

Hartman Rocks

Recreation Area Management Plan

Final

**Providing Recreation Opportunities
While Protecting Resources**

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A. Background

The Hartman Rocks area is a popular urban interface recreation area about 2 to 6 miles southwest of Gunnison. Its proximity to Gunnison makes it a handy place for local residents to go for a quick recreation experience close to town after work, after class or when higher elevation recreation sites are still covered with snow. It is estimated that it receives about 15,000 to 20,000 user days each year. Visitors practice a variety of recreation activities including mountain biking, motorcycling, ATV riding, 4 wheeling, rock climbing, camping, trail running, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, dog sledding, hill parties, target shooting, hunting and more. The area also has other resource values that must be considered when contemplating management actions. These include livestock grazing, cultural sites, wildlife habitat and rare plants.

The focused recreation use in this area has led to some benefits and problems. The benefits are that many locals use the roads and trails in this area regularly for a variety of recreational pursuits. Some of the concerns that arise from this recreation use include impacts to soil & vegetation from user created trails, potential impacts to cultural sites, impacts to wildlife from concentrated recreation use, conflicts between recreationists and livestock operations, trespass on adjacent private lands and conflicts between different recreation groups.

The Resource Management Plan (RMP) for this area, prepared in 1993, only provides general guidelines for managing the recreation in this area. The BLM recreation staff along with our partners in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group have taken some steps to manage the area but now feel that use levels have increased to the point that a more detailed management strategy, in the form of a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP), is necessary to more clearly identify the issues and define management goals and actions for the area. We have been a regular participant in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group which includes representatives from the City, County, local homeowners and representatives from various interest groups that use the area. The group has informally discussed and carried out management actions that fit within current management guidelines. It has also helped to organize a variety of volunteer projects to improve the area. The BLM participated in the creation of a Management Plan for the 160 acres of City & County land at the base area back in 1998. That plan coordinated with management priorities on BLM and made some recommendations to be considered when we began to develop a more detailed management plan but it did not identify any specific management decisions that applied to BLM land.

B. The Planning Area

The Hartman Rocks Recreation Area is located from 2 to 6 miles SSW of Gunnison (see map). It contains approximately 8,350 acres of BLM land. The extent of the actual planning area will probably be a bit larger than the area normally identified as Hartman Rocks because some trails are starting to expand out of the core area. These need to be examined and considered during the plan because their use is directly related to the use at Hartman Rocks.

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C. The Planning Process

Due to the popular nature of this area the process for writing this plan has included significant public involvement. We have tried to design a planning process that gives folks who feel strongly about the area plenty of opportunity to participate in the process. It was possible that some management decisions that come out of this planning process could result in an amendment to the RMP. As a result, we started this process off with a Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register just in case we have to do a Plan Amendment. As we progressed through the planning process it appears that a Plan Amendment will not be necessary.

The planning process we will follow includes:

1. Identify issues, concerns, impacts, conflicts, hopes and goals generated over the last 10 years.
2. Preliminary scoping session with Hartman Rocks Group and a variety of interested parties for the area to start to identify issues and goals and determine if a Plan Amendment seems likely.
Completed 9/18/02
3. Prepare Notice of Intent for a possible Plan Amendment and submit to Washington for approval.
Completed early Dec, 2002
4. Receive approval from Washington for NOI and publish in Federal Register. Completed 2/10/03
5. Hold 3 public scoping meetings in Gunnison to gather input on issues, concerns, goals, possible alternatives and recommended actions. We will also try to identify folks willing to work on a core group to help craft these ideas into a workable plan. Meetings held 3/26/03, 4/17/03 and 6/11/03.
6. The Hartman Rocks Planning Group requested that the Southwest Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) sponsor them as a subgroup to help provide balanced input for the BLM. The RAC did support the collaborative planning effort and accepted the Hartman's Planning Group and the Core Team as a subgroup of the RAC on 6/27/03.
7. A Core Group of stakeholders volunteered at the scoping meetings. Their primary interests reflected a broad spectrum of the activities enjoyed by Hartman visitors. They worked under the auspices of the Hartman Rocks Planning Group and meet regularly to work out details and develop well thought out input for the BLM to consider in its preparation of the Management Plan. A BLM representative participated in all these meetings. These meetings were open to the general public but we did not spend time at meetings catching up newcomers on everything that had gone on before. The members of the Core Group included:
 - ★ Mark Fonken – interests include trail running, skiing, shooting & mt. biking.
 - ★ Dan Schuster – interests include motorcycling and vehicle recreation.
 - ★ Bill Maier – interests include hiking, shooting and is an adjacent homeowner.
 - ★ Ken Glover – interests include extreme 4 wheel driving and vehicle recreation.
 - ★ Dave Wiens – interests include mt. biking, family recreation and skiing.
 - ★ Lori Brummer – interests include birdwatching, conservation, mt. biking and family recreation.
 - ★ Jon Turner – interests include motorcycling.
 - ★ Arden Anderson – representing the BLM, interests include hiking, skiing, shooting, birding.
 - ★ Sally Thode – representing the BLM, interests include hiking & skiing.

In all, the Core Group met for 20 meetings (2 hours each) from 6/19/03 to 4/14/04 and several field trips (about 4 hours each) to discuss the variety of issues we had to wrestle with. This adds up to approximately 52 hours of time the Core Group spent discussing the issues and coming up with recommendations or about 350 person hours.

8. The BLM will prepare a draft plan with alternatives based on the discussions with the Core Planning Group. The Hartman Rocks Group, the core working group and the BLM will then sponsor another 1 or 2 public meetings to share the ideas that the group has developed with the general public and get more feedback.
9. The Core Working Group will incorporate any appropriate input from the public meetings into their package and present it to the BLM as their input from a representative group of stakeholders.
10. The BLM will take this input along with all other input it has received during the process and prepare a Recreation Area Management Plan for the area and an Environmental Assessment EA. This will go out for 30 days of public review and comment.
11. Once public comments to the Plan and EA are received and analyzed they will be incorporated as appropriate in the final plan and EA and a decision will be prepared.
12. The final RAMP and the decision document (signed by the Field Manager) are released for a 30-day protest period. If there are no protests then the plan will be final. If protests are received they will need to be dealt with and hopefully resolved.

D. Goals for the Hartman Rocks Recreation Management Plan

- To determine the appropriate boundaries for this intensively used and managed recreation area.
- To provide for a variety of quality recreation experiences while maintaining the integrity of natural and cultural resources (water quality, soils, vegetation, wildlife, etc.).
- To ensure that the area continues to be an asset to the community by providing quality recreation experiences for locals and visitors alike.
- To take positive steps to reduce or eliminate conflicts between different recreation user groups as well as between recreation groups and other land uses or resource values.
- To identify, manage and maintain a formal trail system and eliminate the creation of new trails created without proper design and authorization.
- To design and manage for recreational opportunities that are suitable for visitors with different skill levels.
- As much as feasible, try to accommodate uses that were displaced from the base area (motocross, rock crawling, shooting).
- To determine what informational signage and facilities (if any) are appropriate throughout the area including at entrance points other than the base (McCabe's Lane, Bambi's, the South End).
- To enhance educational efforts with the goal of developing an appreciation for the area's resources, encouraging responsible use, minimizing impacts, fostering stewardship and reducing conflicts between visitors.
- To provide and support more opportunities for volunteers to be involved with the stewardship of the area (work projects, trail days, adopt a trail, volunteer patrols etc.).
- To ensure that recreational use is confined to public land and does not trespass on private land without permission or easements.

- To provide a well thought out plan that can be drawn on as a strong base to write, receive and responsibly administer grants that provide funding that support our management goals for the area.

This is not meant to be a static plan. During the expected 10 to 15 year life of the plan there will be changes in recreational activities, demands and use levels. In this plan we have tried to outline management for the uses that occur now as well as anticipate management needed for some possible future trends. It is certain we will not be able to anticipate all the ways that recreation will change over that time and we want to leave room for recreation management in this area to adapt to these unforeseen changes. Our first priority will be to implement the management actions identified in this plan since these deal with issues and concerns that exist now. As the need arises we will try to address new issues and concerns. If these are not specifically dealt with in the plan these new issues will be evaluated and hopefully resolved in light of the goals outlined above. Such changes and adaptations can be done without going through a formal plan amendment as long as they stay within the general objectives and intent of this plan. Any new ground disturbing activities such as new trail development will have to be evaluated for potential impacts to archeological sites, Skiff Milkvetch, Sage Grouse, wildlife winter range etc. before they could be approved. We do not anticipate frequent changes to management direction here but want to leave the door open for possible adaptations without having to rewrite the plan.

E. Issues and Concerns

Before we can start on a management plan for Hartman Rocks it is important to identify issues and concerns that we should consider and try to deal with as we prepare a plan. To do this we gathered ideas from the resource managers in the BLM, Division of Wildlife, City, and County that might have an interest in the area. We also held several public scoping meetings in 2003 to get input from the wide variety of folks who enjoy this area. **Appendix 1** contains a list of thoughts, ideas, concerns and issues gathered from all those sources. These issues and concerns formed the basis for the plan. They are loosely grouped under general themes but are recorded as we received them without editing.

On that list you can see that few issues enjoy universal agreement. Everyone has a different idea of how they would like to see the area managed. Our challenge in a management plan is to take all of these views into consideration as we craft a strategy that provides the most benefits and the least disadvantages to as many points of view as possible. As a result, it is unlikely that anyone will see 100% of their desires satisfied by the final plan. It is our hope that everyone can keep in mind their goals for the area but also try to understand and respect the goals of others too.

F. Background Information on Key Issues Considered by the Core Group

1. Access and Trespass

Some of the user created routes in the Hartman's area trespass on private land either because the public didn't know where the boundary was or because they didn't care. Our basic philosophy on this issue is that there are plenty of recreational opportunities on public land and the road & trail system for public use should never trespass on private land without the owner's permission. If permission cannot be obtained from the landowner then the road or trail should be blocked and signed to reduce the chance of trespass. If landowner permission can be obtained for public use of the land then we should try to get at least a written permission for the route(s) and identify whatever stipulations the landowners might have for use of their land. This information would be incorporated in the management strategy for the area.

There are a total of 12 known areas where routes trespass on private land. These are listed in clockwise order from the City Wastewater Treatment Plant. For each area we will summarize what is currently known about the situation.

- A. The City Wastewater Plant – a regularly used portion of the lower Luge (trail 12) goes thru this section. The City and County are comfortable with public use on this route. In addition, a little used route goes north from the NW corner of this route along a fence line and exits onto the Wastewater Plant road. In a conversation with Ken Coleman with Public Works that manages the Treatment Plant he indicated that they didn't want recreationists wandering around the facilities at the Plant but if recreationists really felt that access through there was essential then they would be willing to work with us to find a route that met that need. Land east of this fence belongs to Mr. Moncrief though the exact location of the boundary has not been clearly marked on the ground. The existing trail may trespass on private land. The Core Group felt the trail gets little use - mainly by folks who get tired while riding and choose to get out to the highway to head back to town. Given the low demand and uncertain access they felt the route was not necessary and recommended it not be developed as a legal route.
- B. Moncrief Main Ranch – two trails access this property – one from the bottom of trail 12 and the other from the top of the river overlook in Section 16. Trespassers use the bridge across the Gunnison to get over to Highway 50. The Moncriefs have made it very clear that they do not want the public on their land so both of these routes should be closed and signed.
- C. Raisig Property – one trail that accesses Moncriefs first goes through the Raisig property. The owners have been contacted and they made it clear they did not want the public using trails on their land. The trail should be closed and signed at the BLM boundary.
- D. Gunnison Golf Club – the end of the Golf Course Trail (#6) ends up at a fence that the Golf Club has put up to prevent trespassing. They used to allow public access along this route as long as the public stayed on the cart paths to avoid damage to the course. Unfortunately, the public did not honor those wishes and the permission to pass was revoked. The Golf Course trail is a viable riding opportunity but our trail survey showed it was not considered a very desirable trail by bikers or motorcyclists probably because of its out and back nature. Given the lack of access across the Golf Course it must be considered an out and back trail. Signing should seek to discourage trespassing. Some private landowners in the Golf Course area have expressed an interest in gaining access to Hartman's via this route while keeping the public from going the other way. The only way this could happen is if a lockable gate was installed at the boundary and the landowners used a key or combination to get through the gate. We feel it is inappropriate for the BLM to cover the cost of this improvement since it offers no benefit to the general public so the cost would have to be borne by the landowners if the Golf Club permits the improvement.
- E. Khaira Property – Trail 5 accesses a ridge that overlooks the valley. A trail heads northwest along that ridge onto the Khaira property then goes back onto BLM to drop steeply down to the Golf Course Trail. The main attraction of the trail is the view from the ridgeline – mostly on the private property section. The Core Group felt that this was a desirable enough trail that we should pursue access if the landowner is amenable. A letter was sent to the landowner to determine his wishes on the property. In his response, Dr. Khaira has expressed a willingness to grant a permissive easement for public use of their property with the stipulation that the route be restricted to non motorized uses (foot, horse and mountain bike, skiing) only. The trail on BLM is not heavily used but some skilled mt. bikers and motorcyclists use it occasionally. The steepness of the descent makes it likely to cause unacceptable resource damage. It makes sense to at least keep the most desirable section of the trail (along the ridge) open to use. It would be best to relocate the steep downhill section to an alignment that is less likely to erode while trying to maintain its character as an intermediate to advanced trail. This could be an opportunity for an expert route. If the downhill

portion of the trail cannot be improved to avoid unacceptable resource impacts then it should be closed and the Ridgeline section would be maintained as an out and back route. It is important for recreationists to help ensure that use on this route complies with the terms of the easement or we risk losing the easement all together since permissive easements can be revoked at any time. If recreationists are respectful while using the property there may be the possibility of upgrading the easement to be permanent.

- F. Maier Property – two roads about 500 ft. apart go to the top of the ridge near Trail 5. People driving between these 2 roads trespass on the Maier property. Mr. Maier has expressed that he doesn't mind if the public accesses that point on foot or mt. bike but does not want motor vehicles on it or roads created. These stipulations should be honored and management structures should be installed to prevent trespass by vehicles. One option is to keep both roads open but install barriers to prevent folks from driving from one to the other. Another option is to close the southernmost of the 2 roads. This would still allow folks to access the ridge in a vehicle but remove the temptation to traverse the ridge to go down the other road.
- G. Odom Property – there are at least 5 trails that trespass on the Odom property south of the base area. Two in the northern portion get some use and are not currently blocked. One in the middle gets some use and is not blocked. The two in the southern portion have been blocked but still get occasional use. Based on discussions with the Core Group about which of these trails is desirable a letter was sent to Mr. Odom requesting permission to use 2 of the 5 trails (one in the northern section called Sacrifice and the other is in the middle called Bong Hits). Mr. Odom responded that he does not want the public to use his land. Since no access was granted all trails should be blocked and signed as closed.
- H. Spitzmiller Property – trails do not trespass on this property but the public sometimes parks in the large parking area on the property north of the cattleguard at the base of Bambi's trail. There are signs that say "No Parking" but the public doesn't pay attention to them. There is some parking available along the county road south of the cattleguard and this is also used by the public. It is felt that if we developed adequate parking on public land for this trailhead then this would reduce the likelihood of trespass on Spitzmiller's land.
- I. Southern Entrance Road – the road that enters the south end of the planning unit leaves the Gold Basin road and passes through the property of at least 2 landowners (Weaver and Kozlowski) before it enters BLM. This route has always been open to the public so access shouldn't be a problem. It appears that both properties are up for sale so a change in ownership could result in a change of perspective but a strong case for historical use can be made. In the spring we close a gate on BLM to prevent road damage during mud season. Still, damage is done to the road on private land before visitors get up to the gate on BLM. This has the potential to upset the landowners. Discussions with Mr. Weaver indicate he is not willing to put up a gate at the entrance to the road because he fears disgruntled recreationists might damage his buildings or facilities. Discussions with Mr. Koslowski indicate he would be willing to establish a spring closure gate on his property to reduce road damage but additional fence would probably have to be built to prevent visitors from driving around it and causing additional damage. At the very least we could establish a sign at the beginning of the road during spring closures informing visitors that the gate is locked 1 mile ahead. This could discourage them from driving on the road through private lands and causing damage when the road is wet.

- J. Moncrief South Beaver Creek - There are two parcels of land owned by the Moncriefs along South Beaver Creek that have a road or trail trespassing on them. As stated earlier, it is clear that the Moncriefs do not want the public using their land so these routes should be blocked and signed.
- K. Gunnison Pioneer Society Aberdeen Quarry – the Pioneer Society owns 120 acres in South Beaver Creek in the vicinity of the Aberdeen Quarry. Several roads and user created trails cross the area. They want to manage the land to protect the historical features of the area. They are interested in working with us to provide public access to the Quarry site and providing interpretive signs to help the public understand and appreciate the history of the area. Our discussions with them have shown that they are also willing to allow the public to use the land with the following conditions.
- That no new trails or roads will be created without their permission.
 - That visitors do not leave trash, messy fire rings or other debris.
 - That visitors not drive vehicles or ride mt. bikes on the old railroad grade north of the powerline road.
 - That visitors not remove any of the stones from the Aberdeen Quarry area.
 - That visitors not burn or remove any remnants of the historic cabins in the area.
 - That overnight camping stays would be limited to one night.

Failure to abide by these conditions could result in the loss of permission to use the property.

L. Woodward Property – Mr. Woodward owns two parcels totaling 60 acres north of the powerline and near the Enchanted Forest Trail (#20). Maps of the area do not show the full extent of his holdings and the BLM is currently verifying land ownership records to tie down the legal boundaries of his property. He is aware of the public use on the trail in that area which probably involves about .16 mile (850 ft.) on his property and on the 2 track road which involves about .18 mile (950 ft.) on his property. He is in the process of trying to sell the property which could affect road and trail access. A letter has been sent to Mr. Woodward asking his perspective about public use on these 2 routes. If he grants permission then we could include these routes in some or all of the alternatives with the recognition that these permissions could change if the property changes hands. If he denies permission for public use then the routes would have to be closed.

2. Gunnison Sage Grouse

In 2000 this bird was recognized as a distinct species from the Greater Sage Grouse that occurs in scattered populations in the western U.S. Both species are declining but the Gunnison Sage Grouse has a much smaller range limited to southwest Colorado and a small portion of southeast Utah. This range has been shrinking over the years and the population of the bird in the remaining habitat has also been declining. The Gunnison Basin has the largest remaining population of this sensitive species estimated at only 3800 birds. The Gunnison Sage Grouse is classified as a candidate species under the Federal Endangered Species Act and it is likely it will be proposed for listing in September of 2005. In order to develop a strategy to stop and hopefully reverse the decline of this species in the Gunnison Basin a Sage Grouse Working Group has been formed. They have gathered the available data, identified key issues & concerns and identified appropriate management goals & actions to help protect the species.

The Hartman Rocks area includes habitat for this scarce species. Current levels of recreation use here have probably pushed the bird out of some suitable habitat. It is essential that the needs of this species are considered as we develop a management strategy for recreation to ensure we are not contributing to the further decline of the species. Failure to take positive steps to protect the bird and its habitat could help convince the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service of the need to list the bird as threatened or endangered. If that happens it is likely that the law will require more severe controls on recreation activities in suitable

habitat. So it is clearly in the best interest of the grouse and public land recreation to do what we can to protect the species.

To be able to survive, Gunnison Sage Grouse need proper habitat to breed (called leks), to nest, to raise their young and to survive the harsh winters. These activities can happen in different habitats but disruption or disturbance of the birds in any of the habitats can increase the chances for population decline.

Leks or strutting grounds are generally open areas with low vegetation so the birds can see and hear each other clearly along with any predators that might be trying to sneak up on them. Leks are typically used in the early morning from mid March to mid May though they can sometimes be used in the evenings. There are only a few places in the Gunnison Basin that have just the right conditions to serve as a lek. Some of those have already been lost due to such things as development and disturbance. It is essential to protect the few that remain. The birds are very sensitive during strutting and any human activity or noise can cause them to abandon the lek for the day. This reduces the breeding success of the birds. If they are chased from the lek often enough they could abandon it altogether. The critical period for lek activity is March 15th to May 15th each year.

Nesting & Early Brood Rearing Habitat generally occurs within stands of taller sagebrush (16 inches or more) with good coverage of grasses and forbs below the sage. About 50% of the hens nest in appropriate habitat within 2 miles of the active leks. Therefore minimizing disturbance to suitable nesting habitat within the 2 mile radius is a priority. The recently adopted Rangewide Conservation Plan extends the protective radius around leks to 4 miles which contains about 80% of the nest sites. Suitable habitat outside that area is also used by some hens and should be considered. Sage Grouse are very sensitive to disturbance while on the nest. It doesn't take much disturbance to make them abandon the nest completely. Nesting and early brood rearing usually occurs from April 15th to July 1st.

Brood Rearing Habitat generally occurs in riparian areas, meadows and the interface between sagebrush and wet meadows. These areas provide high protein foods to enable the young to grow faster and prepare for winter. The birds are generally more mobile during this time. Regular activity in suitable brood rearing habitat could displace birds from the area, limiting their ability to obtain high quality food. This could reduce their fitness going into the winter and threaten their chances of surviving. Brood rearing habitat is most important from July 1st to August 31st.

Winter Habitat is essential both to offer adequate food sources and to provide hiding & thermal cover. The deeper the snow gets in winter the more critical this habitat is for their survival. The best areas for grouse in the winter are drainages with large sagebrush, south and west facing slopes with good sagebrush, mesa & ridge tops and relatively flat & low sites with sagebrush. Like many wintering animals, if they are disturbed too much during the winter they will have to use up essential fat reserves to escape. This can threaten their survivability if their fat reserves run out before the winter is over. Areas that are not often used by grouse in a light to moderate winter may be very important to them in a winter with a deep snowpack. The most critical time for winter habitat is December 1st to March 15th.

3. Skiff Milkvetch (Astragalus microcymbus)

This is a sensitive plant species that occurs only in a very limited range in the dry slopes around South Beaver Creek southwest of Gunnison. Detailed inventories have identified a number of areas where actual plants occur. Surface disturbance in these areas must be avoided to reduce the chances of

impacting the plant. The Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Gunnison Basin established the South Beaver Area of Critical Environmental Concern to protect this plant in 1993. It required vehicles to stay on designated routes to avoid impacts to the plants and named most of the existing roads in the area as designated routes. Since then some unauthorized routes have been created that impact known Skiff Milkvetch populations. These impacts must be addressed in the Hartman's Recreation Mngt. Plan.

4. Big Game Winter Range

This term defines lands in this area that are critical for Elk, Deer, and Pronghorn during the winter. In the winter, food plants for these species are scarce and the nutritional value of the plants is reduced. As snow covers the vegetation at higher elevations big game herds migrate down to lower elevations to try to find food plants that haven't been covered by snow. The deeper the snow the less land is available as winter range and big game herds are concentrated on smaller patches of critical winter range. If there is human use on these limited areas of winter range the animals will feel threatened and will likely have to expend extra energy to escape. All of the Hartman Rocks area has been identified by the Colorado Dept. of Wildlife as Critical Winter Range for big game. These areas are particularly critical during heavy snow years (perhaps 1 in 10 years) because more animals are trying to feed on very limited habitat in the lower elevations. This means that the vegetation needs to be managed to maintain the forage that animals rely on. Winter recreation activities by people and their pets must be managed in a way to allow some safe areas for wildlife to occupy without being disturbed. In rare years when snowfall is heavy enough it could be necessary to restrict all human use to allow animals to make use of the critical winter range without disturbance.

5. Archeological Resources

These are common in the Hartman Rocks area in the form of lithic scatters where stone tools were made, campsites and other remains of past civilizations. Some sites in the area are very significant because they date back more than 5,000 years. Federal law demands that any surface disturbing project contemplated on federal lands must first be evaluated to be sure that it does not negatively impact these archeological resources. Based on past surveys in the 8,375 acres of the Hartman Plan Area about 1,270 acres (15%) have been evaluated for archeological resources. A total of 61 sites were found. This suggests a site density of about 31 sites per square mile and the possibility of about 403 sites in the planning area. All of the officially recognized trails and most of the roads in the area have been evaluated for archeological resources. In some cases existing trails have been rerouted to avoid known archeological sites. Any existing roads or trails that have not been surveyed for archeological resources must be evaluated and cleared before they can be considered for inclusion in the official transportation network. Any new routes proposed by this plan or reroutes of existing trails must also pass the same sort of evaluation before they can be approved.

6. Livestock Grazing

This has been a long established use in the Hartman Rocks area and will continue to be one of the multiple uses of the area. There are 2 main pastures in the area that are grazed for a short time (10 to 14 days) in the spring of most years which is also a busy time for recreation. Each pasture is not grazed (rested) periodically to allow the vegetation to recover. A number of fences and water developments have been constructed in the area to help manage the grazing activities. These serve to keep animals in specific areas and encourage more even grazing. Problems can occur when gates are left open or fences are damaged by recreational use. This can allow cattle to move into public land pastures that are being rested or trespass onto private land. Livestock tends to walk on the same roads and trails used by recreationists. As a result, cows are often pushed along these routes by recreation use. This can have the effects of separating cows from their calves, decreasing weight gain and making it hard to keep livestock evenly distributed to achieve proper forage utilization. Grazing use is managed under the terms of an allotment

management plan that is tailored specifically to the area and its resources. As a result, this recreation area management plan will not deal specifically with grazing management. We will, however, look for ways to reduce the potential for conflicts between recreationists and ranchers.

7. Transportation System

There are a variety of roads and single track trails that cross the planning area and form the basis for public access and many recreation opportunities in the area. Some of these have been officially planned, designed and constructed in a way that provides access while minimizing impacts to resources. Many more have been pushed in by the public without authorization from the BLM. These routes were often created with more emphasis on providing recreation activities but without much understanding of sustainable design or the resource impacts they might cause. This sometimes results in inappropriate impacts to soil, vegetation, wildlife, archeological sites etc. Poorly designed trails, such as those located in drainage bottoms, often are more easily damaged by storms or regular use and require more maintenance to keep them in usable shape.

Route Density - One of the factors that we need to consider in managing transportation and recreation is route density. This is important for several reasons. The first would be the total amount of soil and vegetation impacted by travel routes. A road typically denudes about 1.7 acres per mile while a single track trail denudes about .25 acre per mile. Another consideration is the effect these routes have on wildlife use in the area. Recreation use usually displaces wildlife from a corridor on either side of roads and trails. The width of this corridor varies from species to species. For example, a smaller species like a chipmunk will feel threatened and may run from a person if they are using a trail 25 feet away. Further than that and the species feels less threat and is less likely to be displaced. A larger animal like a deer or pronghorn may run away from someone using a road or trail 100 to 150 yards away. We don't have detailed studies on every species at Hartman's to know exactly how they are affected by routes but an example from another study can give you an idea of the cumulative effect of roads and trails on wildlife. While elk are not usually found in this area some studies of the effects of road density and recreation use on elk in other areas showed that a road density of 3 miles of roads per square mile of habitat reduced elk use in the area by 50%. When road density reached 6 miles of road per square mile elk abandoned the area completely. Other factors that can affect the equation include:

- ★ Frequency of Use - if an animal only sees one or two people per day on a trail they will be startled and run but it won't be frequent enough to make them abandon the area. If they see 50 or 100 people per day it is likely that they could be stressed enough to make them abandon the area completely.
- ★ Noise - the noisier the activity the wider the corridor around the route that animals avoid.
- ★ Hiding Cover - the easier it is for an animal to hide from the visitor the less likely they are to be chased out of the area. This could reduce the size of the corridor along a route for that species.
- ★ Dogs - some dogs leave wildlife alone while others chase wildlife regularly but all dogs are perceived as predators by wildlife. When dogs accompany recreationists it significantly increases the width of the corridor that wildlife avoids along a route.
- ★ Speed – some species are less disturbed by fast moving vehicles (e.g. along a highway) than by slow moving vehicles. Some species are the other way around.
- ★ Inside or outside a vehicle – most animals are afraid of people and will be more likely to run if they see people (hikers, bikers, motorcyclists, ATV, skiers etc.) than if the people are enclosed in a car.

The 13 square miles in the planning area currently contain about 130 routes that measure about 80 miles in length. If we look at this system strictly in terms of how much soil and vegetation it disturbs it would total about 78 acres of denuded ground or less than 1% of the planning area. But if we factor in the

avoidance corridors for a deer of 100 yards on either side of these routes it adds up to 5,818 acres or 70% of the planning area that is unlikely to be used by that species.

Vehicle Designations - The BLM has vehicle designations which are meant to define how vehicles can be used on public land. For many years the designation for this area was “Open” which allowed the public to drive anywhere they wanted, on or off the roads, as long as they were not causing resource damage. In 1993, as part of the Resource Management Plan for the Gunnison Basin, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) was established along South Beaver Creek to protect the Skiff Milkvetch mentioned above. The vehicle designation for this part of the area was changed to “Limited to Designated Routes” to prevent vehicles from driving off the roads and carelessly impacting this rare plant. This designation pertained to full sized vehicles, ATVs and motorcycles but did not apply to mountain bikes. This eventually caused problems because new routes were created by mountain bikers and other vehicles followed these new routes and caused additional impacts to the Milkvetch. One of the needs brought out in the planning process was to make sure that designations dealing with the creation and use of routes apply equally to all user groups.

In 2001 the vehicle designations for the remaining portions of the planning area, along with all the other “Open” areas on BLM, were changed to “Limited to Existing Routes”. This was necessary because the increase in recreation use, the changing technology in recreation equipment, the increase in new routes being created all were resulting in unacceptable resource impacts. The designation basically said it was no longer acceptable or legal to drive cross country, ride off the existing routes or create new routes without authorization from the BLM. This time the rules included mountain bikes among the uses that must comply with the regulations.

This change in designation wasn't considered a final solution because there were many user created routes that weren't necessarily viable because of poor design, resource damage, trespassing etc. Instead, it was considered an interim measure to keep the situation from deteriorating more until a more detailed route by route analysis could be done to evaluate and decide which routes really made sense to include in a well managed and maintained transportation system. It is our hope that this plan will provide a platform to do this route by route analysis of the Hartman Rocks roads and trails so we can identify a sustainable network of routes that support diverse recreation opportunities while minimizing impacts to resources. In our evaluation, the Core Group tried to look at each route weighing the recreation values it offered and the impacts it caused. Notes on each route that helped us make our decisions and recommendations are contained in Appendix 2.

Spring Closures - It is typical for the BLM and the County to close the gates to the area for 3 to 5 weeks each spring once the snow starts melting to let the roads dry out. This type of spring closure occurs on many roads in this area and has been a regular practice for many years. It is based on a decision in our Resource Management Plan as a way to address the excessive damage that is done to roads if the public drives on them when they are very wet. This type of irresponsible behavior creates huge ruts that are made worse as the water from snowmelt runs down them. Along with damaging the road the erosion increases sedimentation in streams and causes a variety of other problems. We have over 3000 miles of roads on BLM lands in this area. Each year we get enough money to do maintenance on 20 to 30 miles. We clearly can't allow roads to be torn up indiscriminately because we don't have the funding to fix the damage. If we can't fix the damage then the rest of the public is shut out of these damaged roads because their vehicles can't negotiate the deep ruts that develop. If they do try to use the roads they end up having to create a completely new path to the side of the existing road to avoid the ruts. This results in more damage to soils and vegetation. In some areas the road has widened to 3 or 4 times the width of the original roads as people try to drive around problem spots.

Our goal is to open the roads as soon as they dry out but it is necessary to close them for awhile each spring. We try to educate the public about the need for these closures with articles in the paper when we implement the closures each spring. Some folks understand and even call us up to let us know that one road or another is starting to get rutted and it is time for us to close the gate for the spring. Other folks are frustrated whenever they are told they can't do something and may not try to understand the reason why the closure is necessary.

When we close a gate in the spring it is to protect the whole road system that may extend for 5, 10 or even 20 miles beyond the gate and gain 1000 feet or more in elevation. The public is sometimes frustrated when they pull up to a gate with a sign that says "Closed to prevent damage during wet conditions". They look just beyond the gate and see that the road is dry. They think the closure is excessive or kept on too long because the road they can see is dry. Unfortunately they are not thinking about the rest of the road they can't see which is still very wet and could be easily damaged if traffic was permitted through.

This is often the case at Hartman Rocks. Some of the roads and trails in the lower part of the area are dry and could be ridden without damage but there were still some roads in the higher parts of the area that are wet and would be damaged by traffic. In an attempt to reduce this type of frustration we have installed some intermediate gates in the area. This allows us to open the gates to the lower trails when they are dry but still restrict access to the higher roads that may not have dried out yet.

At this time the rules on spring closures only affect motorized vehicles though some motorcycles and a few full sized vehicles violate the closures each year. We have asked for voluntary cooperation from mountain bikers to respect the closures but have not gotten much cooperation.

Management Implications of Transportation Issues - There are several management implications suggested by these issues in light of our overall goals of offering recreation opportunities while minimizing impacts to other resources.

1. The current system of roads and trails and the use that occurs on them has already reduced the amount of wildlife habitat and wildlife use for some species in the area.
2. It may be better to concentrate recreation use in the future to areas that have already been impacted rather than spreading out to impact new areas.
3. An ever expanding system of roads and trails would further erode the area's capacity to support wildlife species. It would be best to halt the haphazard creation of new routes by recreationists since these are more likely to cause unacceptable impacts to wildlife and other resources.
4. New routes can be considered but should be evaluated in terms of how well they meet the goals mentioned above.
5. Any proposed new routes should be designed through a cooperative effort between the BLM and recreationists to ensure both a good recreation experience and minimal impacts to resources.
6. Routes that are unpopular, little used, heavily impacting, trespassing on private property or that duplicate other routes should be eliminated. The problems on some routes can be avoided by maintenance, erosion control, rerouting and other means.
7. Vehicle designations for the area should also outline the rules for mountain bikes.
8. Proper maintenance of routes is essential to maintain a good recreation experience and reduce resource impacts. The BLM's ability to adequately maintain routes is very limited. It doesn't make sense to develop a road & trail system that is beyond our ability to maintain. Cooperative efforts between the BLM and recreationists can extend our trail maintenance capabilities.
9. The rules on spring closures need to apply to mountain bikes as well as to motorized vehicles.

10. Education of the visitors is essential to help them understand the reasons behind the rules that we have, encourage their cooperation and reduce the impacts of their visits from factors that they have control over such as noise, dogs and trail proliferation.

In the plan we tried to identify all the transportation routes that currently exist in the area and portray them on a map with number labels on each. We broke them down into 3 main categories:

★ **Roads and Trails that will remain open in all alternatives.** These include Trails T2 – T5 and T7 through T23 (total 20.72 miles) and Roads R1 through R44 (total 31.61 miles) = 65 routes for 52.33 miles. **See Appendix 3 for more information on these routes.**

★ **Roads and Trails that will be closed in all alternatives.** These include:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
A1	Water Treatment Outlet	1	.13 mi.	Possible trespass, unnecessary, little use
A2	River Trail	1	.93	Trespasses without permission
A7	None	1	.18	Steep and eroding, unnecessary
A10	None	2	.46	Deadends at fence, erosion, unnecessary
A11	None	2	.08	Unnecessary
A12	None	2	.15	Unnecessary, gets no use
A13	None	1	.15	Unnecessary, archeological site
A14	None	1 & 2	.15	Unnecessary, little use
A16	Sacrifice	1	.21	Trespasses without permission
A17	East Trail	1	.35	Trespasses without permission
A19	Middle Luge old route	1	.24	Archeological site, reroute exists
A22	Old kids motorcycle loop	1	.39	Replace with terrain park
A23	None	1	.20	Illegally created to avoid spring closure
A27	None	2	1.04	Illegally created in ACEC, currently closed
A29	None	2	.33	Unsafe at shooting area, redundant
A32	None	1	1.3	Illegal, replace with terrain park
A34	None	2	.15	Redundant
A35	None	1	.17	Redundant
A41	None	1	.13	Redundant
A42	None	1	.10	Redundant, unnecessary
A44	None	1	.29	Trespasses without permission
A45	None	1	.17	Trespasses without permission
A47	None	1	.24	Reroute makes it unnecessary
A48	None	2	.05	Unnecessary
A50	None	2	.44	Impacts Milkvetch population
A51	None	1	.57	Trespasses without permission
A52	Old Railroad Grade	2	.89	Trespasses without permission
A54	Powerline maint. access	2	.10	No Rec. values (open to WAPA for maint.)
A60	None	2	.14	Redundant, unnecessary
A61	None	1	.44	Unnecessary, little use
A62	None	2	.14	Unnecessary, little use
A63	None	2	.16	Unnecessary, little use
(but leave adequate space for folks to park there if they want to camp).				
A68	None	2	.24	Trespasses on private, redundant
A69	None	1	.34	Redundant, impacts archeological site
Total = 34 routes (14 roads & 20 trails)		Total Mileage = 11.25 miles (4.37 mi. roads, 6.88 mi. trails)		

- ★ Uncertain Routes that could be open or closed depending on the goals of the alternatives. The status of these routes will be outlined in each alternative.

Appendix 5 contains notes on these routes that the Core Group generated in their discussions about transportation. In some cases we identified the need to reroute some trails to avoid impacts to resources. In most cases the reroute would have to be completed before the route is considered open and legal to use.

With these and other factors in mind we have come up with several alternatives for management for the public to consider.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-160-2005-016 EA

PROJECT NAME: **Hartman Rocks Recreation Area Management Plan**

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T 48 and 49 N, R 1 W

APPLICANT: This plan was developed by the BLM with extensive input from public participants.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS: See **Appendix 1** for a list of issues and concerns generated by the public in several public scoping meetings, by the BLM, the Division of Wildlife, the City of Gunnison, Gunnison County and other interested parties.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Background : The Hartman Rocks area is a popular urban interface recreation area about 2 to 6 miles southwest of Gunnison. Its proximity to Gunnison makes it a handy place for local residents to go for a quick recreation experience close to town after work, after class or when higher elevation recreation sites are still covered with snow. It is estimated that it receives about 15,000 to 20,000 user days each year. Visitors practice a variety of recreation activities including mountain biking, motorcycling, ATV riding, 4 wheeling, rock climbing, camping, trail running, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, dog sledding, hill parties, target shooting, hunting and more. The area also has other resource values that must be considered when contemplating management actions. These include livestock grazing, cultural sites, wildlife habitat and rare plants.

The focused recreation use in this area has led to some benefits and problems. The benefits are that many locals use the roads and trails in this area regularly for a variety of recreational pursuits. Some of the concerns that arise from this recreation use include impacts to soil & vegetation from user created trails, potential impacts to cultural sites, impacts to wildlife from concentrated recreation use, conflicts between recreationists and livestock operations, trespass on adjacent private lands and conflicts between different recreation groups.

Proposed Action and Approved Plan:

Of the 4 alternatives for management considered in this plan the proposed action represents the mix of management goals and actions that provide the best balance between providing quality recreation experiences and protecting the areas resources. The goals and actions outlined draw heavily from those developed for Alternative 3 in the draft plan. But based on public comment on that draft plan and analysis by BLM resource specialists some components of Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 have been incorporated in the proposed action to make the best plan.

Alternative 3 with modifications – Proposed Action and Approved Plan

General Philosophy – This Alternative would manage for a diversity of recreation uses in a way that seeks to improve the recreation experiences for visitors within the area that is currently used intensively by recreationists. Recreation use would not spread out geographically but could expand somewhat within the planning area to help us meet our goal of improving visitor experiences.

Recreation Management – We would manage Hartman Rocks as an urban interface recreation area that receives moderate to heavy use primarily by local residents. We would do our best to understand the factors that contribute to positive recreation experiences for each activity group and manage for those values as much as possible. Reducing the resource impacts caused by recreation will be important both to meet our legal requirements and to maintain a healthy, natural setting for recreation. Intensive recreation use and management will largely stay within the boundaries of the planning area and not expand beyond those boundaries. Recreation management will attempt to be more proactive by identifying problems while they are small and hopefully easier to resolve. We will open active dialogues with the visitors at Hartman’s including periodic surveys to keep track of how well their expectations are being met.

Resource Impacts - General - The primary focus for this alternative is to manage a variety of recreation uses in a way that tries to increase visitor satisfaction while meeting our legal requirements to protect the area’s resources. The integrity of natural resources plays a major role in visitor satisfaction and the long-term sustainability of recreation use in the area. We can take steps to understand the impacts caused by recreation and take reasonable steps to reduce them. We should identify the resources that are most vulnerable to recreation impacts, identify the critical areas for those resources, understand the parameters that compromise those resources and search for ways to manage recreation so it minimizes negative impacts to these values.

Soils – Soil erosion occurs primarily along roads & trails that are poorly designed, poorly located, poorly maintained or abused when they are wet. Under this alternative the BLM would evaluate the roads & trails for their erosion potential, identify problem areas and improve the situation by performing needed maintenance or relocating the route. Road and trail maintenance and relocation would be increased and would be accomplished by BLM employees, volunteer groups working with the BLM and by contract labor. If the problems cannot be reasonably fixed or rerouted around the problem the route may be closed completely. Spring closures would be continued to minimize impacts to soils when they are most vulnerable.

Vegetation – The unique population of the Skiff Milkvetch must be protected. No roads, trails or other recreation activities would be permitted to disturb known populations with the exception of Road 44 which was identified as a designated route in the RMP in 1993. Route A31 (Dirty Sock) and A53 (Quarry Drop) will be re-routed to avoid known populations of Milkvetch. Recreation use in suitable habitat

would be limited to facilitate recolonization. The vegetation in riparian areas provides important habitat for nesting birds, big game and other wildlife. These values must be considered as we evaluate the recreation use in those areas. We will take reasonable steps to reduce recreation impacts to vegetation. Areas with healthy sagebrush stands within 2 miles of strutting areas (particularly those near drainages and wet meadows) are important habitat for Sage Grouse and should not receive concentrated recreation use. We will continue efforts to reduce the amount of noxious weeds in the area.

Wildlife and Sensitive Species – The presence of wildlife is an important factor in visitor satisfaction for some recreationists. The resources and conditions necessary to maintain wildlife values will be considered as we plan for recreation management in this area. We will take reasonable steps to reduce recreation impacts to wildlife. Dogs will not be required to be on a leash but visitors will be encouraged to keep their dogs under control to reduce impacts to wildlife. Sage Grouse lek areas would be closed to recreation use From March 15th until May 15th. A seasonal closure will be placed on the Aberdeen Loop during the Sage Grouse brood rearing season (June 15th to August 31st) to avoid impacts to the birds known to use that area. This closure will apply to motorized vehicles and mountain bikes, which are the most common users of this area but can be extended to foot and horse use if those uses increase to the point of becoming a threat to brood rearing in this area. There will also be a seasonal closure to motorized use on Trail A66 (Nine O) from 4/15 to 7/1 each year to reduce potential impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Rock climbing activities will be focused on the main buttresses of Hartman Rocks and discouraged in other locations to reduce impacts to cliff nesting birds such as hawks, falcons and eagles. Even in the main buttresses, a protective zone on either side of known active nest sites will be closed to climbing activities while the nest is active – generally from April 1st through July 31st. See the Rock Climbing section below for more specific details.

Access – We have opened discussions with some adjacent landowners to assess their willingness to permit public trails to cross their land. If they are willing we would work out the details about the type of use, level of development, restrictions etc. that are appropriate for those routes and formalize them in a permissive easement. No routes would be designated, developed or maintained that trespassed on private land without the owner's permission. Any trails found to be trespassing on private land would be closed as soon as practical. Reroutes to keep the route on public land could be considered if the trail makes sense from other points of view. During the life of the plan if landowners change their mind and decide to allow public access on routes that are currently closed we reserve the option of evaluating that route in light of the goals of the management plan and adding that route if it contributes to a quality recreation experience and has minimal impacts to resources. Similarly, if a landowner that has granted public access changes their mind and revokes that permission then the route will be closed and removed from the list of designated routes.

Transportation System – The current travel designations (Limited to Existing Routes in part and Limited to Designated Routes in part) would be modified to be Limited to Designated Routes through the entire planning unit. The official road and trail system would be formally designated, signed so it is clear which routes are open to recreationists and managed so no travel occurred off of those designated routes. The current system of roads and trails was evaluated based on a variety of factors including the amount of opportunities for various skill levels, the opportunities for loop trips of various lengths, safety concerns, crowding, diversity, resource impacts etc. A priority would be placed on avoiding impacts to Sage Grouse, Skiff Milkvetch, Big Game winter range and archeological sites. Desired routes with minimal resource impacts would be recognized as valid. Desired routes that cause unacceptable impacts would be evaluated to see if the resource impacts could be minimized. If impacts can be minimized (by rerouting, erosion control structures, seasonal restrictions etc.) then the route may be included in the system once that mitigation has occurred. If impacts cannot be minimized then the route will not be included in the system. Redundant routes would be closed. Any proposals for new trails would have to be evaluated

with criteria similar to that used for existing routes. No new routes would be created without evaluation and authorization from the BLM. Any routes created without authorization would be closed as soon as practical. Vehicle closure gates would continue to be used to avoid damage on the routes in the spring. Additional vehicle closure gates will be maintained near the power line to allow us to open parts of the area earlier in the season while maintaining closures on southern routes that may still be wet. (**Note: see Appendix 2 for a map of the routes open and closed under this alternative**).

Routes Open in Alternative 3 – Under this alternative the routes that would be designated as open include those open under all alternatives - Trails T2 – T5 and T7 through T23 (totaling 20.72 miles) and Roads R1 through R44 (totaling 31.61 miles).

In addition, the following routes would be open:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 Track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Comments</u>
T6	Golf Course Trail	1	.54 mi.	open to foot & horse traffic only *
A4	Ridgeline Trail	1	.6 mi.	reroute needed, non-motorized only
A5	Fenceline Trail	1	.51 mi.	add drainage
A6	none	1	.7 mi.	with reroute
A8	Freefall	1	.47 mi.	with reroute
A9	none	2	.12 mi.	
A18	Technical Becks	1	.2 mi.	
A20	Josie's	1	1.5 mi.	may need some rerouting
A21	Gateway	1	1.59	reroute necessary in 2 places
A24	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A25	none	1	.26 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A26	none	1	.57 mi.	
A30	Buddy Bear	1	1.23 mi.	probably needs some rerouting
A31	Dirty Sock	1	.74 mi	with mandatory reroute
A33	none	1	.08 mi.	
A36	none	2	.20 mi.	
A38	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A39	Ring Dike	1	1.39 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A40	none	1	.07 mi.	
A43a	Qualifier	1	.17 mi	short difficult loop off Josho's
A46	none	1	.32 mi.	
A49	none	2	.09 mi	
A53	Quarry Drop	1	.40 mi	with mandatory reroute
A56 & A57	Aberdeen Loop	1	4.64 mi.	with seasonal closure 6/15 to 8/31 to motorized & mechanized use for Sage Grouse brood rearing.
A58	Skull Pass	1	.74 mi.	
A59	none	2	.12 mi.	with a sign
A64	none	2	.48 mi.	with landowner permission or reroute
A65	Sawtooth	1	.77 mi.	with fence modification & weed control
A66	Nine Oh	1	.96 mi.	closed to motorized use 4/15 to 7/1
A67	none	2	.46 mi.	

Total = 31 routes Total Mileage = 20.88 miles

Open roads = 50 roads (33.08 miles), Open trails = 45 trails (40.05 miles)

Total designated open routes under Alternative 3 = 95 routes Total Mileage = 73.13 miles which is 81% of the routes we analyzed.

New Routes or reroutes to be created under Alternative 3

- Extreme Jeep Route 1 - .20 mile plus the possibility of another route in Site 2 - .13 mi.
- Ridgeline Reroute - .31 mile
- A6 reroute - .77 mile
- Freefall reroute - .23 mile
- Dirty Sock Reroute - .25 mile
- A53 – Quarry Drop reroute - .35 mi.
- A57 reroute around exclosure - .05 mi.
- Motorcycle Terrain Park – approximately 15 acres with perhaps 1.5 miles of trails
- Total new routes or reroutes – 9 routes covering approximately 3.8 miles**

This results in the following mix of allowed uses:

- Foot only – 0 miles
- Foot & Horse - .54 miles
- Foot, Horse, Mt Bike - .60 miles
- Foot, Horse, Mt. Bike, Motorcycle - 38.91 miles
- Foot, Horse, Mt Bike, Motorcycle, ATV – 0 miles
- Foot, Horse, Mt. Bike, Motorcycle, ATV, Full sized vehicle - 33.08 miles

Routes to be Closed in Alternative 3 – The routes that would be closed include Roads and Trails that will be closed in all alternatives. These are A1, A2, A7, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, A16, A17, A19, A22, A23, A27, A29, A32, A34, A35, A41, A42, A44, A45, A47, A48, A50, A51, A52, A54 (open to WAPA for maintenance), A60, A61, A62, A63 (but leave adequate space for folks to park there if they want to camp), A68, A69. This totals 34 routes and 11.32 miles.

In addition, the following routes would be closed –

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
A3	None	1	.50 mi	To protect wildlife values
A28	Back Door	2	2.32	Unnecessary route within ACEC
A37	None	2	.78	Unnecessary & redundant, dead end
A43	Bong Hits	1	.6	Proliferating trails, low use, Qualifier Loop on top is open
A55	Arden’s	1	1.62	Poor Connectivity, trail proliferation
T6	Golf Course	1	.54	Closed to motorized & Mt. bike use, open to foot & horse

Total = 6 routes Total Mileage = 6.36 miles

Total Closed in Alternative 3 = 40 routes Total Mileage = 17.68 miles

The BLM is still in negotiations with landowners that own portions of the Ridgeline Trail (A4) and Enchanted Forest (T 20) for permissive access easements to cross their property. We are optimistic that this permission will be given but if it is not we will have to close down the portions of those trails that cross private land. In that case, alternative routes would be explored to see if we can find an acceptable reroute to facilitate recreation use without damaging key resources.

If a subdivision and associated pedestrian bridge is developed in the Dos Rios area that provides public access to the bottom end of Trail T6 (the Golf Course Trail) then the basis for our decisions on that trail would change. In that case we would modify our management for Trail 6 to allow for mountain bike access along with foot and horse access but still keep it closed to winter recreation uses. This would be

the most realistic way to deal with increased desirability of a through route for mountain bikers. We would have to work with the developer to establish a closure on the bridge during the winter.

Mountain Biking – Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes. Mountain bikes and other non-motorized wheeled vehicles would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed designated routes. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. Spring closures will be employed each year to minimize damage to roads and trails when they are wet. Mountain bikers will be required to follow regulations governing spring closures. Anyone found riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations.

When we are laying out reroutes we will consult with mountain bikers and motorcyclists to look for opportunities to include some difficult stretches for expert riders. This seems most likely to occur on the Ridgeline reroute, the A6 reroute and the Freefall reroute. More skilled riders and advancing technology in freeride bikes that have more suspension and can handle steeper terrain are resulting in some demand for steep downhill routes. Unfortunately, steep routes have a much higher chance of erosion problems and tend to create more obvious visual scars. As a result, we must walk a careful line when we design more expert routes to try to offer a challenging ride and still avoid unacceptable resource impacts. We can do this by searching for routes with rock or durable soils as a substrate, including extensive features to control water and prevent soil erosion, and designing routes to minimize visual impacts.

Motorized Uses – Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes. Motorized vehicles including full sized vehicles, ATVs, motorcycles, dune buggies, RTVs and any other motorized conveyance would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed, designated routes. The only motor vehicles allowed on single track trails would be motorcycles to ensure that the character of the single track is not changed. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. Spring closures will be employed each year to minimize damage to roads and trails when they are wet. The closures will apply to all motorized vehicles as well as horses, mountain bikes and any other wheeled conveyance. Anyone found driving or riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations. To prevent damage to the system of groomed cross country ski trails this area would be closed to motorized use except snowmobiles once the grooming starts for ski trails. Under this alternative no mud runs or mud bogging would be allowed anywhere in the area due to the heavy impacts to soils caused by this use.

A single rock crawling (extreme 4 wheel drive) course would be created at Site 1 approximately .2 mile in length. It would be signed to let potential users know what to expect and discourage folks with inappropriate vehicles for this difficult route. The course would have to meet the requirements of minimal impacts to resources. No competitive events would be authorized here. Once the course is opened and operating for 2 years it will be reevaluated to see whether it is successful at avoiding resource impacts and safety problems. If no significant problems are found then a second rock crawling course could be developed at site 2.

A terrain park would be delineated for motorcycle and ATV use at Site 1 to attempt to replace the recreation opportunity that was closed off at the base area in 1998. A terrain park uses natural terrain features rather than artificially created features to provide varied riding opportunities on a closed track. An area of approximately 15 to 20 acres near the McCabe Lane entrance to the area (see map) would be delineated by a fence. A parking area for 10 vehicles would be constructed adjacent to the access road. A

gate would provide a single entrance/exit for the area to avoid accidents that could come from multiple entrances. The Terrain Park gate would have to be closed and locked when cows are in that pasture for 7 to 10 days in late May or early June each year to prevent the noise of motorcycle use from scattering cows and disrupting the pair bonding that goes on in that area. This concern will be monitored and could be adjusted in future years depending on the actual effects of the Terrain Park. The Terrain Park would also be off limits along with the rest of the area during spring closures to prevent damage when trails are wet. This area would be closed along with the rest of the area during the winter when ski trails are being groomed. The rest of the spring, summer and fall the gate will remain open.

Within the terrain park we will work with someone experienced in the layout of motorcycle routes to identify a convoluted track system that would provide interesting opportunities for riders but it will not be a moto-cross style track. The vegetation would be removed from this track but the terrain would not be manipulated by constructing artificial jumps or other features. The track will become a designated route and riders will be required to stay on that route. Riding off that route will not be allowed. The creation of additional routes within the park will not be allowed without permission of the BLM. Any unauthorized routes will be closed as soon as practical. An information board would be established at the entrance to the area to convey rules and safety tips to riders. It is anticipated that focused motorized use here will result in some impacts to soils and vegetation. Our goal is to focus those impacts in a confined area. This will provide some riding opportunities for motorcyclists in an area that is more durable rather than suffer the impacts that can come from user created routes causing greater impacts in less appropriate areas. As a result, when this terrain park is available we will close several informal tracks that have developed in other areas. These areas are identified in the routes to be closed. This park is intended to meet local and informal riding needs so no competitive events will be authorized here. The area within the fence of the terrain park will be off limits to shooting activities of any kind.

Hiking/Trail Running – For all Alternatives hikers and runners would continue to have full use of the area year round except in very severe winters when the area could be closed to all recreational uses. Signs and educational materials would strongly encourage this group to use designated trails and avoid wearing in new routes that might be followed by other users and result in resource damage. Opportunities for hikers and dog walkers could be improved by installing a few rustic benches at scenic overlooks or other enjoyable spots around the area. A hiking trail down to the Aberdeen Quarry Historical Site may be considered if permission can be obtained from the Pioneer Historical Society.

Rock Climbing – would be managed as a valid use primarily in the main rocks of the Ring Dike. We would continue to authorize commercial guiding for this activity in the area. We would not encourage climbing in other portions of the planning area. The BLM will not be responsible for the soundness or integrity of bolts placed by climbers. Routes used by climbers will be monitored to evaluate impacts to resources. If unacceptable impacts are found then steps will be taken to reduce these as much as possible.

Climbing areas would be evaluated and monitored for existing and potential bird nesting sites (eagles, falcons, owls, ravens etc). Known nesting areas would be closed to climbers during the nesting season (April 1 through July 31). The extent of the closure will be determined on a case by case basis taking into consideration a variety of factors including visibility, sensitivity of the species to disturbance, height of the nest and climbing patterns of use in the area. Generally a closure could include up to 100 yards on either side of the nest site. The boundaries of the closure will be marked on the ground with signs at the base of the cliff. If a nest site is not occupied by May 15 in a given year the closure on that nest site will be lifted for the rest of that season. If a nest site is not used for 3 consecutive seasons the automatic closure will be lifted. The closure would be reinstated if nesting activity begins again. Given current patterns of use there is one nest area in the northern portion of section 26 that this type of closure seems to be appropriate for. To our knowledge this area is not currently used by climbers.

Winter Use - Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling would be confined to routes that are not likely to cause impacts to wintering wildlife. Grooming for cross country ski routes (both skate & classic) could occur on 15.7 miles of routes when there is enough snow to support grooming. The BLM would work with partners such as the Gunnison Nordic Club or Western State College who would do the actual grooming. Education would be used to try to reduce the impacts to wintering wildlife. Snowmobiling would be allowed only on the designated groomed ski routes and an additional 2 miles of road along the powerline. No snowmobiling routes would be designated south of the powerline to reduce impacts to wintering sage grouse and big game. **See Appendix 2 for a map of the designated routes for ski grooming and snowmobile trails under this alternative.** To prevent damage to the system of groomed cross country ski trails this area would be closed to motorized use except snowmobiles once the grooming starts for ski trails. Winter small game hunting would continue to be allowed in the area but would have to be done on foot, ski, snowshoe or snowmobile once the gates have been closed to motorized vehicles. During severe winters, the area would be closed to recreation if agency (BLM and CDOW) biologists determine that stress associated with winter conditions, combined with disturbance from recreationists, are having serious negative effects on wildlife. Signs and news releases would alert the public at the start of the closure and explain the reasons why it's necessary. Continuing efforts to protect Gunnison Sage Grouse on winter habitat may, at some time in the future, result in potential closure of the Hartman Rocks area to snowmobile use. Such management actions would be part of a larger effort to protect Sage Grouse habitat in the Gunnison Basin and would be subject to public scoping and comment. If such a step is taken it is recommended that infrequent snowmobile use be allowed to continue grooming ski trails.

Other Activities - Horseback riding would be permitted but would be required to follow the spring closure along with motorized and mt. bike use. Regulations requiring compliance with spring closures could be utilized if voluntary compliance is inadequate to minimize impacts. Camping would continue to be allowed but brochures would recommend preferred locations to avoid sensitive areas. Hill parties would continue to be allowed as long as trash and resource impacts are kept to a minimum. Geocaching will be allowed if the target is a natural or virtual feature. No manmade objects may be left on public land for geocaching purposes. Other activities would be evaluated as they arise based on the number of people they may benefit and the potential impacts they could cause to desired recreation conditions and experiences.

Special Events – would be permitted within the regulations and management goals for the area. Events would have to follow the procedures for permits from the BLM and from the City or County as appropriate. Smaller, low impact events are more desirable than larger or more heavily impacting events. Depending on the activity and potential impacts of the event a maximum group size and other stipulations could be employed to minimize impacts to resources. All designated routes will be considered valid and available for use in special events without further environmental analysis. These could be used for events related to mountain biking, horseback riding, running, skiing, snowshoeing and other non-motorized events. Rockclimbing and paintball events would also be valid uses of the area. Motorized events such as motorcycle trials, poker runs and enduros could be considered as long as they don't cause lasting damage to the trail system or inappropriate impacts to the area's resources. We will work to ensure that the routes authorized for events are appropriate for that type of use. We would not issue permits for competitive shooting events or competitive rock-crawling events. We would also not consider competitive events at the Motorcycle Terrain Park. Special events would not have exclusive use of the area and will be managed to ensure continued public access during the event and to minimize negative impacts on other visitors to the area. We will continue to accommodate special events like the Rage in the Sage and the 24 Hour Race. Because we are trying to maintain high visitor satisfaction under this alternative we will favor other special events that help maintain or enhance visitor satisfaction in the area and give low priority to events that will reduce visitor satisfaction. Events that do not require a permit but

have more than 30 participants or have the possibility for significant resource impacts will be required to contact BLM for a letter of authorization that will include appropriate stipulations to minimize impacts.

Promotion - Under this alternative Hartman Rocks will be managed primarily to meet the recreation needs of local residents. The perception of a lack of crowding in recreation settings is a key element in the satisfaction of many visitors. If we want to maintain high visitor satisfaction we do not want to draw too many visitors to the area. Local users will have more of a vested interest in making sure the area is managed in a sustainable way. It will be easier to educate the folks in this area about how to enjoy Hartman's without causing inappropriate impacts or creating conflict with other visitors. We will not go out of our way to attract visitors from outside areas to recreate at Hartman's but we will make information available for visitors that have already arrived in the area. We will discourage media articles outside this area that promote Hartman's as a destination for recreation activities.

Segregating Uses – There would be a minimal segregation of uses under this alternative. Motorized and mechanized vehicles would be required to stay on designated routes. ATVs and full sized vehicles would have to stay on full sized roads and not be allowed on single-track trails. Motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and other motorized or mechanized vehicles would be excluded from Trail 6 (the Golf Course Trail) to reduce disturbance to wildlife in the riparian corridor and provide the only non motorized and non-mechanized route in the planning area. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles other than snowmobiles will be excluded from the area in the winter when ski trails are being groomed to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks. Education will continue to be employed in an attempt to reduce the conflicts between different recreation groups that share the trails.

Signage and Facilities – Facility development would be considered where appropriate to enhance recreational experiences or reduce resource impacts. Several benches will be developed at scenic overlooks to provide a place for visitors to rest and enjoy the scenery. A small parking area (for 8 to 10 vehicles) would be developed on BLM land near the trailhead for Bambi's Trail (#23) to reduce trespass problems on adjacent private land. A parking area will also be delineated at the McCabe's Lane entrance to reduce resource impacts from unconfined parking. Trailhead signs will also be established at these 2 areas. A parking area will also be delineated at the top of Kill Hill. We will try to clearly sign all designated routes so visitors know which routes are legal to travel using Colorado's Interagency Sign Standards. Other signage would be employed as necessary to enhance visitor's understanding and appreciation of the area's resources, to encourage their stewardship & responsible use and to inform them of the rules. The facilities for the motorcycle terrain park, extreme 4WD route and target shooting areas are described under those sections.

Regulations and Enforcement – As mentioned above, the vehicle designation for the entire area would be "Limited to Designated Routes". No travel off the signed, designated routes would be allowed. This designation would apply to all wheeled, mechanized or motorized vehicles including full sized vehicles, ATVs, RTVs, Motorcycles, Dune buggies, Mt Bikes, Snowmobiles, Trail Skateboards and others. Travel routes would also be designated for winter use. **See Appendix 2 for maps of the route designations.** The entire road and trail system can be closed in the spring to all the vehicles mentioned above as well as horses to prevent damage to the roads and trails when they are wet. Intermediate gates will be maintained so that when the lower portion of the area is dry it can be opened up for recreation use while the upper portion continues to dry out. The intermediate gates will remain closed until May 15 to reduce impacts on roads that are slower to dry and also to minimize disturbance to Sage Grouse during the breeding season. The Golf Course Trail (Trail #6) will be closed to motorized and mechanized vehicles yearlong to minimize disturbance to wildlife in that riparian corridor and provide the only non-motorized route in the planning area. The Aberdeen Loop would be closed to all motorized and mechanized uses

from 6/15 to 8/31 to protect Sage Grouse brood rearing values. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles other than snowmobiles will be excluded from the area in the winter when ski trails are being groomed to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks. Some trails will have to be rerouted to avoid resource impacts. These trails would not be open to public use until these reroutes have been completed. The grooming of routes for cross country skiing, snowshoeing and other non-motorized winter activities will be restricted to designated winter routes to minimize impacts to wintering wildlife. In severe winters the entire area may be closed to reduce impacts to wintering wildlife. The target shooting of firearms will be encouraged in 2 locations suitable for that activity. If significant amounts of target shooting occurs outside those areas and poses a safety hazard for other recreationists then target shooting may be restricted to only those designated areas. No shooting will be allowed in the terrain park. Some sections of the cliffs used for Rock Climbing may be closed seasonally to protect cliff nesting birds. There would be increased patrol and enforcement of rules in the area to ensure that we are meeting our management objectives.

Management Common in Alternatives 2, 3 and 4

There were some issues that enjoyed almost universal agreement on what needed to be done and the Core Planning Team agreed that the management actions for these issues should remain the same across all alternatives. **These objectives and actions would become part of the Proposed Action.** These include:

Archeological and Historical Values – By law we must avoid impacts to these values. The designated travel routes in the area that have not been surveyed will be evaluated for the existence of cultural sites. Any sites that are found will have to be mitigated by rerouting or other means. Any new routes that are proposed will also be evaluated for cultural values and discovered sites will be avoided or mitigated.

Trash – Under all alternatives we will work to minimize or eliminate the trash left by visitors and dumped illegally in the area. We will seek citations and fines for those caught dumping in the area.

Shooting – would be permitted in the area but we would install several improvements to try to attract shooters to the safest shooting areas to reduce conflicts and safety concerns for other recreationists. Target frames and backstops will be established to reduce resource impacts from trash and lead contamination. Yardages would be marked, parking areas and a shooting line would be delineated. An information sheet would be developed and distributed at sporting goods stores & other locations to make shooters aware of the designated shooting areas. If these measures are not effective at confining the majority of shooting activity then regulations may be established to require that shooters only use these selected sites. Hunting would continue to be legal in the area but given the heavy concentration of other recreation use it would not be encouraged. No shooting will be allowed within the terrain park. No competitive shooting events would be considered in the area.

Paintball use would continue to be allowed throughout the area but could be restricted along with other uses in the winter. No structures may be built as targets or hiding cover for paintball activities. To reduce conflicts with other visitors paintball shooters will be expected to clean up their trash. If their activities become threatening or intimidating to other visitors they may be restricted to specific areas.

Education – For all Alternatives education will be an essential tool to help us achieve our management goals. We will use a variety of means including signs, brochures, personal contact, articles in the local media, classes, presentations etc. to get our essential messages across. These messages will attempt to

help the public understand and respect the resource values in the area, understand the impacts that can be caused by recreation activities and the steps they should take to reduce the impacts of their activities.

Public Involvement and Stewardship – For all Alternatives we will continue to encourage the public to work with us and get involved in the management and stewardship of their public lands. Volunteer projects will continue to be organized and supported to maintain trails, clean up trash, install signs, encourage responsible use and help implement other management goals.

Cooperation and Partnerships – In all Alternatives we will continue to work closely with the City, County, Hartman Rocks Planning Group and other interested parties to achieve the management goals for the area.

Reducing Conflicts with Grazing – To help ensure proper livestock management we will work to make it clear to visitors the importance of closing gates when livestock are in the pastures. Existing gates will be marked with the dates when closure is necessary to help ensure better compliance. More cattleguards may be installed to reduce the need for visitors to close gates. Education materials will alert recreationists about the negative effects they can have on livestock and suggest ways to avoid those impacts. The McCabe Lane entrance to Hartmans is an important transition area for livestock grazing. That is where cows are moved with new calves from private land onto public land for the first time in the spring. Concentrated or noisy recreation use in the McCabe Lane corridor while cattle are in that area can disrupt the ability of inexperienced calves to reconnect with their mothers. To avoid this impact the Motorcycle Terrain Park will be closed each year during the short time that cows are grazing in that area. This is usually 7 to

No Action Alternative: Alternative 1 - Existing Management

General Philosophy – This alternative will aim to continue the current management that is being practiced by the BLM in this area. It is based on general management guidelines contained in the 1993 Resource Management Plan (RMP) for BLM lands in the Gunnison Basin, ongoing cooperative efforts with the Hartman Rocks Planning Group and other regulations and policies that govern public lands and current management practices for the area.

Recreation Management – Recognizes the Hartman Rocks area as an urban interface recreation area that receives a moderate to heavy amount of use primarily from local residents, strives to maintain or improve the recreation opportunities there but need to take steps to reduce the impacts caused by recreation on other resources. Recreation management would largely be reactive – reacting to impacts and problems after they have reached unacceptable levels. Staff and funding focused on the area would stay relatively low.

Resource Impacts - General – we will continue to take a variety of steps to reduce the impacts of recreation on other resources.

Soils – the BLM will try to work with visitors to reduce and hopefully eliminate the number of new routes created without authorization, continue to maintain gates and implement spring closures to reduce road damage, erosion & sedimentation, maintain closures on a few single track trails that were poorly placed and causing deep soil erosion. Spring closures would be continued to minimize impacts to soils when they are most vulnerable.

Vegetation – Many of the items listed under Soils also reduce impacts to vegetation. The BLM will continue to manage the South Beaver ACEC to protect the Skiff Milkvetch which grows nowhere else in the world. We will also continue our efforts to reduce the populations of noxious weeds in the area.

Wildlife and Sensitive Species – The BLM will continue to try to steer winter use to less critical areas to reduce impacts on big game and Sage Grouse winter range. We will monitor Sage Grouse populations in the area.

Archeological and Historical values – The BLM will do archeological clearances on valid existing routes that haven't been cleared and on proposed routes before they are approved to identify cultural sites. Appropriate steps would be taken to reduce or eliminate recreation impacts on important sites.

Trash – The BLM will continue to regularly pick up trash in the area. We would work with a variety of volunteers on cleanup efforts. We would continue to prosecute illegal dumpers when we catch them.

Access – We have purchased 80 acres near the top of Kill Hill to ensure public access to the area. We feel there are enough opportunities to access the area via public land that we would not pursue other access opportunities through private land. We would continue to close roads or trails that illegally trespass on private land without the landowner's permission.

Transportation System – The single-track trail system is a desirable amenity that we work to maintain and improve. There are a variety of problems due to poor location or poor design including impacts to soils, vegetation, sensitive species, archeological sites, trespass etc. The BLM has performed archeological clearances on some trails and accepted the alignment of some of these trails as valid. We would continue to evaluate the trails system based on a variety of criteria. We would close all trails that were created without authorization in the Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) that protects the Skiff Milkvetch. We would close all trails that were created after January 2001 outside of the ACEC because they were created in violation of the vehicle designations for that area. We would continue to maintain existing closures on trails that have unacceptable resource impacts or that trespass on private land. Under this alternative there would be a total of 51 roads open (34.4 miles) and 57 trails open (44.2 miles of which 18 (11.6 mi.) would be non motorized use only). We would work with a variety of partners to maintain acceptable trails, install signs, clean up trash etc. We would continue to prohibit the creation of new unauthorized trails. In some cases ATVs or full sized vehicles have broadened out single-track trails and converted them to two-track roads. We would continue to sign and patrol these to maintain the integrity of the single-track trail system. New trail construction would be a low priority until we can get the existing trail system in better shape. Once the existing trail system is well maintained we would consider proposals for new trails that enhanced recreation opportunities, were well located & designed and had minimum negative impacts to the area's resources.

The BLM would continue to manage and maintain the current system of legal roads for recreation access and motorized activities. This system includes specific designated routes within the Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) that protects the Skiff Milkvetch. In the rest of the area the routes that were in existence before January 2001 and receiving regular recreation use would be considered valid for use. Some old roads have grown over and are no longer considered existing because of the lack of regular use. These would be signed as closed. We would continue to close unauthorized or newly created routes. Several roads have serious problems with drainage and erosion because of poor location, erodable soils or irresponsible use. We will try to deal with high priority problems with the scarce funding available for road maintenance.

Mountain Biking – would be managed as one of the most popular recreation uses at Hartman’s. Mountain bikers are allowed to use existing roads and trails outside the ACEC but may not travel cross-country or create new trails without authorization from BLM. We would continue to use education, enforcement and closures to prevent the creation of unauthorized routes. The rules for Mt. Bike use are not as clear inside the ACEC. We would continue to permit several outfitters who guide Mt Bike rides at Hartman’s and several competitive events.

Motorized Uses - managed as valid recreation uses within the current vehicle designations for the area. Inside the ACEC, motor vehicles may travel only on designated roads. No motorized vehicles are allowed on single-track trails because none were designated. No cross-country travel is permitted. Outside the ACEC motorized vehicles may use existing roads and trails. These are defined as routes that were in existence as of January 2001 and are receiving regular enough recreation use to continue to be recognized as a route. The only motorized vehicles allowed on single-track trails are motorcycles. ATVs and full sized vehicles may only use the existing roads in the area. No cross-country travel is permitted. Education and enforcement would continue to be used to try to ensure full compliance with these regulations. Rock Crawling use and mud runs are not permitted though rock crawlers have expressed an interest in working with BLM to identify an acceptable course for their activity. Moto-cross type use has been accepted at the gravel pit area to provide at least some opportunity for this activity since they were displaced from the base area but some controls will be necessary to reduce spreading impacts. The current opportunities are not considered to be even marginally acceptable by moto-cross enthusiasts. We have not allowed the area to be modified to improve moto-cross opportunities because of concerns about liability. Temporary closures would continue to be implemented in both zones for a short time in the spring to prevent damage to roads and other resources when they are wet due to spring thaw. Education and enforcement would continue to try to ensure compliance with these closures.

Hiking/Trail Running – managed as valid uses in the area. There would be no restrictions on these activities because there are no significant impacts resulting from them at this time. The BLM would continue to issue Special Event permits for competitive races.

Rock Climbing – would be managed as a valid use primarily in the main rocks of the Ring Dike. We would continue to authorize commercial guiding for this activity in the area.

Shooting – the entire area would be open to hunting and target shooting of rifles, pistols, shotguns and paintball guns. We would continue to try to educate shooters to clean up the mess they sometimes create when they do not remove their targets or shells. We would also use education to try to reduce safety problems created when shooters are not careful in their choice of a shooting area.

Winter Use – the area would generally be open to winter uses including Nordic skiing, snowmobiling, dog sledding and small game hunting. The area is important as critical winter range for big game animals, particularly in heavy snow years, so we would not promote extensive use during the winter. The BLM would continue to grant authorization for various groups to groom a limited system of ski trails, consisting of about 6.5 miles, when there is enough snow. These trails are chosen to avoid important wildlife areas.

Other Activities – a variety of other activities occur in the area including horseback riding, dog walking, camping and hill parties. These activities would continue to be permitted. Education and enforcement would continue to be used to minimize the impacts from these activities.

Special Events – these would continue to be permitted at the discretion of the BLM under our regulations governing Special Recreation Use Permits (SRPs). Special events are evaluated in conjunction with the

City and County since many events use the base area to some extent. Currently we permit several Mt. Bike races and a foot race at Hartman's each year. In the past we have authorized a motorcycle Enduro event and the Police & Fire Games. We will try to ensure that the routes authorized for events are appropriate for the proposed type of use.

Promotion – the BLM would not actively promote the area or try to encourage more users to visit. We will offer a variety of information through free brochures and our website so that people who would like to visit can find the information they need. We are willing to work with private parties who are working on guidebooks, articles or other commercial endeavors to be sure the information they are portraying about the area is correct.

Segregating Uses – the only segregation of uses outlined under this alternative are those mentioned under Motorized Use – vehicles must stay on designated routes in the ACEC, on existing routes in the rest of the area and motorcycles are the only motorized vehicles allowed on single-track trails.

Signage and Facilities – outside of the roads, trails, fences, gates and cattleguards the BLM does not have many facilities in the area. We would continue to install and maintain a variety of signs including an orientation sign at the Base Area, trail markers indicating what uses are allowed on recognized trails, ACEC signs and closure signs.

Regulations and Enforcement – many of the rules and regulations have been outlined above as they apply to specific activities. Permanent and seasonal staff for the BLM would continue to patrol at Hartman's to educate visitors and detect problems. If we discover violations of rules and regulations we would continue to issue citations, collect fines and ask for community service that is often focused on improving the area.

Education – through signs, brochures and personal contact we will continue to help visitors understand and appreciate the area and encourage them to use it responsibly by minimizing their resource impacts and reducing conflicts with other visitors.

Public Involvement and Stewardship – through the partnerships mentioned above we will continue to try to get the public involved with management of this area. We would continue our volunteer projects doing cleanup, sign installation and trail maintenance to help the general public develop a sense of stewardship toward the area.

Cooperation and Partnerships – the BLM would continue to be a regular and active participant in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group. We would continue to cooperate with individuals & groups willing to volunteer to work on the area.

Reducing Conflicts with Grazing Operations – Livestock graze in several pastures in the area for about 10 to 14 days in most years in a rest-rotation system. When gates are left open by recreationists livestock may move into areas that are being rested to help them recuperate. We have installed and would continue to maintain a number of cattleguards to reduce the number of gates that recreationists have to open and close. We will place some stipulations on special events that occur while cattle are grazing in the area to reduce the chance of conflict. We will continue to foster discussions between recreationists and the rancher to be sure we understand the issues and concerns related to this topic.

Other Alternatives:

Alternative 2 - Resource Protection

General Philosophy – This alternative will manage for a variety of recreation opportunities in a way that places a high priority on maintaining the integrity of natural resources (soil, vegetation, wildlife, cultural sites etc.) in the area and reducing the negative impact of recreation use on those resources.

Recreation Management – We recognize the area as an urban interface recreation site that will continue to receive moderate to heavy use primarily from local residents. We want to avoid sacrificing the integrity of the area's resources to accommodate recreation demands. A healthy natural setting is an important factor in the desirable recreation experience of many visitors. A balance must be sought between accommodating recreation use and protecting the integrity of the resources. Intensive recreation use and management will stay within the boundaries of the planning area and not expand beyond those boundaries. Management of recreation will attempt to be more proactive in anticipating potential problems and dealing with them before resource impacts become unacceptable. More staff time and funding will be sought to help ensure we are implementing the plan.

Resource Impacts - General – The primary focus for this alternative is to manage a variety of recreation uses in a way that minimizes impacts to other resources in the area. Resource impacts are expected with any human activity on the land and we cannot avoid all impacts. We can take significant steps to understand the impacts caused by recreation and work to reduce them as much as possible. We should identify the resources that are most vulnerable to recreation impacts, identify the critical areas for those resources, understand the parameters that compromise those resources and search for ways to manage recreation so it doesn't threaten these values.

Soils – Soil erosion occurs primarily along roads & trails that are poorly designed, poorly located, poorly maintained or abused when they are wet. Under this alternative we would evaluate the roads & trails for their erosion potential, identify problem areas and improve the situation by performing needed maintenance or relocating the route. If the problems cannot be reasonably fixed or rerouted around the problem the route may be closed completely. Spring closures would be continued to minimize impacts to soils when they are most vulnerable.

Vegetation – The unique population of the Skiff Milkvetch must be protected. No roads, trails or other recreation activities would be permitted to disturb known populations with the exception of Road 44 which is long established and designated route through a known population. Route A31 (Dirty Sock) and A53 (Quarry Drop) will be closed because they directly impact Milkvetch populations. Recreation use in suitable habitat would be limited to facilitate recolonization. The vegetation in riparian areas provides important habitat for nesting birds, big game and other wildlife. These values must be considered as we evaluate the recreation use in those areas. Areas with healthy sagebrush stands near strutting or nesting areas (particularly those near drainages and wet meadows) are important habitat for Sage Grouse and should not receive concentrated recreation use. We will continue our efforts to reduce the populations of noxious weeds in the area.

Wildlife and Sensitive Species – There are a number of wildlife values in the area that can be affected by recreation. Chief among these are the Gunnison Sage Grouse, big game winter range, Pronghorn Antelope, nesting raptors along with a variety of other values. The resources and conditions necessary to maintain these wildlife values will be given priority as we plan for recreation management in this area. Dogs can be very disruptive to wildlife so in this alternative we will educate visitors about the importance

of controlling their pets to reduce these impacts. Sage Grouse lek areas would be closed to recreation use from March 15th until May 15th to minimize disturbance to the birds during the critical breeding season. A seasonal closure will be implemented on the Aberdeen Loop during the Sage Grouse brood rearing season (June 15th to August 31) to avoid impacts to the birds. The Golf Course Trail (#6) would be limited to non-motorized use only (foot, horse, mt. bike) to reduce noise and disturbance on birds that nest in the riparian corridor. Rock climbing activities will be focused on the main buttresses of Hartman Rocks and discouraged in other locations to reduce impacts to cliff nesting birds such as hawks, falcons and eagles. Even in the main buttresses, a protective zone on either side of known active nest sites will be closed to climbing activities while the nest is active – generally from April 1 through July 15th. See the Rock climbing section below for more specific details. Motorized use in the winter would be eliminated once snow gets deep enough to allow grooming for ski trails except for the snowmobile used to groom trails. See the Winter Use section for more details.

Access – No trails would be designated or developed that trespassed on private land without the owner’s permission. Any trails found to be trespassing on private land will be closed as soon as practical. Access easements are being negotiated on a few trails where owners seemed willing and the planning group felt the trails were valuable additions to the area.

Transportation System – The current travel designations (Limited to Existing Routes in part and Limited to Designated Routes in part) would be modified to be Limited to Designated Routes through the entire planning unit. The official road and trail system would be formally designated and managed so no travel occurred off of those signed, designated routes. The current roads and trails were evaluated based on the diversity of recreation opportunities they offer and the impacts to resources that they cause. A high priority would be placed on avoiding impacts to Sage Grouse, Skiff Milkvetch, Big Game winter range and archeological sites. Desired routes with minimal resource impacts would be recognized as valid. Desired routes that cause unacceptable impacts would be evaluated to see if the resource impacts could be minimized. If impacts can be minimized (by rerouting, erosion control structures, seasonal restrictions etc.) then the route may be included in the system once that mitigation has occurred. If impacts cannot be minimized then the route will not be included in the system. Redundant routes would be closed. Any proposals for new trails would have to be evaluated with criteria similar to that used for existing routes. No new routes would be created without evaluation and authorization from the BLM. Any routes created without authorization would be closed as soon as practical. Vehicle closure gates would continue to be used to avoid damage on the routes in the spring. Intermediate vehicle closure gates will be maintained near the power line to allow us to open parts of the area earlier in the season while maintaining closures on southern routes that may still be wet.

Routes Open in Alternative 2 – Under this alternative the routes that would be designated as open include those open under all alternatives - Trails T2 – T5 and T7 through T23 (totaling 20.72 miles) and Roads R1 through R44 (totaling 31.6 miles).

In addition, the following uncertain routes would be open:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 Track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Comments</u>
T6	Golf Course Trail	1	.54 mi.	<u>open to foot & horse traffic only</u>
A4	Ridgeline Trail	1	.6 mi.	reroute necessary, non-motorized only
A5	Fenceline Trail	1	.51 mi.	
A18	Technical Becks	1	.2 mi.	
A20	Josie’s	1	1.5 mi.	may need some rerouting
A21	Gateway	1	1.59	reroute necessary in 2 places
A24	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A25	none	1	.26 mi.	with archeological mitigation

A26	none	1	.57 mi.	
A33	none	1	.08 mi.	
A36	none	2	.20 mi.	
A38	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A39	Ring Dike	1	1.39 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A40	none	1	.07	leave both entrances to Trail 8 open
A46	none	1	.32 mi.	
A56 & A57	Aberdeen Loop	1	4.64 mi.	with seasonal closure 6/15 to 8/31 to motorized & mechanized use for Sage Grouse brood rearing.
A58	Skull Pass	1	.74 mi.	
A59	none	2	.12 mi.	with a sign
A64	none	2	.48 mi.	with landowner permission or reroute
A65	Sawtooth	1	.77 mi.	with modification of the fence
A66	Nine Oh	1	.96 mi.	but closed to motorized use from 4/15 to 7/1 to protect Sage Grouse nesting
A67	none	2	.46 mi.	

Open roads = 48 roads (32.87 miles), Open trails = 40 trails (36.42 miles)

Total designated open routes under Alternative 2 = 88 routes Total Mileage = 69.32 miles which is 78% of the routes that we analyzed.

New Routes or reroutes to be created under Alternative 2

Extreme Jeep Route 1 - .20 mile

Ridgeline Reroute - .31 mile

A57 reroute around enclosure - .05 mi.

Routes to be Closed in Alternative 2 – The routes that would be closed include Roads and Trails that will be closed in all alternatives (**See table on pg 16**). These are A1, A2, A7, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, A16, A17, A19, A22, A23, A27, A29, A32, A34, A35, A41, A42, A44, A45, A47, A48, A50, A51, A52, A54 (open to WAPA for maintenance), A55, A60, A61, A62, A63 (but leave adequate space for folks to park there if they want to camp), A68, A69. This totals 34 routes and 11.25 miles of routes.

In addition, the following routes would be closed –

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
A3	None	1	.50 mi	To protect wildlife values
A6	None	1	.70	To avoid erosion problems
A8	Freefall	1	.47	To avoid erosion problems
A9	None	2	.12	To avoid erosion problems
A28	Back Door	2	2.32	Unnecessary route within ACEC
A30	Buddy Bear	1	1.23	To avoid erosion problems
A31	Dirty Sock	1	.74	Directly impacts Milkvetch population
A37	None	2	.78	Unnecessary & redundant, dead end
A43	Bong Hits	1	.6	Proliferating trails, erosion
A49	None	2	.09	Unnecessary
A53	Quarry Drop	1	.63	Directly impacts Milkvetch population
A55	Arden's	1	1.62	Poor Connectivity, Trail proliferation
T6	Golf Course Trail	1	.54	Closed to motorized vehicles & bikes
Total = 13 routes		Total Mileage = 10.34 miles		

Total closed in Alternative 2 = 47 routes Total Mileage = 21.59 miles

Mountain Biking – Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes. Mountain bikes and other non-motorized wheeled vehicles would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed, designated routes. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. Mountain bikers would be required to follow regulations governing spring closures on the entire area to avoid damage on trails when they are wet. Anyone found riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations.

Motorized Uses - Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes. Motorized vehicles including full sized vehicles, ATVs, motorcycles, dune buggies, RTVs, hovercraft and any other motorized conveyance would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed, designated routes. The only motor vehicles allowed on single track trails would be motorcycles to ensure that the character of the single track is not changed. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. A single rock crawling (extreme 4 wheel drive) course would be created approximately .2 mile in length. It would be signed to let potential users know what to expect and discourage folks with inappropriate vehicles for this difficult route. The course would have to meet the requirements of minimal impacts to resources. No accommodation would be made for moto-cross, a motorcycle terrain park or mud bogging due to the increased impacts to soils & vegetation caused by those activities. Anyone found driving or riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations.

Hiking/Trail Running – For all Alternatives hikers and runners would continue to have full use of the area except in very severe winters when the area could be closed to all recreational uses to protect wintering wildlife. Signs and educational materials would strongly encourage this group to use designated roads & trails and avoid wearing in new routes that might be followed by other users and result in resource damage. Opportunities for hikers and dog walkers could be improved by installing a few rustic benches at scenic overlooks or other enjoyable spots around the area. A hiking trail down to the Aberdeen Quarry Historical Site may be considered if permission can be obtained from the Pioneer Historical Society.

Rock Climbing – would be managed as a valid use primarily in the main rocks of the Ring Dike. We would continue to authorize commercial guiding for this activity in the area. We would not encourage climbing in other portions of the planning area. The BLM will not be responsible for the soundness or integrity of bolts placed by climbers. Routes used by climbers will be monitored to evaluate impacts to resources. If unacceptable impacts are found then steps will be taken to reduce these as much as possible.

Climbing areas would be evaluated and monitored for existing and potential bird nesting sites (eagles, falcons, owls, ravens etc). Known nesting areas would be closed to climbers during the nesting season (April 1 through July 31). The extent of the closure will be determined on a case by case basis taking into consideration a variety of factors including visibility, sensitivity of the species to disturbance, height of the nest and climbing patterns of use in the area. Generally a closure could include up to 100 yards on either side of the nest site. The boundaries of the closure will be marked on the ground with signs at the base of the cliff. If a nest site is not occupied by May 15 in a given year the closure on that nest site will be lifted for the rest of that season. If a nest site is not used for 3 consecutive seasons the automatic closure will be lifted. The closure would be reinstated if nesting activity begins again. Given current

patterns of use there is one nest area in the northern portion of section 26 that this type of closure seems to be appropriate for. To our knowledge this area is not currently used by climbers.

Winter Use – Nordic skiing and snowshoeing would be confined to routes that are not likely to cause impacts to wintering wildlife. Grooming for cross country ski routes (both skate and classic) could occur on about 12.5 miles of designated routes when there is enough snow to support grooming. The BLM would work with partners such as the Gunnison Nordic Club or Western State College who would do the actual grooming. Once there is enough snow to support grooming operations wheeled vehicles (jeeps, ATVs, motorcycles) would be excluded by closing the spring closure gates to reduce impacts to wintering wildlife and avoid damage to groomed trails. Snowmobiling would not be allowed in the planning area except when used to groom the designated ski routes to avoid noise impacts to wintering big game and Sage Grouse. Winter small game hunting would continue to be allowed in the area but access would have to be on foot, ski, or snowshoe once ski trail grooming starts. During severe winters, the area could be closed to recreation if agency (BLM and CDOW) biologists determine that stress associated with winter conditions, combined with disturbance from recreationists, are having significant negative effects on wildlife. Signs and news releases would alert the public at the start of the closure and explain the reasons why it is necessary.

Other Activities – Horseback riding would be managed as a valid use but would be required to follow the spring closure along with motorized and mt. bike use. Camping would continue to be allowed but some camping sites could be signed as closed to avoid sensitive areas or resources. Hill parties would continue to be allowed as long as trash and resource impacts are kept to a minimum. Geocaching will be allowed if the target is a natural or virtual feature. No manmade objects may be left on public land for geocaching purposes. Other activities would be evaluated based on the number of people they may benefit and the potential impacts they could cause.

Special Events – would be permitted within the regulations and management goals for the area. Events would still have to follow the procedures for permits from the BLM and from the City or County as appropriate. Smaller, low impact events are more desirable than larger or more heavily impacting events. Depending on the activity and potential impacts of the event a maximum group size and other stipulations could be employed to minimize impacts to resources. All designated routes can be considered valid and available for use in special events without further environmental analysis. These could be used for events related to mountain biking, horseback riding, running, skiing, snowshoeing, multisport and other non-motorized events. Rockclimbing and paintball events would also be valid uses of the area. Motorized events could be considered if their potential impacts to resources and the trail system are low. We will work to ensure that the routes authorized for events are appropriate for that type of use. Special events would not have exclusive use of the area and will be managed to ensure continued public access during the event. We would not issue permits for competitive shooting events or competitive rock-crawling events. Events that do not require a permit but have more than 30 participants or have the possibility for resource impacts will be required to contact BLM for a letter of authorization that will include appropriate stipulations to minimize impacts.

Promotion – Under this alternative Hartman Rocks will be managed primarily to meet the recreation needs of local residents. Local users will have more of a vested interest in making sure the area is managed in a sustainable way and it will be easier to educate the folks in this area about how to enjoy the area without causing inappropriate impacts. We will not go out of our way to attract visitors from outside areas to recreate at Hartman's. We will discourage media articles that promote Hartman's as a destination for recreation activities. We will make basic information available for visitors that have already arrived in the area. We will continue to accommodate special events like the 24 Hours in the Sage but will not go out of our way to attract new events to the area.

Segregating Uses – There would be a minimal segregation of uses under this alternative. All motorized and mechanized vehicles would be required to stay on designated routes. ATVs and full sized vehicles would be required to stay on full sized roads and would not be allowed on single-track trails. Motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and other motorized or mechanized vehicles would be excluded from Trail 6 (the Golf Course Trail) to reduce disturbance to wildlife in the riparian corridor and provide the only non motorized route in the planning area. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles including snowmobiles will be excluded from the area in the winter when ski trails are being groomed to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks. Education will continue to be employed in an attempt to reduce the conflicts between different recreation groups that share the trails.

Signage and Facilities – Facility development would be kept to a minimum to avoid concentrating recreational use. Several benches will be developed at scenic overlooks to provide a place for visitors to rest and enjoy the scenery. A small parking area (for 8 to 10 vehicles) would be developed on BLM land near the trailhead for Bambi’s Trail to reduce trespass problems on adjacent private land. A parking area will also be delineated at the McCabe’s Lane entrance to reduce resource impacts from unconfined parking. Trailhead signs will also be established at these 2 areas. A parking area will also be delineated at the top of Kill Hill. We will try to clearly sign all designated routes so visitors know which routes are legal to travel. Other signage would be employed as necessary to enhance visitor’s understanding and appreciation of the area’s resources, to encourage their stewardship & responsible use and to inform them of the rules.

Regulations and Enforcement – As mentioned above, the vehicle designation for the entire area would be “Limited to Designated Routes”. No travel off the signed, designated routes would be allowed. Travel routes would also be designated for winter use. This designation would apply to all wheeled, mechanized or motorized vehicles including full sized vehicles, ATVs, RTVs, Motorcycles, Dune buggies, Snowmobiles (except for the snowmobile used to groom ski trails), Mountain Bikes, Trail Skateboards, hovercraft and others. The entire road and trail system can be closed in the spring to all the vehicles mentioned above as well as horses to prevent damage to the roads and trails when they are wet. Intermediate gates will be maintained so that when the lower portion of the area is dry it can be opened up for recreation use while the upper portion continues to dry out. The upper gates will remain closed until May 15th to reduce impacts on Sage Grouse during the breeding season. The Golf Course Trail (Trail #6) will be closed to motorized vehicles yearlong to minimize disturbance to wildlife in that riparian corridor and provide the only non-motorized route in the planning area. The Aberdeen Loop would be closed to all uses from 7/1 to 8/31 to protect Sage Grouse Brood rearing values. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles, other than a snowmobile used to groom ski trails, will be excluded from the area in the winter when ski trails are being groomed to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks and to wintering wildlife. Some trails will have to be rerouted to avoid resource impacts. These trails would not be open to public use until these reroutes have been completed. The grooming of routes for cross country skiing, snowshoeing and other non-motorized winter activities will be restricted to designated winter routes to minimize impacts to wintering wildlife. In severe winters the entire area may be closed to reduce impacts to wintering wildlife. The target shooting of firearms will be encouraged in 2 locations suitable for that activity. If significant amounts of target shooting occurs outside those areas and poses a safety hazard for other recreationists then target shooting may be restricted to only those designated areas. Some sections of the cliffs used for Rock Climbing may be closed seasonally to protect cliff nesting birds. There would be increased patrol and enforcement of rules in the area to ensure that we are meeting our management objectives.

Alternative 4 – Maximize Recreation Opportunities

General Theme – This Alternative would manage for a diversity of recreation uses in a way that seeks to maximize recreation opportunities by increasing the number of routes open for recreation use and accommodating uses that may not be present now. The management focus for the area will continue to place a priority on meeting the needs of local recreationists. We can increase promotion of the area somewhat to attract visitors from outside the immediate area and generate more income for tourism related businesses in Gunnison. The appropriate level of promotion will be driven by our desire to maintain good recreation opportunities and minimize negative impacts to sensitive resource values.

Recreation Management – We would manage Hartman Rocks as an urban interface recreation area that receives a heavy amount of use by local residents and outside visitors alike. This recreation use would be concentrated mainly in the area that is currently used for recreation so that impacts are restricted to areas that have already been significantly altered by recreation use. We would do our best to offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities here including some that are not currently allowed. Reducing the resource impacts caused by recreation will still be necessary to meet our legal requirements but this alternative will be more tolerant of resource impacts to non-critical resources. The quality of recreation experiences could be reduced if our attempt to encourage more use results in more crowded and more impacted settings. Recreation management strategies will attempt to be more proactive by identifying problems while they are small and taking appropriate steps to resolve them. More intensive recreation use would require more intensive recreation management so there would be a need for more attention and funding by the BLM and our partners to carry out the management actions under this alternative. This would include more active enforcement of rules and regulations.

Resource Impacts – General – The primary focus for this alternative is to manage a variety of recreation uses in a way that tries to maximize visitor use while meeting our minimum legal requirements to protect the area's resources. Maintaining the integrity of all natural resources will be considered as we develop our management strategy but will not be the only factor considered in the decision making process. Over the long term we will expect to see increasing resource impacts. We can take steps to reduce the impacts caused by recreation. We should identify the critical resources that we are legally required to protect and are most vulnerable to recreation impacts, identify the critical areas for those resources and search for ways to manage recreation so it minimizes negative impacts to these critical values.

Soils – Soil erosion occurs primarily along roads & trails that are poorly designed, poorly located, poorly maintained or abused when they are wet. Under this alternative we would evaluate the roads & trails for their erosion potential, identify problem areas and try to improve the situation by performing needed maintenance or relocating the route. If the problems cannot be reasonably fixed or rerouted around the problem the route could be left to deteriorate and provide more challenging riding opportunities or it may be closed completely. Spring closures would be continued to minimize impacts to soils when they are most vulnerable.

Vegetation – The unique population of the Skiff Milkvetch must be protected. No roads, trails or other recreation activities would be permitted to disturb known populations except one constructed road that was designated as an open route in the Resource Management Plan (1993). Route A31 (Dirty Sock) and A53 (Quarry Drop) will be re-routed to avoid known populations of Milkvetch. Recreation use in suitable habitat that lacks current populations could be considered. Any new travel routes created under this alternative would avoid riparian areas and areas with healthy sagebrush stands within 2 miles of Sage Grouse strutting areas (particularly those near drainages and wet meadows). We will continue our efforts to reduce the populations of noxious weeds in the area.

Wildlife and Sensitive Species – The parameters of wildlife values will be considered as we plan for recreation management in this area. This is especially true of those values related to Sage Grouse, big game winter range and Threatened or Endangered species. We will take some steps to reduce recreation impacts to other wildlife values.

Access – We have opened discussions with some adjacent landowners to assess their willingness to permit public trails to cross their land. If they are willing we would work out the details about the type of use, level of development restrictions etc. that are appropriate for those routes. No routes would be designated, developed or maintained that trespassed on private land without the owner’s permission. Any trails found to be trespassing on private land would be closed as soon as practical. The BLM would look for opportunities to maintain or improve opportunities for longer distance travel routes when they are exchanging or acquiring land.

Transportation System – The current travel designations (Limited to Existing Routes in part and Limited to Designated Routes in part) would be modified to be Limited to Designated Routes through the entire planning unit. The official road and trail system would be formally designated and signed so it is clear which routes are open to recreationists. No travel by motorized vehicles or mt. bikes would be allowed off of those signed routes. The current system of roads and trails, including those currently closed, was evaluated in light of the goals for this alternative. This analysis was based on a variety of factors including the amount of opportunities for various skill levels, the opportunities for loop trips of various lengths, safety concerns, crowding, diversity, resource impacts etc. A priority would be placed on avoiding impacts to Sage Grouse, Skiff Milkvetch, and archeological sites because these are required by law or policy. Routes that contributed to recreation diversity, increased opportunities and minimal resource impacts were left open as much as possible. Desired routes that cause unacceptable impacts were evaluated to see if the resource impacts could be minimized. If impacts can be minimized (by rerouting, erosion control structures, seasonal restrictions etc.) then the route may be included in the system once that mitigation has occurred. Some routes may have to be hardened to accommodate increased use levels. If impacts cannot be minimized then the route will not be included in the system. Redundant routes would be closed. Any proposals for new trails would have to be evaluated with criteria similar to that used for existing routes. It does not make sense to expand the roads and trails here beyond our ability to maintain them so our current system of routes will be well maintained before we consider expanding the system. No new routes would be created without evaluation and authorization from the BLM. Any routes created without authorization would be closed as soon as practical. Vehicle closure gates would continue to be used to avoid damage on the routes in the spring. Additional vehicle closure gates will be maintained near the power line to allow us to open parts of the area earlier in the season while maintaining closures on southern routes that may still be wet.

Routes Open in Alternative 4 – Under this alternative the routes that would be designated as open include those open under all alternatives – Trails T2 – T5 and T7 through T23 (totaling 20.72 miles) and Roads R1 through R44 (totaling 31.61 miles).

In addition, the following uncertain routes would be open:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>1 or 2 Track</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Comments</u>
T6	Golf Course Trail	1	.54 mi.	<u>open to foot & horse traffic only</u>
A3	none	1	.50 mi.	with reroute
A4	Ridgeline Trail	1	.6 mi.	requires significant work on existing downhill or reroute necessary, non-motorized only

A5	Fenceline Trail	1	.51 mi.	
A6	none	1	.7 mi.	with reroute
A8	Freefall	1	.47 mi.	with reroute
A9	none	2	.12 mi.	
A18	Technical Becks	1	.2 mi.	
A20	Josie's	1	1.5 mi.	may need some rerouting
A21	Gateway	1	1.59	reroute necessary in 2 places
A24	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A25	none	1	.26 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A26	none	1	.57 mi.	
A28	Back Door	1	2.32 mi.	<u>single track only</u>
A30	Buddy Bear	1	1.23 mi.	probably needs some reroute
A31	Dirty Sock	1	.74 mi	with mandatory reroute
A33	none	1	.08 mi.	
A36	none	2	.20 mi.	
A37	none	2	.78 mi.	partial – close steep part
A38	none	1	.48 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A39	Ring Dike	1	1.39 mi.	with archeological mitigation
A40	none	1	.07 mi.	keep both entrances to S end Trail 8
A41	none	1	.13 mi.	eliminate original entry to Trail 14
A43	Bong Hits	1	.6 mi.	see if a loop makes sense, decide on a single track and close braids & side spurs.
A46	none	1	.32 mi.	
A49	none	2	.09 mi	
A53	Quarry Drop	1	.40 mi.	with reroute to avoid Milkvetch, consider possibility of routing bottom to meet with A55, closed until reroute done.
A55	Arden's	1	1.62 mi	need to work out possible connections with other trails.
A56 & A57	Aberdeen Loop	1	4.64 mi.	with seasonal closure 6/15 to 8/31 to motorized & mechanized use for Sage Grouse brood rearing
A58	Skull Pass	1	.74 mi.	
A59	none	2	.12 mi.	with a sign
A64	none	2	.48 mi.	with landowner permission or reroute
A65	Sawtooth	1	.77 mi.	with changes to fence & weed control
A66	Nine Oh	1	.96 mi.	closed to motorized use 4/15 to 7/1 to protect Sage Grouse nesting
A67	none	2	.46 mi.	
Total = 36 routes Total Mileage = 26.66 miles				

Open roads = 51 roads (33.87 miles), Open trails = 49 trails (45.35 miles)

Total designated open routes under Alternative 4 = 100 routes Total Mileage = 79.22 miles which is 87.2% of the routes we analyzed.

New Routes or reroutes to be created under Alternative 4

Extreme Jeep Route #1 - .20 mile and #2 - .13 mi

Ridgeline Reroute - .31 mile

A6 reroute - .77 mile

Freefall reroute - .23 mile

Dirty Sock Reroute - .25 mile

Quarry drop reroute - .35 mile

A3 reroute - .5 mile

Motorcycle Terrain Park – approximately 15 acres with perhaps 1.5 miles of trails

Total new routes – 9 routes covering approximately 4.24 miles

Routes to be Closed in Alternative 4 – The routes that would be closed include Roads and Trails that will be closed in all alternatives (**See table on pg 16**). These are A1, A2, A7, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, A16, A17, A19, A22, A23, A27, A29, A32, A34, A35, A41, A42, A44, A45, A47, A48, A50, A51, A52, A54 (open to WAPA for maintenance), A60, A61, A62, A63 (but leave adequate space for folks to park there if they want to camp), A68, A69.

In addition, T6 – the Golf Course Trail (.54 mi.) would be closed to wheeled vehicles.

Total Closed in Alternative 4 = 38 routes Total Mileage = 14.08 miles

Mountain Biking – Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes.

Mountain bikes and other non-motorized wheeled vehicles would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed, designated routes. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. Spring closures will be employed each year to minimize damage to roads and trails when they are wet. Mountain bikers would be required to follow regulations governing spring closures. Anyone found riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations.

When we are laying out reroutes we will consult with mountain bikers and motorcyclists to look for opportunities to include some difficult stretches for expert riders. This seems most likely to occur on the Ridgeline reroute, the A6 reroute, the Quarry Drop reroute and the Freefall reroute. More skilled riders and advancing technology in freeride bikes that have more suspension and can handle steeper terrain are resulting in some demand for steep downhill routes. Unfortunately, steep routes have a much higher chance of erosion problems and tend to create more obvious visual scars. As a result, we must walk a careful line when we design more expert routes to try to offer a challenging ride and still avoid unacceptable resource impacts. We can do this by searching for routes with rock or durable soils as a substrate, including extensive features to control water and prevent soil erosion, and designing routes to minimize visual impacts.

Motorized Uses – Travel designations in the entire area will be Limited to Designated Routes. Motorized vehicles including full sized vehicles, ATVs, motorcycles, dune buggies, RTVs, and any other motorized conveyance would be required to follow these designations and only ride on signed, designated routes. The only motor vehicles allowed on single track trails would be motorcycles to ensure that the character of the single track is not changed. No new trails could be created without permission from and coordination with the BLM. Any illegally created routes will be closed as soon as practical without the need of further evaluation or discussion. Spring closures will be employed each year to minimize damage to roads and trails when they are wet. The closures will apply to all motorized vehicles as well as horses, mountain bikes and any other wheeled conveyance. Anyone found driving or riding cross country, on closed or illegal routes or during the spring closure could be cited and fined for violation of travel designations. Two rock crawling (extreme 4 wheel drive) courses would be created approximately .2 and .13 mile in length. They would be signed to let potential users know what to expect and discourage folks with vehicles inappropriate for this difficult route. The courses would, as much as possible, have to minimize impacts to resources. No competitive events would be authorized here in these areas. Under this alternative no mud runs or mud bogging would be allowed anywhere in the area.

A terrain park would be delineated for motorcycle and ATV use to attempt to replace the recreation opportunity that was closed off at the base area in 1998. A terrain park uses natural terrain features rather

than artificially created features to provide varied riding opportunities on a closed track. An area of approximately 15 acres near the McCabe Lane entrance to the area (see map) would be delineated by a fence. A parking area for 10 vehicles would be constructed adjacent to the access road. A gate would provide a single entrance/exit for the area to avoid accidents that could come from multiple entrances. The Terrain Park gate would have to be closed and locked when cows are in that pasture for 5 to 7 days in late May or early June each year to prevent the noise of motorcycle use from scattering cows and disrupting the pair bonding that goes on in that area. This concern will be monitored and could be adjusted in future years depending on the actual effects of the Terrain Park. The Terrain Park will also be closed during the spring closures to avoid excessive damage to soils and trails. The rest of the spring, summer and fall the gate will remain open. Within the terrain park we will work with someone experienced in the layout of motorcycle routes to identify a convoluted track system that would provide interesting opportunities for riders but it will not be a moto-cross style track. The vegetation would be removed from this track but the terrain would not be manipulated by constructing artificial jumps or other features. The track will become a designated route and riders will be expected to stay on that route. Riding off that route will not be allowed. The creation of additional routes within the park will not be allowed without permission of the BLM. Any unauthorized routes will be closed as soon as practical. An information board would be established at the entrance to the area to convey rules and safety tips to riders. It is anticipated that focused motorized use here will result in some impacts to soils and vegetation. Our goal is to focus those impacts in a confined area. This will provide some riding opportunities for motorcyclists in an area that is more durable rather than suffer the impacts that can come from user created routes causing greater impacts in less appropriate areas. As a result, when this terrain park is available we will close several informal tracks that have developed in other areas. These areas are identified in the routes to be closed. This park is intended to meet local and informal riding needs so no competitive events will be authorized here. No shooting would be allowed in the terrain park.

Hiking/Trail Running – For all Alternatives hikers and runners would continue to have full use of the area except in very severe winters when the area could be closed to all recreational uses to protect wintering wildlife. Signs and educational materials would strongly encourage this group to use designated trails and avoid wearing in new routes that might be followed by other users and result in resource damage. Opportunities for hikers and dog walkers could be improved by installing a few rustic benches at scenic overlooks or other enjoyable spots around the area. A hiking trail down to the Aberdeen Quarry Historical Site may be considered if permission can be obtained from the Pioneer Historical Society.

Rock Climbing – could be practiced on public lands anywhere in the area. We would continue to authorize commercial guiding for this activity in the area. Educational materials would encourage climbers to avoid routes near occupied bird nests in the cliffs from April 1st to July 31st. We could consider preparing a guide to climbing at Hartman Rocks to encourage more use and educate climbers about how to minimize the impacts of their sport.

Winter Use – Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling would be permitted and education would be used to try to reduce the impacts to wintering wildlife. A system of designated routes would include 7.3 miles open to snowmobiles but not ski grooming, 1.1 miles open to skiing but not groomed and not snowmobiles and 16.3 miles of ski and snowmobile trails that can be groomed when there is enough snow. This grooming would only occur if adequate funding can be found or partnerships can be formed to support grooming operations. Some key areas would still be off limits to winter use to provide safe zones for wildlife. Snowmobiling would be allowed only on the designated trails to reduce impacts to wintering big game and Sage Grouse. Once grooming of ski trails begins the gates to the area would be closed and no wheeled vehicles would be allowed to use the area to avoid disruption of the groomed trails. Winter small game hunting would continue to be allowed in the area but once the gates are closed it would have

to be on foot, ski, snowshoe or snowmobile. Two single track trails (part of Josho's and west side of section 16 for a total of 1.1 miles) were identified as ski routes in this alternative to help complete some loop trails. These routes would not be groomed because they are too narrow to be groomed without damaging vegetation. If we have a particularly hard winter and big game & Sage Grouse concentrate in this area searching for food then the area could be closed to all motorized winter uses to avoid impacts to wildlife. Non-motorized use (skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, dog sledding) could still occur but visitors would be encouraged to reduce harassment of wildlife including not bringing their dogs to the area. Management actions would start off low key such as signs and education but could escalate if necessary to achieve management goals.

Other Activities – Horseback riding would be permitted without regulation unless unacceptable resource impacts result from a significant increase in use. Horse use would not be allowed during spring closures. Camping would continue to be allowed anywhere in the area but developed fire rings, vehicle barriers and other measures may be employed to define appropriate use areas and reduce resource impacts. Hill parties would continue to be allowed as long as trash and resource impacts are kept to a minimum. Geocaching will be allowed if the target is a natural or virtual feature. No manmade objects may be left on public land for geocaching purposes. Other activities not specifically mentioned would be managed for based on the number of people they may benefit and the potential impacts they could cause to resources.

Special Events – We would continue to consider proposals for Special Events in the area. Events would have to follow the procedures for permits from the BLM and from the City or County as appropriate. We would recognize that Special Events have the potential to bring visitors into the area which could have positive benefits for tourism related businesses in town. It would not be the BLM's job to organize Special Events for the area but we can make it known to the Chamber of Commerce and other entities that the possibility exists to hold appropriate Special Events at Hartman's. Local users could be displaced more frequently by special events – particularly on the weekends. Priority would be given to events that had minimal impacts on the area's resources and travel routes. All designated routes will be considered valid and available for use in special events without further environmental analysis. These could be used for events related to mountain biking, horseback riding, running, orienteering, skiing, snowshoeing, multi-sport and other non-motorized events. Rock climbing and paintball events would also be valid uses of the area. Motorized events such as motorcycle trials, poker runs and enduros could be considered as long as they don't cause lasting damage to the trail system or resources of the area. We will work to ensure that the routes authorized for events are appropriate for that type of use. Events that do not require a permit but have more than 30 participants or have the possibility for resource impacts will be required to contact BLM for a letter of authorization that will include appropriate stipulations to minimize impacts.

Promotion – Under this alternative Hartman Rocks will be managed primarily to meet the recreation needs of local residents. The area can also serve as a recreation destination to attract visitors from outside the area as long as it does not significantly diminish the overall recreation experience through increased crowding, resource impacts, visual impacts etc. More crowded recreation settings could be tolerated to some extent in order to achieve the economic benefits of increased visitation. We could take some steps to attract visitors from outside areas to recreate at Hartman's. We could encourage media articles outside this area that promote Hartman's as a destination for recreation activities. We will continue to accommodate special events like the Rage in the Sage and allow other groups to consider Hartman's as a venue for other events. We will place a higher priority on events that have the potential to generate more income for businesses in town.

Segregating Uses – There would be a minimal segregation of uses under this alternative. Motorized and mechanized vehicles would be required to stay on designated routes. ATVs and full sized vehicles would

have to stay on full sized roads and are not allowed on single-track trails. Motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and other motorized or mechanized vehicles would be excluded from Trail 6 (the Golf Course Trail) to reduce disturbance to wildlife in the riparian corridor and provide the only non motorized route in the planning area. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-Oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles other than snowmobiles will be excluded from the area in the winter once trail grooming starts to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks. Education will continue to be employed in an attempt to reduce the conflicts between different recreation groups that share the trails.

Signage and Facilities – Facility development would be considered where appropriate to accommodate increased use or reduce resource impacts. Several benches will be developed at scenic overlooks to provide a place for visitors to rest and enjoy the scenery. A small parking area (for 8 to 10 vehicles) would be developed on BLM land near the trailhead for Bambi’s Trail to reduce trespass problems on adjacent private land. A parking area will also be delineated at the McCabe’s Lane entrance to reduce resource impacts from unconfined parking. Trailhead signs will also be established at these 2 areas. A parking area will also be delineated at the top of Kill Hill. We will try to clearly sign all designated routes so visitors know which routes are legal to travel. Other signage would be employed as necessary to enhance visitor’s understanding and appreciation of the area’s resources, to encourage their stewardship & responsible use and to inform them of the rules. The facilities for the motorcycle terrain park and target shooting areas are described under those sections.

Regulations and Enforcement – To enhance recreation opportunities we would try to keep rules and regulations to a minimum. Still, more intensive recreation use has the potential for increased recreation impacts and some rules and enforcement will be necessary to ensure we do not exceed limits of acceptable impacts. The vehicle designation for the entire area would be “Limited to Designated Routes”. No travel off the designated routes would be allowed. Travel routes would also be designated for winter use. The entire road and trail system can be closed in the spring to all motor vehicles as well as mountain bikes and horses to prevent damage to the roads and trails when they are wet. Intermediate gates will be maintained so that when the lower portion of the area is dry it can be opened up for recreation use while the upper portion continues to dry out. The intermediate gates will remain closed until May 15 to reduce impacts on roads that are slower to dry and also to minimize disturbance to Sage Grouse during the breeding season. The Golf Course Trail (Trail #6) will be closed to motorized vehicles and mountain bikes yearlong to minimize disturbance to wildlife in that riparian corridor and provide the only non-motorized route in the planning area. The Aberdeen Loop would be closed to all uses from 6/15 to 8/31 to protect Sage Grouse Brood rearing values. Motorcycles and other motorized vehicles would be excluded from trail A66 (9-oh) from 4/15 to 7/1 to reduce possible impacts to nesting Sage Grouse. Motorized vehicles other than snowmobiles will be excluded from the area in the winter when ski trails are being groomed to avoid impacts to the groomed tracks. Some trails will have to be rerouted to avoid resource impacts. These trails would not be open to public use until these reroutes have been completed. The grooming of routes for cross country skiing, snowshoeing and other non-motorized winter activities will be restricted to designated winter routes to minimize impacts to wintering wildlife. In severe winters the entire area may be closed to reduce impacts to wintering wildlife. Target shooting with firearms will be encouraged in 2 locations suitable for that activity. If significant amounts of target shooting occurs outside those areas and poses a safety hazard for other recreationists then target shooting may be restricted to only those designated areas. There would be increased patrol and enforcement of rules in the area to ensure that we are meeting our management objectives.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: While working with the Core Planning Group we considered a wide variety of alternatives particularly related to route by route planning for the transportation system. The various alternatives reflect what the group feels to be the most feasible range of alternatives.

NEED FOR THE ACTION: The Resource Management Plan (RMP) for this area, prepared in 1993, only provides general guidelines for managing the recreation in this area. The BLM recreation staff, along with our partners in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group, have taken some steps to manage the area. We have been a regular participant in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group which includes representatives from the City, County, local homeowners and representatives from various interest groups that use the area. The group has informally discussed and carried out management actions that fit within current management guidelines. It has also helped to organize a variety of volunteer projects to improve the area. The BLM participated in the creation of a Management Plan for the 160 acres of City & County land at the base area back in 1998. That plan coordinated with management priorities on BLM and made some recommendations to be considered when we began to develop a more detailed management plan but it did not identify any specific management decisions that applied to BLM land. Now the BLM and our partners feel that use levels have increased to the point that a more detailed management strategy, in the form of a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP), is necessary to more clearly identify the issues and define management goals and actions for the area.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Gunnison Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: February 1993

Pages: 2-2 thru 2-5, 2-13 & 2-14, 2-29 & 2-30, 2-34 & 2-35

Standards for Public Land Health: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following critical elements have been considered and it has been determined that these elements would not be affected by the proposed action: Air Quality, Floodplains, Native American Religious Concerns, Prime and Unique Farmlands, Hazardous or Solid Wastes, Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Environmental Justice.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Affected Environment:

The Planning Area for this Recreation Area Mngt. Plan includes about 70% or about 3200 acres in the South Beaver ACEC. This area was designated in the Resource Management Plan in 1993. Its purpose was to protect and enhance existing populations of Skiff Milkvetch – a rare plant that only occurs in

isolated populations in this area. Ongoing studies in collaboration with the Colorado Natural Areas program have located, mapped and inventoried the scattered populations of the plant. The plant seems to favor dry rocky hillsides in the breaks above South Beaver Creek.

The management prescriptions for the ACEC recognize that the area receives heavy recreation use. It accepted most of the existing surface disturbance caused by motorized vehicles but attempted to halt further proliferation of user created roads by limiting motorized traffic to designated roads only. Most of the existing roads in the recreation area were designated for public use – a total of 10.6 miles of roads in the ACEC portion of the planning area. Unfortunately, the designation only applied to motorized vehicles. It did not apply to use by mountain bikes. As mountain biking grew in popularity we started to see new routes created by mountain bikers. There were no regulations we could use to stop this proliferation. Motorcycles soon followed the single track trails created by mountain bikes and sometimes added to the surface disturbance along these routes. One of the priorities for the transportation section of this plan will be to modify the vehicle designations to ensure that they also apply to mountain bikes. This will hopefully eliminate the proliferation of illegal routes and require all motorized and mechanized vehicle to stay on designated trails.

In the route by route analysis done while preparing this plan we found several well established routes such as A31 (Dirty Sock), A50, and A53 (Quarry Drop) that ran directly through known populations of Skiff Milkvetch. Since we have the known populations mapped, we have, in some cases, planned to reroute the existing trails to avoid Skiff Milkvetch population areas. In other cases it made more sense to close the route completely.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: under this alternative the ACEC and the Skiff Milkvetch it was designated to protect would benefit from actions specifically designed to reduce impact on the plant. Routes A31 and A53 would be rerouted to avoid the known population areas that they go through. Route A50 has been closed in the past and would remain closed to avoid the population that it goes through. The change in vehicle designations would include mountain bikes in the list of vehicles that the regulations would pertain to. This would have the beneficial effect for the ACEC of closing the loophole that resulted in a number of unauthorized routes being created. It would also provide a strong basis for closing any new routes that may pop up. Under this alternative a total of 22.3 miles of roads and single track trails would be designated as open to motorized and mechanized use in the ACEC portion of the planning area. Only one constructed roadway, which was one of the original designated routes, would actually pass through a known population of Milkvetch. It was felt that since the road was bladed many years ago that it is unlikely to negatively impact the Milkvetch any more. Eleven existing routes, totaling 7.3 miles within the ACEC would be closed to motorized and mechanized uses. Volunteers from the Mt. bikers and motorcyclists would help us develop the reroutes to avoid Milkvetch populations on A31 & A53 and would be much more likely to use the new routes. The proposed terrain park would be developed inside the boundaries of the ACEC but no known populations or high probability habitat for Skiff Milkvetch would be affected by this facility. The overall effect of this alternative would be to improve the protection for the Milkvetch while allowing reasonable public use.

Other Alternatives :

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative a total of 10.6 miles of designated roads would continue to be open to motorized and mechanized uses. An additional 11 miles of single track trails would continue to be open to mountain bike use. These routes were not designated in the RMP so they

would not be legal for motorcyclists to use. Another 4.9 miles of routes would be closed. The ACEC and populations of Skiff Milkvetch would continue to suffer from the proliferation of new, routes created by mountain bikers that have the potential to directly impact known populations. It is also likely that motorized use would continue to use undesignated routes and any newly created routes. No terrain park would be developed in this alternative.

Resource Protection (Alt 2) – under this alternative a total of 17.7 miles of roads and trails in the ACEC would be designated as open to motorized and mechanized uses. Only one constructed roadway, which was one of the original designated routes, would actually pass through a known population of Milkvetch. It was felt that since the road was bladed many years ago that it is unlikely to negatively impact the Milkvetch any more. Three other trails that went through Milkvetch populations would be closed. In all, about 9.5 miles of routes in the ACEC would be closed to motorized and mechanized uses. No terrain park would be developed in this alternative. The overall effect of this alternative would be to improve the protection for the Milkvetch while allowing reasonable public use.

Maximize Recreation (Alt. 4) - under this alternative a total of 24.4 miles of roads and trails in the ACEC would be designated as open to motorized and mechanized uses. Only one constructed roadway, which was one of the original designated routes, would actually pass through a known population of Milkvetch. It was felt that since the road was bladed many years ago that it is unlikely to negatively impact the Milkvetch any more. Three other trails that went through Milkvetch populations would be closed or rerouted to avoid impacting known populations of the plant. In all, about 5.1 miles of routes in the ACEC would be closed to motorized and mechanized uses. No terrain park would be developed in this alternative. The overall effect of this alternative would be to improve the protection for the Milkvetch while allowing reasonable public use. More miles of routes would be open for use than in the proposed action and more recreation use would be expected along those routes. As long as recreationists stay on these designated routes the effects of this alternative would still be more beneficial than the no action alternative.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment:

Known cultural resources within the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area Management Plan vary, consisting of isolated finds and sites that are located throughout the area. Previous cultural resource inventories have identified eligible sites, which have been avoided by reroute or other project redesign.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: Under the proposed action, all proposed routes will be inventoried and sites that are determined to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register for Historic Places (NRHP) will be avoided by reroute of the proposed routes or other mitigation as deemed appropriate to avoid impacts to the site.

No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, cultural resources will be identified and sites determined as eligible for listing on the NRHP will be avoided by rerouting or other mitigation.

Other Alternatives: All other alternatives will require cultural resource inventories to identify cultural resources along proposed routes; sites determined as eligible for listing on the NRHP will be avoided by rerouting or other mitigation.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: Invasive species (noxious weeds) are known to exist within the Hartman Rocks Recreation (Planning) Area. There are small scattered infestations of Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), associated with most roadways, trails, water developments, and drainages. Downy brome, (*Bromus tectorum*), occurs throughout the area and is typically associated with road and/or trail disturbances. Scentless chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*), yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), and Russian knapweed (*Centaurea repens*) have also occurred in this area in the past but have been controlled.

BLM Gunnison Field Office began expanding the weed control program into this area (and adjacent pastures) in 2001. This expanded coverage focused on disturbed roadsides, drainages and exclosures to treat Canada thistle and other broadleaf weeds. Ongoing weed control activities along Gold Basin Road (the primary entrance into Hartman Rocks Recreation Area) were initiated in 1994.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: One of the causes of noxious weed infestations within the Hartman Rocks Recreation (Planning) Area is the obvious soil disturbance to be expected with motorized and non-motorized vehicles along roadways and trails. With the Proposed Action, more intensively managed recreational use from motorized and non-motorized vehicles would occur. Soil disturbance associated with existing and/or new roads and/or trails (both authorized and unauthorized) would continue to be areas in which noxious weeds may become established and/or spread if not controlled. Emphasizing or intensifying management in a localized fashion would help to minimize other potential disturbances and weed infestations both within the planning area and on a broader geographic scale within the Gunnison Basin.

The ongoing BLM Gunnison Field Office Noxious Weed Control Program will continue and likely expand independent of the proposed action.

No Action Alternative: Soil disturbances associated with the ongoing recreational use by motorized and non-motorized vehicles would continue along existing and/or new roads and/or trails (both authorized and unauthorized). The ongoing BLM Gunnison Field Office Noxious Weed Control Program will continue and likely expand independent of the No Action Alternative.

Other Alternatives:

Soil disturbances associated with the ongoing recreational use by motorized and non-motorized vehicles would continue along existing and/or new roads and/or trails (both authorized and unauthorized). The ongoing BLM Gunnison Field Office Noxious Weed Control Program will continue and likely expand independent of all of the Alternatives.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment:

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 was passed to regulate the taking of native birds. In 2001, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13186 (66 FR 3853), which directs federal agencies to further implement the MBTA by considering the effects of projects and actions on migratory birds. Pursuant to this Executive Order, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), BLM and Forest Service are developing a Memorandum of Understanding which requires agencies to review the USFWS *Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)* list for species that may breed within a project area. When reviewing the effects of projects and actions on migratory birds, species on the BCC list should be emphasized. Birds on the list for the Southern Rockies/Colorado Plateau region which may breed within Hartman Rocks

recreation area are the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), Lewis woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*), and sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli*).

Golden eagles, peregrine falcons, and prairie falcons all nest on cliffs such as those found in the Hartman Rocks area. Lewis woodpeckers breed primarily in riparian habitats where they nest in mature cottonwoods (Kuenning 1998). They typically choose snags, trees weakened by fire, and natural cavities for nesting sites. Sage sparrows nest within sizable (>30 acres), low-elevation (<8400 ft) stands of big sagebrush or mixed big sagebrush and greasewood. They construct cup nests, usually at mid-bush level with sufficient foliage above to conceal the nest (Lambeth 1998).

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The proposed action protects cliff-nesting birds, including eagles and falcons, by instituting rock-climbing closures around their nests during the breeding season (April 1 through July 31). Areas where rock-climbing occurs will need to be monitored each spring to determine if there are active nests in the area. By encouraging climbers to stay in the main rocks of the Ring Dike, disturbance to all species of cliff nesting birds in other parts of the Hartman Rocks area should be reduced. Under this Proposed Action, there should not be a risk of taking cliff nesting birds or their nests.

Several routes included in the proposed action are within riparian corridors where Lewis woodpeckers may nest. Although recreational activities may disturb nesting woodpeckers, they are not expected to result in the “take” of any nests or birds. The proposed action limits motorized uses and mountain bikes to designated routes, and encourages hikers and trail runners to use designated routes. Because of this, and the fact that birds tend to position their nests sufficiently away from roads and trails, the proposed action would not risk the “take” of sage sparrows, which may nest in the expanses of sagebrush within the Hartman rocks area

To avoid take of migratory birds or their nests, construction of trails within the terrain park and for the jeep course should occur outside the passerine breeding season of May 15 through July 15. Once the terrain park and jeep course are constructed and being used, the noise and activity will discourage most birds from nesting within the 15 to 20 acre terrain park and in areas adjacent to the jeep course.

By identifying two specific areas for target shooting, disturbance to and potential take of migratory birds should be lessened. Restriction of the Golf Course Trail (T6) to foot and horse traffic only will reduce disturbance of nesting birds in this riparian corridor.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative (i.e., current management), impacts to migratory birds would be greater than under the Proposed Action. There are no rock-climbing closures near cliff nesting birds; the entire area is open to climbing. Therefore, nesting eagles and falcons disturbed by rock climbers may abandon their nest which would be a “taking” under the MBTA.

The total miles of open routes are similar to the Proposed Action, however, the only designated routes would be in the ACEC. Without designating specific routes throughout the entire area, users will continue to create their own trails. This could result in direct destruction of nests, destruction and fragmentation of habitat, and increased disturbance to nesting birds.

There would be no motorcycle terrain park under this alternative, and therefore no impacts to migratory birds associated with construction and activity within the park. To avoid take of nests or birds, construction of the extreme jeep course would have to occur outside the passerine breeding

season of May 15 through July 15. Activity along this course would discourage most birds from nesting in the vicinity.

Under this alternative the entire area is open to target shooting. Such dispersed shooting would result in more widespread disturbance to migratory birds with more potential for unethical shooters to “take” migratory birds.

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): This alternative provides protection to cliff nesting birds by instituting climbing closures. Other migratory birds and their nests are protected by limiting motorized uses and mountain bikes to designated routes, and encouraging hikers and trail runners to use designated routes. There would be no motorcycle terrain park under this alternative, and therefore no impacts to migratory birds associated with construction and activity within the park. For the extreme jeep course included in this alternative, construction should occur outside the passerine breeding season of May 15 through July 15 to avoid take of birds or their nests. By designating two specific areas for target shooting, disturbance to and potential take of migratory birds would be less than under current management (i.e., Alternative 1). Restriction of the Golf Course Trail (T6) to foot and horse traffic only will reduce disturbance of nesting birds in this riparian corridor.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): This alternative would provide no protection to nests of cliff nesting birds. By promoting more rock climbing in the area, eagles and falcons would be discouraged from nesting in the area. The extent of disturbance to ground and shrub nesting migratory birds would be greater under this alternative since it has 12% more miles of open trails with the intent of accommodating as many routes as possible. Although motorized uses and mountain bikes would be limited to designated routes, the emphasis on allowing more routes would result in greater habitat fragmentation. Additional recreational activity will occur which could eventually displace birds from nesting in some areas. With two specific areas designated for target shooting, disturbance to and potential take of migratory birds should be less than under current management (i.e., Alternative 1).

SURFACE AND GROUND WATER QUALITY (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment:

Four perennial streams bound the area; South Beaver Creek on the west, Gold Basin Creek on the east and the Gunnison River and Tomichi Creek on the north. There are areas with roads and trails that drain directly into the Gunnison River, Tomichi Creek, South Beaver and Gold Basin Creek, however, much of the area with the highest density of trails is buffered from perennial streams by roads and meadows. There are no known existing impairments to water quality. Accelerated erosion and subsequent sedimentation to streams is a concern but there has been no data collected to identify problem reaches. Many sections of trails have evidence of erosion. Some recreational use trails follow cow trails in drainages that have evidence of erosion and channel incision from historic, excessive cattle grazing. Trail maintenance on the area has been less than what is needed to reduce accelerated erosion. There are several springs and seeps in the area, most have been developed by excavation for livestock watering. Many upland areas dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.) have visual indicators of accelerated soil erosion due to reduced plant cover from drought, historic and recent livestock grazing as well as past over use by deer. Livestock grazing has improved somewhat in recent years but a record drought that occurred from 1999 through 2003 has reduced plant vigor and cover. Recreational use on this area has a cumulative impact to these other impacts that relate to accelerated soil erosion and water quality.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action limits vehicular use to designated roads and trails and has increased road and trail maintenance planned. Appropriate maintenance of trails and roads and the ability to enforce vehicle use be confined to designated roads and trails is currently lacking. Improved enforcement to keep recreational vehicles on designated roads and trails along with increased maintenance, relocation and realignment of trails that is planned in the Proposed Action Alternative will reduce accelerated soil erosion. This would reduce sedimentation that could negatively impact surface water quality. New trail construction provides an opportunity to properly design and construct trails to prevent soil loss. Loss of plant cover, soil disturbance and erosion would occur as a result of motorized vehicle use in the terrain park; impacts to offsite areas would be almost entirely prevented due to the presence of an existing earthen dam in the drainage downstream of the terrain park. The majority of the extreme jeep course is on rock outcrop and while some plant cover would be destroyed it is expected to be minimal. Since this alternative was developed and accepted by the by user groups, it is much more likely a cooperative partnership between recreational user groups and BLM would develop that would effectively focus on the management issues to improve the condition of the roads and trails.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Surface Water Quality:
It is expected that Standard 5 would be met under this proposal.

No Action Alternative: This alternative has 108 open routes, both roads and trails for a total of 78.6 miles. Current management is insufficient to prevent user created trails and there are numerous visual indicators of accelerated soil erosion on many sections of trails and roads that indicate accelerated erosion and sedimentation that could impact water quality is occurring. Historically and currently, the appropriate maintenance and relocation of eroding trails has not been accomplished.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Surface Water Quality:
While some improvement to trails and roads would be accomplished under this alternative, based on recent accomplishments and the amount of work needed it is unlikely that erosion and sedimentation would be curtailed to the degree that Standard 5 would not be met.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): Under this alternative 37.7 miles or 42 percent of the existing routes would be closed. This alternative would reduce accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation that results from improperly designed, placed and maintained trails and roads.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Surface Water Quality:
It is expected that Standard 5 would be met under this proposal.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): There would be 100 routes, both roads and trails for a total of 79 miles. This alternative emphasizes increasing recreational use of the area which would likely stretch the ability of resource managers to provide effective management that prevents accelerated soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation from the expected increased use of roads and trails. Appropriate maintenance of trails and roads and the ability to enforce vehicle use be confined to designated roads and trails is currently lacking. Based on historic and projected funding and manpower it is not feasible to implement the additional needed maintenance and enforcement under the increased recreation use that would occur under this alternative. It does seem feasible to implement the appropriate management and enforcement while meeting the goals of the Proposed Action Alternative and the Resource Protection Alternative but the implementation of this alternative

would very likely result in resource damage in terms of removal of plant cover, accelerated soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation that would impact water quality.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Surface Water Quality:

It is unlikely that Standard 5 would be met under this alternative.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment:

Of the plant and animal species occupying the Gunnison Field Office area that are federal or state listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species, or BLM sensitive species, those that warrant discussion under this Environmental Analysis are the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Gunnison sage grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*), skiff milkvetch (*Astragalus microcymbus*), Gunnison milkvetch (*Astragalus anisus*), and Crandall's rock-cress (*Boechera crandallii*). The Gunnison sage grouse is a candidate species for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act; the bald eagle is a state and federally listed threatened species; and skiff milkvetch, Gunnison milkvetch, and Crandall's rock-cress are all BLM sensitive plant species.

Bald eagles occupy the Gunnison Basin during the winter. The northern 20% or so of the Hartman Rocks recreation area is within a bald eagle winter concentration area as designated by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (<http://www.ndis.nrel.colostate.edu>). This portion of the Hartman Rocks recreation area is just south of and above the Gunnison River. In the winter, eagles may venture to this area to roost and hunt. Although they are primarily fish eaters, bald eagles will also feed upon carrion and small mammals, especially rabbits which are common in the Hartman Rocks area.

The entire Hartman Rocks Recreation Area is within Gunnison sage-grouse (GUSG) occupied habitat. There are no sage grouse leks within the recreation area, however, two active leks exist within about a mile of its boundary (McCabes Lane and South Beaver); another lek, discovered in spring 2005, is about two miles from the recreation area. The Gunnison Sage Grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan [RCP] (Gunnison Sage Grouse Rangewide Steering Committee 2005) designates areas within a 4-mile radius of a lek as non-lek breeding habitat and summer-fall habitat. This is based upon studies of GUSG which indicate that 85% of all GUSG nests and 81% of all GUSG breeding and summer-fall seasonal locations are within four miles of the lek of capture. Almost the entire Hartman Rocks recreation area is within 4 miles of a lek, and therefore within non-lek breeding habitat and summer-fall habitat. The recreation area includes nesting/early brood-rearing habitat and winter habitat within stands of sagebrush, and brood-rearing habitat along riparian areas. The entire recreation area is within severe winter habitat, with the southernmost portion within critical winter habitat; the eastern boundary is adjacent to critical winter habitat.

In the Gunnison Field Office RMP (1993), an Area of Critical Environment Concern (ACEC) was designated to protect the skiff milkvetch. The species occurs as small, scattered colonies throughout the ACEC, which is the only place in the world this plant is known to occur. More than 50% of this ACEC is within the Hartman Rocks recreation area; the remaining portion is just south of it. The plant grows in dry, sandy to gravelly soils in open sagebrush or juniper-sagebrush dominated communities on relatively steep slopes and at elevations between 7,600 and 8,400 feet (Denver Botanic Gardens 2004). Colonies are typically on SE to SW exposures. From 1985 to 1989, the BLM worked with the Colorado Natural Areas Program to inventory, map, and monitor populations of the plant within the ACEC. The information from this effort was used extensively to identify areas where existing trails may impact known populations and to select appropriate locations for re-routes to avoid these impacts.

Although also an endemic to the Gunnison Basin, Gunnison milkvetch is relatively widespread and common in the sagebrush steppe community. During surveys conducted in the Gunnison Basin in 1998, four populations of Gunnison milkvetch were identified in the Hartman Rocks recreation area (Wasson 1998). This was not a comprehensive survey of the area, so other populations may exist. The species prefers dry habitat with south to southwestern aspects on slopes of 2 to 20 degrees and at elevations between 7500 and 9400 feet (Wasson 1998, Spackman 1997).

Although there are no known populations of Crandall Rockcress in the Hartman Rocks recreation area, the habitat in the area is suitable. This species prefers rocky sagebrush areas, rock outcrops, cliffs, and talus slopes.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action:

Bald Eagles: Under this Proposed Action, there would be no groomed routes for winter recreation in the northern portion of the recreation area where bald eagles may roost. Therefore, disturbance to bald eagles would be limited to individuals who may ski or snowshoe off the groomed trails, or hike in that area when lack of snow permits.

Gunnison Sage Grouse: The proposed action incorporates road closures during the sage grouse breeding season (March 15 – May 15) to protect grouse from disturbance at the South Beaver lek, the only lek that can be accessed from the recreation area. These closures have been in place for several years and have been successful at reducing impacts to sage grouse during this critical life stage. Extending the spring closure to mountain bikes will provide additional protection to GUSG using this lek. No snowmobile routes were designated within areas of critical winter range to provide protection from potential noise impacts from motorized activities during this critical period.

Due to the density of routes which have developed over the years in the northern portion of the recreation area, sage grouse nesting habitat has been highly fragmented and use of the area by nesting GUSG is likely low. However, the southern portion of the recreation area has fewer trails, and therefore more suitable GUSG nesting habitat. The proposed action limits motorized uses and mountain bikes to designated routes, and encourages hikers and trail runners to use designated routes. Any new, unauthorized routes that are created would be closed as soon as possible. These actions will help maintain low route densities within sage grouse nesting habitat in the southern part of the recreation area and minimize disturbance to sage grouse that may be nesting in the area. Trail A66, which is within 2-miles of the South Beaver lek and crosses a large tract of suitable sage grouse nesting habitat, will be closed to motorized use during the GUSG nesting period of 4/15 – 7/1 to minimize disturbance to GUSG that may nest in the area.

The southern portion of the recreation area has GUSG brood-rearing habitat along South Beaver Creek and other riparian areas. Because the Aberdeen Loop trail (A55 & A56) includes riparian habitat known to be used by GUSG during brood-rearing, this loop trail will be closed from June 15 through August 31.

Although GUSG may be displaced from the recreation area for much of the year, recreational use is less in the winter, and therefore the area could provide important severe and critical winter habitat for grouse. Sagebrush in much of the area is in good condition compared other areas of the Gunnison Basin where sagebrush experienced dieback from the drought. Disturbance to wintering sage grouse would occur as a result of the 15.7 miles of trails groomed for skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling, a substantial increase over the 6.5 miles groomed under current management. Groomed trails compact

the snow providing potential pathways for sage grouse predators such as coyotes and fox to access areas they may not typically be able to access. The potential benefit of having limited miles of groomed trails is that use would be concentrated on predictable trails that sage grouse could avoid, thereby leaving most of the area undisturbed, unfragmented, and available to grouse and other wildlife. The activities of non-motorized recreation would have minimal impact on sage grouse if recreationists and their dogs stay on the groomed trails. An additional 2 miles of trails, following the powerline, would be open to snowmobiles. The noise and activity of snowmobiles on the 17.7 miles of routes available to them may discourage sage grouse from wintering in the northern portion of the planning area; however, by not designating snowmobile routes in the southern portion, critical winter habitat is protected. Increased patrols and enforcement would be needed several times each winter to ensure that snowmobiles stay on the groomed trails. Although the period of time when snow conditions would be suitable for grooming trails may be short, when such conditions exist, it is also an important time to minimize disturbance to wildlife. Snow can decrease foraging efficiency and increase caloric expenditures of wildlife at a time when their energy reserves may already be low. The BLM has plans to examine the need for further protection of Gunnison sage grouse in light of the recently adopted Gunnison Sage Grouse Rangeland Conservation Plan. During that effort it is likely that the issue of snowmobile use at Hartman Rocks and other areas with important winter habitat for this species will be examined. If, after scoping and input from the DOW and the public, it is decided that motorized use is not appropriate in sage grouse winter range then those changes will be incorporated into our management actions at Hartman Rocks.

Skiff Milkvetch: Colonies would be protected by prohibiting roads (exception is Road 44), trails, developed parking areas, or other recreational activities from disturbing known populations. To facilitate this, two trails (A31, A53) will be re-routed away from known skiff milkvetch colonies and potential terrain park, jeep course, and parking lot locations would be surveyed for skiff milkvetch prior to approval. By limiting motorbikes and mountain bikes to designated routes, and closing unauthorized routes that appear, existing skiff milkvetch colonies will be protected and habitat will be maintained for new colonies to establish.

Gunnison milkvetch: Although Gunnison milkvetch is endemic to the Gunnison Basin, it is fairly common and widespread. Colonies and potential habitat of this plant will be protected by limiting motorbikes and mountain bikes to designated routes, and closing unauthorized routes that are created.

Crandall rockcress: If Crandall rockcress exists within the recreation area, it would also be protected by these actions. Because of the habitat this plant tends to occupy, it may be less susceptible to disturbance from recreationists than the other sensitive plants in the area. Potential terrain park, jeep course, and parking lot locations would be surveyed for Gunnison milkvetch and Crandall rockcress prior to approval.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species:

This standard is expected to be met as a result of mitigation incorporated into this alternative to protect sage grouse winter habitat, road closures to protect sage grouse on the South Beaver lek, implementing seasonal closures on the Aberdeen loop to protect sage grouse brood-rearing habitat, and restricting recreationists to designated trails to protect habitat of special status plants and animals.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, there would be more route miles than under the Proposed Action. Designated routes would only occur in the ACEC, therefore, users would likely continue to create unauthorized trails with high potential to impact sensitive plant species and further fragment GUSG habitat. There would be greater impacts from mountain bikers which would not be

required to stay on designated trails or to follow spring closures. There would be insufficient route closures and re-routes to protect special status species and their habitat.

This alternative has the least amount of winter trail grooming associated with it and therefore, may attract fewer recreationists to the area resulting in less impact to wintering bald eagles and sage grouse. However, under good snow conditions recreationists do use the area. Having a limited amount of groomed trails may benefit bald eagles and sage grouse since the trails would concentrate recreationists on designated routes, leaving other areas undisturbed for wildlife. Without groomed trails, pathways for sage grouse predators would not be created.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: This standard would not be met due to the continuation of impacts to special status species that are occurring under current management.

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): Compared to the Proposed Action, this alternative provides greater protection to special status species. The added protections include closing, rather than re-routing the two trails that currently pass through skiff milkvetch colonies (A31, A53). Also, the miles of groomed trails for winter recreation would be less (12.5 miles versus 15.7 miles), with no groomed trails within GUSG critical winter range. Therefore, impacts to wintering sage grouse would be less under this alternative. Providing a limited amount of groomed trails may benefit bald eagles and sage grouse since the trails would concentrate recreationists on designated routes, leaving undisturbed areas for wildlife. Recreationists that stray off designated routes would continue to disturb wintering sage grouse and bald eagles. No wheeled vehicles or snowmobiles would be legal in the area except the one used to groom ski trails. Patrols and enforcement would have to be increased to help ensure snowmobiles do not use the area.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: This standard would be met under this alternative.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): By expanding recreation to accommodate more uses and users, and promoting the area to attract recreationists from outside the local area, this alternative will result in unacceptable impacts to special status plant and animal species occupying the recreation area. This alternative has nearly seven more miles of roads and trails than the Proposed Action, and three more miles of groomed trails in the winter. The intent of this alternative is to accommodate as many routes as possible to handle increased use of the area. The high-density trail system throughout the recreation area that could evolve under this alternative would displace sage grouse from nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitat. It would also impact sensitive plant species by decreasing habitat available for expansion of colonies. With more users in the area there is a greater likelihood of unauthorized user-created trails that could directly impact sage grouse and colonies of sensitive plants.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species:
Under this alternative of expanding recreational opportunities, this standard would not be met.

WETLANDS & RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment:

The riparian areas in the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area are associated with intermittent drainages, springs and seeps. These riparian areas are dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) or willows (*Salix* spp.) or herbaceous vegetation. Roads and trails have impacted some areas; livestock grazing and deer and elk have also impacted the riparian areas by trailing, grazing and browsing. Some

drainages have experienced entrenchment and headcutting due to the loss of plant cover from excessive grazing and the physical impacts from vehicles. Riparian habitat in these areas has been lost. In recent years livestock management has improved somewhat and some riparian areas are improving. Wintering big game may be using the area less due to the increased human use which may be lessening the utilization of riparian vegetation.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: Under this alternative, the cooperative effort between recreational user groups and the BLM will facilitate appropriate trail use, maintenance and relocation. This is expected to improve the drainage characteristics of many areas that would improve riparian areas.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems:
It is expected that riparian areas would move toward meeting this standard.

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative there would be little change from the current situation. There are several trails and roads that would continue to impact riparian areas. Closing of trails or roads without appropriate construction of drainage structures will generally not solve the problem associated with riparian areas in drainage ways that are eroding or incised.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems:
It is expected that only a small portion of the degraded riparian areas would improve to meet this standard.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): this alternative would have less routes than the proposed action. Assuming the level of recreation use would not be likely to decrease the same amount of visitors (or possibly increasing somewhat) would be concentrated on fewer routes. This could increase potential impacts to those remaining routes in riparian areas. Under this alternative no motorcycle terrain park would be developed which would result in no impact to a small section of riparian included in the area of the terrain park recommended in the proposed action. Without the development of the terrain park, though, it will be harder to effectively close the motorcycle trail in a more valuable riparian area in Sections 21 and 22. The overall effect on the health of riparian values would be negative.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems:
It is expected that riparian areas would move toward meeting this standard under this alternative.

Maximize Recreational Opportunities (Alt. 4): under this alternative there would be an increase in the number of open routes and increased use on roads and trails overall. Given that current management of trails and roads is insufficient to improve many of the degraded riparian areas, the implementation of this alternative would probably not improve current riparian condition and may increase degradation to riparian areas.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems:
It is expected that implementation of this alternative would not appreciably improve degraded riparian areas and may increase damage to riparian systems in some areas. This standard would not be met under this alternative.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment:

The soil mapping units of the area Kezar gravelly sandy loam, Cathedral gravelly sandy loam, Lucky gravelly sandy loam, Cheadle gravelly sandy loam, Duffson loam, Corpening loam, Parlin channery loam, Hopkins channery loam, Duffson loam, Spring Creek stony loam, Alluvial land, Stony land and Rock outcrop. The erosion hazard rating of these soils ranges from slight to high. The actual soil erosion is for the most part dependent on plant cover. Some sites in the area have shallow soils and are droughty and produce sparse vegetative cover. Over much of the area plant cover has been reduced by historic excessive livestock grazing, drought, grazing during the extreme drought years of 1990 through 1992 and 2000 and 2001 and physical impacts from roads and trails.

Microphytic soil crusts have been greatly reduced in many areas. Visual indicators of soil erosion can be found in many upland areas, stream channel incision is also common suggesting imbalance between the upland watersheds and drainages. Livestock grazing has improved somewhat in recent years but grazing during recent extreme drought years has likely reduced forage plant vigor and cover. User created trails continue to cause accelerated erosion. See also the section on Surface and Ground Water quality.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The improved trail and road management that is expected from the cooperative effort between the recreational user groups and BLM is expected to reduce soil movement and loss from trails and roads. Loss of plant cover, soil disturbance and accelerated soil erosion would occur as a result of motorized vehicle use in the terrain park; impacts to offsite areas would be almost entirely prevented due to the presence of an existing erosion control earthen dam in the drainage downstream of the terrain park. The majority of the extreme jeep course is on rock outcrop and while some plant cover would be destroyed it is expected to be minimal.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils:

With the exception of the terrain park, It is expected that this alternative will improve soil conditions to allow the area to move toward meeting this standard.

No Action Alternative: The current management of recreational use is insufficient to prevent accelerated soil loss associated with roads and trails. While trail and road maintenance is being accomplished it is less than what is required given the miles of routes. User created trails continue to be created because enforcement is inadequate.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils:

While some trail and road improvement will be accomplished, the current budget and focus has been insufficient to resolve the majority of trail/road erosion issues. It is unlikely that appreciable improvement would be accomplished such this standard would be met under this alternative.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): This alternative has the fewest miles of open routes of all the alternatives and with the increased focus on minimizing recreational impacts it is expected that impacts to upland soils would be reduced from the current situation.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils:
It is expected that the area would move toward meeting this standard.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): This alternative has the largest number of miles of open routes of all the alternatives. The goal of increasing recreational use on the area would increase the impacts to upland soils. The uncertainty of funding and recreation user cooperation makes it unlikely that the appropriate level of trail and road maintenance and relocation would keep up with the anticipated increased impact.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Upland soils:
It is expected that increased use of the area and uncertainty of the ability to manage the impacts from the increased use would make it unlikely the area would move toward meeting this standard.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment:

Existing and proposed trails, roads, parking, and use areas cross a variety of vegetation types including open grassland/shrub types and riparian types, with the vast majority being vegetation dominated by sagebrush. Some existing trails go through riparian areas. The majority of new construction will occur in upland grassland/shrub types.

Environmental Consequences:

Proposed Action: Impacts to plant communities will occur where vegetation is removed or altered. The disturbance to vegetation will be the minimum necessary to develop any new trails (re-routes), parking areas, one to two extreme 4-WD courses and a motorcycle terrain park.

New trails - re-routes – are needed to address existing resource problems and two re-routes are specifically needed to move existing trails out of known Skiff Milkvetch populations. Under this proposal, recreation use in suitable Milkvetch habitat would be limited. Two of the three proposed parking areas are already in use and devoid of vegetation; and the third would require widening of a roadside area on an alluvial fan which is infested with weeds, so impacts to native vegetation here are minimal as well. The location of the first proposed extreme 4-WD course is restricted to slick rock, with access to and from existing roads. The second extreme 4-WD course is similar in nature; however, it would have some impacts to vegetation, but these impacts would be restricted to a very small area – approximately an acre or less. A small number of (approximately 3) conifer trees would likely have to be removed to provide safe access on both courses. The motorcycle terrain park would have the most effect on vegetation. However, the proposed location is in an area already heavily impacted by contour plowing, seedings of non-native species, a relatively depleted understory, a silt/water impoundment, and the area has some current motorcycle and shooting use. The motorcycle terrain park would be fenced to prevent and minimize additional impacts outside the designated use area.

Even though the total area of vegetation removal resulting from new trail, road and parking lot construction is small, there could be additional impacts to plant communities adjacent to these areas from increased human access as a result of this proposal. In areas where vegetation removal is necessary, proper design should minimize the impacts to vegetation in these areas. The proposed action limits travel to designated routes only, and will close inappropriate trails. This plan was developed cooperatively with various user groups and as such has their support, which should aid in confining use to designated roads and trails – something that is currently lacking. Consequently, this alternative should help to reduce and prevent future impacts to vegetation in areas adjacent to designated use areas. Except for the small, isolated areas where vegetation removal is likely (i.e. trail re-routes, the motorcycle terrain park, the second extreme 4-WD course and the alluvial weedy area for

the third parking lot), it is likely that Standard 3 would be met under this alternative.

No Action Alternative: Plant communities would not be impacted as a result of vegetation removal from new designated trails, road or parking lot construction. However, the future demand for use in the Hartman Rocks area will probably result in more user created trails, as is currently the case. This could result in increased resource impacts to vegetation if the public is not careful with the routes they choose. Currently, the ability to confine use to designated roads and trails is lacking. Based on historic and projected funding, manpower, and a likely lack of support from user groups, it is not feasible to implement needed enforcement under this alternative. Implementation of this alternative would very likely result in removal of plant cover from new/expanding user created use areas. Some of this new use has and will likely continue to be in Skiff Milkvetch habitat. Consequently, it is unlikely that Standard 3 would be met under this alternative.

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): Impacts to plant communities will be similar to, but less than those described in the Proposed Action for this standard. The impacts from vegetation removal would be limited to one extreme 4-WD course (which is minimal), one parking area and any re-routes to resolve current resource impacts. Instead of re-routing trails A31 (Dirty Sock) and A53 (Quarry Drop), they will be closed because they directly impact known Milkvetch populations. This alternative limits travel to designated routes only, and will close inappropriate trails. It is likely that Standard 3 would be met under this alternative.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): Impacts to plant communities, although similar to those described in the Proposed Action for this standard, will likely be increased due to an anticipated increase in the number of new trails (not just re-routes), new users, the active promotion of the area, and the promoting and sanctioning of new events. The increased impacts would likely be greatest in the creation of additional trails, and to the plant communities adjacent to designated user areas which would result from increased human access as a result of this alternative. Furthermore, while two trails will be re-routed out of known Skiff Milkvetch populations, this alternative allows for recreation use in suitable Milkvetch habitat currently lacking known populations. The ability to confine use to designated roads and trails is currently lacking. Based on historic and projected funding and staffing it is not feasible to implement needed enforcement under the increased recreation use that would occur under this alternative. The implementation of this alternative would very likely result in the removal of plant cover and impacts to Skiff Milkvetch populations or it's suitable habitat. Consequently, it is unlikely that Standard 3 would be met under this alternative.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment:

There is aquatic wildlife habitat associated with the springs, seeps and streams in and adjacent to the area. The important aquatic wildlife habitat in the area occurs in South Beaver Creek, Tomichi Creek and the Gunnison River. While no data has been collected, it appears that South Beaver Creek is potentially more susceptible to impacts from recreational use in the Hartman's Rock Area than the Gunnison River because of the number and density of trails adjacent to each stream. The concern is sediment due to accelerated soil erosion on the roads, trails and gullies in areas that drain into South Beaver Creek.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: This alternative has as an objective the improvement of trail and road management so that accelerated soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation is reduced.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation, Aquatic, and Wildlife, Terrestrial):

It is expected that the amount of sediment moving into South Beaver Creek would be reduced under this alternative such that this standard would be met.

No Action Alternative: The management of trails and roads has generally been insufficient to reduce accelerated erosion and sedimentation. .

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation, Aquatic, and Wildlife, Terrestrial): This alternative would not adequately reduce excess sediment from trails and roads that could potentially negatively impact aquatic wildlife habitat.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2):

The increase in management of roads and trails under this alternative would reduce accelerated soil erosion and sedimentation that could negatively impact aquatic wildlife habitat.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial):

Implementation of this alternative would lessen impacts to aquatic wildlife to ensure this standard would be met.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4):

Increased recreational use of the area coupled with the uncertainty of the ability to increase the management of trail and road use suggests negative impacts to aquatic wildlife would increase under this alternative.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial):

It is unlikely that this standard would be met under this alternative.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment:

The Hartman Rocks Recreation Area has a variety of habitat types including sagebrush shrublands, gravelly slopes with dry site vegetation including juniper and yucca, perennial and intermittent streams with associated riparian areas, and rock outcrops with cliffs, ledges, and talus slopes. These varied habitats support a diversity of wildlife including deer, elk, pronghorn, cottontails, white-tailed jackrabbits, coyotes, bobcats, a variety of small mammals, raptors, and migratory birds as described in that section of this Environmental Analysis (EA). The entire recreation area is within elk and mule deer critical winter range. Deer regularly winter in the area, while elk tend to use it in severe winters.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: Wildlife species vary in their tolerance to human disturbances and not all species can be addressed in this EA. The more sensitive species may exhibit behavioral changes, displacement, and reduced reproduction. Recreation has been occurring in the Hartman Rocks area for many years, with most trails designated under this Proposed Action already established. Generally, wildlife is expected to benefit from the increased management and monitoring of recreational activity in the Hartman Rocks area. By designating specific routes that are open to recreationists and closing any unauthorized trails that are created, existing wildlife habitat will be maintained and disturbances will not extend into areas without designated trails. With designated routes, recreational use can be

more predictable, allowing wildlife to find secure areas where recreationists are less likely to intrude. The closure of the Golf Course Trail (T6) to mountain bikes and motorized vehicles will protect wildlife inhabiting the riparian area that the trail follows.

The motorcycle terrain park would displace all but the most tolerant wildlife species from the 15 to 20 acres that it will occupy. However, concentrating motocross activity in one area rather than allowing it to occur in dispersed locations throughout the recreation area, will be less disruptive to wildlife. This is also true of the extreme jeep course.

Even without the presence of human disturbance, snow, cold temperatures, and a lack of food make winter a stressful time for wildlife in the Gunnison Basin. The 17.7 miles of winter trails proposed for Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling will have greater impact to wildlife compared with current management in which about 6.5 miles of trails are groomed. This increase in groomed trails will encourage more use of the area. Research has shown that motorized and non-motorized winter recreation has the potential to negatively affect deer and elk in several ways including displacing them to less suitable or desirable habitat, causing excessive expenditure of energy, and increasing their home ranges as they move to avoid the disturbance (Dorrance et al. 1975, Freddy et al, 1986, Severinghaus and Tullar 1975, Sheppard, 1996). Although these studies are unable to prove that either type of recreation influences ungulates at the population level, Creel et al. (2002) and Hardy (2001) have presented physiological evidence that individuals do undergo stress from winter recreation. The cumulative effects of this stress could result in lower reproduction, suppression of the immune system, muscle wasting and ulcers in the digestive organs.

The noise from snowmobiles would cause additional disturbance to wildlife. Wildlife may eventually habituate to the noise, however, regular patrols would be needed to ensure that snowmobiles stayed on designated trails – those that stray off predictable, designated trails would cause greater impacts to wildlife. The compacted, groomed trails would also provide pathways for predators such as coyotes to more readily access the area to hunt; the greatest concern with this is the potential impact on GUSG as discussed under Threatened and Endangered Species section. Although trails would only be groomed when there is sufficient snow, this is also the time when this area provides critical winter habitat for deer and, to a lesser extent, elk. Disturbance to wildlife that causes them to flee is most detrimental at this time due to the energy they must expend to travel through the snow. Closing the entire area to recreation during severe winters, based upon consultations with BLM and CDOW biologists, would be beneficial to wildlife.

Although impacts to wintering wildlife are expected in the developed areas, large tracts of land in the northern, western, and southern portions of the planning area are void of winter trails. These lands, comprising approximately 50% of the planning area, will remain undeveloped for winter recreation to protect winter wildlife habitat. For those wildlife species with smaller home ranges, sufficient buffers from recreational disturbance also exists in the tracts of land between trails in the portion of the planning area with groomed trails.

The creation of two areas to focus target shooting will benefit wildlife by concentrating this disturbance to designated areas rather than having it dispersed throughout the recreation area. The temptation and opportunities to shoot at wildlife would be reduced in a more focused target shooting area.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): Under this alternative, this standard is expected to be met. Wildlife will benefit from the increased management of the area, including designation of specific routes. Large tracts of

land, comprising approximately 50% of the planning area, will be left void of winter trails providing wildlife with undisturbed winter habitat. Also, there is an option to close the area to recreationists during severe winters to protect wildlife from disturbance when they are most vulnerable.

No Action Alternative: Continuing with current management of the recreation area would not provide adequate protection to wildlife. Disturbances would increase as more unauthorized trails are created, mountain bikes stray off designated roads, target shooting occurs throughout the area, rock climbing is open in the entire area, and winter recreation is dispersed and open to snowmobiles. All of these contribute to habitat fragmentation, loss and deterioration of habitat, and displacement of wildlife.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): Under this alternative, this standard would not be met.

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): Compared to the Proposed Action, this alternative provides greater protection to wildlife. The added protections of this alternative are fewer total route miles (69.8 vs. 77.3), fewer miles of groomed winter ski trails (12.5 vs. 15.7) with no snowmobile trails, and wildlife values would be given priority rather than just consideration when evaluating routes and uses. Having a limited amount of groomed trails in the winter may benefit wildlife since the trails would concentrate recreationists on designated, predictable routes, leaving other areas undisturbed for wildlife.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): Under this Resource Protection alternative, this standard would be met.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): Compared to the Proposed Action, this alternative provides less protection to wildlife. Maximizing recreational opportunities by increasing the number of open routes and accommodating uses that may not be present now, as proposed in this alternative, will result in significant impacts to wildlife. This alternative has nearly seven more miles of roads and trails than the Proposed Action, and three more miles of groomed trails in the winter. The intent of this alternative is to accommodate as many routes as possible to handle increased use of the area. The high-density trail system throughout the recreation area that could evolve under this alternative would fragment wildlife habitat and displace wildlife to less suitable areas. Protections to wildlife would be the minimum required to meet legal requirements for special status species, with little attention given to other wildlife species in the area.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): Under this alternative of expanding recreational opportunities, this standard would not be met.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS:

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access			X
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire	X		
Forest Management		X	
Geology and Minerals		X	
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement			X
Paleontology	X		

Noise			X
Range Management			X
Realty Authorizations		X	
Recreation			X
Socio-Economics		X	
Transportation			X
Visual Resources			X

ACCESS:

Affected Environment:

There is extensive opportunity for public access to the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area through access points at the base area, McCabes Lane, Bambi’s Trailhead and the southern entrance off the Gold Basin Road. Other access points have developed over time – usually pushed in by recreationists. Some of these user-created access points trespass on private land without the permission of the landowner. Some of these illegal access points have been closed and others still need to be closed. It has been the philosophy of this planning effort that we need to identify places where existing trails enter or cross private land and talk with the landowners to see if they are willing to grant the public access on those trails. If they are willing then we would discuss any stipulations they want to place on that use and incorporate those details into our management strategy for the area. If they are not willing to grant the public access then the trail should be closed or rerouted to prevent trespass. In talking with landowners we have secured public access on 120 acres owned by the Gunnison County Pioneer Society with specific stipulations on that use. We are still in discussions with 2 other landowners that are considering granting permissive easements for public use on their land. Once those negotiations are finalized we can incorporate those details into the management plan. All other landowners have indicated that they are not willing to grant access to the public and those trails will need to be closed.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: Access issues are similar under all alternatives except the no action. There is adequate access to the Hartman Rocks area now. Some routes that currently exist illegally trespass on private land. Where possible we will try to negotiate permissive easements from landowners. If these are granted we will work with landowners to understand and follow their wishes. We would also work with recreationists to try to ensure compliance and maintain routes. If access is denied then we will work to close or reroute

No Action Alternative: Under this alternative, less emphasis would be placed on developing and maintaining access across private land. We would continue to maintain existing legal access routes to the area which are adequate to meet public demand.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): effects would be similar to the proposed action.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): effects would be similar to the proposed action.

NOISE

Affected Environment:

Hartman Rocks is an urban interface recreation area but it is far enough removed from the town of Gunnison that very little noise from town reaches the area. The area is dominated by natural sounds at low ambient levels. The recreation use in the area often results in noticeable sounds from motorized sources such as cars, trucks, motorcycles, ATVs or snowmobiles. Such sounds are common and usually expected in an area like this though they are not always appreciated. Some recreationists place a high value on peace and quiet when they recreate on public lands. Some other recreationists enjoy seeing how much noise they can make. Most recreationists can live with some noise disturbance in a recreation setting like this but would prefer that it is not too often and not too loud.

Sound intensity is typically measured in decibels (dB). A conversation at a distance of one meter is about 50 dB or below. Prolonged exposure to 85 dB or more is considered to be potentially harmful and requires monitoring according to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration. The prediction of noise levels and estimation of impacts near a proposed project depend on three factors: 1) The type of equipment that generates the noise, 2) The distance between the project noise sources and sensitive receptors, and 3) Obstacles or barriers to sound between the source and receptors. The noise generated by the proposed action should be considered in terms of the annoyance they may cause to visitors or adjacent landowners and its potential to disturb or displace the wildlife that live in the area. There are no standard federal regulations on the amount of noise that can be produced by a motorcycle though some areas have established their own standards. The Motorcycle Industry Council recommends that motorcycles produce no more than 96 dB when measured at 20 inches from the source. The State of Colorado has recently required that recreation vehicles such as motorcycles produce no more than 84 dB when measured at 50 ft. from the source.

The potential for noise disturbance to wildlife living in the area will vary between species and between different times of the year. Large, mobile species such as deer or coyote will usually find it easy to move away from the area of disturbance particularly during the summer when food supplies are more plentiful and there is little to impede their travel. That could change during the winter when food is scarce and travel through the snow is more difficult. Smaller animals that are less mobile or have smaller home ranges will be less likely to be able to adapt to localized noise disturbance.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: under this alternative it is not expected that the ambient noise levels in the planning area would change significantly. The level of recreation use may slowly go up over the years along with the population of the valley. The planning area would continue to be dominated by natural sounds with periodic noise increases due to the passing of motorized vehicles. There would be some localized changes in noise levels. The Golf Course Trail (T6) would be designated as open to foot and horse traffic only so visitors there can expect a bit more peace and quiet though the sounds of motor vehicles using nearby trails may still be heard. The improvement of 2 shooting areas along the McCabe Lane access road may have the effect of focusing more shooting use in those areas. Shooting use is relatively infrequent but can often be heard for several hundred yards around the site. The topographic screening around these sites will prevent this noise from carrying down to the nearest houses which are at least a mile and a half away. Based on the mitigation mentioned above noise levels in the winter would be reduced once there is enough snow to start grooming the ski trails. At that time, all wheeled vehicles would be excluded from the planning area though snowmobiles would still be allowed on some roads.

The development of a terrain park along the McCabe Lane access road will likely result in greater noise levels in the vicinity when motorcyclists are using the area. Topographic screening will prevent this noise from carrying down to the nearest houses which are almost a mile away. Noise measurements were taken at these houses while a particularly loud motorcycle (106 dB) was revving its engine near the proposed site. At the 2 closest houses to the site only a very faint noise could be heard outside the houses and no noise readings registered on the decibel meter. It is very unlikely that any noise from motorcycle use in the proposed terrain park could be heard while inside either of these dwellings. In order to avoid the potential for a large gathering of motorcycles that could cause increased noise levels we have added the stipulation that no competitive events could be held at this Terrain Park facility. The site for the terrain park was selected partly because of its distance from more heavily used portions of the planning area. The noise increase in the immediate vicinity of the terrain park would disturb fewer visitors due to the lower use levels along the McCabe Lane corridor. At the same time, noise levels would be somewhat reduced in the valley at the top of the hill, which is more heavily used by visitors. This is because the development of the terrain park is expected to significantly reduce the amount of motorcycle use at the old gravel pit in that valley. A reduction in noise would also be seen along road R2 because the informal motorcycle track that has sprung up near that road (A32) would be closed.

No Action Alternative: under this alternative there would be no significant change to the ambient noise levels in the planning area. Several areas will continue to be affected by noise from motorcycles that are using impromptu tracks. The noise from shooting would continue to be dispersed throughout the planning area. Noise from motor vehicles and snowmobiles during the winter would continue to be noticeable at times.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): under this alternative it is not expected that the ambient noise levels in the planning area would change significantly. The level of recreation use may slowly go up over the years along with the population of the valley. The planning area would continue to be dominated by natural sounds with periodic noise increases due to the passing of motorized vehicles. There would be some localized changes in noise levels. The Golf Course Trail (T6) would be designated as open to foot and horse traffic only so visitors there can expect a bit more peace and quiet though the sounds of motor vehicles using nearby trails may still be heard. The improvement of 2 shooting areas along the McCabe Lane access road may have the effect of focusing more shooting use in those areas. Shooting use is relatively infrequent but can often be heard for several hundred yards around the site. The topographic screening around these sites will prevent this noise from carrying down to the nearest houses which are at least a mile and a half away. Noise levels in the winter would be reduced once there is enough snow to start grooming the ski trails. At that time, all motor vehicles except the trail groomer would be excluded from the planning area. No motorcycle terrain park would be developed under this alternative so there would be less noise in that area than under the proposed action but there would be more noise in other areas that motorcycles regularly use such as the old gravel pit near the top of the Kill Hill closer to the base area.

Maximize Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): under this alternative it is not expected that the ambient noise levels in the planning area would change significantly. The level of recreation use would likely go up over the years as a result of population growth in the valley and the promotion of the area. The planning area would continue to be dominated by natural sounds with periodic noise increases due to the passing of motorized vehicles. There would be some localized changes in noise levels. The Golf Course Trail (T6) would be designated as open to foot and horse traffic only so visitors there can expect a bit more peace and quiet though the sounds of motor vehicles using nearby trails may still be heard. The improvement of 2 shooting areas along the McCabe Lane access road

may have the effect of focusing more shooting use in those areas. Shooting use is relatively infrequent but can often be heard for several hundred yards around the site. The topographic screening around these sites will prevent this noise from carrying down to the nearest houses which are at least a mile and a half away. Noise levels in the winter would be slightly reduced once there is enough snow to start grooming the ski trails. At that time, all motor vehicles except snowmobiles would be excluded from the planning area.

RANGE MANAGEMENT:

Affected Environment:

The Gold Basin Allotment is located three miles directly south of Gunnison, Colorado. The allotment consists of 17,395 acres of public land, 2,627 acres of private land owned by the permittee and is run in conjunction with a United States Forest Service allotment that has 8,501 acres.

The allotment is divided into eight pastures. Most of the west boundary of the allotment is South Beaver Creek. The Lower Cochetopa and the Stubbs Gulch allotments form the east boundary of the allotment. The south boundary is the Forest Service pasture that is run in conjunction with this allotment. Topography in this area is rolling hills with intermittent drainages running throughout it. Elevation ranges from 7,800 feet on the north end to 9,300 feet on the southern end. Vegetation on the allotment varies from extensive crested wheatgrass seedings in the northern two pastures to large areas of sagebrush, bluegrass, western wheatgrass, needlegrasses, squirreltail, junegrass, phlox and other species. There are several extensive riparian areas in the allotment that are composed of willows, grasses, sedges, rushes and areas with an overstory of Cottonwoods. The planning area contains all or portions of 3 pastures which are typically grazed for 10 to 14 days each year from late May to early June.

There have been past conflicts between recreation and grazing uses. Some recreationists would fail to close wire gates they would pass through and livestock would move into pastures they were not supposed to be in. Installing cattle guards at key places and using signs to educate recreationists have helped reduce this problem. Cattle traversing trails in the area were sometimes moved more than desired when recreation use on the trail would push them ahead. Recreationists sometimes complained of perceived damage to vegetation and the droppings left from livestock operations.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The majority of the impacts of the Proposed Action will occur in the Hay Gulch, April Gulch and Moore Gulch pastures of the Gold Basin Allotment. Any increases in any recreation uses and/or any addition trails will make livestock management more difficult than it has been in the past. Because livestock use trails and paths, any and all new trails or paths will be used by livestock. With increased signing, education of the recreational users in the importance of good livestock grazing management and improvements in gates and cattle guards to control livestock and make it easier for recreational users will aid in livestock management.

The livestock permittee has expressed concern that the development of the motorcycle terrain park in Site 1 could adversely affect his animals during the critical period when he moves them from private land to public land. He fears that the increased noise and activity at the terrain park could prevent calves from reuniting with their mothers and disrupt the animals in other ways. His preference was to move the proposed terrain park to another area. If that was not feasible he suggested that the terrain park be closed during the short time his animals are in that pasture. To address this concern the proposed action calls for the terrain park to be closed during the time the animals are moving through this area. This would significantly reduce the potential impacts to livestock. This short seasonal closure would be monitored to determine if the closure was effective and to determine the appropriate amount of time necessary to achieve management objectives.

No Action Alternative: The No Action Alternative would continue management as currently is prescribed in the Gunnison RMP. Significant impacts do result on a yearly basis due to gates being left open, even at existing cattle guards locations, and harassment of livestock from some recreation uses. This results in poor livestock distribution in all of the lower pastures associated with this plan. Monitoring of these pastures then is made very difficult due to the cattle not being where they are supposed to be. In recent years management has improved in both the recreation and livestock uses, due to increased coordination, cattle guard installation and education on both sides.

Other Alternatives: The majority of the impacts of this alternative will occur in the Hay Gulch, April Gulch and Moore Gulch pastures of the Gold Basin Allotment. Any increases in any recreation uses and/or any addition trails will make livestock management more difficult than it has been in the past. Because livestock use trails and paths, any and all new trails or paths will be used by livestock. With increased signing, education of the recreational users in the importance of good livestock grazing management and improvements in gates and cattle guards to control livestock and make it easier for recreational users will aid in livestock management.

RECREATION:

Affected Environment:

The Hartman Rocks Recreation Area is a popular urban interface recreation area about 2 to 6 miles southwest of Gunnison. It has been a focus for concentrated recreation use for at least 35 years. Its proximity to Gunnison makes it a handy place for local residents to go for a quick recreation experience close to town after work, after class or when higher elevation recreation sites are still covered with snow. It is estimated that it receives about 15,000 to 20,000 user days each year. Visitors practice a variety of recreation activities including mountain biking, motorcycling, ATV riding, 4 wheeling, rock climbing, camping, trail running, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, dog sledding, hill parties, target shooting, hunting, paintball and more.

The focused recreation use in this area has led to some benefits and problems. The benefits are that many locals use the roads and trails in this area regularly for a variety of recreational pursuits. Some of the concerns that arise from this recreation use include impacts to soil & vegetation from user created trails, potential impacts to cultural sites, impacts to wildlife from concentrated recreation use, conflicts between recreationists and livestock operations, trespass on adjacent private lands and conflicts between different recreation groups.

The Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the BLM's Gunnison Field Office, prepared in 1993, only provides general guidelines for managing the recreation in this area. The BLM recreation staff along with our partners in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group have taken some steps to manage the area but now feel that use levels have increased to the point that a more detailed management strategy, in the form of a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP), is necessary to more clearly identify the issues and define management goals and actions for the area. We have been a regular participant in the Hartman Rocks Planning Group which includes representatives from the City, County, local homeowners and representatives from various interest groups that use the area. The group has informally discussed and carried out management actions that fit within current management guidelines. It has also helped to organize a variety of volunteer projects to improve the area. The BLM participated in the creation of a Management Plan for the 160 acres of City & County land at the base area back in 1998. That plan coordinated with management priorities on BLM and made some recommendations to be considered when we began to develop a more detailed management plan but it did not identify any specific management decisions that applied to BLM land.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The proposed action focused on two equal priorities for the recreation program – to provide and enhance a variety of enjoyable recreation experiences for visitors to this area and to minimize the impacts to other resource values caused by recreation use. To ensure the visitors to the area have a good experience we carefully considered a variety of factors. We tried to accommodate as many different recreation activities as we could. This included adding opportunities for several activities that are not currently available (motorcycle terrain park and Extreme 4wd). Since most of the recreation use centers around the single track trail system we did an informal survey of trail users to see which trails they liked and what made a good experience for them. We examined the difficulty of the trails and tried to make sure that there were trails for all skill levels. We evaluated trails in light of how well they contributed to the total trail system with emphasis on providing or maintaining loops rather than out-and-back alignments. To maintain the quality of the recreation setting and protect resources it made sense to limit both motorized and mechanized use to designated routes and halt the creation of unauthorized roads and trails. This system of designated routes will make it easier for the public to understand and comply with the vehicle designations in the area. We chose to not put much effort into aggressively marketing this area. This will likely have the effect of slowing the growth rate of recreation use. This, in turn, will help maintain the quality of recreation experiences by reducing crowding, noise, trash and other factors that cause social impacts and reduce visitor satisfaction. We focused target shooting activities in two relatively safe and suitable areas. This will improve the quality of experience for other recreationists by reducing their concerns about safety while they recreate. The number of miles of ski and snowshoe trails that could be groomed in the winter would increase from 6.5 to 15.7 miles to provide more opportunities. All of these actions would have the effect of improving recreation opportunities.

There are also parts of the proposed action that would be considered negative by recreation visitors to the area. A total of 40 routes covering 18 miles would be closed to recreation use. There are good reasons for these closures including prevention of trespass on private land and protection of critical resources. Still, any road or trail closure is perceived as negative by some recreationists. Actions such as designating the Golf Course Trail for foot & horse traffic only will increase satisfaction for hikers and horseback riders but diminish opportunities a bit for mountain bikers and motorcyclists. The terrain park for motorcycles improves opportunities for motorcycles but may diminish enjoyment for other users who would prefer not to see a new track developed. Some of the routes that have been used by snowmobilers, particularly the road to the south that connects with the Gold Basin Road, would not be designated for use by snowmobiles to protect wintering Sage Grouse. These tradeoffs were discussed at length with the core planning group as well as BLM resource specialists and the proposed action represents our best effort to balance the many different demands on this area. As a result we feel the overall effect on recreation opportunities and experiences will be positive.

No Action Alternative: under this alternative recreation use would still go on at Hartman Rocks. There would continue to be 2 different vehicle designations at the area – Limited to Designated Routes inside the ACEC (which does not apply to Mt. Bikes) and Limited to Existing Routes outside the ACEC (which does apply to Mt. Bikes). These different designations result in differing effects on the ground and make it difficult to convey a clear understanding of the rules to visitors. It has also resulted in additional trail proliferation inside the ACEC which has resulted in some impacts to Skiff Milkvetch. Some user created routes illegally trespass on private land and that would likely continue under this alternative. We would lack a variety of improvements that would add to visitor satisfaction & enjoyment such as a motorcycle terrain park, extreme 4wd routes, benches at scenic overlooks etc. We would also be unlikely to carry out a number of management actions that would protect other resources in the area such as seasonal closures to protect Sage Grouse, winter closures on vehicles to

protect wildlife. Only about 6.5 miles of ski trails could be groomed in the winter when there is enough snow. This would provide less recreation opportunities than the proposed action. This alternative would have about 5.5 miles more roads and trails available for recreation though use on some of these could result in trespass or inappropriate resource damage.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): under this alternative managing for a variety of recreation opportunities would continue to be a priority for this area. Our attempts to reduce the impacts from recreation on other resources would reduce some of the opportunities for recreation. There would be about 6 miles less roads and trails available for recreation than under the proposed action. There would be no terrain park for motorcycle use. There would be only one extreme 4wd route. There would still be a variety of recreation opportunities available but not as extensive as under the proposed action.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): this alternative allowed the greatest number of roads and trails open for recreation use – about 7 miles more than the preferred alternative. For this reason, this was the alternative most preferred by recreationists in their review of the draft plan. There would be a terrain park, there would be 2 extreme jeep routes, there would be a more extensive system of trails for winter use. There would also be more promotion of the area to draw in visitors from outside the area. This could have an economic benefit for the town of Gunnison by drawing more business into the area. It could also have a detrimental effect on recreation experiences if more promotion results in more crowding, more resource impacts or more vandalism. It is anticipated that to accommodate more recreation use and more miles of routes that we would need more assistance from volunteers to help us maintain the trail system. It is also expected that more stringent enforcement of regulations would be necessary to prevent excessive impacts from increased recreation use. In summary, this alternative would have some positive and some negative effects on the variety and quality of recreation experiences.

TRANSPORTATION:

Affected Environment:

There is an extensive network of roads and single track trails existing in the planning area. These total approximately 90.5 miles of routes – 64 road segments (~38 miles) and 70 trail segments (52.5 miles). Some of these were constructed and maintained with machinery but most were pushed in by recreationists. These user created routes were often not well designed which makes them more prone to soil erosion and resource impacts. Several routes have already been closed to avoid resource impacts. There are also at least 12 routes that trespass on adjacent private land without the owner's permission. The area is currently closed to vehicle use for several weeks in the springtime to prevent damage to roads and trails during spring thaw.

Vehicle designations are currently mixed. Part of the planning area is located in the South Beaver Creek ACEC. The Gunnison Resource Management Plan in 1993 limited motor vehicle use in this area to designated routes. This designation applied to motorized vehicles but did not address mountain bike use. Since that time a number of new routes have been created in the ACEC, primarily by mountain bikes. Once the routes are created then motorcycles often follow these routes even though it is against the current vehicle designations. Several of these new routes directly impact known population areas for the rare Skiff Milkvetch which the ACEC was set aside to protect. In the rest of the planning area, both vehicles and mountain bikes must stay on existing routes. This can pose a problem because not all existing routes are appropriate either for trespassing issues or resource damage concerns. The rules to limit use to existing routes were established in 2001 as an interim measure to try to halt the spread of many new user created routes. It was anticipated at that time that when more detailed planning occurred,

like this Recreation Area Management Plan, that more detailed route-by-route planning would be done to decide which routes were most needed. It was decided that in all alternatives we should convert the designations for the whole area to **Limited to Designated Routes** and make those rules apply to motor vehicles and mountain bikes. We feel it is essential to halt the haphazard creation of new routes by visitors. In the planning process with the Core Group we carefully assessed the routes to decide which provided the best chance of offering good recreation opportunities while minimizing resource impacts and eliminating trespass. The alternatives vary mainly in the number of miles of roads and trails that will be designated as appropriate routes. It is also essential that we work with the different user groups to maintain the system of designated routes.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The proposed action would designate about 73 miles of currently existing routes as open to recreationists for motorized use and mountain bike use. Two track roads would generally be open to all motorized vehicles but the only motorized use that could occur on single track trails would be motorcycles. Other activities such as hiking, trail running, horseback riding etc are also free to use these transportation routes. In addition, about 4 miles of new trails would be created as reroutes for existing trails that have sections that cause inappropriate resource impacts. Also included in that figure are the new routes proposed for the motorcycle terrain park and the extreme 4wd routes. This alternative would close about 18 miles of existing routes to motorized and mechanized uses. This is necessary to avoid trespass on private lands, to avoid resource impacts and to close redundant and unnecessary routes. It is felt this configuration would best balance the needs for public recreation opportunities and our desires to protect the area's resources. We would work cooperatively with volunteers from a variety of recreation groups to maintain this transportation system. We would close the area in the spring to motorized, mechanized and horse use as necessary to protect the transportation system during spring runoff. Use during the winter time is outlined in that specific section of the alternative. This would have the effect of restricting wheeled vehicles from the area once ski trail grooming has begun. About 15.7 miles of winter trails on designated roads could be groomed for cross country ski trails and used by snowmobiles when there is enough snow. An additional 2 miles along the powerline would be open to snowmobile use but would not be groomed for skiing. In general, this alternative would curtail use on some routes in the planning area but still allow use on an extensive system of roads and trails for public enjoyment.

No Action Alternative: Under current management about 78.6 miles of routes would be considered open. There would continue to be 2 different vehicle designations in the area which can lead to some confusion among visitors about what is and isn't legal. No new miles of trail would be created. A total of 14.7 miles would be closed to motorized and mechanized use in the summer. There would still be spring closures for motorized vehicles but the closure would not apply to mountain bikes. In the winter 6.5 miles of routes could be groomed for ski trails when there is enough snow. Vehicles and snowmobiles would be able to use the area but vehicles would be excluded from most of the groomed ski trail once grooming starts.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): under this alternative about 69.3 miles of roads & trails would be designated for public use, about .8 miles of new trail would be constructed as reroutes of existing trails to resolve resource impact issues and 21.6 miles would be closed to motorized and mechanized use in the summer. Spring closures would continue to be used to prevent damage on travel routes and would apply to motor vehicles, mt. bikes and horse use. In the winter, about 12.5 miles of roads could be groomed as cross country ski trails when there is enough snow. Once grooming operations start the

area would be closed to all motor vehicles including snowmobiles (except for the snowmobile used to groom the trails).

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): under this alternative about 79.2 miles of routes would be designated for public use, about 4.7 miles of new routes would be developed to resolve resource impact issues on existing trails. Also included in that figure are the new routes proposed for the motorcycle terrain park and the extreme 4wd routes. About 14.1 miles of existing routes would be closed to public use. Spring closures would continue to be used to prevent damage on travel routes and would apply to motor vehicles, mt. bikes and horse use. In the winter, about 16.3 miles of roads could be groomed as cross country ski trails when there is enough snow. Another 1.1 mile could be used for ski trail but would not be groomed. Snowmobiles would be allowed on all of the groomed ski trails along with another 7.3 miles of designated routes. Once grooming operations start on the ski trail the area would be closed to all wheeled vehicles to prevent damage to the groomed ski trails.

VISUAL RESOURCES:

Affected Environment:

The project area is comprised of a mixture of VRM classifications. These include:

VRM Class II (about 10% around the main rock formations of the ring dike) are areas where we place a high priority on maintaining the integrity of visual resources. Contrasts from human activities must be reduced as much as feasible and must not attract attention. Changes in any of the basic visual elements (form, line, color and texture) caused by a surface disturbing activity should not be evident in the characteristic landscape.

VRM Class III (about 5% in the NW portion of the planning area) are areas where we place a moderate priority on maintaining the integrity of visual resources. Contrasts from human activities may be evident but should remain subordinate to the natural landscape. Human activities should try to repeat the form, line, color and texture of the characteristic landscape in the area. Obvious visual scars should be avoided if possible.

VRM Class IV (about 85%) are areas where we place a low priority on maintaining the integrity of visual resources. Contrasts from human activities may attract attention and be a dominant feature of the landscape in terms of scale but should try to repeat the form, line, color and texture of the characteristic landscape in the area. Obvious visual scars should be avoided if possible.

The Hartman Rocks area has been the focus of intensive recreation use for many years. There are a number of areas where roads and trails are noticeable in the foreground and midground. Impromptu parking areas, motorcycle tracks, party sites, shooting sites and camping sites have all detracted from the visual integrity of the area. A large powerline also traverses the planning area and further degrades visual resources.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action: The proposed action would have both positive and negative effects on the integrity of visual resources in the planning area. In all VRM Classes visual resources would be improved by closing about 18 miles of inappropriate routes. This would reduce the visual impacts of these routes as they slowly revegetated and became less noticeable to visitors. The development of a little over 4 miles of new single track trails has the potential to cause some visual impacts but reducing those impacts will be a high priority as the routes are designed and laid out. As a result the expected impacts are minimal. The development and defining of several small parking areas would also reduce visual impacts by limiting the impact of the slowly expanding impromptu parking lots that are being created

by visitors. The development of the motorcycle terrain park would cause the loss of vegetation on the track and result in some visual impacts in the foreground and midground for visitors traveling along the McCabe Lane access to the area. These impacts would also be offset by the positive effects of closing some other impromptu motorcycle track areas at Hartman Rocks. Such impacts would be within acceptable parameters for the VRM Class IV area that the track is located in. There would also be some visual impacts if the second extreme jeep route is developed but only visible in the immediate area. All of the impacts to visual resources anticipated under this alternative would be within the acceptable limits defined for each VRM Class.

No Action Alternative: This alternative would also have some positive and negative effects on visual resources. A total of 78.6 miles of routes would be open – about 5 more miles than the proposed action. The terrain park would not be developed so those impacts would not be present but the impacts from user created tracks would continue to be a problem. The same is true of the parking areas and extreme 4wd routes. This alternative would likely result in more visual impact in the VRM II section of the planning area because this area now receives the heaviest use. Without the increased management focus called for in the proposed action there would be an increase in the number of user created routes and a lack of capability to fix problems. All things considered, from a VRM standpoint this alternative would have about the same or slightly more negative effects on visual resources than the proposed action.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2): this alternative is focused on more protection for other resource values including visual resources. It would have less negative effects on the integrity of visual resources by designating about 4 miles less of the existing roads and trails than the preferred alternative. Under this alternative there would not be a terrain park for motorcycle use and the visual impacts associated with that facility would not happen. Only one Extreme 4wd route would be developed and this would not be expected to cause much visual impact. All of the anticipated impacts to visual resources under this alternative would be within the guidelines for VRM management in the respective VRM Classes in the area.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4): this alternative would provide the most travel routes for recreationists to use and thus have the potential for the most impact to visual resources. It would provide about 6.25 more miles of roads and trails than the preferred alternative and another half mile of newly constructed routes. The terrain park would be developed along with the parking areas and 2 extreme 4wd routes. New routes would be designed to reduce visual impacts but the existing routes are not always designed this way. Almost all of the additional routes in this alternative are already in existence so the visual impact is already in place. The impact would be that 6.5 miles of routes would not have the chance to revegetate, become less noticeable and cause less visual impact. All of the anticipated impacts to visual resources under this alternative would be within the allowable guidelines for the respective VRM Classes in the area.

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Affected Environment:

Resource protection and public safety are the most important concern for Law Enforcement in the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area. With the urban interface the area received a variety of uses (i.e. Climbing, Mt. Biking, Hiking, OHV Use, Grazing, etc.) It is important that the area is managed in a way that provides for those uses, but also in a way that the resources are protected and the safety of the public is met.

Environmental Consequences/Mitigation:

Proposed Action:

Under the proposed action, signed designated travel routes allow for more effective management of the area and are more easily enforced by Law Enforcement. To be sure users are aware of these travel regulations as well as other regulations it is important that the regulations are well posted in the area. It will also be important that closed routes are well signed as such, and increased patrols occur in the area until the routes are re-vegetated. Increased Law Enforcement patrols would be needed in the area and a grace period would need to take place to allow for educating the users of the new regulations and restrictions.

No Action Alternative:

Under this alternative, management of the area would remain the same. Travel management would continue to be difficult to enforce as much of the area is limited to existing routes. When areas are limited to existing routes, it makes it hard for Law Enforcement to enforce as it does not take long for a route to be beat in and become a route. Existing routes are also more difficult to prove in court since a person new to the area may not know which routes existed when the RMP was completed in 1993.

Other Alternatives:

Resource Protection (Alt. 2) - Under this alternative, management of the area would focus on the resource protection of the area, more routes would be closed and more restrictions would be placed on the users of the area. Increased Law Enforcement patrols would be needed in the area and a grace period would need to take place to allow for educating users of the new regulations and restrictions.

Maximizing Recreation Opportunities (Alt. 4) – Under this alternative, management of the area would see an increase in use. The area is already heavily used and BLM Law Enforcement is limited on the number of patrols that can be made to the area. There would also be a higher probability that resource damage would occur and a potential for a higher rate of user conflicts in the area. To provide for resource protection and the public safety of users in the area, it would be important to plan for increased Law Enforcement patrols.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY:

The Hartman Rocks area has been used for relatively intensive, urban interface recreation for at least 35 years. In the early years most of the recreation was vehicle oriented for motorcycles and 4wd. Later in the 1990s to the present mountain biking has become a very popular pastime out there. During most of that time the vehicle designations for the area were Open. That allowed visitors to drive on or off the existing routes. Many new roads and trails were created by users during that time. Things started to change in 1993 when the RMP established a different vehicle designation in the ACEC. That said vehicles were Limited to Designated Routes. Further route proliferation came in the ACEC from mountain bikes that were not included in the rule change. Outside the ACEC unauthorized routes continued to pop up until we changed the vehicle designations for that area to Limited to Existing Routes. Those rules included Mt. bikes in the list of vehicles the rules applied to.

So over the years there has been a slow but steady increase in the amount of recreational use and in the number of roads and trails in the planning area. This plan is an attempt to try to lay out a strategy for management that would continue to offer outstanding recreation opportunities for a variety of visitors while minimizing the impacts of recreation on other resource values. The majority of the proposed use would take place on routes that already exist so only a little new surface disturbance would result from the implementation of this plan. The few areas where new routes would be allowed are places where the new

route is necessary to reduce impacts on other resources. The terrain park would be a new surface disturbing activity in its location but that impact would be offset by closing other informal motorcycle tracks in the area. The changing of vehicle designations to make the entire area Limited to Designated Routes should make it easier for the public to understand what is allowed in the area. It will also give the BLM a clear tool to halt the creation of unauthorized new routes. This would hopefully place an upper limit on surface disturbing activities in the area.

Given the slowly increasing population of Gunnison it is reasonable to expect recreation visits at Hartman Rocks to also increase slowly. Hopefully the management actions we have identified will help reduce the impacts to resources. But the social impacts that come from increased crowding in an area like this could rise slowly over time. We are hoping to reduce these impacts by a conscious choice not to heavily market the area and attract a lot of visitors in from outside the area. In short, recreation impacts have accumulated slowly over time. The BLM does not have absolute control of how the public recreates on public land. We can only try to nudge recreation in the proper direction with our management actions. This plan tries to reduce some of the impacts that have accumulated over time and set a course for future management that is more sustainable.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED:

- Gunnison Watershed Weed Commission - Adena Green,
- City of Gunnison – Dan Ampietro
- Gunnison County – Marlene Crosby
- Colorado Division of Wildlife - Matt Thorpe
- Southwest Resource Advisory Committee
- Hartman Rock Planning Group
- Western Area Power Administration – Susan Starceovich
- Gunnison Freeride Association – Kain Leonard, Dave Koslowski
- Crested Butte Mountain Biking Association
- Blue Mesa Four Wheelers – Ken Glover
- Black Canyon Audubon Society – Lori Brummer
- Moncrief Ranches – Ted Harter
- BLM State Office – Jack Placchi
- Colorado State OHV Coordinator – Tom Metsa
- Colorado Mountain Club – Vera Smith
- Gunnison Chamber of Commerce – Tammy Scott, Steve Shelafo
- Local homeowners – Bill Maier, Mark Fonken
- Local Mt. Bike Shops – Bill O'Rourke, Rick Garcia, Dave Meyer
- Local Motorcycle shops – Adam Griffith, Fritz Kadlec

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area of Responsibility</u>
Arden Anderson	Recreation Specialist	Recreation – Plan coordinator Access Transportation Visual Resources ACEC Noise
Sandy Borthwick	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds Terrestrial Wildlife Special Status Species

Arthur Hayes	Natural Resource Specialist	Aquatic Wildlife Riparian, Soils
Mike Henkel	Range Management Spec.	Range Management
Alex Birchfield	Natural Resource Specialist	Vegetation
David Lazorchak	Archeologist/ Geologist	Cultural Resources
Tyler Fouss	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement
Buddy Green	Range Management Spec.	Invasive Species
Jodi Bauman	Forester	Forest Management

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FONSI

CO-160-2005-016 EA

The environmental assessment and the analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

RATIONALE: Recreation use at the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area provides positive contributions to the human environment and adds to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of and visitors to the Gunnison Valley. Relatively unregulated recreation use in the Hartman Rocks area for the past 35 years has resulted in some impacts to soils, vegetation, wildlife, archeological values and others. In this Plan and Proposed Action we outline a direction for recreation management that continues to provide quality recreation experiences but takes some positive steps toward reducing or eliminating undesirable impacts to other resources.

DECISION RECORD

DECISION: It is my decision to approve the Recreation Area Management Plan for Hartman Rocks as described in the proposed action.

RATIONALE: The plan is an honest attempt to improve the management of recreation in this popular area. I believe it draws a reasonable balance between the strong demands for recreation opportunities close to Gunnison and the need to protect the other resources present in the area.

The Proposed Action focuses on many of the BLM's priority objectives for managing recreation on public lands. These include:

- Managing public lands for desirable recreation experiences that contribute to our quality of life.
- Establishing a comprehensive approach to travel management and planning.
- Enhancing visitor services.
- Ensuring public health and safety.
- Encouraging and sustaining collaborative partnerships.

I feel the public has been instrumental in creating a workable plan. During scoping, they took advantage of the opportunity to express a wide variety of issues, concerns and desires regarding how the area should be managed. From there, a group of dedicated members of the public formed a Core Planning team to help the BLM develop alternatives for management and make recommendations about the best course for management. These recommendations were presented to the public and comments received from that public review were used to further refine the plan. The Proposed Action accepts many of the recommendations made by the public through the work of the Core Planning Team and public meetings we have held.

We tried to accommodate the public's desires as much as possible but in some cases had to defer to other resource priorities such as Gunnison Sage Grouse, Skiff Milkvetch and the desires of adjacent landowners who did not want trails trespassing on their land. A number of mitigation actions were incorporated in the plan to reduce the impacts that recreation could have on other resource values.

These include:

- Limiting recreational vehicle use (both motorized and mechanized) to a defined system of roads and trails and requiring BLM approval for the creation of any new routes.
- Closing routes that trespassed on private land without landowner permission, were judged to be unnecessary or resulted in unacceptable impacts.
- Rerouting trails that impacted known populations of Skiff Milkvetch.
- Placing seasonal restrictions on routes that could affect Gunnison Sage Grouse during critical breeding, nesting, brood rearing and wintering periods.
- Creating a defined motorcycle terrain park that provides a place for this activity in an area that is less sensitive than several other informal track areas that have been created by visitors. The other informal tracks will be closed.
- Developing defined target shooting areas in appropriate places to reduce safety hazards to other recreationists using the area.
- Establishing defined parking areas at entrances and trailheads.
- Evaluating trails for archeological values and rerouting as necessary to avoid impacts to such sites.

The comments we received during the public review have been evaluated and some changes to the proposed action have been incorporated as a result of that input. A summary of the comments and the BLM's response to the issues raised can be found in Appendix 3.

Given the amount of public involvement we hope their enthusiasm will continue as we work with them to implement the plan and ensure that the area continues to provide outstanding recreation opportunities for many years to come.

MITIGATION MEASURES: The mitigating measures outlined above and in the proposed action will be followed to reduce the impacts of recreation use on other resource values in the area.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: As the Recreation Area Management Plan for the Hartman Rocks area is implemented the area will be periodically monitored to ensure that we are meeting the goals laid out in the plan. We will continue to coordinate with the Hartman Rocks Planning Group to discuss management problems in the area and come up with workable solutions. High interest facilities such as the motorcycle terrain park, the developed shooting areas and the extreme 4 wd course will be regularly monitored to ensure they are meeting the goals of the plan. If the management actions proposed in the plan are not effective in achieving desired future conditions then other actions will be developed to bring us closer to our goals.

NAME OF PREPARER: Arden Anderson – Outdoor Recreation Planner

DATE: March 14, 2006

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Kenny McDaniel
Gunnison Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 03/14/06

Appendix 1

Hartman Rocks Issues & Concerns Sorted by Theme

Before we can start on a management plan for Hartman Rocks it is important to identify issues and concerns that we should consider and try to deal with as we prepare a plan. To do this we gathered ideas from the resource managers in the BLM, Division of Wildlife, City, and County that might have an interest in the area. We also held several public scoping meetings in 2003 to get input from the wide variety of folks who enjoy this area. Below is a list of thoughts, ideas, concerns and issues gathered from all those sources. These issues and concerns form the basis for the plan. They are loosely grouped under general themes but are recorded as we received them without editing.

I. Activities

A. Continue to Allow a Diversity of Uses

- Maintain diverse recreation opportunities including (but not limited to) motorized travel, climbing, hiking, mountain biking, picnicking, horseback riding, trail running, Nordic skiing, etc.
- Ensure Hartman Rock BLM area is non-exclusionary (i.e. all trails and two track for everyone).
- Greatest good for the greatest number of people.
- Balance of diversity of activities. Develop realistic plans. It is not possible to include all proposed uses on 8300+ acres.

B. Segregate Conflicting Uses

- Trail use conflict: multiple user groups on the same trail or area.
- Designate some separations of uses.
- Separated user group areas or specific user trails.
- Differentiate and inform users of trail, historical, resource uses.
- Maintaining activity specific trails.
- Designate areas for shooters, four-wheelers, moto-cross to limit damage done.
- Look at possible non-motorized areas.
- What if volunteers from each interest group worked on their own designated areas. Would that save the BLM from activity and liability?
- Quiet for those that would like it.
- Separation from residential / private land.

C. Motorized Use

- A main concern is to keep the area open to motorized use.
- More ATV friendly trails.
- The moto-crossers need a track. They got screwed in the last compromise!
- Why not build a group maintained moto-x area?
- Introduce a safe and inviting track for little and big kids.
- Dirt bike tracks (natural terrain, one easy for kids, one for intermediate).
- Motorcross track built and maintained by riders (natural terrain, enduro style).
- Two new "motorcross" type tracks – one in creek bottom and other at top of kill hill – both in inappropriate locations.
- Rock Crawlers (extreme 4 wheel drive) would like to have a course at Hartman's.
- Mud runs and other inappropriate vehicle uses are causing unacceptable impacts to soil and vegetation.

D. Winter Use

- Winter use is also important (both motorized and non-motorized).
- Work on winter use that is appropriate for conditions.
- Improve x-country skiing opportunities.
- Grooming of ski opportunities when there is enough snow.
- Ski tracks set in the area are sometimes torn up by vehicles trying to drive on the roads.
- What set of winter use trails is appropriate to allow use but minimize impacts to wildlife?
- What can we do to groom winter use tracks when there is enough snow to support recreation?

E. Firearm Use

- Some folks have safety concerns when shooters don't choose safe areas to shoot.
- Manage shooting areas. Safety and trash concerns.
- Is it possible to have "defined" shooting areas?
- Designate a shooting area.
- Encourage practice shooting to occur not near roads – or educate shooters about horses and vice versa.

F. Other Uses

- Rock climbing should remain the same. There seems to be no problems with it. There's nothing to fix.
- Should there be any limits on bolting by rock climbers?
- Ensure that horseback use can occur into the future – particularly being able to have long loops that don't stop as a result of being excluded.
- Be able to walk dogs off a leash (okay to pick up after them).
- Designate an area for astronomy.

G. Competitive Events

- Guidelines for appropriate trails for competitions.
- Impact of large events (Rage, Moto-X, Jeep crawl).
- Hold events liable for damages / changes their event created.
- Don't all activities carry about the same liability?
- There is an increasing interest in organized events – what limits are appropriate?

II. Setting & Facilities

A. Trail System Issues

1. General

- Excessive trails – not always well thought out.
- Trail proliferation is a problem.
- Trail and road proliferation continues off existing or designated routes.
- Eliminate redundant roads and trails.
- Multiple routes for some trails.
- Less "feeder" trails. More work on planned "existing" trails.
- Some trails are poorly located & lead to resource impacts (soils, veg, wildlife, archeologic) & maintenance problems.
- Some trails or roads trespass illegally on adjacent private lands.
- We should maintain and improve our existing system of roads & trails before we think about building more.
- New trails of higher difficulty for mountain biking and/or hiking.
- Future look – a good trail network with loops of varying ability. Need to have some challenging stuff.
- Maintaining existing trails or relocating them, but not closing them.
- Manage existing routes well.
- Study road and trail system and make necessary changes. Develop ongoing plan for trail maintenance.
- How are we going to maintain the existing trails? Who and at who's expense?
- Trails may not provide riding opportunities for a variety of skill levels.
- Reduce trail density to levels that can be "managed."
- Identify trails most susceptible to damage and limit use accordingly.
- Trail maintenance shouldn't take out the difficult or dangerous features in a trail.
- Provide a qualified trail expert to oversee all trail work to maintain consistency.

2. Single Track Trails

- More single track trails – especially challenging ones.
- Working and sustainable system of single track. Some should be free of motorized use (hikers, bicycles, horses allowed).
- I strongly believe in keeping the challenge in the single track. I like that there are spots I cannot and never will be able to ride over (on existing single track).
- ORV or 4-wheel using single track and changing to "double track."
- Single track trails that "stay" single track – protected from widening into roads.

- Restrict 4 wheeled use to roads & 2 track and keep them off single track.
- Leave natural obstacles in trails. Advanced level trails equally important to green circles.
- Trails for specific skill levels.

3. Trail Closures

- Who decides a trail needs to be closed? Why? Options? Reroute or ???
- As trail closures happen look at locations for new trails.
- Trail closures (creating new miles for closed miles).
- More info when closing trails.
- When a trail gets punched in does BLM close it or just allow it since it is there?
- Leave existing single track not intruding on private land open.
- Prevention of closures of existing trails without group effort.
- Reevaluate some trail closures.
- What can we do to encourage better compliance with trail closures and other regulations?

B. Signage and Facilities

- Minimal facilities. Not littered with signs and structures. More toward pristine than developed (except base).
- Like travel management signs on trails, but don't want to see signs at every intersection.
- Signs for reducing excessive (user made) trails.
- Signs. Trails. Info.
- Bridge across South Beaver Creek suitable for bikes.
- Some folks would like to see a restroom developed on top at the climber's area.

C. Access

- Golf course access.
- Work with landowners to allow easements for trails.
- Linkages for long range travel. Trading some private parcels through BLM exchanges.

III. Management

A. Resource Impacts and Protection

1. General

- More attention to managing high impact areas.
- Improvements to damaged areas.
- Rehabilitation. Include recovery of damaged resources (e.g. eroded trails) as key element before approving uses that will exacerbate current problems.
- Preserve area for the long term.
- Maintain the integrity of the area (as it is now).
- Reduce environmental degradation.
- Spring road closures – how can we make them work well? Guidelines, education, several gates etc.
- Mountain biking and motorcycle impacts.

2. Soil Erosion

- Soil erosion is a problem on some poorly located or designed trails.
- Erosion control projects to protect area from damage; manmade and natural.
- Erosion. Would like to see eroded trails closed, repaired or re-routed.
- Re-routing some routes that have major erosion problems, think about contouring to the landscape.
- Prevent erosion in area (with maintenance).
- Maintain single track to reduce erosion.
- Maintain environment (i.e. curb erosion, sustain native vegetation).

3. Vegetation

- Cheat grass (an unwanted weed) at the base area has potential to be spread by recreationists.
- Other noxious weeds can be a problem in areas disturbed by recreation use.
- Impact to Skiff Milkvetch (actual populations and potential habitat) from user created trails.
- Skiff Milkvetch natural area (ACEC) impact.
- Damage to vegetation caused by creation or expansion of unauthorized trails & roads.

4. Wildlife and ACEC Management

- Sage Grouse / other sagebrush obligate species can be impacted by recreation use.
- Ensure viability of Skiff Milkvetch and Sage Grouse.
- Consideration of environmental / wildlife impacts prior to creating new roads / trails.
- Protection of critical / sensitive wildlife habitat areas.
- Finding sites or areas of concern (vegetation, artifacts, fauna) for protection.
- Wants to see wildlife / plant needs respected.
- Big game and Sage Grouse have been displaced from Hartman's by concentrated recreation use.
- Don't want to see wildlife displaced from other areas by expanding recreation use.

5. Archeological Resources

- Abundant archeological sites in the area – some are very significant, some historical sites.
- Some sites have already been impacted by trails.
- Some sites could be impacted by new trails.

6. Trash

- Too much trash is generated from illegal dumping, shooting areas and hill parties.
- Glass and trash near front.
- More trash pick up days (especially glass).

B. Recreation Management

- Manage some areas for intensive recreation. Manage impacts at acceptable levels.
- Manage increasing use of area.

C. Range Management

- Recreationists are uncomfortable with the impacts to vegetation caused by grazing.
- Cow trails are sometimes followed by recreationists and turn into bike trails.
- Gates left open by recreationists let livestock move into areas they aren't supposed to be.
- Cattle damage on trails.
- No cows.
- Cattle grazing controlled so the landscape is enhanced.
- Date gates for closing only during short grazing period (e.g. Enchanted Forest).

D. Cooperation / Partnerships

- Agency coordination. As the plans go forward on the BLM side of the fence, maintain close coordination with City/County for their 160 acres.
- Build & maintain good working relationship between BLM and other users. Proactive as opposed to reactive. I'd like to see the BLM as more approachable and easy to work with.
- BLM land manager unwilling to work or listen with respect to the largest user group at Hartman's – mountain bikers.
- Need to bring in BLM people from other areas to advise and consult on management (Fruita and Salida).
- Consider forming a volunteer patrol at the area to encourage responsible use.

E. Public Involvement / Stewardship

- Allow public to be more involved (trail work, activities, etc.)
- Continue public and user group maintenance clean-up days.
- Develop plan for utilizing volunteers to help maintain trails for skiing and other activities.
- Keep community involved with area maintenance now and in the future.
- Including public in maintenance more – holding users more responsible.
- Unsupervised volunteers that work on trails are well intentioned but don't always know what they are doing.
- We need to set up a system that provides more training or supervision for volunteer efforts.

F. Funding

- Examine funding alternatives for future management.

G. Enforcement

- Existing vehicle regulations do not adequately cover mountain bike issues – trails in ACEC.
- Provide (law) enforcement sufficient to protect resources and recreational experiences as per the plan.
- There is a lack of enforcement of existing rules & regulations.

- How recreational is this area? Can and can't do things.
- There are problem users like 4WD vehicles mud bogging, party spots, trash dumpers. What are ways to slow or stop destructive activities?

H. Education

- Promote education and cooperation among all user groups.
- Minimize conflict between different user groups.
- Encourage better relations between moto-cross and mountain bikers.
- Motorcycles and bikers living together.
- Establish a good relationship between mountain bikers, hikers, and motorcyclist.
- Educational signage at base area (picture and description of Skiff Milkvetch and Sage Grouse). I don't know how effective it'd be but it would be nice.
- Educate public regarding problems associated with creating new trails.
- OHV environmental education trails coordinator – grant funded.
- Make a geology map.
- We need to make an effort to educate new college students to make them aware of recreation opportunities at Hartman's but to also encourage responsible use.
- Work with the Pioneer Historical Society to develop access to and interpretation of the Aberdeen Quarry.

I. Promotion

- Out of town promotion can help attract more people to the area.
- Hartman's is a good place for special events that would attract business to the community.
- Hartman's could be as popular as Moab if we promoted it more.
- We don't want Hartman's to be like Moab.

How much recreation use is too much? When do visitor numbers start to degrade the experience?

Appendix 2 – Maps

Map 1 – Summer Route designations under the Preferred Alternative

Map 2 – Winter Route designations under the Preferred Alternative

Appendix 3 – Public comments on the EA and BLM’s Response to those comments

The BLM provided a public review period for the Hartman Rocks RAMP and EA from January 12, 2006 to February 10, 2006. During that time we received 6 comments. The comments are summarized below along with BLM's response to significant issues that were raised.

Commenter 1 – represented the opinion of the Wilderness Pursuits program at Western State College. He expressed overall support for the preferred alternative and the strategy of requiring all traffic to stay on designated routes. He was concerned about the potential for damage caused by the creation of new routes and larger vehicles widening single track routes. He encouraged us to consider the direction of travel on steeper routes pointing out that motorized vehicles driving up steep routes had the potential to cause greater impact than those riding down. He also asked for some clarification on what was permitted for paintball shooting and whether they were restricted to specific areas.

BLM's Response – we appreciate support for our overall strategy. Regarding the direction of travel on routes we discussed this regularly when we were evaluating each route. We did not identify many areas where uphill traffic had the probability of causing problems. Some of those that did have this potential such as Trails T3 (V Drop), and A4 (Ridgeline) already have a strong tendency to be used only in a downhill fashion. Others such as Trail A6 that had problems with impact from uphill use in loose soils were rerouted to more sustainable routes. As we work with mountain bike & motorcycle enthusiasts to design those reroutes we have recognized the need to develop routes that can be ridden comfortably in both directions without causing erosion problems. Regarding paintball shooters, in the planning process we did not identify significant safety issues related to paintball the way we did with firearm shooters. As a result we did not perceive the need to restrict their use to certain areas. We have heard some complaints about the perceived trash problem that is sometimes associated with paintball when the paint and the capsules that hold it remain right after paintball use. While this is a short term visual impact the paint and the capsules are both biodegradable and wash away in a relatively short time. We will work with the paintball shooters to encourage them to reduce the trash left after their use.

Commenter 2 – represented the opinion of the Western State College Rock Climbing Club. He expressed overall support for the plan. He did have one concern about whether some restrictions on bolting by rock climbers might be appropriate. He felt that some climbers go overboard in establishing bolts at Hartman's and this could impact the climbing experience on some routes.

BLM's Response - A bolt is established when a rock climber drills a hole in a rock face and puts in an expansion bolt with a metal ring attached. Climbers clip their rope into these rings to help provide safety as they climb up the rock. There are other ways that climbers can protect themselves on a rock by top roping or placing temporary and removable protection. There is an ongoing debate in the climbing community about the desirability and appropriateness of establishing a lot of bolts in popular climbing areas. From a resource point of view the main impacts that might be attributed to bolting are visual. For some climbers, having a lot of bolts along a route can reduce the climbing experience they are looking for. The BLM and the Core Planning Group considered the issue of bolting as we developed management guidelines for climbing. In general, the group did not feel that the problems caused by bolts were large enough to warrant placing restrictions on their use at this time. We hope that the WSC Climbing Club and other climbers that use these areas continue to encourage responsible use among their members and the climbing community so no restrictions will be necessary.

Commenter 3 - had only briefly heard about the Recreation Management Plan and was not commenting specifically on the plan. Instead, he was working on plans for a potential subdivision on the edge of the Dos Rios Golf Course. Part of his plan for the subdivision called for establishing a pedestrian bridge from private land across Tomichi Creek to BLM land. His hope was that this would provide foot and mountain bike access for the residents of his subdivision and the general public from the Dos Rios area into the

Hartman Rocks Recreation area. He also thought the route could provide ski and snowshoe access to Hartman's in the winter. He was clear that he did not intend for this to be motorized access. He also did not want the public driving to his subdivision to use that as a trailhead to park their cars and enter Hartman's on foot or bike. This would cause inappropriate parking problems and traffic congestion. He asked whether this amenity would mesh well with the recreation management in the Hartman's Plan. He stated that he was early in the process of planning and still had to get agreement from the City and adjacent landowners so the final decisions for the development are still a year or two in the future.

BLM's Response - If this subdivision is developed with the access bridge in the proposed location it would likely steer more visitors to Trail 6 (the Golf Course Trail). In our trail survey that evaluated visitor preferences this was not a popular or heavily used trail by mountain bikers or motorcyclists mostly because it is an out-and-back trail that dead ended at private property. This is less desirable for riders than a loop trail that connected with other routes. It was also not looked on as a very challenging trail. In addition, the Cottonwood riparian area along the intermittent drainage provides good nesting habitat for birds along with other wildlife values. We also considered that the area provided good opportunities for hiking along a cool riparian area. As a result, the Core Planning Group recommended in all alternatives that the route be closed to all motorized vehicles and mountain bikes and remain open only to foot and horse traffic. That would make it the only trail that hikers could use without worrying about other users. Given the low use by motorcycles and mountain bikes we felt this would minimally impact these user groups and would enhance opportunities for hikers and wildlife. But this strategy also assumed that the trail would remain a dead end. We did not identify this as a route that should be open or groomed for ski, snowshoe or snowmobile use to reduce impacts to wintering wildlife.

If this subdivision is developed as planned it could significantly change the basis for our decision on Trail 6. By opening an alternative access point to this trail it would no longer be a dead end. This would make it much more desirable for mountain bikers who would be able to use it as an alternative entrance or exit to Hartman Rocks. This route would provide a more scenic access to Hartman's than biking along the Gold Basin Road which many riders now do. The trail would also likely receive more foot traffic from hikers, dog walkers and trail runners coming out of the Dos Rios area. The options that seem available in this case are:

- 1) To stay with our original strategy of keeping Trail 6 open to only foot and horse traffic. This would provide good opportunities for hikers and help reduce impacts to wildlife as originally planned. The developer said he could live with this option if necessary. But this new routes would be very tempting for mountain bikers and it could be very difficult to keep them from using it.
- 2) To modify our management for Trail 6 if the bridge and public access is developed to allow for mountain bike access along with foot and horse access but still keep it closed to winter recreation uses. This would probably be a more realistic way to deal with increased desirability of a through route for mountain bikers. Since they rarely make much noise the mountain bikers should not have significant impacts on nesting birds in that corridor. We would have to work with the developer to establish a closure on the bridge during the winter.
- 3) We could modify management for Trail 6 to allow for foot, horse and mountain bike use in the summer as well as ski and snowshoe access in the winter. This would be similar to the 2nd option for summer use but have the chance of increasing impacts to wintering wildlife.

Given our management goals for the area and the challenge of maintaining effective closures on the route our decision is to follow option 2 if the development of the subdivision results in the

construction of a bridge across Tomichi Creek. If no bridge is developed then management on Trail 6 will remain as open only to foot and horse traffic in the summer and no use in the winter.

Commenter 4 - represented the opinion of the Gunnison Valley Freeride Association which focuses on more extreme mountain biking opportunities. While they had some positive things to say about the plan they had a number of concerns about specific details. These include:

- 1) They felt it was not fair to require bikes and motorized vehicles to stay on designated trails if we did not also require visitors on foot and horseback to do the same. In a related matter, they felt that the seasonal closure on the Aberdeen Loop should be extended to all visitors and not just to motorized and mountain bike use.
- 2) They felt that trails that trespass on private land should retain the possibility of being open if access is granted by the landowners in the future.
- 3) They disagree with our proposal to close routes A3, A28, A50, A51, A53 and A55 and contend that we lacked sufficient rationale for closing these routes, based decisions on old inventory data for Skiff Milkvetch, did not adequately consider access easements or reroutes and that some recommendations needed to be more thoroughly investigated in the field.
- 4) They felt the BLM created an unnecessary reroute on Trail T7 (Beck's) which suggests a contradiction in our management goals.
- 5) They wanted to see language added to the plan that allowed for the creation of additional trails in the future enabling the plan to evolve with user demand.

BLM's Response –

- 1) BLM's travel regulations and designations were originally developed to address concerns with impacts related to the use of motorized vehicles. Over time, as new technologies such as mountain bikes and ATVs came along, the regulations were adapted to address the particular challenges, issues and concerns that those forms of recreation presented. While it is possible for us to extend travel regulations to hikers, horseback riders and skiers it is not common for us to do that unless they are causing, or have the reasonable potential to cause, a management concern that need to be addressed. In the Hartman Rocks Plan we base our management recommendations on our knowledge of the area and the issues and concerns brought up by the public and other agencies during scoping. During those efforts it was clear that mountain bike and motorcycle use made up a large part of the overall use at Hartman's. It was also clear that those 2 groups were responsible for the vast majority of user created routes at Hartman's. This fact was raised by a number of BLM personnel and the general public (including mountain bikers) as an issue that needed to be addressed in the plan. However, we knew that horse use could damage wet roads and trails just as much as a motorcycle, 4wd or mountain bike so we included them in the uses that are excluded during the spring closures. We also knew that extensive winter use could inappropriately impact wildlife during a difficult time of the year so we designated the specific areas that could be groomed for skiing to avoid impacts to animals in other parts of the recreation area. In the case of the seasonal closure on Trail A66 (9-0) we differentiated between the potential impacts to nesting Sage Grouse by mountain bike use and motorized use and decided to leave it open to mountain bikes but closed to motorcycles. Finally, we reserved the right to close the entire recreation area to all users if winter conditions are so severe that human use could threaten wintering wildlife. With regards to the question of who should be restricted from the Aberdeen Loop (Trails A56 and A57) during the seasonal closure to protect Sage Grouse brood rearing habitat it is our experience that this area is so far from any regular hiking or horse use areas that these groups almost never use this trail loop.

We have modified the preferred alternative to allow for the possibility of closing that loop to foot and horse traffic if their use levels increase to the point of posing a threat to the brood

rearing in that area. In short, we crafted our management recommendations and regulations to address known or anticipated issues and concerns and tried not to place rules or restrictions on activities unless we had solid justification for those restrictions.

- 2) One of the hard and fast rules we adopted early in our plan was that no routes would be constructed, maintained or included in the open routes at Hartman's if they trespassed on private land without the owner's permission. As part of the planning process we identified and evaluated the trails that trespassed on private land to decide which ones offered good experiences or contributed to a quality trail system and, in fact, we identified several trails that we wanted to keep in the system if we could get permission from the landowners. We contacted these adjacent landowners that had roads or trails trespassing on their property and made them aware of the location of the trails. We knew that their exposure to liability was a common concern so we sent them a copy of the State statute that significantly reduces landowner liability if they allow the public to use their land. We asked them if they were willing to allow the public to use those trails under a permissive easement. If they were willing to allow public access we asked what guidelines or stipulations, if any, they wanted to place on that use. We were able to gain permission for the public to use one parcel of private land and are still in negotiations with two other landowners who are considering public access. The others wrote back and made it clear they did not want to allow public use on their lands. We were obliged to honor their wishes in our plan and called for the closure of all routes that trespassed without permission. During the public comment period on the draft plan we received comments from the Freeride Group that they wanted us to pursue an easement on Trail A3 which was not part of the group we originally investigated. In response to their request we contacted that landowner and asked if they were willing to allow public access. They wrote back clearly stating they did not want to allow access so we dropped that trail from consideration. Landowners change or sometimes their ideas could change about allowing public access. We feel the plan is flexible enough to enable us to reconsider designating a route as open if the landowner grants public access. We also know that the plan would require us to close a route that crosses private land if the landowner changes his mind and revokes permission for public access. **To make sure these points are clear we will modify the Access section of the proposed action to enable us to consider opening closed routes if the landowner grants access and requiring us to close routes if permission is revoked.** If opening a route became a possibility we would still want to evaluate the route on its other merits to ensure it would add to our goals of offering quality recreation experiences while minimizing resource impacts. During our analysis Trail A16 (Sacrifice) was identified as one that would meet these criteria and would make sense to include in the designated system if landowner public access is allowed in the future.
- 3) This group mentioned many of these routes in their comments on the draft plan. As a result, the Core Planning Group invited their representatives to meet with us for several hours to be sure we understood their points and to share some of the rationale behind our recommendations. We also went out on the ground to look specifically at some of their concerns. On many of the routes they mentioned in this comment letter we explained the rationale behind our decision. The following is a recap of the rationale behind these route decisions.
 - ★ Route A3 – clearly trespasses on private land and leads to other trails that trespass on other private land. As requested by the Freeride Group in previous comments we contacted the landowner requesting permission for public access. They responded that they were unwilling to grant public access. In addition, this area is one of the few remaining sanctuaries for the deer that inhabit the Hartman Rocks area. It is close to the river so they have a regular water supply, there are several habitat types to provide both feeding areas and hiding cover and

receives little enough use by the public that the animals are not regularly disturbed. Our observations of pellet counts (an indicator of density of use) and actual deer use indicate this is an important and heavily used habitat for deer all year long. Because of these wildlife values it is unlikely we would consider opening this trail even if public access was granted across private land. In addition, there is adequate public access along a rough dirt road to allow riders on Trail A6 to connect back into other trails in the area so A3 does not provide an irreplaceable link to other trails.

- ★ Route A28 (Backdoor) – this is a 2 track road that was pushed illegally into the South Beaver ACEC after traffic in that area was limited to designated roads. It has been effectively closed to vehicle use for at least 8 years. It was not officially closed to mountain bikers during that time because of gaps in the rules for the ACEC. Despite that fact it still does not receive much use by mountain bikers. It is a 2 track road and mountain bikers show a strong preference for single track trails and it is not located along regularly used access routes. User created routes off of A28 lead to trespass on private land where the landowner clearly does not want the public to use. The strongest reason for closing this route is that it lies within the 2 mile radius around an active Sage Grouse lek. Given the increasing priority on protecting this declining species our wildlife biologist felt it was important to reduce the possibility of disturbance in this area. The road could be managed to revegetate down to a single track trail but this would not eliminate concerns regarding Sage Grouse habitat.
- ★ Route A50 – This is an old road that led down to a cabin on private land. It used to be part of the Rage in the Sage biking course. But when the BLM conducted detailed inventories for the rare Skiff Milkvetch plant we found a large population bisected by the trail. In response we closed that trail to vehicles in the 1993 Resource Management Plan and effectively rerouted the Rage in the Sage course away from that area. We felt these steps were appropriate not just to avoid impact to individual plants but to protect habitat that the plant obviously preferred to enable it to expand its limited population within that area. In addition, our experience is that many of the users that used this trail in the past continued down to trespass on private land near South Beaver Creek. In their comments on the draft plan the Freeride Group expressed concern about this closure and suggested finding a reroute around the Milkvetch. When asked for their ideas on where a possible reroute might go and how we might resolve the concern about trespassing, it was clear that no other viable reroute was possible and there was no resolution for the trespass issue.
- ★ Route A51 – This route shares the same concerns as A50 because it connects with it to make a loop. Common use patterns for some riders back when the trail was open were for riders to go down A50 then up A51 to connect with the Enchanted Forest area and Trail T20. The other option for use on A51 is to continue down to trespass on private land. So, assuming we have good rationale for closing A50 it only makes sense to also close A51 to avoid the temptation to ride on A50 or trespass on private land.
- ★ Route A53 (Quarry Drop) – this trail clearly cuts through two known populations of Skiff Milkvetch. In our preferred alternative we are not calling for the complete closure of this trail. Public comments from the draft plan indicated that they would like to try to keep this trail. So we identified the possibility of a reroute using only a small portion of the original trail and building a sustainable connection down to the powerline road near South Beaver Creek. This would provide an acceptable connection to the Aberdeen Loop (A56 and A57). We felt this was a compromise that also provided some protection for the rich riparian corridor along South Beaver Creek. In their letter the Freeride Group questions the validity of the BLM's inventory data for Skiff Milkvetch saying it is 15 years old and likely out of date. In the time since the original inventories the BLM has worked in partnership with the Colorado Natural Areas program to occasionally monitor these known Milkvetch populations. Our studies have shown that the suitable habitat within the known population areas remains relatively stable

though the number of actual plants within that suitable habitat varies with drought and other factors. When we were on the ground and exploring the possibility of a reroute for this trail we found some Milkvetch plants outside the mapped area of the known population so it is possible that populations have expanded in some areas. It is important to remember that even if plants have completely disappeared from known population areas the fact that they have been found there in the past makes it clear that area is suitable habitat. Good management for rare or threatened species suggests that those areas of suitable habitat still would need to be protected so plants can eventually repopulate those areas. We will invite members of the Freeride Group to accompany us and help us lay out the new route. We will still place a priority on finding a reroute that avoid the problems mentioned above.

- ★ Route A55 (Arden's) – This route is outside the boundaries of the Hartman Rocks Recreation Area but was included in this planning effort because visitors who are using Hartman Rocks sometimes access this route from the recreation area. The primary goal of the preferred alternative is to focus intensive recreation use, and its associated impacts on other resources, within the boundaries of the recreation area. This recreation area has already been significantly altered and impacted by recreation use. We made the specific choice to manage recreation use in a way that avoided the incremental expansion of intensive recreation use and user created trails to the west of South Beaver Creek, to the east of the Gold Basin Road, or to the south of the southern boundary. We did this because we saw the potential for increasing conflicts with other important resource values such as Sage Grouse habitat, riparian values, big game winter range etc. We made one exception to this goal by allowing the Aberdeen Loop to remain open. This was because in our discussions with the public we got the clear message that this was a popular and important loop that provided a long distance riding experience for riders in better shape that was not matched anywhere else in the recreation area. We did not hear similar support for A55. This route does not legally connect with any other approved route in the plan, it does not get a lot of use and has the potential to encourage more user created routes west of South Beaver Creek in violation of our existing travel regulation in that area.
- 4) The short, alternative route on Trail T7 (Beck's) mentioned in the comment letter was portrayed as an unnecessary impact that contradicted management goals we promoted in the Hartman's Plan. One of our goals in the plan was to provide trail riding opportunities for visitors of all skill levels from beginner to expert. Trail T7 is one of the most heavily used trails at Hartman's and used by riders of all levels of capability. Increasing use along the trail caused erosion over a rocky outcrop that became increasingly rough and dangerous for beginner and intermediate riders. We received a number of complaints from the public about the condition of the trail including some reports of injuries at the problem spot. Our first tendency was to reroute the trail around the problem area and close the portion over the rocks but then we heard from more experienced riders that they really liked the challenge of the difficult rock outcrop. As a result, we agreed to work with volunteers from the mountain biking community to construct a short reroute (about 100 feet) that provided an easier alternative for less experienced riders but we left the difficult rocky area open so more experienced riders would continue to enjoy that opportunity. In general, we do not like to create redundant or braided routes because they increase impacts to soils and vegetation and cause more habitat fragmentation but in this case, after considering the input from mountain bikers, we felt it was the best solution. The Freeride Group by nature is made up of more experienced riders that have the skills to negotiate this problem spot. We felt it was appropriate for the BLM to listen to complaints from the public about the condition of system trails and work with interested parties to find a solution that meets the needs of as many users as possible to the extent that resource concerns allow. As we work with the public to design and build the reroutes called for in the Plan there may be opportunities to employ this strategy in selected areas to provide challenging sections for expert riders but still allow an easier alternative route for less skilled riders.

- 5) In the planning effort we spent a lot of time evaluating existing routes and we ended up with designating an extensive system of roads and trails with a very high route density. The expanded system of designated routes will require even more effort from the BLM and our partners to maintain this system of routes. We are happy to hear that the Freeride Group is willing to volunteer their time to assist with these needs. Currently the preferred alternative contains language under the Transportation section that states: “Any proposals for new trails would have to be evaluated with criteria similar to that used for existing routes. No new routes would be created without evaluation and authorization from the BLM.” That wording was placed in there specifically to allow us to consider proposals for additional routes in the future. It was our intention in the plan to manage and maintain the designated route system to provide a variety of recreation opportunities for visitors to Hartman Rocks. It makes sense that we would work to implement the plan on the designated route system before we spent much time considering proposals for new routes. Still, the plan allows for the possibility of considering new routes in the future using the same evaluation guidelines that we used for existing routes.

Commenter 5 – represented the opinion of the Crested Butte Mountain Biking Association (CBMBA). They said they supported the plan with the exception that they wanted all 40 routes identified for closure to be reviewed by CBMBA or the Gunnison Valley Freeride Association before any closures are made. They felt an on-the-ground review was critical for the integrity of the plan.

BLM’s Response - This entire planning process was designed and carried out with extensive opportunities for public involvement. We easily met the minimum requirement for public participation called for by NEPA by holding scoping meetings and allowing public comment on the Environmental assessment. In addition, we went well beyond the minimum by holding four public meetings to give the public a chance to share their views of what they would like to see at Hartman Rocks and learn about the management alternatives in the draft plan. We conducted a visitor survey to try to understand the desires of folks who use the area. We recruited a Core Planning Group made up of members of the public who represented a variety of recreation perspectives (including 3 mountain bikers) to help us develop a workable plan from the suggestions we received during public input. This dedicated group had a total of 26 work sessions, including several field trips to carefully consider all the sides of the issues. The draft plan and recommendations went out to the public for a month of review and comment. Those comments were considered and incorporated as appropriate in the Preferred Alternative passed on to the BLM for Environmental Assessment. News of the Environmental Assessment was posted on our NEPA register on our website for 6 months. Articles on the plan and notices of meetings appeared in local papers and at least one half hour radio show discussed the planning effort. An email list of folks interested in the Hartman’s Plan (including CBMBA members) was generated at our public meetings and email messages were sent out to that list to make them aware of public meetings and to send out documents for review. These documents and meetings have had maps and write-ups that clearly described what we had in mind for every single route. In short, we feel the BLM has gone to great lengths to involve the public in this planning process. After their comment on the EA we offered to meet with them to clarify any uncertainties they may have about the plan but have not yet heard back from them. In the plan we are committed to work with interested users to help us design the reroutes called for in the plan. CBMBA also offered to encourage their members to participate in volunteer projects to help implement the plan. We look forward to working with them to manage this popular area for a variety of recreation opportunities while protecting the integrity of other resources.

Commenter 6 - was not happy with the plan and opposed it. He lives several hundred miles away from this area and was not aware of the planning process until recently. He did mention that the notice of the Environmental Assessment had been posted on the State webpage but was not obvious. While not

familiar with the details of the plan he had heard that some mountain bike trails would be closed to protect wildlife and opposed that idea. More specifically:

- 1) He felt that hiking and horse use could impact wildlife also and it wasn't fair to close routes to mountain bikers but not close them to hikers and horses. He cited studies that suggested bikers caused no more impact to wildlife than hikers.
- 2) He felt that since bikers stay on the trail they should be allowed to continue to ride on trails that cross through populations of Skiff Milkvetch since any damage to individual plants has already been done.
- 3) He felt that since Hartman's is already heavily impacted by recreation it was unreasonable to close any routes to mountain bikes to prevent further impacts.
- 4) He felt we should work more closely with the public to develop a better plan.
- 5) He said he did not like to see a proliferation of unplanned, user created trails. But he also felt that bicycling was treated too negatively.

BLM's Response – many of the questions brought out in this comment have already been answered under other comments so we will refer to those answers when appropriate and focus more attention on concerns that were not previously addressed.

- 1) This concern has been addressed in our response to Comment 4 Item 1.
- 2) This concern has been addressed in our response to Comment 4 Item 3 – Route 53. Good management for rare or threatened species suggests that those areas of suitable habitat still would need to be protected so plants can eventually repopulate those areas. The BLM's Standards for Public Land Health require us to focus management efforts on protecting sensitive species such as this. The plan calls for closing only one route because of concerns about impacts on Skiff Milkvetch and that occurred only after we had evaluated whether there were reasonable options to reroute the trail away from the plants. There were not, so the trail, which is currently closed under existing management, was designated to remain closed. In two other cases though we were able to resolve conflicts between bikers and rare plants by rerouting the trail to avoid impacts to plants.
- 3) The BLM is a multiple use management agency whose mission is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. That mission, the supporting policies of the recreation management program on BLM and the goals for this plan expect us to try to balance the needs of recreationists with the needs and requirements of other resource values. The fact that the Hartman's area is not pristine and has been impacted by recreation does not lead to the conclusion that we should tolerate unlimited impacts or that nothing should be done to try to reduce unnecessary impacts.
- 4) This concern has been addressed in our response to Comment 5. The vast majority of recreationists at Hartman Rocks are local residents of Gunnison and Crested Butte so our efforts at public outreach were directed most toward that audience. There were some constituents in other areas that were interested enough in management issues at Hartman's that they asked to be informed of planning efforts in that area and we gladly complied. In an attempt to let others outside the area know of the draft plan and EA we post that information to be accessible on both our local website and the BLM website for the State of Colorado. This information about the Hartman Plan and EA has been posted on these sites since August 5th, 2005.

5) We share the commenter's dislike of unplanned, user created routes no matter which recreation group creates them. This plan was an attempt to work together more closely with the recreationists that use Hartman Rocks to address this proliferation of routes. It gave us a chance to step back and ask ourselves what is really needed to provide a good recreation experience at Hartman Rocks. We also had a chance to hear from other disciplines about what impacts recreation use may be causing to other resource values. Working with a variety of recreation interests we came to the conclusion that more is not necessarily better. We listened carefully to what recreationists said they really wanted to do at Hartman's and we asked them to consider some of the other resource values that we are required to care for on public lands. In the end we recommended a management plan that allowed recreationists to continue to use 84% of the routes in the area. This included opening some routes that had been closed under current management. Of the 40 routes and 17.68 miles that were not designated for recreation use this is a summary of the rationale our decisions were based on:

- 10 routes (4.28 miles) trespassed illegally on private land.
- 13 routes (3.73 miles) were roads that received little or no use, were redundant, provided no recreation values, were unsafe because they went through a shooting area or are closed under current management.
- 13 routes (4.75 miles) were trails that received little or no use, were redundant, had reroutes available, or were closed under current management.
- Only 3 routes (4.38 miles) were closed primarily for concerns about resource impacts. One of these is a road (2.32 miles) currently closed to vehicles and rarely used by bicyclists which was closed to protect Sage Grouse values. One route is a trail (1.62 miles) that is discussed above under comment 4 item 3 – Route A55 that only gets light mountain bike use. One route is an old road discussed above under comment 4, item 3 – route A50 that impacts Skiff Milkvetch habitat and is closed under current management.
- Only 1 route (.54 miles) was closed to mountain bikes and motorcycles to protect riparian values and provide hikers and horseback riders the only trail in the entire area that was set aside for their use. This was done after our survey showed that the trail was not popular with or heavily used by either motorcyclists or mountain bikers.

So in the final analysis mountain bikers were closed off from very few routes that they used regularly, were not redundant and were free of trespass problems. As a result we must disagree with the accusation that the plan was biased against or antagonistic toward mountain biking. Mountain bikers were closely involved with the planning process every step of the way and most will say their issues and concerns were heard, understood and in many cases incorporated into the plan.

Appendix 4

Results of Hartman Rocks Trail Survey – November 2003

Number of Surveys Received – 68 – mostly from mt. bikers and motorcyclists.

Age Range of Respondents:	Mt. Bikers	Motorcyclists (Avg. 27)
Less than 20 years old	0	4
21 to 30 y/o	9	9
31 to 40 y/o	20	0
41 to 50 y/o	19	3
51 to 60 y/o	3	0
61+	2	0
??	1	

Activities practiced at Hartman's and skill level –some respondents practiced more than one activity

Skill level ►	Unknown	Beginner	Intermediate	Expert	Total
Activity ▼					
Mt Biking	15	1	11	25	52
Motorcycle	3	3	6	4	16
Hiking	10		1	1	12
X-C Skiing	5			1	6
Horseback	1				1
Trail Run	7	2	3	4	16
Rock Climb			2		2

How do You Rate the Hardest Trail at Hartmans compared with the hardest trail you've ridden elsewhere on a scale of 1 to 10?

Mt Bike – 40 responses – Range 3 to 10, responses indicating:

3 = 1, 4 = 3, 5 = 6, 6 = 5, 7 = 10, 8 = 9, 9 = 2, 10 = 4 average = 6.88

Motorcycle – 16 responses – Range 3 to 10 average = 7.4

Horseback – 1 respondent- average = 3

Hiking – 17 respondents – Range 1 to 7 responses indicating 1=2, 2=4, 3=5, 4=0, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1
Average = 3.47

What is appropriate mix of skill levels on trails?

(shown as percentage of Beginner, Intermediate, Expert and the number that voted for that mix)

For Mountain Biking

25-50-25 = 9	33-34-33 = 5	20-40-40 = 5	40-40-20 = 4	20-60-20 = 4
40-50-10 = 2	30-50-20 = 2	20-45-35 = 2	20-50-30 = 2	30-40-30 = 2
25-25-50 = 1	10-60-30 = 1	30-30-40 = 1	40-55-5 = 1	30-60-10 = 1
10-70-20 = 1	30-35-35 = 1	0-80-20 = 1	50-25-25 = 1	60-25-15 = 1
25-40-35 = 1	30-45-25 = 1			

For Motorcycle Use	33-34-33 = 2	25-50-25 = 2	5-45-50 = 2	10-50-40 = 2	40-50-10 = 2
	20-60-20 = 1	25-75-0 = 1	20-40-40 = 1	5-35-60 = 1	0-50-50 = 1
	50-25-25 = 1	30-50-20 = 1	20-50-30 = 1	5-25-70 = 1	

**Table of Results for Trail Survey on Difficulty, Popularity and Quality of Trails at Hartman's
Scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being most**

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 – V Drop	4.27 / 1	2.75 / 19	2.84 / 20	33
4 -	2.72 / 9	3.41 / 15	3.45 / 18	11
5 – Ridge Trail	3.65 / 3	2.73 / 20	3.23 / 19	26
6 – Golf Course	2.06 / 16	2.89 / 18	3.74 / 16	19
7 – Becks	2.66 / 11	4.25 / 4	4.27 / 11	33
8 – Rattlesnake	3.95 / 2	4.20 / 6	4.39 / 7	37
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.44 / 4	4.20 / 6	3.74 / 16	36
10 – Behind Rocks	2.48 / 12	3.91 / 9	3.96 / 14	24
11 –	2.33 / 14	4.30 / 3	4.36 / 8	11
12 – Lower Luge	2.47 / 13	3.47 / 13	3.92 / 15	36
13 – Middle Luge	1.81 / 19	4.43 / 1	4.56 / 3	36
14 – Sea of Sage	1.65 / 20	4.37 / 2	4.50 / 4	36
15 – Broken Shovel	1.82 / 18	4.21 / 5	4.28 / 10	33
16 – Skyline	2.48 / 12	3.90 / 10	4.31 / 9	32
17 – Josho's	3.00 / 7	3.94 / 8	4.47 / 5	33
18 – McCabe's	1.85 / 17	3.04 / 17	3.48 / 17	27
19 – Dave Mo's	3.16 / 6	3.42 / 14	4.03 / 13	32
20 – Ench. Forest	2.86 / 8	3.27 / 16	4.12 / 12	34
21 – Outback	3.25 / 5	3.89 / 11	4.62 / 1	36
22 – Wienzy's	2.32 / 15	3.75 / 12	4.45 / 6	33
23 – Bambie's	2.67 / 10	4.08 / 7	4.59 / 2	39

Trail Ratings from Motorcyclists

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 – V Drop	3.71 / 1	2.00 / 15	3.71 / 8	7
4 -	2.00 / 17	16	3.00 / 15	2
5 – Ridge Trail	3.50 / 2	3.25 / 12	2.89 / 16	10
6 – Golf Course	1.86 / 18	2.00 / 15	2.60 / 17	7
7 – Becks	3.13 / 5	4.00 / 1	3.43 / 11	8
8 – Rattlesnake	3.17 / 4	4.00 / 1	4.25 / 2	12
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.30 / 3	3.78 / 4	4.00 / 5	10
10 – Behind Rocks	2.44 / 13	2.37 / 10	3.13 / 14	9
11 –	1.67 / 20	3.00 / 14	2.50 / 18	3
12 – Lower Luge	2.90 / 7	3.57 / 7	4.47 / 1	16
13 – Middle Luge	2.47 / 11	3.79 / 3	4.13 / 4	15
14 – Sea of Sage	2.20 / 15	3.00 / 14	3.00 / 15	10
15 – Broken Shovel	2.50 / 10	3.62 / 5	4.15 / 3	14
16 – Skyline	2.78 / 8	3.25 / 12	3.89 / 6	9
17 – Josho's	2.63 / 9	3.09 / 13	3.75 / 7	13
18 – McCabe's	2.27 / 14	3.58 / 6	3.25 / 13	13
19 – Dave Mo's	2.50 / 10	3.38 / 9	3.36 / 12	14
20 – Ench. Forest	3.00 / 6	3.55 / 8	3.25 / 13	11

21 – Outback	2.17 / 16	3.27 / 11	3.50 / 10	12
22 – Wienzy’s	1.80 / 19	3.00 / 14	3.60 / 9	10
23 – Bambie’s	2.45 / 12	3.80 / 2	3.36 / 12	11

Trail ratings from Hikers/Runners

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/ Rank	Quality/ Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 – V Drop	4	2	4	6
4 -	2	4.33	5	3
5 – Ridge Trail	3.20	2	3.60	5
6 – Golf Course	2	2.5	3.6	4
7 – Becks	2.67	4.33	4.50	6
8 – Rattlesnake	3.33	4.17	4.67	6
9 – Rocky Ridge	3.50	4.17	4.67	6
10 – Behind Rocks	2.20	3.80	4.80	5
11 –	1.67	4.00	5	6
12 – Lower Luge	3	3.17	4.33	6
13 – Middle Luge	1.83	3.67	5	6
14 – Sea of Sage	1.83	4	5	6
15 – Broken Shovel	1.80	3.20	4	5
16 – Skyline	2.50	3.33	4.50	6
17 – Josho’s	3.67	3.67	4.67	6
18 – McCabe’s	1.60	3.40	2.80	5
19 – Dave Mo’s	1.83	2.83	4.33	6
20 – Ench. Forest	2.60	2.40	4	5
21 – Outback	2.20	2.80	4	5
22 – Wienzy’s	2	2.80	4.20	5
23 – Bambie’s	2.50	4.14	4.12	8

Trail Ratings for Horseback Riders

Characteristic ►	Difficulty/ Rank	Popularity/Rank	Quality/Rank	# of Responses
Trail Number ▼				
3 – V Drop	3			1
4 -				
5 – Ridge Trail				
6 – Golf Course	2	1	1	1
7 – Becks	2	4	3	1
8 – Rattlesnake				
9 – Rocky Ridge	2	1		1
10 – Behind Rocks				
11 –				
12 – Lower Luge	2	2	2	1
13 – Middle Luge	1	2	2	1
14 – Sea of Sage	1	3	3	1
15 – Broken Shovel	1	4	3	1
16 – Skyline	2	4	4	1
17 – Josho’s				

18 – McCabe’s	1	5	4	1
19 – Dave Mo’s	1	5	4	1
20 – Ench. Forest	2	5	4	1
21 – Outback	2	5	4	1
22 – Wienzy’s	1	5	5	1
23 – Bambie’s	1	5	4	1

Comments on what makes a good ride

For Mountain Bikers:

- **no motorcycles on trails – they widen single track**
- **open trails, non-motorized use**
- **good friends, tunes & rhythm, well maintained trails, no litter, no ruts from motorcycles or 4 x 4s**
- **smooth with some rideable challenges, non-motorized, no loud, aggressive motorcyclists**
- **single track, well kept, challenging trails, nice scenery, no litter or deep ruts from motorcycles**
- **trails with some technical challenges but not so much that he has to look at the ground all the time**
- **trails that are rideable by a skilled rider, a variety of terrain, good access**
- **nice scenery, challenging trails, riding with friends and dog**
- **challenging but not suicidal trails, smooth trails with turns**
- **not too many people, good trail conditions**
- **challenging single track, quiet**
- **no motors, buff trails**
- **single track that’s narrow – not blown out and straightened by motorcycles**
- **nice scenery, variety of terrain, good difficulty, doesn’t like overly maintained trails**
- **nice scenery, rolling single track interspersed with technical sections, not too crowded or rugged**
- **not having to ride through horse droppings**
- **good flow, technical and cruising sections, climbing and descending**
- **connect single track trails into larger loops without using roads**
- **solitude, no litter, friendly other users, good maintenance, highly technical trails**
- **lots of maintained trails, trying new trails**
- **smooth mellow trails**
- **well maintained trails, no litter or vandalism, courteous & considerate users, good signage**
- **good mix of technical and fast trails**
- **moderately difficult, good traction, few people, nice scenery**
- **single track, mix of slickrock & challenges, no motorized use on bike trails, too loud, tear up trails**
- **prefers trails that aren’t technical, prefers no motorcycles – they come up too fast, loud, damage tr.**
- **Nice scenery, quiet, no motorcycles**
- **Rolling, fast trails**
- **Fast, smooth single track combined with technically challenging sections, good dirt**
- **No cows, no motorcycles, no horses**
- **Rideable trails for his skill level, clean, no motorcycles**
- **Within his riding ability (intermediate), good scenery, not overcrowded, respectful trail users**

- Nice scenery, good trail conditions, respectful trail users
- Clearly marked trails in good shape – not rutted by motorcycles or erosion, not so difficult you have to walk a lot of sections
- Amazing single track, well marked trails, friendly people
- Trails at Hartmans are world class
- Nice scenery, singletrack, rolling fast trails combined with technical sections
- Dog friendly, rideable bike trails, not getting run over by motorized use
- Good day, trails that aren't too rocky
- Nice scenery, fun technical combined with high quality single track, not many people
- Not a lot of people, no motorcycles
- Challenging, not crowded
- Lots of single track, low dust, low traffic,
- Network of trails for a varied experience, a choice of a combination of trails, no litter or abused trails
- Diverse trail system, varied length and difficulty, well maintained, develop new trails periodically
- Wide range of trails – easy to hard
- Smooth trails, not rutted, challenging terrain, without huge steps or drops, no loose gravel, tacky trails, shared use if folks respect each other, no trash, whoops from motorcycles are bad, design trails to slow down users after a cruising section without quick corners

For Motorcyclists:

- Expert – difficulty of terrain and variation, as little road riding as possible
- Expert – lots and lots of miles, consistent loops
- Expert – high level of difficulty, little road riding, some high speed sections
- Intermed – Technical, difficult trails
- Inter – a good variety of trails, rocky, smooth, fast, slow
- Inter – winding trail with banked turns
- ? – challenging trails with high difficulty and variety of technicality
- Begin – fast, winding sections, short quick loops you can ride after work
- Expert – tough technical trails with up & down hills, lots of interconnecting trails so you can make big loops, lots of turns with varying terrain conditions.
- Inter – technical trails, rocky tight trails with lots of obstacles, rocky, rough, slow trails rather than smooth fast ones, big loops with lots of connecting trails
- ? – everything from easy to most difficult, rocky and difficult is more fun
- ? – technical, difficult trails
- Begin – likes Hartmans because of variety, can start out easy then get harder and improve his skills
- Begin – a good selection of trails, easy to hard, varying terrain
- Inter – big loops to get lots of miles, technical trails with a few fast sections.

Appendix 5

Notes on Transportation Routes at Hartman Rocks

Existing Valid Trails on BLM Land

These are the roads and trails that are considered to be officially recognized by the BLM. They have been managed and maintained for many years as part of the official transportation system for the area. They have been cleared for archeological resources and Skiff Milkvetch. They are not all perfect. Many could use some maintenance or other improvements. But these were the routes that made sense to carry forward in the plan without questioning their validity.

Trail 2 – The Notch - .09 mi. on BLM - mostly on the base area but the approach is on BLM. The beginning of the trail has had 4 wheel traffic on it but we have established rock obstacles and signs to try to keep use to 2 wheel vehicles and hiking.

Trail 3 – V Drop - .27 mi. on BLM – has been cleared for archeology and has been used for the Rage downhill. It is mostly on the Base area but the start is on BLM. Closed to motorcycles on City/County land. This is a steep trail downhill with some spots where erosion could cause problems. These problems become more serious in some places on City/County land down below the BLM. The route is too steep and gravelly for most users to ride up so the vast majority only ride it downhill. A cooperative project with IMBA several years ago rerouted a portion of the trail on City/County. It is hoped that this process can continue in other problem spots.

Trail 4 – .22 mi. – a short route used in the Rage in the Sage to connect the top of Kill Hill to other trails. It is primarily ridden downhill and could use some drainage work to avoid erosion problems.

Trail 5 – .23 mi – another short single track route that leads up a ridge with a scenic overlook of lower Gold Basin and Gunnison then descends back down to the valley via a steep road.

Trail 6 – Golf Course Trail - .54 mi. – a quiet route that starts as a 2 track then narrows to a single track. It is an out and back route that deadends at private property belonging to the golf course. Because of this it is not as popular with mt. bikers and motorcyclists. The riparian area with cottonwoods provides good nesting and feeding habitat for many bird species in the spring and summer. In both the summer and winter it also provides forage and hiding cover for deer.

Trail 7 – Beck’s - .38 mi. – one of the most frequently used trails in the area. Some of the curves have been widened or eliminated by motorcycles and bikes cutting the edges.

Trail 8 – Rattlesnake – 1.63 mi. – a long and winding trail that scored high in our user’s survey in both difficulty and popularity with bikers and motorcyclists.

Trail 9 – Rocky Ridge – 1.23 – a popular route that traverses from the Cottonwood Grove to the top of Beck’s. It is part of the Rage course.

Trail 10 – Behind the Rocks - .63 mi. – also used in the Rage. The scenic rock formation just to the north of it adds to its appeal. Care must be taken to ensure that full sized vehicles don’t try to turn this into a 2 track.

Trail 11 – .69 mi – relatively easy and moderately popular – more so with bikers than motorcycles.

Trail 12 – Lower Luge or Water Treatment – 2.49 mi. – part of the Rage course. This is a relatively long trail with some sandy spots and a long climb out which reduces its popularity with some.

Trail 13 – Middle Luge – 1.4 mi. – part of the Rage course. The long gentle downhill with plenty of curves is considered easy but still very popular with bikers and motorcycles.

Trail 14 – Sea of Sage – 1.07 mi. – another easy, gently rolling trail very popular with bikers but only moderately so for motorcycles. Ditch to the west of it threatens to take out part of the trail.

Trail 15 – Broken Shovel - .8 mi. – part of the Rage course. A relatively easy trail more popular with bikes than with motorcycles. Drainage in the lower end can cause challenges for maintenance

Trail 16 – Skyline – 1.38 mi. – a moderately popular trail. The south end of the trail has been rerouted to avoid the livestock water troughs. There are still some visitors who try to ride through that area and we may need to lock the gates to avoid problems with cows being let into unwanted areas.

Trail 17 – Josho’s – 2.1 mi. – a moderately popular trail with both groups. Several narrow gates on the trail must be closed at certain times when livestock are in that pasture. The sign system informing riders of the need to close the gate at those certain times seems to work well when we have the time to mark the sign before the cows are turned out.

Trail 18 – McCabe’s - .66 mi. – motorcycle use on this trail has resulted in bumps that are not enjoyable for mt. bikers which have mostly been displaced from this trail.

Trail 19 – Dave Mo’s – 1.09 mi. – part of the Rage course. This moderately popular trail needs work in places. We have heard complaints that some folks have fallen on the timber bridge on this trail.

Trail 20 – Enchanted Forest - .84 mi. – part of the Rage course. This moderate trail is also moderately popular. About .16 mi. of the trail is located on private land and it is uncertain if the landowner will grant permission for the public to continue using it.

Trail 21 – Outback – 1.33 mi. – part of the Rage course. It is only moderately popular possibly because of the distance that bikers have to ride to use it.

Trail 22 – Wienzy’s - .82 mi. – part of the Rage course. This is a moderately popular trail.

Trail 23 – Bambi’s – 1.37 mi. – a popular trail particularly with hikers and motorcyclists. Its location in a drainage causes regular maintenance problems and some long sections of sand and gravel uncomfortable for riders. Parking at the bottom of the trail needs improvement.

Total miles of approved trails – 21.26 miles

Existing Valid Roads on BLM

- Road 1 – Top of Kill Hill to Cottonwood Grove – 1.52 mi
- Road 2 – Cottonwood Grove to McCabes’s via Cottonwood Gulch – 1.13 mi
- Road 3 – McCabe’s entrance from Cattleguard to Powerline – 3.45 mi.
- Road 4 – Powerline Road from Powerline Junction west to Historical Society land – 1.85 mi.
- Road 5 – Powerline Road from Powerline Junction east to Gold Basin Road – 1.35 mi.
- Road 6 – Southern Entrance from Powerline Junction to Gold Basin Road – 3.85 mi.
- Road 7 – Jeep trail in section 11 off Southern Entrance Rd. - .71 mi.
- Road 8 – Jeep Trail on south boundary from Southern Entrance Rd. to Moncrief’s boundary - .95 mi.
- Road 9 – Spur from Southern Entrance Rd. around big rock - .22 mi
- Road 10 – Outback Road from Southern Entrance Rd west to Powerline Rd. – 1.6 mi
- Road 11 – Powerline Road on Historical Society land from BLM to S. Beaver Creek - .44 mi.
- Road 12 – Spur N. of Powerline Rd to Waterhole - .09 mi. – used only for rancher to access water development
- Road 13 – Rd from Rattlesnake Junction SW to Powerline – 1.59 mi.
- Road 14 – Spur from McCabe’s cutoff to deadend at rocks – 1.18 mi.
- Road 15 – Spur to upper shooting site from McCabe’s cutoff - .05 mi.
- Road 16 – Spur to lower shooting site from McCabe’s Cutoff - .1 mi
- Road 17 – Circular drive off McCabe’s Cutoff - .18 mi.
- Road 18 – North Gate Road from McCabe’s to Trail 10 – 2.43 mi.
- Road 19 – Fork off North Gate Road to steep downhill - .9 mi.
- Road 20 - Spur off North gate rd along fence on trail 12 out to Overlook - .87 mi
- Road 21 – Spur off North Gate Rd along drainage to trail 12 - .28 mi.
- Road 22 – Party Loop at the beginning of Trail 10 - .22 mi.
- Road 23 – Road north of North Gate Rd up to west end of trail 10 - .31 mi.
- Road 24 – Main road from West end of trail 10 to main rd at top of hill - .86 mi.
- Road 25 - Rd in W side of valley down to grassy meadow - .33 mi.
- Road 26 – Gravel pit to Grassy Meadow - .35 mi
- Road 27 – Gravel pit curving west back to road 24 - .21 mi.
- Road 28 – E side of Gravel Pit curving back into Rd 27 - .15 mi.
- Road 29 – In Valley E of drainage to bottom of trail 4 and around to Grassy meadow - .5 mi.
- Road 30 – Spur from rd. 29 up to top of hill - .06 mi
- Road 31 – Spur from top of Kill Hill up to Overlook - .11 mi.
- Road 32 – Rd from rd 29 that deadends in drainage - .22 mi.
- Road 33 – Connection between Rd 32 and Rd 26 - .08 mi.
- Road 34 – Rd connecting Rd 32 east to Rd 29 - .11 mi.
- Road 35 – Gravel pit trail complex - .3 mi.
- Road 36 – Road from beginning of Rd 24 uphill to camping area - .1 mi.
- Road 37 – Early entrance from Top of hill to Mainstreet - .15 mi.
- Road 38 – Buddah’s belly loop - .14 mi.
- Road 39 – Road Loop to V Drop - .51 mi.
- Road 40 – Right fork off Rd 39 to Party area - .64 mi.
- Road 41 – Midway exit from Rd. 40 - .11 mi.
- Road 42 – Road into top of Beck’s - .23 mi.
- Road 43 – Side Loop off Rd 42 - .09 mi.
- Road 44 – Cottonwood Grove sw to McCabe’s Cutoff – 1.09 mi. Total 31.61 miles to here

Notes on Uncertain Routes

While planning for the roads and trails at Hartman Rocks we accepted the well established and officially recognized routes as valid. There were at least 67 other segments that have not been officially recognized. We discussed these routes in detail as to their advantages and disadvantages. These are some of the notes from those discussions. They include specific references to key resource issues such as Skiff Milkvetch and Sage Grouse along with possible recommendations on where each may fit under the different alternatives. After discussions the Core Group made their final recommendations on which routes would be open or closed under the different alternatives. This may or may not agree with the suggestions listed below. **Note – all routes considered for inclusion in our trail system would have to have an archeological clearance done on them before a final decision could be made.**

A1 – Sewer Plant Outlet – .13 mi. - faint trail not used very much. Mainly used by inexperienced riders who decide they want to bail out once they are out along the Lower Luge. No one felt it was necessary. Moncrief's land begins somewhere east of the fence (exact location is uncertain) so there may be a trespass problem. The route dumps out east of a locked gate and getting through the gate could be a problem. Ken Coleman with the City said he clearly didn't want folks wandering around the sewer plant but he could be open to a route to get out to McCabe's Lane if we feel it is necessary. Skiff Milkvetch – outside the ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives. Post a sign letting folks know the route is closed.

A2 – On private land owned by Moncrief - .93 mi. plus about .12 mi. on BLM . No legal access and no hope of access. Closed now but sometimes violated. We need to beef up signs and physical barriers. Area heavily used by deer displaced from the rest of Hartmans. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Must be closed in all Alternatives.

A3 – Connects Lower Luge with Scenic Overlook - .5 mi. We walked this in the field. The trail trespasses on private property (Moncrief) and we will not get an access easement. There is lots of deer use in the area because it doesn't get much human use and is close to the river. It cannot be used the way it is now. We would have to reroute about .25 miles of trail to make a legal route off private land. This would be made more difficult by archeological sites in the area. Increased human use in this area would likely displace and reduce the deer population and level of use. The only way it would make sense to use this trail is if we also opened A6 for use. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known populations, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A4 – Ridgeline Trail – .6 mi. - we walked this in the field. Moderately popular mainly because of the nice view over the Gunnison Valley from on top. The descent down the hill to the Golf Course Trail is steep, difficult and eroded beyond acceptable limits. A significant portion of the nice part of the trail is trespassing on private land. It would be possible to reroute around the private land but it wouldn't be easy and would cut out the most desirable portion of the trail. The landowner has recently offered an easement across that piece. If this could be worked out it would allow us to use the desirable part of the trail but would force us to deal with the resource impacts in the steep downhill section. We would have to investigate the feasibility of a reroute that would be more sustainable and less impacting. Skiff Milkvetch – outside the ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A5 – Fenceline Trail – .51 mi. - we walked this in the field. Regularly used as a shortcut to get back to the base from the west side. The western half is ok but the eastern half is steep and eroded. It would have to be rerouted to the north to be more sustainable and less impacting. Cattle will probably continue to walk along the fence line to water so it may be hard to make the scar disappear. Skiff Milkvetch – outside

ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all 3 Alts once reroute is completed.

A6 – Goes from Golf Course Trail NW to Scenic Overlook - .7 mi. – we walked this in the field. The north portion of the trail is stable but the southern portion drops too steeply and is not sustainable. Folks liked the setting of the steep section in the trees but it would be a challenge to redesign the trail in that area to be sustainable. There may be a possibility of using the stable northern portion of the trail then designing a reroute that uses some of the trees & rocks on top before descending down the south face of the hill to end up near the beginning (southern end) of the Golf Course Trail. This would be about .5 mile of new construction and probably be designed for intermediate & advanced riders. It would also take visitors out into a little visited portion of the area which could impact deer use in that area and encourage trespass on private land. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A7 – Steep hill from Trail 11 to the road - .18 mi. The group says it isn't necessary. Closed now because of poor location and erosion concerns. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A8 – Freefall - .47 mi. - older trail, has been considered closed for a long time because of erosion on steep portion of downhill. A few folks still ride it. Upper part is pretty stable and we may be able to use that and find an outlet that would tie back into Behind the Rocks for an advanced slickrock type route. We also discussed the possibility of rerouting the unacceptable part of the downhill to a path that was just as difficult but less impacting and more sustainable. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A9 – Short difficult 2 track from main road up through rocks to party spot - .12 mi. We walked this in the field. It has been closed but some folks are still using it. Resource damage is unacceptable and the route is too short for a desirable recreation experience. It isn't challenging for serious rock crawlers but is challenging for standard 4 wheel drive vehicles. The group was split on whether it made sense to leave it open. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A10 – Steep 2 track and associated spurs that lead up to the boundary fence then deadends - .46 mi. It used to go through the fence before the master plan for the base area closed the routes on the other side. It is necessary to keep the fence intact to prevent livestock from getting down into the Base Area. There is no real need for routes now – they don't lead to any nice overlooks. There are erosion problems on the route. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all 3 Alternatives.

A11 – Short spur off A10 that doesn't go anywhere - .08 mi. The group felt that there wasn't any need for it but the area is open enough that it may be hard to close. If we closed A10 down at the bottom it would take care of this problem. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A12 – Old 2 track from Becks over to the road - .15 mi. Currently open in case people wanted to go that way but there seems to be no demand. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A13 – Single track from Becks over to the road - .15 mi. It is closed now because of archeological site and erosion on the steep drop to the road. Not used so the closure seems to be working. Skiff Milkvetch

– outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A14 – One of many proliferating routes among the rocks - .15 mi. The portion close to the main road is a single track that only gets a little use. The portion headed east is going to 2 track. Not an essential route but some folks say they use it. It may be hard to close. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A15 – V Drop – better listed under trail 3 – open in all alternatives

A16 – Sacrifice – .21mi. - the group felt it was a good advanced trail. It trespasses on private land owned by Mr. Odom. We ask him for permission to cross his land. He said he does not want the public using his private land. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives if permission cannot be acquired. If permission is granted in the future then we should include this route as part of our designated routes.

A17 – East Trail – .35 mi. - a lousy trail that doesn't get much use. It trespasses on private land without permission. The group felt that it wasn't needed so it doesn't make sense to ask for permission on it. The landowner has stated that he did not want the public using his land for recreation. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A18 – Technical Becks – .2 mi. - a short, technical trail that leads from the hub at the top of Becks down to the road. Some like it for the challenge but it just leaves you at the road which is less enjoyable riding. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A19 – Old route on Middle Luge closed to avoid an important archeological site - .24 mi. Reroute in place and folks are finally accustomed to using it. Closure seems to be working but may need to be beefed up and signs added. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Must remain closed in all Alternatives.

A20 – Josie's – 1.5 mi. - Reasonably popular trail, some concerns about location in the gully on the south end, may need to reroute up on the side slope. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – uncertain but probably low.

A21 – Gateway - 1.59 mi. - Reasonably popular trail, has been around for awhile. There are 2 known archeological sites along the trail and it would have to be rerouted around these sites before it could be acceptable. Route seems to be stable but needs work in a few places. Skiff Milkvetch – part inside and part outside ACEC & no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A22 – Single track motorcycle route that is a remnant of the Enduro event about 5 years ago - .39 mi. Not very challenging – set up as a kids loop. If we can develop a terrain park elsewhere this area would not be necessary. Doesn't get much use now. This was one of the areas suggested by motorcyclists for a terrain park but significant archeological site in southern drainage inhibits our ability to expand it. Its proximity to private land could also generate some controversy on a noise issue. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives assuming we can develop a terrain park to take its place.

A23 – New route created by motorcyclists in 2003 to get around our spring closure gate - .2 mi. Not a necessary route. It is currently closed but needs to be monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the

closure. We may need to lock the wire gate in the spring. Skiff Milkvetch – outside the ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A24 – Reasonably popular single track that starts just south of the gate on McCabe’s side - .48 mi. It was an old road that fell out of use once the current road was constructed. Now it is mainly single track but 4 wheel vehicles are sometimes tempted to start down the beginning but soon have to turn around. The northern portion of the trail goes through a large and significant archeological site. We need to look for options that will avoid or minimize damage on that site. Further along, the trail splits. One side goes down into the gully (A24) which is sandy and mainly attractive for motorcycles though not everyone enjoys riding in sand. There is rarely water in the gully – only during spring melt and after big storms. Along with going up the bottom some folks slalom up on the sides of the gully which may cause bank instability and increase erosion. The other fork is described under A25. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – uncertain but should be evaluated because of drainage, large sage nearby and location within lek buffer. Consider open in Alt 3 & 4 and closed in Alt 2 or also open in Alt 2 if other resource concerns are negative?

A25 – the Mt. biker’s fork for A24 - .26 mi. It stays up on the bench above the gully and is less sandy. It gets moderate use primarily as a single track alternative to the road. Rage course has been diverted away from this route because of the archeological site at the beginning. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – uncertain but should be evaluated because of drainage, large sage nearby and location near lek buffer.

A26 – Continuation of the gully bottom trail from the second dam south to the third dam - .57 mi. Moderately popular with motorcyclists but too sandy for mt. bikers. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – uncertain but should be evaluated because of drainage, large sage nearby and location near lek buffer.

A27 – Relatively new 2 track route pushed in without authorization in ACEC – 1.04 mi. Currently closed to vehicles and closures seem to be working. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns at least moderate – inside lek buffer and good sage habitat in some places. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A28 – Back Door – unauthorized 2 track pushed into the ACEC – 2.32 mi. Currently closed to motor vehicles and closures seem to be working. It gets a little use by mt. bikers but the group felt it wouldn’t be a big loss if it was closed to that group. It is hard to have routes open to mt. bikes but not to motorcycles but our plan must clarify who can do what on all of our routes. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – within lek buffer. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A29 – Two track road that continues north from shooting area up to connect with Buddy Bear - .33 mi. If we are going to develop the shooting area it won’t make sense to have a travel route going through there for safety reasons. There is another single track access to that trail so this isn’t necessary. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A30 – Buddy Bear – 1.23 mi. - used by mt. bikes and motorcycles, some like it while others are not excited. The climb out of the gully is probably too steep and needs to be rerouted if we decide to keep it. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – probably low.

A31 – Dirty Sock - .74 mi. - used by mt. bikes and motorcycles, some like it while others are not excited. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC the southern portion goes directly through a known population of Skiff Milkvetch and must be rerouted if we decide to keep it, Sage Grouse concerns – probably low.

A32 – Cottonwood Gulch motorcycle track – 1.3 mi. - gets some use though not a great experience, motorcyclists feel that if we open a terrain park then demand for this track will disappear. From a resource point of view there are several concerns. This is one of the few places at Hartmans that has mature cottonwood trees associated with a riparian area so it has values for nesting birds and other wildlife. It is also one of the few places that offers decent camping opportunities. Having a motorcycle track running through these values is counterproductive. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closing in all 3 alternatives and rehab to make the track disappear assuming we can develop a terrain park.

A33 – Single track connection from Middle Luge to road - .08 mi. – users say it is a necessary route. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all Alternatives.

A34 – Two track connection from motorcycle trail over to road – .15 mi. - part of the maze of trails at the Cottonwood Grove. It gets some use though other existing routes can provide the same access. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A35 – Connection from main road to Broken Shovel – .17 mi. - part of the maze of trails at the Cottonwood Grove. Gets moderate use now though other existing routes can provide the same access. If we close this we should rework the connections between Broken Shovel and Skyline. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A36 – This was created by 4 wheel vehicles when they widened out the single track on the north end of Rattlesnake - .2 mi. They couldn't get through a set of rocks and detoured around them to connect in with the main road behind the rocks. Recreationists lamented the loss of the single track but it may be hard to shut off the 4 wheel use and convert it back to a single track. If we leave it as a 2 track then it probably makes sense to allow A36 to stand as long as it doesn't have archeological concerns. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A37 – 2 track road from the top of Becks to the middle of Rattlesnake - .78 mi. This is one of several 2 tracks that have been pushed into this area in the past 10 years. Not often used by mt. bikers or motorcyclists. Bill says it could be a good spot to set up a telescope for stargazing. The southern portion that goes down the hill to tie in with Rattlesnake is too steep and eroding to be sustainable and has been closed by the BLM. Some folks had a concern that if 4 wheeled vehicles used it they may veer off and drive on the single track trail on Rocky Ridge. 4 wheel access is duplicated in the same area by road A36. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all 3 Alts.

A38 – A small piece of single track that is usually not an attraction by itself but can be used on your way to somewhere else - .48 mi. Used by mt. bikers and motorcyclists but not heavily by either group. It is eroded in places and needs work. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all 3 Alts if trail erosion can be fixed.

A39 – Ring Dike – 1.39 mi. - a more advanced trail that is relatively popular. It needs some maintenance work and some portions could be rerouted onto slickrock to reduce impacts and make for a more challenging riding opportunity. The trail hasn't been cleared for archeology but there is at least 1 known

arch. site on the north end. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all Alts as long as archeology concerns are resolved.

A40 – Additional entrance to Rattlesnake – .07 miles. The group felt we should keep the entrance to Rattlesnake near the end of Josho's. While this alternate entrance does get some use it wasn't essential and could be eliminated because of the way most traffic flows. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A41 – Alternate entrance to Sea of Sage - .13 mi. – it is not essential but folks are accustomed to using it. It isn't marked with a sign so ATVs may be tempted to drive down it. If we only keep one route keep the original and close this alternate with a barrier on both ends and a sign indicating that the trail entrance is just up the road. Consider the cost and benefit of fighting the issue. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A42 – Short single track cutoff from the main road - .1 mi. An old cow path that sometimes gets ridden. It just straightens out the curve in the road. The group felt it wasn't necessary and wouldn't cause a lot of complaints if we closed it. We would also have to try to keep cows off it if we want it to disappear. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A43 – Bong Hits – .8 mi. - starts on private owned by Mr. Odum without permission. He has stated he does not want the public to trespass on his land. Not very good for mt. bikers or motorcyclists, Mark says it's nice to hike but not easy. Parking at the bottom of the trail along the Gold Basin road is not good and is located on private land. At this time rock climbers don't seem to use the cliffs near the trail. There is a bird nest (probably falcon) in the cliffs that we must try to protect at least in the nesting season from April through July. Most felt it was not an essential route. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A44 – Spur from Josho's down to Gold Basin Road - .29 mi. – east end is on private owned by Mr. Odum with no permission from the landowner. It is currently closed and most folks felt it wasn't needed. We checked with the landowner for permission and he stated he did not want the public using his land. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all 3 Alternatives.

A45 – Spur from Josho's down to Gold Basin Road – .17 mi. - east end is on private owned by Mr. Odum with no permission from the landowner. It is currently closed and most folks felt it wasn't needed. We checked with the landowner for permission and he stated he did not want the public using his land. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all 3 Alternatives.

A46 – An old cow path that folks ride sometimes to connect from road over to Skyline - .32 mi. Not essential but some folks think that the public would prefer to keep it open. It is sandy in places where it follows a wash. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all Alts.

A47 – Mainly used as an off the road traverse from the beginning of Dave Mo's to the beginning of Dirty Sock - .24 mi. If we close Dirty Sock or keep it open and reroute the southern end it will hopefully eliminate the need for this route. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known populations affected, Sage Grouse concerns – probably low.

A48 – Short 2 track that deadends after 70 yards – currently closed - .05 mi. No one felt it was necessary. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A49 – Short 2 track spur from a portion of Dave Mo’s out to the road - .09 mi. The group felt it wasn’t necessary and didn’t get much use but may be hard to close since it is so open around there. We don’t want to encourage 4 wheeled use on the single track trail. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A50 – old 2 track from the end of designated road down to drainage - .44 mi. It leads down to trespass on private owned by Moncrief without permission. Currently closed but still gets a little use by mt. bikes and motorcycles. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & directly impacts 1 known population, Sage Grouse concerns – uncertain. Consider closed in all 3 Alternatives.

A51 – Single track that goes from the bottom of Enchanted Forest down to the old cabin on Moncrief’s land - .57 mi. No legal outlet and visitors aren’t likely to ride it down and back. No chance for an access easement on Moncrief’s. Currently closed but closures are regularly torn out. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – lower portion is within lek buffer. Must be closed in all Alternatives.

A52 – Old Railroad Grade – .89 mi. - 2 track and single track route. Pioneer Society says they don’t want it used on the south end and the north end trespasses on Moncrief. Some resource damage from vehicles driving on it when boggy. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – riparian area could be useful for them and definitely is for other birds. Must be closed in all Alternatives.

A53 – Quarry Drop - .63 mi. – doesn’t get much use but some folks ride it. Exits from the lower portion trespass in both directions. Dave Weins thought there might be a possibility of rerouting to avoid Milkvetch populations and tie into the powerline road to make it an easier way to get down to the creek. This would also avoid trespass problems. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & goes right through 2 known populations, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A54 – Short spur to powerline tower off the powerline road - .1 mi. Needs to stay open for powerline maintenance but doesn’t serve a use for recreation. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed for recreation but open for WAPA maintenance in all Alternatives.

A55 – Arden’s – 1.62 mi. - a single track west of South Beaver Creek that doesn’t get much use. It is outside the area of the Hartman’s Plan but included in this discussion because use here is related to Hartman’s use. It goes down a drainage and is sandy in spots. It also doesn’t mesh well with other trails. It crosses the riparian area in South Beaver Creek then connects with the Quarry Drop trail which will be closed because of impact to Skiff Milkvetch populations. It cannot be accessed legally from the old railroad grade because that route trespasses on private land. The group felt it was not in a good location and didn’t get enough use to warrant keeping it open. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known populations, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – the drainage could have values near the lek buffer.

A56 – West side of Aberdeen Loop – 2.09 mi. – a single track cow trail that started to be used by bikers and motorcycles. It is outside the area of the Hartman’s Plan but included in this discussion because use here is related to Hartman’s use. It includes part on Pioneer Society land. They have said use on them is ok as long as the land is taken care of and no new routes are created without their permission. They are

particularly concerned about the remnants of the old buildings by the creek. If we leave it open we should place signs at the boundary letting folks know they are entering private land. The route is reasonably popular because of the long distance loop it offers. There is concern that increased use could lead to an undesirable proliferation of routes west of South Beaver Creek. There are some places where bank instability in the drainage may devour the trail. The route is most popular in the spring and fall – too hot in the summer. If Sage Grouse brood rearing is a concern there may be the possibility of a seasonal closure during brood rearing times to minimize conflict. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC but near several known populations. One of these is so close that it needs to be investigated to make sure the trail doesn't impact the population. Sage Grouse concerns moderate – the sagebrush portions of the drainages is used by sage grouse for brood rearing.

A57 – East side of Aberdeen Loop – 2.55 mi. - a single track cow trail that started to be used by bikers and motorcycles. It is outside the area of the Hartman's Plan but included in this discussion because use here is related to Hartman's use. It includes part on Pioneer Society land. They have said use on them is ok as long as the land is taken care of and no new routes are created without their permission. They are particularly concerned about the remnants of the old buildings by the creek. If we leave it open we should place signs at the boundary letting folks know they are entering private land. The route is reasonably popular because of the long distance loop it offers. There is concern that increased use could lead to a undesirable proliferation of routes west of South Beaver Creek. There are some places where bank instability in the drainage may devour the trail. A fenced enclosure to protect the spring source has been constructed on the south end of the trail and blocks the traditional route. A new trail alignment would have to be constructed around this enclosure to make it more usable. The route is most popular in the spring and fall – too hot in the summer. If Sage Grouse brood rearing is a concern there may be the possibility of a seasonal closure during brood rearing times to minimize conflict. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC and no known populations on the trail. Sage Grouse concerns moderate to high – the sagebrush portions of the drainages are used by sage grouse for brood rearing.

A58 – Skull Pass – .74 mi. - a popular route for intermediate and advanced riders. It is usually ridden clockwise from the powerline road south then downhill to the creek, down the creek on Pioneer Society land then back up the powerline road. The Pioneer Society has given permission for recreationists to use this route on their property as long as they take care of the land and don't create any more new routes without their permission. The route is steep and eroded in places and would benefit from drainage work. There is a fence between it and Outback so there isn't a connection. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider open in all Alts.

A59 – Short 2 track that leads up into the rocks at the west end of Outback - .12 mi. - not heavily used. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A60 – A shortcut Y at an intersection on the east end of Outback - .14 mi. The group felt it was not necessary. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – inside lek buffer.

A61 – A single track that is remnants of an old 2 track - .44 mi. - It is used by cattle going to salt and occasionally by recreationists. No one felt it was necessary or that it would be missed if we closed it. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – inside lek buffer.

A62 – Near the beginning of Wienzy's – .14 mi. - a short 2 track leading nowhere. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alternatives.

A63 – Small 2 track just to the side of the established road - .16 mi. It was possibly created by folks driving around a bog in the established road on a wet year. The group felt it was not necessary. If we close it we should place barriers on both ends and consider if we have to address the bog on the main road to eliminate the need to drive around it. It may get some use by campers. If we place barriers we should leave room for a camper to park. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low. Consider closed in all Alts.

A64 – 2 track road – pushed in fairly recently - .48 mi. It goes through private land without permission. It is uncertain whether the owner would agree to access but we will send him a letter to tie down his position. There may be the possibility of a reroute around the private land if we can't get permission but still feel the route is necessary. It is a rough road – some folks liked it and others didn't. It does offer the advantage of completing a loop for full sized vehicle to connect over to the powerline road. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known population, Sage Grouse concerns – low.

A65 – Sawtooth – .77 mi. - the most technical trail out there. It is popular with advanced mt. bikers & motorcyclists. There is a dangerous spot on a crux move that sends you down into a barbed wire fence. Think about a reroute or move the fence out of that area. The trail needs some work in places. There is a cheatgrass infestation out there that we should try to deal with to prevent spread. Skiff Milkvetch – outside ACEC & no known population, Sage Grouse concerns low – inside lek buffer and it will be important to avoid route proliferation in this area. Consider open in all Alternatives if route can be repaired.

A66 – Called Nine-O – .96 mi. - a popular single track trail – fast & straight. It was closed because it was a new, unauthorized route in the ACEC and we heard complaints about it. Skiff Milkvetch – about half inside and half outside the ACEC but no known populations, Sage Grouse concerns moderate – it is within the lek buffer. There is also concern that allowing use on this route could encourage the proliferation of more routes moving to the south that could increase impacts on Sage Grouse. Consider open in all Alternatives if there aren't Sage Grouse concerns with added attention to closing any new routes that might develop in that area.

A67 – An access road used by the rancher to access a livestock water development - .46 mi. It is the logical outlet to complete the loop to the powerline road if A64 is authorized. It will have to continue to be available for the rancher to use but if A64 is not authorized we can consider not having it open to recreationists since it would not offer a useful destination. Skiff Milkvetch – inside ACEC but no known population, Sage Grouse concerns uncertain – outside lek buffer but may be good habitat. Consider closed to recreation but open to rancher in Alt 2 and open in Alts 3 & 4 if A64 is opened with owner's permission.

A68 – .24 mi. - an old road that has been abandoned for a long time because it trespasses on private land. A parallel road exists on BLM land and serves as the primary access in this area so the old road is redundant and unnecessary.

A69 - .34 mi. – an alternative route to connect to the east side of the Aberdeen Loop, impacts archeological site, redundant, consider closed in all alternatives.