat delineation, raptor nest distribution and occupancy, and mule deer winter range delineation in the Book Cliffs. Additional wildlife and habitat plans produced by the UDWR, which should be referenced, include: the current Utah Sensitive Species List, wildlife management area habitat management plans, and game species management plans (deer, elk, bighorn sheep, bear,</p>	<p>BLM has adopted the current Utah Sensitive Species List under authority of IM UT 2007-078. In order to keep current with the latest guidance that is developed during the Final EIS process and after the ROD is signed, the BLM has incorporated several statements in Management Common to All under Special Status Species and Wildlife that allow for consideration of new information. They are as follows:</p> <p>1) Implement the specific goals and objectives of recovery plans, conservation agreements and strategies, and approved activity level plans. BLM would continue to work with USFWS and others to ensure that plans and agreements are updated as necessary to reflect the latest scientific data.</p>	

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			<p>cougar). Interagency plans which are completed or in draft form and should be referenced include the following sensitive species conservation plans and strategies: Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Colorado River Cutthroat Trout (<i>Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus</i>) in the State of Utah, the Range-wide Conservation Agreement for Roundtail Chub (<i>Gila robusta</i>), Bluehead Sucker (<i>Catostomus discobolus</i>), and Flannelmouth Sucker (<i>Catostomus latipinnis</i>), Utah Strategic Management Plan for Sage-Grouse, 2002, Guidelines to Manage Sage-Grouse and their Habitats, and Utah Partners-in-Flight Avian Conservation Strategy.</p>	<p>2) BLM would continue to implement the specific goals and objectives of all recovery plans, conservation plans and strategies, and activity level plans.</p> <p>3) BLM would continue to work with USFWS and others to ensure that plans and agreements are updated as necessary to reflect the latest scientific data. Recovery plans have been finalized for Uinta Basin hookless cactus, shrubby reed–mustard, and clay reed-mustard. A draft plan is being developed by the USFWS for Ute ladies’ tresses. A Conservation Plan has been prepared for <i>Astragalus equisolensis</i>, <i>Penstemon goodrichii</i>, <i>Penstemon grahamii</i> and <i>Penstemon scarious</i> var. <i>albifluvis</i>.</p> <p>4) Where special status plant species, including listed T&E plant species, occur on public lands in the planning area, BLM would collaborate with affected local, state, and federal agencies and researchers in the implementation of approved recovery plans and conservation strategies to protect, stabilize, and recover such species and their habitats. In addition to on-the-ground actions, strategies would be developed to provide public education on species at-risk, significance of the species to the human and biological communities, and reasons for protective measures that would be applied to the lands involved. Continue or develop monitoring studies in order to determine population dynamics and trends.</p>	

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State of Utah	G-1	WF78	Within the "Actions Common to All" section of the RMP EIS, the BLM should commit to implementation of goals and objectives of all current and future approved recovery and conservation plans, strategies, and activities. Future approved research or study results and species/habitat distribution coverages should automatically be updated for planning and action decisions. Failure to do so will diminish the quality of resource decisions based on old or less-than-accurate data.	See comment response WF77.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF79	The UDWR urges the BLM to fully implement BLM Manual 6840 "to conserve listed species and the ecosystems on which they depend" and "to ensure that actions requiring authorization or approval by the Bureau of Land Management...are consistent with the conservation needs of special status species and do not contribute to the need to list any special status species..." Application of accepted guidelines and meaningful mitigation and stipulations are necessary to meet the stated goals of the Manual.	Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives states: "Manage habitat to prevent the need for additional listing of species under the ESA and contribute to the recovery of those species already listed."	
State of Utah	G-1	WF79A	The UDWR urges the BLM to incorporate the most current Utah Sensitive Species List, as approved by the Utah Wildlife Board, in development of current and future lists of special status species.	BLM has adopted the current Utah Sensitive Species List under authority of IM UT 2007-078.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF80	The UDWR supports the cooperative implementation of the goals of the Black-footed Ferret Recovery Plan through augmentation of an existing population in the Snake John Wash area.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF81	Wildlife and fisheries actions common to all alternatives begin on page 2-36. The UDWR is in agreement that mitigation banking should be used as a method to compensate for habitat loss due to surface disturbing activities. The UDWR views an effective banking	See comment response WF10.	

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			system as a way to ensure that meaningful mitigation is completed.		
State of Utah	G-1	WF82	Reintroductions are discussed on page 2-38. The State of Utah maintains legal authority for wildlife management within the State. The UDWR collects public and intergovernmental comment on wildlife management, including species introductions, through a Regional Advisory Council process. Through this process, transplant lists and herd management plans for several species have been created with input from the public and interested parties.	See comment response WF18A.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF82A	As such, UDWR requests that BLM remove paragraph 3 on page 2-38 which states: "After analysis, reintroductions would be made in areas where they do not conflict with livestock or where such conflicts would not be avoided, coordination with permittees would be required," as this is not a BLM prerogative. The state will make these analyses as part of its public review process for reintroductions.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
State of Utah	G-1	WF83	The UDWR supports the decision to continue to allow placement of bear bait on public land through a permit process. Baiting is a legitimate hunting method for archery bear hunts. The UDWR requires notification from bear hunters of bait station locations for law enforcement and compliance purposes.	<p>Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Mountain Lion and Black Bear states:</p> <p>“Placement of bear bait on public land would require a permit.”</p>	

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				Any bear bait permit would be issued though the UDWR.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF84	Wildlife and fisheries issues begin on page 2-64 of the alternatives matrix. The UDWR supports seasonal stipulation within the McCook Ridge and Monument Ridge mule deer migration corridors.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF85	The UDWR supports migration and reintroduction of bighorn sheep, bison, and moose in defined areas in the VFO. The UDWR has a legal role in managing wildlife populations, hunting, and fishing in Utah. The UDWR has a public process that allows for public comment on wildlife management activities in Utah. The UDWR encourages the BLM to clarify and define the "Southern Book Cliffs" under the bison reintroduction alternative. The UDWR encourages the BLM to define the bison reintroduction area to be the same as the Book Cliffs Bitter Creek/Little Creek sub-units (Unit 10 a,b).	See comment response WF19.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF86	Chapter 3, specifically the special status species and wildlife sections, does not contain detailed information of local populations within the planning area. The UDWR, BLM, and other cooperators have numerous inventories and publications that offer information on wildlife populations. These documents should be discussed, referenced, and cited in the RMP. The UDWR recommends this chapter incorporate further analysis of current populations and management.	See comment response WF77.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF87	The fish and wildlife resources section 3.19 begins on page 3-123. Multiple tables within this section confuse the herd unit numbers for Bonanza and Diamond Mountain sub-units. The Bonanza sub-unit number is 9d and Diamond Mountain is 9c. This discrepancy	Table 3.19.2 in the PRMP/FEIS text has been revised to correct and clarify the herd unit numbers and to complete the description of mule deer habitat.	X

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			should be changed in tables 3.19.1, 3.19.3, and 3.19.5. In addition, table 3.19.2 appears to be incomplete for mule deer habitat in the VPA.		
State of Utah	G-1	WF88	Table 3.19.3 outlines management goals for mule deer. Some of the population objectives and buck-to-doe ratios are incorrect. The combined mule deer population objective for the South Slope Vernal, Diamond, and Bonanza sub-units is 13,000. The buck-to-doe ratio for South Slope Diamond Mountain (9c) and Book Cliffs Bitter Creek and Little Creek (10a) is 25-30:100. Table 3.19.5 outlines management goals for elk in the VPA. The listed bull age ratios are incorrect. The North Slope (Summit and West Daggett), North Slope Three Corners, South Slope Yellowstone, South Slope Vernal, and South Slope Bonanza sub-units are managed for 50% of bulls 2½ years or older. The South Slope Diamond sub-unit (9c) is managed for bulls 3-4 years old. The Book Cliffs (Bitter Creek and Little Creek) and Nine Mile Anthro sub-units are managed for 5-6 year old bulls. Utah's statewide herd management plans for mule deer, elk, and other species should be referenced and discussed in section 3.19.	Table 3.19.3 used 2002 goals for purposes of analysis of the Draft RMP. Updated goals may be found at the UDWR web site. The PRMP/FEIS text has been revised to correct the errors.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF89	Section 3.19.1.3 discusses pronghorn in the VPA. This section displays population estimates for several herd units. The data referenced are not population estimates, but rather annual trend count numbers. These numbers are used for population trend and do not reflect population sizes. The section does not offer trend count data for the Book Cliffs and Nine Mile pronghorn herd units. Trend data for these units can be obtained by contacting the UDWR Vernal office at 435-781-6707.	Section 3.19.1.3 in the PRMP/FEIS text has been revised, and trend count data added to the section.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF90	Bighorn sheep are discussed on page 3-127. The	Section 3.19.1.4 in the PRMP/FEIS text has been	X

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			UDWR is unaware of any large bighorn sheep populations in the Nine-Mile Canyon area. The UDWR manages bighorn sheep populations in Desolation Canyon and on Range Creek, both of which are outside the VFO. The Ute Tribe has bighorn sheep populations in Desolation Canyon and in Hill Creek.	revised to remove the reference to a sheep population within Nine-Mile Canyon. Bighorn sheep are in the UDWR Nine Mile Unit (#11), which is outside of the VPA.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF91	Moose populations are outlined in section 3.19.1.5. This section does not mention that moose populations also occur in the North Slope wildlife management unit and does not offer population estimates for that unit.	Section 3.19.1.5 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include moose population information for the North Slope wildlife management unit.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF92	Section 3.19.1.10 should include Brown's Park and Mallard Springs WMAs as additional important waterfowl and shorebird areas in the VFO.	Section 3.19.1.10 in the EIS text has been revised to include these areas as important to waterfowl.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF93	Desert and mountain cottontails should be removed from section 3.19.1.12. Cottontail rabbits are managed by the UDWR as upland game species.	The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to move the cottontail information from Section 3.19.1.12 (Non-Game Species) to Section 3.19.1.9 (Upland Species).	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF94	Page 3-133 outlines habitat fragmentation concerns. The section cites a study on mule deer conducted in the Book Cliffs. This study was a four-year inventory (1998-2002), rather than two years as listed in the RMP. The UDWR initially recommended the study continue for five total years, however sufficient data were collected by the fourth year to meet the study objective. More information on fragmentation of mule deer habitat can be found in the study "Mule Deer Conservation: Issues and Management Strategies" by Vos, Conover, and Headrick (2003).	Section 4.19.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show that the inventory length was four years.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF95	The RMP must develop stipulations and mitigation strategies designed to minimize potential impacts to wildlife, yet allow other resource uses to proceed. No mitigation or other stipulations are presented under alternative A in section 4.19.2.3.1. Mitigation strategies not presented in the document have been developed	Stipulations for surface disturbing activities relative to wildlife and special status species are outlined in Appendix K. Spatial buffers and seasonal mitigation for special status raptor species are outlined in Appendix A. Specific mitigation measures for wildlife and special status species also are	

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			for several species including mule deer, elk, pronghorn, Greater Sage-grouse, bighorn sheep, white-tailed prairie dogs, Mountain Plovers, Burrowing Owls, and black-footed ferrets. These should be presented and further developed to include each of the species listed in sections 4.15 and 4.19.	developed at the project level, when the particular species involved and the nature of the potential impacts are known. Please also see comment response WF77.	
State of Utah	G-1	WF96	Section 4.19 on page 4-305 should include an additional impact of grazing management decisions on wildlife. Livestock grazing in critical big game winter ranges, riparian areas, and sage-grouse areas has the potential to impact wildlife by changing vegetation composition and structure. These impacts are real and should be analyzed in the RMP.	Section 4.19 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include an analysis of the impacts of livestock and grazing management actions on wildlife.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF97	The RMP confuses UDWR GIS data and Utah GAP Analysis data in section 4.19.2.5.2.1 on page 4-314 and in section 4.19.2.5.2.2 on page 4-316. Utah State University developed GAP Analysis projected habitat occurrence data for several wildlife species during the mid-1990s. The UDWR GIS database includes, in part, habitat value designations as well as season of use designations for big game and other managed wildlife species	Sections 4.19.2.5.2.1 and 4.19.2.5.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS text have been revised to clarify the use of UDWR GIS data and Utah GAP analysis data.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF98	The UDWR recommends that the RMP further address cumulative impacts in both the special status species section (4.22.9) and the wildlife and fisheries section (4.22.12). The RMP should provide more information regarding past activities and projected future activities in the Uintah Basin and the combined impacts these actions may have on wildlife populations.	Sections 4.22.10 (special status species) and 4.22.12 (wildlife and fisheries) in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to provide more information on cumulative effects.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WF99	The UDWR notes that the sage-grouse lek buffers subject to timing and controlled use on figure 11, figure 12, and figure 13 may be incorrect. USU completed a resource assessment for BLM and documented leks, winter use areas, and other grouse observations. The	Figures 11-13 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to correct sage grouse lek buffers.	X

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			data displayed on figure 11 appear to represent all data points USU collected, many of which are not actual lek locations. This discrepancy occurred on the sage-grouse lek map BLM had in the administrative draft RMP and appears not to have been corrected. The UDWR maintains the most up-to-date database for sage-grouse leks and those data should be used for the RMP.		
State of Utah	G-1	WH27	The State of Utah strongly opposes the Winter Ridge Wild Horse Herd action being proposed by BLM due to impacts to wildlife in the immediate area.	Comment noted.	
State of Utah	G-1	WH28	The analysis of wild horse impacts on wildlife and fisheries on page 4-324 is incomplete and does not address long-term impacts by wild horses on sagebrush steppe vegetation communities and existing riparian areas. The Utah DWR indicates that significant overgrazing of browse (needed by mule deer) occurs annually, especially around water collection ponds, in other areas of wild horse herds. Estimates of the effects of the Ute Tribal wild horses in Agency Draw indicate that a minimum of a 0.5-mile radius on browse damage can be seen around watering sites	The potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on vegetation are analyzed in Section 4.16.2.14. The analysis of potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on wildlife contained in Section 4.19.2.13 has been expanded for the PRMP/FEIS.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WH29	No analysis is included in the DEIS of the impacts of wild horse trespass on state lands adjacent to Winter Ridge.	The BLM is unaware of trespass issues on State lands, so an analysis of this potential impact was not included in the DEIS. See also comment response WH9.	
State of Utah	G-1	WH30	The State of Utah (DWR) has documented three sage grouse leks on Winter Ridge, although no birds have been noted there for the last few years. It is inconsistent for the BLM, a major player in the local Sage Grouse Working Group, to be a proponent of restoring sage grouse habitat to prevent a listing, while at the same time considering a decision that might	See comment response WH17.	

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			establish a wild horse herd in an area with three historic lek sites.		
State of Utah	G-1	WH31	State of Utah (DWR) biologists have documented heavy summer and winter use of Winter Ridge by elk. This use has created competition for forage between the elk and the livestock permittee. This impacts of wild horses on available forage in light of this existing competition needs to be analyzed further in the DEIS.	Analysis of impacts from competition for forage between elk, livestock, and wild horses has been added in the PRMP/FEIS.	X
State of Utah	G-1	WH32	The potential riparian damage caused by wild horses and its impact on the Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Recovery Program for Meadow Creek and the headwater streams in upper Willow Creek has not been sufficiently analyzed in the DEIS.	The potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on riparian areas are outlined in Section 4.11.2.2. The potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on special status species is provided in Sections 4.15.1.2 and 4.15.2.2, as part of forage allocations. The potential impact of wild horse management decisions on soil and water resources is contained in Section 4.13.1.3. The commenter does not identify what is insufficient about the analysis in question.	
State of Utah	G-1	WH33	The proposal to establish a wild horse herd of between 50 and 100 animals on Winter Ridge may countermand the previously agreed upon and funded efforts of the State of Utah, SITLA, and BLM to improve sage grouse habitat there in order to prevent listing of the grouse.	See comment response WH17.	
State of Utah	G-1	WH34	The Wild Horses and Burros Section 3.18 presents information regarding the Hill Creek Southeast/Agency Draw HMA on page 3-121. The UDWR believes the RMP should note that horses freely roam outside the HMA in the Buck Canyon/Bates Knolls vicinity. Wild horse use has negatively impacted range conditions on UDWR lands in and near Chimney Rock and on Willow Creek. The RMP should also note that wild horse use on Winter Ridge and Bonanza has impacted range conditions in sage-grouse habitat.	The BLM has taken action to prevent wild horses from moving up Buck Canyon to the Bates Knolls area. The fence has been built; however, the BLM is waiting for Uintah County to install the cattleguard.	

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State of Utah	G-1	WT1	With respect to Woodlands, it was a little difficult to follow the logic regarding the link between SRMAs and woodland benefit in Table 2.5. Perhaps very brief mention of SRMAs in Section 2.4.19.2, Management Common to All would help.	Table 2.5 of the Draft RMP has been deleted from the PRMP/FEIS. More detailed information about the link between special designations (including SRMAs) and woodland impacts are provided in Sections 4.20.2.4 and 4.20.2.6 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
State of Utah	G-1	WT2	Woodlands and Forest Lands should be managed to control soil erosion to prevent the soil erosion rate from exceeding the tolerable (T) rate as determined through USDA/NRCS. Resources should be managed such that T is not exceeded on vegetated forest lands nor from roadways or road cuts, or from riparian areas within forested lands.	The BLM is planning management of Pinyon/Juniper forested lands through firewood sales, thinning and fire to decrease canopy cover, and increase shrub and herbaceous cover to reduce erosion at levels of tolerable (T) or below. Ponderosa and Douglas Fir areas will be managed for diversity and cover and will get prescriptions for change if erosion becomes a problem. Roads and road cuts will always be a site where (T) will be exceeded during high rain events. Where sedimentation is identified to be a problem, conservation measures will be applied.	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	LG1	If the BLM is considering implementing utilization standards for grazing for uplands, a similar consideration should be given to riparian areas.	See Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS/FEIS for information on grazing in riparian zones.	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	LG2	Allocation of wildlife AUMs appears to be secondary to livestock AUMs in the document. Wildlife needs should be met first.	Comment noted.	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	LG3	AUMs assigned to wildlife that are mobile cannot be verified.	Comment noted.	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	SD4	Special designations which hinder access and/or economic development of Tribal or Allotted lands should be reviewed carefully. Your Preferred Alternative may warrant review within the proposed Bitter Creek ACEC which appears to have a Tribal or Allotted in-holding.	The RMP provides access to lands administered by other surface management entities and private parties.	
Bureau of	G-2	SW1	Recent increases in oil and gas development in the	Oil and gas is the predominant surface disturbing	

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Indian Affairs			<p>Uintah Basin are likely to have effects on soil stability, soil productivity, water quality and water supply in addition to the oil and gas surface disturbances listed in Tables 4-1 to 4-4. These [additional impacts] are not addressed well in the draft document in the affected environment, effects or the cumulative effects sections. To adequately compare alternatives, a quantification of total existing and projected surface disturbance (in acres, square miles, etc.) not just those from oil and gas developments should be included.</p>	<p>activity within the planning area. While there may be other proposed actions that involve surface disturbance, it is unlikely that the incremental impact of these activities would significantly contribute to the overall impact.</p>	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	SW2	<p>Water quantity use/appropriation (in acre-feet or similar measurement), and water quality tolerances/limits should be provided in the EIS.</p>	<p>Water quality tolerances/limits are established by the Utah DEQ and the EPA and are incorporated by reference. It is not necessary for the BLM to include in the RMP exhaustive recitation of all laws, policies, and guidelines applicable to proposed management decisions if those documents are readily available elsewhere, as are the standards for water quality. It is also unnecessary to discuss specific water quantity use/appropriation in order to compare proposed alternatives.</p>	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	TR47 (JTR-11)	<p>To avoid natural and cultural resource damage to Tribal lands, please review and reconsider the preferred alternative's "open" designation bordering the Uintah and Ouray Indian reservations near the White River.</p>	<p>Although the BLM has identified an "open" area with a portion directly adjacent to Tribal Lands, there are three factors that will minimize the opportunity for natural and cultural damage to Tribal lands: 1. According to the DEIS, any use beyond the "open" boundary would be restricted to designated routes, 2. Most users prefer to ride the tall and rounded Mancos shale ridges located at the heart of the "open" area located 2 miles to the east and 3. Tribal Lands are posted closed to all ATV use with federally enforced trespass laws.</p>	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	VI25	<p>Under Alternative C, the reduction in short-term adverse impact is recognized but the reduction in long-term beneficial impacts (associated with restrictions on</p>	<p>Section 4.17.2.12.3 has been revised in the PRMP/FEIS as follows:</p>	X

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			fuel reduction in ACEC's) is not.	“Alternative C would have similar impacts as Alternative A, except that up to 552,663 acres of forest and woodlands would be available for treatments or harvesting. Forest and woodland species salvage would be allowed only when the woodland or forest resource were threatened, which would reduce the short-term, adverse impacts on visual resources. Excluding woodland salvage within 242,760 acres of proposed ACECs would reduce the long-term beneficial impacts on woodlands because this form of fuel load reduction would not be conducted to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire.”	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	G-2	WH1	Wild and feral horses are culturally important to members of the Ute Tribe and their management and AUM allocations should be coordinated with the Tribe.	The BLM already coordinates with the Ute Tribe as part of its ongoing policy regarding sites, areas, and resources of concern to the Tribe. The BLM would continue such coordination under all alternatives in the RMP.	
Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	GC42 (GC-A)	The RMP contains many management prescriptions that are unsubstantiated as to need and unsupported by science.	Comment noted.	
Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	ME89 (ME-A)	We are concerned that the RMP does not fully comply with the Energy and Policy Conservation Act, which requires governmental entities to analyze restraints and impediments to energy development, and remove them if unnecessary.	See comment response ME22.	
Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	SD180 (SD-A)	Of concern is the manner in which the Wild and Scenic River Act is implemented on segments of the Green and White Rivers in the RMP. This could prohibit further water development for a number of important uses. Additionally it could restrict development of energy resources that would have been accessible.	See Response to Comment SD37-G-22.	

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Regional Council on Workforce Services, Uintah Basin	G-3	SO32 (O-A)	Oil and gas development will not have a long-term adverse effect, as the RMP postulates, on the tourism sector of the local economy. This is because most if not all of the tourism attractions are located outside of the exploration regions.	See comment response SO15	
Vernal Area Chamber of Commerce	G-4	ME89 (ME-A)	We are concerned that the RMP does not fully comply with the Energy and Policy Conservation Act, which requires governmental entities to analyze restraints and impediments to energy development, and remove them if unnecessary.	See comment response ME22.	
Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office	G-5	SO1	The unemployment rate for Duchesne County should be closer to 7.1% rather than the 1.7% stated in the RMP.	Section 3.12.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct this number.	X
Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Office	G-5	SO2	Much of the socioeconomic information included in the draft RMP does not accurately reflect data that [the Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Office] supplied during comment periods in cooperation with Uintah County Economic Development and the Uintah Basin Association of Government throughout 2004. We sincerely hope the final document will give a corrected version of these very important and pertinent facts.	The data supplied by the counties and the State of Utah has been considered and incorporated into the PRMP/FEIS.	
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	GC3	The RMP contains no discussion of the impacts of BLM decisions on School and Institutional Trust lands.	Table 2,1,22 (Travel – Road and Trails) in the PRMP/FIES in the subsection entitled Management Common to All Alternatives states: “Per the State of Utah v. Andrus, October 1, 1979 (Cotter Decision), BLM would grant the State of Utah reasonable access to State lands for economic	

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				<p>purposes, on a case-by-case basis.”</p> <p>The RMP only implements management decisions on BLM lands. All rights of access to and use of School and Institutional Trust Lands within the planning area would be maintained.</p>	
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SD5	<p>There are potential adverse impacts to State Institutional and Trust Lands Administration lands surrounded by areas of special designation on BLM lands. These impacts aren't addressed in the document. For example, the Winter Ridge WSA contains state lands that are surrounded by BLM lands with leasing restrictions. This devalues the state's trust lands. The BLM must make the SITLA whole with restitution of some kind.</p>	<p>State inholdings may or may not currently have access, depending upon whether or not existing vehicle routes lead to them. Under different alternative scenarios, existing routes may be proposed for closure. The BLM's policy, as required by the Cotter decision (State of Utah v. Andrus, 10/1/79), is that “the State must be allowed access to the State school trust lands so that those lands can be developed in a manner that will provide funds for the common school...” This decision confined the issue of access to situations directly involving economic revenues generated for the school trust. The recreation restrictions do not prohibit the State from reasonable access to its lands for economic purposes through separate permit authorization as specified by the Cotter decision.</p>	
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SO3	<p>The RMP has no analysis of the economic impacts of the decisions on Utah trust lands or on the economic impact on schools, the University of Utah, and Utah State University.</p>	<p>Section 4.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include an analysis of the effects on SITLA lands. An analysis of the effects of Alternative E on SITLA lands has been added to Section 4.12.3.1.5.</p>	X
Utah State Office of Education	G-6	SO4	<p>The economic analysis of the impact of decisions on communities and then indirectly on schools and universities is sketchy. Federal law requires resource management plans to address the economic impact of each alternative. We find the analysis in the current document to be woefully unsophisticated and to inadequately address the impact of these decisions on</p>	<p>The anticipated socioeconomic impacts of each alternative can be found in Section 4.12 and its subsections. Further qualitative and quantitative clarifications, including impacts to SITLA lands, have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	

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			education and communities in Utah.		
National Park Service, Intermountain Region	G-8	GC4	Cedar View Park (49-00055) is a potential Section 6(f) property (Land and Water Conservation Fund property) that is not included in the RMP/DEIS.	Cedar View Park does not fall within VFO managed lands.	
Duchesne County	G-9	AQ149	Regional haze is mentioned here as an adverse impact from compressors and generators associated with mineral extraction activities. Prescribed burns and naturally occurring wildfires are much more likely to generate regional haze; however, these adverse impacts are not mentioned in many sections of the document where the impacts of prescribed burns are listed.	The general consensus among air quality professionals is that oil and gas is usually a more significant source of potential regional haze impacts on a long-term basis.	
Duchesne County	G-9	AQ150	The cumulative effects of air quality associated with Alt D should be less than the three action alternatives due to the prescribed burning of about 105,525 fewer acres of land over the next decade under Alt D	Other sources, such as activities associated with oil and gas, were also considered in the analysis.	
Duchesne County	G-9	AQ151	DEIS states that "dust abatement measures need to comply with UAC regulation: compliance would be obtained through special stipulations as a requirement on new projects and through the use of dust abatement control techniques in problem areas." DEIS lacks information and sufficient analysis supporting a need for this change and does not expand upon what special stipulations would be required.	Section 4.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS describes the cumulative impacts regarding air quality (including PM10 and PM2.5 dust emissions). Section 4.2.3 in the PRMP/FEIS describes mitigation measures.	
Duchesne County	G-9	AT43 (AT-JJ)	Last 2 sentences: are these comparisons really between alternatives B and D or are they between alternatives B and A as stated?	The comparisons are between Alternatives B and A as stated. Alternative B was compared to Alternative D elsewhere in the paragraph.	
Duchesne County	G-9	FM2	This summary fails to address the relative merits of the four alternatives based on woodland and forest decisions.	Section 4.4.2.8 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to summarize the effects of woodland and forest management decisions on fire management to each alternative summary.	X

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Duchesne County	G-9	FM4	This section does not seem to recognize the beneficial effects of mineral development access road construction in creating fire breaks that could actually reduce the spread of fire.	Comment noted.	
Duchesne County	G-9	GC56 (GC-M)	DCWCD would like to see further information given as to the Colorado River Compact and how it affects public land use.	<p>There is absolutely no effect whatsoever on water rights or in-stream flows related to suitability findings made in a land use plan decision, barring Congressional action. Even if Congress were to designate rivers into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, any such designation would have no affect on existing, valid water rights. Section 13(b) of the Wild and Scenic River Act states that jurisdiction over waters is determined by established principles of law. In Utah, the state has jurisdiction over water. Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act implies a federal reserved water right for designated rivers, it doesn't require or specify any amount, and instead establishes that only the minimum amount for purposes of the Act can be acquired. Because the State of Utah has jurisdiction over water, BLM would be required to adjudicate the right as would any other entity, by application through state processes. Thus, for Congressionally designated rivers, BLM may assert a federal reserved water right to appurtenant and unappropriated water with a priority date as of the date of designation (junior to all existing rights), but only in the minimum amount necessary to fulfill the primary purpose of the reservation. In practice, however, federal reserved water rights have not always been claimed if alternative means of ensuring sufficient flows are adequate to sustain the outstandingly remarkable values.</p> <p>The BLM is fully evaluating and considering potential impacts related to these Wild and Scenic</p>	

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				River decisions in this planning process. Congressional designation of suitable streams is evaluated in the cumulative impacts analysis of the FEIS. See Appendix C for a more thorough discussion of how the suitability considerations are applied to each eligible river.	
Duchesne County	G-9	LG107 (LG-S) (LG-22)	Section 4.6.2.4 does not seem to exist in the document and the effects of livestock grazing decisions on fire management definitely needs to be addressed	Section 4.7.2.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to remove the reference Section 4.6.2.4 and to impacts analysis of livestock grazing management actions on fire management. As stated in Section 4.4.2, the management actions associated with livestock grazing would have negligible impacts on fire management.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	LG132 (LG-RR)	It is noted that unallocated AUMs could be allocated to wildlife. The Duchesne County General Plan contains a policy that "The BLM and Forest Service are expected to comply with and honor the domestic grazing preference on grazing districts." As such, any unallocated AUMs should be considered first for domestic grazing.	See comment response LG88.	
Duchesne County	G-9	LG8	<p>The Forage policies of the RMP should be revised to be consistent with the livestock and grazing policies of Duchesne County, which are as follows:</p> <p>The cultural heritage of Duchesne County is based on agriculture and livestock. These industries formed the historic basis of the local economy from the beginning days of settlement until the development of significant oil and gas resources in the early 1970s. Livestock grazing influenced lifestyles, left its imprints on the landscapes, and is one of the oldest enduring and economically important cultural heritage resources in the west. Although farms and ranches in the County were established on a private land base, during parts</p>	<p>In accordance with FLPMA, the BLM reviewed and considered the general plans of Duchesne, Daggett, Uintah, and Carbon counties during development of the management alternatives within the RMP. Where feasible, prudent, and consistent with the purpose and need of the RMP and BLM's multiple-use/sustained yield mandate, the BLM developed a range of alternatives and included them in the RMP/EIS.</p> <p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is</p>	

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			<p>of the year livestock is pastured on public rangeland. The combination of public rangeland and private farmland constitutes the economic base for many of the County's livestock operations. If either the grazing permit or the private land is lost or diminished, the economic viability of those operations can be jeopardized.</p> <p>Federal grazing permits issued under the Taylor Grazing Act (BLM) or the Granger-The Act (USFS) allow permittees the privilege to use publicly owned forage.</p> <p>It is the position of Duchesne County that:</p> <p>a. Public land agencies shall maintain livestock grazing permits and grazing allocations at present levels until a study of rangeland improvement justifies increased or decreased grazing.;</p> <p>b. The County recognizes grazing permits on public lands as an asset, which may be transferred by the permit owner. Such transactions must be processed by the land management agency within ninety days of proper notification. Any reduction in the size of the permit or forage allocation as a result of the transaction shall not be made without a specific scientific justification;</p> <p>c. When grazing permits are withdrawn from a livestock operator due to grazing violations, the permit shall not be reallocated to other uses and shall be made available for continued livestock use before the commencement of the next grazing season;</p>	<p>bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolved to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law, there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p>	

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			<p>d. Access to public rangeland is vital to the permit-holders and the management agency for planning, management, and development. Access shall be maintained and improved as management needs require;</p> <p>e. The permit-holder shall be compensated for the remaining value of improvements made on reduced allotments, unless the permit was canceled for non-compliance with grazing regulations. Said compensation will be provided for in accordance with Section 402 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which provides a reasonable compensation for the adjusted value, to be determined by the Secretary concerned, of his interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on lands covered by such permit or lease, but not to exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein;</p> <p>f. Livestock allocations shall not be converted to wildlife allocations as long as the land supports the grazing Animal Unit Months (AUM's) assigned to the allotment. The only justification for decreasing domestic livestock grazing AUM's is for there to be a valid and documented scientific finding that the range district will no longer support the AUM's in question. The BLM and Forest Service are expected to comply with and honor the domestic grazing preference on grazing districts.</p> <p>Duchesne County recognizes that 43 CFR part 4110.3 provides for changes in permitted use. Conversion of allocated forage from one grazing animal to another would require a NEPA process that conforms with land use plans;</p>		

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			<p>g. Management decisions shall be based on the individual range allotment condition and not on the overall condition of surrounding lands. Increases in available forage resulting from the conservation practices of livestock permit-holders shall not be allocated or credited to other uses;</p> <p>h. Forage allocation reductions resulting from forage studies, drought, or natural disasters shall be implemented on an allotment basis. Reductions shall be applied proportionately to all allocations unless it can be proven that a specific type of grazing animal is causing the land health degradation. Duchesne County recognizes that, in the event of fire, drought or natural disaster, a variety of emergency or interim actions may be necessary to minimize land health degradation, such as temporary reduced forage allocation for livestock and wildlife. Forage allocation reductions shall be temporary. Grazing allocations shall be restored when forage production is restored;</p> <p>i. Weed control efforts that affect forage allocations shall be discussed by the land management agency with livestock representatives, neighboring landowners, and the County weed specialist. After the discussion, a weed control plan shall be developed and implemented;</p> <p>j. Public land management agencies shall endeavor to inspect riparian and sensitive areas with livestock permittees approximately one week before livestock are admitted to the grazing allotment;</p> <p>If riparian areas are damaged or degraded before the livestock enter the grazing allotment, the management agency and representatives shall make a record of the condition and appropriate mitigation shall be acceptable to all parties. A copy of the signed report</p>		

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			<p>shall be filed with the agency and provided to the permit-holder;</p> <p>k. Increases in available forage resulting from practices or improvements implemented by managing agency will be allocated proportionately to all forage allocations, unless the funding source specifies the benefactor;</p> <p>l. Changes in season of use or forage allocation must not be made without full and meaningful consultation with permittee. The permittee must be the first point of contact;</p> <p>m. The continued viability of livestock operations and the livestock industry shall be supported on federal and state lands within Duchesne County by management of the lands and forage resources and the optimization of animal unit months for livestock in accordance with the multiple-use provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq., the provisions of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, 43 U.S.C. 315 et seq., and the provisions of the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, 43 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.</p>		
Duchesne County	G-9	LR1	<p>"No lands acquired through land tenure adjustments would be classified or opened for agricultural entry or leasing in the RMP planning area."</p> <p>At a minimum, Duchesne County would request the addition of the bolded phrase into this sentence. However, Duchesne County questions whether such restrictions should be imposed across the board.</p>	The suggested wording change has been made in Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Land Tenure Adjustments (LTAs).	X
Duchesne County	G-9	LR2	Duchesne County requests that the Land Tenure Adjustments policies and Exchange/Acquisition policies of the RMP be revised to be consistent with Duchesne	The Land Tenure Adjustments listed in Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS and Exchange/Acquisition policies listed in the same	

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			<p>County policies, which are as follows:</p> <p>"Whereas more than fifty-percent of Duchesne County consists of public lands managed by federal and state agencies, further loss of private property will result in a diminution of the economic base and cultural values. It is the position of Duchesne County that:</p> <p>a. Private property shall be protected from coerced acquisition by federal, state and local governments;</p> <p>b. The County shall be compensated for loss of private lands or tax revenues due to land exchanges;</p> <p>c. Private lands shall not be converted to state or federal ownership in order to compensate for government activities outside of Duchesne County;</p> <p>d. Any conversion from private property to public lands shall result in no net loss of private property. No net loss shall be measured both in terms of acreage and fair market value; and</p> <p>e. A private property owner has a right to dispose of or exchange property as he/she sees fit within applicable law."</p>	<p>table do not conflict with the elements of Duchesne County's policies as stated in the comment and do not preclude the County's maintenance of those policies. BLM is only interested in acquiring private property from willing sellers.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	LR2A	<p>Duchesne County requests that the Land Tenure Adjustment policies listed on Page 2-15 and the Exchange/Acquisition policies on Pages 2-16 and 2-17 of the RMP be revised to be consistent with the above</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes</p>	

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			Duchesne County policies.	<p>necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolved to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/DRMP, so that the State and local</p>	

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				governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the DRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME10	<p>Duchesne County supports Alternative B for all types of mineral and energy use. This alternative best complies with the Duchesne County General Plan policies.</p> <p>Alternative B also appears to best comply with Executive Order 13212, BLM Instruction Memorandum 2003-233 and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Duchesne County understands these documents require that access to public lands for energy exploration and development not be unduly restricted. President Bush has made it clear that new RMP's should eliminate impediments to energy development and not create new ones. Alternative B should be selected, as the supply of oil, natural gas and other energy sources, at reasonable prices, is critical to the economy of our nation.</p>	Comment noted.	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME31	The analysis concludes that Alternative C would reduce long-term adverse impacts on the Oil, Gas and CBM resources "by ensuring that the resource was available to support a viable, long-term mineral industry." This conclusion is based on the assumption that minerals that cannot be used today could be used in the future. However, there is no guarantee that lands deemed unsuitable for such use under Alternative C today will ever be made available for future resource extraction, that other sources of energy may be developed and the National immediate energy need.	Section 4.8.2.1.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to delete the statement in question.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	ME31A	The statements fail to consider EPCA directions requiring impediments to energy development be	See comment response ME22.	

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			reduced and management restrictions be the least restrictive.		
Duchesne County	G-9	ME34	If Alternative C would close 48,801 acres to oil and gas leasing, how can that acreage be included in the total number of acres available for oil and gas leasing in Table 4.8.1?	The acreage closed to oil and gas leasing under Alternative C is included in the "Closed to Leasing" line item in Table 4.8.1, not in the acreage open to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulations.	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME35	In the alternatives there are proposed management prescriptions such as VRM, NSO, and oil and gas closures. If these are for recreational purposes they must be analyzed here. If they are for other resources then they should be removed. As written, when analyzing it is difficult to determine the purpose for the NSO's, etc. All actions proposed for recreation should be limited to management of recreation not other resources.	<p>See Table 2.1.3 (Recreation Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.14 (Recreation – Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.18 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers (SWR)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.20 (Special Designations – Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Management decisions related to NSO and oil and gas closure are primarily related to special designations, special status species and wildlife decisions, and VRM classification. NSO stipulations</p>	

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				and oil and gas closures may overlap with areas within which recreation is anticipated, but are not implemented specifically for the purpose of recreation.	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME42	The statement that none of the alternatives would result in more than a 0.4% net decrease in the number of predicted oil and gas wells is deceiving. Based on the information in Tables 4.8.2, 4.8.3, 4.8.4 and 4.8.5, Alternatives A, B and C all provide more opportunity for oil and gas well drilling than Alternative D. However, the difference between Alternatives B and C is about 2.5%.	Sections 4.8.3 and 4.8.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to read: "Under all action alternatives there would be a net increase in the number of predicted oil, gas, and CBM wells as compared to the No Action alternative."	X
Duchesne County	G-9	ME45	This text implies that Alternative B will have substantial impacts and jeopardize plant species when compared to the impacts of Alternative A, yet Tables 4.8.2 and 4.8.3 indicate that Alternative B anticipates only 13 more oil wells, 34 more gas wells and 2 more coal bed methane wells than Alternative A in the vast southern part of the VPA. The alarming text in this paragraph should be toned down.	The small increase in the number of wells between Alternatives A and B is not as important as are the locations of those additional wells. As stated in Section 4.15.2.3.2.1: "...the increase in mineral and energy development is concentrated in the southern part of the VPA, which would place the Book Cliffs soil endemics at substantial risk and potentially result in jeopardy to listed species and/or the listing of previously candidate or sensitive species as threatened or endangered."	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME8	This principle should be amended to contain a commitment to process [lease] authorizations in a timely manner. [We] understand there is a growing backlog of authorizations and that private industry has contributed funds in an effort to reduce the backlog. The agency must ensure that it has adequate resources to serve its clientele.	The issue is beyond the scope of the RMP.	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME9	Revise this section as follows:	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not	

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			<p>"...any lands known to contain federally proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or their proposed or designated critical habitat; and..."</p>	<p>limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	ME9A	<p>A plan of operation should not be required when the species is merely proposed as threatened or endangered.</p>	<p>Since proposed species are in jeopardy it is important to treat them in such a way as to not lead to the listing of the species. Requiring a plan of operations would be one of the measures to help protect the species from listing.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	PA2	<p>This section recognizes the benefits of paleontological studies associated with mineral development mitigation; however, such benefits are not mentioned in the analysis of Alternatives A and D that follow.</p>	<p>Language acknowledging the scientific benefit (e.g., increasing the body of knowledge) of paleontological investigations conducted in association with minerals development has been added to the discussions of Alternatives A, D, and E.</p>	X
Duchesne County	G-9	RE41 (RE-U)	<p>Paragraph 2 line 7: The reference to "unmanaged OHV use" under Alt B is not logical given the data in Table 2.3 and elsewhere indicating that the amount of land open to unrestricted OHV use in Alt B is very similar to Alt A and C (yet "unmanaged OHV use" is not mentioned in the analysis under those alternatives).</p>	<p>The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to remove "unmanaged" from the text in Section 4.10.2.6.2.2.</p>	X
Duchesne County	G-9	RE42 (RE-V)	<p>2nd paragraph: Why is it stated that there would be "minimal management of OHV use" only in Alt B when the amount of acreage open to OHV travel in Alt B is</p>	<p>This paragraph refers to the minimal level of OHV management under Alternative B in the areas mentioned: White River, Blue Mountain, Fantasy</p>	

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			the same as ALT C and less than Alt A" The amount of acreage available in Alt B for limited OHV travel is very similar to that available in Alt A.	Canyon, Book Cliffs, Browns Park, Red Mountain-Dry Fork, and Nine-Mile Canyon. Under Alternative A, these areas would be designated as SRMAs and would receive a higher level of OHV management. While the total acres for Open, Limited, and Closed OHV use are roughly similar for Alternatives A and B, this paragraph is an analysis of impacts from OHV use on the above-mentioned areas.	
Duchesne County	G-9	RW25 (RW-G)	Introduction of moose populations into riparian areas would seem to have similar impacts as livestock grazing versus the long term, indirect beneficial impacts stated in this section.	Comment noted.	
Duchesne County	G-9	RW26 (RW-H)	If an exception were granted to allow development within 100 meters of a riparian area, based on exception criteria #1, there would impacts on listed species. However, if the exception were granted based on criteria #2, there may be short-term impacts but no long-term impacts. If the exception were granted based on criteria #3, there should not be any adverse impacts.	Comment noted.	
Duchesne County	G-9	RW3	It is the position of Duchesne County that the statutory requirement regarding the management of riparian areas is to provide "reasonable protection," not to prevent against any and all impacts. The intent is to "maintain function." Riparian area buffer zones of no surface disturbance should be determined in an adaptive and flexible manner and only when site-specific analysis shows it is necessary to reasonably protect the area. RMP and Forest Plans must require that waters and riparian areas be managed so as to not impair function and reduce grazing allotments based on AUM's (sic) or create expansion of NSO requirements on lands historically open to mineral development. In keeping with BLM IM 2003-233 and	<p>This is beyond the scope of the PRMP/FEIS. BLM must adhere to Executive Order 11988 (1977) for Floodplains/Utah Riparian Management Policy which states that:</p> <p>"No new surface disturbing activities will be allowed within 100 meters of riparian areas unless it can be shown that (1) there are no practical alternatives or (2) all long-term impacts can be fully mitigated or (3) the activity will benefit and enhance the riparian area."</p> <p>The proposed plan includes the exceptions noted</p>	

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			2003-234, the riparian buffer distance should be set based on site specific analysis and should be no greater than the least amount necessary to accomplish the desired resource protection. Providing a blanket 100-meter buffer is not acceptable.	above in Appendix K.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD10	Duchesne County is opposed to the extension of the existing ACEC in Nine Mile Canyon beyond the upper rim of the canyon. On page 3-83 of the RMP/DEIS, it appears that the proposed expansion of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC covers a total of 36,987 acres. On Page 2-56, it indicates that the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC (in Alternative A) would expand from 44,181 to 48,000 acres (an increase of 3,819 acres). This leads Duchesne County to conclude that the remaining 33,168 acres of ACEC expansion in Nine Mile Canyon would occur in Carbon County. If this is true and the ACEC boundaries stay within the canyon upper rim, Duchesne County would not object to Alternative A.	See Response to Comment SD9-G-9.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD11	<p>Duchesne County asserts that the RMP/DEIS does not address all of the five criteria listed [below] and that no additional Wild and Scenic Rivers shall be designated in Duchesne County:</p> <p>i) It is clearly demonstrated that water is present and flowing at all times; (ii) It is clearly demonstrated that the required water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of the three physiographic provinces in the state. The rationale and justification for the conclusions shall be disclosed; (iii) The effects of the addition on the local and state economies, private property rights, agricultural and industrial operations and interests, tourism, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river</p>	<p>The criteria the commenter is referring comes from Utah Code Section §63-38d-401.</p> <p>The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when</p>	

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			<p>corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment have been evaluated in detail by the relevant federal agency; (iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the provisions and terms of the process for review of potential additions have been applied in a consistent manner by all federal agencies; and (v) The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed. All valid existing rights, including grazing leases and permits shall not be affected.</p>	<p>statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD12	<p>The Duchesne County General Plan contains the following policies regarding ACEC's:</p> <p>All plans and management decisions must ensure that special designations do not influence the use of resource on lands not listed. The County opposes the use of a buffer zone management philosophy that dictates land use practices and influences decisions beyond the scope and boundaries of the designations. The County also opposes the imposition of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) classifications or Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications as substitutes for former Wilderness Inventory Units or so-called Citizens' Proposed Wilderness Units, or as mean to displace formerly valid surface occupying multiple use activities. ACEC and VRM classifications are improper management tools unless narrowly drawn and tailored, both geographically and programmatically, to effect only those minimal restrictions that are actually necessary to prevent irreparable damage to valid and</p>	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning</p>	

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			<p>relevant resource values. Imposing ACEC classifications in the name of “protecting scenic values” is an improper use of the ACEC tool, which contradicts this County Policy.</p> <p>Special designations include wilderness designations, wild and scenic rivers, areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC), critical habitat, semi-primitive and non-motorized travel areas, and other designations that may result in non-use, restricted use, or environmental impacts on public and private lands. Special designations dictate practices that restrict access or use of the land that impact other resources or their use. Such designations cause resource waste, serious impacts to other important resources and actions, and are inconsistent with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. County support for the designation of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern shall be withheld until:</p> <p>(i) It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed area contains historic, cultural or scenic values, fish or wildlife resources, or natural processes, which are unique or substantially significant; (ii) The regional values, resources, processes, or hazards have been analyzed by the federal agency for impacts resulting from potential actions which are consistent with the multiple-use, sustained-yield principles, and that this analysis describes the rationale for any special management attention required to protect, or prevent irreparable damage to the values, resources, processes, or hazards;</p> <p>(iii) The difference between special management attention required for an ACEC and normal multiple-</p>	<p>stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/DRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the DRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP/FEIS with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p>	

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			<p>use management has been identified and justified, and that any determination of irreparable damage has been analyzed and justified for short and long-term horizons;</p> <p>(iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the proposed designation is not a substitute for a wilderness suitability recommendation; and</p> <p>(v) The conclusions of all studies are submitted to the county for review, and the results, in support of or in opposition to, are included in all planning documents.</p> <p>(vi) Any impacts on private property rights are evaluated and mitigated.</p> <p>Based on these Duchesne County policies above, the County supports Alternative B for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.</p>		
Duchesne County	G-9	SD13	<p>The Duchesne County General Plan contains the following policies regarding Wild and Scenic Rivers:</p> <p>County support for the addition of a river segment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System shall be withheld until:</p> <p>(i) It is clearly demonstrated that water is present and flowing at all times;</p> <p>(ii) It is clearly demonstrated that the required water-related value is considered outstandingly remarkable within a region of comparison consisting of one of the three physiographic provinces in the state. The rationale and justification for the conclusions shall be disclosed;</p> <p>(iii) The effects of the addition on the local and state economies, private property rights, agricultural and</p>	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	

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			<p>industrial operations and interests, tourism, water rights, water quality, water resource planning, and access to and across river corridors in both upstream and downstream directions from the proposed river segment have been evaluated in detail by the relevant federal agency;</p> <p>(iv) It is clearly demonstrated that the provisions and terms of the process for review of potential additions have been applied in a consistent manner by all federal agencies; and</p> <p>(v) The rationale and justification for the proposed addition, including a comparison with protections offered by other management tools, is clearly analyzed within the multiple-use mandate, and the results disclosed. All valid existing rights, including grazing leases and permits shall not be affected.</p> <p>Based on the policies listed above, Duchesne County is in support of Alternatives A or B in this section of the RMP.</p>		
Duchesne County	G-9	SD240 (SD-JJJ)	1st paragraph: It states that, under Alternative A, the upper and lower segments of the Green River would be determined suitable for WSR status. However, on pg. 4-212 and 4-214, it implies that these Green River segments have already been determined to be suitable. Has suitability been determined for these segments; and if so, when?	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the status of WSR river segments under Alternative A.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	SD241 (SD-KKK)	Does the designation of a route as a backcountry byway actually result in regulation of surface disturbing activities as implied here? Or is it the SRMA designation that provides for such regulations.	The Back Country Byway Program of the BLM is a special designation program wherein the BLM can regulate land uses in accordance with the maintenance of the resource values for which the byway was designated.	
Duchesne	G-9	SD242	Contrary to EPCA and NEP policy, the designation of	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	

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County		(SD-LLL)	Segments 1 and 2 of the White River as suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System would result in overlapping restrictions, since the lands adjacent to these river banks are frequently wetland habitats and within the 100-year floodplain, which are under NSO stipulations or closed to mineral development. We recommend that stipulations not necessary to accomplish desired protection be modified or dropped through the planning process. NEP, pp. 5-7; IM 2003-233, p.3. Preferred actions in the DEIS/RMP must be analyzed and developed in the context of these statutory and executive policies that promote and facilitate oil and gas development.		
Duchesne County	G-9	SD8	It is the position of Duchesne County that Special Recreation Management Areas are improper if they are used or managed to diminish the multiple use-sustained yield mandate of FLPMA and NFMA, or provide BLM with an excuse to carry out wilderness non-impairment standards of land management. An RMP should specify the precise parameters of SRMA uses and management. SRMA's are not to be considered as strictly recreation areas to the exclusion or elimination of other uses. The RMP should specify the precise parameters of SRMA uses and management before Duchesne County will feel comfortable with Alternative A. Absent such assurances, Duchesne County supports Alternative B.	<p>The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM determined that a single alternative analyzing the protection of all Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics would best provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives. Although the other alternatives do not provide specific management prescriptions to protect Non-WSA, these alternatives analyze and disclose the impacts</p>	

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				<p>of the proposed resource management prescriptions, uses and actions on the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This gives the public the ability to fully compare the consequences of protecting or not protecting the wilderness characteristics on these Non-WSA lands. If all alternatives contained comparable protections of the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, the alternatives would have substantially similar consequences and would not be significantly distinguishable.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	SD9	Under [Alternative B], 44,181 acres in Nine Mile Canyon would continue to be managed as a SRMA. Duchesne County does not support increasing this SRMA to 81,168 acres under Alternative A.	The BLM concurs that the Nine Mile ACEC boundary should not extend beyond the upper rim and BLM has provided that determination in the Proposed Plan. This revision is consistent with the Price FEIS boundary.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SO6	In addition to tourism impacts on law enforcement and emergency services, tourism on public lands impacts the county road systems.	There is no requirement in NEPA to do the detailed analysis that the commenter demands. This is outside the scope of the RMP and EIS. Administrative Actions by the BLM do not require a specific planning decision to implement.	
Duchesne County	G-9	SS1	The Duchesne County General Plan contains the following policies regarding Introduced, Sensitive, Threatened and Endangered Species:	Comment noted.	

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			<p>a. No threatened and endangered species shall be proposed for listing in Duchesne County until verifiable scientific data has been available to the public that there is a need for the designation, that protections cannot be provided by other methods, and the area in question is truly unique compared to other area lands;</p> <p>b. Buffer zones for the protection of threatened and endangered species or other special designations are not acceptable;</p> <p>c. The County does not believe that it is the intention of the Act to restore all original habitats once occupied by a specific species, but only the amount needed to protect the species from extinction;</p> <p>d. These designations or reintroduction often grow beyond the stated boundaries and scope and result in detrimental effects on the area economy, life style, culture and heritage. The Fish and Wildlife Service shall exclude areas from critical habitat designation if the economic damage is considered too great;</p> <p>e. Designation or reintroduction plans, guidelines, and protocols must not be developed or implemented without full County involvement and public disclosure;</p> <p>f. Any analysis of proposed designations or reintroductions must be inclusive and analyze needed actions associated with the proposal to prevent growth beyond the scope and boundaries;</p> <p>g. Recovery plans must provide for indicators to track the effectiveness of the plan and identify at the point recovery has been accomplished;</p> <p>h. Such designations shall provide access for reservoirs, maintenance of irrigation facilities, fire,</p>		

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			<p>weed and pest control;</p> <p>i. Devaluation of private property by the Endangered Species Act is a “taking” under the 5th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and compensation must be paid.</p> <p>In light of these policies, Duchesne County supports an alternative that provides the least restrictions on the use of natural resources in the planning area. This appears to be Alternative B.</p>		
Duchesne County	G-9	TR1 (TR-N)	We request that the BLM articulate its policies regarding the granting of Title 5 rights of way to counties and provide a Title 5 right of way agreement template in an appendix of the RMP.	The request is beyond the scope of this document. Title V rights-of-way are clearly explained in FLPMA. It is not necessary to repeat that information in this document.	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR2	This item talks about the elimination of "unneeded travel routes." This item should be modified to indicate who makes such a determination.	Recreation management guidelines were developed to help achieve and maintain healthy public lands as defined by the Rangeland Health Standards. Refer to Table 2.1.13 (Recreation Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under Rangeland Health Standard 1 for the Recreation Management Guidelines. The BLM will make the determination of unneeded travel routes in a Travel Management Plan which will be prepared after the Record of Decision. The public and the PRMP cooperating agencies will be involved in scoping for the plan.	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR3	This item should be modified to indicate that determinations as to whether travel routes are "unneeded" would take into account county transportation plans and county comments.	See comment response TR2.	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR32 (TR-P)	Construction of new roads across riparian areas does not create an irreversible loss of habitat. If such roads are deemed to no longer serve a public purpose after the activity they serve is completed, such roads can be	Section 4.11.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows:	X

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			removed and the habitat restored.	“Depending upon the types of construction methods and materials used, roads built across riparian areas would result in a direct loss of riparian habitat at the site of the crossing. The loss of habitat would continue until the reclamation of the road occurs and traffic diminishes to a point that riparian habitat can reestablish itself.”	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR4	The RMP should include a discussion of BLM's policies regarding granting Title V rights-of-way.	See comment response TR1.	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR5	There are many roads on BLM land that are not officially "county roads," but are public (Class D) roads that have RS 2477 rights. Many of these appear on the Duchesne County Transportation Plan that has been provided to the BLM. Can the BLM recognize such rights in this part of the document?	<p>A “D” route does not equate to a County road assertion. The routes identified as “D” routes in the DRMP/DEIS are roads located on public lands and managed by the BLM until properly adjudicated. The DRMP/DEIS proposes four different alternatives to manage these routes.</p> <p>As specified in the Draft RMP/DEIS Section 1.8 these issues are addressing RS 2477 assertions and are beyond the scope of this planning effort. However, nothing extinguishes any right-of-way or alters in any way the legal rights the State and Counties have to assert and protect RS 2477 rights.</p> <p>See comment response TR8.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	TR6	Duchesne County favors Alternative B. The county promotes the continued use of roads that serve a public interest. The county would like the ability to maintain and upgrade existing roads and propose realignments to address safety or environmental issues. The county recognizes the importance of Off Highway Vehicles to the economy of the area; however, the damage OHV use causes to the environment is of concern. We feel that Alternative B	Comment noted.	

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			strikes an acceptable balance.		
Duchesne County	G-9	TR7	Closing or restricting access over public lands is mentioned in this paragraph. Duchesne County requests that this paragraph make it clear that such closures or restrictions would not effect roads shown on county transportation plans or roads with RS 2477 rights.	This clarification is provided for in Section 1.8, Issues Beyond the Scope of the PRMP/FEIS.	
Duchesne County	G-9	VE1	Duchesne County has adopted a list of noxious weeds, which was provided to the BLM staff at the February 9, 2005 open house in Duchesne. The status column in this table may need to be amended accordingly.	All of the plants listed in the comment are already included in Table 3.16.6 except for Tamarisk, which is discussed at the end of Section 3.16.2. The "Status" column of Table 3.16.6 has been revised to identify which of the plants are listed by Duchesne County as noxious weeds.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	VE3	Alternative C would have lesser beneficial impacts on vegetation resources than Alternative A (not more). This is because Alternative C would not automatically provide for the same level of vegetation removal as Alternative A, which increases the chances for catastrophic wild fires (see Section 4.13.2.14.3).	The woodland and forest species salvaging is proposed for Alternative A and limited in Alternative C (Section 4.13.2.14.3). The level of this activity under Alternative A would have long-term adverse impacts to soil and water resources because of surface disturbance and subsequent soil erosion and sedimentation in streams. These effects would adversely affect the vegetation under Alternative A, and less so under Alternative C. In fact, the two alternatives are probably comparable in their effect on vegetation. The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect this analysis.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1	It is the position of Duchesne County that RMP's should not apply VRM classifications in such a way as to diminish historically permitted or leased "domestic livestock grazing," "mineral exploration and production," "timber production," and principal and major uses of the land as mandated by FLPMA Section 1702(1).	According to BLM Manual 8400.06(2) Visual Resource Management, VRM classes shall result from, and conform to, the resource allocations made in RMPs. This would include domestic livestock grazing, mineral exploration and production, timber production, etc.	
Duchesne	G-9	VI1A	VRM classifications and goals must be limited to protecting against only damage that is permanent and	The purpose of VRM classifications is not tied to protecting permanent and irreparable damage.	

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County			irreparable, while recognizing and allowing for overall multiple use and quality of life for local communities (who enjoy the land and who rely on balanced, sustained-yield economic use of natural resources in the planning area) and visitors to public lands [see FLPMA Section 1702(1)].	VRM classifications are assigned to public lands based on scenic quality, sensitivity level, and distance zones. The VRM classification has an objective which prescribes the amount of change allowed in the characteristic landscape. See the Glossary of Terms in BLM Manual 8400.	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1B	VRM I and II classifications constitute de facto wilderness management in violation of the multiple use mandate of FLPMA, and required by BLM Manual H 8410 and NEPA to impose VRM restrictions.	<p>VRM classifications are not the mechanism for designating wilderness areas. Wilderness Study Areas are managed by their own set of rules and regulations (see BLM Manual H-8550-1, Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review). BLM Handbook 8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory, states in III(5),</p> <p>“Special Areas. Management objectives for special areas such as Natural Areas, Wilderness Areas or Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Scenic Areas, Scenic Roads or Trails, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), frequently require special consideration for the protection of the visual values. This does not necessarily mean that these areas are scenic, but rather than one of the management objectives may be to reserve the natural landscape setting. The management objectives for these areas may be used as a basis for assigning sensitivity levels.”</p> <p>Furthermore, BLM IM-2000-96 (Use of Visual Resource Management Class I Designation in Wilderness Study Areas states:</p> <p>“... that all WSAs should be classified as Class I, and managed according to VRM Class I</p>	

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				management objectives until such time as the Congress decides to designate the area as wilderness or release it for other uses. If a WSA is designated as wilderness, the area would continue to be managed as VRM Class I."	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1C	VRM analysis should be based on certain visual reference points. For example, analysis should be based on that which is visible from the resource that is intended to be protected. Classifications for VRM should not be "overly broad." All VRM's must be developed based on a specific point of reference such as a river, a stream, a road, etc. RMP's are legally flawed that lack such articulation of existing character and why retention of such is important, a statement of acreage affected, etc..	<p>VRM classifications are made to meet management goals and objectives. Although an inventory may be used, it is not required.</p> <p>The current classifications were brought forward from the Book Cliffs and Diamond Mountain RMPs.</p> <p>H1601-1 – Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C, I. Visual Resources states, "Land Use Plan Decisions. Manage visual resource values in accordance with visual resource management (VRM) objectives (management classes). Designate VRM management classes for all areas of BLM land, based on an inventory of visual resources and management considerations for other land uses. VRM management classes may differ from VRM inventory classes, based on management priorities for land uses (see BLM Handbook H8410-1 for a description of VRM classes)."</p> <p>The commenter is correct in stating that VRM classifications should be prescribed to areas as seen from specific places only. Called "Key Observation Points" (KOP), i.e. a scenic overlook, a frequented canyon rim, or a particular feature, the VRM classification given would be managed to protect that view shed from that point. Another way</p>	

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				to protect an area like the White/Green River corridors or a Scenic Byway would be to manage for whatever classification is determined along the entire river corridor. This has been analyzed in the past by projecting a computer generated viewer from 3 feet above the river surface (similar to a canoeist) located in the middle of the waterway and then asking the computer to generate a 360 degree view for the length to be analyzed. The results demonstrate the frequency of sightings, the distance seen, and the areas observed.	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1D	VRM I rating shall be restricted to Class I wilderness areas, congressionally designated wild and scenic river segments, and other areas where congressional decisions or legitimate administrative decisions have been made to preserve a natural landscape.	VRM Class I can be designated for other areas that are not national wilderness areas, wild and scenic river segments, and other congressionally and administratively designated areas. The language of H-8410-1 states that in areas where the natural landscape is to be maintained includes areas such as WSAs, wild and scenic rivers, etc. This does not eliminate other naturally scenic areas from designation as VRM I. The BLM can designate other areas as VRM I if the land use objectives for that area deem it important to maintain the natural scenic quality and if the area proposed for VRM I designation possesses scenic quality and natural landscape characteristics. The alternatives present a range of VRM categories from which management can select from.	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1E	RMP's are contrary to law to the extent they authorize VRM ratings beyond these parameters. VRM I ratings are illegal in WSA's (see BLM IM 2000-96 and BLM H-8550-1). Moreover, a VRM I classification on WSA's conflicts with FLPMA Section 1782(c), which expressly allows for the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was conducted when	Visual Resource Management in class I and II areas does not preclude oil and gas development, but it does mean that the BLM has to try harder to accommodate both the visual concerns as well as the valid and existing rights. Through screening techniques such as topography, vegetation, coloration, and adaptation of facilities, we have been successful in fully mitigating the visual	

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			FLPMA took effect.	<p>concerns of some VRM II areas.</p> <p>See comment response SD174 regarding valid existing rights. This would include both mining and grazing uses.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI1F	<p>Duchesne County has adopted a policy in its General Plan stating, "Imposing VRM classifications that result in the prohibition of formerly valid surface occupying or surface disturbing activities is an improper use of the VRM tool."</p> <p>Based on the above, Duchesne County expresses support of Alternative A, depicted on Figure 29 of the Draft EIS. This alternative contains no Class I VRM in Duchesne County and the only Class II VRM is located along Nine Mile Canyon, east of Gate Canyon. Duchesne County opposes Alternatives B, C, and D, which designate more Class II VRM areas in the county.</p>	<p>BLM is aware that there are specific County and State Plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, BLM is bound by Federal law. FLPMA requires that the development of resource management planning for public land must be coordinated with and consistent with county plans to the maximum extent possible by law, and resolve to the extent practicable, inconsistencies between federal and non-federal government plans (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c) (9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled. Thus, while county and federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practicable, the federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to county plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/Vernal RMP so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the Vernal RMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the Vernal RMP with the State and County Master Plans has been included in Chapter 5.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	VI25	Under Alternative C, the reduction in short-term adverse impact is recognized but the reduction in long-term beneficial impacts (associated with restrictions on	Section 4.17.2.12.3 has been revised in the PRMP/FEIS as follows:	X

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			fuel reduction in ACEC's) is not.	“Alternative C would have similar impacts as Alternative A, except that up to 552,663 acres of forest and woodlands would be available for treatments or harvesting. Forest and woodland species salvage would be allowed only when the woodland or forest resource were threatened, which would reduce the short-term, adverse impacts on visual resources. Excluding woodland salvage within 242,760 acres of proposed ACECs would reduce the long-term beneficial impacts on woodlands because this form of fuel load reduction would not be conducted to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire.”	
Duchesne County	G-9	WF35	This conclusion does not appear to be adequately supported by findings in the chapter and is an overstatement of the potential impacts.	Section 4.15.6 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include supporting statements for the conclusion reached in this section.	X
Duchesne County	G-9	WF36	Efforts have not been made in Alternative B to allocate forage to wild horses.	The commenter is correct. Alternative B represents part of the range of alternatives by CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1).	X
Duchesne County	G-9	WF37	Alternative B should be amended to allow for UDWR involvement in analyzing exceptions to the dates as in Alternatives A and C.	<p>The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM determined that a single alternative</p>	

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				<p>analyzing the protection of all Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics would best provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives. Although the other alternatives do not provide specific management prescriptions to protect Non-WSA, these alternatives analyze and disclose the impacts of the proposed resource management prescriptions, uses and actions on the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This gives the public the ability to fully compare the consequences of protecting or not protecting the wilderness characteristics on these Non-WSA lands. If all alternatives contained comparable protections of the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, the alternatives would have substantially similar consequences and would not be significantly distinguishable.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p>	
Duchesne County	G-9	WF38	Alternative C will have a lesser beneficial long-term impact than Alternative A because of the restrictions on removal of woodland materials within ACEC's under Alternative C.	Comment noted.	
Duchesne County	G-9	WF54	Alt B does not include the 560 acres per township limitation for wildlife, according to Table 2.3 on pg 2-65. Alts A and C contain this limitation, while Alt B has a 10% habitat threshold. Duchesne Co. supports Alt B and the 10% threshold.	Section 4.16.2.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct the analysis error for Alternative B.	X
Duchesne	G-9	WF55	This section is supposed to address the cumulative	As described in the cumulative impacts (Section	

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County			effects on wildlife and fisheries but seems to focus on the effects to vegetation.	4.22.12), the impacts of the mentioned oil and gas exploration and development projects would impact vegetation. Restated in another way, the Impacts to vegetation and other surface disturbances could have direct and cumulative impacts on wildlife and fisheries by adversely impacting the habitat (e.g., vegetation) upon which they depend for food, shelter, and reproduction.	
National Park Service, Dinosaur National Monument	G-10	ME1	The impact of mineral and energy development on Dinosaur National Monument is not analyzed in the RMP/DEIS. Impacts on the view sheds, soundscape, and night sky of the Monument from mineral and energy development decisions must be addressed.	Appendix K in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include information of mineral and energy development near Dinosaur National Monument by alternative. See comment response ME2.	
National Park Service, Dinosaur National Monument	G-10	ME2	Dinosaur National Monument requests "no surface occupancy" (NSO) restrictions of ½-mile adjacent to the Monument for mineral and energy development.	No surface occupancy around the borders of Dinosaur National Monument is provided for under Alternative C. Under Alternatives A and B, surface occupancy is subject to either standard stipulations or timing and controlled surface use (CSU) stipulations.	
Carbon County	G-11	AT9 (AT-A)	Carbon County supports and recommends that the alternatives chosen for any decisions through the EIS be consistent with County and Tribal plans to the maximum extent possible, not in derogation of federal law.	Comment noted.	
Carbon County	G-11	LG75	All AUMs should be used to the maximum extent possible allowing for existing conditions and forage availability.	The Vernal Field Office RMP determines the allowable uses of the public lands as provided for in FLPMA. FLPMA states in section 202(a) that land use planning provides for the use of the public lands "regardless of whether such lands previously have been classified, withdrawn, set aside, or otherwise designated for one or more uses". FLPMA further provides in Section 202(e) the authority to issue	

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				<p>management decisions which implement newly developed or revised land use plans. Such decisions, including those that exclude one or more uses, are subject to reconsideration, modification and termination through revision of the land use plan.</p> <p>See comment response LG45A regarding FLPMA policy to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield.</p> <p>While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for and recognizing the need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law for the BLM to maximize the number of domestic livestock AUMs. According to section 2 of the TGA, it is the objective of the act to regulate the occupancy and use of the Grazing Districts and to preserve these lands.</p>	
Carbon County	G-11	LG90 (LG-B)	Grazing AUMs or allotments should not be relinquished or retired to wildlife or any other conservation type use.	See comment response LG60.	
Carbon County	G-11	LG91 (LG-C)	Season of use restrictions need to have flexibility and make good on the ground science complete with trend and utilization study to support any decisions made before restrictions are levied.	Comment noted.	
Carbon County	G-11	LG92 (LG-D)	Data gathered in cooperation with permittees or by third parties from universities, etc. as outlined in the Cooperative Monitoring MOU with NCBA and PLC should be accepted as part of any studies conducted to support changes in season of use.	Comment noted.	
Carbon County	G-11	ME90 (ME-B)	It is our contention that it is in the best interest of the local communities as well as our nation for the BLM to adhere to Congressional dictates that require that federal planning create the least impact on the	Comment noted.	

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			continued reasonable use of renewable and extractive resources in any long term land use plan.		
Carbon County	G-11	SO33 (SO-B)	Carbon County recommends that the final plan give the involved county governments and their citizens a land use plan that responds to the social and economic needs and supports continuation of the unique historic and cultural lifestyle that is so important to our citizens and our nation's heritage.	<p>Sections 103, 201, and 202 of FLPMA direct the BLM to take into account the national interest, as well as the local interest. In accordance with FLPMA and BLM rules, regulations, and policies, the BLM must provide for the balanced management of all resources and resource uses on public lands.</p> <p>The BLM gave strong consideration to the concerns of local governments throughout the planning process. In particular, San Juan, Duchesne and Daggett Counties are cooperating agencies and have been active cooperators, including during the development of alternatives.</p> <p>The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the</p>	

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				<p>alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p> <p>Additionally, the BLM believes its preferred alternative is consistent with the attitudes and needs of local residents as reflected in the USU survey.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	AT64 (JAT-15)	<p>The document states as an assumption: "BLM would have the funding and work force to implement the selected alternative." To this should be added: "... and all associated restoration, mitigation, and monitoring." We believe this assumption without the addendum could have significant consequences. For example, if the BLM lacks funding and adequate work force to ensure compliance with stipulations and mitigation measures, that shortfall may lead to unmitigated impacts to fish and wildlife resources and degraded habitats. We recommend you provide a separate analysis based on the current level of compliance monitoring as supported by existing funding, and develop thresholds for permitting based on the amount of compliance monitoring you are able to conduct.</p>	<p>The funding and work force levels for the Vernal Field Office are administrative in nature and thus not subject to analysis within the RMP. The RMP provides the framework for how work will be accomplished subject to public demands, resource objectives, and available funding.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	FM13 (JFM-4)	<p>The 3rd bullet states that during periods of prolonged dryness or drought, on a site-specific basis, BLM may implement OHV closures to minimize injury to the rangeland or to minimize the risk of spark-induced fires. We recommend that under the same conditions, you also provide the option of closure for other surface-disturbing activities (page 2-3). Currently, the document emphasizes heightened revegetation efforts, but does not provide for closure. Under drought conditions, in certain soil types present in the VPA, even heightened revegetation efforts will not be</p>	<p>The commenter's concern is addressed in Table 2.1.1 (Management Common to All Alternatives) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Fire, Draught, and Natural Disasters. While closure is not specifically mentioned, BLM would address what type of activities would be allowed during short periods of restrictions associated with "drought", i.e. fire restrictions.</p>	

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			effective. We recommend provisions for closures or, at a minimum, establishment of thresholds for surface-disturbance within particular watersheds.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	FM14 (JFM-5)	During Emergency Stabilization and Restoration (ESR) treatments, we recommend that the assigned ESR team contact Fish & Wildlife Service biologists to serve as technical specialists to the team when T & E species/habitat has been affected by the fire.	The exact nature of the ESR team is left open-ended in the RMP to allow for the selection of the most appropriate specialists for the situation. Other agencies would be consulted by the team as appropriate for the resources and issues involved and in accordance with the BLM's existing policies and consultation commitments.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	FM15 (JFM-6)	What about fuel management via biological control (e.g. Chinese leaf beetle for tamarisk control)?	<p>The proposed plan would allow for the use of biological controls for fuels management. Table 2.1.23 (Vegetation Resources) under the subsection entitled Management Common to AI Alternatives, states:</p> <p>“Allow mechanical, fire, biological, or chemical control of noxious weeds and insect infestations within the resource planning area with restrictions to protect desired ground cover and water quality. Use the type of manipulation appropriate to and consistent with other land use objectives.”</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	FM16 (JFM-7)	Last paragraph: This is a very large assumption, dependent on the juxtaposition and timing as well as the acreages treated. If a square of 1,000 acres were treated, you'd have a much different result than if 1,000 acres were treated within a 10,000 acre block leaving a mosaic of age classes and vegetation types.	It is certainly true that the timing, location, and distribution of prescribed fire all affect the magnitude of the benefit gained through the action, the basic assumption still holds that using prescribed fire in areas that need it for healthy function and fuels reduction is achieves a more positive outcome than no fire at all, and that on average, the greater the number of acres requiring treatment that are treated, the higher the benefit.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	G-12	LG183 (JLG-10)	The document states "If grazing is causing resource degradation and all other options have been	Response begins immediately when degradation is documented. However, the specific timing and	

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Service			exhausted, temporarily close those riparian areas that do not satisfactorily respond to changes in management.” You should identify the time frame the degradation will be allowed to continue, the expected response time of the degraded habitat, as well as how you are defining “temporarily”.	nature of the response must be determined on a case-by-case basis in order to be most appropriate to the conditions at hand. Specific response times cannot be dictated in a programmatic level document, such as an RMP, and be expected to be the most effective possible.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	PR31 (JPR-7)	The document should include the FWS Ouray National Wildlife Refuge as one of the entities with which the BLM will coordinate management in the VPA.	The document will be amended to include the USF&WS.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	PR32 (JPR-8)	The DEIS notes that monitoring and evaluation of the revised RMP will follow a set schedule and will be documented. You should provide specifics regarding the schedule and the evaluation process. For example, you should identify target thresholds that would trigger a change in management or require remedial actions. For monitoring and evaluation regarding the RMP's management affecting listed species and migratory birds, the Fish & Wildlife Service should be part of the process	The specifics of how this will occur will be developed as a part of the implementation phase of the RMP after the issuance of the ROD.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	RE60 (JRE-15)	We commend the development of recreation guidelines to help achieve and maintain healthy public lands as defined by the Rangeland Health Standards. We recommend development of similar guidelines using the same standards for other surface-disturbing programs.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	RE61 (JRE-16)	We commend the commitment to minimize light and sound. We recommend a similar commitment in the Minerals and Energy Resources section.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	RW29 (JRW-2)	Riparian: Alternative C should be more protective of riparian habitat than Alternative A, not the same as Alternative A. Reassess stubble height and utilization levels accordingly. We recommend hat Alternative C be carried forward into the preferred alternative.	Comment noted.	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD319 (JSD-59)	ACECs have been created to address protection and recovery needs for federally listed and sensitive species found within ACEC boundaries; these should not be lumped into "other natural systems or processes."	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD320 (JSD-60)	<p>Please change this section to state:</p> <p>"Manage to protect high value wetland, wildlife, and plant habitat resources,"</p> <p>On page 3- 79, Table 3.14.1, it is stated for Pariette Wetlands that this is "Special status bird and plant species' habitat, a wetlands ecosystem, Significant population of the federally threatened plant species <i>Sclerocactus glaucus</i>."</p>	Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to implement the suggested change.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD321 (JSD-61)	Special Designations -ACECs: FWS supports designation of these ACECs to help ensure appropriate conservation of our trust resources, including listed species and migratory birds.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD322 (JSD-62)	The section on "Currently Designated ACECs" states that the management relevance and importance criteria (which include plan fish, and wildlife resources) are detailed in Chapter 3 of the Diamond Mountain RMP and ROD. As Chapter 3 of the Diamond RMP and ROD document provides little discussion on ACECs, their management relevance and importance, this discussion needs to be fully presented and expanded within this current RMP/EIS.	The inconsistencies in cited relevant and important resource values have been corrected. Appendix G contains the correct list of values.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD323 (JSD-63)	The section on "Currently Designated ACECs" states: "Based on a current analysis of the areas, the present designations have been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will all be	See Response to Comment SD7-G-13.	

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			<p>carried forward as ACECs in the Vernal RMP."</p> <p>Although there may be validity to this statement, there is little discussion of these "relevant values," indicating that the degree of protection has not been analyzed, may be minimal, or actually remains unknown. Land actions continue to be allowed in ACECs that directly reduce these relevant values. An analysis of ACECs and impacts that are being permitted appears to be lacking. We also recommend an expanded discussion on this topic in Section 4.14.</p>		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD324 (JSD-64)	<p>This table may be insufficient to address current and future actions. Part of the purpose of Section 3.14.1.1.1 states, "Existing ACECs are subject to reconsideration when RMPs are revised." This "reconsideration" should include updating and potential furthering of protective measures to advance protection of relevant values.</p>	<p>See Responses to Comments SD55-G-25, SD301-O-44.</p> <p>BLM Manual 1613 .21 C states:</p> <p>"Normally, the relevance and importance of resource or hazards associated with an existing ACEC are reevaluated only when new information or changed circumstances or the result of monitoring establish the need."</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SD325 (JSD-65)	<p>We recommend you establish and manage ACECs, whenever possible, with specific measures to preserve the natural systems and support diversity of ecological associations. Existing ACECs lack specificity and in some cases, management plans. We recommend this be remedied in the new RMP. The RMP should further emphasize protection for listed and sensitive species, especially plants and historic Uintah Basin plant communities. Management plans detailing plant specific conservation measures should be developed in</p>	<p>ACEC management plans will be developed after the Final EIS and Record of Decision, if ACECs are designated.</p>	

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			coordination with FWS, TNC and UDWR.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SO61 (JSO-13)	You should provide information regarding income related to wildlife-related activities such as hunting and wildlife viewing.	See comment response SO9.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS-57	4th paragraph: Lands and Realty decisions could affect special status species if large acreages of habitat are included in land exchanges or sales.	Section 4.15 in the PRMP/FEIS states: “Some decisions regarding resources would not affect special status species because they would neither change the status of current species threats nor affect recovery potential. The impacts from decisions concerning Cultural Resources, Lands and Realty, Paleontological Resources, Visual Resource Management, Wild Horse Management, and Wildlife and Fisheries Management would be negligible on special status plant and animal species in the Vernal Planning Area (VPA) and therefore will not be discussed further in this analysis.”	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS73 (JSS-30)	Recovery Plans may be amended during the life of a Resource Management Plan (e.g. the Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan is currently being revised). In addition, recovery plans may be developed for species for which none currently exist, or new species may be listed and recovery plans drafted for them. We recommend either not specifying a date, or noting that the BLM will incorporate new Recovery Plans as they are finalized.	In Table 2.1.21 under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Action Alternatives, it states: “BLM will work with UDWR and other partners to implement conservation actions identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy) (UDWR, 2005), which identified priority wildlife species and habitats, assessed threats to their survival, and identified long-term conservation action needs (per WO IM 2006-114).”	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	G-12	SS74 (JSS-31)	Habitat for listed or candidate species should be retained in federal ownership.	Table 2.1.7 (Land and Realty Management) in the PRMP/FEIS states in Management Common to All:	

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Service				"Habitat for listed T&E species would be retained in federal ownership. Exceptions may be considered in exchanges with the State of Utah and others with consultation and concurrence with the USFWS.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS75 (JSS-32)	Include a complete list of "threatened and endangered" and "sensitive" species that are included in references to "Special Status Species."	The listing of threatened and endangered and sensitive species is provided in Tables 3.15.1 and 3.15.2 in Section 3.15. BLM has adopted the Utah Sensitive Species List under authority of IM UT 2007-078.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS76 (JSS-33)	The difference between "Goals and Objectives" and "Action Common to All" is unclear. For example, it is unclear why augmenting ferrets in Snake John is in the "Goals and Objectives" section, but implementation of the Coyote Basin Cooperative Plan is mentioned in the "Actions Common to All" section. Provide a definition for "Goals and Objectives" and "Actions Common to All," and maintain consistency in their use throughout the document.	Goals and objectives represent the overarching condition the BLM wishes to achieve in management of the resources under its jurisdiction. The "Actions Common to All" represent specific measures that would be implemented under all action alternatives (A, B, and C) to help the BLM achieve that desired condition.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS77 (JSS-34)	Add the following goal/objective for Special Status Animal Species: "In cooperation with UDWR and USFWS, continue to implement the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-Footed Ferrets in Coyote Basin, Uintah County, Utah."	See comment response SS3A.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS78 (JSS-35)	Paragraph 5: Direction contained in the Northwest National Fire Plan may not be entirely beneficial for special status species. The EIS should evaluate specific actions of the Fire Plan, and evaluate potential negative and beneficial effects.	Implementation of the plan is identified as a goal, not a management action common to all alternatives. As with all goals involving specific plans, implementation of the plan would be undertaken to the degree that the measures are consistent with all other directives, laws, regulations, policies, and management objectives of the RMP.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	G-12	SS79 (JSS-36)	The peregrine falcon is no longer a federally listed species, under the Endangered Species Act. Delete	The commenter is correct. The peregrine falcon is a special status species, but is not Federally listed.	

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Service			from the list provided in paragraph 6.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS80 (JSS-37)	We recommend adding the caveat to paragraph 6 that, "Recovery Plan revisions or new Recovery Plans are also incorporated."	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives states: "BLM would continue to implement the specific goals and objectives of all recovery plans, conservation plans and strategies, and activity level plans."	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS81 (JSS-38)	Edit the 3rd paragraph, "In collaboration with the USFWS, DWR, and other partners, develop and implement habitat management plans or conservation strategies for sensitive species."	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to make the suggested wording change.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS82 (JSS-39)	Add Mexican spotted owl to this list. Include the following commitments: 1) Establish Protected Activity Centers (PACs) at all known Mexican spotted owl nest sites, 2) Maintain habitat to support small mammal populations as a prey base for Mexican spotted owls in occupied and suitable owl habitats, and 3) Retain large down logs, large trees, and snags as prey habitats in occupied and suitable Mexican spotted owl habitats.	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the Mexican Spotted Owl.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS83 (JSS-40)	Edit the Bald Eagle discussion to read: "Protect and restore cottonwood bottoms for bald eagle winter habitat... as well any new roost and nest sites.... "	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to make the suggested wording change.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS84 (JSS-41)	Include a section for sage-grouse.	A range of differing management actions by alternative is presented in Table 2.1.21 (Special Statues Species).	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS85 (JSS-42)	The UDWR is currently the lead in developing a multi-state Conservation Agreement for the roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker. As this should be final during the lifetime of this RMP, we recommend you manage them as Conservation Agreement Species.	Section 2.4.1.4.4.3 in the Final EIS has been revised to add the Conservation Agreement for the roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS86 (JSS-43)	Reference is made to conservation measures identified in the Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Colorado River Cutthroat Trout. Similar action items should be identified from the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program's Recovery Action Plan (available at www.r6.fws.gov/crrp/rip.htm)	The Recovery Implementation Plan for the Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin (1987) is incorporated by reference in Section 1.9 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS87 (JSS-44)	Raptors: We commend BLM Vernal for incorporation of the most recent BLM BMPs and FWS Raptor Guideless in the Preferred Alternative A. Note that the identification of modifications to buffers is already anticipated by the FWS Raptor Guidelines.	See comment response SS19 and SS73.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS88 (JSS-45)	FWS, Raptors, Nest Protection, Alternative C: This alternative should apply the 7-year nest protection for existing oil and gas leases.	See comment response SS19.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS89 (JSS-46)	Raptors, Nest Protection, Existing Oil and Gas Leases: Note that the bald eagle is protected and managed under authority of the Endangered Species Act and Section 7 consultation procedures. It may be inappropriate for the RMP to specify protection measures for listed species prior to completion of Section 7 consultation. We do not believe a 2-year "protection" is sufficient for bald eagle nest sites.	The bald eagle has been delisted under ESA. The BLM will follow IM UT 2006-096, BMPs for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats in Utah, for nesting guidelines. The BMPs can be found in Appendix A of the PRMP/FEIS.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS90 (JSS-47)	Special Status Species: We recommend that human disturbances be avoided within a 2 miles of a lek during the breeding season (Alternative C), to provide protection for nesting. We also recommend allowing use of both the Strategic Management Plan for Sage-	Comment noted.	

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			Grouse and the Connelly Guidelines, based on site-specific information and biologist evaluations. Also include other appropriate scientific information, as appropriate.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS91 (JSS-48)	There are 12 listed and 4 candidate species within the VPA, not 15 and 1. See also page 4-231.	These changes have been made in Table 3.15.1 of the PRMP/FEIS.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS92 (JSS-49)	The DEIS states that 188,500 acres of split-estate lands (federal minerals-Tribal surface) within the Hill Creek Extension of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation would be available for mineral leasing. Much of the impact analysis includes the acreage in the Hill Creek Extension; therefore, you should address impacts to species contained therein.	Potential impacts to special status species in the Hill Creek Extension were included in the impacts analysis contained in Section 4.15.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS93 (JSS-50)	This table should identify the potential occurrence of the southwestern willow flycatcher. Include a discussion that willow flycatchers have been identified along the White River near Ouray. Genetic testing to determine specific identity has not been completed. Many of the BLM RMP riparian conservation measures would also apply to willow flycatcher habitat.	The Southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) has never been documented in the VPA and has not been included in the PRMP for analysis. All known occurrences of SWFL lay south I-70. Consequently, there was not need to correct the Table 3.15.1.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS94 (JSS-51)	Identify the occurrence of 7 bald eagle nest sites in Utah. Closest known nests to the project area are northwest of Manila, and on the Duchesne River between Duchesne and Bridgeland. There is the potential for bald eagle nest sites to occur on BLM lands in the Vernal Field Office area.	Table 3.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include information regarding the presence of these nests and the potential occurrence of nests in the Vernal Field Office planning area.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS95 (JSS-52)	Mexican spotted owl: Delete the following statement: "They typically prefer old growth mixed conifer ponderosa pine, or evergreen oak forest, and associated deciduous riparian forests." While this is true in parts of their range, owls in Utah	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not	

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			are restricted to rocky canyon habitats. Forested habitats should be referenced as suitable habitat for foraging and dispersal.	substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS96 (JSS-53)	Penstemon scarious var. albifuvius is not known from Duchesne County.	The USF&WS identified a small area of habitat within Duchesne County in a Federal Register Notice.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS97 (JSS-54)	As previously noted (comment on page 2.4.13,4.4.3), we recommend you manage roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker as Conservation Agreement species, like the Colorado River cutthroat trout.	See comment response SS85.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS98 (JSS-55)	We recommend that BLM add Cryptantha barnebyi to its list of additional special status plant species. This species was a category 2 species in the FWS Federal Register NOR prior to 1996 and remains a species of conservation concern to the FWS Utah Field Office. We will review this species for possible inclusion as a candidate species at some time in the future as resources permit. Cryptantha barnebyi occurs in the same habitat as Penstemon grahamii, and has a narrower distribution and faces the same threats as P. grahamii.	The BLM will manage special status plant species as identified by USFWS and the BLM Utah State Office. The BLM regularly updates its Sensitive Plant Species list. Cryptantha barnebyi will be considered for inclusion on the list at the next update.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS99 (JSS-56)	Provide a list of the 17 listed and 28 sensitive species.	Section 4.15 in the PRMP/EIS has been revised to reflect the Utah Sensitive Species List under authority of IM UT 2007-078.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	G-12	SS100 (JSS-58)	4th paragraph: Wildlife and Fisheries Management actions may have effects to special status species and their habitats. Habitat treatments beneficial for one	See Section 4.4 and Section 4.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS for a discussion on fire management	

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Service			species can be a detriment to another species. Generalizations like this are dangerous and inaccurate. For example, a vegetation treatment to improve habitat for sage grouse reduces habitat suitability for pygmy rabbits.	and effects to special status species.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS101 (JSS-59)	Species-specific analyses should be provided under each resource use to allow easy referencing. As currently written, it is difficult to determine if all effects for all species have been properly analyzed; for example, there is no discussion of sage grouse in the Fire and Woodland Management or Forage Allocation sections. In addition, the effects discussions are too generalized. Recommend using headings under each resource use, e.g., Mexican Spotted Owl, Bald Eagle, Canada Lynx, Listed Fish Species, etc. This will also provide a more comprehensive analysis and discussion of species-specific effects from resource use activities.	Section 4.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the impacts analysis.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS102 (JSS-60)	This entire discussion appears focused on listed species. Analysis of effects to all special status species should be included in this section.	<p>Section 4.15.1 includes a general discussion of the impacts to all special status species based on impacts to habitat types used by these species. The links between these habitat types and the special status species are disclosed in Table 3.15.2 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Section 4.15.1 the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify this link and provide additional detail regarding potential impacts to non-listed special status species.</p>	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS103 (JSS-61)	1st paragraph: We disagree with the statement that "...fire would not be used in black-footed ferret, bald eagle...habitats." Ferrets and eagles utilize sagebrush habitat that are often the target for fire management activities.	See comment response SS100.	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS104 (JSS-62)	2nd paragraph: Rework this discussion. Mexican spotted owls occur in rocky canyon habitats in Utah. Therefore, the discussion of effects should include loss of prey species habitat in canyon bottoms and along canyon rims; human disturbance during fire activities; and smoke accumulation in canyons. Recovery Plan recommendations for forested habitats are not necessarily applicable to Utah's canyon habitats.	See comment response SS19.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS105 (JSS-63)	"...but none of the alternatives would exclude grazing in special status species habitats." While this may be true, the Plan should allow for site-specific exclusions where impacts to special status species are observed. For listed species, this acknowledgement would be consistent with sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act.	Regardless of the programmatic management provisions for livestock grazing contained in the RMP, the BLM retains the right and authority to make adjustments to authorized land uses within the parameters of federal law and policy.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS106 (JSS-64)	"Grazing would have both direct short and long term adverse impacts on listed plant species..." The Plan should provide appropriate measures to minimize grazing impacts to listed plant species.	As identified in Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Plants) and Table 2.1.23 (Vegetation Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS, protection of special status plant species is a primary goal/objective of the BLM across all alternatives and program decisions. Table 2.1.21 also indicates the goal to manage all listed T&E plant species and the habitats upon which they depend in such a manner as to conserve and recover these species to the point where the requirements of the Endangered Species Act are no longer necessary. The BLM's efforts would include collaboration with other agencies in developing and implementing recovery plans, habitat management plans, conservation agreements, etc. The BLM will be conducting inventories of listed plant species and will be monitoring them over time. Should undue impacts to specific areas be identified (regardless of the source of the impact), the BLM will exercise the appropriate management authority to adjust land use provisions within the parameters of federal law	

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				and policy in order to minimize, eliminate, and/or mitigate the impacts.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS107 (JSS-65)	We disagree with the statement that "Designation of SRMAs would provide beneficial impacts to special status species by removing some areas from oil and gas or mineral development." There will still be impacts to special status species from recreation use including habitat loss and fragmentation and human disturbances.	The impacts of recreation decisions on special status species acknowledged in the statement following the sentence in question. While it is true that some level of impact may occur to special status species from recreation use within designated SRMA, the statement in question is meant to describe the relative, landscape-level impact of SRMA decisions.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS108 (JSS-66)	This section focuses on recreation use at specially designated recreation areas. Impacts from recreation use would also occur on non-designated areas, and should be evaluated.	Recreation impacts are discussed in Section 4.10 in the PRMP/FEIS.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS109 (JSS-67)	Black-footed ferret: Include habitat loss and fragmentation as potential impacts.	Table 4.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include habitat loss and fragmentation as potential impacts to black-footed ferrets.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS110 (JSS-68)	Bald eagle: Habitat loss and fragmentation on deer winter ranges can also negatively impact bald eagles by reducing their forage resource of carrion.	Table 4.15.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include habitat loss and fragmentation as potential impacts on deer winter range bald eagles.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS111 (JSS-69)	Mexican spotted owl: Focus discussion of impacts on those occurring in canyon habitats, not forested habitats.	See comment response SS89.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS112 (JSS-70)	Bald eagle and yellow-billed cuckoo: Note that we recommend a 1.0 mile buffer for bald eagle nest sites and 0.5 mile buffer for bald eagle roost sites. The 100-meter buffer from riparian areas does not provide adequate protection from surface disturbing activities.	See comment response SS89.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS113 (JSS-71)	2nd paragraph: Note that the bald eagle is protected and managed under authority of the Endangered Species Act and section 7 consultation procedures. It	See comment response SS89.	

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			may be inappropriate for the RMP to specify protection measures for listed species prior to completion of section 7 consultation. We do not believe a 2-year "protection" period is sufficient for bald eagle nest sites.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS114 (JSS-72)	3rd paragraph: Provide a reference for the following statement "According to data supplied by the BLM, the USFWS believes that the ferruginous hawk population could be lost in the Uintah Basin..."	Section 4.15.2.6.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include a reference for the statement cited in the comment.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS115 (JSS-73)	1st paragraph: Delete "or less restrictive." The Guidelines already allow for flexibility and modification, based on biological and site-specific conditions.	See comment response SS19.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS116 (JSS-74)	2nd paragraph: Edit: "Strategic Management Plan for Sage-Grouse (State of Utah, June 11, 2002, or revisions)" throughout the document, because this is a long-range plan, we recommend allowing for revisions of conservation plans to be incorporated.	See comment response SS48 where it states that the BLM will work with the USFWS and others to ensure that plans and agreements are updated as necessary, thereby providing the BLM the flexibility to adopt revisions to plans as they occur.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS117 (JSS-75)	3rd paragraph: Note that the bald eagle is also managed under authority of the Endangered Species Act and Eagle Protection Act. It is also likely that nest sites will occur on BLM land during the implementation of this RMP revision. We recommend including management of bald eagle nest sites.	Section 4.15.3 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to provide a reference for the Endangered Species Act and Eagle Protection Act. Protections for eagle nests are outlined in Appendices H and K.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SS118 (JSS-76)	The cumulative effects analysis of the Special Status Species and Wildlife and Fisheries Sections of the document should address contaminant influxes to the river system, such as selenium and contaminants associated with oil and gas construction, drilling, and production operations.	Soil and water cumulative impacts are addressed in section 4.22.1. It should be noted that selenium is a natural occurring contamination and not just associated with energy related actions	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW34 (JSW-5)	Impacts from selenium on soil, water, fish, and wildlife should be discussed in each section and in Cumulative Impacts.	See comment response SW36.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW35	RMP/EIS should have discussion of cautions in	See comment response SW36.	

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Wildlife Service		(JSW-6)	developing surface water supplies on seleniferous soils and selenium –bearing formations, which could have adverse impact on fish and migratory birds.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW36 (JSW-7)	An analysis of selenium impact on fish and wildlife from mineral and energy resource decisions should be in RMP, rather than at project specific phase. It can be discussed on a watershed level: because the RMP will identify those areas open for mineral leasing and with what stipulations, and because those selenium bearing formations have been identified, the RMP can and should identify those watersheds where stipulations specific to selenium mobilization should be in place.	<p>The impacts of selenium on fish and wildlife are not needed at the programmatic-level of analysis for the RMP.</p> <p>Selenium impacts are reviewed and mitigated at the site-specific phase of any project proposal. The cumulative impacts would be disclosed at that time.</p> <p>Geologic mapping is reviewed during project proposals by interdisciplinary specialists including soil and water specialists to determine if selenium bearing soil or rock formations are being disturbed.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW37 (JSW-8)	Restrictions should be placed on construction on slopes >20% in areas identified with selenium rich soils. Areas of selenium–rich soils should also have restrictions on road construction and well pad numbers.	Under Alternatives A, B, C, and E, surface disturbing activities on slopes greater than 21% but less than 40%, regardless of soil type or content, require an approved development plan the includes an erosion control strategy. Additionally, surface disturbance on slopes greater than 40%, regardless of soil type or content, would not be allowed under these alternatives.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW38 (JSW-9)	Pipeline crossings through ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial drainages have potential to affect the four endangered Colorado River fish as well as other fish and wildlife resources. We support the use of hydraulic analysis and the Guidance for Pipeline Crossings in the planning phase. We recommend that including this commitment as an "Action Common to All Alternatives" (rather than a Goal) under Mineral and Energy Resources or Soil and Water Resources is more appropriate and will ensure its use.	Although not a stipulation or condition of approval Appendix B; Hydraulic Considerations for Pipeline Crossings of Stream Channels provides the formal guidelines during onsite surveys of by natural resource specialists to minimize impacts to drainages by pipeline crossings.	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW39 (JSW-10)	<p>The document states that there are no data for biological soil crusts within the VPA. However, the presence of biological soil crusts has been documented. A 1974 document (Johansen) by a student of Dr. Sam Rushforth, then of Brigham Young University (BYU), surveyed algae of both surface waters and soils of the Federal Oil Shale Lease Areas of Uintah County. It was intended to serve as a baseline study of the area because there were concerns at that time regarding the potential effects of oil shale processing. The document makes note of the presence of biological soil crusts at that time. Dr. Larry St. Clair of BYU has several soil microbial crust monitoring sites in the Vernal area that are part of a National Science Foundation-funded project.</p> <p>We recommend the RMP incorporate the US Department of Interior (USDI) Technical Reference 1730-2, Biological Soil Crusts: Ecology and Management (BLM 2001) as "Management Common to All Alternatives." With the existing baselines, a management program for biological soil crusts should be developed and implemented to determine land use impacts and stabilize soils.</p>	Information from the referenced biological soil crust research project was reviewed subsequent to the receipt of this comment and was incorporated into Section 3.13.3.2.1.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW40 (JSW-11)	This section should include selenium bearing and boron bearing soils in this category, either as a separate discussion, or within the Salinity discussion. The document states, "Impacts are to be minimized in areas with saline soils, and revegetation of previously disturbed saline soils is to be promoted to the extent possible." The RMP should provide guidance on salinity thresholds and management direction if/when these thresholds are exceeded. We recommend you adopt more stringent minimization standards that may	See comment responses SW31 and SW33.	

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			include avoidance of surface disturbance in these areas.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW41 (JSW-12)	The document states that water quality would be impacted due to rises in salinity, sediment load, and increases in Selenium and Boron concentrations. We agree with that statement, but believe the mitigation provided in the document is inadequate.	Mitigation measures for impacts on soil and water resources are outlined in Section 4.13.3. Additional mitigation measures would be developed in collaboration with the appropriate state and federal agencies with regulatory authority over water quality. Natural resource specialists along with interdisciplinary analysis prior to authorization conduct analysis for water and soil impacts.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	SW42 (JSW-13)	Any proposed development of phosphate resources should include research and sampling to determine if co-located sources of selenium or uranium are present and could be released into the environment. BLM should require an exit strategy, adequate mitigation and a commitment to compliance resources in order to address these concerns.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	VE-6	"Unique features within the planning area include...the Pariette Wetlands, which provide habitat for over 100 species of wildlife." What about plants?	Section 1.4 of the PRMP/EIS has been revised to acknowledge the plant communities of the Pariette Wetlands.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	VE22 (JVE-7)	We appreciate the discussion of invasive species and noxious weeds, and believe it should be expanded upon in other related discussions. For example, the document notes, "Of particular management concern are potential and existing populations of invasive species in the oil and gas fields that are receiving increased activity and interest", However, at no point in the document does it analyze the position of those populations relative to the known populations of federally-listed plant species, particularly those areas which will be open to energy development- It's an analysis that should be done. In addition, a discussion regarding the VFO's management direction regarding biological control of tamarisk using the Chinese leaf	See comment response VE4. Mapping of weeds is an ongoing project. More detailed analysis of noxious weeds and invasive plants relative to specific listed species of plants would be conducted at the field-development NEPA or site-specific NEPA stage when the locations of these plant populations relative to each other can be more readily defined through inventory and mapping.	

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			beetle and including the risks and benefits would be appropriate here.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	VE23 (JVE-8)	Last paragraph, 3rd sentence: "However, some areas of tamarisk are currently protected as critical habitat for the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, which further complicates its management." Although southwestern willow flycatchers have been possibly identified along the White River near Ouray (genetics testing has not yet been completed), the VPA does not contain any designated critical habitat for the species.	The commenter is correct. The Vernal Planning Area contains no designated critical habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher. Section 3.16.2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect the issue made in the comment.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	VE24 (JVE-9)	BLM should develop and implement monitoring of the population and habitat status of all plant species of conservation concern within the VPA. Specific conservation measures should be established to protect them. We recommend greater specificity regarding individual species and their needs. The BLM should designate areas of lands to be set aside as plant preserves.	The RMP provides for establishing conservation measures in accordance with BLM Manual 6840.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	VE25 (JVE-10)	The current document should carry over any and all protections from previous RMPs. The current plan should protect, via a "no surface disturbance" stipulation, no less than the 48,000 acres previously protected in the Diamond Mountain RMP, plus additional protections for the former Book Cliffs RMP area. Relict vegetation communities identified in the Diamond Mountain RMP, the original 3,740 ac at a minimum should be carried forward and excluded from land use authorizations. Areas with plants and/or potential habitat should be retained in the new plans and clearly identified as requiring implementation of the avoidance and minimization measures contained in the oil and gas lease notifications.	Management prescriptions from the previous RMP's were analyzed during alternative development. If they were no longer necessary, duplicative, or did not meet the objectives of the alternative they were dropped from consideration. See Section 2.4 of the PRMP/FEIS for a discussions of alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.	
U.S. Fish and	G-12	WF134	More fish and wildlife impact minimization measures	See comment response WF10.	

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Wildlife Service		(JWF-24)	are needed to meet mgt goals. DEIS briefly mentions habitat banking; we encourage a more thorough discussion of this strategy. Should also establish time frames for determining when remedial actions are required. DEIS should include a table/discussion relative to thresholds for disturbance, at which point mgt action would be triggered (i.e. rest, mitigation, restoration). Should partner with industry, FWS, DWR, FW, NRCS etc for this.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF135 (JWF-25)	DEIS should treat migratory birds in their own section. DEIS is currently inconsistent; 2.4.18.2.6 section is separate, but in Ch 3 they are grouped differently. Birds protected under migratory Bird Treaty Act should merit separate section and separate consideration. BLM should specify the migratory species on FWS Birds of Concern and Utah Partners in Flight Priority Species lists and provide description of habitats, threats and known areas of concentration.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF136 (JWF-26)	Utah Bird Habitat Conservation Areas (UBHCA) should be incorporated. IN the VPA, the areas identified are: Red Mountain, Diamond Mountain, Blue Mountain, the Pariette wetlands, the Green River corridor, Willow Creek and Bitter Creek. These areas should be managed with migratory bird nesting habitat in mind.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF137 (JWF-27)	Management specific to wildlife should incorporate the life history needs and habitat requirements of BSS and PIF species. Migratory bird analysis should be incorporated into all resource programs (ACECs, decisions re: forage availability and use, etc)	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF138 (JWF-28)	Should use most recent BLM BMPs. Should delete all references to BMPs as being comparable to FWS Raptor guidelines; they are separate and not intended to be used in lieu of Raptor guidelines. 2002 Raptor Guidelines should be included as an Appendix.	As per Instruction Memorandum No. UT 2006-096 (Best Management Practices for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats) dated September 6, 2006, raptors are now managed under the in Utah under all alternatives.	

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF139 (JWF-29)	Benefits to wildlife are discussed but negatives are not fully disclosed. For example, Alternative A's precluding mineral entry on withdrawn lands is beneficial, but the table on page 2-103 does not list the 18,945 acres of surface disturbance that will occur under Alternative A from mineral development. The harmful effects of this are not discussed.	Detailed information about the impacts of minerals and energy program decisions on wildlife and fisheries can be found in Sections 4.19.1 and 4.19.2.5.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF140 (JWF-30)	Mitigation, monitoring, funding and partnership to achieve mitigation of impacts to wildlife needs more thorough discussion.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF141 (JWF-31)	In accordance with Executive Order 13186, conservation of migratory birds and their habitats should be addressed in federal planning documents; therefore, they should be included as an issue needing attention. Neither previous plan (Diamond Mountain or Book Cliffs) addressed migratory birds because E.O. 13186 was not signed until January of 2000. Specifically, species identified as Birds of Conservation Concern by the Service and species listed on the Partners in Flight Priority list should be described in terms of habitats, threats, and potential impacts from activities in the VPA.	Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS states: "In accordance with Executive Order 13186, incorporate conservation measures for the protection of migratory birds, as outlined in the Utah Partners-In-Flight Avian Conservation Strategy and other scientific information, into all surface-disturbing activities."	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF142 (JWF-32)	We recommend you set goals for migratory bird habitat conservation, restoration, and enhancement.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF143 (JWF-33)	The document states, "In accordance with Executive Order 13186, incorporate conservation measures for the protection of migratory birds, as outlined in the Utah Partners-in-Flight Avian Conservation Strategy and other scientific information, into all surface-disturbing activities." We commend you for this commitment, but remind you that the Strategy does not provide conservation measures for all species addressed in	See comment response WF141.	

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			E.O. 13186 that may use the VPA. We recommend you broaden our statement accordingly.		
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF144 (JWF-34)	We commend the BLM for the commitment to "pursue a partnership between industries, local governments, USFWS, UDWR, BLM, and others to establish a raptor management fund to be utilized for raptor population monitoring and habitat enhancement." We recommend you also include, at a minimum, the Forest Service and NRCS. We offer our assistance in establishing this partnership.	Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the USFS and NRCS.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF145 (JWF-35)	We appreciate the actions provided to conserve aspects of forested and riparian habitats that provide nesting and foraging opportunities for cavity-nesting and riparian-obligate species, However, we recommend you also develop conservation measures for avian species with other nesting or foraging requirements, for example, ground-nesting or cliff nesting species. Additional measures should be developed for species breeding in all habitat types.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF146 (JWF-36)	We recommend that a habitat mitigation plan be developed prior to any significant ground disturbing activity, not just tar sand development.	Comment noted.	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF147 (JWF-37)	1st sentence: All the raptor species found in the VPA are federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. We recommend you reword the sentence to reflect that all have federal protection and several have additional state protection.	Section 3.19.1.11 In the PRMP/FEIS text has been revised to include a reference to protection of raptors under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.	X
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF148 (JWF-38)	2" paragraph: The BLM proposes employment of a raptor database using information from an ongoing study, which intends to determine the nesting requirements and seasonally important rapt or habitats located on public lands within the VPA. Using this database to track nest sites and important raptor habitat location, the document outlines the next step:	Section 3.19.1.11 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to the delete the following sentence: "Oil and gas development maps will be used to develop predicted models for raptor/energy development conflicts, and to develop mitigation	X

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			<p>"oil and gas development maps will be used to develop predictive models for raptor/energy conflicts, and to develop mitigation measures for unleased parcels." We believe this approach, as proposed, will fail to protect raptors because: 1) the utility of the ongoing study has yet to be determined, and it may not provide the level of information necessary, and 2) virtually all the habitat for the most sensitive raptor species in the VPA has already been leased for development, so there will be few acres with mitigation applied.</p>	<p>measures for unleased parcels."</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF149 (JWF-39)	<p>We appreciate tile discussion of habitat fragmentation and recommend that impacts to migratory birds be included in both the discussion and the big-game research being coordinated with UDWR.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF150 (JWF-39)	<p>The document states that the mitigation measures described under the heading Management Common to All would reduce unavoidable adverse impacts to the extent possible. We disagree with this statement and reiterate the need for additional mitigation measures, including avoidance and compensation.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF151 (JWF-40)	<p>The document states that there is the possibility of an irreversible loss of a small isolated wildlife population due to the habitat fragmentation from minerals development, "particularly if reclamation of cleared well pads and roads does not occur within 20 to 30 years." We agree with the statement. We also believe that, given the limited capacity of some soils to be reclaimed, the longevity of existing oil and gas fields, the prospect of future development, and lack of adequate mitigation in the document, the irreversible loss of a small isolated wildlife population is probable.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	G-12	WF152 (JWF-41)	<p>The discussion of Cumulative Impacts on Wildlife and Fisheries does not detail what the overall impact will be from all resource decisions on wildlife and fisheries.</p>	<p>Section 4.22.12 in the PRMP/FEIS has been be revised to include a more comprehensive analysis of cumulative impacts on wildlife and fisheries.</p>	X

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			The section is copied from two paragraphs in the Special Status Species cumulative impacts section, but there is no further determination of what the impact would be to fish and wildlife resources.		
Daggett County	G-13	LG9	Brown's Park has always been an important winter range for wildlife, and Clay Basin and Brown's Park have been important to farming and ranching. In many areas range lands can continue to be improved with cooperation from the Division of Wildlife Resources. These efforts should not be limited by VRM's or ACEC's.	VRM classification and ACEC designation do not preclude maintenance of rangeland health or range enhancements. Maintenance of rangeland health is listed in Table 2.1.6 Forage – All Localities) in the PRMP/FEI under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Alternatives.	
Daggett County	G-13	ME13	The Clay Basin and Brown's Park areas should be managed in a way to continue resource development.	Comment noted.	
Daggett County	G-13	RE3	[This page] lists the alternatives for an SRMA in the Brown's Park area. The recreation in the area is almost totally limited to the area along the river corridor. Alternative D, 18,474 acres with VRM III or IV is our preference. Historically, the Brown's Park area has been used for ranching, livestock grazing and mining. Recreation has recently been a more common use in the area, but we feel it is important not to forget and to manage for these historical uses.	Comment noted.	
Daggett County	G-13	SD6	Recently the area along the river [the Green River?] has had many recreational facilities put in to take care of public needs such as campgrounds, restrooms, boat ramps, etc. The Division of Wildlife Resources and private land owners divert water from the green River for wildlife refuge and irrigation. Currently the county has an approved application for water that could be sued for the Taylor Flat Subdivision. New diversions and right of way easements will have to be created. The river is currently being managed mostly for recreation. [Daggett County] believes that a proposed designation of "Recreational" is most appropriate for	<p>The Upper Green River Segment was identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all</p>	

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			<p>the Green River. Consideration must be given to changes and development in use, since the analysis was done in 1980.</p>	<p>applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p> <p>“In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values...”</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SD7	<p>[Daggett County] questions if proper analysis and review were done on this in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP. It appears management of this area hasn't changed since this designation and that the area could be properly managed under normal BLM management practices.</p>	<p>The analysis and rationale for the designation of the Red Creek ACEC in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the</p>	

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				<p>potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SD14	[Daggett County] believes that the layering, with special designations and other management prescriptions will in many ways, limit how this area can be best managed.	<p>“Layering” is planning tool. Under FLPMA’s multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and</p>	

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				<p>uses) are consistent and compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a)(7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land Use Planning Handbook "H-1601-1"). Specific decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a</p>	

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				<p>compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p> <p>The values protected by WSA management prescriptions do not necessarily protect those values found relevant and important in ACEC evaluation, and vice versa. The relevant and important values of ACECs within or adjacent to WSAs were noted in the ACEC Evaluation (Appendix G). The ACECs are evaluated and ranked based on the presence or absence of the stated relevant and important values. None of these values includes wilderness characteristics. Additionally, the management prescriptions for the ACECs is limited in scope to protect the relevant and important values, and the BLM maintains that the size of the ACEC areas is appropriate for protection of the relevant and important values identified.</p>	
Daggett County	G-13	SD15	Alternative B would be the preferred alternative of [Daggett County]. [T]here are 18,474 acres along the river corridor. Areas outside of this corridor are more rocky and rugged with pinions and junipers. There have been efforts made to reduce the pinion and juniper encroachment and this needs to continue. The state statute requires that potential and proposed	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	

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			ACEC's be limited in geographic size and that the proposed management prescriptions be limited in scope to the minimum necessary to specifically protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant and important values. [Daggett County] requests that BLM re-examine and re-justify the need for the Brown's Park ACEC. We feel that under the 18,474 SRMA the BLM could manage this area adequately.		
Daggett County	G-13	SO7	The BLM is required to incorporate social science and economic considerations into the planning process. The BLM is also required to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield and to meet the needs of present and future generations. The focus of an RMP should include a detailed analysis for each community based upon current conditions and trends, including projection of future trends.	The RMP is a programmatic document that considers management decisions and impacts analyses on a landscape level, not a site-specific level. As such, the BLM has conducted the socioeconomic analysis at the individual planning area level.	
Daggett County	G-13	SO8	The economic effect on Taylor Flat Subdivision and Brown's Park residences from management decisions was not analyzed.	The RMP is a programmatic document that considers management decisions and impacts analyses on a landscape level, not a site-specific level. As such, the BLM has conducted the socioeconomic analysis at the individual planning area level.	
Daggett County	G-13	SO9	The economic effect of proposed management on those outfitting and guiding was not addressed.	The outfitting/guiding/angling industry was included as part of the Tourism industry, which is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.4, 3.12.3.2.4, 3.12.4.2.3, 4.12.2.3, and 4.12.3.3.	
Daggett County	G-13	VI2	The maximum VRM rating [Daggett County] can see a need for is VRM III. The area you are recommending for VRM I is in view of Taylor Flat Subdivision, which has 1000 lots that are sold and also in view of the Jarvie Ranch Historical Site.	The alternatives present a range of VRM categories from which management can select. It should be noted that VRM Class I is associated with Cold Spring Mountain Wilderness Study Area. While it is possible to look from the Taylor Flats Subdivision into this WSA, this would not change	

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				the Cold Springs Mountain VRM Classification, nor would it change the classification for the subdivision or the Jarvie Ranch Historical Site.	
Daggett County	G-13	VI3	The Brown's Park area could have mineral development. Utility lines to the Taylor Flat Subdivision, range improvement programs, burning and chaining the pinion and juniper, watering trough's (sic) etc. that would be limited by VRM I designation. VRM I allow (sic) only "very limited management activity" and VRM III would allow more flexibility in management and the view sheds could still be protected and in some cases enhanced.	See comment response VI2.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	AT10 (AT-B)	Would like to recommend that the BLM adopt Alternative B as the next management plan.	Comment noted.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	AT11 (AT-C)	The WPA encourages adopting Alternative B to reduce the timing/seasonal lease restrictions and stipulations for oil and gas leases.	Comment noted.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	GC43 (GC-B)	The scope of the document is broad in nature which we feel is beneficial due to the variety of lands within the RMP and that it will allow for more specific planning on an individual case, area or resource basis.	Comment noted.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	ME91 (ME-C)	The major transportation/utility corridors are adequately addressed but should allow for future pipeline expansions and additions beyond those anticipated in the scope of the draft document as new discoveries and field extensions encountered, or as technology enhances production. The document should define how the BLM would manage new pipelines that cross or intersect historic trails or monuments.	Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) in the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Transportation/Utility Corridors states that the BLM would designate: "...additional [utility] corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values."	

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				<p>This table also states that:</p> <p>"...major linear [rights-of-way] meeting [certain] thresholds that are proposed outside of [currently] designated corridors would require a plan amendment."</p> <p>The intersection of historic trails and monuments by future utility corridors would be managed through the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act. The historic resources would be evaluated for their importance under the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, anticipated impacts to them would be identified, and mitigation measures (including avoidance, restoration, etc.) for any identified adverse impacts would be implemented.</p>	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	ME92 (ME-D)	The BLM should honor existing rights, contracts and leases purchased under previous management plans.	See comment response ME3.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	ME93 (ME-E)	The WPA believes that lands within the Vernal RMP have the potential to contain large reserves of natural gas and could add to the future energy security of the county.	Comment noted.	
Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority	G-14	ME94 (ME-F)	Increasing restrictions on existing leases or decreasing lease acreage does not meet the intentions of the National Energy Policy and the Presidential Executive order mandating increasing domestic supply and lessening dependence upon foreign oil.	See comment response ME89.	
Uintah County	G-15	GC (JSO-19)	Oil shale needs to be added to land use and economic resources.	Due to the speculative nature of oil shale development at this time, analysis in this RMP is not	

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				included. Should such development occur, site-specific NEPA would be required.	
Uintah County	G-15	GC85 (JGC-7)	There is no consistency in the RMP as to whether this document is for a 15-year period or a 20-year period. Pick one and use that for all projections.	Comment noted.	
Uintah County	G-15	GC139 (JSO-19)	Oil shale needs to be added to land use and economic resources.	Oil shale will be addressed in the programmatic EIS. Please see Section 1.12 of the PRMP/FEIS for more information.	
Uintah County	G-15	GC140 (JSO-48)	Is this document supposed to be good for 15 or 20 years?	The RMP document is intended to be relevant for as long as 20 years from the completion date. However, the BLM will continually consider the accuracy and applicability of the resource management needs within the planning area and will update the RMP through addenda as needed. The BLM will consider the complete re-writing of the RMP approximately 15 years from the completion date, unless conditions or policy require early consideration.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO57 (JPR-9)	As cooperating partners, Uintah County and Duchesne County provided two socioeconomic reports for incorporation into the RMP. They were not included. They must be included before any alternative can be properly analyzed and the impacts disclosed. Reports were: #1 UEO Report addressing cost and related impacts of Drilling a well in Uinta and Duchesne counties, and #2 Uinta Basin Industry Impact Study	See comment response SO2.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO62 (JSO-14)	Outdated insufficient or incorrect data and graphs have been used to provide socio-economic information; additional information supplied to BLM was not generally incorporated. Accurate and comprehensive analysis of impacts is not included in all sections and is not consistent throughout document (some sections, like oil/gas mention number of jobs, other areas like	The PRMP/FEIS incorporates recent data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. This data has been used in the recent (November, 2007) study commissioned by the State of Utah: The Structure and Economic Impact of Utah's Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Industry Phase I -	

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			grazing or agriculture do not).	The Uinta Basin.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO63 (JSO-15)	We provided you with specific data source; there is no reference or indication that it was ever used. (Uinta Basin Industry Impact Study)	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been incorporated into the Final RMP/EIS.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO64 (JSO-16)	We provided you with specific data source; there is no reference or indication that it was ever used. (UEO Report addressing cost and related impacts of Drilling a well in Uintah and Duchesne counties.) The Draft RMP drilling costs differ by more than 300% from this report, making it impossible to accurately analyze and disclose impacts.	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been incorporated into the Final RMP/EIS. The BLM accepts the identified document as a valid source of information, and the socioeconomic analysis was redone based upon the information provided.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO65 (JSO-17)	You need to update data given economic changes--especially energy prices--since DEIS data was gathered. Failure to do so could constitute a flawed document.	NEPA does not require agencies to wait on studies to be completed, but if there is more current information please acknowledge or show that it does not significantly modify the impacts.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO66 (JSO-18)	RMP does not adequately disclose the degree to which BLM lands affect local economy. "...these often-conflicted uses need to be addressed in terms of how they affect local communities..." Without a full economic and fiscal analysis of each alternative, this objective is not met.	The socioeconomic impacts analysis can be found in Section 4.12 and its subsections. See comment response S037.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO67 (JSO-20)	The RFD "projects environmental impacts through the next 15-year period." RFD should address economic impacts, too.	Similar to the RFD, the life of the RMP is expected to be 15-20 years. Anticipated economic impacts from management decisions under consideration in the PRMP/FEIS are discussed in Section 4.12.3.2 and its subsections.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO68 (JSO-21)	Summary of Impacts, Discipline, Social and Economic Consideration: Mineral Development is erroneous. There is no reference as to where and how these numbers were calculated. Based on upon UEO report, these numbers need to be recalculated. It does not make sense to have \$3.8 billion in cost to recoup \$437 million in sales.	This document has been reviewed, and the relevant information has been revised into the Final PRMP/FEIS. The BLM accepts the identified document as a valid source of information, and the socioeconomic analysis was redone based upon the information provided.	X

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				See comment responses to SO31 and SO54.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO69 (JSO-22)	Recreation section. We question these numbers, are they for BLM managed land only? All 3 counties? Are oil field workers staying in local motels being counted as tourists? Again, there is not reference to check where these stats came from.	It is unclear which statistic in the Recreation Section of Table 2.5 is being questioned. Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect the impact of oil workers in local motels.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO70 (JSO-23)	The RFD is inadequate and not realistic. Estimates for new wells are extremely low. This number should be increased to a more realistic number.	See comment responses ME47 and ME70.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO71 (JSO-24)	Note that a large portion of "tourism tax dollars" come from the oil and gas industry (local motels for housing for oil field workers etc). This should be made clear in all sections of the RMP discussing tourism impacts.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the relationship between oil and gas workers and "tourism tax dollars."	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO72 (JSO-25)	This data from 2000; table needs to be updated. Should use info from Utah Division of Travel not Utah Travel Council. Also this table reflects a percentage change, but does not say what it is changing from.	Table 3.10.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate information from the Utah Division of Travel Development.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO73 (JSO-26)	Update the population data. Although census from 2000, recognized agencies have more updated population data and this data should be used.	There may be more up to date population numbers, but the commenter did not provide that information to use. Population projections for 2020 are given and updated data has been used where applicable. Also, an RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes. See comment response SO53.	X

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Uintah County	G-15	SO74 (JSO-27)	The information in this table is at least 3 years outdated and does not reflect present employment base. The table should be updated. In addition, numbers shown for 2001 are incorrect. See DWS latest fact sheet.	An RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO75 (JSO-28)	Table needs to be updated with FY2004 data. Old data does not accurately show present impacts.	Due to changes in recordation at the Minerals Management Service, this information is not available for more recent years. However, Table 3.12.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate new minerals revenue figures.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO76 (JSO-29)	Charts from Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining are 2002; need to be updated with 2004.	The charts following Table 3.12.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to reflect 2004 figures from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO77 (JSO-30)	Gas and oil prices per barrel in RMP need to be adjusted to reflect current conditions.	Section 3.12.2.2.3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect 2004 figures from the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO78 (JSO-31)	Conflict between Tax Revenue text and Table 3.10.1 data. (\$951,000 vs. \$334,514). Use most current data.	Section 3.12.2.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect the correct tax revenue figures. See response to SO6.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO79 (JSO-32)	Data doesn't truly reflect actual tourism dollars (high % of industry in them).	This has been noted in Sections 3.12.2.2.4 and 4.12.3.2	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO80 (JSO-33)	ALL county revenue should be included in data. Show what portion of revenue goes to state and not county.	Sections 3.12.2.2.3 and 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to indicate what portion of county revenue goes to the state.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO81 (JSO-34)	Chapter 4 deals with environmental consequences but fails to deal with economic ones. Chapter 4 should include economic impacts within each resource section.	The socioeconomic impacts analysis is contained in Section 4.12 and its subsections.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO82 (JSO-35)	Agriculture impacts to the local economy were omitted in Chapter 4.	See Sections 4.12.2.1 and 4.12.3.1 for impacts to grazing as a result of BLM management decisions.	
Uintah	G-15	SO83	Need consistency in whether this plan is projecting for	15 to 20 years is the planned projected life of this	

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County		(JSO-36)	15 or 20 years.	RMP which is reflected in the analysis. If significant changes were found, a plan amendment would be done.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO84 (JSO-37)	Table 4.2 underestimates potential for development and needs to be re-analyzed to reflect a more accurate development scenario based on today's activity.	The commenter does not provide an alternative estimate of future development or an indication of what would be a "more accurate scenario based on today's activity." As such, the BLM is unable to respond to this comment.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO85 (SO-38)	Last paragraph 2nd sentence should read "to the federal government and the State of Utah" rather than "or"	Section 4.8.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate the change suggested in the comment.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO86 (JSO-39)	Inconsistency in number of wells between various sections of RMP and Mineral Potential Report. Figure of 6,530 more accurately reflects a minimum for wells, not a maximum.	Errors in the numbers of wells between various sections will be corrected in the FEIS. The maximum number of wells predicted in the RFD was based on the best information available at the time of the report. See comment response AT29.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO87 (JSO-40)	"Tourism generates tax revenue that is used to support the local community, which would potentially decrease". This is irrelevant. Tourism tax dollars are not applicable to Uintah County BLM lands, nor are there tourist focal points.	Potential tourism-related tax revenue could result from a range of recreation opportunities on BLM lands including Backcountry Byways, SRMA's and trails in the planning area. See section 4.10.2.6 for recreation opportunities in the VPA.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO89 (JSO-42)	This statement does not adequately convey the layering of restrictions and their impacts on inhibiting development. Needs to be spelled out to laypeople.	"Layering" is a planning tool. Under FLPMA's multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The	

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				<p>process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and uses) are consistent and compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a) (7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM’s Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land Use Planning Handbook “H-1601-1”). Specific decisions must be included in each of the</p>	

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				<p>alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p>	
Uintah County	G-15	SO90 (JSO-43)	Cost of drilling as stated in RMP is incorrect and results in need for reassessment of all alternatives.	Section 4.12.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to consider the cost of drilling based upon data received by the BLM.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO91 (JSO-44)	Data on state and local revenues from wells must be included as much wages, support jobs, etc.	See comment responses SO2 and SO28.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO92 (JSO-45)	Discrepancy in well numbers (6,312 v. 6,340) in document text vs table. Also well number from MPR of 6,530 not reflected in any alternative.	Section 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised so that the number of wells are consistent throughout the RMP. The well number of 6,530 is the maximum RFD. The maximum number of wells was adjusted by the percent of area open for development under each alternative.	X
Uintah County	G-15	SO93 (JSO-46)	All of the impacts are incorrect based on the information from the UEO.	See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO94 (JSO-47)	Royalties and PILT not connected in any way and the statement that they are suggests that the preparer has no knowledge of BLM and local, or state revenue sources.	Sections 4.12.3.2.2 thru 4.12.3.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to clarify the impacts of royalties and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT).	X

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Uintah County	G-15	SO96 (JSO-49)	All three of these sections have inaccurate well counts and extrapolations of impacts. Also they assume that PILT is a royalty payment, this is not correct.	See comment response SO93.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO97 (JSO-50)	Table 4.12.1 should be deleted and a new chart prepared with accurate and updated information. The table should also include additional fiscal items (state local revenues, direct/indirect jobs etc) needed for true analysis as required by FLPMA.	An RMP will never have current, up-to-date information due to the length of time it takes to publish the document. The data is provided for comparison purposes. See comment responses SO31 and SO54.	
Uintah County	G-15	SO98 (JSO-51)	Section is inadequate and insufficiently detailed to specific locations and counties and does not tie wages to jobs. Also, references are not cited.	The document has been revised such that references used have been cited the text.	X
Town of Rangely	G-16	SD181 (SD-B)	In order to not belabor the point it is the opinion of the Town of Rangely that any designation of a Wild and Scenic River on the White River or the consideration of such without the expressed support to the Upper Basin Compact Commission, White River Water managers such as the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District, the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Colorado River Water Conservation District, in the face of drought and serious compact curtailment issues that may affect both Utah and Colorado and without a full understanding of the reserved water rights impacts, is a gross negligence on part of BLM and in direct violation of the spirit and practice required to analyze impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act.	See Response to Comment SD59-G-25, G-1.	
Daggett County	G-17	AT49 (AAT-6)	The entire document seems to have a restrictive nature to it, so we urge you to consider changing the VRMs to III and limiting the sizes of ACEC's and SRMA, while closely examining how to positively and actively manage the BLM controlled areas in Daggett County to improve these areas for livestock, wildlife, recreation and other uses.	Comment noted.	

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Daggett County	G-17	SD255 (ASD-11)	<p>On page 1-8 under 1.4.1.1: Identification of Issues, Wilderness Characteristics it still shows that the BLM is planning to manage for wilderness characteristics in areas outside of WSA lands, which is counter to the Utah vs. Norton settlement. An ACEC or special management areas cannot be a surrogate for a former “wilderness” inventory area. Unfortunately, many of the proposed SMAs or ACECs are exactly that and fail to meet the criteria and policy.</p> <p>There is little evidence of positive action on the part of the BLM in these areas of Special designations to meet stated objectives. The Counties have made repeated attempts to get the data used to develop the need for maintaining or expanding the areas of these Special Designations and still has not received the requested information and the RMP does not adequately document the need for maintaining or expanding the size of these special designations.</p>	See Response to Comment SD16A-G22.	
Daggett County	G-17	SD256 (ASD-12)	The number, size, and frequency of special designations that limit or disallow “disturbances” illustrate our concern that the BLM is not managing these lands for multiple use. Policy is being set that constricts the economies of local areas to meet the desires of groups that do not live or in most cases even visit the area.	Under FLPMA’s multiple-use mandate, the BLM manages many different resource values and uses on public lands. Through land use planning BLM sets goals and objectives for each of those values and uses, and prescribes actions to accomplish those objectives. Under the multiple-use concept, the BLM does not necessarily manage every value and use on every acre, but routinely manages many different values and uses on the same areas of public lands. The process of applying many individual program goals, objectives, and actions to the same area of public lands may be perceived as “layering”. The BLM strives to ensure that the goals and objectives of each program (representing resource values and uses) are consistent and	

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				<p>compatible for a particular land area. Inconsistent goals and objectives can lead to resource conflicts, failure to achieve the desired outcomes of a land use plan, and litigation. Whether or not a particular form of management is restrictive depends upon a personal interest or desire to see that public lands are managed in a particular manner. Not all uses and values can be provided for on every acre. That is why land use plans are developed through a public and interdisciplinary process. The interdisciplinary process helps ensure that all resource values and uses are considered to determine what mix of values and uses is responsive to the issues identified for resolution in the land use plan. Layering of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA and National BLM planning and program specific regulations.</p> <p>The FLPMA directs BLM to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield (Section 102(a)(7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land uses through its land use plans. The BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (See, Appendix C, Land Use Planning Handbook "H-1601-1"). Specific decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the land use plan. As each alternative is formulated, each program decision is overlaid with other program decisions and inconsistent decisions are identified and modified so that ultimately a</p>	

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				<p>compatible mix of uses and management prescriptions result.</p> <p>For example, the BLM has separate policies and guidelines, as well as criteria, for establishing ACECs and when the WSAs were established. These differing criteria make it possible that the same lands will qualify as both an ACEC and a WSA but for different reasons. The BLM is required to consider these different policies.</p> <p>The values protected by WSA management prescriptions do not necessarily protect those values found relevant and important in ACEC evaluation, and vice versa. The relevant and important values of ACECs within or adjacent to WSAs were noted in the ACEC Evaluation (Appendix G). The ACECs are evaluated and ranked based on the presence or absence of the stated relevant and important values. None of these values includes wilderness characteristics. Additionally, the management prescriptions for the ACECs is limited in scope to protect the relevant and important values, and the BLM maintains that the size of the ACEC areas is appropriate for protection of the relevant and important values identified.</p>	
Daggett County	G-17	WF111 (AWF-2)	On page 1-9 there is a paragraph discussing the "...establishment of thresholds for disturbance that could be accommodated without significant impacts to wildlife populations..." Again, it seems that wildlife considerations are given priority over multiple uses. In	Comment noted.	

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			most instances wildlife are quite comfortable moving in and out of human areas and the consideration that hunting is a disturbance never seems to get any attention. While we do not want to see irreparable damage that would completely ruin or destroy wildlife areas, minor disturbances that promote multiple use and improvement of habitat should be allowed.		
Bureau of Reclamation	G-18	AT44 (AAT-1)	We suggest that you reference the Operation of Flaming Gorge Dam EIS (for which the BLM is a cooperating agency) in this section of the EIS (pg 1-13, 1.5).	It is not necessary to reference the Flaming Gorge Dam EIS in the RMP.	
Bureau of Reclamation	G-18	FM9 (AFM-1)	We note that the Fire Management Categories Map identifies areas not desired for prescribed burning; including the land around Steinaker Reservoir, and agree with this designation. BLM land surrounding the Green and White Rivers also would be areas of no-wildfire preference. We note the potential for adverse direct and indirect effects to water quality from fire and support fire management practices that protect water quality.	Comment noted.	
Bureau of Reclamation	G-18	SS155	This section states that the BLM will work with the USFWS 'and others' to ensure that plans and agreements for special status species are updated as necessary. We suggest adding "including the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program" after "others".	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the</p>	

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				adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ100	Section 2.4.2.1 already assures compliance with State laws. The listing of specific provisions in Utah R446 is useful as examples, but please clarify that it is the State that determines which provisions are applicable, not the BLM. Please clarify that other laws and other provisions of R446 will be followed in accordance with State regulation.	Section 4.2.2.5 in the PRMP/FEIS states that the VFO is in compliance with R446 through an MOU between the BLM, UFS, and UDAQ.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ101	This section appears to be missing pertinent local information available from agency websites – some of which is in the Air Quality Assessment Report -- and instead relies on some data “located at distances of greater than 150 miles from Vernal” (p. 3-4). Could local data also be incorporated? Enclosed with this review are some air pollution facility emissions from EPA for the areas of Duchesne, Myton, Roosevelt and Vernal (www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html); this was assembled for an oil and gas proposal south of Duchesne and which may help provide more local information for the BLM RMP. Some of these emission sources are listed in the Air Quality Assessment Report, but since that document only looked in detail at emissions occurring after 2000, not all local emission sources are individually examined. The NEPA document is available on the Ashley National Forest website at http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/1_sowers_seismic_and%20Well_ex_03_05.pdf and additional information is in the project record. The BLM is welcome to photocopy the hard copy project record on file at Ashley National Forest offices if that is useful in this analysis.	See comment response AQ89. The methodology of using background air quality data to select sources that are explicitly modeled was agreed to during the modeling protocol process and has been standard methodology for BLM air quality analyses for several years. The BLM appreciates the FS providing access to the additional information.	
USFS— Ashley	G-19	AQ102	Noise (and associated potential wildlife disturbance) is not addressed. An affected environment description for	Mufflers on pump jacks have been used by the Vernal Field Office for years and have become an	

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National Forest			<p>a Forest Service oil/gas development proposal was done for an Ashley National Forest oil and gas proposal south of Duchesne (http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/1_sowers_seismic_and%20Well_ex_03_05.pdf). The BLM is welcome to photocopy project record references on file at the Ashley National Forest. The Vernal BLM Castle Peak-Eight Mile EIS identified quantitatively that motor mufflers on pump jacks can reduce noise considerably; could this information be used for noise stipulations in Appendix K?</p>	accepted practice.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ103	<p>Please add existing deposition and lake ANC conditions relating to the High Uintas Wilderness to the Affected Environment discussion for the area, including the larger area considered in the cumulative effects analysis. The High Uintas Wilderness is in the same State defined airshed as most of the oil and gas development (www.utahsmp.net/GRAPHICS/UTAIRS1.jpg).</p>	<p>Section 3.2.3 in the Final EIS has been revised to make some of the change(s) as suggested. The 4th paragraph of this section now reads as follows:</p> <p>“In addition to these requirements, the National Park Service (NPS) Organic Act requires the NPS to protect the natural resources of the lands it manages from the adverse effects of air pollution. In 1978, the US Forest Service (USFS) Air Monitoring Program was established to protect all USFS managed lands from the adverse effects of air pollution. In 1988, the USFS became a primary participant in the national visibility monitoring program titled Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments (IMPROVE). Starting with the enactment of the Regional Haze Rule, the USFS has provided regional haze monitoring representing all visibility-protected federal Class I areas where practical.”</p>	X
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ104	<p>Please add discussion of additional relevant regulations and policies regarding air quality, such as the EPA Clean Air Rules of 2004, Utah Air Quality Rules, Wilderness Acts of 1964 and 1984 which</p>	See comment response AQ72.	

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			<p>establish and govern air quality for the High Uintas Wilderness (south slope Uintas), and the Memorandum of Understanding and associated documents from the Federal Leadership Forum for oil and gas air quality NEPA, in which BLM is a partner. A summary of these (also prepared for the Ashley NF oil/gas review south of Duchesne, referenced above) is provided for your convenience.</p>		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ105	<p>In Chapter 4, please evaluate compliance with applicable regulations, including any BLM internal manual or policy direction.</p>	<p>Model results are compared to the NAAQS and State AAQS. The BLM Soil, Water and Air Program Manual is currently under revision and should be available for discussion in future air quality analyses.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ106	<p>Please include recognition of the Wilderness Acts (1984, 1964) and High Uintas Wilderness (e.g., in a paragraph following the National Park Service requirements), in addition to identifying these in Table 3.2.5 (p. 3-7). The Air Quality Assessment Report (Trinity, 8/04) states that there are no laws governing air quality in the High Uintas Wilderness. The Clean Air Act (and State implementing regulations) has provisions which apply across the entire State of Utah – including Class II airsheds, with additional restrictions for specific areas of non-attainment (non-attainment areas) and federally mandated Class I areas.</p>	<p>Although no section is referenced, BLM believes the commenter is referring to Section 5.4.2 of the TSD which states that Class II areas have “no visibility protection under local, State, or Federal laws.” The BLM believes this is still the case.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ107	<p>Additionally, the Wilderness Acts governing the High Uintas Wilderness protect all resources including air quality. In management, the visibility standard of a “just noticeable change” of 1dv with a trigger for examination at 0.5 dv due to varying sensitivities of areas would apply to the High Uintas Wilderness even though it is a Class II airshed under the Clean Air Act. The air quality discussion in the RMP focuses on standards which do not encompass all pollutants</p>	<p>See comment responses AQ49 and AQ106.</p> <p>BLM included all pollutants in the air quality analysis which are generally included in NEPA air quality analyses and for which there are widely recognized metrics.</p> <p>BLM would welcome discussions on inclusion of</p>	

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			affecting Air Quality Related Values of the High Uintas Wilderness. For example, NAAQS addresses NO2 but not NO3 and other nitrogen oxides contributing to the Air Quality Related Values (AQRV). The High Uintas Wilderness is in the same State defined airshed as most of the oil and gas development (www.utahsmp.net/GRAPHICS/UTAIRS1.jpg).	additional pollutants in future analyses.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ108	EPA regulates Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) in addition to other pollutants. The discussion on p. 3-5 suggests that the Clean Air Act is fully implemented if NAAQS are met, which is not the case. Ref: Federal Register June 17, 1999. EPA 40 CFR Part 63 National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Oil and Natural Gas Production and Natural Gas Transmission and Storage; Final Rule and other EPA rules.	Section 112(a)(1) of the Act defines a major source as: “any stationary source or group of stationary sources located within a contiguous area and under common control that emits or has the potential-to-emit considering controls, in the aggregate 10 tons per year (tpy) or more of any HAP or 25 tpy or more of any combination of HAPs.” There is no source included in the analysis would qualify as a major source under this regulation. Therefore, the NESHAP for Oil and Natural Gas Production is not applicable for this air quality analysis.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ109	Table 3.2.6, Background Concentrations for Vernal RMP Area, is the basis for analysis in Chapter 4 and focuses on 4 national criteria pollutants for various time periods. The units are in ug/m3 (ambient concentration), which helps evaluate NAAQS standards but which is not helpful in comparing to data in Tons/Year (emissions) or in comparing to Tons/Acre or kg/ha/year (deposition).	Table 3.2.6 in the Draft RMP only presents background air concentrations. This table is now identified as Table 3.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS. Data related to atmospheric deposition and emissions can be found in the Air Quality Technical Support Document.	
USFS— Ashley National	G-19	AQ110	Table 3.2.6, Background Concentrations for Vernal RMP Area, appears to be based on estimates provided by Utah DEQ and a 12-year old application for	This data was provided by the Utah DEQ-AQD. BLM defers the selection of background air quality data to the appropriate State air quality agency.	

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Forest			Bonanza PSD; please consider use of more current and more accurate data presented or available for background estimates. Also, this information would be more useful in Chapter 3 as it is part of the "Affected Environment".	This table is now identified as Table 3.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS, and remains as part of Chapter 3, Affected Environment.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ111	The background estimates are orders of magnitude of 1-10 (values 5-6,984 ug/m3), yet the modeling in the Air Quality Assessment Report exhaustively looked at components of individual sources to 4 or more decimal places (Appendix C). Adding such detailed quantities to an estimated "lump sum" appears to be a discrepancy in orders of magnitude in the analysis. Please check the U.S. website for measured pollutants for area sources, some of which appear to have been used in the Air Quality Assessment Report (Trinity, 8/04; see samples enclosed). Rather than using a baseline from broad estimates, and adding to them detailed information calculated from EPA, it would seem a stronger baseline to sum the more current EPA data (ca. 1999, http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html) which), and then add the detailed "inventory sources" since that date for Chapter 3/baseline. Adding the BLM proposed sources for direct/indirect effects (Chapter 4) would then be done, along with adding the Tribal, private and Forest Service proposed sources for cumulative effects. This would resolve the differences in orders of magnitude and avoid combining data at 100-10 with data at the scale of 10-3.	Clarification of this comment is needed to properly respond. It is typical of large-scale air analyses that background concentrations range over several orders of magnitude. Also many of the sources listed in Appendix C were screened out for a number of reasons and are as provided to Trinity by the State air quality agencies.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ112	3.2.4.2 Criteria for Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) Table 3.2.5 – Sensitive Areas to be Considered in the Analysis (p. 3-7). Inclusion of the High Uintas Wilderness in this table is appreciated. The Flaming	The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area is included in Table 3.2.5 of the Draft RMP. This table is now identified as Table 3.2.3 in the PRMP/FEIS. The Flaming Gorge NRA was included in the effects analysis.	

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			Gorge National Recreation Area should also be included (as in 3.2.4.3), as the Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan includes air quality considerations for this NRA. In Section 3.2.5 (Consistency with Non-Bureau Plans – U.S. Forest Service), please include these two areas and address potential effects in Chapter 4 (effects analysis).		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ113	<p>3.2.4.3 Visibility Criteria</p> <p>Visibility is an air quality related value under the Wilderness Acts establishing and governing the High Uintas Wilderness, which should be identified in this section. The inclusion of the Flaming Gorge NRA is appreciated. In Section 3.2.5 (Consistency with Non-Bureau Plans – U.S. Forest Service), please include these two areas and potential effects discussed in Chapter 4 (effects analysis).</p>	The High Uintas Wilderness is a Class II area which does not have visibility protection under State or Federal law. However, the High Uintas is included in the screening visibility analysis. See Tables 5-56 to 5-60 in the Air Quality Assessment Report.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ114	<p>4.2.2.2 Effects of SOIL AND WATERSHED, Special Designations, Recreation Management, and Wildlife and Fisheries Management Decisions</p> <p>Paragraph 1 identifies these uses as having “negligible effects on short-term air quality and negligible to incrementally positive effects on long-term air quality” (p. 4-7). However, recreation management which includes use of motorized vehicles (on – or off-road) can create considerable dust clouds in some soil types.</p>	While not explicitly modeled, these sources were considered in making this statement.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ115	4.2.2.3 Effects of LIVESTOCK GRAZING, Rangeland Improvement, RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT, Vegetative Management, and Woodland and Forest Management Decisions	See comment response AQ114.	

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			As in 4.2.2.2, vehicle uses or other ground-disturbing activities in some soil types can affect air quality as well as water quality.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ116	Effects of MINERAL DECISIONS on Air Quality If only emission sources developed after 2000/2001 were modeled to determine impacts to nitrogen/sulfur deposition, visibility, and/or lake acidity (ANC), then this assessment may underestimate existing air quality impacts.	See comment response AQ101.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ117	No noise assessment is provided. With the amount and density of oil/gas and related development proposed in all alternatives, a noise analysis and effects to wildlife, recreation, and/or other uses would be relevant. A copy of a Forest Service NEPA write-up for a small oil/gas proposal (as an example) is available on the Ashley NF website at http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/ashley/projects/1_sowers_seismic_and%20Well_ex_03_05.pdf with additional materials available from the Forest. The BLM is welcome to photocopy project record materials on file at the Ashley National Forest.	The BLM thanks the FS for the noise reference. See comment response AQ102.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ118	Mitigation to minimize air pollution effects is not presented until p. 4-25 (Section 4.2.3) and appears incomplete relative to mitigation available for oil and gas technology. Mitigation in addition to the items on page 4-25/26 and in addition to minimum regulatory requirements could help reduce air pollution. For example: Regarding type of engines allowed or encouraged, the Clean Air Rules of 2004, Non-road Diesel, identify the differences in air pollution between new and old engines and provide technological air quality improvements. Mitigation could specify or	The BLM appreciates the extensive information provided by the FS. However, BLM does not discuss mitigation of potential air quality impacts when there are no potentially significant impacts that require mitigation.	

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			<p>encourage use of cleaner engines.</p> <p>Where electrification is not available, operators could install large compressor engines with NOx emissions of 1.0 g/hp-hr or less; operators could use natural gas-fired engines to power drill rigs and associated equipment to further reduce NOx emissions. (For additional mitigation possibilities for small and large compressor engines, please consider technologies and emission factors identified by the Wyoming DEQ minor source regulatory program.)</p> <p>Operators should schedule and carry out regular inspection and maintenance to prevent emission leaks.</p> <p>Specific air quality monitoring could be required of the oil/gas industry in accordance with State of Utah; this may be conducted in coordination with the Forest Service, National Park Service, or other agencies or entities. There is precedent for this in Utah and Wyoming, where oil industry has paid for air quality monitoring stations and data collection. NADP, CASTNET, IMPROVE, or other air quality monitoring stations can be set up and monitored in cooperation with the State of Utah and local agencies.</p> <p>Incorporation of recommendations in Oil and Gas Surface Operating Standards for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development prepared by USDI-BLM and USDA-Forest Service (3rd Ed, 1989)</p> <p>Incorporation of USDI-BLM Production Operations – Best Management Practices for Fluid Minerals and</p>		

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			<p>USDI-BLM Best Management Practice Information Sheets (on BLM website).</p> <p>Incorporation of recommendations in the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) 2004 report, Natural Gas Flaring and Venting: Opportunities to Improve Data and Reduce Emissions Produced water management recommendations in U.S. Department of Energy (2004) "A White Paper Describing Produced Water from Production of Crude Oil, Natural Gas, and Coal Bed Methane</p> <p>Incorporation of the over 100 BMPs identified by EPA through its National Gas STAR Program which involved 65% of the U.S. natural gas industry. Pneumatic devices and compressors were the largest pollution sources; 15 practices and technologies are presented to reduce these emissions. Participants in the STAR program reported reductions of over 275 billion cubic feet worth over \$825 million which is enough to heat over 4 million homes for 1 year or remove 24 million cars from U.S. highways for 1 year (referenced in GAO report).</p> <p>Use of "green completion" technology in lieu of flaring which has been successfully used in the Pinedale Anticline oil field development area. The RMP currently has no direction to encourage, consider, or require such technology in lieu of flaring. With the amount of flaring anticipated from this RMP, the difference to air quality could be significant, both in the vicinity of individual wells and cumulatively regarding the High Uintas Wilderness and Flaming Gorge NRA. In addition to these areas, there are Research National Areas on the Ashley National Forest which could be susceptible to air pollution. Questar and Shell have</p>		

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			been two leaders in “green completion” technology, which has been cost-effective to them, and they are encouraging other producers to follow suit.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ119	The effects analysis considers many regulated pollutants but is limited regarding some pollutants affecting High Uintas Wilderness air quality related values (AQRV, protected under the Wilderness Acts). For example, NAAQS addresses NO ₂ and SO ₂ but not SO ₄ , NO ₃ and other nitrogen oxides contributing to the impacts on AQRVs. Similarly, AQRVs at Flaming Gorge NRA could be affected by more pollutants than addressed by NAAQS.	See comment response AQ107. The CalPuff model does attempt to account these secondary pollutants (and others) with several chemistry modules available in the model.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ120	Paragraph 2 states that “The best available air quality monitoring data collected near the VPA were used to compare changes in air quality contributed by the modeled emission sources.” Please refer to comments above for 3.2.2 Baseline Air Quality and enclosures regarding the availability of additional local data for some pollutants.	See comment response AQ101.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ121	Particulate Matter – PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5} . Some soil types (such as those high in Mancos shale) would be more likely to have air quality effects since they produce large amounts of dust that can linger in the air. These soils are also likely to be high in salinity; those areas near streams could contribute to 303(d) water bodies listed for salinity/TDS/chlorides. For these areas, the averages presented are potentially underestimated.	The emission factors used to calculate particulate matter emissions are assumed to be representative of the activities under consideration. At this point in time, fugitive dust calculations do not go to the level of detail mentioned in the comment (except perhaps in a research setting).	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ122	In EPA’s facility monitoring website, http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html , individual wells in the RMP area had a wide range of pollutant discharges (T/yr). For example, see the comparisons	Without specifics about the information presented, no response can be made. For this analysis, the number of wells and pads associated with each alternative were used to calculate emissions and	

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			<p>below. Multiplying the larger amount, or even an average, suggests voluminous annual increases in pollution. It is uncertain from the Air Quality Assessment Report and the RMP which scale of values was used in the analysis. Because different assumptions could yield large variations in projected potential impacts when multiplied by the number of proposed wells (6000+), please clarify the assumptions in the analysis.</p>	<p>compression requirements, using emissions factors as proposed in the modeling protocol or factors taken from commonly acceptable sources such as EPA's AP-42.</p>	
<p>USFS— Ashley National Forest</p>	<p>G-19</p>	<p>AQ123</p>	<p>3. Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs).</p> <p>a. The MLE/MEI analyses for health concerns (p. 4-14) considered the additional (“incremental”) emissions from BLM sources only – excluding background. However, health risks would be a result of the marginal BLM-induced increases PLUS the background. Please include both so it reflects a more complete health risk analysis</p>	<p>The incremental (project only) risk methodology used in the air quality analysis was proposed in the modeling protocol and accepted by the stakeholders group. Additionally, the background data recommended by the CDPHE were collected in an urban environment and are possibly overestimates of actual rural background concentrations.</p>	
<p>USFS— Ashley National Forest</p>	<p>G-19</p>	<p>AQ124</p>	<p>b. It is stated that “neither the State of Utah nor EPA have established HAP standards.” However, EPA does regulate HAPs and States have the option of being more stringent (such as Wyoming has done for the Pinedale Anticline area). Refer to Federal Register June 17, 1999, 40 CFR Part 63, EPA National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Oil and Natural Gas Production and Natural Gas Transmission and Storage; Final Rule. This document addresses 188 HAPs; oil and gas natural production facilities were identified as a category of major sources (glycol dehydration units, natural gas transmission & storage were included).</p>	<p>See comment response AQ108 regarding NESHAPS regulations.</p>	
<p>USFS— Ashley National</p>	<p>G-19</p>	<p>AQ125</p>	<p>Paragraph 3 states that “The best available air quality monitoring data collected near the VPA were used to compare changes in air quality contributed by modeled</p>	<p>See comment response AQ101.</p>	

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Forest			emission sources.” Please refer to comments above for 3.2.2 Baseline Air Quality and enclosures regarding the availability of additional local data for some pollutants.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ126	The effects analysis considers many regulated pollutants but is limited regarding some pollutants affecting High Uintas Wilderness air quality related values (AQRV, protected under the Wilderness Acts). For example, NAAQS addresses NO2 but not NO3 and other nitrogen oxides contributing to the impacts on AQRVs. The assurance that acid-sensitive lakes would not have more than a 10% change over time (cumulatively from this and other influences) is not assured. Similarly, AQRVs at Flaming Gorge NRA could be affected by more pollutants than addressed by NAAQS. Please include discussion of non-NAAQS pollutants that would affect the AQRVs.	From Section 3.9 of the Air Quality TSD: “Gas-phase dry deposition fluxes were modeled for SO2, NOx, and HNO3. Particulate-phase dry deposition was modeled for SO4, NO3, PM2.5, and PM10. Wet deposition was modeled for SO2, SO4, HNO3, and NO3. Results are reported in total (wet + dry) sulfur and nitrogen deposition.”	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ127	The project life of BLM emissions sources was considered to be 15 years. Oil and gas developments can commonly extend past 30 years.	The Life of Plan (LOP) of 15 years was provided by the BLM Vernal FO. Also, this is a Resource Management Plan covering a number of different resources, all of which are taken into account in choosing the LOP.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ128	Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs). a. Please clarify why data was modeled from Grand Junction, CO rather than using local data to establish baseline conditions. Are local hazardous air pollution emission estimates for the area available on the EPA website (http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html or elsewhere)?	This data was recommended by Ms. Nancy Chick of the CDPHE (taken from EPA Urban Air Toxics Pilot Project, Grand Junction, CO) and was provided to Trinity Consultants. Also see comment response AQ110.	
USFS— Ashley National	G-19	AQ129	VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS (VOCs) I did not find any discussion of VOC pollutants. EPA	VOC emissions were estimated for glycol dehydrators.	

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Forest			has recently (11/04) changed the definition of which compounds are considered VOCs. A public hearing will be held on May 24 in Salt Lake City regarding Utah's proposal to amend the State definition to match the new federal definition.		
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ130	Paragraph 2 – other sulfur and nitrogen compounds (not just sulfate and nitrate) also contribute to visibility effects; not all compounds affecting visibility are reflected in NAAQS. Does this analysis consider all contributing compounds?	In addition to nitrate and sulfate, visibility impacts also included fine particulate matter and coarse particulate matter.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ131	Paragraph 3 – A 1.0 dv change -- with a 0.5 dv trigger for investigation relative to the sensitivity of some environments -- is also applied to the High Uintas Wilderness area as it is under the same Wilderness Act protection as Class I Wilderness areas.	See comment responses AQ106 and 107.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ132	In EPA's facility monitoring website, http://www.epa.gov/air/data/geosel.html , individual wells in the RMP area had a wide range of pollutant discharges (T/yr). For example, see the comparisons below. Multiplying the larger amount, or even an average, suggests voluminous annual increases in pollution. It is uncertain from the Air Quality Assessment Report and the RMP which scale of values was used in the analysis. Because different assumptions could yield large variations in projected potential impacts when multiplied by the number of proposed wells (6000+), please clarify the assumptions in the analysis.	See comment response AQ122.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19 G-19	AQ133	(pp. 4-22 to 4-24 and 4-27/28) Visibility, Deposition If these analyses consider only BLM inputs, then please also display the result when these are added to baseline in order to determine effects on High Uintas	This section describes the impacts of the alternatives, which includes BLM sources only. See comment response AQ76.	

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			Wilderness air quality (and other cumulative effects). As explained earlier, some USGS modeling suggests that the High Uintas Wilderness has already reached 4-6 kg/ha/yr sulfur.		
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ134	There appear to be discrepancies between Table 4.2.5 and the Air Quality Assessment Report (Trinity, 8/04) findings. The following are in the Trinity report but not reflected in the EIS: at least 1 day >5% would occur in the High Uintas Wilderness (pp. 104-108, Trinity report) under Alternative A, B or D (compared to 0 baseline). The narrative (p. 92) states that, “Visibility for BLM sources only showed no impacts >1.0 deciview for any sensitive area. Some sensitive areas exceeded the 1.0 deciview threshold for inventory sources only and inventory plus BLM sources.”	The BLM NSTC Air Quality staff does not believe that the 0.5 dv is a “just noticeable change” in visibility. See comment response AQ49. As a courtesy to the FS, BLM includes results compared to the 0.5 dv threshold, but only in the TSD.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ135	Under Alternatives B, C, and D, the Flaming Gorge NRA would experience a 33% increase in nitrogen deposition from baseline + VMA proposed activities (0.003 to 0.004 kg/ha/yr, p. 98) Under Alternative A, the Flaming Gorge NRA would experience a 33% increase in sulfur deposition from baseline + VMA proposed sources (0.003 to 0.004 kg/ha/yr, p. 99) and the same increase for nitrogen (p. 100). These are not considered “none to negligible” effects by the USFS.	The basis for the qualitative categories for the deposition results is based on comparison to the Fox vales of 3 kilograms per hectare per year (kg/ha/yr) for total sulfur and 5 kg/ha/yr for total nitrogen.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ136	It does not appear that the acid-sensitive lakes of the High Uintas Wilderness were any of the “lakes considered” since the Air Quality Assessment Report (p. 92) seems to indicate that the only lakes evaluated were in Colorado (Maroon Bells, Flat Tops and Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Areas, p. 110 & p. 114-cumulative	The sensitive areas (including lakes) selected for the analysis were proposed by the BLM, with several additions requested by the FS and NPS representatives at the stakeholder (protocol development) meetings. Additional sensitive receptors cannot be added at this point in the NEPA	

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			effects). Please include High Uintas Wilderness lakes and conduct this analysis; the BLM is welcome to ANC or other data from Ashley NF files.	process.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ137	Results in this table are presented qualitatively (“negligible”, “none”) rather than quantitatively. This applies a value judgment prior to presentation of objective data; the quantitative data is needed to evaluate significance by the reader. Please provide the data.	Section 4.2.2.6 [Far Field Analysis] in the PRMP/FEIS presents the quantitative results by alternative.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ138	The DEIS does not clearly identify the spatial and temporal boundaries and their rationale for the cumulative effects analysis.	Details of the air quality analysis are presented in the TSD (See sections 3.3.1 and 3.4).	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ139	Does whether [sic] the cumulative effects analysis includes all past, present and reasonably foreseeable development including that which has been accomplished or proposed on Tribal, private, State, and National Forest System lands? These all should be considered in cumulative effects analysis. The “baseline” air quality, if accurate, would reflect existing conditions. In addition, there have been proposals for oil/gas development on other land ownerships which are very dense in some areas (e.g., Tribal). A single proposal currently being evaluated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Sowers Canyon area (south of Duchesne) is up to 200 wells (Berry Petroleum). Please also include potential oil-shale development; some oil-shale development may meet the criteria for reasonably foreseeable sources.	BLM makes every attempt to include all sources that should be included explicitly in the air quality modeling. It should also be understood that the NEPA process (for projects that require a large-scale, multi-resource analysis) takes place over a number of years. Hence, projects may become reasonable foreseeable during the process at a point where they cannot be included in the on-going analysis without redoing the entire analysis, which would come at great expense and cause delays of months. For air quality analyses, a project or source that is thought to be reasonably foreseeable must have sufficient information available to calculate emissions and to be included in the modeling.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ140	There seem to be discrepancies between this table (which does not identify air quality concerns) and information in the Air Quality Assessment Report (Trinity, 8/04). For example:	Table 4.2.7 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised so that it is consistent with the TSD.	X

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			At least 1 day >5% would occur in the High Uintas Wilderness and Flaming Gorge NRA (p. 113, Trinity report) under all alternatives. The narrative (p. 110, Cumulative) states that, "Visibility for BLM sources only showed no impacts >1.0 deciview for any sensitive area. Some sensitive areas exceeded the 1.0 deciview threshold for inventory sources only and inventory plus BLM sources."	See comment response AQ134.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ141	The High Uintas Wilderness would experience as 12.5% increase in nitrogen deposition in all alternatives (increase from 0.004 to 0.0045 kg/ha/yr from BLM sources— this was rounded to 0.004 in the table but in fact is a difference). Flaming Gorge NRA would experience a 33% increase in nitrogen deposition in all alternatives (increase from 0.003 to 0.004 kg/ha/yr from BLM sources). These are not considered "none to negligible" effects by the USFS.	See comment response AQ135.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AQ142	Please explain why the visibility impact numbers presented in the Assessment Report (e.g., p. 104) are not additive across rows.	Because the maximum impact from the different sources may not have occurred at the same receptor.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	AT75 (LAT-11)	How does Alternative A provide for Goals and Objectives identified in Section 2.4 in regards to riparian, livestock, and soils?	Alternative A combines with the Management Common to All actions outlined in Tables 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources), Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management), and 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) for each of the resources in question for an overall approach that achieves the identified goals and objectives. Specific management actions would be implemented under Alternative A that control grazing through timing restrictions and other prudent and feasible controls within the BLM's authority to restore proper functioning condition in riparian areas that have been compromised.	

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				Alternative A would implement Surface Operating Standards for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development, require development plans for slopes between 21-40%, and have no surface occupancy on slopes greater than 40% in order to reduce soil degradation, sedimentation, and disruption of stream soils and waters. Alternative A would combine livestock management actions, such as timing/season of use controls, with forage, wildlife, and vegetation management actions to achieve proper utilization of rangelands.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	GC87 (LGC-2)	Please include the Forest Service in the list of collaborators as some watersheds, allotments, or other management areas containing BLM-administered lands also include NFS lands.	Table 2.1.7 (Soil and Water Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS subsection entitled Management Common to All states: “Collaborate with the USFS, state, counties, Tribes, and the Division of Water Rights when possible to protect and enhance priority watersheds.”	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	GC88 (LGC-3)	Clarify what NEPA analysis would occur for those areas considered available for oil and gas leasing. Will it be site-specific?	Section 4.8.1.2 in the PRMP/FEIS states that additional NEPA analysis requirements for locatable minerals. Similar language has been added to Section 4.8.1.1 to describe the level of NEPA analysis required for oil and gas development.	X
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	GC89 (LCG-4)	Why are Wilderness and SSS subheadings of Soil and Water? These would be better relocated in separate sections so they can be readily found.	Table 2.1.20 (Special Designation – Wilderness Study Areas) has been given its own table in the PRMP/FEIS. Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) has been given its own table in the PRMP/FEIS.	X
USFS— Ashley National	G-19	LG62	Please acknowledge that early season grazing is not beneficial to all streams. Clary and Webster (1989) note that streambanks are susceptible to early season grazing damage where a combination of high soil	Comment noted.	

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Forest			moisture and fine soil texture exists; in these cases, delayed grazing is recommended. Also, some TES species may need disturbance protection in some early spring riparian areas.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	LG63	While it is agreed that “longer duration of use would result in greater impacts to vegetation, soils, and water in a given area”, it does not seem feasible to limit grazing before periods of late summer thunderstorms, since they occur during the grazing season in an unpredictable manner. However, limiting livestock grazing generally so that perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams function well -- preserving soil, water and vegetative components and functions – would seem to be a reasonable goal. Since such a high percentage of streams are not in properly functioning condition (p. 4-161), a grazing strategy which reduces livestock numbers or duration to enhance riparian condition would seem appropriate; however, this is not discussed.	Grazing strategies addressing riparian areas would be developed in the AMP (allotment management plan).	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	LG89 (SW15)	Livestock grazing could also have negative impacts on wetlands and riparian zones, particularly in areas which either have riparian areas below proper functioning condition or upland conditions with watershed integrity concerns (whether from activities or natural conditions; i.e., the 70% of the allotments which are in categories of “improve” or “custodial” care, p. 3-36).	Management prescriptions by alternative for grazing in riparian areas can be found in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.12.2, and Table 2.3 under Riparian and Wetland Resources.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	LG186 (LLG-3)	It is preferable to address riparian [grazing] conditions to be achieved on the ground, as stubble height is a short-term annual indicator and not a long-term resource goal.	See comment response LG182.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	ME60	Much mineral development would occur in watersheds with 303(d) listed streams (impaired water bodies under the Clean Water Act), including those listed for salinity and Total Dissolved Solids. Please clarify how	The commenter failed to identify which water bodies could be impacted. Consequently, the BLM is unable to add clarification to the RMP.	

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			the alternatives accommodate increased minerals management under all alternatives with “erosion, loss of soil productivity, increased runoff, landslides, flooding, and water quality degradation” increasing with increased well development (including potential groundwater impacts) -- and still be consistent with State water quality standards and laws/treaties relating to salinity in the Colorado River.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	ME60A	Please include relevant mitigation measures and BMPs. These may help prevent “improper road building” (along with the Gold Book already referenced in a previous chapter) and reduce erosion consequences. As the Gold Book is under revision, it would be good to note that the new edition would be incorporated when finalized.	Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS states that the Gold Book would be complied with under all alternatives and does not specify a version or date of publication for the book. This provides the BLM with the necessary flexibility to adopt revised versions of the document as they are developed.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW14	Section 3.7.2 (page 3-36) confirms that 60 allotments need improved resource conditions and 53 are in custodial management with low productivity; these are areas of concern for riparian conditions. In addition, even allotments with good upland conditions can have degraded riparian conditions. Please provide for riparian health in riparian zones currently below good ecological condition.	As stated in Section 4.11, impact-causing activities within riparian areas are subject to restrictions under the Utah BLM Standards for Rangeland Health. “All of the RMP alternative must adhere to Standard 2 of the Rangeland Health: riparian and wetland areas must be in properly functioning condition (PFC).”	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW15	Some of the actions and direct/indirect effects associated with this RMP do not seem consistent with the goals for riparian areas. Please address that the stubble height standards may not accommodate needs of riparian areas which are below good ecological condition (about 42% of VMA riparian areas are below properly functioning condition). There may be conflicts between riparian goals and the degraded watershed conditions described from minerals management. The	The commenter does not explain or describe how and why the stubble height standards may not accommodate riparian area needs. The commenter does not explain or illustrate what conflicts may arise or exist between riparian goals, degraded watershed conditions, and minerals management.	

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			general concepts for quality riparian vegetation condition and stream/flooding function are good.		
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW16	A stubble height of 4 inches applied appropriately to hydrophilic vegetation would generally represent utilization greater than 30%; a height of 6 inches would generally represent utilization greater than 20%. The translation to percent utilization would be species-dependent. Clary and Webster (1989) affirm that these stubble heights are only suitable for maintenance of riparian systems in good to high ecological status and are not sufficient for “conditions to be improved” as asserted under Alternatives A and C. The effects to those riparian areas below Proper Functioning Condition – which would likely include degradation of some – is not addressed in the analysis. Please address these considerations.	See Section 4.13.2.7; Effects of Riparian Management Decisions on Water and Soils. See Section 4.13.2.7.1 Alternative A & C; less than 20% utilization if conditions are to be improved. See page 2-19, Section 2.4.7.4; Grazing and River Corridors, 4th paragraph; if grazing is causing resource degradation, and all other options have been exhausted, temporarily close those riparian areas that do not satisfactorily respond to changes in management.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW17	In Alternative B, grazing of riparian herbaceous vegetation in fall (50% or 60%) is excessive relative to recommendations in Clary and Webster (1989) and others, since these utilization levels would promote utilization of streamside willow by domestic livestock.	See Section 4.13.2.7; Effects of Riparian Management Decisions on Water and Soils. See 4.13.2.7.2 Alternative B; second sentence; key riparian woody vegetation would not be used more than 50%.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW31 (LRW-2)	Please address riparian management goals for uses other than livestock utilization.	Riparian management goals were proposed with the purpose of improving riparian habitat, with management actions based on measurable stubble height of riparian vegetation. While it is implied that livestock grazing has an impact on riparian resource, the proposed riparian management actions would also apply to other resource activities (e.g., recreation, wild horses, wildlife, wildlife, fire management).	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW32 (LRW-3)	Paragraph 1 change to read “would be a result of surface disturbing activities both within and outside of the riparian zones.”	Section 4.11 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include surface disturbing activities within and outside of riparian zones.	X

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USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW33 (LRW-4)	Stubble height criteria would not be expected to protect all of the riparian areas that are below proper functioning condition, provide additional protection for these systems.	The commenter does not provide additional information on why stubble height criteria are inadequate nor what additional protection measures should be applied.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW34 (LRW-5)	Indirect effects to riparian areas from watershed disturbance and sediment related to minerals/oil/gas development not addressed.	Soils and watershed management are described in Section 4.11 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW35 (LRW-6)	Clarify how 'active floodplain' is defined and discuss the importance of intermittent or ephemeral drainages.	An active floodplain is the level area with alluvial soils adjacent to streams that is flooded by stream water on a periodic basis and is at the same elevation as areas showing evidence of flood channels free of terrestrial vegetation, recently rafted debris or fluvial sediments newly deposited on the surface of the forest floor or suspended on trees or vegetation, or recent scarring of trees by material moved by flood waters.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW36 (LRW-7)	The potential loss of PFC in Alternatives A and B is in contradiction to goals stated earlier in the document, and there also may be effects to riparian –dependent species.	Riparian habitat has been identified and mapped by the VFO and is managed for Properly Functioning Conditions (Section 3.11.2; Riparian and Wetland Inventory) thru rangeland management and riparian monitoring. Section 4.13.1.3 (Impacts Common to All Livestock and Grazing, Forage, and Wild Horse Management Decisions) could incorporate language on riparian habitat management associated with grazing practices. Refer to Section 2.4.12; Riparian and Section 3.11.1; Regional Overview.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	RW37 (LRW-8)	Address the effects of authorized and unauthorized OHV use and dispersed camping to riparian areas.	Section 4.11.2.7.1 in the PRMP/F has been revised to include an analysis of OHV use on riparian resources. Additional analysis of OHV use has also been included in Section 4.11.2.7.1.	X
USFS— Ashley	G-19	RW38 (LRW-9)	Impacts to riparian soils and biological soil crusts should be considered an 'irreversible loss of resources	As stated in Section 4.13.1.3 of the PRMP/FEIS:	

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National Forest			and should be mitigated accordingly.	<p>"Through monitoring and changes in range use, soils should not become degraded to the point where they lose productivity; therefore no long-term impacts should occur."</p> <p>Thus, monitoring and mitigation of livestock grazing, wild horse, and other potential soil-degrading activities should reduce the risk of irreversible riparian soil losses within the VPA.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SD332 (LSD-7)	The table and discussion of non-WSA lands does not consider cumulative impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development.	Impacts and restrictions to oil and gas development are discussed in detail in the 2007 Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Section 4.8.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW9	Please note that soil productivity loss is an irreversible consequence per CEQ regulations.	<p>Section 4.13.6 of the PRMP/FEIS states:</p> <p>"Soil is a finite resource, and soil productivity would experience irreversible impacts if excessive erosion were to occur without mitigative control structures or practices. These irreversible impacts would be applicable to all activities described above."</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW10	Please clarify which "soil and water management decisions" are referenced. If this relates to decisions for actions specifically to improve soil/watershed conditions, then statements may be accurate. However, improvement projects may do no detectable benefit to streams given the negative effects to soil and water resources identified under riparian, grazing, and minerals management. It is good that further site-specific analysis is indicated. Destruction of soil crust areas has been previously acknowledged related to livestock grazing (4.13.1.3) and would also likely occur with mineral development.	The management decisions referenced in the statement referred to in the comment are specific to those made solely for soil and water and their impact on soils and water under all alternatives. Reading all of Section 4.13 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS provide clarity to the question.	

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USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW11	<p>In the RMP, development of erodible soils on 21-40% slopes is allowed with an erosion control plan. Preferably, an erosion control plan should be required on every proposal – especially those with erodible soils, even if on slopes <20%. This is validated at the bottom of p. 4-185 which acknowledges that slopes <20% would likely experience more soil loss than erodible soils—even without the consideration of road densities. In that case 21-40% slopes (especially those with erodible soils) may need additional protection, such as NSO or other limiting features unless demonstrable lack of adverse effect to water quality, riparian, and soil resources other than pad/road areas taken out of production (irreversible consequences per CEQ). This would be consistent with the Forest Service’s Western Uinta Basin Oil and Gas Leasing Record of Decision (1997) which includes NSO for Geologic Hazards and Unstable Soils, Slopes >35%. Since erodible soils are also often saline soils, there is a risk that water quality - including salinity – would deteriorate. In some areas, water quality is already impaired and not supporting beneficial uses per the Clean Water Act 303(d) list for State of Utah. Section 4.13.2.4 on page 4-189 and Table 4.13.2 on pages 4-190/191 affirms concerns from mineral activity on slopes 0-20%. It also raises a concern that Monument Butte-Red Wash RFD area has the greatest erodible soils and also the greatest number of potential wells; please address this risk. Even though some may not be on BLM land, the watershed and water bodies are still at risk if adequate protection is not provided.</p>	<p>Although an erosion control plan is required on slopes from 21-40%, BLM may require erosion control plans for any proposal, if site-specific analysis indicates a need.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW12	<p>The ability of the utilization percentages specified (50% or 60%) to achieve the goals claimed depends on condition of the lands and season in which the vegetation is used. If all rangelands were in high</p>	<p>The general utilization levels are based on an allotment that does not have a management plan specifying specific settings of use levels. When an allotment, through an evaluation by utilization</p>	

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			<p>ecological condition, then these might be good UPLAND goals (noting separate riparian recommendations above). However, page 3-36 identifies that 70% of the allotments are in categories of “improve” or “custodial” care (the latter including areas of low productivity). Therefore, the utilization percentages identified may be inadequate to promote quality watershed conditions (soil, water, vegetation) on those allotments in “I” and “C” categories. On the Ashley National Forests, it has been demonstrated through long-term monitoring (10 years or more) that riparian areas on shale-derived soils recover very slowly, even with complete rest (Sherel Goodrich studies in Red Pine Shale, e.g., studies 38-2C, 38-3R1, 40-3A)</p>	<p>monitoring or Range Land Health Assessments, determines the need of a different use level to meet the objectives, then the use levels will change.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW13	<p>The discussion of alternatives on pages 4-192/193 identifies the extent of disturbance; please also address resource effects such as:</p> <p>water quality effects including to salinity and 303(d) listed water bodies that could be further impaired</p> <p>irreversible consequences through loss of soil or soil productivity</p> <p>increased sediment and lowered watershed integrity could affect watershed conditions including riparian or wetland resources.</p>	<p>Potential water quality effects, soil productivity loss, and increased sedimentation and impacts on watersheds are addressed under the impacts common to all alternatives sections of the soil and water chapter. Please, see Sections 4.13.1 through 4.13.1.15.</p> <p>Irreversible consequences through loss of soil productivity and sedimentation are also acknowledged in Section 4.13.6 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW14	<p>Please discuss resource effects and acknowledge the risks of land and water degradation.</p>	<p>The analysis of potential impacts for all resources are provided in Chapter 4. The analysis of potential impacts relative to soil and water is provided in Section 4.13.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW15	<p>Please acknowledge that some of the management actions could result in long-term increased erosion, water quality degradation, and watershed deterioration, particularly from the magnitude of mineral/oil/gas</p>	<p>Potential long-term effects of management decisions on soil and water resources are acknowledged in Sections 4.13.1.1 through 4.13.1.15 for all alternatives, Sections 4.13.2 and its</p>	

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			development. This is especially true in areas with erosive soils, high salinity, and lower vegetative conditions.	subsections by individual alternative, and Sections 4.13.5 and 4.13.6.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW16	Please consider that loss of soil at roads, well pads, or eroded from activities (including minerals, livestock grazing, recreation, or other uses) is not “reversible” with respect to surface water quality. Loss of topsoil and organic layers changes the soil profile for decades or centuries. Even with mitigation and revegetation efforts, the land productivity would not be equivalent to pre-disturbance conditions for a very long time. The soil would experience irreversible impacts – even without excessive erosion – from well pads, roads, and other activities which remove native topsoil along with its microorganisms. This applies equally to areas with and without biological soil crusts. Loss of soil productivity is part of the CEQ definition of irreversible impacts.	See comment response SW9.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW17	Since a risk to ground water resources has been identified here, please identify mitigation related to protection of ground water resources.	Most groundwater issues addressed during the site-specific well construction phase, as the requirements of Onshore Order No. 1 are applied to the well design at this time. The BLM also has authority over the plugging and abandoning of wells. The well-plugging design is partially based on the need to isolate and protect usable water and prevent it from mixing with non-usable water within the bore-hole.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW43 (LSW-1)	If additional areas in Alternative C are needed for watershed/ecosystem health, clarify what consequences to their health would occur in Alternative A.	Potential environmental consequences from each proposed alternative are disclosed in Chapter 4 by resource and by resource management action. Within each section, the potential impacts of alternatives are compared to each other.	
USFS— Ashley	G-19	SW44	Since the RMP does not identify priority watersheds and does not consider all watershed influences	Priority watersheds would be identified in collaboration with the state, counties, Tribes, and	

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National Forest		(LSW-2)	regarding water quality, how does the citation of the Unified Federal Policy for a Watershed Approach to Federal Land assure protection?	Division of Water Rights as part of developing watershed protection and enhancement plans under all alternatives (see Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW45 (LSW-3)	What soil and water protection is provided in other uses than oil and gas? Are the Utah Non-point Source Plan Appendices included?	<p>Management actions that afford protection to soil and water resources can be found under most resource and land use programs in the tables located in Chapter 2. In particular, see the sections on livestock grazing, recreation, and riparian resources.</p> <p>The Utah Non-Point Source Plan Appendices are not included in the RMP. They are incorporated by reference. Many of the appendices, as well as the body of the plan, are available from the Utah Division of Water Quality website found at http://www.waterquality.utah.gov/documents/NPSPplan.html. A complete paper set of the appendices can be requested via this website.</p>	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW46 (LSW-4)	Please acknowledge the Clean Water Act sections 303(d) and 305(d) in Water Quality	The Clean Water Act and BLM's compliance with it are cited in Table 2.1.1 (Management Common to All Alternatives) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW47 (LSW-5)	Mention the directives for floodplains under EO 11988.	Executive Order No. 11988; Floodplain Management; May 24, 1977 has been added to the References in the PRMP/FEIS.	X
USFS—Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW48 (LSW-6)	Include a discussion of groundwater resources and effects to them from oil development, grazing, and recreation.	Groundwater resources in the Vernal Planning Area are described in Section 3.13.4.2 of the PRMP/FEIS. Potential impacts on them are disclosed in Section 4.13 and its subsections.	

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USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW49 (LSW-7)	Clarify how the aquifers described in the RMP mesh with those mapped by the USGS and Ashley NF.	Information has been added to Section 3.13.4.2 denoting the relationship between the aquifers described in the RMP and those mapped by the USGS and Ashley National Forest to the extent that such information is available.	X
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW50 (LSW-8)	Discuss what surface water effects could occur from ground water withdrawals?	Section 4.11.1 acknowledges surface water effects from groundwater withdrawals relative to riparian areas.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW51 (LSW-9)	Include a discussion of the present regulatory legislation for ground water including: Safe Drinking Water Act 1974, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan	Comment noted.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW52 (LSW-10)	Mention the TDML assessment on the lower Ashley Creek that is pending approval to demonstrate that an effort toward remediation has begun.	The BLM does not believe that such a demonstration is necessary and would become quickly outdated in an RMP intended to serve for 15 to 20 years.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW53 (LSW-11)	Include additional laws and regulations relating to water quality such as State of Utah Water Quality Standards and other laws and treaties with Mexico regarding Colorado River Basin salinity.	Adherence with Utah Division of Water Quality and EPA standards as well as the Colorado River Basin Salinity Act is acknowledged in Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives. See comment response SW51.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW54 (LSW-12)	Include stipulations for groundwater protection, such as casing requirements.	Stipulations are management actions that apply to leases rather than specific exploration and development activities. Since the potential for groundwater intrusion does not exist across all	

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				<p>areas within a lease, broad stipulations for casing or other groundwater protection would be inappropriate and unnecessary. However, the BLM reviews the geological condition, presence/absence of groundwater/aquifer sources, etc. for every application to drill (APD) on a case-by-case basis. If the BLM determines that a risk exists for an individual drilling activity to impact a groundwater source, conditions of approval are applied to that APD that require protections such as casing, cement lining, or other techniques for isolating the groundwater from the bore site.</p>	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW55 (LSW-13)	Adverse effects to riparian areas would be a violation of EOs 11988 and 11990 and the No Net Loss of wetlands provisions for federal agencies. Cite references to support the grazing benefits.	Executive Order 11988 is specific to floodplains, which are not necessarily synonymous with wetlands. Executive Order 11990 is specific to the protection of wetlands. The commenter does not identify how allowing adverse impacts to riparian areas would be a violation of these EOs. Riparian areas are not the same as wetlands or floodplains. Riparian areas are managed in accordance with the BLM's national policy on riparian management. The provisions for riparian area management are outlined in Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW56 (LSW-14) ME- TempA (LSW-14) in BLM 10-08 table	If “reclamation and restoration” of minerals/energy sites upon abandonment results in “less stream sedimentation” then is stream sedimentation occurring during operation of these sites?	Stream sedimentation is not occurring at these sites as conditions of approval on permits where sedimentation is possible require that measures be put in place to control the runoff of sediments into adjacent streams.	

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USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	SW57 (LSW-15)	If all alternatives result in impacts to soil, they may be in violation of Colorado River quality laws and Clean Water Act.	Impacts to soils do not necessarily equate with water quality reductions. The RMP commits to adherence with the Clean Water Act, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Act, Utah Division of Water Quality, and EPA regulations for water quality within the Vernal Planning Area and includes stipulations under Alternatives A, B, C, and E to reduce the potential impact of soil erosion on water sources by placing restrictions on development on steep slopes in areas of erodible soils and within 100 meters of riparian areas (see Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) and Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
USFS— Ashley National Forest	G-19	VI49 (LVI-1)	Mention the Wilderness Acts, High Uintas Wilderness, and Flaming Gorge NRA in this section and affects on visibility to these properties.	The analysis of impacts on visibility in Class I areas is provided in Section 4.2.2.6.7.4 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administratio n	G-20	WH43 (AWH-1)	Alternative D is the only acceptable alternative for Trust Lands. There is already conflict and range use issues with the existing “unofficial” wild horse herd. To make this an official HMA would just compound and extend the existing problems.	Comment noted.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administratio n	G-20	WH44 (AWH-2)	In these paragraphs it states that a decision in the 1985 Book Cliffs RMP had been made to remove the herd, but the decision was never implemented. The reason for removal was that it may not be suitable habitat due to elevation. In the paragraph it mentions that fences would be required between the State (Trust Lands) and the BLM.	Comment noted.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administratio n	G-20	WH45 (AWH-3)	Even though there is not an official herd, the Utah trust lands in the area are having large amounts of forage removed by the horses with no compensation for the removal.	See comment responses WH9 and WH17.	

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School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration	G-20	WH46 (AWH-4)	The BLM is unable to control the number and the area in which the horses roam. Points in case: 20 years have passed and implementation of a decision still has not happened. On May 10, 2005, Trust Lands staff observed a large group of wild horses on Willow Flats within the main block of trust lands.	Comment noted.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration	G-20	WH47 (AWH-5)	Conflict with the horses already exists and would only increase with Alternative A.	Comment noted.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration	G-20	WH48 (AWH-6)	The area being considered for wild horse herds is not ecologically suitable for the wild horses. This area includes both the Horse Point and Winter Ridge Allotments which have combined 452 AUMs suspended from the grazing permittees due to the lack of available forage. Also, according to Appendix L of the RMP, 36.8% of these two allotments is in fair or poor condition which is below acceptable conditions (38,808 acres in good or excellent condition and 22,551 acres in poor or fair condition). The Wild Free-roaming Horse and Burros Act of 1971, Public Law 92-195, Sec. 3(a), states "...The Secretary shall manage wild free-roaming horses and burros in a manner that is designed to achieve and maintain thriving natural ecological balance on public lands... It is questionable that Public Law 92-195 will be met by adding horses to an area already experiencing ecological problems.	See comment response WH35.	
School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration	G-20	WH49 (AWH-7)	The Utah State Trust Lands Administration does not feel it is their obligation or fiduciary responsibility to build fences and other structures to keep wild horses from entering trust lands where they are not welcome.	The RMP does not indicate or imply anywhere in the document that the SITLA would be responsible for constructing fences adjacent to herd management areas. The BLM would construct such fences where they were determined to be necessary or appropriate in lieu of other management actions.	

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Dept. of Agriculture and Food	G-21	LG174 (JLG-1)	There is a need for flexibility of grazing times in the management plan. Weather conditions, husbandry practices and economic impacts can all create the need for some adjustment in grazing schedules. Especially true for sheep ranchers; producers need to lamb on the winter BLM range before moving to spring and summer sites, e.g.	There is no data that says that sheep ranchers need to lamb on BLM range, in fact within the VFO very few of the sheep operators lamb on the BLM. If we are to have a true flexibility system then the permittees also need to have the flexibility built into their operations that provide for them to be able to leave the allotments early (i.e. in case of low precipitation in the spring when the cold season species have little soil moisture to re-grow or continue to grow, in some cases this could be as early as the end of March).	
Dept. of Agriculture and Food	G-21	LG175 (JLG-2)	Sheep permit holders have demonstrated good stewardship by reducing their numbers during these drought years. They want to maintain viable and healthy grazing units.	Comment noted.	
Dept. of Agriculture and Food	G-21	LG176 (JLG-3)	Well drilling planned for these allotments may require the sheep to leave or may cause too much disruption to the sheep. Both activities can coexist. Drilling activities should be adjusted around grazing schedules for specific areas to create a plan to minimize impact to both parties. Creation of additional watering sites could help with this scheduling. Much of the area has limited amounts of grazing due to availability of water, if additional grazing acres were made usable, sheep could be rotated around to reduce the interaction between the two activities. Utah ranchers have expressed support for such a plan. District should allow enhancement of improved water sources by the ranchers.	The BLM has and will continue to encourage and allow the permittees to participate as an affected party in the development of the NEPA documents, in this case specifically the Oil & Gas NEPA documents.	
Dept. of Agriculture and Food	G-21	SO56 (JSO-1)	Sheep ranching contributes \$31 million to the vitality of rural Utah. More significantly, this income generally stays in the county, creating a multiplier effect that produces even more income for residents and merchants. Is also a big part of the economic,	The BLM acknowledges the importance of sheep ranching to the local communities. The plan has no decisions expected to negatively impact the industry. AUMs per alternative presented in Section 4.7 include sheep in their allotments.	

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			historical and cultural fabric of the Uinta Basin. Given recent drought, these ranchers need your help with access to viable grazing areas so they can stay in business.		
UBAOG	G-22	AQ96	BLM lacks authority to set the standards to identify desired future conditions. Achievement standards are set by the State of Utah and the EPA.	The BLM is not attempting to set ambient air quality standards. BLM recognizes the primacy of the State Air Quality agency and EPA to set air quality standards. This sentence applies to those criteria that BLM can control to influence future conditions.	
UBAOG	G-22	AQ97	The cancer related health risks are based on a worst case exposure scenario that isn't even reasonable considering the remote location of the HAP emitting facilities.	The incremental risk assessment used two types of receptors, one of which is the "Maximally Exposed Individual (MEI)". It is understood that this represents an upper-bound on possible incremental risks due to the conservative assumptions associated with this receptor.	
UBAOG	G-22	AQ98	This section reviews the visibility analysis and Section 4.2.2.6.7.5 reviews the deposition analysis. This modeling analysis consisted of only BLM sources. It should be noted that current modeling requests from EPA Region 8 require including all sources within a 200 KM radius from the source for deposition.	See comment response AQ76.	
UBAOG	G-22	AQ99	The cumulative effects to air quality associated with Alternative D should be less than the three action alternatives due to the prescribed burning of about 105,525 fewer acres of land over the next decade under Alternative D.	A whole range of source types are included in the cumulative analysis.	
UBAOG	G-22	AQ146	Prescribed burns would be consistent with the State of Utah Division of Environmental Quality permitting process and timed so as to minimize smoke impacts. BLM should recognize that more fires must occur to regain natural ecosystem balance for fire prone systems and that air quality especially visibility in fire season will be diminished back to what it was naturally	Comment noted.	

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			when fires were more frequent.		
UBAOG	G-22	AQ147	Section 2.4.2 states that the VPA is an attainment or unclassifiable area for all pollutants. This statement refers to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as set forth in 40 CFR 50 (50.4 through 50.12). Being in "attainment" means that current measured air quality values for the regulated pollutants do not exceed any of the NAAQS standards. Attainment is assessed on a pollutant by pollutant basis, and so an area can be attainment for one pollutant and be non-attainment for another. The nearest non-attainment area to the VPA is Utah County Utah which is considered non-attainment for CO. Unclassifiable means that there isn't enough data to make a determination for a particular pollutant.	See comment response to AQ89.	
UBAOG	G-22	AQ148	Section 2.4.2.2 mentions two areas that have the potential of impacting the VPA in relation to the NAAQS standards. Dust from construction activities and smoke from prescribed burns by the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Since there are currently no particulate monitors operating in the area, neither of these activities should present a problem in the VPA.	The presence or absence of a monitor does not affect the potential impacts of a given activity.	
UBAOG	G-22	AT6	Strike: "employs timing and sequencing of events" Replace with "would identify land objectives and would authorize actions to achieve those objectives". The RMP should identify the desired outcome or land objective and manage to achieve the objective. As written, the RMP imposes numerous prescriptions that prohibit otherwise lawful uses without any assurance	The RMP identifies goals and objectives for the entire planning area in addition to individual resource programs. See Table 2.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS under Management Common to All Alternatives. Management prescriptions can be tied to the goals and objectives. For example in Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS under Goals and Objectives:	

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			that the restrictions will achieve any identified land resource objective.	<p>“Maintain, restore, improve, protect, and expand riparian-wetland areas so they are in proper functioning condition and meet Utah Rangeland Health Standards for their productivity, biological diversity, and sustainability, and achieve an advanced (late-climax seral stage) ecological status, except where resource management would require an earlier ecological status for such purposes as vegetation diversity.”</p> <p>One of the prescriptions put forward to achieve this goal is in Table 2.1.16 in the PRMP/FEIS under Management Common to All Alternatives:</p> <p>“Allow no new surface-disturbing activities within active flood plains, public water reserves, or 100 meters of riparian areas unless:</p> <p>There are no practical alternatives.</p> <p>Impacts would be fully mitigated.</p> <p>The action was designed to enhance the riparian resources.”</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	FM2	This summary fails to address the relative merits of the four alternatives based on woodland and forest decisions.	Section 4.4.2.8 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to summarize the effects of woodland and forest management decisions on fire management to each alternative summary.	X
UBAOG	G-22	FM3	In event of a fire or prescribed burn, for 3-1/2 years you can't put anything on it. Can suspend oil acquisition, etc. Cattle would be off for 3 years. If this is implemented we would be opposed to prescribed burns. This section should be re-written to include provisions of the recent IM on this subject.	Section 4.13,1 of the PRMP/FEIS makes no mention of suspensions due to prescribed burns. IM 2004-007 (Land Use Plan and Implementation Plan Guidance for Wildland Fire Management) states that grazing and other surface disturbing activities would not be allowed for 2 years or until	

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				vegetation is re-established.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC7	This is a programmatic RMP, and this fact should be discussed and described in the document.	Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS describes the programmatic nature of the RMP and its relationship to more specific planning and NEPA documents.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC9	<p>The RMP appears to be trying to manage the wilderness inventory areas contrary to the settlement. BLM can identify wilderness character under § 201 of FLPMA but it cannot manage public lands to protect wilderness character. State of Wyoming v. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, ** F. Supp.2d ** (D. Wyo. 2003)(holding the Forest Service lacks implied authority to protect wilderness character); see also 43 U.S.C. § 1711 (BLM cannot manage based on inventory) The RMP misconstrues the settlement terms in assuming that BLM can protect wilderness character identified in the inventory. In fact the settlement makes it quite clear that the inventory cannot be the basis for managing these areas as if they were wilderness study areas. For example Four Mile, Coyote Basin and Lower Green are all relatively small inventory areas that were originally excised from the Desolation Canyon WSA due to intrusions of man.</p>	<p>The BLM's authority for managing lands to protect or enhance wilderness characteristics comes directly from FLPMA Section 202 (43 U.S.C. §1712). This section of BLM's organic statute gives the Secretary of the Interior authority to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield. Nothing in this section constrains the Secretary's authority to manage lands as necessary to "achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences." (FLPMA, Section 202(c) (2) (43 U.S.C. §1712(c) (2)).) Further, FLPMA makes it clear that the term "multiple uses" means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land and that the Secretary can "make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . ." (FLPMA, section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c)).) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including wilderness character management, amongst the various resources in a way that provides uses for current and future generations.</p> <p>In addition, the BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) directs BLM to "identify decisions to protect or preserve wilderness characteristics (naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive and</p>	

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				unconfined recreation). Include goals and objectives to protect the resource and management actions necessary to achieve these goals and objectives. For authorized activities, include conditions of use that would avoid or minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics.”	
UBAOG	G-22	GC10	43 CFR 16.10.3-2, (e) provides that the governor shall identify any known inconsistencies with State or Local plans, policies or programs. Rewrite.	This concern is addressed in Section 1.5 of the PRMP/FEIS as Step 8 in the “Steps in the BLM Land Use Planning Process.”	
UBAOG	G-22	GC11	Rewrite to include: State Land Use Management policies codified in Utah Code Sec 63-38d-401 as amended.	Chapter 1 for the PRMPO/FEIS has been rewritten. The comment is no longer applicable.	X
UBAOG	G-22	GC12	In the heading where it says County Land Use Plans, add the words "Policies and Programs".	See comment response GC11.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC13	Add "Duchesne County Public Land Implementation Plan."	Section 1.10 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include the addition as suggested.	X
UBAOG	G-22	GC14	Have these gone through the NEPA review? Make a comment of the appropriateness of referring to non-NEPA documents.	The review of plans and documents as part of the RMP planning process considers those plans that are available at the time of the review and that have been implemented by agencies, governments, or other entities having jurisdiction over lands or resources within or adjacent to the planning area, regardless of whether or not they are NEPA documents. Exclusion of non-NEPA documents from consideration would also exclude such plans as those of counties and local governments.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC15	We have previously asked that a description of surface disturbing activities be included in the glossary.	The glossary in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include a definition of “surface disturbance activities.”	X
UBAOG	G-22	GC15A	Failure to provide a definition for surface disturbing activities prevents analysis and disclosure of impacts. Throughout the document there are references with	The definition supplied in the glossary is consistent with the definition used in analysis. As such, no re-analysis of proposals involving surface disturbance	

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			<p>surface disturbing activities which are not consistent. It is impossible to determine if restrictions placed on surface disturbing activities apply equally to livestock grazing, recreation, oil and gas development, etc. Many areas across the resource area have been designated at NSO in this plan. As written, the lack of definition does not make it clear what activities may take place in NSOs areas such as grazing, recreation etc. Define surface disturbing activities and re-analyze proposals involving surface disturbance.</p>	<p>is necessary.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC16	<p>The RMP does not define surface disturbing, although it is assumed that the term applies to actual construction of a road, where vegetation is removed and soil is mixed or removed.</p>	<p>See comment response GC15.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC17	<p>The detail of analysis is not consistent. Example: Air quality and poaching is said to increase if mineral activity is increased, yet, it is not addressed in recreation. The impacts of wildlife prescriptions on development are understated. Socioeconomic impact fails to include multipliers. Failure to address these issues understates impacts.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC18	<p>Throughout this section there are stipulations that do not provide for modification or waivers. The lack of ability to waive or modify stipulations is replacing management with protection and excludes the possibility of the use of adaptive management now and in the future.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC20	<p>Concerning line of sight. This is not consistent with the Uintah County Plan. This should be a matter of timing not a matter of visual.</p>	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to</p>	

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				<p>the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC21	What is the definition of "active flood plains"?	The glossary in the Final EIS has been revised to include a definition of "active flood plain" to the existing definition of Flood Plan.	X
UBAOG	G-22	GC22	[Regarding the] Diamond Mountain Planning Area and Book Cliffs Planning Area, NSO, [for all alternatives]. If the BLM definition of "surface disturbance activities" is used, then there could be no use of the campgrounds.	The limitation on surface disturbing activities would not apply to needed recreational infrastructure (note the exception statement).	
UBAOG	G-22	GC8	Strike "often-conflicting" and replace with "land".	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not</p>	

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				<p>substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	GC8A	The assumption that recreation or aesthetic land uses conflict is over-stated.	The statement in question regarding land use conflicts refers to all land uses, not just aesthetic and recreational, which were merely provided as examples of how some desired uses of public lands have changed since the last RMP was completed.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC124 (GC8a)	In general the RMP does not make much of a case for changes in livestock grazing or ACEC's.	The discussion of current grazing conditions within the Vernal Planning Area, which is the basis for management decisions provided within the RMP for livestock and grazing uses, can be found in Section 3.7 of the PRMP/FEIS. The relevance and importance criteria for existing and proposed ACECs are provided in Section 3.14 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	GC125 (GC8b)	The RMP should also acknowledge the historical facts under which agriculture and mining formed the local communities, and the importance of energy uses as well to regional and state interests.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	HZ1	Because of BLM requirements for isolation of natural gas in the well bore and lack of natural escapes of gas, this section should be struck.	<p>In the interest of full disclosure under NEPA, this section is retained.</p> <p>Abatement of the health and safety hazards presented by natural seeps would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG10	The draft contains proposals to retire AUMs and	See comment responses LG1 and LG4.	

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			<p>convert them from livestock to wildlife or other purposes. Recently a copy of a memorandum issued by the Office of the Solicitor, clarification of M-37008 was made available to us. Based on that memo, it is the County's position that before the BLM can accomplish such relinquishments and reallocations, the Secretary must revoke the 1936 orders of withdrawal and reverse or revise the determination that these lands are chiefly valuable for grazing. As written, the draft does not provide for this. The availability of this memo will require a revision of Uintah County's Plan. As written, the RMP draft proposes to approve all voluntary retirements without plan amendments and public involvement. Assignments of retired AUM's would be made for various purposes without further analysis or public input. This is unacceptable and must be rewritten or struck.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	LG11	Strike the first sentence.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG12	Add at the end of the second sentence:	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not	

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			<p>"although proposed rule changes would continue the practice of showing the suspended AUMs on the grazing permit."</p>	<p>limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG13	<p>The RMP proposal to allow the retirement of a grazing permit violates the Taylor Grazing Act, 43 U.S.C. § 315, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act ("FLPMA"), 43 U.S.C. § 1752. It violates the Tenth Circuit decision in Public Lands Council v. Babbitt, 167 F.2d 1287 (10th Cir.1999)</p> <p>Any relinquished grazing permit should be offered to qualified permittees.</p>	See comment response LG4.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG14	<p>"all grazing activities" should include horses, burros, and wildlife.</p>	<p>The statement, as written, does not specifically exclude wild horses, burros, or wildlife from the Comprehensive Land Health Standards.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG15	<p>Add after "allotment(s)":</p> <p>"Commit to and implement appropriate range improvements."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p>	

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				<p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG16	<p>"Maintain or improve the total forage resource using techniques that are compatible with the use and development of other resources and which would meet or exceed Utah BLM Rangeland Health Standards."</p> <p>Add after "would":</p> <p>"make substantial progress and"</p> <p>The grazing rules recognize that making progress towards meeting rangeland health standards is compliance. 43 I.E. §4180.1. The RMP generally omits this key qualifier, which is problematic because in many cases it will take many years to "achieve" range health standards.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.6 (Forage – All Localities) in the PRMP/FEIS (under the subsection entitled Goals and Objectives, has been changed to read as follows:</p> <p>"Maintain or improve the total forage resource using techniques that are compatible with the use and development of other resources and which would meet, make substantial progress toward, or exceed Utah BLM Rangeland Health Standards."</p>	X
UBAOG	G-22	LG17	<p>"Any adjustments in forage assignments to either livestock or wildlife would be based on analysis of monitoring data including long-term vegetation trend, actual use, climate, and utilization. Additionally forage would not be allocated in areas where forage production is less than 25 lbs per acre, which equates to 32 acres per AUM. Areas that are seldom or never grazed by livestock due to physical factors such as slopes greater than 50% and areas that are in excess of four miles from water would not be included in the</p>	Comment noted.	

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			livestock forage allocation. An exception for areas in excess of four miles of water if water is hauled or the areas would be grazed when snow is on the ground. Adjustments would involve permittees and would be implemented through documented mutual agreement or decision."		
UBAOG	G-22	LG18	"Increases or reductions associated with monitoring of base allocations would be evaluated against the established grazing permits, UDWR herd unit objectives, and wild horse Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs) to determine needed adjustments to animal numbers." Based on the TGA, PRIA and MUSYA, BLM should state that it is the goal of BLM to manage the range resource to retain full grazing preference AUMs taking all necessary actions to do so like they say later on under wildlife. Then if necessary then follow the rest of the paragraph. Starting "If it is determined."	<p>The Vernal Field Office PRMP/FEIS proposes allowable uses of the public lands as provided for in FLPMA. Alternative D includes an analysis of the current active preference, while Alternative B emphasizes livestock use, both sheep and cattle, over use by wildlife by allocating additional available forage to livestock.</p> <p>As provided for in FLPMA, the Secretary has the discretion, in the land use planning process, to modify levels of use including livestock grazing. The RMP proposes, in all alternatives, to use monitoring information to adjust forage allocations based on current levels of livestock use, wildlife herd unit objectives, and wild horse AMLs in relationship to objectives set forth in each alternative (see alternative tables). This will assure that allocation levels are within the rangeland's ability to sustain them. While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law for the BLM neither to "retain full grazing preference AUMs" nor to take "all necessary actions to do so". According to FLPMA, BLM is to manage for "multiple uses" which best meet the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the</p>	

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				productivity of the land. The use of monitoring data to adjust forage allocations based on the lands capability is consistent with FLPMA, PRIA, and the TGA.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG19	Livestock grazing is an historic use along the Green River and Brown's Park area. There is little, if any, scientific basis to exclude livestock grazing from this area.	Table 2.1.6 (Forage – All Localities), in the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives provides for a prescription where grazing may be allowed under certain conditions.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG20	BLM lacks the authority to hold grazing permits in "nonuse."	The BLM is not proposing to hold a grazing permit in "nonuse".	
UBAOG	G-22	LG21	The Counties object to the proposed "retirement" of grazing permits. The State of Utah is not qualified to hold grazing permits and must relinquish them. The State is not using the permits, which violates the nonuse permits.	See comment response LG4. The State of Utah does not hold any BLM permits within the Vernal Field Office.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG22	These groups have failed to follow BLM grazing rules by not exercising their grazing permits. BLM has failed to enforce the rules, which would not allow nonuse for more than three years. This entire scheme should be ended now.	Please see comment responses LG4 and LG21.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG23	Grazing is a mandated legal use and not to be reduced to provide for watersheds as provided for in the Taylor Grazing Act, subsequent withdrawals and FLPMA. With proper management, grazing and watershed protection are not incompatible.	See comment responses LG8 and LG10. While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for and recognizing the need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law which restricts BLM from reducing livestock use or to continue allocations at historical levels. The definition of multiple use in Section 103(c) of FLPMA specifically indicates that some lands can be used for "less than	

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				<p>all of the resources” which they are capable of providing. According to FLPMA, BLM is to manage for “multiple uses” which best meets the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the productivity of the land. According to section 2 of the TGA, it is the objective of the act to regulate the occupancy and use of the Grazing Districts and to preserve these lands. Under FLPMA, uses of the land are allocated during the land use planning process. BLM agrees that proper grazing is not incompatible with livestock grazing and most of the Field Office is grazed by livestock. The combinations of uses proposed in the Draft RMP/EIS are varied and diverse across the planning area taking into consideration the current and future needs of the public. This is consistent with both FLPMA and the TGA.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG24	<p>In discussions with BLM staff it is their position that this is not a permanent reallocation and it is only for the life of the plan. The history of these acquisitions and the stated purpose would indicate that the reallocation is permanent.</p>	<p>See comment response LG4.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG25	<p>"Achieve appropriate utilization of the range by livestock, wildlife and wild horses through management prescriptions and administrative adjustments."</p> <p>Replace with</p> <p>"Grazing is an important economic and cultural resource and the BLM goal is to maintain and enhance the industry by retaining full historic grazing preference through management prescriptions."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions</p>	

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				<p>or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Under FLPMA, multiple use and sustained yield are mandated goals of federal land use management plans. Multiple use and sustained yield relative to rangelands means that the range is managed appropriately and within its carrying capacity for the combination of forage users (e.g., livestock, wildlife, wild horses) placing demands on the land. The BLM cannot favor one land use or user group over another when developing land management plans.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG26	<p>"Requests from a permittee to change seasons of use would be a priority if all of the following criteria were met: changes enhance or meet resource objectives contained in the Vernal RMP; allotments(s) are scheduled for assessment the same year a request is made; and funding for the assessment is provided by sources other than BLM."</p> <p>Strike all of the above.</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG27	<p>The VFO has not convened an Advisory Board meeting in over 5 years. This requirement should be struck if board is not required to meet.</p>	<p>Changes to the regulations in 1995 no longer provided for the Grazing Advisory Boards and they were reestablished under State law. They are currently active under Utah States Grazing Improvement Program. The coordination with this</p>	

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				<p>Board is still appropriate and provided for in the grazing regulations. This policy improves coordination and communication with local livestock permittees and improves range management and BLM believes it should remain in effect.</p> <p>Although a meeting has not been recently held, the agreed upon policy remains in effect.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG28	<p>The Counties object to these limits on changes in livestock for several reasons. First, the grazing rules govern such changes and require monitoring data and other relevant information. 43 C.F.R. § 4130.3-2. Second, the limits on crucial deer range or wild horse areas are not within the scope of the rules. Similarly the limits on conversions and range improvements in WSAs are not required in the IMP. Strike or rewrite these provisions.</p>	<p>The allocation of resources and the uses made of BLM lands is a function of the Land Use Planning process. Proposed livestock conversions will be analyzed on a site specific basis considering the criteria as outlined in the plan. This is an appropriate use of the LUP as it allocates uses of the land and guides the management of the BLM lands. Monitoring data and other relevant information will be used to analyze the impacts of livestock conversions and make the decision as to whether or not to approve the proposed conversion.</p> <p>The subsection entitled Criteria for Changing Class of Livestock, in the PRMP/FEIS for Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management), has been revised to read:</p> <p>“Prior to the authorization of any livestock conversions in WSAs, the impacts from any necessary rangeland improvements projects would be assessed.”</p>	X
UBAOG	G-22	LG29	Strike this bullet.	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:	

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				<p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG29A	<p>The RMP establishes the number of AUMs available for livestock grazing and for wild horses. This bullet implies that there would be some movement of livestock AUMs to wild horses. Grazing and their associated AUMs are mandated and legal uses as provided for in the Taylor Grazing Act, subsequent withdrawals and FLPMA. Nowhere is it authorized for the conversion of livestock AUMs to wild horses. Forage for wild horses should have been established at the time of the creation of the HMA and not supplemented by such conversions.</p>	See comment response LG1.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG30	<p>Strike this bullet. Replace with</p> <p>"conversions in WSAs would be made when in compliance with H-8550-1 IMP Chapter 3 Guidelines for Specific Activities -D. The Interim Management Plan (IMP) is to direct activities within the WSAs until such time as congress acts on the designations."</p> <p>It is very specific in the analysis and provisions for such conversions and should not be replaced with language</p>	The subsection entitled Criteria for Changing Class of Livestock, in the PRMP/FEIS for Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management), has been revised to incorporate the suggested change.	X

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			that is inconsistent with the IMP and that is vague.		
UBAOG	G-22	LG31	<p>Strike this paragraph as it is not consistent with the WSA IMP.</p> <p>If not struck it should be provided that such designations should not be more restrictive than requirements of the IMP.</p>	<p>The subsection entitled Criteria for Changing Class of Livestock, in the PRMP/FEIS for Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management), has deleted the bullet item in question to make it consistent with the WSA IMP.</p>	X
UBAOG	G-22	LG32	Strike 1st three paragraphs.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG32A	<p>In 4th paragraph add the following after "resource degradation":</p> <p>"to the extent that rangeland health standards are not being met and progress is not being made, monitoring data show that livestock grazing is the most significant factor and all other options have been exhausted, temporarily close those riparian areas that do not satisfactorily respond to changes in management."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p>	

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				<p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG32B	<p>Most of this section should be deleted entirely, and the riparian or river corridor section needs to be amended to conform to BLM rules. First, the changes need to be based on monitoring data and the data must show that livestock is the primary reason that the area is not meeting or making progress towards meeting standards. In too many cases, there is no monitoring data and it is otherwise very difficult to qualify the role of wildlife, especially big game, or wild horses.</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG33	<p>There cannot be any increased allocation to anything. All AUM's were allocated before PRIA and can only be a reallocation, which should be a separate NEPA process.</p>	<p>BLM is authorized to implement allocation changes through the land use planning process, and a separate NEPA process is not required. Allocation of AUMs is based on range health and availability of forage; active AUMs may be increased or decreased depending on the health and quantity of forage.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG34	<p>The RMP projects a reduction [in AUMs] without explaining the basis or accounting for the likely reductions due to application of RMP standards. The RMP needs to document the changes from Alternative D to Alternative A. If these projections are due to the permit retirements, this is unlawful. If it is something else, this too violates FLPMA since the RMP cannot</p>	<p>As stated in Table 2.1.6 (Forage – All Localities) under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives in the PRMP/FEIS, monitoring would be used to determine the amount of forage available to livestock, wildlife, etc. Adjustments would be based on vegetation trends, actual use, climate, and utilization.</p>	

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			reduce grazing on individual permits without failing to consult, coordinate and cooperate with the permittee.	Adjustments would involve permittees and would be implemented through documented mutual agreement or decision. Table 2.1.6 in the PRMP provides a summary of the proposed actions in Alternatives A – C and E as well as the existing management direction (Alternative D).	
UBAOG	G-22	LG35	The Counties' position is that the number of AUM's for permitted use should be no less than the maximum number sustainable by range conditions as mandated in the allotments and grazing districts as governed by the Taylor Grazing Act and other related grazing legislation, and as contemplated under existing Vernal and Diamond Mountain RMP's.	The Vernal RMP will replace the existing Book Cliffs and Diamond Mountain RMPs, and that as authorized under FLPMA . The Vernal RMP can make changes in the allocation of forage	
UBAOG	G-22	LG36	The current AUM figure of 137,897 is a depressed figure reflecting the scaling back of AUM's in recent years to deal with the current five year drought. As drought conditions abate and forage conditions improve, the current AUM figure should be adjusted back upward to pre-drought numbers, and the current AUM figure should not be seized upon as the new arbitrary maximum.	The 137,897 AUMs is the permitted number which was not decreased by the drought conditions that have existed. Instead it is the average actual use over the past 10 years of 78,500 AUMS that reflects the drought conditions.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG37	Where are the AUMs for horses coming from? It should be noted here. County Plans require forage must be available when reintroductions are made. No AUM should be taken from livestock and wildlife allocations.	Any alternative that proposes reintroduction of wild horses would only occur when rangeland health meets acceptable standards and adequate forage to support the AUMs allocated to livestock, wildlife, and wild horses is found to be available. BLM's commitment to the health, condition, and availability of rangeland and forage for all allocations is found in Chapter 2, Management Common to All (MCA) for Forage, Rangeland Health, and Wild Horses. BLM declines to implement the suggested wording addition as we do not believe it is necessary and	

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				this issue is addressed in the MCA section of the document.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG37A	<p>Add to the beginning of this alternative</p> <p>"if monitoring, field observation, or ecological site inventory indicate that adequate forage is available"</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG37B	<p>The Uintah County Plan requires adequate habitat must exist before introductions or reintroductions. There is no indication of where these AUMs are to come from or if they exist. This is supported in 3.20.2, which indicates that the decision to remove the horses in 1985 was partially based on forage concerns and there is no indication that forage was improved.</p>	See comment response LG8.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG38	<p>The RMP should reflect a goal of retaining the full grazing preference to sustain and enhance the livestock industry. Any additional AUMs will be allocated based on contribution resources invested. The process otherwise outlined violates FLPMA because it makes management a matter of forage, rather than whether resource objectives are being achieved and the reasons that they are not. In addition, the process violates the obligation to coordinate, consult and cooperate because it imposes</p>	<p>The RMP has as a goal (see Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management) in the PRMP/FEIS) for the appropriate use of the range by livestock, wildlife, and wild horses. The BLM recognizes that livestock grazing has been identified as a primary use of public lands; however, BLM has been given the authority under the Taylor Grazing Act and FLPMA to manage grazing to ensure range health and is not required to manage for full grazing preference without regard to resource condition.</p>	

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			a top down reduction without the permittee's involvement or consent.	The goal, therefore, must reflect sustainable yield, which is based on range health and forage availability. BLM monitors range health and land uses to determine sources of rangeland health degradation and implements management actions accordingly. As indicated in Table 2.1.8 in the PRMP, the BLM will coordinate with permittees.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG39	This is ... inequitable, because the permittee makes the largest investment and yet receives the least compensation.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG40	The omission of wild horses [from analysis of available forage and impacts on forage] is ... inequitable and unrealistic. Wild horse numbers increase by 19% a year and to date BLM has not made any projects or improvements to mitigate the damage done to range resources. BLM policy requires a proportionate reduction [in forage assignments to wild horses] while the RMP would put the burden entirely on the permittee.	The impacts of wild horse management decisions on forage under each alternative are analyzed in Sections 4.7.1, 4.16.2.2, and 4.16.2.14.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG41	Alternative D does not fairly reflect the current no action [relative to forage management.]	As the commenter does not indicate how Alternative D fails to fairly reflect the current no action condition, the BLM cannot address this comment.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG42	Alternative C contradicts BLM rangeland health management policy by only reducing livestock without regard to the causal connection between forage and user or consumer. While the RMP can discuss an alternative that violates law or policy, it needs to fully disclose this fact.	Table 2.1.6 (Forage – All Localities) in the PRMP/FEIS for Alternative C indicates that monitoring would be used to determine if adjustments in forage allocation are needed. Alternative C considers the use by wildlife over livestock as part of the range of alternatives that are required and appropriately considered in the RMP. The commenter is correct that reductions in livestock would not be appropriate if livestock use was not a factor in the forage allocation issue.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG43	All of the alternatives ... suffer from the fact that they do not address resource conditions and would base	Throughout the RMP, the BLM fully commits to management based on resource condition, including	

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			reductions simply on forage.	the condition (quantity and quality) of forage, with the goal of maintaining a healthy and thriving ecosystem. Please, see Tables 2.1.1 through 2.1.27 in Chapter 2 of the PRMP, Management Common to All alternatives, especially those for wildlife, vegetation, forage, rangeland health, and wild horses, for more information about these resource-based goals and commitments.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG44	The Counties do not support disclosing forage allocations, since otherwise BLM is adopting plan conditions that cannot be achieved.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG45	Strike- all of Alternative A. Strike - all of Alternative C.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG45A	The Alternative A criteria for livestock grazing should be deleted entirely. First, it violates FLPMA which provides that seasons of use be established in a grazing permit, not the RMP. 43 U.S.C. 1752(e). Second, it violates the grazing rules to the extent that the RMP would unilaterally amend a grazing permit without monitoring data or other information. 43 C.F.R. 4130.2-1 (changes in grazing use). Third, it also	The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to	

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			<p>violates the requirement that BLM coordinate, consult and cooperate with individual permittees before amending an allotment management plan. 43 U.S.C. 1752(d). This proposal also violates the grazing rules by attempting to substitute principles of phenology for rangeland health standards. BLM has no choice but to follow the Utah standards and cannot amend them without revising the rules with the advisory councils. 43 C.F.R. 4180.2; 43 C.F.R. Part 1784. Finally, from a resource perspective, neither the RMP nor the DEIS justify this departure from established criteria. This alternative is unlawful and should be deleted in its entirety.</p>	<p>determine a reasonable range alternatives that best addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public.</p> <p>An Interdisciplinary team of resource specialist, with on-the-ground knowledge of the planning area, analyzed the current management situation, desired conditions, the uses and activities to create a framework to resolve the issues raised through the development of the alternatives. A balanced approach consistent with FLPMA’s principles of “multiple use” was a key component of the analysis.</p> <p>The FLPMA makes it clear that the term “multiple use” means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land and that the Secretary can “make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . .” (FLPMA, Section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c)).) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including energy and mineral development, as well as conserving and protecting other resource values for current and future generations.</p> <p>The DRMP/DEIS contains alternatives which strike an appropriate balance between environmental protection and development of the mineral resources on our public lands consistent with the requirements of the Mining and Mineral law and FLPMA. The PRMP/FEIS will offer BLM</p>	

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				management the flexibility to protect resource values and uses while allowing for acceptable levels of mineral development.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG46	BLM has made a number of decisions regarding livestock grazing that an RMP cannot unilaterally discard, e.g. public lands are withdrawn as chiefly valuable for domestic livestock grazing, the grazing permits issued pursuant to Taylor Grazing Act and FLPMA, and renewed pursuant to Congressional direction. In these circumstances, BLM does not have the discretion to allow or disallow livestock grazing. Alternatives C and D do not reflect Congressional direction that grazing permits be renewed under the same terms and conditions until BLM does a site-specific evaluation under NEPA. Similarly the efforts to set seasons of use in an RMP without regard to the permit terms also violates federal law and the grazing rules, which require a change in grazing use to be based on monitoring data. The RMP provides no justification in terms of science and data for the stipulated seasons of use.	<p>The BLM has the authority under the Taylor Grazing Act and through the Secretary to make adjustments to grazing use based upon range conditions and to regulate the occupancy and use of public rangelands in order to preserve the land and its resources from destruction or unnecessary injury, and to provide for the orderly use, improvement, and development of the range (43 U.S.C. §315a). FLMPA and PRIA also authorize the BLM to manage public rangelands for multiple use, sustained yield, and all rangeland values (43 U.S.C. §1712 and 43 U.S.C. §§1901(b) (2) and 1903(b)).</p> <p>See comment responses LG4, LG11, and LG26.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG47	The discussion regarding range projects needs to be prefaced with an explanation that these are anticipated projects but are not intended to be a ceiling if additional work is appropriate to meet rangeland health standards and other management objectives. As written, the discussion appears to set ceilings on range projects. The discussion is also troubling in that it fails to show how BLM would actually accomplish these objectives. Unfortunately, more often than not, planned projects are not funded and/or approved. The agriculture industry should not be punished if BLM fails to secure the funding or adopts other priorities.	<p>The information about rangeland improvements contained in Table 2.1.12 (Rangeland Improvements) of the PRMP/FEIS does not represent a ceiling or limit but serves as a relative estimate of such improvements for the purpose of assessing impacts under each alternative. Table 2.1.12 of the PRMP under Management Common to All alternatives for Rangeland Improvements indicates that:</p> <p>“Specific improvements to rangeland health would include, but are not limited to [emphasis added], vegetation treatments, fencing, spring development,</p>	

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				<p>reservoirs, guzzlers, pipelines, and wells.”</p> <p>The entire PRMP and the management actions implemented through it are predicated on the base assumption that the BLM will have the resources available to undertake the actions indicated.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG48	<p>The number of acres for vegetation treatment, especially the differences between Alternatives D and A, make no sense. Vegetation treatment can be equally or even more beneficial for wildlife. There is no explanation for fewer acres. Analysis of proposed habitat improvement projects proposed by the partners for conservation and development and as well as projection of future projects. Allowable treatment acres proposed here must be adjusted to provide for opportunity for completion of this project.</p>	<p>The commenter does not provide any additional information on how or why the acreage differences do not "make sense", nor why or how acreages should be adjusted for an unidentified "this project."</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG49	<p>The RMP never explains the reasons for reducing both range improvement and vegetation treatment.</p>	<p>See comment responses AT61 and LG45.</p> <p>As required by NEPA, the RMP/EIS analyzed a range of alternatives and management actions to ensure that resources are protected and to ensure that a balanced approach was recommended that allows opportunities for legitimate land uses.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG50	<p>The VRM Classes I and II will likely affect range project construction [in addition to minerals production] but the RMP fails to disclose, justify or document this effect.</p>	<p>No VRM classification precludes range improvements. VRM Class I and II designation place greater restrictions on how such actions may be undertaken but do not prevent them. The analysis of anticipated impacts of visual resource management decisions on livestock and grazing, minerals and energy, and vegetation are provided in Sections 4.7.2, 4.8.2.7, and 4.16.2.13, respectively.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG51	<p>The RMP does not disclose what is the full historic grazing preference. The Counties assume it is</p>	<p>For the purposes of the RMP/EIS, the historic preference is the amount of use authorized under</p>	

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			substantially less than 146,220 AUMs.	the existing MFP as modified through implementation of the MFP. As stated on Page 3-35 in Section 3.7 in the DRMP - Livestock and Grazing; 146,161 AUMs are the total permitted use.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG52	The RMP discussion largely omits the economic and cultural importance of grazing and ignores affects of reducing AUMs on private land open space. During the ten years since BLM adopted new grazing rules, the western states have seen more and more ranchers leave the business and sell their private lands for 3-acre homesites. This occurred even during very high cattle prices and low costs of money. It is widely recognized that BLM's increased regulation and hostility to livestock grazing plays a significant role in this trend. If BLM wants to protect open space and wildlife habitat it needs to recognize the importance and even critical role that livestock grazing plays in providing wildlife habitat and open space.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG53	The assumption of limited demand for AUMs is unsubstantiated. If BLM had a number of vacant allotments it could make the case but it does not. The only vacant allotments are those purchased by UDWR.	The commenter has misinterpreted the section of the document to which the comment refers. The statement says that the demand for forage by livestock during the last 10-year period (as reported by permittees themselves) was only 78,500 AUMs as compared to the 137,897 AUMS allocated under existing permits. The statement does not claim that there is no desire by permittees to use more of the AUMs allocated; it is merely a statement of data reported to the BLM.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG54	Strike "resource use conflicts or controversy". The criteria used to classify the allotments is incorrect	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not	

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			and bears little relationship to actual management or resources.	<p>substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Controversy is a legitimate basis for considering management approaches to allotments.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG55	"Positive economic return" this is under grazing	The point of the comment is unclear, and as such, the BLM cannot provide a detailed response.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG56	<p>This conclusion in the RMP is unsupported and inaccurate. The base property for most ranches consists of "farm land" where operators will grow hay. These lands are an integral part of the public lands and the RMP management policies directly affect these lands. These comments have identified the anti-grazing bias throughout the document. The implementation of the RMP without correction will lead to more ranches being sold for development. This more than any other factor will close access to public lands and "fragment habitat" by replacing ranches and grazing allotments with 3 to 5 acre ranchettes. The trend in Colorado and Idaho shows that there is a huge market for this type of development. If BLM were to follow the direction, it would revise the plan to recognize and provide for the economic viability and stability of the livestock industry. Unfortunately the plan fails to even recognize the significant contribution that ranch operations make to maintaining open space, improving rangeland conditions, and providing water for</p>	<p>The linkage between private agricultural pursuits and public lands within the Vernal planning area is acknowledged in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1.</p>	

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			all species, not just livestock.		
UBAOG	G-22	LG11A	The RMP fails to document resource-based reasons to change seasons-of-use. The conflicts arise in large part from the failure to comply with previous RMP decisions regarding wild horses, undocumented theories of phenology, and increased numbers of big game species, which are both numerous and increasing in population and proper use of rangeland health standards.	Where feasible and prudent and consistent with the purpose and need of the RMP and BLM's multiple-use/sustained yield mandate, the BLM developed actions that are compatible with said plan and included them as alternatives in the RMP/EIS. Phenology is and will remain a staple for rangeland management.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG12A	The RMP omits the fact that proposed changes to the grazing rules would restore the practice of showing suspended non-use on a grazing permit, with the opportunity to restore that use. § 4110.3	The RMP must be consistent with all applicable grazing regulations.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG15A	The RMP fails to address the need to actually implement range improvements.	All management prescriptions proposed in the RMP are predicated on the basis that implementation would be accomplished as funding becomes available to accomplish them.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG17A	<p>Paragraph should be struck entirely.</p> <p>"50% slope and limitation of 25 lbs/acre".</p> <p>The DEIS/RMP fails to analyze or disclose the impacts of this proposal.</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LG20A	The grazing rules prohibit nonuse, 43 C.F.R. §4130.1-	The grazing regulations do not prohibit nonuse.	

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			1(g) (limiting nonuse to three years).	See 43 C.F.R. §4130.1-1.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG20B	The RMP essentially attempts to adopt the prohibited conservation use grazing permit while violating the grazing rules regarding nonuse.	The grazing regulations limit nonuse. See 43 C.F.R. §4130.2 (g), (2).	
UBAOG	G-22	LG23A	At the end of this sentence, strike "unless specified elsewhere in the plan".	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG23B	As written, this is not consistent with the Uintah County Plan and violates previous decisions that set aside the land as chiefly valuable for grazing.	See comment response LG8.	
UBAOG	G-22	LG26A	Changes in seasons of use should be based on site specific facts and management decisions. Add: "The Secretary concerned shall also specify therein the numbers of animals to be grazed and the seasons of	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.	

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			<p>use, and that he may reexamine the condition of the range at any time, and, if he finds on reexamination that the condition of the range requires adjustment in the amount or other aspect of grazing use, that the permittee or lessee shall adjust his use to the extent the Secretary concerned deems necessary." 43 U.S.C. § 1752(e)."</p>	<p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR3	<p>The RMP/DEIS states: "If one or more of the above criteria are not met, proposed land ownership changes outside of designated transfer areas would not be approved or would require a plan amendment."</p> <p>Strike</p> <p>"If one or more of the above criteria are not met"</p> <p>Add after "amendment"</p> <p>"unless it was determined to be in the best interests of the affected landowners and in the public interest as well."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR3A	<p>As written, the LTA criteria is too limiting and prescriptive. LTA standards should also consider the interests of local governments, both in terms of land management and protecting the local tax base.</p>	<p>The Land Tenure Adjustments (LTA) criteria contained in the RMP were prepared to be consistent with FLMPA and to achieve the overall management goals of the Vernal Field Office (VFO). Under FLMPA, the VFO notifies government entities with zoning or other land use management jurisdiction over the general geographical area within with adjustments would take place such that these entities may coordinate the exchange with their policies.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	LR4	"No lands would be classified or opened for agricultural entry or leasing in the RMP planning area." If the RMP plans to authorize land exchanges, it is unreasonable to preclude agricultural entry.	See comment response LR1.	
UBAOG	G-22	LR5	The Uintah County General Plan is in direct conflict with removal of desert land entry status (Homestead Act). Acquired land should be governed by the same as other public lands. Strike this provision.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See comment response LR2A.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR6	In the last sentence, the stated acreage of 35,462 does not match the acreage shown on Figure 6, which states 54,031 acres. There should be a table developed which lists these tracts by their location as it is not possible to determine from the map which tracts these are.	Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Disposals has been revised to match the acreage stated on Figure 6. Specific tracts of land suitable for disposal will be identified at the time a specific disposal or exchange is proposed, and the potential impacts of that disposal or exchange will be assessed through site-specific NEPA processes and documents.	X
UBAOG	G-22	LR7	Non-federal lands to be acquired through both Bureau- and public-initiated exchanges must have at least one of the following characteristics:	Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Exchanges/Acquisitions has been revised as suggested.	X

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			<p>Add after "exchanges must":</p> <p>"be in the public interest and have at least one of the following characteristics"</p> <p>FLPMA does not recognize efficiency as a criterion for land acquisition; instead it must be in the public interest.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	LR8	<p>This section provides for acquisition of easements for public access to approximately 70,700 acres of public lands. Chapter 4 fails to analyze the impacts of such acquisitions. Furthermore, more specific descriptions should be made with respect to the location, size, and purpose of such acquisitions.</p>	<p>The specific locations of individual access routes, and therefore acquisitions, are not known at this time and are not required to be identified or evaluated within the RMP. The acreage identified within the RMP is a rough estimate of the likely area needed for the easements and is not specific to a particular route or access corridor. The potential impacts of such acquisitions and intended uses will be analyzed and disclosed in NEPA documents prepared in advance of the acquisitions and implementation of the intended management actions.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR9	<p>"Ashley Creek drainage, White River, Jackson Draw, Warren Draw, Allen Draw, Red Mountain, Wild Mountain-South Pot Creek, Spring Creek, Nine Mile, Red Mountain East and West, and Moon Shine area." The emphasis on acquiring easements lacks of any discussion of public roads and R.S. 2477 rights-of-way.</p>	<p>In the Development of Planning Criteria, it was identified that the RMP will not address RS2477 issues. However, if in the course of trying to establish easements, BLM finds that a county claims a public road to where BLM desires to acquire access to, then BLM would work with the county to ensure that public access is indeed in place prior to proceeding with an easement.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR10	<p>The County objects to Alternative A under "Withdrawals." This alternative reveals a continuing attitude and intent to treat and manage old WIA's and</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	

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			<p>citizens proposed wilderness areas under a non-impairment management standard, which was outlawed under the April, 2003 Wilderness Settlement Agreement. All the acreage figures for the WSR should be revisited. As an example it appears that 320 acres per mile was used to calculate the acreage withdrawal for the White River WSR designation. This is counter to the Act and the acres to be withdrawn should reflect line of sight up to ¼-mile, not to exceed 320 acres per mile. Additionally, here it proposes to withdraw 11,399 acres on the Lower Green for ACEC.</p> <p>As per our previous comments, ACEC's are created to protect resources from irreparable damage not to manage for non-impairment.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	LR11	<p>On the Figure 6 map, the area withdrawal indicated appears to be much greater than 9,048 acres. Additionally the proposed withdrawal is for locatable minerals, which is not indicated on Figure 6.</p>	<p>Figure 6 illustrates both existing and proposed withdrawals. Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS, reflects only proposed withdrawals; there would be no change to existing withdrawals. It is unclear where the commenter obtained the 9,048 acreage figure.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	LR12	<p>Strike:</p> <p>"access should be closed or restricted"</p> <p>Replace with:</p> <p>"In situations when BLM is not required to grant a right-of-way pursuant to law or regulation, BLM can close or limit access. BLM cannot deny access to in holdings or if related to another right."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p>	

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				The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	LR12A	This section overstates BLM's authority and is limited to situations when BLM issues a Title V right-of-way and there is no other legal basis to require BLM to grant access, e.g. telecommunications or pipeline rights-of-way.	BLM does not deny access to inholdings when there is no other access. BLM also does not deny access if related to another right.	
UBAOG	G-22	LR34	All the acreage figures for the WSRs should be revisited. As an example it appears that 320 acres per mile was used to calculate the acreage withdrawal for the White River WSR designation. This is counter to the Act and the acres to be withdrawn should reflect line of sight up to ¼-mile, not to exceed 320 acres per mile. Additionally, here it proposes to withdraw 11,399 acres on the Lower Green for ACEC. As per our previous comments, ACEC's are created to protect resources from irreparable damage not to manage for non-impairment.	The acreage calculation used to determine areas of withdrawals along the White River and other rivers was calculated based upon the maximum allowable withdrawal of 320 acres per mile. At the programmatic level represented by the RMP, such assumptions are appropriate for general management prescriptions, and line of sight evaluations will be made on a case-by-case basis as the need arises.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME8	This principle should be amended to contain a commitment to process [lease] authorizations in a timely manner. [We] understand there is a growing backlog of authorizations and that private industry has contributed funds in an effort to reduce the backlog. The agency must ensure that it has adequate resources to serve its clientele.	The issue is beyond the scope of the RMP.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME14	Continue to meet local and national non-renewable and renewable energy and other public mineral needs. Ensure a viable long-term mineral industry related to energy development while providing reasonable and necessary protections to other resources. "Add following "resources" that are based on science and represent the least restrictive standard to protect the	The commenter's additional language suggestions for Goals and Objectives are covered in Section 1.11 of the RMP. It states the following: "The President's comprehensive National Energy Policy, issued in May 2001, directed the Secretary	

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			resource."	to "...examine land status and lease stipulation impediments to federal oil and gas leasing, and review and modify those where opportunities exist (consistent with the law, good environmental practice and balanced use of other resources)."	
UBAOG	G-22	ME15	National Energy Policy. 1, 2, & 3 does not give a full summation of the National Energy Policy. Either expand or remove all 3 points. Remove the word "by" and add a period after policy. Rewrite to include all policy and directives and re-analyze all proposed management prescriptions in compliance with the law and directives associated with them.	BLM believes that the RMP is in compliance with the law and all of the directives associated with it. As a programmatic document, the RMP need not restate all policy in its entirety. The RMP references the general nature of the law.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME16	This section fails to include the requirements in instructional memorandums which directs the integration of EPCA into the Land Use Planning process. It also fails to include provisions of Executive Order 13212 which states that agencies expedite their review of permits or take other action necessary to accelerate the completion of (energy related projects) while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. In addition, this section fails to address the fact that the Vernal Resource Area is a focus area with respect to EPCA.	Integration of EPCA into the PRMP/FEIS is explained in Section 1.12 How Vernal Field Office Considered EPCA Inventory Information and Concerns. See comment response ME-231.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME17	1st sentence Insert between "applied to leases" and "in the form" "issued after the date of this RMP" 2nd sentence strike "generally reflect the minimum requirements" and replace with "are necessary to protect the resource and would contain provisions/criteria to allow for waiver and modification if warranted."	Section 2.4.8.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows: "Mitigation of oil and gas impacts developed under the plan and applied to leases issued after the record of decision in the form of stipulations would adhere to BLM's standard format. Stipulations generally reflect the minimum requirements necessary to protect or minimize the impacts to the resource and would contain provisions/criteria to allow for waiver and modification if warranted."	X

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UBAOG	G-22	ME17A	BLM cannot lawfully retrofit new terms and conditions into existing leases. Union Oil Co. of Calif. v. Morton, 512 F. 2d 745, 750 (9th Cir. 1975); National Wildlife Federation, et al., 150 IBLA 385 (1999). Nor is it accurate to say that lease stipulations are the minimal requirements to protect the resource.	See comment response ME3.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME18	There are no socioeconomic impacts listed in Actions Common to All.	Table 2.1.9 (Minerals and Energy Resources) Section 2.4.8.2.1 refers to Management Actions Common to All Alternatives, not impacts common to all alternatives. The socioeconomic impacts of proposed management actions under the various alternatives are discussed in Section 4.12 and its subsections and summarized in Table 2.2.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME19	Strike #'s 1 & 2. Part 3809 rules cannot be unilaterally amended to require plans of operation when notice is otherwise all that is required.	Items 1 and 2 are from 43 CFR 3809.11(c). These two items are not unilateral amendments; the finalization of the regulations in January 2001 was preceded by publication of a programmatic EIS and public comment periods for the Draft EIS as well as for the proposed rules.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME20	"The plan would recognize the opportunity for alternative energy development such as wind, solar and geothermal. Individual proposals would be evaluated based on conformance with other program goals and objectives stated in the plan." BLM actively support, the analysis and permitting of such projects.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME21	An NSO classification for the Pelican Lake area is inappropriate because that would illegally withdraw this land from FLPMA's multiple use mandate without Congressional approval. The area has potential for gas production. FLPMA mandates consistency with the County Plan, which calls for mineral development of areas like this. The FLPMA multiple use mandate	FLPMA mandates that multiple uses and sustained yield for public lands be considered in management decisions applied to those lands. It does not mandate that all uses occur on all lands. FLPMA also mandates that federal agencies consider the plans of local and adjacent jurisdictional entities and make an effort to be consistent with them where	

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			requires that you manage for both recreational and mineral values side by side, not that one should exclude the other. After initial development, the presence of a well head in the area would not be intrusive on recreational and other values and uses. The proposal here lacks the analysis required in EPCA, executive order, and other BLM direction.	practical. In addition, the continued management of the 1,020 acre Pelican Lake SRMA as an area of No Surface Occupancy to oil and gas does not preclude industry from drilling into and below the site.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME22	The DEIS/RMP fails to analyze the impacts on oil & gas development [of special designations] and comply with EPCA and IMs directing incorporation of EPCA into RMPs. It requires that management restriction be the least restrictive necessary to protect documented and supportable needs.	The integration of EPCA into the RMP is discussed in Section 1.12. EPCA does not prohibit the use of special designations or multiple overlapping prescriptions, but requires that these prescriptions are the minimum necessary to maintain sustained yield. The BLM believes it has met this mandate and has only identified special designations where such designations are necessary.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME23	Provide a map for each mineral as you did for oil and gas, and for each alternative A, B, C, D. The maps, as they are, are impossible to read.	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS. However, BLM did review the maps for clarity.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME24	It is impossible to find a corresponding classification	Figures 15-18 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised	X

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			(combined hydrocarbon areas) on the maps. What are combined hydrocarbon areas; are they the combined areas set forth in figures 11-14? Are they oil shale and tar sands? Do they include oil and gas and coal bed methane? The acreage figures on page 2-7 for open standard lease, open controlled surface and open NSO, don't reconcile with the combination of the other numbers on page 2-7 for the other minerals. In short, the whole Minerals section is confusing when it comes to clear classification of mineral classes' types and when it comes to acreage figures.	<p>to correct the acreage figures and to show Special Tar Sand Area leases.</p> <p>Combined Hydrocarbon areas are the areas designated as Special Tar Sand Areas, which are not shown in Figures 15-18 (can somewhat be implied from leasing decisions). Coal Bed methane natural gas is considered to be part of the oil and gas estate.</p> <p>All decisions related to oil shale and tar sands leasing in this PRMP/FEIS are being deferred to the ongoing PEIS for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing. For more information please see Section 1.10.9.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	ME25	In these alternatives it provides that a certain number of miles would be open for gilsonite leasing and that additional veins located through field study or prospecting, not shown on Figure 15, would be available if such are within open category lands. As described above the method of identifying areas that would be available for prospecting, leasing and development of gilsonite do not properly describe all possible gilsonite occurrence areas. It is our recommendation that a Northwest Southeast rectangle that would encompass all of the potential occurrence area be developed to identify areas for prospecting, leasing and development of gilsonite.	<p>Areas closed to gilsonite leasing were determined based on the analysis of exploration and development impacts to other resources.</p> <p>Table 2.1.9 (Minerals and Energy Resources) states:</p> <p>"172 miles or 36,846 acres would be available for prospecting, leasing, and development of gilsonite (additional veins located through field study or prospecting not shown on Figure 15 would also be available if such are within "open" category lands)."</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	ME26	This paragraph fails to mention that these resources are located in an EPCA focus area.	Section 3.8.1.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised mineral and energy resources are located in the EPCA focus area.	X
UBAOG	G-22	ME27	As written, increased royalties are listed as a benefit. Local tax base severance tax source and supply sales also increase benefits and are not listed. This	Direct or indirect contributions to local communities from sales, severance taxes, and other royalties are	

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			statement appears in other resources and should be corrected.	addressed in Section 4.12.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME28	Here it is stated that there is a 19.4% increase in tar sands available for lease for Alternative A as compared to Alternative D. Between Alternative D and Alternative A there is an increase of 34,391 acres or 9% in the total acres of tar sands. The impacts are hidden because the acreages have increased. Percentage of change should be based on the same acres as in no action to disclose impacts of proposed management prescriptions.	<p>The section in question actually states that there is a 16% increase in acres open for tar sands leasing under Alternative A over Alternative D. Under Alternative D, 229,076 acres would be open to special tar sands leasing. Under Alternative A, 263,468 acres would be open to special tar sands leasing. This is an increase of 34,392 acres open for leasing, which represents approximately 15% of the total acres open under Alternative D, and the percent of increase over Alternative D that Alternative A represents. Acres closed to tar sands leasing under each alternative are irrelevant for the statement in question, which is only discussing acres open to tar sands leasing. Differences in the total acres of tar sands areas under each alternative are also irrelevant for the same reason—the percentage in question is only related to actual acres open for leasing.</p> <p>In addition, all decisions related to oil shale and tar sands leasing in the PRMP/FEIS are being deferred to the ongoing PEIS for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing. For more information please see Section 1.10.9.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	ME29	Figure 15 shows veins open and closed. New veins are unlikely to be open as they would have to lay over, under, or beside the ones indicated! There is no indication of the width of veins shown on Figure 15. As written, new veins would be closed unless they lay under or over those veins identified. It is impossible to determine the location and size of open veins.	<p>See comment response ME 23.</p> <p>Note: Section 4.8.2.1.1.2 discloses the impacts from proposed management to Gilsonite leasing for Alternative A only.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	ME30	The total acres open and closed has increased	See comment response ME28.	

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			between Alternative D and Alternative A, thereby hiding the actual impacts. Percentage of change should be based on the same acres as in no action to disclose impacts of proposed management prescriptions.		
UBAOG	G-22	ME31	The analysis concludes that Alternative C would reduce long-term adverse impacts on the Oil, Gas and CBM resources "by ensuring that the resource was available to support a viable, long-term mineral industry." This conclusion is based on the assumption that minerals that cannot be used today could be used in the future. However, there is no guarantee that lands deemed unsuitable for such use under Alternative C today will ever be made available for future resource extraction, that other sources of energy may be developed and the National immediate energy need.	Section 4.8.2.1.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to delete the statement in question.	X
UBAOG	G-22	ME31A	The statements fail to consider EPCA directions requiring impediments to energy development be reduced and management restrictions be the least restrictive.	See comment response ME22.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME32	Here it is implied that the buffer is in alternatives other than "D" but the alternatives don't reflect that.	See comment response ME33.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME33	Here it is implied that Alternative A contains a 200-foot buffer zone but a check of the alternatives does not list one. Additionally it states that Alternative D does not require the buffer but it does.	The controlled surface use and NSO stipulations related to cultural resources are not related to buffer zones but to restrictions applied to OHV travel in areas of high cultural site density. Buffer zones are not implemented under any alternative. Please, see Section 4.3.2.1.1 for Alternative A.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME34	If Alternative C would close 48,801 acres to oil and gas leasing, how can that acreage be included in the total number of acres available for oil and gas leasing in Table 4.8.1?	The acreage closed to oil and gas leasing under Alternative C is included in the "Closed to Leasing" line item in Table 4.8.1, not in the acreage open to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulations.	

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UBAOG	G-22	ME35	<p>In the alternatives there are proposed management prescriptions such as VRM, NSO, and oil and gas closures. If these are for recreational purposes they must be analyzed here. If they are for other resources then they should be removed. As written, when analyzing it is difficult to determine the purpose for the NSO's, etc. All actions proposed for recreation should be limited to management of recreation not other resources.</p>	<p>See Table 2.1.3 (Recreation Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.14 (Recreation – Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.18 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers (SWR)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.20 (Special Designations – Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Management decisions related to NSO and oil and gas closure are primarily related to special designations, special status species and wildlife decisions, and VRM classification. NSO stipulations and oil and gas closures may overlap with areas within which recreation is anticipated, but are not implemented specifically for the purpose of recreation.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	ME36	<p>A map should be included in the draft RMP that shows these areas of 40% slope and the acres of 40% slope calculated for analysis purposes. Such restriction, do to their existence along streams become linear features</p>	<p>Under Alternative A, exceptions and modifications are possible for the prohibition on development on slopes greater than 40% on a case-by-case basis. No such exceptions or modifications would be</p>	

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			and become an impediment to developing roads and pipelines. In some cases considerable increase in disturbances to other resources will result when these areas must be circumvented.	available under Alternatives C or D. Under alternative B, development on slopes greater than 20% would require an erosion control plan that was approved by the BLM prior to construction. Please, see Appendix K, Fragile Soils/Slopes for a summary of these management alternatives.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME37	Here it states "operators have demonstrated a willingness to comply with spatial and temporal restrictions." Strike this sentence as it is not true. The restrictions have been a point of contention since they were imposed and throughout the RMP process. Such acceptance does not equal an analysis of impacts such as affect on RFD and socio-economics.	Section 4.8.2.7 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows: "Operators have complied with..."	X
UBAOG	G-22	ME38	The draft fails to analyze and disclose the impact of compressing development activity in short periods and the ability of industry to comply.	The possible impacts to minerals activities are discussed in this section. As for ability of industry to comply, the mitigation measures would be reflected as lease stipulations, etc. Industry should be fully aware of what mitigation measures are associated with the lease when it is acquired. Well specific environmental reviews are conducted as applications for permit to drill are received and any site specific impacts based on dense drilling in limited time frames would be addressed at that time. Oil and gas operators are responsible for complying with lease terms and conditions of approval that are attached to approved APD's.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME39	When reviewing protection of raptors in the guidelines, BMP, Matrix, Appendix K, and here, the ability to modify Raptor Guidelines and Practices is confusing. In Appendix K, modifications are not permitted.	All sections in the PRMP/FEIS relating to raptors have been revised or clarified.	X

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			Perhaps some wordsmithing would help, as it appears the word modification used in Appendix K stipulation descriptions are the same as discussed here.		
UBAOG	G-22	ME40	This statement fails to address the fact that these restrictions have been placed on several hundred thousand acres and fails to consider overlap of such restrictions. There are some areas that will be open for only 4.5 months, this will increase impacts on other species and resources by concentrating activities in short time periods. The limited number of drilling rigs would reduce the number of wells that could be drilled in a given year.	See comment responses ME41 and ME201. The section in question discusses the anticipated impacts of wildlife management decisions on mineral resources. The anticipated impacts of wildlife management decisions on wildlife and on special status species are addressed in Sections 4.15.1 and 4.19.2.12.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME41	Here it states that impacts on mineral resources development from wildlife management decisions would not be substantive as there is only a 15-day increase in timing restrictions. The discussion fails to address the large increases in the sizes of these ranges. These impacts must be re-evaluated.	The section states that compared to Alternative D, wildlife management decisions on Alternative A would not have substantially more of an impact on minerals resources because of the 15-day increase in timing restrictions. It is unclear how the commenter arrived at the conclusion that the ranges to which the wildlife management timing restrictions apply are different for the different alternatives. The geographic areas to which the restrictions apply are the same for all alternatives (see Figure 34). If the commenter is referring to the differences between alternatives relative to the application of timing and controlled surface use stipulations as reflected in Figures 11 through 18, the reader should be aware that these differences reflect geographic differences in stipulations related to special status species. The impacts of these increased areas for seasonal and spatial buffers relative to special status species are addressed under Section 4.8.2.5 and its subsections.	

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UBAOG	G-22	ME42	The statement that none of the alternatives would result in more than a 0.4% net decrease in the number of predicted oil and gas wells is deceiving. Based on the information in Tables 4.8.2, 4.8.3, 4.8.4 and 4.8.5, Alternatives A, B and C all provide more opportunity for oil and gas well drilling than Alternative D. However, the difference between Alternatives B and C is about 2.5%.	Sections 4.8.3 and 4.8.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to read: "Under all action alternatives there would be a net increase in the number of predicted oil, gas, and CBM wells as compared to the No Action alternative."	X
UBAOG	G-22	ME43	Here it states "most of the riparian zone is listed as NSO." Neither the Common to All in the Riparian portion or in the Matrix supports this statement.	See Appendix K (Riparian Resources) regarding NSO stipulations that apply throughout the planning area.	
UBAOG	G-22	ME44	This section implies that water used for drilling may impact the species. Given the number of wells proposed in the RFD to be drilled each year, the amount needed would be approximately 181 acre feet each year. As this water is taken from various locations throughout the VPA as well as the fee and Indian lands, the impact would be small and that fact should be listed here.	Section 4.15.1.3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show the acre-feet of water per well. The commenter does not indicate how they calculated 181 acre- feet per year. BLM estimates that approximately .075 acre- feet of water per well is needed based on current trends. With an estimated 6,530 wells anticipated during the life of the plan this would total 4,897 acre -feet of water.	X
UBAOG	G-22	ME45	This text implies that Alternative B will have substantial impacts and jeopardize plant species when compared to the impacts of Alternative A, yet Tables 4.8.2 and 4.8.3 indicate that Alternative B anticipates only 13 more oil wells, 34 more gas wells and 2 more coal bed methane wells than Alternative A in the vast southern part of the VPA. The alarming text in this paragraph should be toned down.	The small increase in the number of wells between Alternatives A and B is not as important as are the locations of those additional wells. As stated in Section 4.15.2.3.2.1: "...the increase in mineral and energy development is concentrated in the southern part of the VPA, which would place the Book Cliffs soil endemics at substantial risk and potentially result in jeopardy to listed species and/or the listing of previously candidate or sensitive species as threatened or endangered."	

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UBAOG	G-22	PA2	This section recognizes the benefits of paleontological studies associated with mineral development mitigation; however, such benefits are not mentioned in the analysis of Alternatives A and D that follow.	Language acknowledging the scientific benefit (e.g., increasing the body of knowledge) of paleontological investigations conducted in association with minerals development has been added to the discussions of Alternatives A, D, and E.	X
UBAOG	G-22	RE4	There is no analysis of need for the closures of currently open areas. The DEIS/RMP does not analyze or disclose the impacts of massive closures on other public, state, and private lands. This is counter to Uintah County Plan that provides such closures must be based on documented resource damage.	<p>The need to respond to OHV conflicts and concerns with other resources and other resource users is documented in Section 1.7 (Identification of Issues) in the PRMP/FEIS. OHV and transportation issues were identified during the agency and public scoping process required for preparation of the RMP EIS under NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7). As stated in Section 1.47, the analysis of potential impacts and issues from proposed management actions, and proposed resource objectives and goals are related to the BLM VFO's mandate to fulfill its multiple-use resource management mission. Analyzing the impacts on county, state, and private lands from the closing of OHV trails within the VPA is beyond the scope of the PRMP/FEIS. Site-specific OHV trails designated as Limited or Closed were not identified in the EIS. The impacts of site-specific OHV trail closings would be analyzed under site-specific NEPA processes and documents. Please see Figures 25-28. A wide range of alternatives were considered within the Draft RMP.</p> <p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State Plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. FLPMA requires that the development of resource management planning for</p>	

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				<p>public land must be coordinated with and consistent with county plans to the maximum extent possible by law, and resolve to the extent practicable, inconsistencies between federal and non-federal government plans (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c) (9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled. Thus, while county and federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practicable, the federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to county plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans has been included in Chapter 5.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	RE5	<p>"The Upper Green River from Little Hole to the Colorado state line would limit all surface disturbing activities within line of sight up to one half mile, unless related to recreational infrastructure support."</p>	<p>The one-half mile or line of sight from river center line is identified in Table 2.1.13 (Recreation Resources) under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to Call Alternatives. This management decision is not part of any proposed Wild and Scenic River segments.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	RE6	<p>"Motorized vehicles would be allowed to travel on a single path up to 300 feet from designated routes to access a camp." Hiking in to a camp is not an option for everyone. This is discriminatory to young children, older people and handicapped. There is no analysis of these impacts. They must be addressed.</p>	<p>See comment response RE1.</p> <p>The BLM provides reasonable access for people with disabilities, when applicable.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	RE7	<p>There is no basis for surface-disturbing activities to be limited for everything but recreation infrastructure.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	

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			Surface disturbance is surface disturbance regardless of purpose. Impacts do not change.		
UBAOG	G-22	RE8	To accomplish this alternative a plan should be prepared with full participation by the public and Counties.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	RE9	This is counter to the Uintah County Plan and we feel that Alt B is the only acceptable alternative here.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	RE10	In the first sentence it refers to the creation of non-motorized trails, horseback riding and hiking in the listed areas. This sentence needs to be rewritten to ensure that it is clear that the intent here is not to create such trails on roads that are RS2477 claims. It is one thing to designate trails in these areas; it's another thing to designate trails over RS2477 claimed roads.	<p>The "Limited" sections within the VPA are located in figures 25-28. Any designations within the limited sections will be done subsequent to the signing of the Final EIS and Record of Decision as part of a Travel Management Plan. This plan will address individual trail designations, and the system of trails will be required to go through the NEPA process.</p> <p>Addressing RS-2477 assertions is beyond the scope of this planning effort. However nothing extinguishes any right-of-way or alters in any way the legal rights the State and counties have to assert and protect RS-2477 rights.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	RE11	We need to further expand this to include special use permits for commercial operations on BLM ground.	Table 2.1.3 (Recreation Resources) in the PRMP/FEIS has been updated to include SRP information.	X
UBAOG	G-22	RE12	The increase in resource impacts listed here is the best analysis for why the current open areas should be maintained as activity is dispersed over a larger area and is not likely to lead to the increases in OHV use associated with trail systems. The impacts listed here are those that proponents of the trail system say will be	Comment noted.	

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			decreased by its establishment.		
UBAOG	G-22	RE5A	<p>Strike:</p> <p>"The Upper Green River from Little Hole to the Colorado state line would limit all surface disturbing activities within line of sight up to one half mile."</p> <p>Developed recreation sites would be closed to grazing and surface-disturbing activities not directly related to recreation development.</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	RE5B	<p>The RMP does not document the 1/2 mile area. A similar designation was held to be unlawful by the Eighth Circuit. To the extent that this coincides with proposed wild and scenic river, as explained elsewhere, the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act does not authorize management of rivers where neither the State nor the Congress has nominated the river segment. BLM's sole authority is to study, it cannot change management in these circumstances. 16 U.S.C. § 1371.</p>	<p>The commenter does not provide any additional information on which 8th Circuit Court ruling is applicable to the comment. It is presumed that the commenter is referring to 16 USC 1271(Wild and Scenic River), not 16 USC 1371 (Marine Mammals Product Importation).</p> <p>The statement in 16 USC 1271 is a policy declaration to preserve selected rivers as free-flowing and "... to protect their immediate environments for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations...and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes."</p> <p>Furthermore, Section 1283 states that: "... the head of any Federal department or agency having jurisdiction over any lands which include, border</p>	

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				upon, or are adjacent to, any river included within the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System or under consideration for such inclusion, in accordance with Section 12 73 (a)(ii), 1274(a), or 1266(a) of this title, shall take such action respecting management policies, regulations, contracts, plans, affecting such lands, as may be necessary to protect such rivers in accordance with the purposes of this chapter."	
UBAOG	G-22	RW4	Given the number of factors that are included in Proper Functioning Condition (PFC), it is difficult to understand the basis for the statement that PFC might not meet the resource goals for fisheries, birds, etc. PFC is not a "minimum" standard. The RMP cannot impose additional standards.	Proper Functioning Condition is identified in Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) as the minimum acceptable riparian goal, toward which management actions in the RMP are focused. The BLM has administrative leeway to impose management actions, stipulations, restrictions, prescriptions, etc., within the parameters of existing federal law and policy, to allow the agency to achieve its management goals.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW5	The prevention of surface disturbing activities within these areas prevents development such as roads, pipelines, power etc. and to avoid these areas with such development would create additional surface disturbances required to circumvent them. These disturbances have not been analyzed or disclosed in this draft. This is substantiated by the fact that there are no maps to delineate these areas. Such prohibitions add greatly to the cost of development, and in some areas, could prevent development of the joining lands. Such activities should be provided for when designed to prevent impacts to the proper functions of these systems. The proposal here lacks the required analysis with respect to analysis of need and a determination that the proposed restriction is the least restrictive necessary.	Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives states that no surface disturbing activities would be allowed unless: "(a) there are no practical alternatives; (b) impacts would be fully mitigated." Nowhere does it state that management actions would prevent development. Disturbances and impacts to riparian and wetland resources from development actions have not been analyzed in this EIS because those actions are site-specific and would require site-specific analyses unique to a	

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				project. This PRMP/FEIS is a programmatic document, and site-specific analyses are beyond the scope of the document. Site-specific analyses of project-specific impacts would be analyzed under other NEPA processes and documents.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW6	Herding is very expensive and not a reasonable alternative. Except for sheep an essential component of riparian management is to provide alternative sources of water. This facilitates distribution of livestock and big game/wild horses. The prescription omits significant factors of big game and wild horses and unfairly targets the livestock industry. As this is written, there are few options other than to drive the livestock operator out of business. The BLM should not put itself in the position of telling a livestock operator which kind of livestock to raise. This is especially true when there are significant differences between the market for cattle and sheep and the permittee's capability to change.	The management actions listed to meet riparian objectives in Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS are a range that includes herding of livestock as a potential management action that could be applied where appropriate. Nowhere in this table is it implied or stated that the livestock grazing industry is specifically targeted for application of riparian and wetland resources management actions.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW7	Cottonwood and willow are heavy water users and could change the nature of the wetland or riparian area. Any such discussion must include control of tamarisk as it competes with cottonwoods and willows for water. Not all wetlands or riparian ecosystems include cottonwood or willow.	The management of native and naturalized plant species, and invasive plant species impacts and control are discussed under Table 2.1.23 (Vegetation Resources) under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW8	Only broad goals such as assignments of resources should be considered in the RMP. BLM continues to use prescriptive management throughout this document. This section needs to be struck in favor of outcome based goals and adaptive management to achieve out comes.	FLPMA and NEPA require that the Vernal RMP consider and propose a range of alternatives and resource management actions for management of the VPA, and that management actions be chosen to achieve and maintain the approved resource objectives for the VPA. As stated in Section 1.5 of the PRMP/FEIS, monitoring and evaluation of the revised RMP management actions will be documented through supplements, addenda, and	

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				amendments to achieve the RMP's approved management actions for resources within the VPA.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW9	The RMP inaccurately assumes that livestock grazing will continue to harm riparian resources. Livestock grazing has occurred in these riparian areas for more than 100 years. Before that other big game grazed there. In addition, these riparian areas receive heavy utilization by wild horses and big game. As written this is very biased and not entirely accurate.	As stated in Section 4.16, forage use by livestock could have adverse impacts on vegetation by altering plant productivity, changing plant communities, changing plant succession trajectories, increasing soil disturbance and sedimentation rates, compacting soil, and increasing the potential for introduction of exotic plant species.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW10	The DEIS needs to disclose the fact that it has no current assessment of the Book Cliffs riparian zones. Twenty-year-old data are not meaningful or reliable. Riparian areas will recover (and change) relatively quickly. There have been major changes in the area and the DEIS cannot assume that area remains in "poor ecological condition." In the Book Cliffs area, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation purchased ranches and grazing permits in the early 1990's and the area has only been lightly grazed by livestock on those permits. If the riparian zones have not improved, then BLM needs to disclose the fact that this has not occurred due to domestic livestock grazing.	As stated in Section 3.11.2, a preliminary wetland inventory has been conducted of riparian and wetland resources within the VPA (as of 2003). A comprehensive assessment of riparian conditions has yet to be conducted by a full interdisciplinary team. Once the inventory is completed, the condition of wetlands and riparian resources could change. Section 3.1.2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include a statement that states that: "...current riparian conditions within the Book Cliffs are being assessed, and that conditions could have changed since the 1984 riparian/wetland assessment."	X
UBAOG	G-22	RW11	How can Alternative A have more indirect beneficial impacts to riparian resources than Alternative D when both are stated to preclude agricultural entry onto withdrawal lands?	Both alternatives preclude agricultural entry on land withdrawals. However Alternative A would preclude agricultural entry on 36,265 acres versus 35,900 acres under Alternative D.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW12	This paragraph implies that ecologically sound manners of timber harvesting would occur only under Alternatives A and C. However, Page 9 of Appendix K indicates that all surface disturbing activities across the planning area, even under Alternatives B and D, would	The setbacks and restrictions described in Appendix K for do not apply to the Book Cliffs RMP area for Alternative D, thus making this Alternative less restrictive than the other alternatives. Consequently, Section 4.11.2.3.1 is still accurate in	

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			be regulated with setbacks and other restrictions to protect riparian areas. Correct analysis.	its analysis.	
UBAOG	G-22	RW13	Construction of new roads across riparian areas does not create an irreversible or irretrievable loss of habitat. If such roads are deemed to no longer serve a public purpose after the activity they serve is completed, such roads can be removed and the habitat restored. By proper designing of such road this could be beneficial in that such development could be used to control or retain water.	Section 4.11.6 in the PRMP/FEIS (Riparian and Wetland Resources) states that: "There would be no irreversible and irretrievable impacts to riparian habitat from RMP decisions."	
UBAOG	G-22	SD16	Strike in 7th line "would not". Replace with "cannot". Strike in 8th, 9th and 10th line "would consider whether non WSA lands with or likely to have wilderness characteristics will be managed to preserve some or all of those values with other land management allocations and actions." Strike in 10th line "these allocations" and Replace with "management actions". Strike last word in 12th line "ACECs".	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD16A	As written, the RMP still fails to conform to the State of Utah v. Norton settlement or other case law. An ACEC or special management area cannot be a surrogate for a former wilderness inventory area. Unfortunately, many of the proposed SMAs or ACECs are exactly that.	The BLM's authority for managing lands to protect or enhance wilderness characteristics is derived directly from FLPMA Section 202 (43 U.S.C. §1712). This section of BLM's organic statute gives the Secretary of the Interior authority to manage public lands for multiple use and sustained yield. Nothing	

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				<p>in this section constrains the Secretary’s authority to manage lands as necessary to “achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences.” (FLPMA, Section 202(c)(2) (43 U.S.C. §1712(c)(2))) Further, FLPMA makes it clear that the term “multiple use” means that not every use is appropriate for every acre of public land, and that the Secretary can “make the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use. . . .” (FLPMA, Section 103(c) (43 U.S.C. §1702(c))) The FLPMA intended for the Secretary of the Interior to use land use planning as a mechanism for allocating resource use, including wilderness character management, amongst the various resources in a way that provides uses for current and future generations.</p> <p>The BLM has long acknowledged that FLPMA Section 603 (43 U.S.C. §1782) requiring a one-time wilderness review has expired. All current inventory of public lands is authorized by FLPMA Section 201 (43 U.S.C. §1711). In September 2006, the Utah District Court affirmed that the BLM retained authority to protect lands it determined to have wilderness characteristics in a manner substantially similar to the manner in which such lands are protected as WSAs.</p> <p>The BLM is aware that there are specific State laws relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, BLM is bound by Federal law. As a</p>	

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				<p>consequence, there may be inconsistencies that cannot be reconciled. The FLPMA requires that BLM's land use plans be consistent with State and local plans "to the extent practical" where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options.</p> <p>Finally, the Utah v. Norton Settlement Agreement does not affect BLM's authority to manage public lands. This Agreement merely remedied confusion by distinguishing between wilderness study areas established under FLPMA §603 and those lands required to be managed under §603's non-impairment standard, and other lands that fall within the discretionary FLMPA §202 land management process.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD17	Strike this bullet.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the</p>	

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				adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD17A	In addition to the fact that the Red Creek ACEC is a surrogate for the former WIA, it will fragment management to the detriment of land management and multiple uses.	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD18	<p>Here it is proposed to continue ACEC designations on Pariette Wetlands, Redcreek Watershed and Lears Canyon. BLM planning documents provide that existing ACEC's should be analyzed to determine their continued need. It is our position that these existing ACEC's must be analyzed to determine if conditions have changed or other designations placed on these areas would provide protections equal to that of the ACEC and if the ACEC's need, importance and relevance still exist.</p> <p>RE: The first and third bullet points regarding Pariette Wetlands and Lears Canyon. The County's position is the NSO classification is not necessary to prevent unnecessary damage to the identified value. There is no analysis or documentation in the draft EIS to show otherwise. Further, the NSO classification eliminates "use or development" of the subject areas, thus by definition, taking the areas outside the scope of an ACEC management, thus making the ACEC tool nonessential and inapplicable.</p>	<p>The analysis and rationale for the designation of the Pariette Wetlands, Red Creek Watershed, and Lears Canyon ACECs in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD7-G-13.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD19	The proposed wild and scenic rivers as set forth in the RMP violate the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. BLM's authority is limited to study when neither the state nor Congress support designation. 16 U.S.C. 137*.	The FLPMA gives the BLM broad authority to manage the public lands, including management of eligible and suitable river segments. For eligible rivers, it is BLM's policy to protect certain values identified in the eligibility determination process to ensure that a decision on suitability can be made. To accomplish this objective, the BLM's management prescriptions must protect the free-	

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				<p>flowing character, tentative classifications, and identify outstandingly remarkable values of eligible rivers according to the prescriptions and directions of the current, applicable land use plan per BLM Manual Section 8351.32C. The BLM Manual further states that should a determination on suitability not be made during the planning process, “the RMP must prescribe protective management measures to ensure protection shall be afforded the river and adjacent public land area pending the suitability determination” (Section 8351.33A).</p> <p>The NEPA specifies that while work on the EIS is in progress, BLM cannot undertake or authorize any actions in the interim that would prejudice the RMP decision or, in this case, the suitability determination (40 CFR 1505.1 (c)(3)). A case-by-case evaluation of potential impacts resulting from a proposed action must be made to ensure that all eligible rivers are not limited from being considered for suitability among the range of RMP alternatives, thus eliminating the opportunity to prejudice the decision. Implementation of the interim management to protect eligible rivers, therefore, is applied through site-specific NEPA analysis of environmental impacts on a case-by-case basis. The NEPA compliance, required for all Federal actions that could significantly affect the environment, ensures that BLM consider alternatives to the proposed action and provides BLM an opportunity to apply mitigation measures that will reduce impacts on a given resource such as an eligible stream. This mechanism of applying management must be in conformance with the current land use plan. Protective prescriptions would be applied to rivers determined suitable in the ROD for the Field Office</p>	

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				RMP. Resource allocations (such as those for visual resources, OHV use, and mineral leasing) compatible with protecting river values would be prescribed for suitable river corridors as part of the decision. In addition, no special management objectives would be applied to eligible rivers determined not to be suitable in the ROD. Instead, they would be managed without additional consideration according to the provisions of the plan.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD20	Strike 2nd paragraph.	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD20A	A future inventory has no place in an RMP. BLM has no additional authority to either establish new WSAs or to manage them.	FLPMA Section 201 gives BLM the authority to inventory for wilderness characteristics. Section 202 of FLPMA gives BLM the authority for planning how the public lands are to be managed. Section 302 of FLPMA gives BLM general management authority for the public lands. It is BLM policy (as stated in its planning handbook and in Instruction Memorandums 2003-274 and 2003-275 Change 1), that through planning, the BLM has addressed non-	

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				WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the October 2007 Supplement to the DRMP/EIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD21	In order to comply with the FLPMA multiple-use mandate, the BLM may not use SRMA or VRM classifications to exclude mineral leasing, or mineral related and other surface activities. The SRMA and VRM tools have been used improperly to purport to exclude surface disturbing activities in the proposed White River and Browns Park SRMA's. The fact that the White River proposed SRMA, follows the old WIA boundary makes it highly suspect in this regard.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD22	In general, the ACEC's and SMRAs appear to be surrogates for the now discredited wilderness inventory areas. The Vernal office appears to be clinging to protecting these areas despite court orders and BLM direction. The Counties strongly object to these areas as reconstituted since the management criteria are quite similar to de facto wilderness.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD23	The RMP needs to recognize that current land use activities like livestock grazing are entitled to continue at today's levels and subject to meeting rangeland health standards. In general, the RMP fails to address the impacts on livestock grazing. If this is the objective, the RMP and DEIS must disclose it and the effects. If this is not the objective, then specific language recognizing that livestock grazing is compatible should be added.	The Vernal Field Office RMP determines the allowable uses of the public lands as provided for in FLPMA. FLPMA states in section 202(a) that land use planning provides for the use of the public lands "regardless of whether such lands previously have been classified, withdrawn, set aside, or otherwise designated for one or more uses". FLPMA further provides in Section 202(e) the authority to issue management decisions, which implement newly developed or revised land use plans. Such decisions, including those that exclude one or more uses, are subject to reconsideration, modification and termination through revision of the land use plan. FLPMA indicates that it is the policy of the United States to manage the public lands on the basis of	

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				<p>multiple use and sustained yield. While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for and recognizing the need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law for the BLM to maximize the number of domestic livestock AUMs. The definition of multiple use in Section 103(c) of FLPMA specifically indicates that some lands can be used for “less than all of the resources” which they are capable of providing. According to FLPMA, BLM is to manage for “multiple uses” which best meets the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the productivity of the land. According to section 2 of the TGA, it is the objective of the act to regulate the occupancy and use of the Grazing Districts and to preserve these lands.</p> <p>Grazing decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401. Proposed Plan decisions on public lands would continue to promote a healthy active grazing industry. Forage allocations for livestock and wildlife are fully allocated on public lands. Numerous RMP decisions under other identified resources allow for the restoration and maintenance of rangeland and watershed health. For example, the Proposed Plan provides the umbrella to allow implementation-level actions for hazardous fuel reductions, fire rehabilitation, vegetation treatments, riparian improvements, range and wildlife habitat improvements, UPCD projects – including Healthy Lands Initiative projects, seed collection, etc. Minor, if any, adjustments to current</p>	

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				permitted livestock AUMs are made in the Proposed Plan. Prior voluntary relinquishments and/or retirements have been recognized.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD24	The acres contained in the current ACEC proposal are triple the acres proposed in the first set of alternatives. Given the fact that this area is held up as the area of highest concentration of prairie dogs in the world, and the fact that the AMS do not reflect a concern or need for protection of the prairie dogs in this area, leaves one to question the need for this alternative. Chapter 3 discussion on affected environment, northeast description, and analysis in Chapter 4 discusses the management prescriptions presented in this alternative. This is no analysis of need or impacts. The size of this should be reduced to that of Alternative B.	The RMP presents the various management strategies for achieving the desired range of alternatives. Size and management prescriptions vary between the alternatives. If the protection of the relevant and importance values "outweighs" the other resource uses then the ACEC was proposed under all the alternatives. Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9	
UBAOG	G-22	SD25	Add to Alternatives "A", "B", and "C" the statement: "All management prescriptions for the black-footed ferret will be consistent with the Black Footed Ferret Recovery Plan. None of the management prescriptions applied to this area are essential to Prairie Dog management and could be provided with existing management options."	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS. Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled	

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				<p>Management Actions Common to All Alternatives states:</p> <p>"The BLM would continue to implement the specific goals and objectives of all Recovery Plans, Conservation Plans and Strategies, and activity level plans."</p> <p>Also, Section 2.4.13.4.4.2 specifically states that under all action alternatives, the:</p> <p>" BLM would manage the black-footed ferret consistent with the 1999 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan Amendment and those portions of the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin, Uintah County, Utah that are consistent with the Black-footed ferret plan amendment."</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD26	Select Alternative B as the preferred alternative. The County is concerned about the ability of the BLM to effectively manage this section of the river as an ACEC given the fragmentation of ownership. In some areas here the BLM is a minority landowner.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9	
UBAOG	G-22	SD27	The proposal here is to manage as an ACEC for recreation and Riparian ecosystems. Recreational use of this section of the river is insignificant when compared to the reaches above and below it. Most river use ends at Split Mountain and begins again at Sand Wash. The subject section of the river is flat water and seldom used by anyone except the occasional day floater, duck hunters and fisherman. The use of this section for fishing is on the decline as many of the sport fish have been removed in favor of	<p>On August 27, 1980, BLM promulgated final ACEC guidelines (45 Federal Register 57318) that clarify that the term "protects" means:</p> <p>"To defend or guard against damage or loss to the important environmental resources of a potential or designated ACEC. This includes damage that can be restored over time and that which is irreparable. With regard to a natural hazard, protect means to</p>	

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			<p>T&E species. This would indicate a decline in recreational use. It is clear that protection for recreational use of this section of the river does not meet the test for irreparable damage, relevance and importance. Alternative B should be selected.</p>	<p>prevent the loss of life or injury to people, or loss or damage to property.”</p> <p>Thus, BLM is to consider the potential for both reparable and irreparable damage when protecting important historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish and wildlife resources; or other natural systems through ACEC designation. This interpretation is consistent with FLPMA’s legislative history and implementing policy. Section 2 of the guidelines clarifies that ACECs are special places within public lands. It states:</p> <p>“In addition to establishing in law such basic protective management policies that apply to all the public lands, Congress has said that ‘management of national resource lands [public lands] is to include giving special attention to the protection of ACECs, for the purpose of ensuring that the most environmentally important and fragile lands will be given early attention and protection’ (Senate Report 94-583, on FLPMA). Thus, the ACEC process is to be used to provide whatever special management is required to protect those environmental resources that are most important, i.e., those resources that make certain specific areas special places, endowed by nature or man with characteristics that set them apart. In addition, the ACEC process is to be used to protect human life and property from natural hazards.”</p> <p>See Appendix G for information concerning relevance and importance on specific, existing or</p>	

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				nominated ACECs.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD28	The riparian areas along this section of river have been designated as critical habitat for T&E species fish. There is no need to establish an ACEC to protect riparian ecosystems on this section of river as that protection is provided by Critical Habitat designation. It is difficult to identify a need for protection for this section of the river from irreparable harm when it is currently covered by very strict standards as critical habitat. This segment of river was analyzed for suitability in the Diamond Mountain Plan and was found unsuitable.	<p>Critical Habitat designation is part of the special management attention focused on this area relative to the relevant and important values. Under Alternatives C and E, the ACEC would be established.</p> <p>See Appendix C regarding the consideration of the Middle Green River for WSR eligibility and suitability as part of the RMP.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD29	Select Alternative "A or B." Main Canyon is not significantly different from the rest of the Book Cliffs area and does not contain values that meet the test of importance. None of the values listed under "Relevance" would be irreparably damaged by current activities under current management.	<p>See Appendix G for more information on the relevant and important values identified for the Main Canyon ACEC.</p> <p>See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SD30	Inadequate analysis has been made as to the relevance and importance of the approximately 160 acres of Old Growth Pine, and that failure to protect them would lead to irreparable damage. It would seem reasonable to provide protection and management for it. If it meets this test, create a new alternative establishing West Tent Canyon as an ACEC for protection of Old Growth Pinion Pine (160 acres). It should be noted that the values listed here are not consistent with those listed in Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Appendix G. The changes in values from earlier draft and the lack of consistency in values listed could be seen as an attempt to justify a pre-determined area, as opposed to the need of the area being determined	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	

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			<p>by the relevance and importance of identified values. There is no indication of analysis or a need to protect the remaining resources listed here. These resources, except for the Pinion stand, are common throughout the Book Cliffs area thus they are not unique, and other law and regulations provide for protection of cultural and historical resources. FLPMA at 1702 defines ACEC's in part as areas where special management attention is required to protect and to prevent irreparable damage to important historical cultural or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources and other natural systems or processes. Clearly the protections for cultural resources, historical features and watershed exist or are proposed in the DEIS/RMP. Current protections exist in law regulation or policy.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	SD31	<p>Here is proposed the establishment of a research natural area. ACEC protection is not needed to do research and does not meet the criteria required to establish one. Natural area seems to be added to enhance the title. The establishment of a natural area and to limit multiple-use is not consistent with the ACEC criteria. Additionally, an ACEC is not required to establish a research and monitoring plan.</p>	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD32	<p>VRM Classes 2 and 3 are proposed here without discussion of need and what they are intended to protect. Approximately one half of the ACEC is VRM Class 2 and the other half Class 3. Given the definition of VRM Class 2 which states: "A low level of change in landscape characteristics, and activities not attracting the attention of the casual observer," it appears this would prevent development of existing leases and also on future leasing. The impacts to oil & gas and other permittee's was not analyzed or disclosed. The impacts of a VRM II must be analyzed in Chapter 4 and reflected in reasonable foreseeable development, and</p>	Based on the analysis of and response to the public comments, BLM has changed the proposed VRM classes to be more consistent with overall management objectives.	X

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			<p>be analyzed to insure they are the least restrictive necessary. As written it implies that the area would be open to oil and gas leasing subject to standard lease terms or controlled surface use. Oil and gas leasing and development are two different things given the fact that much of this area is VRM II. Being able to develop a lease in the majority of the area described here is questionable at best and not analyzed.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	SD33	<p>This alternative proposes protection for watersheds. Further investigation reveals that this protection is thought to be needed for the reintroduction of Colorado Cutthroat to insure that streams in that area meet certain sedimentation requirements. The County Plan requires that habitat quality and quantity exist prior to the introduction or reintroduction of any species. It is our concern that to achieve water quality levels in the Bitter Creek area that would provide optimum habitat for the trout may not be achievable. Indications are that the cutthroat were not present in the past due to historically high sediment in the stream.</p>	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD34	<p>The size of this ACEC is not supported in the text and is not supported by distribution of the reported values to be protected.</p>	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD35	<p>Given that this area was once a proposed WSA, it is not difficult to argue that the proposed ACEC is based on unsubstantiated need and questionable qualification and is an attempt to circumvent the Wilderness Settlement agreement and create de facto wilderness.</p>	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD36	<p>Here there appears to be a layering of special designations in an attempt to manage this area for non-impairment. This is in conflict with the BLM's mandate for multiple use and IMs that provide for the removal of unnecessary stipulations that impact energy development, which is in conflict with EPCA and BLM</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.</p> <p>In accordance with BLM policy and its recognition of the National Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 2000 (EPCA), as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3,</p>	

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			instructional memorandums.	mineral resource development would be allowed throughout the VPA subject to standard lease terms unless precluded by other program prescriptions, as specified in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD37	<p>This section of river contains critical diversion points and water rights for the area. Development of these rights are sure to have a direct and adverse affect on the value proposed to be protected in the WSR designation. The language in Section 7 of the WSR Act prevents federal licensing or assistance to such projects. Given this, it is unlikely that development of water rights and other projects on the river could take place. To approve a WSR designation that would prevent development of property rights could be construed to be a taking of these rights.</p> <p>The WSR Handbook provides that the resources to be protected are unique or rare within the region. Such is not the case with the resources to be protected here. The FLPMA definition of an acre states "where protection is required" with respect to the T & E fish. This area of river has been designated crucial habitat providing them protection to the highest standard.</p>	<p>There is no effect on water rights or in-stream flows related to suitability findings made in a land use plan decision, barring Congressional action. Even if Congress were to designate rivers into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, any such designation would have no affect on existing, valid water rights. Section 13 (b) of the Wild and Scenic River Act states that jurisdiction over waters is determined by established principles of law. In Utah, the state has jurisdiction over water. Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act implies a federal reserved water right for designated rivers, it doesn't require or specify any amount, and instead establishes that only the minimum amount for purposes of the Act can be acquired. Because the State of Utah has jurisdiction over water, BLM would be required to adjudicate the right as would any other entity, by application through state processes. Thus, for Congressionally designated rivers, BLM may assert a federal reserved water right to appurtenant and unappropriated water with a priority date as of the date of designation (junior to all existing rights), but only in the minimum amount necessary to fulfill the primary purpose of the reservation. In practice, however, federal reserved water rights have not always been claimed if alternative means of ensuring sufficient flows are adequate to sustain the outstandingly remarkable values. The BLM is fully evaluating and considering potential impacts related to these Wild and Scenic River decisions in this planning process.</p>	

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				Congressional designation of suitable streams is evaluated in the cumulative impacts analysis of the Final EIS, and Appendix C is modified to include a more thorough discussion of how the suitability considerations are applied to each eligible river.	
UBAOG	G-22	SD38	When Alternative D includes an ACEC designation in the Lower Green River Expansion of only 1,700 acres less than Alternatives A and C, how could Alternative D “not have the benefits” described for Alternatives A and C? It should provide the same benefits but to a slightly lesser degree.	Chapter 4 in the PRMP/F EIS has been revised to indicate that Alternative D would have lesser benefit than Alternatives A, C, and E.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SD39	[The stipulations for the Pelican Lake SRMA for all alternatives are] not consistent with the County Plan. Why grant an exception to recreation and not to other multiple use activities? Surface disturbance has the same impacts regardless of the purpose.	See Response to Comment SD12-G-9. The Pelican Lake SRMA is a very heavily used recreation area where surface development unrelated to recreation would be incompatible with the BLM's goals and objectives for the area. Surface disturbance related to authorized recreational development would be subject to impacts analysis prior to implementation.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO10	The sentence needs to be expanded. Particularly in the counties, where socioeconomics would be implemented. Royalty revenues - Service revenues	Section 1.5 is a description of planning criteria development. Specific socioeconomic factors used in analysis of impacts are discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.12.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO11	The social and economic section entirely omits the role of agriculture in the region. It is the historical land use and consistently plays an important role in the custom agriculture of the community as well as the economy.	See comment response SO5.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO12	The DEIS needs to acknowledge that tourism tends to generate minimum wage and often seasonal jobs and is not consistent with local heritage and culture.	The commenter does not provide any additional information to substantiate the assertion or relationship regarding seasonal employment and local heritage and culture.	

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UBAOG	G-22	SO13	<p>The DEIS discussion of social and economic factors is very one-sided and thus inadequate. The Area historically depended on agriculture for its social and economic base. This is still the case today with energy playing an increasingly large role. Recreation by contrast plays a relatively small role in the economy. Moreover, a tourism tax base is only sales tax. There is little other tax base since the United States owns the majority of the land in the planning area. It is a misnomer to describe a sales tax base as healthy since it suffers from periodic slumps. By comparison, the State of Utah also assesses a severance tax, which is entirely omitted from the economic discussion. In addition, the counties received half of the federal mineral leasing revenues and these funds play a much greater role in funding schools and public services. The social and economic discussion also omits the fact that tourism industry jobs are typically minimum wage and non-professional. For that reason, these jobs tend to be temporary.</p>	<p>The commenter fails to indicate what is "one-sided" about the discussion. The socioeconomic considerations in section 3.10.4 are within the context of recreation, and thus the discussion is focused on that current range of activities and impacts. Section 4.12 discusses socioeconomic impacts for all resources. To address issues such as severance tax, further quantitative clarifications have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.</p> <p>See comment response SO3.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SO14	<p>The DEIS fails to disclose and discuss the full historic grazing preference. The reference to 146,220 AUMs appears to be the average use over the last 10 years. By using this lower figure, the DEIS obscures the probable reductions in domestic grazing that will occur under this plan. This violates the obligation under NEPA to fully disclose the effects of a proposed federal action on the environment. Fails to mention economic and cultural importance of grazing, ignores affects of reducing AUMs, and directly threatens private land open space by conversion to development.</p>	<p>The socioeconomic role of agricultural in the planning area is discussed in Sections 3.12.2.2.2, 3.12.3.2.2, and 3.12.4.2.1 and in the socioeconomic analysis in Section 4.12 and its subsections.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SO15	<p>Minerals development will not have a long-term adverse effect on the tourism sector of the economy. This is because a majority of the tourism is associated with resources that are located outside of the "oilfield"</p>	<p>While a large portion of the tourism is concentrated in the northern end of the VPA, there are recreation opportunities in the proposed SRMAs, non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, special</p>	

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			areas (High Uintah Wilderness, Starvation Reservoir, Flaming Gorge, etc...).	designations, and OHV travel routes in the southern portion of the VPA where the highest concentration of minerals development is likely to occur according to the RFD.	
UBAOG	G-22	SO16	This same level of analysis should be applied to oil and gas development as it has a positive effect on the same sectors of the economy. The loss of jobs and tax revenue will be made up several times over by development.	Sections 4.12.2.3 and 4.12.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to address tourism tax revenues.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO17	The impact to Daggett County discussion should be struck as the increase in wells is only 4.5. This impact is a great exaggeration as are others where mineral development is discussed.	Section 4.12.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to incorporate the suggested comment. These sentences have been deleted in the FEIS.	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO18	This sentence should be changed to read "Under Alternative A 1,798,378 acres would be open in leasing categories 1 and 2 to oil and gas and coal bed methane. CBM should be added here as acres are not correct if you don't. It should be noted that categories 1 and 2 are used here with no indication of where they are in the text or on the maps. This comment applies to Alternative "C" and "D" in this section. Nowhere does this section discuss volumes of production.	1,776,782 acres would be open to Category 1 and 2 oil, gas, and Coal-bed Methane leasing categories under Alternative A. Section 4.12.3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show the correct acreages for mineral development. CBM production would account for approximately 2% of the natural gas in the VPA, therefore a detailed analysis (in comparison to oil and natural gas development) of CBM development will not be provided in the PRMP/FEIS. See Section 4.12.3.1	X
UBAOG	G-22	SO19	The Counties question the findings in the last two sentences of Section 4.12.3.1 on page 4-175. If Alternative C were to be selected, Table 2.3 indicates that livestock forage would decrease from 146,161 AUMs under Alternative D to 77,294 AUMs. Such a reduction would have an impact on the livestock industry and its ability to expand in the future to serve a growing population. Such reductions ignore provisions	Sections 4.12.2.1 and 4.12.3.1 in the PRMP/FEIS have been revised to provide details on AUM demand.	X

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			of the Taylor Grazing Act and withdrawals.		
UBAOG	G-22	SO20	A decrease in jobs in the oil and gas sector would not decrease the dependency of the region on the oil and gas industry or make the region less susceptible to boom and bust cycles. The way to make the region less vulnerable is to create jobs in other economic sectors. In addition, the creation of more jobs in the minerals industry will attract more jobs in other sectors of the economy. This increased level of services could make the region more attractive to other forms of basic industry, which may result in less dependency on oil and gas.	It is not the BLM's role to create (or decrease) employment opportunities in any one sector of the economy. The role of the RMP is to assess the impacts planning decisions have on various affected sectors, if any.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS2	Strike "and restore them to their historic ranges."	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect. The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences. The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS3	Strike this paragraph and rewrite as "BLM would manage the Black-footed Ferret consistent with the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction & Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin Uintah County, Utah and with the 1999 Black-footed	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not	

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			Ferret Reintroduction Plan amendment."	<p>substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SS4	Both the best management practices and the USFWS guidelines were developed without opportunity for public input or review.	When the draft was released, the public had the opportunity to comment during the 90-day public comment period. In addition, the Utah BLM has adopted the BMPs for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats in Utah, IM UT 2006-096. Detailed guidelines for implementing waivers to stipulations are found in Appendix A of the PRMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS5	The best management practices and USFWS's guidelines do not provide appropriate consideration of the life cycles of the species and their respective adaptability to disturbance.	<p>Site specific NEPA will be conducted at the time the modifications are proposed.</p> <p>Considerations of the life cycles of the species and their adaptability are provided for under the exceptions, modifications, and waiver stipulations. Modifications to the spatial and seasonal buffers could be allowed as long as protection of nests is ensured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● completion of a Site-Specific Assessment form; written documentation by the BLM Field Office Biologist confirming that implementation of the modifications would not impact the success of the nest or the suitability of the site for future nesting; and ● monitoring, which would include strategy 	

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				employment and implementation of a post-project/mitigation plan.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS6	The provision for protection of nest is not consistent with law or regulation. (See General Comments on raptor management or the Uintah County's Public Lands Implementation Plan)	The commenter does not indicate which law or regulation this management prescription is not consistent.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS7	Alternative A defies required analysis and disclosure of impacts. As written, Alternative A is not consistent with Uintah County's Public Lands Implementation Plan. Alternative B is the only acceptable alternative presented.	See comment response PR3.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS8	To correct the many short comings of this section a new BMP should be written that recognizes the differences between species and is consistent with law.	The commenter does not specify the shortcomings so we cannot address this comment.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS9	The alternatives here are not consistent with law and Uintah County's Public Lands Implementation Plan.	See comment response PR3.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS10	The failure to clearly state the limitations on a specific activity prevents required analysis and disclosure. Baseless restriction, such as here, prevent analysis to insure management prescriptions are the least restrictive necessary. Rewrite to be consistent with law and Uintah County's Public Lands Implementation Plan based on species needs.	The RMP is a programmatic document intended to give broad direction for management. Site-specific NEPA will be conducted at a later time for proposed activities and will include more detailed analysis. Also see comment response PR3.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS11	Strike exception section. The exception here is not related to the prescriptions above it. It implies livestock would be managed to achieve rangeland health standards and implies that somehow grazing will be managed to improve grouse habitat. Livestock grazing is a permitted right and a mandated legal use of a resource. There is no authority to manage livestock grazing or otherwise change it to satisfy the needs of grouse.	The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following: The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate. The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion. The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the	

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				<p>current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>Exception applies to all species including the sage grouse. BLM is mandated to follow the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SS12	As written, as an example, a single rider or stockman could not ride a horse across these areas. It would prevent Raptor viewing and hiking. In short, it would prohibit insignificant casual use.	It is not BLM's intent to prevent casual use. However, if it is determined that the proposed activity would have an impact on special status species, then the BLM would work with the user to minimize impacts.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS14	Here and in Appendix M, add a provision that any structures constructed within 1300 feet of a lek must be protected from raptor perching.	This provision is proposed in Alternative B and may be considered for the preferred alternative.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS15	Any designation within 2 miles of a lek must be designed to minimize to the extent possible raptor perching. Which stipulations do you comply with? Perches or avoiding perches?	The stipulation is meant to prevent or minimize raptor perching.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS16	The exception in Alternative B should be applied in all alternatives.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS17	This would allow you to drill but you could not put in a tank battery.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS18	Uintah County's Plan for Raptor Management was created with public input.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS19	Unoccupied nests are not protected, however it is provided for here.	The Utah BLM has adopted the BMPs for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats in Utah, IM UT 2006-096. These BMPs may be found in Appendix A of	

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				the PRMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS20	Most of the stipulations listed here are not consistent with Uintah County's Public Lands Policy and Plan. "B" is the only acceptable alternative.	See comment response PR3.	
UBAOG	G-22	SS2A	The criteria should not be restoration to historic range. First, little if anything is known about historic ranges. Second, what is often written is based on conjecture without data. It is neither feasible nor practical to restore these species to their historic range.	<p>One reason contributing to the listing of species is loss of habitat, including historic range. It is within the parameters of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to have a goal of restoring historic range. One of the purposes of the ESA is to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved.</p> <p>The Endangered Species act defines the term 'conserve' as:</p> <p>"To use all methods and procedures which are necessary to bring any endangered species or threatened species to the point at which the measures provided pursuant to the Act are no longer necessary. Such methods and procedures include, but are not limited to, all activities associated with scientific resources management such as research, census, law enforcement, habitat acquisition and maintenance, propagation, live trapping, and transplantation, and, in the extraordinary case where population pressures within a given ecosystem cannot be otherwise relieved, may include regulated taking."</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SS3A	The cooperative plan for reintroduction and management is the basis on which the black-footed ferret was reintroduced as agreed on by County government and the Ute Tribe. No designations or	See Table 2.1.21 (Special Status Species) of the PRMP/FEIS. BLM would manage the black-footed ferret consistent with the 1999 Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Plan Amendment and those portions	

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			<p>other actions should be taken that are contradictory to this agreement as it could jeopardize future reintroduction efforts. In addition Uintah County's Public Land Policy provides that this is the guiding plan for Ferret management.</p>	<p>of the Cooperative Plan for the Reintroduction and Management of Black-footed Ferret in Coyote Basin, Uintah County, Utah that are consistent with this plan amendment.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SS3B	<p>Any black-footed ferret introduced in Daggett County should be classified as experimental nonessential. Daggett County should be added to the experimental nonessential designation status for the ferret.</p>	<p>The RMP does not consider black-footed reintroduction in Daggett County.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SW4	<p>Strike the 1st sentence. Replace with</p> <p>"Current management direction is inadequate or lacking in opportunities to enhance the management of Watershed Values and Vegetation Resources. BLM did not implement planned range projects authorized in prior plans".</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SW5	<p>All material into water is considered a pollutant. The statement in the RMP makes no sense. It is not possible to "eliminate" all pollutants.</p>	<p>The term "pollutant" is used here in its common form meaning undesirable materials or substances that are generally man-made. The BLM finds that no change to the document is necessary to clarify this</p>	

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				statement.	
UBAOG	G-22	SW6	Strike Paragraphs 1, 2 & 3. This discussion makes no sense and cannot be properly implemented. It also fails to recognize the scientific controversy regarding "crypto biotic" crusts or "Shepherds soils" and the role of various land uses on the soils. For example, if sheep or cattle hooves have adverse effects, then elk and wild horses, as well as deer and antelope will have equally significant if not more effects. The RMP assumes that only livestock have adverse effects. The DEIS RMP fails to identify where these crusts exist, what management prescriptions would apply and analyze and disclose impacts to other resources.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SW6A	As written this section is inconsistent with Uintah County Plan regarding microbiotic crusts.	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolved to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as</p>	

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				<p>integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p> <p>43 U.S.C. §1712(c) (9) states that the Secretary of the Interior (through the land use plans of the federal agencies under it) shall "coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management activities of or for such lands with the land use planning and management programs of other Federal departments and agencies and of the States and local governments within which the lands are located." It further states that "the Secretary shall...assure that consideration is given to those State, local, and tribal plans that are germane in the development of land use plans for public lands [and] assist in resolving, to the extent practical, inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal Government plans..." This language does not require the BLM to adhere to or adopt the plans of other agencies or jurisdictional entities, but rather to give consideration to these plans and make an effort to resolve inconsistencies to the extent practical.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	SW7	The allocation of upland forage assumes that only livestock affect soil and water resources. This is inaccurate. Wild horses have greater adverse impacts and big game through numbers and duration and	Table 2.1.17 (Soil and Water Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS accounts for the impacts of wild horses on soil and water resources under all alternatives. Section 4.13.1.14 accounts for impacts of wildlife on	

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			uncontrolled grazing will also have measurable and potentially adverse impacts.	soil and water resources under all alternatives. The impacts of wildlife on soil and water resources are accounted for by alternative in Section 4.13.2.13.	
UBAOG	G-22	SW8	This section fails to mention the potential long-term, adverse impacts [on soils and water] of failing to allow woodland and forest species salvage, under Alternative C, associated with catastrophic wildfire.	Catastrophic wildfire is possible under all alternatives.	
UBAOG	G-22	TR8	Drop "construction" replace with "maintenance of roads".	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	TR9	Currently there are paved roads outside of the transportation/utility corridors and in all probability there are roads that are now located outside these corridors that are in need of being paved and will be in the near future. As written, this section implies that paved roads cannot exist outside of the corridor.	<p>Table 2.1.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Transportation/Utility Corridors:</p> <p>"Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the designated corridors would require a plan amendment."</p> <p>Therefore, roads can exist outside of the corridor after the approval of a plan amendment.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	TR9A	Rewrite this bullet to provide for such activity.	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	TR10	<p>"Travel management would account for valid existing rights, and would incorporate the county and other public roads".</p> <p>Add this bullet to consider valid existing rights impacts to travel management (i.e., R.S. 2477).</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	TR11	Strike these alternatives. The road described here (Chipeta Canyon road) is a county claimed road to and beyond the cabin as well as other roads in the area. A	BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:	

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			<p>proposal to close county claimed roads is inappropriate. This alternative implies that the road beyond the cabin will be closed. The county views this as a county road. It would appear that to discuss open or closed roads in the RMP is premature given the RS2477 settlement. Due to the controversy over ownership of such roads, the plan should not imply ownership.</p>	<p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	TR12	<p>What was once over 1,000,000 acres open to travel has been reduced to 4,306. There appears to be no documentation justifying this dramatic shift. There are acreages that appear to have dropped out of consideration. The County Plan provides that acres be open until there is a demonstrated and substantiated need.</p>	<p>By the "4th Alternative" the BLM presumes that the commenter means the 4th line of alternatives under the heading "Travel-Roads and Trails." The line of management actions allocates lands open and closed to OHV travel. Under Alternative D, approximately 1.6 million acres are open to some form of OHV travel, and no routes are designated. Under Alternatives A, B, and C, between 1.35 million (Alt. C) and 1.6 million acres of land and between 4,707 linear miles (Alt. C) and 4,861 linear miles (Alt. B) of routes would be designated for some form of OHV travel.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	VE2	<p>The draft RMP/EIS focuses only on the negatives of livestock grazing while completely ignoring the fact that wild horses and wildlife will have similar and possibly greater impacts [on vegetation].</p>	<p>The section of the document to which the comment refers is specific to the potential impacts of livestock grazing and forage decisions on vegetation resources. The potential impacts of other resource program management decisions on vegetation are discussed elsewhere. The potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on vegetation resources are discussed in Section 4.16.2.14. The potential impacts of wildlife management decisions on vegetation are discussed in Section 4.16.2.15.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	VE3	Alternative C would have lesser beneficial impacts on vegetation resources than Alternative A (not more). This is because Alternative C would not automatically provide for the same level of vegetation removal as Alternative A, which increases the chances for catastrophic wild fires (see Section 4.13.2.14.3).	The woodland and forest species salvaging is proposed for Alternative A and limited in Alternative C (Section 4.13.2.14.3). The level of this activity under Alternative A would have long-term adverse impacts to soil and water resources because of surface disturbance and subsequent soil erosion and sedimentation in streams. These effects would adversely affect the vegetation under Alternative A, and less so under Alternative C. In fact, the two alternatives are probably comparable in their effect on vegetation. The PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect this analysis.	X
UBAOG	G-22	VI5	The RMP misuses visual resource management areas and most of the Class II areas should be changed to Class III or IV.	The commenter does not provide any reasons as to why VRM II class areas should be changed to VRM III or IV.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI5A	While FLPMA expresses a policy to protect scenic quality, there is no other direction. The FLPMA policies cannot be implemented absent such direction.	FLPMA and BLM policy require that the RMP process review visual resources within the VFO in order to protect scenic quality. VRM II areas were designated as such, based on BLM VRM inventories, proposed management actions for the area.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI6	The RMP assumes that visual quality by itself is a major multiple use when FLPMA does not authorize this assumption. Even more significantly, the RMP claims to preserve "scenic vistas" which are areas far outside what is actually being proposed.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI7	The proposed VRM I classification in the western portion of the proposed White River SRMA and in the Browns Park area is improper. The amount of acreage subject to the VRM is not specified, making it totally improper in this draft EIS.	There are no VRM classifications proposed in the Browns Park or White River SRMAs and none are indicated in Table 2.1.14 (Recreation – Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI7A	The RMP contains no evidence that the necessary groundwork has been done as required by BLM	An interdisciplinary team reviewed the existing VRM inventory to identify proposed VRM objectives,	

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			<p>Manual H-8410 to explain or justify this classification. H-8410 section V restricts Class I classifications, wilderness areas, congressionally designated wild and scenic river segments, and other areas where congressional decisions or legitimate administrative decisions have been made to preserve a natural landscape. No such congressional decision and no such legitimate administrative decision has been made here. BLM may not use the VRM I tool in an attempt to effect a non-impairment management standard. To do so would violate the multiple use sustained yield mandate of FLPMA.</p>	<p>Classes I – IV, and how they relate to the management objectives for each alternative. A wide range of alternatives is included and analyzed in the RMP. Visual resources are analyzed in each alternative along with the other resources.</p> <p>The inventory followed the procedures and is in compliance with the guidelines established in BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1 Visual Resource Inventory as well as BLM Manual Handbook 8431-1 Visual Resource Contrast Rating.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	VI7B	<p>The White River and Brown's Park SRMA language should be amended to eliminate the Class I VRM which purports to exclude legitimate surface activities in a high mineral potential previously leased area over which a number of RS 2477 county roads run.</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	VI7C	<p>To use the VRM I tool to eliminate legitimate surface activities in the name of managing for the naturalness of the area, is to return to the old policies of managing WIA's, citizens proposed lands and the like, under a non-impairment standard, all of which were outlawed in the Settlement Agreement.</p>	<p>See comment response VI1E.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	VI8	The RMP is defective to the extent it relies on a VRM II Classification to eliminate surface disturbing activities at all, let alone on over a half mile of land either side of the eastern portion of the proposed White River SRMA. Manual H-8410-1 at section V.B.2. states the Class II objective allows that management activities to be seen as long as they do not attract the attention of the casual observer. Given this criteria, the BLM's use of VRM II label as a means to bar all surface activities up to one half mile on either side of this eastern segment of the White River area is arbitrary and wholly unjustified, given the utter lack of analysis and rationale expressed in the RMP. The RMP fails to justify or even attempt to explain why the proposed White River SRMA has to extend wider than the existing White River recreational corridor.	<p>While BLM manual H-8410-1 provides guidance and criteria for inventorying the visual quality of an existing landscape, it is management's calculated decision based on FLPMA's policy to protect the scenic qualities as well as other resource issues which determine the amount of latitude they wish to manage for. The half- mile corridor is a tool which management has determined to be a reasonable distance to protect the naturalness and/or the VRM classification objectives for that area.</p> <p>The alternatives present a range of VRM categories from which management can select from.</p> <p>NOTE: H-8410-1 is a handbook, not a manual. Manuals provide policy direction; handbooks provide guidance.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	VI9	All reference to VRM in this RMP are lacking in detail to enable the reader to fully analyze the impacts of such designations.	Analysis of impacts on visual resources from land management decisions are provided in Section 4.17. The analyses of visual resource management decisions on other resources and land uses are provided within each resource section throughout Chapter 4.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI10	In extreme SW Duchesne County you will find that BLM land and fee lands there have been assigned VRM Class II (Figure 26). If you compare it to Figure 9 the BLM lands have been assigned category 2 (Timing and control as surface use.) It is questionable that category 2 is consistent with a VRM Class 2 management.	<p>VRM II can be consistent with Timing and Controlled Surface Use when site-specific VRM mitigation is applied (see VRM Manual H-8431-1 for possible design techniques to reduce visual impacts).</p> <p>Figure 26 is a Travel/OHV map. VRM classification starts with Figures 29-32. Figure 9 is a Seasons of Use map for grazing.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	VI11	In [extreme SW Duchesne County] the BLM holds small tracts within fee lands, some appear to be as small as 40 acres. The value of assigning a VRM class to small tracts of land surrounded by fee lands is questionable. This comment would apply where the same situation exists NW of Maeser and in the Diamond Mountain area. In these areas BLM would not be able to control use of the land, thus lacks the ability to control VRMs in the area.	The BLM is required, by policy, to assign VRM inventory and management classes to all BLM-administered public lands during the RMP process. See comment response VI1.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI12	It appears that VRM restrictions on BLM land could be used to restrict acres and ROW to fee lands to restrict their development. If this is the intent it should be analyzed and disclosed.	See comment response VI1.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI13	All proposals for establishing Visual Resource Class should be analyzed. Throughout the matrix there are proposals that in addition to establishing a management restriction or a special designation it is proposed to establish a VRM classification. Here when a management alternative is selected a VRM class is also selected without analysis of need or other VRM classification alternatives.	See comment response V I7A.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI14	The visual resource inventory manual H-8410-1 provides that management decisions are the basis for the assignment of a VRM classification. To insure that the appropriate VRM class is assigned after a management alternative is selected, an analysis of a range of alternatives for that decision should be made.	BLM Manual H-8410-1 states that RMP management decisions are the basis for assigning VRM management classes. That is, the type and intensity of activities permitted within an area will determine the VRM management class. NEPA requires that a range of reasonable alternatives be considered and analyzed (as was done in the Vernal RMP EIS) that are applicable to the Proposed Action and meet the project's Purpose and Need (40 CFR 1502.14).	
UBAOG	G-22	VI15	A review of Figure 26 would indicate that the VRM classifications proposed are based on proposed management alternatives. In most cases the more	Figure 26 is a Travel/OHV map. Maps displaying VRM classification are found in Figures 29-32.	

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			<p>restrictive ones follow the proposed alternative exactly. This indicates that the Scenic Quality Evaluation in H-8410-1 was not made. H-8410-1 provides in section V.A.1 that class 1 is assigned to those areas where a management decision has been made previously to maintain a natural landscape. There are areas in the RMP where VRM class I has been proposed that do not meet this test. In the White River area VRM Class I is proposed that is outside the proposed WSR proposed designation and does not meet this test. Additionally a VRM Class I cannot be assigned to the ACEC or SRMA proposed here as a previous decision to manage it to maintain a natural landscape has not been made, and is inconsistent with direction provided in H8410-1.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	VI15	<p>Given the fact that the VRM class is to be established after a management decision and that some lack analysis and a range of alternatives, it would seem clear that analysis should take place here.</p>	See comment response VI1C.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI16	<p>In Brown's Park a VRM Class I has been proposed within the expanded SRMA. The VRM Handbook is clear in VA. I that Class I is reserved for areas where a previous decision has been made to manage the area to maintain natural landscapes such as wilderness and WSR (wild). None of the Brown's Park area has been designated to be managed for natural landscape. The nomination of the Green River as WSR is for scenic not wild. Thus the river corridor does not meet the above requirement.</p>	See comment response VI1D.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI17	<p>On Figure 26 the map shows a VRM class I designation for Raven Ridge. A search of the document shows no analysis of need or other alternatives for this designation.</p>	In both alternatives A and C, Raven Ridge is shown as having a VRM II classification. If the area in question is located north of there, then that is the far western extension of the Bull Canyon WSA located	

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				<p>primarily in Western Colorado. The WSA is identified as VRM I.</p> <p>See comment response VI15.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	VI18	A VRM class I clearly would prohibit mineral development and other surface disturbing activities. This designation in effect is withdrawal.	See comment response VI1E.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI18A	In the VRM handbook at V.I it provides that VRM class do not establish management direction and should not be used as a basis for constraining or limiting surface disturbing activities.	See comment response VI14.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI19	The same descriptions should be provided for VRM I, III, IV as for VRM II was.	The Final EIS text has been amended to show descriptions for all VRM Management Classes in Appendix K.	X
UBAOG	G-22	VI20	This section should be rewritten to provide that such action would be permitted if the function of these areas is protected. This then would be consistent with EPCA direction. Strike (B) and (C) as they are not. There is no requirement for development to enhance riparian.	The commenter does not provide additional information nor explain how or why VRM Class objectives would be inconsistent with EPCA. In fact, Section 1.12 specifically points how the EPACA inventory was considered during the preparation of the PRMP/FEIS. BLM policy requires surface disturbances within VRM Class II areas to meet the visual resource management objectives stipulated for that VRM Class. This is stated in Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
UBAOG	G-22	VI21	How can 35,900 acres of mineral withdrawals under Alternative D lead to a higher level of visual protection than 36,267 acres of such withdrawals under the three action alternatives?	Section 4.17.2.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect that Alternatives A, B, C, and E provide more acreage for protection of visual resources that does Alternative D.	X
UBAOG	G-22	VI22	It is not correct to say that Alternative B does not specify management actions on slopes greater than 40%. Table 2.3, Page 2-54, states that an approved, engineered plan is required under Alternative B for	Section 4.17.2.8 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the statement describing the slope management actions for Alternative B.	X

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			surface disturbance on slopes greater than 20% (which should include slopes over 40%).		
UBAOG	G-22	VI23	It is not logical that Alternative B would have greater negative OHV impacts on visual quality than Alternative D. Alternative B has much fewer acres open to unrestricted OHV use and both of these alternatives maintain existing roads if they continue to serve a public purpose.	The text in question has been deleted from Section 4.17.2.7.4 of the PRMP/FEIS.	X
UBAOG	G-22	VI24	In the analysis of Alternative B, the long-term beneficial visual impacts associated with woodland forest management are not recognized.	Section 4.17.2.12.2 has been revised in the PRMP/FEIS as follows: "The long-term beneficial impacts on woodlands would be similar to those discussed under Alternative A."	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF2	The RMP fails to document or support the "crucial winter or other big game" habitat. It is rarely clear whether UDWR has updated or expanded these areas as well as what is the scientific basis for such classifications.	Section 3.19.1.2 of the PRMP/FEIS states that: "Crucial winter range is considered to be the part of the local deer and elk range where approximately 90% of the local population is located during an average of five winters out of ten from the first heavy snowfall to spring green-up." The BLM has adopted the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources' (UDWR) identification of crucial winter habitat.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF3	There should be a clear distinction between introduction, reintroduction and emigration. Glossary should provide a definition of each. Emigration should not be handled as a reintroduction. The Uintah County Plan provides that animals outside of their permitted area are in trespass. Such animals should be removed. To allow emigration requires planning and	The Glossary of the Final EIS has been revised to clarify the meaning of "introduction," "reintroduction," and "emigration." The commenter was not clear in defining what "permitted area" means.	X

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			forage adjustments after the fact and is not sound management. Emigration requires the same analysis and disclosure as do other decisions.		
UBAOG	G-22	WF4	The document as a whole fails to address coyotes, foxes and ravens. Control of these is critical to sustaining and increasing sage grouse populations and should be addressed.	<p>Predator control is implemented by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Table 2.1.26 (Woodlands and Forests Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS states:</p> <p>“Coordinate with Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to prepare an annual operating plan for predator control within the planning area.”</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF5	Throughout the draft there are discussions on how wildlife populations are to be managed, and management prescriptions have been developed. The BLM has no control over wildlife populations. When there is an increase in wildlife AUM's consumed it is likely that the burden of these reductions will fall on livestock. To prevent this and to provide for a method for implementing management prescriptions contained in the RMP, the RMP should contain a provision for development of an MOA between the BLM and the State of Utah regarding these issues as well as addressing forage allocations. Increases in wildlife populations should be based on availability of forage. Such increases must be analyzed and impacts disclosed and that has not been done.	<p>The BLM has responsibility to manage wildlife habitat as part of its multiple use mandate (cite FLPMA and the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act). BLM coordinates with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) in the management of this habitat to help ensure that UDWR wildlife management goals are being addressed. This coordination includes determination on the appropriate big game herd numbers to ensure that forage meets Rangeland Health Standards and forage production for livestock is not decreased. See Table 2.1.26 (Woodlands and Forests Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS .</p> <p>Site specific action plans and MOAs may be developed as part of the implementation of the RMP.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF6	The three bullets on 2-3 and the last bullet on 2-4 use the word "would" as a directive. The top bullet on 2-4 "wildlife management" states that discussions would be held with DWR. The Counties requests to be included in discussion regarding these bulleted issues. These	Table 2.1.1 (Management Common to All Alternatives under the subsection entitled Fire, Drought, and Natural Disasters states that the BLM would coordinate with affected parties. Counties could also be considered affected parties.	

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			decisions affect the Counties.		
UBAOG	G-22	WF7	As written, range health and viability, as well as animal health, will be impacted beyond levels that should be allowed. Wildlife populations are usually controlled through hunting in the fall. The time it takes from the beginning of discussions to actual reduction in wildlife numbers could greatly increase recovery time for both habitat and wildlife numbers. Rewrite to provide for earlier discussions and adjustments of wildlife numbers. Additionally similar language should be added to provide for such adjustments in other situations when rangeland health is threatened. An MOU between BLM and The State of Utah should be implemented to provide and govern such communication.	See comment response WF5.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF8	<p>"During periods of prolonged dryness or drought, to the extent that wildlife grazing ungulate populations cannot be sustained due to competition for water and available forage, and overall animal health is compromised. BLM would enter into discussions with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) regarding herd numbers and overall management options to combat the effects of drought."</p> <p>Remove "and overall animal health is compromised."</p> <p>Remove "combat" on last line and add "ensure that rangeland health is maintained and to address."</p>	Table 2.1.1 (Management Common to All Alternatives under the subsection entitled Fire, Drought, and Natural Disasters has been revised to incorporate the suggested changes.	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF9	Any "need of conservation" needs to be limited to ESA. The UDWR plans do not meet "species and habitat" in need of conservation. Any state habitat plans must be based on available forage for subject species.	Any "need of conservation" should be related to all species as described in BLM Manual 6840.	

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UBAOG	G-22	WF10	This section should be rewritten to include recent off-site mitigation, which provides for habitat banking.	BLM would consider off-site mitigation as a method to offset impacts due to surface disturbing activities.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF11	<p>Add after "activities"</p> <p>"only if it is voluntary and there is a causal connection to the impacts being mitigated."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>The BLM would consider off-site mitigation as a method to offset impacts due to surface disturbing activities.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF11A	The RMP needs to conform to the IM on mitigation and the case law that requires a causal connection. The RMP currently promotes buying out of grazing permits without regard to the impacts on resource management, the economy, community and law and regulation.	The commenter does not indicate which IM on mitigation he/she believes applies to the statement in question. As many IMs on the subject of mitigation exist, the BLM is unable to specifically address this portion of the comment.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF12	<p>Add:</p> <p>"When reintroduction of a species will result in impacts on private land, the landowners must also consent."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p>	

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				<p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF12A	Where reintroduced species could come on private lands, reintroduction cannot occur without their agreement.	Any reintroduction of species in the planning area would be subject to site-specific NEPA, which would include an analysis of potential impacts to private landowners. Landowners and other interested parties would have an opportunity to comment on the proposed introduction and potential conditions and/or mitigations for that introduction during the public involvement process for that NEPA analysis.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF13	<p>Add:</p> <p>"When the reintroduced species is subject to the ESA, it will be experimental nonessential. Coordination needs to be clearly understood to be consent."</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	

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UBAOG	G-22	WF13	Any reintroductions that would affect private landholders or permittees should not be publicly reviewed through RAC but through County Authority as provided by Uintah County General Plan.	<p>Whether or not a reintroduced species that is subject to ESA is classified as experimental nonessential is outside of the scope of this planning process. The USFWS determines the status of reintroduced federally listed species.</p> <p>Any public review of federally-listed species reintroductions would be conducted through site-specific NEPA led by the USFWS.</p> <p>See comment response WF12A.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF14	The RMP fails to provide a scientific basis for these restrictions and clearer limits.	These restrictions are based on management direction that was carried forward from the Diamond Mountain RMP (in Appendix K).	
UBAOG	G-22	WF15	Requirement to modify fence to protect wildlife should not be at permittee's expense and should be made clear here.	Payment of fence modification will be determined during site specific project planning.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF16	There is no requirement on habitat mitigation plan from oil & gas. Just to get a lease you have to submit a plan.	Habitat and mitigation plans are required as part of the plan of operation.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF17	<p>We fail to see the need for a protection for migrating deer. The Uintah County Plan provides for protections in these areas on winter range and fawn activities, which clearly are more critical activities for deer.</p> <p>There appears to be no justification for this alternative. It is not an issue raised in the AMSs and seems to be centered on mineral development activity. Most of the migration corridor overlaps deer and elk crucial winter range and it is protected from activities that would have adverse impacts on deer and elk from November 15 to April 30. In some of these acres, surface disturbing</p>	<p>Deer migration occurs outside of the November 15 to April 30th time period. Migration is vital to deer survival because it allows animals to move to lower elevations, including crucial winter range, to obtain forage during the critical fall and winter months. The need to maintain wildlife migration corridors has been well documented in both the scientific literature and through BLM and UDWR biologist's experience.</p>	

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			<p>activities could only be permitted from 4/14 - 9/1 (4 1/2 months) of additional time such as a nesting raptor. As written, this is not consistent with Uintah County Plan. It is unlikely that the level of activity would ever be at a level that it would impact the ability of deer to migrate between ranges given the topography, screening provided by area vegetation, and the size of the area. There is no analysis of need, impacts and restriction being least restrictive as necessary.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	WF18	<p>Add to Alternative A:</p> <p>“Bighorn sheep reintroduction or emigration will not be proposed or permitted in an area within nine (9) miles of land currently permitted to domestic sheep.”</p>	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF18A	<p>It is the Counties position that the legal and primary use of forage in grazing districts is livestock. Reintroductions of bighorn sheep in areas grazing by domestic sheep or cattle is sure to create conflicts. Any proposal to restrict grazing for wildlife purposes is counter to County Plans.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS states that</p> <p>“Reintroduction of native fish and wildlife species into appropriate habitats would be accomplished through coordination with UDWR, counties, and interested publics through appropriate public participation processes. Reintroductions would involve, but may not be limited to, native species</p>	

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				such as Rocky Mountain big horn sheep, moose, bison, and Colorado River cutthroat trout, and wild turkey.”	
UBAOG	G-22	WF19	This alternative as well as the next on bison should provide for cooperation, consultation, and collaboration with the counties.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF20	Strike "emigration and/or".	<p>The BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF20A	The counties are opposed to emigration of Bison or Big Horn Sheep or any other species that may impact the use of lands for livestock grazing or other development. Such animals outside of their designated areas are to be trespassed and removed. Such emigrations should on a case by case basis be allowed after full NEPA analysis to determine impacts on forage, livestock and other wildlife populations.	See comment response WF18A.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF21	There is no indication of the type of disturbance that is to be reclaimed. One assumption would be surface disturbance if so. There is nothing in the text to support the need for 1.5:1 mitigation ratio. It must not	Alternative A in Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to reflect a 1:1.5 ratio.	X

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			<p>be based on habitat loss as such habitat should be avoided to the extent possible. When area disturbance is located outside sage brush habitat when reclamation is complete often habitat is created or forage plants are established where they did not exist prior. This issue has been one of long-time contention. The 1.5:1 ratio is the result of a negotiation that began with a 3:1 ratio and bargained down. The bottom line is that reclamation should be based on the amount of habitat lost. The goals expressed in CHS, to double and triple mule deer and elk populations would appear to be a driving force behind forced increases in habitat.</p>		
UBAOG	G-22	WF22	<p>The requirement [for a 1.5:1 ratio] is not consistent with Uintah County's Plan. It is forced habitat development beyond what was disturbed 1:1. The County Plan requires avoidance of such areas when possible--that requirement should be included here. By avoidance of these areas and reclamation of disturbed areas at 1:1 it is likely that habitat will be increased.</p>	See comment response WF21.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF23	<p>Alternative B: The County Plan requires that in addition to [1:1 habitat development], roads are to be consolidated, pipelines and utilities will be placed in corridors.</p>	Table 1.2.7 (Lands and Realty Management) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Transportation/Utility Corridors states that priority would be placed on placing pipelines and other utilities within existing ROW corridors, including roads	
UBAOG	G-22	WF24	<p>This standard needs to be limited to surface disturbing activities and to only apply to significant impact. The RMP must ensure that restrictions have a scientific basis. For example, it is shown that big game become accustomed to incidental uses of a road by motor vehicles or even drilling in the distance. If the activity involves 6 acres out of 18,000 acres it is difficult to show that this is significant activity. The oil and gas industry has extensive experience working in big game</p>	The language in alternative A applies to any activity that has a potential for adverse impact. Impacts will be analyzed during site specific NEPA.	

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			habitat and there is scant support for the assumption of long-term ill effects. Big game numbers are high and population trends are upwards. Thus, it is difficult to justify closures that are being proposed in the RMP.		
UBAOG	G-22	WF25	EPCA, Executive Orders and BLM Policy require more detailed analysis and documentation than what is found in the draft RMP. EPCA, executive orders, and BLM direction require analysis of need for such restrictions based on science and that such restrictions are the least restrictive needed; this has not been accomplished. The proposed restriction should be rewritten based on proper analysis or select alternatives. Reanalyze base on substantiate species needs that justify the dates and analyze impacts on other resources and uses.	The alternatives analyzed in the PRMP/FEIS include a range of management restrictions related to oil and gas development. As per EPCA, this range of management restrictions was developed specifically for the purpose of determining that is the least restrictive alternative with regards to oil, gas, and mineral development, while still retaining the long-term productivity of other resources in the planning area. The analysis of the impacts of these alternatives on oil and gas development and on these other resources is disclosed in Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS. The final determination on the most appropriate alternative to meet EPCA while providing for other resource use and long-term sustainability will be disclosed in the Record of Decision (ROD).	
UBAOG	G-22	WF26	Add to this alternative that criteria for such waiver must be developed within 6 months of the ROD. The provisions here are meaningless and lack certainty without any guidance on how they will be applied.	The criteria are spelled out adequately in this alternatives matrix to be applied as programmatic direction at the planning level. For example, there isn't a need to elaborate on the statement "If the animals are not present" or "topography screens activity sufficiently so the proposed activity does not displace subject species". Site-specific analysis would be required for each waiver to determine if they meet the criteria described here and would include additional description and rationale as to whether these criteria are met or not.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF27	The Uintah County Public Land Implementation Plan established a 10% trigger level for such disturbances. It was based on the following: When development was	To ensure that the functional value of the crucial range is available for wildlife, it needs to be protected during the seasonal use of that range.	

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			<p>proposed in the area of the existing crucial deer winter range, the range was greatly expanded based on the best guess of a biologist. When the increase was challenged a study was conducted to substantiate his finding. It has long been the Counties position that an unbiased review of the study would reveal that the actual boundaries and acres is somewhat less than the boundaries established and according to the DWR some of the crucial habitat is used only 30% of the time. This raises the question of how crucial some of the habitat is and what the actual impact of a surface disturbance would be in these areas. The fact that there are goals to double or triple deer and elk populations that are dependent on these crucial ranges indicates that these ranges are not used to capacity at this time and that a 10% impact should not affect current populations. As written, Alternative B is the only acceptable alternative.</p>	<p>Projected will be evaluated on a site specific basis to mitigate impacts outside of the timing restrictions.</p> <p>Additionally, the commenter has not shown how he/she has determined that BLM or UDWR has the goal of doubling or tripling deer and elk populations. Doubling or tripling the deer and elk population is not a goal of this RMP planning process and analyzing the potential impacts of this would be speculative in that UDWR has shown no plans to double or triple deer or elk numbers in the planning area.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF28	<p>This statement omits the continued grazing of these areas by big game and wild horses. It also discloses that the RMP would only manage livestock, contrary to established policy that requires BLM to make reductions based on causation. The RMP cannot try to place the entire management burden on the livestock industry.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.6 (Forage All Localities) of the PRMP/FEIS includes the allocations of AUMs for livestock, wildlife, and wild horses.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF29	<p>Relying solely on utilization without monitoring is inconsistent with BLM rules and policy.</p>	<p>However, nowhere is it stated in the Draft RMP that vegetation utilization would not be monitored. Various alternatives in Table 2.1.25 (Wild Horses) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives state that their goal is to:</p> <p>“Achieve and maintain a desired plant community that would provide palatable, nutritious forage for</p>	

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				<p>wild horses while sustaining rangeland health and a thriving natural ecological balance.”</p> <p>Also see Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Habitat Improvements.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF30	The effects [on wildlife] are grossly overstated and ignore reclamation and mitigation.	The commenter does not provide any additional information nor states how or why the Draft RMP grossly overstates and ignores reclamation and mitigation.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF31	<p>Strike "would" in the first sentence. Replace with - "may".</p> <p>Not all reintroduction efforts will uniformly benefit wildlife habitat. For example, increased prairie dog populations to support the black-footed ferret will have significant and adverse impacts on rangeland vegetation. While this is justified under the ESA, the RMP cannot ignore the damage done and resulting increase in sediment and erosion, loss of native vegetation, etc.</p>	Table 2.3 in the Final EIS has been revised with the suggested changes.	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF32	The RMP discussion should also address changes in big game and wildlife populations and trends. The Counties believes the elk numbers, for example, in this region are increasing and are believed to be in an upward trend for the next decade. If UDWR has increased its herd objectives that fact is also relevant to the issue of where rangeland conditions are not achieving rangeland health standards and the contributing factors.	BLM coordinates with UDWR in the management of this habitat to help ensure that UDWR wildlife management goals are being addressed. This coordination includes determination on the appropriate big game herd numbers to ensure that forage meets Rangeland Health Standards and forage production for livestock is not decreased (See Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsections entitled Goals and Objectives.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF33	Throughout this section there is discussion on wildlife populations and population objectives or the AUM's	Chapter 3 describes the current condition of the VPA's affected environment, and Section 3.19	

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			levels assigned to wildlife. As written this implies that population goals drive management not resource capacities. These issues need to be addressed. See general comments on forage/grazing.	describes the current conditions and resource objectives for wildlife and fisheries. Proposed management decisions for wildlife and fisheries under the revised RMP are stated in Table 2.1.26 (Wildlife and Fisheries Resources) of the PRMP/FEIS and were derived through the RMP process described in Section 1.5.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF34	The DEIS does not define and appears to misuse the term "habitat fragmentation." The discussion incorrectly states that agriculture uses fragment habitat. Agriculture in the planning area is primarily ranching and it does not "fragment habitat." Second, the alleged fragmentation is probably due to private land ownership along water bodies. Unless the land uses prevent life processes, it is inaccurate to describe the habitat as fragmented. Moreover, fragmentation means different things to different species and the broad-brush discussion incorrectly assumes that habitat changes have an equal effect.	The Section 3.19.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include a definition for habitat fragmentation. Otherwise, the commenter does not provide any additional information to substantiate or support the assertions made concerning habitat fragmentation within the VPA.	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF35	This conclusion does not appear to be adequately supported by findings in the chapter and is an overstatement of the potential impacts.	Section 4.15.6 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include supporting statements for the conclusion reached in this section.	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF36	Efforts have not been made in Alternative B to allocate forage to wild horses.	The commenter is correct. Alternative B represents part of the range of alternatives by CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1).	X
UBAOG	G-22	WF37	Alternative B should be amended to allow for UDWR involvement in analyzing exceptions to the dates as in Alternatives A and C.	The CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.1) require BLM to consider reasonable alternatives, which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment, based on the nature of the proposal and facts in the case (CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions 1b.). While there are many possible management prescriptions or actions, the BLM used the scoping process to determine a reasonable range alternatives that best	

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				<p>addressed the issues, concerns, and alternatives identified by the public. Public participation was essential in this process and full consideration was given to all potential alternatives identified.</p> <p>The BLM determined that a single alternative analyzing the protection of all Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics would best provide a reasoned choice among the alternatives. Although the other alternatives do not provide specific management prescriptions to protect Non-WSA, these alternatives analyze and disclose the impacts of the proposed resource management prescriptions, uses and actions on the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. This gives the public the ability to fully compare the consequences of protecting or not protecting the wilderness characteristics on these Non-WSA lands. If all alternatives contained comparable protections of the Non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics, the alternatives would have substantially similar consequences and would not be significantly distinguishable.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF38	Alternative C will have a lesser beneficial long-term impact than Alternative A because of the restrictions on removal of woodland materials within ACEC's under Alternative C.	Comment noted.	

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UBAOG	G-22	WF39	Here it refers to a 7 year nest monitoring period. There is no definition of what this is and it is not contained in section J, Inventory and Monitoring.	<p>As per Instruction Memorandum No. UT 2006-096 dated September 6, 2006 raptors will now be managed under the Best Management Practices for Raptors and Their Associated Habitats in Utah under all alternatives. The BMPs allow for modifications to the spatial and seasonal buffers so long as protection of nesting raptors is ensured. Criteria that would need to be met, prior to implementing modifications to the spatial and seasonal buffers and allowances for local nesting chronologies are outlined in Appendix A.</p> <p>As a programmatic NEPA and planning document, the RMP and EIS are not site-specific. Project-related site-specific conditions would be analyzed and mitigated through other NEPA processes and documents.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF40	A 1.5:1 ratio is not measurable and is counter to County Plans.	See comment responses WF1 and WF 44A.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF41	A 3:1 ratio is not measurable and is counter to County Plans.	See comment response WF44A.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF42	October 1 - May 31 is a six-month migration. The migration is not that long. The draft contains no analysis of need.	Alternative D is the No Action Alternative, which means that this reflects the current resource management situation within the VPA. There is no analysis of need because it is the current RMP management action against which the other proposed action alternatives are compared, as required by NEPA.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF43	This stipulation applies to the whole 472,000 acres. Counties do not want this stipulation in Alternative B. This would not allow any activity on 10% or 47,000 acres. It is the Counties position that there are other methods to address this issue and they should be	See comment response WF37 and WF44A.	

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			explored.		
UBAOG	G-22	WF44	To not allow activities that would result in adverse impacts is open ended and could be interpreted to prohibit any type of activity and close the area for recreation road use, normal development, maintenance, etc. The exception pertaining to the expected duration of disturbance should be added to corridor exceptions. This comment should be added to the language in modifications and waivers above.	See comment response WF37.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF44A	The provision not to allow any adverse impact is counter to the Uintah County Plan which would not allow displacement from more than 10% of their winter habitat.	FLPMA states that resource management planning on federally-administered land coordinate with, be consistent with county plans to the maximum extent possible, and resolve to the extent practicable inconsistencies between federal and non-federal government plans (FLPMA, Title II (c)(9)). Thus, while county and federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practicable, the federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to county plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations.	
UBAOG	G-22	WF45	As written stipulations are not consistent with Uintah County Plan. The plan provides for exceptions when animals are not present.	The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict	

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				<p>with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p> <p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WF8A	The criteria for initiating discussions with UDWR should not be animal health, because this would allow range health to be harmed so long as animal health is not.	See comment response WF5.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH3	BLM has admitted and demonstrated a lack of ability to manage and control wild horse population in the VRA and throughout the West. Alternatives that propose the establishment or expansion of an HMA must contain a provision that implementation will not take place until such a time that resources are available to provide proper management of these areas, and that wild horse population can be controlled. The Counties oppose any establishment or expansion of wild horse herds.	The RMP is based upon the assumption that sufficient resources would exist for the BLM to implement proposed management actions, including such things as the establishment and control of wild horse herds.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH4	In the draft there are provisions to assign AUM's to wildlife and wild horses without any discussion of where the AUM's will come from or that adequate forage even exists. The impacts must be analyzed and disclosed.	Table 2.1.6 (Forage – All Localities) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Actions Common to All Alternatives, discusses the allocation and reallocation of forage/AUMs between livestock, wildlife, and wild horses. Impacts for forage/AUM allocation are	

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				discussed in Sections 4.7.2.2, 4.18.2.3, and 4.19.2.3.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH5	<p>After 1st sentence use would be allowed within allocations made in the land use plan, and overall herd numbers would be confined to management limits established as an appropriate management level. Add:</p> <p>"BLM would remove wild horses when appropriate management levels are exceeded or when wild horses are found outside the herd management areas."</p> <p>The RMP needs to commit to removal and active management of wild horses.</p>	<p>Table 2.1.1 (Management Common to All Alternatives) of the PRMP under the subsection entitled Fire, Drought, and natural Disasters has been revised to read as follows:</p> <p>"Wild or feral horses will be gathered and removed. Forage allocation has been allocated until removal."</p>	X
UBAOG	G-22	WH6	Strike the words "the land use plan" and replace with "this plan".	See comment response WH5.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH7	The stigma of EIA within the local wild horse population has already had a drastic effect upon the domestic horse market. Further, the mixing of wild horses and domestic horses at auctions or in the local community for adoption heightens the potential for transfer of EIA to domestic horses which also impacts the market for domestic horses. Additional costs associated with testing and proof of health certificates are experienced by local horse owners when trying to race, sell, or use their horses outside of the local areas.	Wild horses that are gathered in the Uintah Basin are tested for EIA before they can leave the trap site. All wild horses brought to Vernal and the surrounding areas have a negative Coggins Test for EIA and are current on all vaccinations. The cost of testing for the public is minimal compared to taking the chance of spreading or having EIA.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH8	The only acceptable alternative here is Alternative A. Alternative D proposes a planned amendment involving introduction of horses in the Bonanza area would be implemented. Previous court cases and documented impacts from past over-grazing by horses which are supported elsewhere in the text would indicate the reintroduction of horses to this area is unacceptable. Currently BLM has expressed concern regarding the	Comment noted.	

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			condition of these ranges with respect to cool season grass species. The text indicates that these declines are associated with past wild horse grazing.		
UBAOG	G-22	WH9	There is no analysis of the impacts of reintroduction of wild horses into this [Bonanza] area and the impact that they would have on private lands that are contiguous to this area. There has been a history of such impacts on private lands along the White River and the failure of BLM to properly manage wild horses in that area to prevent such impacts.	The alternatives providing for reintroduction of wild horses in this area are predicated upon the assumption that the BLM would have the resources to establish and manage the herd such that adjacent private landowners suffer no impacts. The FRMP/FEIS allows for the BLM to remove wild horses when and where conditions warrant.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH10	Reintroduction of horses in the Bonanza area is counter to the Uintah County Plan.	Comment noted.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH11	The counties are opposed to the establishment of an HMA and the placement of horses in Winter Ridge. Strike all in Alternative A & B in this section and replace it with "same as Alternative D". Previous analysis and RMP discussed the unsuitability of Winter Ridge for wild horses. Draft AMSs for this RMP discuss and support the decisions in the 1985 RMP that the horses must be removed. Some of those concerns are contained in the current AMSs although some were dropped, such as limitations on using aircraft for gathers, as much of HA HML is within the Winter Ridge WSA. Another consideration is location. Winter Ridge is a remote location and it is questionable how much public enjoyment of this resource there can be. It is difficult to understand why an HMA is proposed when so much evidence exists that indicates alternative D is the only acceptable and supported choice. Select D as the preferred alternative.	As required by NEPA, the EIS alternatives provide a range of alternatives management actions from which the Vernal FO can select for the FRMP/FEIS. The management actions selected for the final RMP will be consistent with general overall management direction.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH12	Analysis fails to address impacts to stressed sage-grouse leks and wildlife habitat in the area as well as uncontrolled wild horse grazing on wildlife habitat and rangeland standards.	The potential impacts of wild horses on wildlife and vegetation are outlined in Sections 4.19.2.13 and 4.16.2.14, respectively.	

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				<p>See also the comment response WH28.</p> <p>The potential impacts of management decisions on sage grouse are outlined in Table 4.15.1.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WH13	<p>Change title to Herd Protected Occurrence Area. Figure 33 does not reflect alternatives A, B, C, D as other maps do. The difference between a herd protected occupancy area and herd management protected occupancy would then be clear as would the affect of each alternative. The Uintah County Plan provides that management is not to be extended beyond the boundaries of a proposed action unless it is fully analyzed in the planning document.</p>	<p>The legend at the bottom of the map (Figure 33) gives the definition of what they are.</p> <p>The boundaries would only change in Alternatives A and C which are analyzed.</p>	
UBAOG	G-22	WH14	<p>Strike this entire alternative. This alternative says the permits would be offered on the former HMA of Hill Creek. Neither the text nor maps indicate where this is. Issuing this permit would only add to the management problems in the HMA.</p>	<p>Only Alternative B would authorize permits for wild horse grazing in the Hill Creek HA, and these permits would only be issued to the Northern Ute Tribe. Figure 33 has been revised to show the Hill Creek Herd Area in question.</p>	X
UBAOG	G-22	WH15	<p>The Uintah County Plan requires that the horses be gathered periodically.</p>	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolve to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p>	

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				Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH16	This alternative proposes extending the HMA. This extension is not shown on the maps. The Counties object to any extension of a HMA.	The proposed expansion is shown on Figure 33 as the diagonally-hatched area to the north of solidly-shaded the Hill Creek parcels.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH17	The RMP does not address or fully discuss the wild horse management issues, such as impacts on vegetation, other wildlife species, and private property rights.	Impacts from wild horse management decisions on other resources are discussed in Chapter 4 for each resource for which an impact is potential. Specifically, impacts from wild horse management decisions on vegetation and other wildlife are discussed in Sections 4.16.2.14 and 4.19.2.13, respectively.	
UBAOG	G-22	WH18	The RMP and DEIS discussion of wild horse management is deficient. It entirely omits the significant and ongoing resource damage caused by unmanaged wild horse use. It also omits the fact that BLM failed to manage horses within the AML's thus contributing to resource damage. More importantly BLM must ensure that wild horses numbers do not interfere with attaining rangeland health standards. The combined effects of drought and excess wild horse numbers are also omitted. The RMP also omits the fact that tribal and local governments sued to enforce wild horse numbers and that there is no local support	Herd management, monitoring, and gathering plans would be developed under all alternatives and would provide for the gathering of horses to manage herd sizes, test health, and address conflicts as needed.	

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			for the Winter Ridge Herd Area to be converted to an HMA. In these circumstances, BLM needs to provide for limiting horse numbers to AML and to removing wild horses elsewhere. Wild horse numbers increase rapidly and probably more than any other non-domestic species. Thus it can be a significant factor in rangeland resource degradation.		
UBAOG	G-22	WH19	The provision for a herd projected occurrence area implies horses will be permitted on land outside the HMA. This is contrary to BLM rules and direction.	An occurrence area is land that is not fenced but has the natural boundaries to contain the wild horses from moving any further out side of the HMA, thus allowing the BLM to contain within and prevent wild horses from leaving the HMA.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	PR17	A "not to designate" [ACECs] alternative was not provided, which fails the full range of alternatives test.	There is no requirement in NEPA, FLPMA, other federal legislation or BLM policy to examine an exhaustive range of alternatives that represent extremes in proposed options. Rather, law and policy require BLM to consider a reasonable range of alternatives that meet the purpose and need of the undertaking, which in this case is the purpose and need for the BLM to manage the lands and resources of the Vernal Planning Area (VPA) under a multiple use and sustained yield regime. The BLM is authorized to designate ACECs and other special management areas where the need for such consideration exists. The range of alternatives considered in the RMP provide for anywhere from 165,944 acres to 681,310 acres in ACECs. The BLM believes that this range is sufficient to offer a variety of options for management and still meet the BLM's goal of managing VPA lands for multiple use and sustained yield.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne	G-23	RE14	The work projects described in the AMS and current use in the area would indicate more attention should be directed at recreation management, not values that are	Comment noted.	

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Counties			currently afforded protection under other law and regulation.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD40	This area has been layered with special designations and other management prescription without consideration to manageability of these designations and current use.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD41	The Wild and Scenic River Act give agencies no authority to manage rivers, determined to be suitable for WSR designation, to protect their outstanding remarkable characteristics. Thus BLM lacks authority to manage the Upper Green River as provided in Chapter 2.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD42	Suitability of [the Upper Green River] segment should be re-analyzed in this document. A review of the Diamond Mountain RMP and ROD indicates no analysis of suitability for WSR designation was analyzed in them. In the Diamond Mountain Plan, at SEA 08 page 2-4, it indicates that the Upper Green River suitability determination was made prior to that RMP.	The Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS Record Of Decision at SEA08 on page 2-4 reflects the Areawide Decision made concerning the two river segments. The Upper Green River and Lower Green River segments were analyzed in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and Wild and Scenic Suitability Analysis reports may be found in Appendix 7, Special Emphasis Areas, in the referenced RMP/EIS.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD43	The DEIS/RMP and the AMS are silent on the origin of the suitability designation. Research of determination history shows that suitability was determined in Wild and Scenic River Study Environmental Statement July 1980. This document addresses the Green and Yampa Rivers.	See Response to Comment SD42-G-23.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD44	The 1980 EIS [for the Wild and Scenic River Study], which is the only analysis of impacts of a suitability determination, is woefully inadequate. A review of Chapter 3 beginning on page 229 indicates that impacts to private landowners with respect to current	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			uses, agriculture, grazing and family residential occupancy, was not analyzed. Analysis was not made based on the assumption that scenic easement and/or agreement would be purchased or made, thus impacts would be eliminated. This has not happened. In short the analysis and disclosure of impacts related to a suitability determination on this stream segment has not been made.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD45	The Wild and Scenic River Review in Utah, process and criteria for interagency use pages 2 and 3, suitability states "The purpose of the suitability component is to determine whether eligible rivers are appropriate additions to the national system by considering trade-offs between corridor development and river protection." It further states "suitability considerations include the environmental and economic consequences of designation and the manageability of the river if it is designated." Appendix E lists suitability factors to be considered in analysis. This analysis required for determination of suitability has not been accomplished in this DEIS/RMP nor in previous analysis of suitability. BLM has relied on faulty analysis that is 25 years old.	Appendix C in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to include additional information regarding suitability determinations.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD99	More than 25 development projects have taken place with the Browns Park/Upper Green River area since the 1980 eligibility and suitability analysis was completed. The 1980 analysis is used in the DEIS to support special designations in the area, and was not updated to account for changes in the landscape resulting from these development projects. A determination of eligibility and suitability based upon these changes of use and development and current conditions and state law must be made in the DEIS/RMP. It is clear that the majority of use and values on this segment of the river is recreational in	The Upper Green and Lower segments of the Green River were determined eligible and suitable in the Diamond Mountain RMP (1994). The findings were based on development that was in place at that time. Any development on public lands within the river corridor would have to be consistent with the Diamond Mountain RMP decision, so findings should not have changed since 1994. However; the outstandingly remarkable values and tentative classifications for these river segments were reassessed for the Vernal RMP planning effort. (Refer to Appendix C), and existing developments	

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			nature as opposed to classifications of scenic that exist in the RMP. Proper analysis would show that with existing or proposed protection, a WSA designation would not be needed to protect existing values.	were taken into consideration in the suitability analysis. It is true that these river segments were brought forward as suitable in all alternatives for the Vernal RMP. This is because these river segments had been thoroughly analyzed in the EIS for the Diamond Mountain RMP, and because no objection to this approach was raised during scoping for the Vernal RMP.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD100	There are no management prescriptions for this segment of the river and thus no analysis or disclosure of impacts of management restrictions that are to be applied. This should be done in the DEIS/RMP.	See Response to Comment SD72-G-25, G-1.. As such, management prescriptions were included in the RMP (e.g., Appendix K) and included in the analysis of impacts from special designations decisions on other resources and uses.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD110	At page 2-29 under 2.4.13.3.1.2. It is proposed that Red Creek watershed (24,475 acres) be managed to protect the high value watershed and wildlife habitat resources by continuing the designation. The wording here is not consistent with that in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 where it provides that Browns Park, Red Mountain, Dry Fork, and Lower Green River corridor would continue to be managed as ACEC's for the protection of high value watersheds and Class I fishery Chapter 3 and historical, cultural, scenic, fish and wildlife resources.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD111	Section 1613.21 of Chapter 1 of the ACEC Handbook provides that existing ACEC's must be analyzed in RMP planning. There is no analysis in the DEIS/RMP that indicates a need for the continuation of existing ACEC's. The only attempt to justify continuing existing ACEC's is at 3.14.1.1.1. It states "based on current analysis of the areas, the present designation has been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will all be carried forward as ACEC's in the	See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.	

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			Vernal RMP.” There is no reference to this analysis in the AMS, which by regulation is to drive the formation of alternatives.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD112	Other than brief ambiguous statements in the draft that say that relevance and importance criteria exist there is no analysis that supports the need for existing ACEC's in Brown Park and Red Creek or the need to carry them forward. To the contrary in the AMS at 5.4 Current ACEC's there is a listing of Completed or Under Consideration Work Projects in these ACEC's None of the projects would require a ACEC designation to be accomplished. In fact these projects could be accomplished on any lands not covered by an ACEC. A review of the management prescription in the Diamond Mountain RMP indicates the work project is consistent with that plan. Current activities and proposed work on this ACEC is not consistent with the values identified as relevant and important. In the DEIS/RMP BLM claims there is a need to continue the existing ACEC in Red Creek and Browns Park, but it offers no analysis of need or impacts and substantiates the need with work projects that are not ACEC management prescriptions. BLM has fallen short of substantiating the need for ACEC, in these areas.	See Response to Comment SD90-G-24.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD113	At Table 2.3, Page 56, Alternative A, it is proposed an ACEC to manage Browns Park to develop a comprehensive integrated activity plan that would address protection of scenic, wildlife, cultural and historical values. It goes on to place restriction on oil and gas development, OHV and other uses by establishing a VRM class I and II for the area. The development of an activity plan is not a basis for an ACEC designation and would not pass the relevance and importance as other protections exist for the values to be protected. In addition the restrictions listed are	The development of a comprehensive integrated activity plan is not the basis upon which the ACEC would be established but would be the plan under which the ACEC, established to focus special management attention on the relevant and important scenic, wildlife, and cultural/historical values of the area, would be managed. VRM Class I and II allocations would not be enacted for the sole purpose of excluding oil and gas development and OHV use but are part of the overall strategy to manage this area, in part, for its high scenic value.	

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			not supportive of the need for a plan development.	The relevant and importance criteria for this ACEC are discussed in Chapter 3 and in Appendix G.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	SD114	SRMA, Table 2.3 on Page 52, Alternative A provides for an SRMA to provide for outstanding scenic vistas and enhancement of resources and associated activities such as riparian, fisheries, special status species, water quality, water based recreation, hunting, trail system for hiking, biking, horseback riding and OHV use, camping, cultural and historical interpretation and facility development that goes on to establish non-impairment standards for a portion of the area. As with the ACEC's, here again is an attempt to layer restrictions and management to circumvent multiple use requirements and manage to a non-impairment standard. Protection of scenic vistas, enhancement of resources, riparian, fisheries, special status species and water quality are not recreational use and are already protected under other proposed management prescriptions, law or regulation. They have no place in an SRMA.	Scenic vistas (including riparian corridors), fisheries, special status species, and cultural/historical sites are all resources that contribute significantly to the recreational uses of the area. As such, management for these resources is appropriate within a SRMA. While other regulations may provide a measure of protection for such resources, they do not provide a comprehensive strategy that manages the resources for the maintenance and enhancement of recreational opportunity.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	VI33	The VRM I proposed for primitive recreation values is not shown on map 29. A shape file recently received from the BLM indicates that this is an area on the south side of the river and appears to be the entire north slope of the mountains that make up the visual barrier when looking south from the river. The majority of the area proposed as a VRM I are within full view of the Taylor Flats subdivision and in some cases less than a mile from it. The area is also within sight and sound of recreational activities, and vehicle traffic along the river and residential activity on Taylor Flats, which has been divided into one thousand lots. The existing uses of [the area's classified as VRM I], and the fact the area	The West Cold Springs and the Diamond Breaks WSAs are protected by VRM class 1. This is not associated with the Taylor Flat area.	

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			receives very little recreational use, demonstrates poor analysis of need and planning for this proposal and should be struck from all alternatives.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	VI34	As with other VRM classes proposed in the area, a VRM I here would prevent needed wildlife habitat improvement in an area BLM has proposed to protect crucial habitats.	See comment response SD99.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	VI35	The proposal to establish a VRM I here is counter to direction provided in BLM's VRM handbook which provides that a VRM I is only to be applied where previous management decisions have been made to manage an area for it's natural landscapes such as wilderness areas. A VRM I has also been applied to the two WSA's in the area. These are inappropriate as they are inconsistent with provisions of the IMP, which guide management of WSA's. There are uses allowed in the IMP that would be prohibited under a VRM I.	See comment response VI1D	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	VI36	In all alternatives this area is to be managed as a VRM II. Neither the DEIS/RMP nor the AMS justifies the need for change from the VRM III and VRM IV that is currently applied to the area. The condition of the area at this time would support that the current VRM III and VRM IV adequately protect the area.	BLM visual inventories use scenic quality and visual sensitivity to evaluate the visual resource condition of an area. As described in BLM Handbook H-8410-1 Visual Resource Inventory, a more protective VRM Class may be assigned to an area if the VRM inventory process determines that an area has become more visually sensitive and management decisions have been made to preserve or maintain the area's landscape and scenic quality. See comment response VI14.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-23	VI37	A VRM II applied to this area is inconsistent with existing developments and uses within the area and ignores the existence of road and utility corridor that crosses it. Much of the area is private or state land,	This statement merely refers to the fact that the BLM does not have the authority to impose restrictions on non-Bureau landholders within areas that contain VRM I or II designation, nor does it	

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			<p>which BLM does not control. There is a strong possibility that private property rights would be impacted. There is a possibility on need for holders of water rights to develop those rights or to construct or reconstruct diversions for those rights; in many cases a VRM I or II could impact those rights.</p>	<p>have the authority to usurp legal water rights.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>GC28</p>	<p>The impact analysis at 4.8.2.3.1 only addresses the impact from light and sound and NSO restrictions adjacent to Dinosaur National Monument. Appendix K indicates there are other areas that would be impacted.</p>	<p>Section 4.8.2.3.1 of the Draft RMP/EIS only addresses impacts from light and sound and NSO restrictions for recreation purposes around the monument since these are the only management decisions for this area as it relates to recreation (the subject of Section 4.8.2.3.1. Impacts from non-recreation management decisions on minerals and energy development are addressed in the remainder of Section 4.8, including discussions of special status species and wildlife decisions for sensitive areas identified in Appendix K.</p> <p>Note: Section 4.8.2.3.1 of the Draft RMP is renumbered as Section 4.8.2.4.1 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>SD88</p>	<p>In Alternative A, sections of Nine Mile Creek are proposed not to be identified as suitable for inclusion in the Wild & Scenic River System. There appears to be an error in the description of the first section discussed. Nine Mile Creek between the Green River and the Duchesne County line is not in Duchesne County. The outstanding ORVs identified for this section are not dependent on the river for their existence and not directly river-related as required in IM 2004-196. There is lack of detailed analysis of the need for a WSR designation, how the ORVs meet the above analysis, what management prescription will be applied and impacts on current development leases or permits.</p>	<p>The statements in question should reference the portion of Nine Mile Creek in Duchesne and Uintah counties, from the Green River to the Duchesne-Carbon County Line. Under Alternatives C and E the river segment would be found suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS.</p> <p>Chapter 2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify that suitable rivers/river corridors will be managed to protect their outstandingly remarkable values, tentative classifications, and free-flowing nature. Specific resource allocations and</p>	<p>X</p>

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			Alternative A is the only acceptable alternative, as lack of analysis, location and need to protect the ORV fail to support designation. The ORVs used to support designation have other laws or regulations to protect them or are currently protected.	management prescriptions within and outside of eligible river corridors are shown on alternative maps, whether or not such information is described in the wild and scenic river section of Chapter 2.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD89	It is proposed to designate 98,000 acres in Nine Mile Canyon as an ACEC. As written the alternative proposed here fails to clearly show that the Lears Canyon ACEC is included in the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC proposed in Alternative C and D.	Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environment Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to show that Lears Canyon ACEC is a separate and not part of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC for all alternatives.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD90	There is no analysis of the need to retain the existing ACECs. The requirement in BLM manual 1613.21(A)(I) for reconsideration of existing is not met by the brief comment at 3.14.1.1.1 where it states “Based on a current analysis of the areas, the present designations have been effective in protecting the relevant values they exhibit, and these will be carried forward as ACECs in the Vernal RMP.” This analysis, if it exists, should be presented in the draft for analysis and disclosure.	<p>The analysis and rationale for the designation of ACECs in the 1991 Diamond Mountain RMP were disclosed to the public and available for public comment and protest through the EIS and the ROD. No substantive objections were raised at that time.</p> <p>The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s) of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p>	

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				<p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>SD91</p>	<p>Management decisions [for ACECs] must be disclosed in the DEIS/RMP.</p>	<p>ACEC management plans will be developed subsequent to the RMP and the designation of ACECs through the Record of Decision.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>SD92</p>	<p>At Section 3.14.2.9 the draft discusses the Nine Mile Canyon expansion ACEC but does not disclose the values to be protected, the impacts on existing development, leases and permits.</p>	<p>The final sentence of Section 3.14.2.9 of the DRMP/DEIS identifies the values to be protected as "significant cultural resources, special status plant species, and high quality scenery."</p> <p>The analysis of impacts from the expansion were included in those disclosed in Chapter 4 for Alternative C, which is the only alternative under which the expansion would be implemented.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>SD93</p>	<p>The DEIS fails to analyze management decisions [for the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC] to insure they are the least restrictive yet protect identified and substantiated values as required by EPCA.</p>	<p>Appendix G in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to clarify the relevance and importance of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC.</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>Uintah,</p>	<p>G-24</p>	<p>SD94</p>	<p>On page G-8, Table 1, Relevance and Importance</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD50-G-25.</p>	

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Daggett, and Duchesne Counties			Summary, all areas list the values needing protection as Fremont, Ute, Archaic Rock Art and Structures, and Special Status Plant Habitat. There are current laws and regulations that protect these values plus management prescriptions proposed in this DEIS/RMP. It is likely that these are the reason for the condition of existing values, not the ACEC. The fact that these values are currently protected is not analyzed in the draft as well as the threat of irreparable damage. This lack of recognition of existing protections, and analysis of impact of the proposed designation on oil and gas development and other resources, and uses, renders all alternatives presented here as unacceptable.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD95	ACECs proposed here must be analyzed, impacts disclosed, and an alternative not to designate proposed. Such analysis and disclosure must include management prescription carried forward from the Diamond Mountain RMP and those that will be applied in this RMP.	See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD96	The Goals and Objectives at 2.4.11.1 are proper uses of an SRMA, however, the guidelines at 2.4.11.2.1 and 2.4.11.2.2 step outside these goals and objectives, and are not proper use of an SRMA. SRMAs are not for the purpose of enforcement of rangeland standards or the management of resource development. The issues of light and sound should be addressed in NEPA analysis of a proposed project not in the RMP. It should be made clear throughout the text that all SRMA management will be limited to those presented in 2.4.11.1 and that SRMAs are for the management of recreation to protect other resources and not the protection of other resources.	The management actions related in Table 2.1 (Recreation Resources) is consistent with the BLM's policy on recreation management and are directly related to proper management of SRMAs. Although SRMA identification is not, in and of itself, an enforcement tool for rangeland standards, the BLM policy is to manage recreation on Bureau lands, both within and outside of SRMAs, within parameters consistent with Rangeland Health Standards. Establishing general parameters related to issues of light and sound intrusion around a nationally designated monument (for which recreational opportunity is a primary component) surrounded by BLM lands is consistent with the BLM's overall management goals and with SRMA identification.	

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Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD97	There is no analysis of the need to expand the size of the SRMA. It should be limited to areas that have considerable recreational use and not expanded to areas receiving casual use.	The decision to expand the size of the SRMA under two of the alternatives was made during alternative development in response to identified issues and public comment on cultural resources.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD98	The DEIS/RMP fails to address the impacts of individual and collective special designations placed on this area. The impacts to RFD was not analyzed or disclosed except for a collective listing of acres and well numbers affected. There is no discussion that this area has high potential for oil & gas. Additionally, EPCA and guidelines providing for its incorporation into an RMP provides that management restrictions must be the least restrictive while providing protections where it is documented that protection is needed. This analysis has not been done. There are areas of NSO located in VRM III & IV that are NSO for oil and gas with no apparent reason for the restriction. NSOs are proposed in Nine Mile Canyon without analysis of impacts or consideration of existing rights and existing development. The layering of special designations in the Canyon is an attempt to manage the area to a non-impairment standard and to circumvent multiple-use.	<p>The Mineral Potential Report and Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario discuss the potential for oil and gas development in the planning area. The information in these documents was considered during alternative development.</p> <p>Chapter 1 of the PRMP/FEIS explains how the EPCA was incorporated during the planning process of the RMP</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-24	SD383 (SO32a)	There is no analysis of the impacts on RFD or socioeconomic impacts from the proposed Nine Mile Canyon SRMA.	<p>There is no requirement in NEPA to do the detailed analysis that the commenter demands. This is outside the scope of the RMP and EIS. Section 4.12 of the PRMP/FEIS states:</p> <p>“If impacts to some aspect of the socioeconomic situation are not mentioned in this analysis, then a negligible effect should be assumed.”</p>	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne	G-25	AT7	The 2002 RFD was completed along with the mineral potential report in 2002. Since then BLM has provided additional direction on resource planning and incorporation of EPCA into planning. The draft should	<p>The BLM incorporated EPCA into planning.</p> <p>In the PRMP/FEIS see:</p>	

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Counties			be reviewed to insure compliance with these directives. Based on this review alternatives should be created or selected that fully embraces the direction including the selection of alternatives that are performance based or outcome based.	Section 1.13 (Relationship to the President's National Energy Policy and The Scientific Inventory of Onshore Federal Lands' Oil and Gas Resources and Reserves, and The Extent and Nature of Restrictions or Impediments to their Development) Section 1.7 (How Vernal Field Office RMP Considered EPCA Inventory Information and Concerns).	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	GC23	It should be made clear in the Record Of Decision (ROD) and the final RMP that the total number of wells cited in reasonable foreseeable development do not represent a ceiling or cap on the number of wells that can be drilled in the VRA during the life of the plan. The ROD and RMP should state that the RFD well total were developed for the purpose of assessing impacts for decision making and that the total number of wells will be determined by NEPA analysis of field development projects of possible RMP revisions. This clarification is supported by case law.	Additional text has been added Section 4.1.2 in the PRMP/FEIS to describe the role of the RFD as a general metric used to assess relative impact and does not represent a ceiling on the number of wells that can be drilled within the VPA during the life of the RMP. The additional text is as follows: "It should be noted that the total number of wells cited in the RFD report do not represent upper limits on the number of wells that could be drilled in the VPA during the life of the plan. The RFD well totals were developed for the purposes of assessing impacts for decision-making. The total number of wells permitted will be determined through site-specific NEPA analysis of field development projects."	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	GC24	The information under Section 3.14.3.2, page 3-84, should more fully and accurately represent the specific management requirements found in Manual Section 8351.32C, particularly regarding valid existing rights.	The specific management guidelines of Manual 8351, along with other guidance, are incorporated by reference in Section 3.14.3.2 of the PRMP/FEIS and do not require reiteration in the RMP. Information contained in Section 3.14.3.2 does not conflict with or otherwise imply rejection of management policy outlined in Manual 8351. Additionally, as is mentioned in Section 1.9 as well	

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				as the introductions to Chapters 2 and 4, all management actions contained within the PRMP/FEIS recognize valid existing rights and do not apply retroactively to said rights.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	GC25	The meaning of the statement “to the extent that BLM has the authority to do so” needs to be clarified.	<p>Section 3.14.3.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to add language to clarify it relative to the authority bestowed upon the BLM by FLPMA, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and BLM policy. This statement is also intended to acknowledge that the BLM does not manage all lands through which the proposed wild and scenic rivers pass and cannot impose restrictions on other land owners and land managers. The additional text is as follows:</p> <p>“It is BLM policy (8351 Manual, Section .32C) to manage eligible segments to protect their free-flowing nature, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classifications to the extent that BLM has the authority to do so through FLPMA, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and BLM policy.”</p>	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	GC26	Some of the information presented in Table S.3 Alternatives Comparison, page S-4, and is not found in Table 2.3 Alternatives, page 2-57. Table S.3 indicates that the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are recommended, in all Alternatives, for Wild and Scenic River designation. However, these segments are not identified in Table 2.3.	The segments have been identified in Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	GC27	The draft fails to address the impact of management restrictions on valid existing rights including oil and gas leases. Throughout the draft, restrictive conditions of approval are proposed, without analysis or disclosure of impacts or even clearly stating restrictions to be applied.	<p>Section 1.9 in the PRMP/FEIS states:</p> <p>“All decisions made in the RMP and subsequent implementation decisions will be subject to valid existing rights.”</p>	

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				<p>Valid existing rights are considered Administrative Actions by the BLM and do not require a specific planning decision to implement. As noted in Chapter 1 under Planning Criteria and as outlined in the BLM's Land Use Planning Manual (Section 1601.06G), all decisions made in land use plans and subsequent implementation decision are subject to valid existing rights. The BLM will work with and subject to the agreement of holders of valid existing rights to modify proposed actions or activities to reduce the effect of the actions or activities on resource values and uses. These modifications may be necessary to maintain the choice of alternatives being considered during land use plan development and implementation, and may include appropriate stipulations, relocations, redesigns, or delay of proposed actions.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>LG58</p>	<p>The RMP proposes to exclude from forage allocation the land that produces less than 32 pounds of forage per year. The draft RMP and DEIS do not analyze the effects of doing so but given the fact that much of the planning area is a high mountain desert, this would remove significant volume of forage. The majority of range science does not support this proposal and the DEIS inadequately assesses the effects of adopting such a proposal.</p>	<p>In Section 2.4.5.2 in the DRMP, the actual number cited is 25 pounds per acre, which equated to 32 acres per AUM. The commenter does not provide substantial information to refute these suitability criteria.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>LG59</p>	<p>The draft RMP fails to recognize current livestock grazing in these areas as legitimate and authorized land uses.</p>	<p>The commenter does not identify which areas the BLM allegedly fails to recognize as current grazing areas. The RMP recognizes livestock grazing as a legitimate and authorized use of public lands within the Vernal Planning Area (VPA) and provides for its continuance under the new RMP. See Table 2.1.8 (Livestock and Grazing Management) in the</p>	

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				PRMP/FEIS for provisions related to livestock and grazing within the VPA.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	LG60	Throughout the draft there are proposals to directly and indirectly convert livestock AUMs to wildlife and watersheds. State law (U.C. §§63-38d-401(6), (7) and (8)) broadly outlines criteria for state plans concerning the management of federal lands located in Utah and the natural resources on those lands. The law contains provisions which generally disfavor diminishment of forage allocated to livestock grazing, the law also recognizes the state's interest in providing forage and habitat for wildlife, and the general provision that increases in forage ought to be shared among all users who participate in managing the forage of the area. Uintah and Duchesne County Plans also provide that livestock AUMs cannot be converted to other uses.	The Taylor Grazing Act, FLMPA, and PRIA authorize the BLM to manage grazing to achieve multiple use and sustained yield and for the full range of resource values. The 1995 rangeland policy (see Office of the Solicitor IM 37008, and the subsequent clarification) authorizes the BLM to convert livestock AUMs to wildlife, so long as the conversion does not constitute a permanent withdrawal grazing on lands that have been identified as chiefly valuable for such activity.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	LG61	There is no discussion of impacts of wild horse management decisions on livestock.	The anticipated impacts of wild horse management decisions on livestock are addressed in Section 4.7.1. See also the discussion of forage management decisions on livestock found in Section 4.7.2.2.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	LG87 (PR14)	At page 2-48 table 2.3 Alternatives, Livestock and Grazing Management, Season of Use, it is proposed to establish new seasons of use for designated Seasons of Use for Livestock Grazing. As proposed C and D of the Alternatives are inconsistent with the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) 43 U.S.C. 1752(b) and the terms of the ten-year grazing permits. To the extent that the proposal purports to change the season of use, it also conflicts with the Utah Rangeland Health Standards, which do not adopt a phenology criteria. BLM must follow rangeland health and is not at liberty to unilaterally change the standards. Even assuming BLM could and should change seasons of use in an	<p>The PRMP/FEIS doesn't propose to change the Utah Standards for Rangeland Health. The limitation on season of use proposed by the RMP is a common rangeland management practices to maintain or improve range conditions. The proposed seasons of use have been developed on an area specific basis (Figures 7 through 10) to help assure that Rangeland Health Standards continue to be met or are met in the future.</p> <p>The Guidelines for Grazing Management include implementing grazing management practices that "meet the physiological requirements of desired</p>	

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			<p>RMP, it cannot do so without violating the requirement that it coordinate, consult, and cooperate with the permittee or lessee in doing so. 43 U.S.C. 1752 (d); 43 C.F.R. 4110.2-3.</p>	<p>plants and facilitate reproduction and maintenance of desired plants” (1(c)). The proposed seasons of use will provide for these plant needs. The DRMP also includes flexibility providing for extended seasons of use when deferment and/or rest are provided for and for authorization of use outside of the specified season of use when certain criteria are met (Section 2.4.7.2).</p> <p>There is no requirement in FLPMA to maintain seasons of use as currently specified in grazing permits. Alternative D continues the current grazing management practices including the seasons of use as indicated on existing grazing permits. FLPMA indicates that it is the policy of the United States to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield and in such a manner as to best meet the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the productivity of the land. The proposed seasons of use will provide for the use of the public lands while helping to insure that no permanent loss of productivity will occur.</p> <p>The BLM does not propose to violate any consultation, coordination or cooperation requirements as indicated in the grazing regulations. The public participation process associated with this RMP and EIS effort as well as with that of the site specific environmental analysis and administrative decision process involved with any changes to the season of use will comply with the grazing regulation requirements to consult, coordinate and cooperate with the permittee and other interested</p>	

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				publics.	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>LG88 (PR16)</p>	<p>The RMP attempts to authorize the retirement of grazing permits and their "reallocation" to wildlife. This violates the Taylor Grazing Act, 43 U.S.C. 315, The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (AFLPMA"), 43 U.S.C. 1752, and the terms of the Executive Orders Ns. Executive Order 6910, 54 I.D. 539 (1934), and Executive Order 6964 (Feb 5, 1935) which withdrew public lands that were determined to be chiefly valuable for (10th Cir. grazing. The Tenth Circuit in Public Lands Council v. Babbitt, 167 F.3d 1287 (10th Cir. 1999) aff'd on other grounds, 529 U.S. 728 (2000), held that BLM could not offer permits "not to graze" public lands, since grazing permits are limited to domestic livestock. By the same token, BLM cannot purport to retire grazing permits for wildlife. Any such decision would require amending the Presidential Executive Order, which BLM cannot do, since authority to amend a withdrawal is limited to the Interior Secretary. It is also inconsistent with the grazing rules, which provide for BLM to offer a permit to qualified permittees whose base property is nearby. 43 C.F.R. 4130.1-2.</p>	<p>The PRMP/FEIS determines the allowable uses of the public lands as provided for in FLPMA. FLPMA states in Section 202(a) that land use planning provides for the use of the public lands "regardless of whether such lands previously have been classified, withdrawn, set aside, or otherwise designated for one or more uses". FLPMA further provides in Section 202(e) the authority to issue management decisions which implement newly developed or revised land use plans. Such decisions, including those that exclude one or more uses, are subject to reconsideration, modification and termination through revision of the land use plan.</p> <p>As provided for in FLPMA, the RMP proposed to re-allocate retired livestock AUMs to in order to meet the overall goals and objectives of the plan. The Secretary has the discretion under FLPMA to use the land use planning process to close areas to grazing, change levels of use, or to devote the land to another public purpose in accordance with the relevant land use plan. The transfer of AUMs from livestock to wildlife reflects the desire of BLM to modify the levels of use and in this particular instance to recognize the importance of wildlife values. These changes in use are made within the rangeland's ability to sustain the allocations of use. Any AUMs allocated by the land use plan, whether for livestock or wildlife, are within the productive capability of the public lands involved.</p> <p>FLPMA indicates that it is the policy of the United</p>	

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				<p>States to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield. While it is the goal of the BLM to enhance rangeland health while providing for and recognizing the need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber, there is no requirement in the Taylor Grazing Act (TGA) or other applicable law for the BLM to "maximize the number of domestic livestock AUMs" or to continue allocations "at historical levels." According to FLPMA, BLM is to manage for "multiple uses" which best meets the present and future needs of the American people without permanently impairing the productivity of the land. According to Section 2 of the TGA, it is the objective of the act to regulate the occupancy and use of the Grazing Districts and to preserve these lands. The Grazing Districts were established through a classification system established in the TGA. Under FLPMA, uses of the land are allocated during the land use planning process. The combinations of uses proposed in the RMP are varied and diverse across the planning area taking into consideration the current and future needs of the public. This is consistent with both FLPMA and the TGA.</p> <p>Also, see comment response LG4.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>ME55</p>	<p>The DEIS/RMP fails to properly disclose the impacts of the proposed management prescriptions on mineral development. It appears that Table 5.1 on 5-3 and Table 4.8.1 on page 4-100 was an attempt to disclose these impacts as at 4.8.2.1.1.1 the text presents these changes from Alternative D, the no action alternative. These figures are simply a tabulation of acres assigned to each leasing category and not a disclosure of</p>	<p>Section 4.8 (Minerals and Energy Resources) discusses the effects of cultural, reaction, Soils, Special Status Species, Wildlife, and Visual decisions on mineral development. Section 4.8 has been revised to discuss impacts of Special Designations on mineral development.</p> <p>Chapter 4.12 Socioeconomics discusses the loss or</p>	<p>X</p>

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			<p>impacts required in IM 2004-089 on FRD. In the Chapter 4 analysis it is the only data presented to show impacts on oil and gas development with respect to the loss of wells and acreage for future development.</p> <p>IM 2004-089 requires the creation of a baseline of well numbers and acres that would be developed if such development were governed by BLMs standard lease form. As management prescriptions are proposed the baseline is to be reduced by the number of well and acres affected. The result of this analysis is a clear disclosure of the impact of proposed management restrictions on oil and gas development.</p>	<p>gain of revenue from oil and gas development by alternative.</p> <p>The reduction of wells imposed by management prescriptions can be seen in Table 4.8.2 (Alternative A), 4.8.3 (Alternative B), 4.8.4 (Alternative C), 4.8.5 (Alternative D), and 4.8.6 (Alternative E).</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>ME56</p>	<p>The tabulation of acres assigned to the mineral leasing categories in Tables 1 and 4.8.1 include 188,499 acres of split estate land where no management restrictions will be applied as a result of the RMP. Additionally approximately 80,000 of low mineral potential acres that were closed and moved to timing and controlled surface use, and heavily developed lands from controlled surface use to standard stipulation. These additions of acres mask the impacts of management decisions proposed in the draft, the preventing required analysis and disclosure. A map of current oil and gas leases and mineral occurrence potential was not included in the map section; this also hampers proper analysis and disclosure.</p>	<p>The 188,500 acres (which represents the Hill Creek Extension) is proposed as open to oil and gas development with timing and controlled surface use under all action alternatives (Alternatives A, B, C and E). The acreage for Hill Creek is not included in Alternative D and is noted in Section 4.1.1 (Analytical Assumptions). The 80,000 acres were included in the calculations and the analysis.</p> <p>A map of current oil and gas leases and mineral occurrence potential were not included in the Draft RMP due to space limitations but were utilized during alternative development and analysis.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>ME57</p>	<p>The VFO is located primarily in the Uintah/Pieance oil and gas basin, one of seven areas identified as priority basins in the EPCA inventory. As a focus area the basin must be reviewed for appropriate levels of stipulations or unnecessary impediments to oil and gas production. The EPCA inventory must be integrated</p>	<p>See comment responses ME165 and ME167.</p>	

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			<p>into the planning process to determine oil and gas leasing stipulations and restrictions. Page 1-15 of the RMP discusses the President's National Energy Policy, issued in May 2001, which directed the Secretary to "...examine land status and lease stipulation impediments to federal oil and gas leasing, and review and modify those where opportunities exist (consistent with the law, good environmental practice, and balanced use of other resources)." This includes the evaluation of lease mitigation requirements to determine whether they are consistently applied, science based, appropriate and effective. While the RMP states that the VFO conducted an extensive review of the inventory regarding energy resources within the planning area, nowhere in the document is this review apparent. Information, clarification, and justification for leasing stipulations are not found in the document. In addition, stipulations not necessary to accomplish desired protection must be dropped. Without further information the counties cannot determine if the stipulations and mitigation measures laid out in the draft are the least restrictive possible as required by EPCA.</p> <p>FLPMA provides that land must be managed in a manner that recognizes the nations need for domestic sources of minerals. 43USC 1701(a)(12). EPCA provides that proposed actions must be analyzed to determine if the proposed actions are the least restrictive necessary and documents the scientific basis for the restriction. The fact that the Vernal plan revision was classified as a Time-Sensitive Plan to address energy resources under EPCA does not allow BLM to merely reference the data on leasing constraints without further evaluation as required by</p>		

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			law.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	ME58	One component of EPCA is the development of outcome-based stipulations. The DEIS/RMP contain virtually no such stipulation and Appendix K offers opportunities for variances and waivers.	Comment noted.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	ME59	The analysis required in IM 2004-089 must be accomplished and management restriction re-evaluated in accordance with IM 2003-233 to insure they are the least restrictive as required by EPCA. The reasonable foreseeable development (RFD) should be recalculated based on the most recent statistics on development.	See comment responses ME165 and ME167. The RFD was developed from the Mineral Potential Report, which was completed in 2004 using the best available data. The RFD is merely a measure for estimating relative total surface disturbance by alternative and does not represent a cap or ceiling. As such, the BLM finds the existing RFD to be sufficiently accurate for evaluating the potential impact of management decisions on resources and land uses within the planning area.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	PR4	The counties believe that the BLM has not sufficiently divulged the proposed management prescriptions for the river segments discussed in the draft RMP and EIS. BLM Manual Section 8351.32C reads “public notification of protective management shall occur no later than publication and release of the draft RMP, or plan amendment.” This section requires exactly what it says; that the proposed management conditions be discussed in the draft RMP and EIS in order that the effects of the management can be ascertained before the ROD is signed. The information found at pages 4-211 through 4-214 consists simply of general statements of “concerns,” rather than an evaluation of identified impacts, and support for the concerns cannot be found within the RMP.	Table 2.1.19 (Special Designation – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Alternatives refers to new classifications and establishes protective measures to prevent impairment of outstandingly remarkable values within line of sight, up to ¼-mile from centerline on each side of the river, not to exceed 320 acres per mile. BLM believes the non-impairment standard would allow for individual proposals to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, whereas specific management criteria could unnecessarily restrict some proposals.	
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-25	PR5	Section 3.14.3.2 and Appendix C contain the VFO’s reasons and rationale for a determination of eligibility	As discussed in Appendix C, a BLM interdisciplinary team used their professional judgment to review all	

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Duchesne Counties			for segments of rivers within the VFO. Table 4, page C-11, discusses the identified required “values” for each segment. The Table does not contain the information necessary to demonstrate that the values mentioned are river-related, “outstandingly remarkable,” or significant on a regional basis. The information presented in the table does not satisfy the guidance provided at page 7 of the 1996 Process and Criteria document adopted by the Bureau of Land Management (Utah State Office), the USDA Forest Service (Intermountain Region), and the National Park Service (Rocky Mountain Region), which requires that “in order to determine regional significance of river resources, it is imperative that similar rivers be compared to each other.”	nominations, and in fact all drainages within the planning area, to come up with a list of "potentially eligible" rivers, which were then further scrutinized. Table 4 summarizes the findings of the BLM after a thorough review involving input from outside entities, including cooperating agencies and the public at large.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	PR6	Table 4 does not meet the requirements of the law, or BLM policy; it merely describes attributes that may support designation of the proposed ORVs in general glowing terms. The counties request that the BLM review these eligibility determinations with the state and local governments, in order to fully explore the rationale for each.	See comment response PR5.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	PR7	On page 2-57, the draft RMP suggests river segments found to be eligible during the current RMP preparation process would continue to be managed to protect their eligibility under the “no-action” alternative, Alternative D. The counties do not believe this is an accurate representation of federal law and does not comply with BLM policy and direction, or State law.	The BLM has broad discretionary authority to manage the public lands. It is BLM's policy (BLM Manual Section 8351.33A) to manage and protect the free-flowing character, tentative classification, and identified ORVs of eligible and suitable rivers. This protection occurs at the point of eligibility determination, so as not to adversely constrain the suitability assessment or subsequent recommendation to Congress. For eligible rivers where a suitability determination has yet to be made, management is addressed on a case-by-case basis as actions involving these rivers are proposed. For rivers determined suitable in the	

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				<p>ROD for the Vernal RMP, protection continues and resource allocations (such as VRM, OHV and mineral decisions) that are compatible with such protection are made for the suitable river corridor as part of the decision. Eligible streams not determined suitable will no longer be managed to protect wild and scenic values, but will be managed in other ways according to the plan.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>PR8</p>	<p>Utah Code c63-38d-(8)(a)(A) and (B) require that federal agencies conduct all studies of rivers for possible inclusion in the NWSRS completely through the suitability phase. Alternative D, as represented at page 2-57, is unacceptable and does not meet the requirements of BLM policy or State law since it states that no suitability determinations would be made.</p>	<p>Alternative D is the baseline (the No Action Alternative) against which all of the other alternatives (the action alternatives) are compared, and is the current management direction.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>PR9</p>	<p>The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and BLM Manual Section 8351 require consideration of characteristics which “do” or “do not” make a river segment a worthy addition to the NWSRS. Unfortunately, Table 5 only contains a discussion of the “do” characteristics (the ORVs) under the “Consideration” heading. Table 5 fails to acknowledge related information found in Table 3 of Appendix C, which represents some of the “do not” characteristics. For example, information from Table 3 regarding Argyle Creek states “[t]he high percentage of private land adjacent to the stream has resulted in the construction of numerous ranch houses and summer homes in the corridor. A power line parallels the stream for approximately 7 miles.” This information not only caused Argyle Creek to receive a proposed “recreational” classification, but should also be considered relevant to a suitability determination.</p>	<p>The information from Appendix C Table 3 relative to the characteristics that do not contribute to or detract a river segment’s suitability for WSR designation has been added to Appendix C Table 5. Please note that the information from Table 3 is added in other appropriate sections such as Land Ownership within Table 5.</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>PR10</p>	<p>The statement at page 4-210, which reads “In the No Action Alternative, a suitability determination would not</p>	<p>See comment response PR8.</p>	

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Duchesne Counties			be made,” does not meet the requirements of State law. Utah Code 63-38d-(8)(a)(A) and (B) require that federal agencies conduct all studies of rivers for possible inclusion in the NWSRS completely through the suitability phase.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	PR13	BLM is proposing to manage the area under a non-impairment standard, in violation of state law (U.C. 63-38d-401(8)(c)(i) (ix) and 6(b)) and the settlement in the case of Utah v. Norton.	The range of alternatives contained in the RMP clearly demonstrate that the BLM is allowing multiple uses throughout the planning area to the extent that they are compatible with the goals and objectives of the plan and existing law.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	PR15	The assignment of resources is a legitimate purpose of an RMP. In the RMP assignments of AUMs and a determination of season of use could be made but the proposals here establish dates for permitted use. The process for establishing the dates is within law and regulations cited above (in comment PR87). These alternatives should be rewritten to comply with RMP purposes and law and regulation.	See comment response LG87.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD48	The apparent loss of focus of the BLM on the statutory rationale for an ACEC becomes important because in Handbook Section 1613.1, the characteristics of an ACEC are discussed. The first subsection (Section 1613.11) discusses the need for "relevance" and "importance," and the second (Section 1613.12) discusses the requirement for special management attention. Again, however, the regulatory requirement to discuss the need for special management attention does not focus on the statutory requirement to "protect and prevent irreparable damage" to resources; rather it only speaks to the need to "protect" the important and relevant values. This loss of focus has been carried through the entire DEIS/RMP from the proposed alternative through affected environment and into analysis.	See Response to Comment SD27-G-22.	

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<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD49</p>	<p>State statute requires that the BLM analyze the required relevant and important values of an ACEC on a regional basis, analyze the need to “protect and prevent irreparable damage to those relevant and important values” from activities which may occur in the area, requires the BLM to explain the need for “special management for the ACEC and explain how this management is different from normal BLM management and authority, that the protections proposed by the required “special management” do not duplicate or constitute simple restatements of protections afforded by other federal and State laws, and contain other analytical and procedural requirements. (See Utah Code 63-38d-401(8)(c).</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD12-G-9</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD50</p>	<p>The discussion of ACEC management (page 4-203) contains the general statement that ACECs would benefit from the “special management attention they would receive if designated.” Special management attention is more than a coincidental benefit that flows from designation. It is a fundamental prerequisite to designation. The BLM must make a determination for each potential and proposed ACEC that special management attention is required to protect the identified relevant and important values. It has failed to do so in the DEIS/RMP.</p>	<p>The FLPMA states that in developing land use plans the BLM shall give priority to the designation and protection ACEC. The BLM gave full consideration to the designation and preservation ACEC during this land use planning process. Nominations for ACECs from the public were specifically solicited during the scoping period. A total of 35 ACEC nominations were received and the relevance and importance of each were determined. Fourteen of the ACEC nominations were found to meet both the criteria of relevance and importance and all these were included for special management as proposed ACECs in Alternative B.</p> <p>The BLM Manual 1613.23 states that “After completing the analysis of the effects of each alternative, the manager selects the preferred plan alternative which best meets the planning criteria and the guidance applicable to the area. The preferred alternative reflects the BLM’s proposals</p>	

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				<p>for designation and management of ACECs.” The BLM has full discretion in the selection of ACECs for the various alternatives. In the selection of the preferred alternative, a comparison of estimated effects and trade-offs associated with the alternative leads to development and selection of the preferred alternative.</p> <p>Should BLM choose not designate potential ACECs, BLM Manual 1613 .33E provides direction in this process. Rational for not proposing designation of a potential ACEC in the preferred alternative must be provided, that is, the reasons for the decision not to provide special management attention must be clearly set forth. Such reasoning may include:</p> <p>Special management attention is not required to protect the potential ACEC because standard or routine management prescriptions are sufficient to protect the Relevance and Importance Values from risks or threats of damage/degradation.</p> <p>The area is being proposed for designation under another statutory authority such as wilderness and would require no further management attention.</p> <p>The manager has concluded that no special management attention is justified either because of exposure to risks of damage to threats to safety is greater if the area is designated or there are no reasonable special management actions which can be taken to protect the resource from irreparable damage or to restore it to a viable condition.</p>	

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				<p>BLM ACEC guidance (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; Policy and Procedures Guidelines, 45 FR 57318, 57319 (Aug. 27, 1980)) allows a manager to exercise discretion not to protect a potential ACEC through ACEC designation, but that decision has to be documented through the planning process. If the manager decides to provide the necessary protection through another form of special management, the documentation will include specifics of the special management proposed. Rationale for all ACEC decisions will be provided in the Record of Decision and supported by analysis in the EIS. If the decision is to allocate the resources with relevant and important values, in whole or in part, to another use which would in result in damage or loss to such resource, the authorized officer must first find that there is an overriding public need for such other use; that the public benefits of such other use outweigh the public benefits of use appropriate with ACEC designation, and that such other use will best meet the present and future needs of the American people. In addition, any allocations to such other use will include all feasible planning and management to prevent, minimize, mitigate or restore any consequent damage to the resource, and these requirements will be specified in the documentation.</p> <p>The BLM, in developing the PRMP/FEIS, can chose management actions from within the range of the alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS and create a management plan that is effective in</p>	

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				addressing the current conditions in the planning area based on FLPMA's multiple-use mandate.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD51	On page 4-203, the draft RMP indicates that the lack of designation of some potential ACECs may place the relevant and important values “at some risk of irreparable damage during the life of the plan.” This statement is completely backward. BLM must make a determination that a threat of irreparable damage from some authorized multiple-use activity exists, and is directed toward the identified relevant and important value in order to complete the fundamental requirements for an ACEC. The identification of required threat of irreparable damage cannot be supported from simple hypothetical musings postulating that the lack of the very management structure (ACEC) BLM is trying to justify may result in damage to the resources.	<p>The BLM followed the ACEC designation process outlined in BLM Manual 1613 and analyzed the implications of designating or not designating areas as ACEC. In particular, in Chapter 4 of the DRMP/DEIS analyzes the impacts of ongoing and future uses on the relevance and importance values associated with potential ACECs under all alternatives. Appendix G of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS provides information concerning the interdisciplinary team review.</p> <p>The rationale for designation of individual ACECs carried forward into the PRMP/FEIS will be provided in the Record of Decision (ROD). The analysis that forms the basis of the rationale for the final decision to designate or not designate an ACEC can be found in Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD52	BLM Manual section 1613.22 requires the BLM to consider whether the values within the proposed and potential ACEC are already afforded protection through other designations. BLM Manual Section 1613.33E allows that BLM may decline to designate an ACEC “because standard or routine management prescriptions are sufficient to protect the resource or value from risks or threats of damage/degradation,” which is clarified to mean that “the same management prescriptions would have been provided for the area in the absence of the important and relevant values.” Examples of values that have been used to justify need	See Response to Comment SD51-G-25.	

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			for protection management are the special cultural resources, riparian and wetland areas and special status species. The counties cannot find any analysis of these factors within the draft RMP and EIS. In fact the majority of the relevant and important values identified are already afforded such protection.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD53	BLM Manual Section 1613.22(A)(2) requires the BLM to consider the value of other resources when considering the protection of important and relevant values of a proposed and potential ACEC. The intent is that BLM balance the various multiple-uses within the proposed RMP, and consider whether the need for other multiple-uses in the area "outweigh" the need for the ACEC. The discussions in the draft RMP and EIS do not analyze any such balancing, and do not discuss the potential benefits of ACEC designation versus other resource uses for any of the potential and proposed ACECs. The impacts on RFD are not disclosed to a level that such analysis could be made.	See Responses to Comment SD24-G-22 and Comment SD8-G-9. The projected RFD for each alternative accounts for restrictions resulting from closures associated with special designations, special status species protections, and other resource program decisions.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD54	The majority of the ACEC boundaries extend well beyond the boundaries of what is reasonable to protect the relevant and important values identified.	See Response to Comment SD14-G-13.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD55	The counties are concerned that the BLM views potential and proposed ACECs as convenient vehicles to generally focus agency management attention on an area, rather than a very focused management tool with strict criteria for creation of particular concern is that most of these areas mirror proposed WSAs.	The potential ACECs analyzed for designation into the Proposed Plan have gone through a rigorous and stringent process in accordance with FLPMA, the planning regulations at 43 CFR 1600, Land Use Planning Handbook (H- 1601-1), and in accordance with BLM Manual 1613 and ACEC Policy and Procedures Guidelines (45 FR 57318). Appendix G outlines the process the interdisciplinary team underwent to determine whether a nominated ACEC had relevance and/or importance values. The size of the proposed ACECs is limited only to the area(s)	

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				<p>of geography where the relevance and importance values are manageable to protect and prevent irreparable damage. In the Proposed Plan, the potential ACECs generally do not have redundant special designations and/or other existing protections applied.</p> <p>The potential ACECs carried forward into the Proposed Plan necessitate an ACEC designation because special management protection is necessary (outside of normal multiple-use management) to specifically protect the relevance and importance values within the areas identified. The special management prescriptions that have been proposed are narrowly tailored to protect the identified relevant and important values; none of which are recognized as wilderness resources. For these reasons, the potential ACEC decisions carried forward into the Proposed Plan are considered by BLM to be consistent with Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD56	The discussions concerning potential recommendations for addition to the Wild and Scenic River System in the draft RMP and EIS are confusing, contradictory and incomplete, and do not meet the requirements of federal or state law or BLM policy and direction. The counties believe it is imperative that the BLM properly disclose the reasons and rationale for determinations of eligibility and suitability for proposed additions to the NWSRS, and to fully meet the requirements of state and federal law in doing so.	Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD57	The counties are concerned that the designation of stream segments as "Wild & Scenic" could jeopardize the ability of local communities, industry, farmers, Indian tribes, and other water users to appropriate and	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	

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			<p>develop water and to get change applications approved in order to meet their future water needs. Fundamentally, the counties are concerned that Wild & Scenic River designations would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. limit the ability of communities to develop water needed for future growth 2. limit additional industrial growth including oil shale development 3. limit additional agricultural growth 4. affect water right settlements with the Northern Ute Tribe 5. affect completion of the Central Utah Project 6. affect operation of Flaming Gorge Reservoir 7. reduce funding to the Colorado River Salinity Control Program, or affect agreements already in place for the Endangered Fishes Recovery Program 		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD58	The counties acknowledge the VFO is required to conduct Wild and Scenic Rivers studies as part of the RMP process. However, the counties also understand and support the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's standards of classification, eligibility and suitability and the requirement for proper analysis in the assignment of such designations.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD59	State plans, as outlined by State law (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a) through (b)), expand upon the requirements of the WSR Act by delineating the necessary analysis which must be conducted on river segments considered for possible inclusion in the NWSRS. These state requirements are not in opposition to the federal requirements, but are designed to fully flesh out studies that the federal agencies should perform, in	The State of Utah has worked as a Cooperating Agency throughout this planning process and has been intimately involved with the BLM's wild and scenic river planning process. The State has assisted Field Office specialists to help determine eligibility findings for each of the river segments, and has provided social and economic expertise and advice as the BLM determined which eligible	

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			<p>order to assure that the full and complete nature of the proposal is made public. State law expands upon the requirements for study by requiring that river segments proposed for inclusion in the NWSRS contain water at all times, that the river segment contain an outstandingly remarkable value which is significant within a physiographic regional context, that the rationale and justification for the determination of the outstanding value is fully disclosed, all segments considered eligible are evaluated for suitability of designation, a "suitable" or "not suitable" decision is made for each segment, and that studies of the effects of designation on uses within the river corridor, and upstream and downstream from the corridor are analyzed and disclosed.</p>	<p>segments to carry forward as suitable into the Proposed Plan. BLM has committed to working cooperatively among Federal, State, and local governments and communities during the post-planning wild and scenic river study phase when statewide recommendations for inclusion of river segments into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would go forward to Congress. Prior to this post-planning phase, BLM would work with affected partners to help identify in-stream flows necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the subject river segments were found suitable via this planning process. Thus, because there are no effects of this planning decision on valid existing rights, and because suitability findings in this planning process do not create new water rights for the BLM, the land use planning wild and scenic river suitability determinations are found by BLM to be consistent with the Utah Code 63j-4-401.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD60</p>	<p>State law requires the BLM to fully disclaim any rights to water in the segments recommended for inclusion in the NWSRS as a result of adoption of the final Resource Management Plan. (U.C. §63-38d-401(8)(a)(viii)c)). Although there is language on page 4-210 which discusses in-stream flows, this language does not address this State statutory requirement directly. Additionally, the paragraph at the top of page 2-28 which states that the BLM will develop additional and maintain existing water rights" is unsupported. We suggest that the BLM provide more detail and specifics for this statement, and more affirmative language clearly disclaiming any water rights.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD61</p>	<p>We have concerns regarding the language at page 4-210 which passively mentions the Colorado River Compact. Under the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin</p>	<p>Section 13(e) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act says:</p>	

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Counties			Compact, Utah is allotted a depletion of 1,369,000 acre-feet per year from the Colorado River system. Obviously, the Compact is of major significance to the state and any actions that may affect the compact are of concern. Utah Code §63-38d-401(8)(a)(x)(A)and(B) require clear demonstration that including rivers in the NWSRS and terms and conditions for managing such rivers will not impair or otherwise interfere with interstate compacts.	“Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by any States which contain any portion of the national wild and scenic rivers system.”	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD62	We are concerned that the BLM is not stating, in a full and complete manner, the authority for protection of river segments while studies pursuant to Section 5(d) of the Act are underway and protection until Congress may act upon any recommendations made in planning documents pursuant to BLM planning authority.	See Response to Comment SD19-G-22.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD63	The draft RMP indicates on page 2-29 that “new river segments found suitable” would be managed in accordance with the “Wild and Scenic River Act to prevent non-impairment of outstandingly remarkable values.” We do not find the term “non-impairment” in either the Act or BLM policy direction. The Wild and Scenic Rivers guidelines of federal agencies indicate that Section 10(a) of the Act is interpreted to provide for a “nondegradation and enhancement policy for all designated river areas.” However, this provision does not apply to rivers found suitable for recommendation during planning processes. The counties are concerned the statement of management found on page 2-29 is too simplistic, doesn’t meet the intent of the statements found on page 3-84 or page 4-210, and fails to give the stakeholders or the public sufficient notice of criteria or process the BLM intends to employ as part of the proposed management for the river segments determined to be suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS. We request that the BLM revise the	Actions Common to all for Wild and Scenic Rivers have been moved to Table 2.1.19 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS. The Actions Common to All have been revised to more clearly define how BLM intends to manage segments determined suitable as a result of this planning process. The correct phrasing should be “prevent impairment” instead of “prevent non-impairment.”	X

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			document to address these concerns.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD64	Table 2.3, page 2-57, contains no information regarding the rationale related to wild and scenic river considerations, nor proposed protective management, for any of the various segments listed in the table. The counties request that the BLM revise the RMP to address these concerns.	See Response to Comment SD24-G-25,G-1.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD65	The discussion of Upper and Lower segments of the Green River in the draft RMP is incomplete. BLM assumes that the rationale, findings and protective management identified in the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs, completed in the 1980's still applies. Numerous significant recreation related facilities (i.e. campgrounds, picnic areas, boat ramps, vehicle parking), and other types of development, are now present along the Green River corridor, particularly the Upper segment. Much of this development has occurred since the Diamond Mountain RMP was completed and the ROD was signed. This development may affect not only the determination of suitability for these segments, but the current classification of "scenic" for the segment as well. The counties oppose simply carrying over the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River as recommended additions to the NWSRS from the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs. The counties believes that the BLM must consider all new information which has developed since the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs were finalized, to determine whether the segment still qualifies and should still be recommended, and to meet the requirements of the State law.	<p>The Upper and Lower Green River Segments were identified as suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System in the Diamond Mountain RMP/EIS and has been carried forward in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p> <p>Appendix C of the PRMP/FEIS details the steps undertaken in the eligibility review process including the identification of outstandingly remarkable values as well as the Suitability Considerations by eligible river segments. The BLM complied with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process.</p> <p>Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Policy Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, states:</p> <p>"In general, a wide range of agricultural, water management, silvicultural, and other practices or structures could be compatible with scenic river values..."</p>	

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<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD66</p>	<p>Table 5 includes “[m]anageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values” as a “Suitability Consideration.” However, in the “Consideration Applied” column which is supposed to provide the information about manageability, the document simply states “[m]anageability ... and other means of protecting values would be extrapolated from the impact analysis for the Vernal RMP/EIS.” This analysis goes nowhere as an explanation, and is inadequate to meet the requirements of Federal law and BLM Manual 8351, and further, is not supported by the impact analysis information presented on pages 4-210 through 4-215.</p>	<p>Appendix C of the EIS has been revised to include additional information regarding the BLM's eligibility and suitability analysis and determinations.</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD67</p>	<p>The draft RMP provides only cursory acknowledgment of the White River Dam project and fails to adequately represent its significance, and characterizes the impacts of an eligibility or suitability determination, and associated “protective management” on the proposed project in a contradictory manner. Statements found on pages 4-212 and 4-213 illustrate the cursory analysis, as follows: “...a suitable decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with the continuation of an existing permit for a dam site” and t]he suitability decision for Segment 1 of the White River would result in the discontinuance of the existing permit for the dam site.” The White River is also described as part of Alternative D, on page 2-57, as follows: “[u]nder this alternative, suitability findings would not be made and eligibility would continue with BLM applying protective management to the free flowing nature, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classification of the river.” The discussion of Alternative D on page 4-214, reaffirms that Segment 1 of the White River “would remain eligible.” However, in a contradictory manner, the discussion also states,</p>	<p>Alternatives B and D are part of the range of alternatives. There is an existing right of way for a dam on the White River in segment 1. Segment 1 was carried forward for analysis purposes under the wild and scenic river situation.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	<p>X</p>

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			<p>“Segment 1 has been identified for a potential dam site.” Subsequently, the last paragraph on page 4-214 concludes the description of Alternative D, as follows: “Under this alternative, the continued eligibility decision for Segment 1 of the White River would be incompatible with continuance of the existing permit for the dam site. Because this permit would continue under this alternative, the free-flowing nature of Segment 1 would not be maintained and this segment would no longer be eligible as a Wild and Scenic River.” Further, Appendix C, Wild and Scenic River Eligibility, Suitability, Classification and Review does not include any information regarding the White River Dam Project.</p>		
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD68</p>	<p>On pages 4-211 and 4-212, the discussion of Alternative A contains contradictory statements. For example, on page 4-211, the RMP states that “where mineral leasing [is] allowed with standard stipulations or timing and controlled surface use, or where other mineral development would be allowed within the corridor of the White River (Segments 1 and 3) the outstandingly remarkable values of these rivers would be at risk.” Segment 1 of the White River is addressed again under this same alternative, at page 4-212, which states that “the White River (Segments 1 and 2) would largely be protected from disturbance related to mineral development by either being closed to mineral leasing or by no surface occupancy stipulations.” Based on this information, Segment 1 of the White River is both “at risk” and “largely protected” from mineral development under Alternative A. The same language, and thus the same apparent contradiction, exists in the discussion of Alternative C. No information, which offers any clarity, exists elsewhere in Chapters 2, 3 or 4 of the RMP. The counties request</p>	<p>Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.</p>	<p>X</p>

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			that the RMP be revised to correct these issues concerning the White River.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD69	The discussion of Alternative B on page 4-213 includes the following statement, "If acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek are grazed, the outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values would be more at risk than with Alternatives A and C". Unfortunately, nowhere in the draft RMP and EIS is there other mention of this apparent concern, or other information that would enable the reviewer to grasp its relative significance. We strongly object to this unsupported assertion that grazing threatens the ORVs in the area, especially on lands that may be acquired. Grazing can be managed to protect cultural and riparian values. The BLM needs to carefully explain the potential difficulties of this area, and analyze them in terms of proper mitigation, rather than making unsupported blanket statements such as this. In addition, the discussion of Alternative A at pages 4-211 and 4-212, contains no reference to any "acquired lands along Nine Mile Creek."	Chapter 4 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to correct and clarify the apparent contradiction.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD70	As a matter of clarification, the document, at page S-3, refers to sections of rivers, ranging from one to six rivers, which are recommended for Wild and Scenic River designation. Throughout the remainder of the document, the discussion of wild and scenic rivers refers to segments of rivers, rather than separate individual rivers. The confusion is immediately apparent when the reader looks to Table S.3, as directed by the text on page S-3. Clarity could be achieved by indicating the number of segments associated with the rivers, i.e., "Alternative C ... recommends 9 segments of six rivers."	Table S.3 of the Executive Summary in the PRMP/FEIS has been corrected and the issue clarified regarding the number of rivers and river segments.	X
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-25	SD71	The information at page 2-29 does not fully characterize proposed interim management of WSRs,	Chapter 2 of the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to be consistent with the information found in Section	X

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Duchesne Counties			because the discussion of management of eligible segments, found at page 3-84, is not presented here. We recommend that information similar to that found at page 3-84 be included at page 2-29.	3.14.3.2 regarding WSRs.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD72	The information presented in Table 2.3, at page 2-57, does not include the Upper and Lower segments of the Green River. Additionally, the descriptions of the Alternatives, in Table 2.3, should reflect either a finding of "suitable," or a finding of "non-suitable," as BLM policy directs. (See BLM Manual 8351.33A).	<p>The Upper and Lower segments of the Green River are discussed in Table 2.1 (Special Designations – Wild and Scenic Rivers) of the PRMP/FEIS under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives, where it states:</p> <p>"Continue to manage previously recommended segments of the Upper Green and Lower Green Rivers to protect their outstandingly remarkable values and the tentative classifications until such time that a designation decision is made."</p> <p>Also as stated in Appendix C, determination of whether or not each eligible segment is suitable will be made in the Record of Decision for the Vernal RMP.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD73	The RMP, at Table 2.3 and elsewhere, must include information regarding management of segments found to be "non-suitable," as directed by Manual Section 8351.53B, which states "[f]or river segments determined nonsuitable in the RMP, the river shall be managed in accordance with the management objectives as outlined in the RMP."	The management objectives for the RMP are outlined in Chapter 2 Management Common to All. All segments would be managed under riparian objectives.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD74	Table 2.5 Summary of Impacts, at page 2-99, does not adequately characterize the impacts associated with wild and scenic river recommendations. The counties suggest that the impacts be more fully described.	The impacts of special designations, including wild and scenic rivers, on each resource program are discussed in Chapter 4.	
Uintah, Daggett, and	G-25	SD75	The draft correctly lists the purposes for which an SRMA designation would be used. SRMAs are for the	The West Cold Springs and the Diamond Breaks WSAs are protected by VRM class 1. This is not	

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Duchesne Counties			purpose of managing recreational activities. Throughout the draft, SRMAs have been used to place restrictions on other resources and permitted uses. In Brown's Park an SRMA was used to justify a VRM I. This has been accomplished without an analysis of need or impacts or even discussion on the specific goal of the SRMA.	associated with a SRMA identification.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD76	In looking at Figures 21 through 24, one immediately notices that ACECs and SRMAs are proposed for the same geographic areas. The draft RMP and EIS does not define the reasons for the proposed SRMAs, nor the functional difference between an ACEC and an SRMA.	Definitions of SRMAs and ACECs are provided in the Glossary. Additional description of SRMAs is provided in Chapter 3.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD77	This section lists some of the things that would be included in an integrated activity plan for recreation. The draft RMP does not discuss what would constitute the remaining portion of the integrated activity plan. Does the plan only integrate recreational activities, or does the plan propose to consider other resource uses?	Table 2.1 (Recreation Resources) of the PRMP/FESI is related to recreation goals and objectives and; therefore, correctly lists possibilities, but does not limit those possibilities, for comprehensive integrated activity level planning.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	SD78	Page 4-143 discusses the possibility of closing some SRMA areas to mineral leasing and establishing no-surface occupancy zones in others. It states that closing SRMAs to mineral leasing would have direct, long-term, beneficial impacts on recreation resources by preserving natural, undisturbed qualities of these recreation areas. Does closing the areas to leasing go beyond SRMA management prescriptions? Page 4-52 states "all SRMAs would be managed according to the philosophy of multiple-use." Can the recreation goals described here be accomplished without no-surface occupancy stipulations? Does this conflict with the policy directives of EPCA and the Presidents National Energy Policy?	Closures of portions of SRMAs are related to one of two factors: WSA lands within SRMAs and areas to be managed for primitive recreation opportunities, including associated high scenic value. A comparison of Figures 11-14 and 21 will shown that the vast majority of proposed SRMA areas are open to leasing under standard, timing and controlled surface use, or no surface occupancy stipulations. The BLM would only enact closures or non-standard stipulations where opening an area to leasing or leasing under standard stipulations would be incompatible with other resource values and management goals for the area. The BLM believes the SRMA alternatives and accompanying	

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				<p>stipulations are consistent with EPCA and the NEP.</p> <p>Also, see Response to Comment SD8-G-9, concerning a range of reasonable alternatives.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SD79</p>	<p>The counties object to the proposed areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) when such proposals will impact forage allocations to livestock or grazing use. First, the expansions are not documented. Second, the expansions are justified based on wildlife and/or wildlife habitat for big game species, which are numerous. These factors alone do not merit establishment or expansion of ACEC's. If the RMP were to assure current land users, especially livestock permittees that the ACEC will not be managed to the detriment of grazing, it would be less problematic.</p>	<p>Special designations would not alter livestock grazing. Management of livestock grazing in areas of special designations would be consistent with the management provisions outlined in Chapter 2, Table 2.3, Appendix F, and Appendix L.</p> <p>Also, see Appendix G for information on the relevant and important values considered for each proposed ACEC.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>SO21</p>	<p>The draft attempts but falls short of analyzing the socioeconomic impacts of Lands and Realty, Forage, Minerals, and Recreation and OHV decisions. Notably missing is an economic analysis of the lost shared mineral revenue from federal lands that have an economic impact on the community as well as other mineral sharing programs within the state. Socioeconomic impacts must be reanalyzed and the results used to reassess impacts of proposed management decisions and a preferred alternative selected based on this new analysis.</p>	<p>The anticipated socioeconomic impacts of each alternative can be found in Section 4.12.3 and its subsections. Further qualitative and quantitative clarifications have been provided in the PRMP/FEIS.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>VI26</p>	<p>We are concerned about the lack of real discussion in the Draft EIS about the management of visual resources. The proposed management prescriptions laid out on page 2-62 do nothing more than indicate the aggregate amount of acreage to be managed in each</p>	<p>Table 2.1.24 (Visual Resource Management) of the PRMP/FEIS Section 2.4.16.1 identifies the Goals and Objectives for visual resource management. Section 3.17 provides a discussion of the affected environment regarding visual resources. Section</p>	

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			VRM management class. The management “common to all” discussion on page 2-36 indicates only, in one simple sentence, that the objectives for each specific visual resource management class, outlined in BLM Handbook H-8410-1, and repeated on page J-3, would be implemented.	4.17 provides a discussion of the environmental consequences for visual resources.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI27	We are concerned about the apparent lack of an updated visual inventory. This ties in with the rationale for the “Sensitivity Level Analysis” required by BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1.III.A. - Factors to Consider. Many of these factors change over time, and a simple rollover of an older inventory would not accurately reflect these adjustments. In addition, the lack of updated inventory information makes interpretation of the differences between the inventory and management classes impossible to determine. The draft RMP needs to fully explain how the visual inventory was accomplished, so that differences in visual management prescriptions proposed in the various Alternatives may be compared to the inventory classes. This indicates to the reader exactly how the VRM management classes are assisting in the resource management goals of each Alternative.	<p>See comment response VI7A.</p> <p>Some major travel corridors were elevated in their visual sensitivity, (which is one of the criteria in visual sensitivity rating), because of the increase in use and visitation. Two areas were re-inventoried because of both the dramatic increase in oil and gas activity and the perceived increase of both user numbers and attitude perception toward natural landscapes. As a result of the re-inventories, both areas were elevated in VRM rating as seen in Figures 29 and 32 which are reflected in Alternatives A and D respectively.</p> <p>The alternatives provide a range of VRM classification from which management can select from for the final RMP and the VRM classification within the final RMP will be consistent with general overall management direction.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI28	The maps on Figures 29-32 are hard to interpret concerning the VRM management classes, as the figures are not specific enough to determine the exact geographic location of most of the boundary lines. Because of this, the counties cannot determine if the criteria for VRM inventory have been correctly followed, and exactly where, on-the-ground, the BLM proposes to change management from one class to another,	The BLM acknowledges that the scale of Figures 29-32 may not provide sufficient detail to delineate VRM boundary lines for the various classifications; however, electronic files are well defined and provide sufficient detail.	

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			except for certain geographical areas which fully correspond to other proposed management designations.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI29	The draft RMP purports to discuss the impacts of various resource management decisions on visual resources, but, in actuality, this discussion is either misleading or circular and non-responsive. As an example of a misleading statement, the discussion of VRM resources on pages 3-117 to 3-118 lays out the management criteria and requirements for the four VRM management classes. The discussion indicates that currently the only areas in the VFO managed as VRM management class I are Wilderness Study Areas, and one WSA equivalent, an Instant Study Area. It continues by stating that minerals exploration and development “is not presently exceeding VRM class objectives” throughout the Vernal Field Office, due to proper visual mitigation methods. Yet on page 4-122 the document indicates that VRM management classes I and II “allow little or no alteration to the line, form, color and texture that characterize the existing landscape,” thereby raising the potential for greater impacts to minerals development. On page 4-123, the analysis clearly states that an increase in the number of acres of VRM Classes I and II would lead to a direct decrease in the number of available well locations, thereby leading to less production (and royalties). We ask for clarification of the correct standards for VRM management in the VFO, and that the VFO analyze VRM I and II designations as a possible withdrawal of the mineral resources.	Minerals exploration and development are presently occurring in areas not designated has high VRM classes but in areas of lower VRM classification (Class IV to be specific—see Figure 32), where greater levels of visual intrusion are tolerated. Smaller areas are designated as VRM Class III and Class II, wherein slightly higher restrictions on visual alteration exist and visual mitigation measures are used. As such, the DEIS statements referenced in the document are not contradictory. Under Alternatives A and C, changes in VRM classification across the VFO would increase the number of acres under Class I and II designation (with more VRM Class I under Alternative C than A). More of these VRM Class I and II areas would overlap with areas desirable for minerals and energy exploration and development. As such, under these alternatives, there would be greater impacts on minerals and energy development through increased restrictions related to visual resources management.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI30	We are concerned that the draft RMP is not specific about the sources and goals of many of the special management designations available to it, leading to circular and non-responsive reasoning in the analysis.	Table 2.1.18 (Special Designations – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)) of the PRMP/FEIS provides information about the management foci for each proposed ACEC or	

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			<p>For example on page 4-284 the impacts analysis for visual resources and special designations indicates that visual resources will be protected by designation of ACECs and Wild and Scenic River designations. This analysis proceeds under the general presumption that ACECs and WSR segments are “good” for visual resources, but fails to indicate the management prescriptions which actually accomplish this goal.</p>	<p>special designation. Many of these foci, such as controlling noxious weeds, limiting OHV use to designated routes, and establishing controlled surface use stipulations on minerals and energy exploration and development would reduce visual intrusions and alteration of the landscape. Such an outcome would be beneficial to the preservation of visual resources. Also, designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and through the ACEC process confers a level of resource management that protects and preserves the important and relevant values of an area from the potential effects of actions that would otherwise be permitted by the RMP. In general, emphasis is given to protecting the aesthetic, scenic, wildlife, historic, archaeological, unique or distinctive, and/or scientific features of these areas.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>VI31</p>	<p>Which designation - ACEC, WSR, SRMA or VRM management - is being proposed for the protection of visual resources? The VRM discussion mentions the others, while the ACEC discussion mentions the use of VRM classifications. This lack of clarity in proposed management prescriptions doesn't meet the requirements of full disclosure under the provisions of NEPA, and doesn't allow us to determine whether or not the BLM is proposing duplicate prescriptions, contrary to the provisions of state law, and the BLM's Manual on designation of ACECs.</p>	<p>Visual resources benefit from a variety of different special management designations, not just VRM classification. While VRM classification is specific to visual resources, ACEC, WSR, and SRMA designation can also consider visual resource values, and the management goals of such designations typically include actions that afford protection to visual resources as an ancillary benefit.</p> <p>Overlapping of program decisions is not optional for BLM, but is required by the FLPMA, 1976 and National BLM planning and program specific regulations. The FLPMA directed that management of public lands be on the basis of multiple use (Section 102(a) (7)). As a multiple-use agency, the BLM is required to implement laws, regulations and policies for many different and often competing land uses and to resolve conflicts and prescribe land</p>	

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				<p>uses through its land use plans. For example, 43 CFR Group 2500 provides guidance and requirements for Disposition; Occupancy and Use of public lands; Group 2800 for Rights-of-way; Group 3400 for Coal Management; Group 6000 for Designated Wilderness, and Group 8200 for Natural History, part 8351 for Wild and Scenic Rivers. Multiple-use management requires a balancing of the mandates for these separate programs.</p> <p>BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook requires that specific decisions be made for each resource and use (Appendix C, H-1601-1). The required decisions must be included in each of the alternatives analyzed during development of the RMP. The RMP will include the decisions required for each program.</p> <p>See comment response VI29.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-25</p>	<p>VI32</p>	<p>The counties and State of Utah cannot support any proposed VRM class management specifications that will prevent habitat enhancement, fuels reduction, and prescribed fire activities from occurring in the VFO. The RMP must choose VRM management classes which allow vegetation and habitat treatments that improve wildlife habitat and reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fire events.</p>	<p>The BLM is aware that there are specific County and State plan decisions relevant to aspects of public land management that are discrete from, and independent of, Federal law. However, the BLM is bound by Federal law. The FLPMA requires that the development of an RMP for public lands must be coordinated and consistent with County plans, to the maximum extent possible by law, and inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal government plans be resolved to the extent practical (FLPMA, Title II Sec. 202 (c)(9)). As a consequence, where State and local plans conflict with Federal law there will be an inconsistency that cannot be resolved or reconciled.</p>	

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				<p>Thus, while County and Federal planning processes, under FLPMA, are required to be as integrated and consistent as practical, the Federal agency planning process is not bound by or subject to County plans, planning processes, or planning stipulations. The BLM will identify these conflicts in the FEIS/PRMP, so that the State and local governments have a complete understanding of the impacts of the PRMP on State and local management options. A consistency review of the PRMP with the State and County Master Plans is included in Chapter 5.</p> <p>See also comment response VI1. No VRM classification precludes limited management actions, which may include fuels reductions, prescribed fire, and/or habitat enhancements. VRM Class I and II require that these management activities be conducted in ways that have minimal impact on visual resources over the long term.</p>	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI58 (PR11)	Some of the proposed VRM boundaries follow the boundaries of old Wilderness Inventory Areas, causing the concern that these provisions for VRM management are substitutes for non-use or non-impairment standards, in contradiction to State law and the case of Utah v. Norton.	This is the same comment as VI39.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	VI59 (PR12)	Because a VRM management class is to be established only after a management decision is made, and the VRM proposed management regime lacks significant analysis and a range of alternatives, the counties request that a review of all detailed VRM analysis and proposed management decisions be undertaken in cooperation with the state and local government before the Final EIS and RMP is	This is the same comment as VI 43.	

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			completed.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	WH23	There are proposals to expand herd management areas (HMA) and establish an AML in Bonanza Winter Ridge areas. The counties oppose any expansion of HMAs or Wild Horse herds. BLM has demonstrated and stated that they do not have the resources to manage existing herds. BLM has ignored historical problems with unmanaged wild horse problems such as the excess numbers that grazed the Bonanza area unchecked and the contribution of this overgrazing to the current purported problem of loss of cool season grasses in the area.	Comment noted.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-25	WH24	The expansions of the HMAs are proposed without proper analysis of need, the availability of forage, manageability of impacts on vegetation, soils and riparian areas and impacts on wildlife and their habitats.	<p>The Wild Horse and Burro Act authorizes the BLM to manage Wild Horses on public lands.</p> <p>Table 2.1.25 of the PRMP/FEIS outlines the management goals and measures that would be implemented under the alternatives in order to appropriately manage wild horse herds relative to forage availability and quality. The potential impacts of wild horse management decisions on vegetation, soils, riparian areas, and wildlife are discussed in Sections 4.11.2.2, 4.13.2.2, 4.16.2.14, and 4.19.2.13, respectively.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	CR16	The Ute Tribe requests that the Tribe be informed at least two weeks in advance of all future cultural resource surveys, so that Tribal elders can participate in the surveys. The Tribal elders can provide valuable information on locations of sacred areas, medicinal plants, and other areas of cultural importance to the Tribe that may potentially be impacted by surface disturbance on Tribal lands. The RMP/EIS should specify that Tribal elders would participate in evaluation of the cultural importance of a site to the Tribe, where	<p>The BLM declines to include language in the proposed RMP that stipulates that the Tribe would be given a 2-week advance notice of cultural surveys and participate in evaluating a site's cultural importance to the Tribe where surface disturbances are proposed.</p> <p>In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 13175, other</p>	

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			surface-disturbing activities are proposed.	federal legislation and BLM policy, the BLM Vernal Field Office (VFO) will continue to consult with Native American Tribes regarding any undertaking of the VFO that has the potential to affect resources that are important to the Tribes. This consultation affords the Tribes the opportunity to identify for the BLM any concerns and suggest any additional identification or evaluation measured deemed appropriate to the undertaking. In addition BLM will comply with Executive Order 13007, Indian sacred sites, consultation and also comply with manuals 81-20 and H-8120-1.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	CR17	Impacts to important sacred or cultural sites should be avoided.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	CR18	<p>The Ute Tribe requests that the following Tribal requirements and stipulations be included in the RMP and in Appendix K (surface stipulations applicable to all surface-disturbing activities), as appropriate, in order to ensure that disturbance to important cultural sites on Tribal lands is avoided:</p> <p>The Tribe shall be consulted prior to any surface disturbance on Tribal lands to ensure that habitats for plants of medicinal or cultural value are not disturbed. If a specific location contains such plants, no surface occupancy would be allowed;</p> <p>Cultural or archaeological sites that are determined by the Tribe to be important historical sites and/or gathering places would be unavailable for surface occupancy;</p> <p>No surface occupancy, including vehicular traffic, would be allowed in sacred areas or on Tribal hunting grounds on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation; and</p>	<p>Information related to these requests was not provided as a part of the comments from the Tribe, so the VFO is unable to determine where these areas are that the Tribe is concerned about.</p> <p>A meeting was held with Tribal representatives on 12-9-2005 to clarify the comments provided. During the meeting it was stated that all of the comments shown were in regard to Tribal trust surface lands, except for the cultural site comment. As such, any access across Tribal trust surface would be negotiated with Tribe, thus not needing to be addressed within the proposed RMP. Mitigation to important cultural sites will be determined after consultation with the Tribes.</p>	

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			No vehicular traffic shall be allowed on Saturdays and Sundays between Memorial Day and Labor Day for annual summer religious festivals.		
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	CR19	The RMP states that the higher number of acres designated in SRMAs under Alternatives A and C would provide greater positive impacts to cultural resources. However, the document (at page 4-50) also states that the greater level of human activity associated with increased recreation in these SRMAs would result in increased levels of vandalism and looting of cultural resources. The Ute Tribe is concerned with the high level of recreation proposed under Alternatives A and C. We disagree that human activity in a "managed setting" would limit vandalism and looting of cultural resources of high importance to the Tribe. We believe that the greater volume of people using the area for recreation would result in increased adverse impact to cultural resources. Therefore, we recommend that cultural surveys be conducted in areas proposed for SRMAs, so that areas with important cultural and sacred sites would be identified and closed to recreational activities.	Mitigation of impacts to important cultural resources and sacred sites would be developed at the time of site-specific proposals during the NEPA analysis process.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	FM5B	The Ute Tribe supports the commitment of the BLM in the RMP to work with the Tribe to identify important cultural resources prior to prescribed burns and looks forward to participating with the BLM in future actions related to fire management.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	GC36	Many of the proposed decisions/actions have the potential to negatively impact Tribal lands and resources. Therefore, we request that the BLM formally consult with the Ute Tribe on any land use decision or action (e.g., leasing for mineral development) that could directly or indirectly affect Tribal interests and resources.	The BLM maintains regular and ongoing consultation with the Ute Tribe as part of its responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 13175, and existing BLM policy. Additionally, the BLM is in the process of developing a working agreement with the Tribe to outline the specific parameters and nature	

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				of said consultation.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	LG66	The draft RMP at page 4-317 states that rangeland improvements would include a variety of activities. The Ute Tribe supports these improvements, as they would also improve existing wildlife habitat and provide water during high-stress drought periods. The Tribe requests that the BLM notify the Ute Tribe Fish and Wildlife Department prior to initiating rangeland improvements in proximity to Tribal land. Cooperation between the BLM and Tribal biologists would result in the greatest benefit to wildlife that inhabit both BLM and Tribal lands.	The BLM commits to continuing the existing and ongoing consultation with the Ute Tribe regarding actions that have the potential to affect tribal resources or concerns and actions that create opportunities for cooperative management regarding these resources and concerns.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	LR14	The Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (Ute Tribe) has previously informed the Vernal Office of the BLM of the need to have the RMP and EIS for the Vernal Field Office discuss the law relating to access to the surface estate of the Ute Tribe. Despite these previous requests, the RMP is completely silent concerning surface access to tribal lands. The Ute Tribe requires acknowledgements of its rights as a surface owner within the area of the RMP. Failure to set forth these rights within the text of the RMP will render the document incomplete and inadequate.	<p>Acreages under jurisdiction of the Ute Tribe are included in Table 1.1; however, language has been added to Section 1.4.1 of the PRMP/FEIS clarifying the role of the Ute Tribe as holder of surface estate within the area to be managed through the RMP.</p> <p>See comment response LR37.</p>	X
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	LR15	The RMP at pages 4-37 to 4-38 states that the BLM would pursue acquisition of Indian trust lands under Alternatives A and C, whereas under Alternative B only administrative access to Indian trust lands would be pursued. The Ute Tribe prefers Alternative A or C in which land exchange would be pursued. We are also considering a land exchange proposed by the State for the State's minerals south of Township 13 South.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah	G-26	ME63	Page 3-39 identifies six RFD areas within the VPA that were evaluated for potential energy resources. It	Section 1.4.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows:	X

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and Ouray Reservation			should be noted in the RMP/EIS that the Uintah & Ouray Indian Reservation is located in portions of the East and West Tavaputs Plateau, Monument Butte-Red Wash, Altamont-Bluebell, and Tabiona-Ashley Valley RFD areas. Oil and gas, CBM, tar sands, and mineral materials, such as sand gravel and building stone are potentially present within Reservation boundaries. The RMP/EIS should specify that all Tribal laws, regulations, conditions, and stipulations, would apply to energy and mineral resources, if operations are conducted on tribal land within the VPA.	"Decisions and actions of the RMP only fully apply to BLM lands. In cases of split estate lands, such as lands within the planning area that are split between the BLM and the Uintah & Ouray Indian Tribe, actions affecting the surface must be coordinated with the surface owner. Undertakings conducted on lands not wholly or partly administered by the BLM are subject to the laws, regulations, conditions, and policies of the relevant land management agency or other landowner."	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	ME64	Page 4-98 states that under Alternatives A, B, and C, approximately 188,500 acres of split-estate lands (Tribal surface-Federal minerals) within the Hill Creek Extension of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation would be available for minerals leasing. It is important to note that the Hill Creek Extension is known as a "Wildlife and Cultural Resource Protection Area" and was under a mineral development moratorium pursuant to Tribal Ordinance 83-02 and Resolution 83-184. The Tribe only granted exceptions for mineral development for projects in the Flat Rock area, because substantial financial compensation was received for surface use and access to Tribal lands. The Tribe wishes to minimize development in the southern portion of the Hill Creek Extension area, particularly south of Township 13 South. In addition, the Tribe is adamant about not allowing any development in Grand County for a number of environmental and cultural reasons.	The Vernal RMP planning area does not include any BLM managed lands within the Hill Creek Extension in Grand County, so the comment is outside the scope of the RMP. For the remainder of BLM managed lands within the Hill Creek Extension, the BLM has worked with the Ute Tribe and BIA to determine appropriate leasing categories for BLM minerals underlying the Hill Creek Extension.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	ME65	Page 4-98 states that the impacts of leasing of minerals would be beneficial to the Ute Tribe, including rentals or fees from the use of surface permits or other rights-of-way. However, it does not state that there would also be adverse impacts, including those to	Section 4.8 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to add a footnote explaining that impacts from minerals leasing are discussed in other resource chapters as part of the area analysis.	X

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			cultural resources, e.g. sacred sites, medicinal plants, and ancestral hunting grounds.		
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	ME66	<p>The Ute Tribe requests that the following Tribal requirements and stipulations for surface disturbance resulting from mineral development be included in the RMP/EIS and in Appendix K (surface stipulations applicable to all surface-disturbing activities), in order to ensure that surface disturbance on Tribal lands is avoided, where possible, or minimized:</p> <p>All Tribal laws and regulations shall apply to all oil and gas activities, including the Tribal environmental regulations that are presently being drafted by the Tribe;</p> <p>No geophysical or seismic activities are allowed on Tribal lands without first obtaining a Mineral Access Permit from the Tribe, including payment for surface disturbance;</p> <p>Applications for new road construction on Tribal surface shall be submitted to the Tribe for approval. Access to pristine areas or areas with cultural resources or sacred sites shall be limited (or denied) and multiple well drilling pads may be required to minimize impacts to wildlife, endangered plants or medicinal plants, cultural or historic areas, artifacts, and important visual resources;</p> <p>All contents of any reserve pit or similar pits and associated pit liners located on Tribal land shall be removed upon well completion and disposed of in an appropriate facility;</p> <p>A fugitive dust control and road maintenance plan shall be submitted by the operator to the Tribe for approval prior to use of Tribal roads; this may require selected roads to be paved by the Lessee;</p>	While the BLM supports the Tribe's comment, the suggested language is more applicable to site - specific proposals. Also, since the BLM is not the surface management agency, it is more appropriate for the Tribe to develop these conditions of approval based upon current resource conditions and their desired land use objectives.	

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			<p>Vehicular traffic and equipment for oil and gas operations shall be subject to maximum daily quotas, noise reduction and road usage curfews, as necessary, established by the Tribe to minimize impacts to the wilderness experience now enjoyed by Tribal members on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation;</p> <p>A written agreement between the Tribe and the operator is required prior to drilling a water well(s) on Tribal lands. All water removed from the well shall be purchased from the Tribe;</p> <p>Surface activities during wet or muddy periods or periods of high fire danger, may be curtailed or prohibited upon notice by the Tribe;</p> <p>No oil and gas development shall be conducted within 500 feet of a canyon rim or hilltop within the Uintah and Ouray Reservation to avoid or minimize impacts to visual resources. The construction of low-profile oil and gas facilities may be required;</p> <p>The minerals underlying leases on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation are subject to claim by the Tribe; and</p> <p>All oil and gas activities shall be in full compliance with Onshore Order No. 1 (25 CFR section 169) and other applicable rules and regulations, including the Tribe's right to receive full market value for all surface use of and access to Tribal lands (25 CFR Section 169).</p>		
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	ME67	<p>Pages 4-101 to 4-109 discuss the alternatives and mention that each alternative would affect royalties paid to the federal government and/or the State of Utah. As the Tribe owns some mineral rights in the Hill Creek Extension, it should be noted that royalties paid to the Tribe would be affected as well.</p>	<p>The impacts to royalty payments in each alternative are associated with public minerals, i.e. leased by the BLM. As to the mineral estate held in trust for the benefit of the Ute Tribe, the RMP does not impact royalties paid as the determination as to what Indian trust minerals are available for leasing or not is a decision to be made by the Tribe, not the</p>	

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				BLM.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	ME68	Pages 4-101 to 4-109 propose, under Alternatives A, B, and C, timing and controlled surface use for the Hill Creek Extension, which is located on the East Tavaputs Plateau. However, several hundred wells would be drilled under all alternatives in East Tavaputs Plateau, some of which would be on Tribal surface lands. The Ute Tribe requests that the number of potential wells on Tribal lands be clearly identified in the RMP/EIS and appropriate mitigation measures should be included.	The mineral potential report identified potential future development within a region, but it is not specific as to location. Therefore, the RMP cannot reflect the number of potential wells upon Tribal surface. Appropriate mitigation measures, beyond what was identified in comment ME66, would be developed at the project proposal stage	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	RE15	The use of some vehicles, such as motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), may be prohibited on Tribal lands.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	SD115	<p>The Ute Tribe is evaluating specific areas on Reservation lands for possible designation as Tribal Wilderness Areas, including but not limited to the lands south of Township 13 South, S.L.M. The RMP/EIS should include the following tribal stipulation in areas of potential surface disturbance on tribal lands:</p> <p>All lands on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation may be subject to additional future restrictions, i.e., Tribal Wilderness Designation.</p>	<p>BLM declines to make the suggested wording changes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to, the following:</p> <p>The BLM does not find the suggested changes necessary or appropriate.</p> <p>The suggested wording change does not substantively contribute to or clarify the discussion.</p> <p>The commenter did not provide any rationale why the suggested change is necessary or how the current data and analysis is incorrect.</p> <p>The suggested change expressed personal opinions or preferences.</p> <p>The suggested change had little relevance to the adequacy or accuracy of the RMP/FEIS.</p> <p>The Vernal RMP only addresses split estate issues such as the Hill Creek Extension, which are Tribal</p>	

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				<p>surface and Federal minerals.</p> <p>Discussions have been held between the BLM and Tribal representatives concerning split estate issues on the Hill Creek Extension. Maps and comments have been provided by the Tribe that illustrates surface management concerns for the leasing of the Federal mineral estate. The maps illustrating surface resource impacts were used in analyzing the appropriate category and stipulations for the leasing of the Federal mineral estate.</p> <p>Necessary information as to the area that may be proposed for additional future restrictions has not been provided, so it cannot be included in the RMP decisions at this time. In the future, should the Ute Tribe decide to provide differing surface use restrictions other than what has already been provided, that would not impact the management of existing leases. Future leases may be impacted after a plan amendment was completed to address the impacts to the mineral resources managed by BLM.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	SS21	The Ute Tribe supports the use of Best Management Practices, timing limitations, controlled surface use, and no surface occupancy stipulations to protect special status plants and animals. In addition, the Tribe requests that the BLM consult with the Ute Tribe Natural Resources Department prior to implementing any actions that may affect special status species and/or habitats on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.	BLM supports consultation with other jurisdictional agencies as stated in Section 1.4.1.2.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah	G-26	SS22	The Ute Tribe proposes the inclusion of the following stipulation for special status species and habitats in the	BLM has incorporated surface use restrictions for the management of wildlife. Please see Appendix	

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and Ouray Reservation			<p>RMP/EIS:</p> <p>No surface occupancy stipulations would be required for raptor and eagle nesting sites and special status plant species habitat (including threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species).</p>	K.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	SW18	<p>The Ute Tribe is concerned about the impacts of surface disturbance to soil and water quality, since these disturbances would likely affect the water quality on Tribal lands near disturbed areas. We are especially concerned about water quality degradation to Hill Creek from soil erosion and potential contamination of the stream with chemicals. Therefore, the Tribe recommends that the following stipulation be included in the RMP/EIS:</p> <p>No surface occupancy shall be allowed in areas adjacent to Hill Creek.</p>	<p>The area around Hill Creek is designated for Controlled Surface Use under Alternatives A, B, C, and E. Stipulations are in place (see Table 2.1.16 (Riparian Resources) under the subsection entitled Management Common to All Action Alternatives that prohibit surface disturbance within 100 meters of riparian areas, with exceptions for the following situations: a) there are no practical alternatives; b) the impacts are fully mitigated; or c) the proposed action is designed to enhance riparian resources. BLM agrees with your concerns related to water quality impacts to Hill Creek. The BLM-administered lands are subject to the riparian policy stated in Table 2.1.16.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	TR14	<p>No right-of-way may be granted across the lands of the Ute Tribe without its consent. 25 U.S.C. § 324; 25 C.F.R. § 169.3. Furthermore, such rights-of-way and surface uses require payment of not less than the fair market value of the rights granted. 25 C.F.R. § 169.12. Payment of the fair market value for surface use is in addition to any payment or bond for potential damage to the surface.</p>	<p>The BLM acknowledges the Ute Tribe's jurisdictional authority and makes no claim in the RMP to the contrary.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	TR15	<p>The Ute Tribe supports the restrictions on OHV use to exiting trails and other travel restrictions outlined for Alternatives A, B, and C (as compared to D) for areas adjacent to the Reservation, since it will substantially decrease the likelihood of trespassers on Tribal lands and also reduce the potential for damage to cultural resources of importance to the Tribe.</p>	Comment noted.	

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Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	TR69	<p>The Ute Indian Tribe has implemented a Master Infrastructure Plan (MIP) to guide use and development of roads, pipelines, and other facilities in a portion of the RMP area known as the Hill Creek Extension. The Tribe is constructing or has constructed this infrastructure to accommodate foreseeable impacts and development in an effort to eliminate the need for producers to construct unnecessarily. The plan has been developed and implemented with strong consideration to the sensitive needs of wildlife, cultural and historic resources and other environmental concerns. A visual mitigation corridor is in place for the Hill Creek Canyon Corridor to maintain the pristine, recreational experience of the Tribal Members accessing the Towave Reservoir Recreation Area. It is the Tribe's expectation that our MIP will be incorporated into the RMP and that your agency will work with the Tribe to insure the integrity of the plan. Failure to set forth the key points of the Plan within the text of the RMP will render the document incomplete and inadequate.</p>	<p>The BLM will continue to work with the Tribe regarding surface development on split estate lands within the Hill Creek Extension. The BLM recognizes the authority of the Tribe with regards to surface rights and surface development within these lands, and the RMP would not negate this authority.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	WF68	<p>The Ute Tribe supports the protection measures for deer and elk and provision of habitat and forage for the reintroduction of bighorn sheep, bison, and moose as described under Alternatives A and C, as these animals are of great importance to the Tribe. We also support timing limitations and controlled surface use stipulations for other wildlife species, including sage grouse breeding grounds and raptor nests, as specified in the draft RMP/EIS and Appendix K.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	WF69	<p>The Ute Tribe requests that the BLM include the following stipulations in the RMP/EIS in order to minimize disturbance to game species of importance to the Tribe:</p>	<p>BLM acknowledges the Tribe's comment; however, the suggested language is more applicable to site-specific proposals. Also, since the BLM is not the surface management agency, it seems more appropriate for the Tribe to develop these conditions</p>	

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			<p>Vehicular traffic shall be prohibited during the breeding and calving season and hunting seasons for deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and buffalo; and</p> <p>All bear and mountain lion lairs shall be protected to avoid or minimize any potential impacts to bears and mountain lions.</p>	of approval based upon current resource conditions and their desired land use objectives.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	WH25	<p>The Ute Tribe does not support Alternatives A and C relative to wild horse management decisions for the Hill Creek Herd Management Area and prefers that the existing program (i.e., Alternative D) continue. However, the Tribe wishes to continue to work with the BLM to find a mutually acceptable solution to the problem of equine diseases and control of the wild horse population.</p>	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-26	WH26	<p>The Ute Tribe is concerned about the potential for increased competition for forage and habitat between the wild horse population in the Hill Creek HMA and the wildlife and horses on the Reservation. Since game species, such as antelope, deer, elk, bighorn sheep, moose, and black bear, forage on the same vegetation as the wild horses, they would be adversely affected by large populations of wild horses adjacent to the Reservation.</p>	Comment noted.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD80	<p>Throughout the DEIS/RMP the outstanding remarkable values listed for this section of [the Lower Green] river are recreation and fish, yet the tentative classification for this segment of river is "scenic". A tentative classification of "recreational" is the only one supported by the eligibility finding and suitability analysis.</p>	Recreation as a value and a recreational designation for a wild and scenic river are not necessarily synonymous. Viewing the scenery is considered a passive form of recreation. The Final EIS carries forward the decision from the Diamond Mountain RMP ROD.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD81	<p>This segment of the river should be reanalyzed for suitability due to the flawed analysis and in light of recent decisions regarding management for the segment of the river south of T12S. Here it was</p>	The area to which the commenter refers is well south of the VFO's proposed ACEC/WSR for the Lower Green River.	

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			<p>provided that the river adjoining the Naval Oil Shale Reserve (NOSR) would not be managed as Wild & Scenic. This was done in an agreement with Department of Interior and ratified by Congress.</p> <p>It was recently agreed by the Secretary of Interior and ratified by Congress that on the river segment adjoining NOSR lands to the south of the subject segment, that 1/4 mile was adequate to protect such values as proposed by this ACEC.</p>	<p>This area is outside the scope of the Vernal RMP as it relates to lands not managed by BLM.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-27</p>	<p>SD82</p>	<p>The attributes of both the Upper and Lower sections of the river are the same with the possibility of the Naval Oil Shale Reserve being even more remote than the area proposed suitable in the Lower Green segment.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD81-G-27, concerning the Naval Oil Shale Reserve.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-27</p>	<p>SD84</p>	<p>It was recently agreed by the Secretary of Interior and ratified by Congress that on the river segment adjoining NOSR lands to the south of the subject segment, that 1/4 mile was adequate to protect such values as proposed by this ACEC.</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD81-G-27.</p>	
<p>Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties</p>	<p>G-27</p>	<p>SD85</p>	<p>The DEIS/RMP contains no analysis that indicates this subject area is threatened by irreparable damage and that the riparian ecosystems are unique to the region, or even the immediate area. Meaningful analysis of impacts on RFD and socioeconomics are missing.</p>	<p>See Responses to Comments SD19-G-9 and SD51-G-25.</p> <p>The RFD scenarios described for each alternative incorporate potential reductions based upon restrictions related closing areas for minerals exploration and development, whether for ACEC designation or other allocation.</p> <p>The impacts analysis for socioeconomics has been expanded and clarified in Chapter 4 of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS.</p>	
<p>Uintah,</p>	<p>G-27</p>	<p>SD86</p>	<p>Analyze and then rewrite these alternatives including</p>	<p>See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.</p>	

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Daggett, and Duchesne Counties			ones not to designate.		
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD87	The alternatives as presented are clearly an attempt to manage this area to a non-impairment standard and circumvent multiple-use.	See Response to Comment SD8-G-9.	
Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties Uintah, Daggett, and Duchesne Counties	G-27	SD83	On page 55, Table 2.3 Alternatives, Special Designations, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - it is proposed to manage both sides of the Lower Green (line of sight) up to ½ mile as an ACEC to protect high value scenic resources and riparian ecosystems.	See Response to Comment SD81-G-27.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-29	CR55	The areas of Chandler Canyon, the Green River Corridor, and steep canyon country of the connected drainages should be designated as areas of no leasing/no activity as they are highly culturally and aesthetically sensitive.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-29	RW74	No leasing/activity should occur within one-half mile of any spring or riparian area.	Appendix K outlines stipulations for surface disturbing activities near riparian areas. These stipulations apply to all alternatives and throughout the planning area and include no surface occupancy within active flood plains, public waters, or 100 meters of riparian areas.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-29	SS154	No leasing should occur within the agency-established distance of active sage grouse leks.	Comment noted.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray	G-29	WF210	The Ute Tribe has identified areas of no leasing/activity as Chandler Canyon, the Green River corridor and steep canyon country of the connected drainages.	The Chandler Canyon area of the Hill Creek extension would be managed by the BLM under timing and controlled surface use stipulations under	

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Reservation			These areas provide important habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, and are considered critical year-round range for bighorn.	<p>Alternatives A, B, C, and E. Management under these stipulations would be conducted in coordination with the Ute Tribe.</p> <p>The Upper Green River Corridor is designated as no surface occupancy for line of sight from the centerline, up to ½-mile along both sides of the river from Little Hole to the Colorado State line. The Lower Green River Corridor is designated as no surface occupancy for line of sight from the centerline, up to ½-mile along both sides of the river from the trust land boundary at Ouray and the Carbon County line.</p>	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-29	WF211	The Ute Tribe has identified Wild Horse Basin as an area of no leasing/activity as it provides critical winter range and transitional spring and fall range for deer, elk and bison. This designation of no leasing/no activity also extends to the area south of Wild Horse Basin and into the area including Moon Water Canyon and Chandler Point.	Please, see the response to Comment WF210 as the same stipulations apply to the Wild Horse Basin-Moon Water Canyon-Chandler Point area.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-29	WF212	The Wolf Flat project area provides critical winter habitat for big game. Limited activity, i.e. no new drilling of wells, should occur from December through March. Much of the area is also important bison calving habitat. Limited activity should occur during April and May.	The Wolf Flat area of the Hill Creek Extension would be managed by the BLM under timing and controlled surface use stipulations under Alternatives A, B, C, and E. These stipulations include timing limitations for deer and elk winter range from November 15 through April 30 under Alternatives A and C and timing limitation for deer and elk winter range from December 15 to March 15 under Alternative B.	
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	G-30	LR37	The Ute Tribe is a Cooperating Agency in the revision of the RMP. Despite this status, the Ute Tribe does not believe that its concerns about land use affecting tribal lands have been addressed in the RMP process. As the owner or administrator of much of the surface area	<p>The following language has been added to Section 1.4.1 of the PRMP/FEIS:</p> <p>"Decisions and actions of the RMP only fully apply</p>	X

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			<p>within the planning area, the Ute Tribe is entitled to consent to any rights-of-way or other surface uses of these lands. The Tribe is also interested in assuring the proper and efficient development of tribal minerals, while protecting the interests of the Tribe and its members. While BLM officials have been supportive of the Tribe's concerns in private conversations, the RMP does not include any discussion of those concerns, or analysis of how best to address those concerns. The Ute Tribe is frankly worried that the RMP process will be used to justify land development processes that are inconsistent with the special status of tribal lands. The Ute Tribe again requests that the RMP include a clear acknowledgement of the rights of the Ute Tribe to manage access to tribal lands, and a discussion of the process by which the Ute Tribe and the BLM will cooperate in the management of their respective land bases.</p>	<p>to BLM lands. In cases of split estate lands, such as lands within the planning area that are split between the BLM and the Uintah & Ouray Indian Tribe, actions affecting the surface must be coordinated with the surface owner. Undertakings conducted on lands not wholly or partly administered by the BLM are subject to the laws, regulations, conditions, and policies of the relevant land management agency or other landowner."</p>	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ68	<p>The DRMP-EIS incorrectly lists the UDAQ emission inventory data as the source information for the NAAQS table. Emission inventory data are not monitoring data.</p>	<p>Table 3.2.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been replaced so that it now depicts Applicable Ambient Air Quality Standards instead of Ambient Air Quality Data.</p>	X
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ69	<p>The current 8-hour ozone NAAQS is not included in this table.</p>	<p>See comment response AQ68.</p>	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ70	<p>The values listed for the maximum concentration for all of the pollutants, but especially PM10, seem extremely low. Please provide the exact reference for each pollutant. These numbers appear to be averages instead of maximum monitored background concentrations.</p>	<p>See comment response AQ68.</p>	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ71	<p>The current PM2.5 NAAQS and relevant maximum monitored background are not included in this table.</p>	<p>The significant criteria for potential air quality impacts include NAAQS requirements for CO, PM10, PM2.5, NO3, O3, and NO2/NOx. Applicable</p>	

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				federal and state criteria are presented in Table 3.2.1 of the PRMP/FEIS.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ72	<p>The following statement is incorrect:</p> <p>"The NAAQS represent maximum acceptable concentrations that generally may not be exceeded except annual standards, which may never be exceeded."</p> <p>Please refer to the applicable standard to determine the form of the standard, and to show if a violation has occurred. For example some standards are based upon three-year averages, and some standards are based on the 4th highest maximum concentration.</p>	<p>Section 3.2.3 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to read as follows:</p> <p>"Air quality in a given location is defined by pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere and is generally expressed in units of parts per million (ppm) or micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³). One measure of a pollutant is its concentration in comparison to a national and/or state ambient air quality standard. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and Utah Air Quality Standards are health-based criteria for the maximum acceptable concentrations of air pollutants (with a margin of safety) at all locations to which the public has access. The NAAQS are established by the EPA and are outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 50). An area that does not meet the NAAQS is designated as a nonattainment area on a pollutant-by-pollutant basis. The State of Utah has adopted the NAAQS as state air quality standards. In 2004, the EPA passed a suite of actions called the Clean Air Rules of 2004 aimed at improving America's air quality. Two of the rules, the Nonroad Diesel Rule and the Ozone Rules, will potentially improve the future air quality of the VPA."</p>	X
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ73	<p>Table 3.2.2 is incorrect. The table implies that only a handful of emission sources are located in Daggett, Duchesne, and Grand and Uintah counties. Is this table referring to a certain size of emission sources? Please specify the criteria that were used to develop the table.</p>	<p>Table 3.2.2 (Emission Sources in the VPA) of the Draft RMP has been deleted from the PRMP/FEIS. The text that cited Table 3.2.2 (Section 3.2.4) has been revised to read as follows:</p> <p>"The VPA covers Daggett, Duchesne, and Uintah</p>	X

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				Counties and part of Grand County. Currently, emission sources within the VPA consist of mostly oil and gas development facilities and mining sites. There are also fugitive dust sources associated with these sites, construction activities and roadways. A detailed listing of emission sources in and around the VPA, along with information on how specific sources were addressed in the air quality modeling, is available the TSD (Trinity and Nicholls, 2006, tabular source information is found in Appendix C)."	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ74	Ozone is not included in the table. Please include an analysis of ozone concentrations in the proposed location, and the subsequent impact on the NAAQS as a result of each of the Alternatives.	Ozone is appropriately excluded from this table, as no ozone modeling analysis was performed. See comment responses AQ54 and AQ65.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ75	The DRMP-EIS has not addressed all of the NAAQS; an ozone analysis has not been presented.	See comment responses AQ54, AQ65, and AQ74.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ76	The following statement is not supported by the DRMP-EIS: "With the exception of prescribed fire, impacts from management decisions related to the proposed development alternatives are projected to have no effect to a negligible effect on air quality in those regions where they are implemented." A cumulative air quality analysis has not been included in the DRMP-EIS. One project may have a small, albeit, negligible effect on air quality, however several of the alternatives approach listing 6300 projects, and it is reasonable to assume that collectively these projects might impact the quality of the air.	Section 4.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS describes the cumulative impacts regarding air quality.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ77	In regards to increment calculations, the major and minor PSD datelines [sic] have been established for the DRMP-EIS area, and therefore, minor sources consume increment and must be included in any	This NEPA analysis compared potential air quality impacts from the proposed Alternatives to applicable ambient air quality standards and PSD increments. The comparisons to the PSD Class I	

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			discussion regarding increment consumption.	and II increments were intended to evaluate a threshold of concern for potential impacts, and do not represent a regulatory PSD Increment Consumption Analysis. Such a regulatory analysis is the responsibility of the State air quality agency (under EPA oversight) and could be conducted during permitting process. Therefore, PSD Baseline dates are not relevant.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ78	Please include a description of the policy, rules and procedures that the BLM implements to minimize the air quality impacts and specifically impacts to regional haze for fire events. Also include a discussion of the procedures the notifying the public regarding specific fire events.	Section 4.2.2.5 in the PRMP/FEIS describes the effects of fire decision on air quality. This section also describes how the public is notified during a fire event.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ79	The Utah Division of Air Quality (UDAQ) requested a copy of the Air Quality Modeling Analysis cited in the DRMP-EIS on February 7, 2005. UDAQ cannot conduct a thorough review of the DRMP-EIS without the modeling analysis, and as such, all comments submitted here are considered preliminary (cited as Air Quality Technical Support Document, Trinity and Nichol [sic] 2004.)	According to Jerry Kenczka of BLM's Vernal FO, the UDAQ was sent the requested material with sufficient time to submit comments.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ80	The DRMP-EIS states, "PSD increments do not apply, as a majority of these sources are temporary in nature." Please provide supporting documentation. It is difficult to determine what projects are being considered for the statement. Process fugitive emissions attributable to a stationary source do consume increment and must be included in the analysis.	See comment response AQ77. The air quality analysis done for the Vernal RMP DEIS should not in any way be interpreted as a regulatory PSD ICA. This type of analysis would be conducted by the appropriate, delegated air quality agency.	
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ81	UDAQ is not familiar with "monitoring baseline date," or why it would support the conclusion that since a source was operating at the time of the monitoring date, it was assumed to be included in the background	See comment responses AQ32 and AQ34 regarding the modeling base year date approach and comment response AQ77 and AQ80 regarding PSD.	

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			<p>concentration of a pollutant. As mentioned in other discussions in the DRMP-EIS, there is very little actual air quality monitoring data that exists within the study area. A PSD modeling analysis must include emissions from sources that would impact the study area at the 1ug/m3 level. The analysis must be redone using standard modeling procedures, which would include modeling the emissions from nearby sources. Also, since the major and minor PSD baseline dates have been established for the DRMP-EIS area, minor sources consume increment and must be included in all increment calculations.</p>		
Utah DEQ – Division of Air Quality	G-31	AQ82	<p>The information supplied in the DRMP-EIS does not support the conclusions presented in this table. The DRMP-EIS did not conduct an air quality cumulative impact analysis for the different alternatives.</p>	<p>A cumulative analysis was conducted as part of the air quality analysis. The BLM believes there is ample basis for the information presented in this table.</p>	
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ83	<p>Cumulative Air Quality Impacts of Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions: Significant cumulative visibility impairment associated with mineral and energy development was identified. The Draft EIS describes the inventory sources and BLM sources and the Technical Support Document for Air Quality provides more information on how these sources were modeled. Background concentrations were added to the emissions associated with reasonably foreseeable development and the impacts of Alternative B to estimate potential cumulative air quality impacts. The Draft EIS concludes that the existing emissions, when combined with emissions from Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions (RFFA) would cause only negligible air quality impacts. However, the air quality analysis may provide a low estimate of the potential emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) from energy construction and production within the “Indian Country” that comprises a large portion of the Vernal Planning</p>	<p>The existing “Indian Country” sources would be represented by the background air quality data and thus not explicitly modeled.</p>	

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			Area. We suggest that actual emission rates from within Indian Country be assessed and used to describe a range of potential emissions from construction and production activities from these sources.		
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ84	We also suggest several additional reasonable foreseeable future sources of air emissions in the West Tavaputs Plateau area be included in a revised air quality modeling assessment once those projects are adequately defined. For example, in 2004, Petroglyph Oil and Gas Company proposed 8008 steam injection wells on 2.5 acre spacing in the Antelope Field. This proposed plan for oil development using steam recovery was submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 2004 and it includes the estimated emissions of some pollutants. This oil and gas development project could be reasonable foreseeable if the 288 well pilot project currently under development proves to be economically and technically feasible. Further, in 2001, the Northern Ute tribe leased 83,000 acres to the Dominion Exploration and Production, Inc. on lands known as Naval Oil Shale Reserve No. 2. This land is adjacent to the Green River and is surrounded by lands currently producing gas reserves from the Uinta Basin geologic section. When these plans are formulated the projects may also need to be considered RFD.	The BLM thanks EPA for the information provided. These projects will be included for consideration in future projects should they become reasonably foreseeable.	
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ85	Nitrogen oxide emission rates in Indian Country. The near-field modeling analyses for the Draft EIS used the NOx emission rates of either 1.5 gram per horsepower-hour (g/hp-hr) or 0.7 g/hp-hr for the Utah-permitted new compressor engines. However, many compressor engines associated with the RFFA may be located on Indian country lands within the exterior	BLM is always willing to cooperate with EPA on NEPA air quality analyses and we hope to do so in the future.	

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			<p>boundaries of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation. Such sources will be subject to the requirements of EPA as the permitting and regulatory authority. It is likely that many of the new compressor engines added as a RFFA with "Indian Country" will be considered minor sources under the Clean Air Act. Although EPA is considering a rulemaking to allow air permits for minor sources in Indian country, it is not clear at this time how many new compressor engines would be required to obtain an air quality permit. If no permit is required, the assumption of restricting NOx emission limits within the range assumed for the air quality cannot be assured. We suggest that BLM assisted by EPA evaluate NOx emission rates of recently installed compressor engines in Indian Country on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in order to establish the range of emissions to be used for RFFA with Indian Country. Information available to EPA indicates that field compressor engines on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation emit NOx in the range of 2 to 28 g/hp-hr. This information would then be used in a revised air quality modeling effort for future NEPA analysis of large-scale energy projects with the Vernal Planning Area.</p>		
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ86	<p>Visibility.</p> <p>Section 4.2.2.6.7.4 explains that the screening analysis for visibility showed reduction in visibility at Class I areas due to BLM sources alone. The Technical Support Document is consistent with this statement. Table 4.2.7 shows cumulative visibility impacts and combines results of the screening analysis with results of a refined analysis. BLM conducted a refined analysis in cases where the screening analysis showed</p>	Table 4.2.7 and the accompanying text in the PRMP/FEIS EIS have been revised to clarify the presentation of the results of the screening and refined visibility analysis.	X

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			<p>impacts. An error in the text accompanying Table 4.2.7 refers to “the screening visibility analysis” and could lead the reader to believe that a screening analysis resulted in no perceptible visibility impacts. Table 5-65 of the Technical Support Document reveals the results of the screening analysis of cumulative visibility impacts. The analysis showed potential days of visibility reductions greater than 1.0 deciview (dv) at the Arches National Park Class I area (one day) and at the Class II Dinosaur National Monument (three days). (Additional days of reduced visibility were modeled for sources in the Glenwood Springs planning area. One of the three days of cumulative impact greater than 1.0 dv at Dinosaur National Monument resulted only when emissions from BLM sources were added to those of the inventory sources. In other words, the potential impact of the BLM sources tipped the balance and caused potential cumulative impacts to exceed 1.0 dv. Please revise the text accompanying table 4.2.7 to show that the screening analysis showed potential visibility impacts that disappeared in the refined analysis.</p>		
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ87	<p>Ozone.</p> <p>The DEIS mentions ozone in the context of prescribed burning. Table 3.2.3 lists the criteria pollutants but excludes ozone.... Current development in the planning area includes sources of volatile organic compounds (VOC’s) [sic] and oxides of nitrogen, which are ozone precursors. The model used by BLM for the air quality analysis (i.e., CALPUFF) was not suitable for estimating ozone impacts. However, we recommend that the FEIS address ozone and specify that project-level NEPA compliance documents will estimate</p>	<p>Ozone is appropriately excluded from this table, as no ozone modeling analysis was performed. See comment responses AQ54 and AQ65.</p> <p>The CALPUFF model was proposed as the far-field model and was approved by the stakeholder group.</p> <p>As EPA noted in their comments on the Roan RMP DEIS air quality analysis:</p> <p>“Running a regulatory ozone model such as RPM-IV</p>	

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			potential ozone impacts.	<p>for purposes of the DEIS is impractical, and we understand that BLM’s National Science & Technology Center may be reluctant to estimate potential ozone impacts with a conservative method such as VOC/NOx point source screening tables.”</p> <p>Given the above, it is not clear how a possible ozone analysis would be done.</p>	
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ88	<p>Prescribed Fire.</p> <p>We appreciate that the draft EIS addressed the air quality effects of prescribed fire. We suggest that the FEIS indicate that project-level NEPA documents will be needed for prescribed fire treatments which can address EPA’s Interim Air Quality Policy on Wildland and Prescribed Fires. The FEIS should also further analyze [sic] the need that project-level NEPA documents for prescribed fire address alternatives that meet the purpose but also minimize smoke and its impact, such as mechanical reduction of fuel build-up and for pre-treatment before burning, limiting the amount burned at any one time, and implementing hazard awareness and mitigation programs for the public.</p>	See Section 4.2.2.5 in the PRMP/FEIS regarding prescribed burns.	
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ89	Section 3.2.2, Baseline Air Quality page 3-4: According to the first sentence of section 3.2.2 of the DEIS, the Vernal Planning Area is “designated as being in attainment” for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. (Section 4.2 begins with a similar sentence. The area technically is “unclassifiable” in the case of PM10 and “unclassifiable/attainment” for other pollutants (see 40 CFR Part 81). Please revise this portion of the DEIS. Also, please revise “air-born” to	<p>Section 3.2.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to make the change(s) as suggested. This section now reads as follows:</p> <p>“The VPA is located in a region designated as unclassifiable for PM10 and unclassifiable/attainment for all other airborne pollutants [See 40 CFR Part 81] (L. Svoboda, EPA Region VIII, 2005).”</p>	X

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			"airborne."		
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ90	Section 3.2.4.2, Criteria for Background Concentrations, pages 3-4 through 3-8: The DEIS presents different data on existing air quality (Table 3.2.1) and background concentrations for modeling purposes (Table 3.2.6). The two tables present data on the same pollutants from different air monitoring stations. In the case of PM10, Table 3.2.1 gives an annual concentration of 3.3 µg/m ³ , while Table 3.2.6 gives an annual concentration of 10 µg/m ³ . Table 3.2.1 gives an annual NO ₂ concentration of 41 µg/m ³ (0.022 ppm) and Table 3.2.6 gives an annual NO ₂ concentration of 10 µg/m ³ (0.005 ppm). Please revise the final EIS to clarify the reasons for using different sources of data.	See comment response AQ68.	
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ91	Section 3.2.4, Regional Air Emissions, page 3-5: This section of the DEIS generally describes the emissions inventory for the planning area. It covers point sources but does not mention such emissions as dust from construction activities and roadways, which were included in the modeling effort according to the Air Quality Assessment Report. Please revise this section to address fugitive dust emissions.	Section 3.2.4 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised. See comment response AQ73 to view the revised text.	X
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ92	Section 3.2.4.2, National Ambient Air Quality Standards, page 3-4: Please revise the reference to NAAQS as "absolute" upper limits. Alternative wording could be: "The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and Utah Air Quality Standards are health-based criteria for the maximum acceptable concentrations of air pollutants at all locations to which the public has access."	Section 3.2.4.2 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to make the change as suggested.	X

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US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ93	Section 4.2.2.4.1.1, Direct Effects of Prescribed Fire and Criteria Pollutants, page 4-10: Please correct the typographical error in identifying carbon dioxide (CO ₂) as a criteria pollutant and include carbon monoxide (CO) as a criteria pollutant that wildland fires and prescribed fires emit.	Section 4.2.2.5.1.1 in the PRMP/FEIS has been revised to make the change(s) as suggested.	X
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ94	Air Quality – Technical Support Document (Air Quality Assessment Report). 1) National Park Service Reference. Please correct the date in the footnote to Table 3-24.	The footnote to Table 3-24 in the TSD has been revised to make the change(s) as suggested.	X
US EPA Region VIII	G-32	AQ95	Air Quality – Technical Support Document (Air Quality Assessment Report). 2) Increment Comparison Results. The value for three-hour SO ₂ under “GMA BLM Sources Only” (Glenwood Springs Management Area) in Table 5-12 differs by an order of magnitude from the corresponding values in tables 5-13 through 5-16 and might be a typographical error. Please check this value and revise if necessary.	The TSD has been revised to make the change(s) as suggested.	X