

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) and DECISION RECORD (DR)

San Rafael Route Designation Plan EA-UT-067-94-010

FONSI

The San Rafael Route Designation Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes impacts that would result from the designation of specific routes available for use by off-highway vehicles (OHV) on public lands in the San Rafael area. The EA analyzed four different route designation alternatives in the "limited to designated roads and trails" category. The decision to place the majority of the San Rafael area into the "limited" OHV category was made in the 1991 San Rafael Resource Management Plan (RMP). This EA is tiered to the RMP.

The selection of any one of the four alternative route designations identified in the EA would benefit many components of the environment because cross-country OHV use would be curbed by route designation through signing, kiosks, barricades, dissemination of route travel maps, and monitoring efforts. Restricting OHV use to designated routes would help to protect important sensitive resources such as riparian vegetation, threatened, endangered, and other special status species, as well as cultural and paleontological resources. Other benefits include fewer disturbances to wildlife species, and reduced motorized and non-motorized conflicts in certain areas. Increased management of a clearly defined network of secondary routes, augmented through maps and signing, will also enhance user safety and the recreational experience.

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the San Rafael Route Designation Plan EA, and for the reasons discussed in the rationale for the Decision Record (DR), I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment and an environmental impact statement is not required.

DECISION

It is my decision to implement Alternative Four (Proposed Alternative) as described in EA-UT-067-94-010, with minor modifications that are described in the attached Errata to the EA and its associated Map 2. This Decision will designate approximately 677 miles of routes open to motorized travel (including motorcycles and ATVs) in the San Rafael Swell and surrounding areas as shown on the large attached **map entitled *San Rafael Motorized Route Designations*** ([HTML / PDF](#)), dated February 2003. This decision will close the remaining 468 miles of routes in the "limited to designated roads and trails" category. The antelope fawning habitat located in the San Rafael Desert is limited to designated roads and trails from May 15 to June 15 each year. In deer and elk crucial winter ranges, located in the foothills adjacent to Forest Service lands west of Highway 10, the area is also limited to designated roads and trails from December 1 to April 15 each year. For all other times of the year, these crucial wildlife habitat areas are in an "open" OHV category as stated in the San Rafael RMP.

Attachments included with this decision are the "Errata to the EA" which describes minor changes to the text and maps of the EA, and a "Response to Comments" document which addresses public comments concerning the EA and route designation process.

BACKGROUND

BLM regulations, at 43 CFR 8340, outline the requirements for managing OHVs on public lands. The 1991 San Rafael RMP directed the Price Field Office to designate routes within the "limited

to designated roads and trails" category through a public process. The route designations apply only to public lands, and are not applicable on state lands and private land inholdings. Other roads that have existing rights-of-way (ROW) will retain the restrictions or stipulations provided in the ROW.

Route designation applies to "casual use" travel normally associated with recreational and other purposes. The route designations do not apply to authorized emergency personnel and vehicles, or to any BLM authorized permitted activities on public land. Special Recreational Use Permits may be considered on a case-by case basis to allow use of a non-designated route or for cross country travel pending additional NEPA analysis.

The 1991 RMP specifically stated that route designations applicable to this effort do not apply to BLM system roads, County maintained (Class B) roads, or to State or Federal Highway system roads. These are the roads considered to be the primary infrastructure of roads usually traveled by visitors to the San Rafael area. The majority of them are maintained paved, graveled or unsurfaced dirt roads that can be traveled in a two-wheel drive vehicle. These routes, comprising well over 1,300 miles, remain available for OHV use and are not subject to this OHV route designation decision. The San Rafael Route Designation Plan basically deals with secondary dirt roads and trails that are seldom, if ever, mechanically maintained and are often passable only with high-clearance, 4-wheel drive vehicles, ATVs or motorcycles. This Decision designates approximately 677 miles of these secondary routes for motorized use. The BLM system and County maintained (Class B) roads in combination with the secondary routes designated as open for motorized travel in this Plan comprise an extensive access network of nearly 2,000 miles of routes available for recreational purposes within the San Rafael area

The San Rafael Route Designation Plan is a result of many years of coordination between BLM and the public. Beginning in 1992, the Price Field Office initiated a public stakeholder process, involving 18 meetings, to obtain a wide variety of public input on routes in the San Rafael area. Stakeholders included County Commissioners, representatives from OHV clubs, environmental groups, mountain bike clubs, hiking groups, and other users of public lands. During this process these stakeholders from their constituents solicited over 1,000 comments. BLM used this information to prepare a preliminary Route Designation Map that was released for review in 1997. The Utah Congressional Delegation was briefed on this proposal and formal public meetings were held in various locations throughout the state and in Colorado. Over 1,500 additional comments were received concerning this preliminary proposal, which BLM used to formulate the San Rafael Route Designation Plan EA, including alternatives.

The San Rafael Route Designation Plan EA was released for public review and comment on February 7, 2002. The public comment period extended until April 22. Approximately 1,200 substantive comment letters were received from the public. Some of the letters suggested routes that were not in BLM's inventory database. Other information was received by the public on routes that were in BLM's inventory database but had revegetated and should no longer be considered vehicle routes. BLM conducted field checks to verify the public's data. In many cases, public comment resulted in corrections to the inventoried route baseline map that was shown as Alternative One in the EA. These corrections are displayed in the Errata Map 1. Some of these changes were carried forward into Alternative Four and can be found on Errata Map 2.

RATIONALE

This Route Designation Plan is an implementation decision for the 1991 San Rafael RMP. Four alternatives were analyzed in the EA. Alternative Four, with minor modifications, is selected as the Decision. It was selected because it provides for a balanced approach to OHV use and management of other resources.

The San Rafael Swell region is the "centerpiece" of the public lands affected by the San Rafael Route Designation Plan. The area addressed in the Plan is a massive, steep, rugged anticlinal uplift that includes a spectacular sandstone reef dissected with slot canyons. The land behind the reef is a mosaic of stunning canyons, grasslands, and eroding arches and buttes that cannot be duplicated. The 1991 RMP did not place this area in an "open," or even in an "existing roads and trails" OHV category due to the very special values associated with this area. The RMP required that routes be "limited to designated roads and trails" to (1) provide for protection of critical soils; (2) provide for protection of scenic resources; (3) protect crucial wildlife habitat; (4) provide for recreational opportunities; and (5) provide special management for certain vegetation, cultural, and historic mining resources among others. This Decision meets these requirements in addition to allowing for a myriad of motorized opportunities that serve as important access to destination points and scenic overlooks for recreation. It includes a variety of OHV loop rides and single-track motorcycle trails. These open routes will be designated in the field via signs and structural installations and will be patrolled.

Approximately 468 miles of routes are not available for motorized travel under this Decision, primarily because they were: (1) duplicate routes to destination points; (2) dead end routes; (3) routes causing resource damage by inviting "route proliferation" (multiple parallel trails, hill climbs, additional routes around difficult spots); (4) routes that are naturally re-vegetating; (5) routes with conflicts between motorized and non- motorized users; (6) routes through riparian areas; (7) routes through critical soils susceptible to damage; (8) routes that have the most potential to affect threatened or endangered species; (9) routes that could affect cultural resources; (10) and routes that could impact the tentative classification of eligible wild and scenic river segments, as per the San Rafael RMP. Two *Federal Register Notices* released in 1992 and 2000 respectively, had already closed some of these routes in the Wedge Portion in the Middle San Rafael River ACEC and in six of the seven wilderness study areas (WSAs) within the San Rafael. These routes were closed to prevent further deterioration of the Wedge area's endangered plant and wildlife resources as well as to prevent the impairment of wilderness values. These routes remain closed under this Decision.

The March 2000 Emergency OHV Order allowed use to continue on four pre-existing inventoried ways in the Sid's Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) as long as wilderness impairment did not occur. Subsequent monitoring has shown that the condition of the WSA is improving due to better user compliance. This is because the impacts associated with OHV use are being controlled using barriers, signs, and more on the ground presence. This Decision maintains the status quo, designating the four inventory routes open to motorized use. As specified in the previous emergency order, and the EA, these routes will remain "conditionally open" only if motorized travel does not impair the suitability of the WSA for congressional wilderness designation.

Specific conflicts and uses of each route that provide the rationale for this decision are identified on a route-by-route basis in two documents available for review at the BLM Price Field Office. These documents are the *Purpose and Need Assessment for Public Land Non-System Roads* and the *Field Report on Specific Routes Brought Forth from Public Comments*. Refer to the attached Response to Comments and the Errata to the EA for further details on these and other routes. Not all of the routes can be discussed here; however, of particular concern to the public are:

- **Behind the Reef** - This route has been designated as open to motorized vehicles but has a vehicle restriction on a portion of the route for safety purposes. From the Quandry Canyon trailhead (approximately 1/2 mile south of the County Road that leads to the Hidden Splendor Mine) to the Horse Valley Road junction, only vehicles less than 52" in width are authorized. This section is not suitable for full sized vehicles.
- **Seeger's Hole** - All routes on public land south and east of the State section 2 are closed to motorized use. These routes are in an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

designated in the 1991 San Rafael RMP. The ACEC is to be managed as a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class I category area. Increased OHV use has created proliferated routes that are damaging scenic values and are not meeting the VRM Class I objectives.

- **Junes Bottom** - This route is closed to motorized use. Of concern is (1) route proliferation and damage to cryptogamic soils, and; (2) protecting the tentative classification of "wild" on an eligible wild and scenic river segment identified in the San Rafael RMP. Occasional motorized access to an old homestead site may be provided for family heritage purposes through the Special Recreation Use permitting process pending additional NEPA analysis.
- **Five Miles of Hell** - This route is open to motorcycle (single-track) use only. Full size vehicles and ATVs are not allowed on this route. One escape route will be designated and marked.
- **Sid's Mountain** - The following specific routes are "conditionally open" to motorized use: Coal Wash, the dugway entering Coal Wash, North and South Forks of Coal Washes, Eva Conover, Fix-it-Pass to Cane Wash, Justesen Flats Access Route and the Devils Racetrack. These routes would remain open only if motorized travel does not impair the suitability of the WSA for congressional wilderness designation. The routes would continue to be frequently monitored.
- **Muddy Creek** - This route is closed to motorized use to protect riparian and watershed resources. Hydrologically it is considered to be "functioning at risk," in part due to OHV use. The Muddy Creek is identified in the San Rafael RMP as eligible for wild and scenic river designation with a tentative classification of scenic. Current OHV route proliferation is jeopardizing this tentative classification.
- **Upper Little Wild Horse** - This route is temporarily closed to motorized travel until repair and rehabilitation is completed. Motorized travel will then be limited to the designated route.
- **Cane Wash** - This route remains open to motorized use. A planned future action is to fence the riparian area around Mexican Seep and reroute the motorized trail on the outside of the enclosure. This action is being considered to protect the riparian area from livestock disturbance.

Alternative One was not selected because it provided minimal protection of critical soils, scenic resources, crucial wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species habitat, and special management objectives designed to protect certain vegetation, cultural, and historic mining resources. This alternative analyzed leaving open to OHV use the maximum mileage of inventoried routes within the "limited" category. Many of these routes are duplicate routes and dead end routes that create manageability problems through "route proliferation." Inadequate protection was provided to routes that are naturally re-vegetating and routes that could impact the tentative classification of eligible wild and scenic river segments.

Alternative Two was not selected because it did not provide a balanced approach for motorized recreation opportunities, and it selectively provided for protection of critical soils, scenic resources, crucial wildlife habitat and special management objectives designed to protect certain vegetation, cultural, and historic mining resources. This alternative closed all routes within WSAs, wilderness inventory areas, and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunity spectrum class areas. By doing so, much of the quality scenic areas in the San Rafael area would have been off limits to motorized recreationists. Additionally, prime Desert Bighorn Sheep hunting areas would be inaccessible by vehicles. And importantly, all of the single track motorcycle trails, including the popular Temple Mountain motorcycle trail system, would have been closed to that use.

Alternative Three was not selected because it limited motorized loop opportunities and did not provide a balanced approach between motorized and non-motorized recreation activities. More specifically, this alternative would have closed the popular Devil's Racetrack in the Sid's Mountain

WSA, negating that loop opportunity. It would no longer allow motorized access on the shortened loop route from the Head of Sinbad along the Devil's Racetrack continuing up North Fork Coal Wash and over Fix-it Pass. Other routes left available in Sid's Mountain WSA require nearly a full day to complete, while the Devil's Racetrack route can be completed in less time. Another favored route that would be closed under this alternative is the Behind the Reef route. Closing this route to motorized users would preclude numerous loop opportunities and their spectacular associated scenic experiences.

MONITORING and IMPLEMENTATION

Monitoring has been and will continue to be conducted in the San Rafael area. The monitoring methods for the Price Field Office San Rafael route designation area would be in conformance with the monitoring methods being developed by the Utah Statewide OHV team. Different levels of monitoring will be conducted, ranging from general incidental written observations related to compliance of OHV activities, to more complex intensive studies where issues or problems arise. Monitoring studies in the Sid's Mountain WSA along the four routes designated for OHV use will continue on a scheduled basis. These routes will remain "conditionally open" only if motorized travel does not impair the suitability of the WSA for congressional wilderness designation.

Implementation of the San Rafael Route Designation Plan will be done through a concerted effort by many entities. Maps and increased on-the-ground signing will help inform recreational users of the new restrictions. BLM will continue to work with Utah State Parks and Recreation and the Emery County Sheriff's Office to provide law enforcement patrol in the San Rafael area. BLM will seek opportunities for garnering other law enforcement capabilities with federal, state, and local agencies where possible. In addition, BLM will continue to encourage partnerships and volunteer agreements with groups/organizations and individuals to help with tasks such as sign/kiosk building and installation, rehabilitation projects, monitoring, and to act as public contact/information distribution sources.

CONFORMANCE

This Plan is in conformance with the 1991 San Rafael RMP. It is also consistent with federal regulation, laws and policies.

The Price Field Office has initiated a revision of the 1991 San Rafael RMP and the 1983 Price River MFP through a Federal Register Notice on November 7, 2001. These two land use plans will be folded into the new Price RMP. Until the new RMP is completed, route designations made in this Decision Record will remain in effect. However, the new RMP may consider changes in the route designations made through this Route Designation Plan.

APPEAL PROCEDURES

This decision will be effective 30 days after the date it is signed by the authorized officer. The decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. If an appeal is filed, a copy of the notice of appeal must be filed in this office (Price Field Office, 125 South 600 East, Price, Utah, 84501) within 30 days of the decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR 4.21(a)(2), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Patrick Gubbins
Authorized Officer

February 3, 2003
Date

ERRATA TO THE SAN RAFAEL ROUTE DESIGNATION PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This Errata document presents minor changes to the maps and text of the San Rafael Route Designation Plan Environmental Assessment (EA) as a result of public comments. This document accompanies the EA and is part of the permanent file.

1. Route Adjustments to Alternative One (No Action): Numerous trail maps and new information have been submitted to the BLM for consideration in response to the EA on the Route Designation Plan. BLM has taken a hard look at these submittals. In some cases, routes have been added to the baseline for Alternative 1, and in some cases routes have been deleted, as depicted on the attached ***Errata - Map 1 – Alternative One (No Action)*** ([HTML](#) / [PDF](#)). This map does not represent the decision for the San Rafael Route Designation EA; it only displays the changes to the route inventory baseline data – some of which were used to formulate the decision. More detail concerning Map 1 can be obtained from the Price Field Office.

Some of the proposed trails not added to the baseline map were not included because they were revegetating and were found to have little if any use, or could not be located in the field. Other routes that have been proposed by the public for designation enter ROS primitive areas or specific ACECs where OHV use has been closed by the 1991 RMP. Still others are trails within existing WSAs that were not inventoried routes during the 1979/80 wilderness inventory, and are not considered for OHV use. Additionally, some routes that have been documented by the Price Field Office and do not show up on the base map are motorcycle routes that have been permitted under a Special Recreation Use Permit in the past and are not considered in the Route Designation Plan for a myriad of reasons. Pages 12 and 13 of the EA provide additional information on the "Historical Trails Alternative" that was considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.

This San Rafael Route Designation Plan deals with secondary dirt roads and trails that are seldom, if ever, mechanically maintained and may often require high-clearance and/or 4-wheel drive vehicles. The primary infrastructure of maintained roads, which includes paved, graveled, and specific unsurfaced dirt roads are not a subject for designation in this EA. This primary infrastructure includes approximately 650 miles of Emery County-maintained roads, 183 miles of BLM transportation system roads, 199 miles of paved state roads, 79 miles of Interstate-70, and numerous miles of routes that cross School Institutional Trust Lands Administration Lands (SITLA), none of which are affected by this route designation plan. The secondary routes, which are the subject of this Plan, include hundreds of OHV routes that comprise approximately 1,150 miles. These routes establish the baseline inventory for the San Rafael Route Designation Plan EA. This Errata adds approximately 70 additional baseline miles of inventoried routes from that portrayed in Alternative 1 of the EA. The route changes made to this alternative are minimal and do not affect the overall analysis of designating routes under this alternative.

2. Route Adjustments to Alternative Four (Proposed Alternative): The Alternative Four map has been modified in response to public comments. Some new routes that were identified by the public for baseline have been added to this alternative because they fit the criteria used to formulate this alternative. Others have been deleted based on specific public comments because they did not meet the general criteria for the alternative. The attached ***Errata - Map 2 – Alternative Four (Proposed Alternative)*** ([HTML](#) / [PDF](#)) depicts these changes. Based on these minor changes, approximately 677 miles of secondary routes are identified for designation in the Proposed Alternative. This added an overall total of approximately 14 miles of routes to the Proposed Alternative. Of the approximately 677 miles of routes identified for OHV use under this alternative, 41 miles are for single track use and 5 miles are restricted to vehicles 52" or less. The route changes made to this alternative are minimal and do not affect the overall analysis of

designating routes under this alternative. More detail concerning Map 2 can be obtained from the Price Field Office.

Designating routes under this alternative would not affect the primary infrastructure of maintained roads, which includes paved, graveled, and specific unsurfaced dirt roads because they are not a subject for designation in this EA. This primary infrastructure includes approximately 650 miles of Emery County-maintained roads, 183 miles of BLM transportation system roads, 199 miles of paved state roads, 79 miles of Interstate-70, and numerous miles of routes that cross SITLA lands, none of which are subject to this route designation plan.

3. Table of Contents, Appendix 1: Add to *Federal Register Notice*, February 1992 "Emergency Closure and Restriction on Public Land in the Wedge Portion in the Middle San Rafael River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)".

4. Page 1, BACKGROUND, 1st paragraph, 3rd sentence: Replace "limited to existing roads and trails" with "limited to designated roads and trails".

5. Map 1.2 – OHV Categories: The map has been modified to show the OHV Category of Seasonal Limitations on public lands east of Highway 10, as per the 1991 San Rafael Resource Management Plan.

6. Page 3, BACKGROUND, 3rd paragraph, 3rd sentence: Replace the sentence with the following clarification information: "Four inventoried ways (comprising eight segments) which existed prior to the designation of the Sid's Mountain WSA were left open "conditionally". The eight segments include: Coal Wash, the dugway entering Coal Wash, North and South Forks of Coal Wash, Eva Conover, Fix-it Pass to Cane Wash, Justensen Flats access route, and the Devils Racetrack." These segments also apply to all references to the "four routes" left "conditionally open" in the Sid's Mountain WSA on pages: 3, 15, 17, 24, 25, 59, 67, 68, and 82 of the EA.

7. Page 6, CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence: Add "Non-native Invasive Species".

8. Page 6, CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT, 2nd paragraph: Delete "Native American Religious Concerns" and add "Native American Trust Resources".

9. Page 6, CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT: Add as a 3rd paragraph, "Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines." "In 1997, the BLM in Utah developed parameters to carry out ecosystem management priorities as directed by the Secretary of the Interior called Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. The Standards describe the ecological conditions that BLM will achieve through management of land resource uses. Guidelines are management practices that BLM will implement in order to attain the Standards. These conditions were taken into consideration for the analysis of Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Species, Water Quality, Riparian Resources, and Critical Soils. Implementation of any alternatives under this Route Designation Plan would help to attain the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines"

10. Page 7, Native American Religious Concerns: Replace 2nd sentence with the following: "BLM has received comments from the Hopi Tribe and the Navajo Nation on the EA. Both are concerned over inventories being completed prior to route designation. The BLM met with the Hopi Tribe to discuss the San Rafael Route Designation Plan, among other issues. Although they provided no support of any alternative in the Plan, they are in agreement that limiting OHV use and curbing cross-country travel is a positive step toward the protection of cultural resources."

11. Page 9, Impacts From Route Designation on Local Economics: Replace this whole section with the following: "It is not anticipated that any of the alternatives would impact local economics in the area around the San Rafael. Although some routes are proposed for closure in three of the alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3, and 4), numerous opportunities would still be available for OHV enthusiasts – both within and outside the "limited" OHV area. The proposed alternative, coupled with over 650 miles of Emery County maintained roads, 183 miles of BLM transportation system roads, 199 miles of paved state roads, 79 miles of Interstate-70, and varying amounts of the 273 miles of routes that cross SITLA lands, would continue to provide a myriad of opportunities and experiences for the OHV riding public.

Currently, there are numerous opportunities within both Emery and Carbon Counties for unrestricted OHV use as well. For example, over 190,000 acres of public lands managed under the San Rafael RMP in Emery County remain open for cross-country use. Other public lands in Emery and Carbon County managed under the Price River Land Use plan have designated over 480,000 acres of public lands as open to unrestricted OHV use. The new RMP revision effort currently underway in the Price Field Office may restrict cross-country travel in these areas in the future; however it is anticipated that the majority of known and inventoried routes would continue to be designated for OHV use. In effect, cross-country travel may be restricted, but continued use of most existing routes is anticipated in the upcoming plan.

Recent BLM staff communication with Rosanne Fillmore (1/14/02), Economic Development Coordinator for Emery County, and John Kemp (1/14/02), Utah Travel Council, confirmed that no information concerning OHV recreational activities and their impacts on the local economy has been collected because it has been regarded as too small of an issue to be worth the cost of study. However, it is recognized that motorized recreation contributes to the economy in a manner similar to other forms of recreation. Travel related expenditures such as food, lodging, and gasoline often occur within the local economy. Although some capital expenditures may occur in the local area, most motorized recreationists from outside the area make large capital equipment purchases in their own hometowns. The net effect of motorized recreation, although difficult to quantify, is a small but integral part of the economic benefits of recreation to the area.

Route designation may actually enhance the economic benefits to the counties. This is because once routes are easily identifiable on the ground thru signage and kiosks, and maps of these routes are available to the public, the San Rafael could become even more of a destination. Routes would be easier to find, and loop riding opportunities would be mapped. Confusion over which routes are open and where the open routes terminate would be diminished. Selection of any of the four alternatives would continue to provide a myriad of riding opportunities in the San Rafael area and OHV users could continue to enjoy this experience. For these reasons, local economic impacts are not an issue for further analysis.

12. Page 10, Other Issues Brought Forward By The Public: Replace last three sentences with, "BLM has completed a full interdisciplinary review of SUWAs new information, and has determined that the seven UWC wilderness proposal areas have a reasonable probability of having wilderness character. An impact assessment of route designation on these lands is included in Chapter 4."

13. Page 12, R. S. 2477 Alternative, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence: Replace "thousands" with "hundreds".

14. Page 13, Management Common To All Alternatives, 1st sentence: Change March 21, 2001 to March 21, 2000.

15. Page 17, ALTERNATIVE FOUR (Proposed Action), 1st paragraph: Add as 2nd to last sentence, "Many of the BLM-transportation system roads, county-maintained roads, paved state

roads, and roads that pass through SITLA lands were used to form loop routes and route designations."

16. Page 20: Add the following supplemental information as the 4th paragraph "A recent statewide trail user survey (USU, Oct. 2001) and seven regional public meetings revealed statistically significant findings regarding trail use, preferences, demographics, location and other data relating to trails (roads/ways/paths). The need for additional and well-maintained extant trails/ways was supported by over 75% of the statewide respondents. Additional remote trails are needed. Although many trails/ways exist, they need maintenance, repair, and in some cases relocation. Search and rescue entities were very direct regarding accurate signage, maps, and location information so they know where they are and where a victim is located, particularly on federal lands. Public safety is a major concern and requires a higher standard of trail/way development and signage than currently exists.

It was found that 81% of all trail users want to use trails more often. Over 80% of trail users agreed there are economic benefits from trails. 95% of trail users and 66% of non-users strongly agree "quality" trails and ways are important to them. The objective of trail development (way designation B motorized and non-motorized) is to improve the "quality of life in Utah". Approximately 71% of the survey respondents mentioned hiking; 17% were OHV users. Another major finding was the need to ensure public access to public lands. Complaints indicated that many historical/traditional areas and resources are being closed by private development, federal regulations, local regulations and lack of road and trail maintenance. Respondents and meeting attendees strongly supported a policy and practice of keeping access open for a wide range of public recreation users. BLM, NPS, USFS, Utah Department of Natural Resources, Envision Utah, Utah State Parks, USU and others collaborated in this seminal study of trail users and trail needs in Utah."

17. Page 21: Add as supplemental information from the State Division of Parks and Recreation to the Recreation section as the 1st full paragraph: "The 1999 Goblin Valley State Park Resource Management Plan was a public input generated resource management plan for the 3,014 acres state park adjoining the San Rafael Swell. There is a proposed \$2 million improvement project within the state park for new campgrounds, services, pavement, parking, remote camp sites, etc. The park is a major staging area for motorized and non-motorized access into the San Rafael area, and is contiguous to a WSA. With average visitation now exceeding over 70,000 visitor days, the quality, availability and type of OHV trails/ways are very important to the park and satisfaction of park users. The public steering committee provided 12 major recommendations B protecting natural qualities of the park and area are a high priority, along with the need to collaborate with BLM, Emery County, and other park users. The park generates over \$875,000 in economic activity (community spending). Providing reasonable but environmentally sensitive OHV trails/ways with adequate signage and interpretive/educational materials would continue to enhance opportunities for park visitors who travel outside of the park for OHV activities."

18. Page 25, last paragraph, 1st sentence: Replace with "If Congress designates the area as wilderness, the routes will be closed." with "If Congress designates the area as wilderness, they may choose to leave these routes open or close them. However, until Congress acts, the BLM must protect the wilderness character of the area."

19. Page 27, 3rd paragraph: Replace the whole paragraph with the following, "BLM's Price Field Office completed a thorough review of SUWA's new information regarding seven Utah Wilderness Coalition wilderness proposal units to determine whether or not there is a reasonable probability these lands may have wilderness characteristics. In the findings signed by the Field Office manager in 2002, all seven of these areas were determined to have a reasonable probability of possessing wilderness character. Thus, Chapter 4 analyzes the impacts of route designation on the potential wilderness character of these lands."

20. Page 28, WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, 1st paragraph, 1st sentence: Add the word "eligible" before "wild and scenic river segments..."

21. Page 28, WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, 2nd paragraph, insert before last sentence: "The nature of the OHV use in the wash has resulted in a braided network of trails, not necessarily a defined route. This network of trails continues to expand and multiply depending on conditions. Numerous visible trails now criss-cross the creek bottom and continue onto the benches. This detracts from the scenic values identified for this eligible wild and scenic river segment. Flooding events result in even more new trails because segments become isolated and often abandoned, especially on the benches. OHV enthusiasts reroute their activities to seek new paths in order to complete travel in Muddy Creek canyon through the Reef."

22. Page 29, Desert Bighorn Sheep, 1st sentence: Replace the word "transplanted" with "reintroduced".

23. Page 32, 1st full paragraph: Delete "and OHVs may cause direct mortality by running them over".

24. Page 39, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence: Delete the Dirty Devil River from the discussion on exceeding levels of TSS and TDS, it is no longer on Utah's 2000 Clean Water Act 303(d) list.

22. Page 82 - 83, Replace all of Chapter VI - Implementation and Monitoring Plan - with the following:

Implementation Plan: Newspapers, the Internet, and postcard mailings are examples of media that will be used to inform the public about route designations in the San Rafael area. Travel maps that identify designated routes and provide other information, such as the *Tread Lightly* program, would be made available to the public in hard copy and via the Internet for downloading. All users would be encouraged to carry a San Rafael Motorized Route Designation Map.

People entering the San Rafael area would need to stop at travel information kiosks that would display a Route Designation Map and provide explanations of route designations and the types of signs that they may encounter. Travel ethics information would be included at every opportunity. Signs would be installed at trailheads and along routes to encourage compliance and reduce confusion. An important function of signing would be to not only inform the user of route designations, but of the opportunities awaiting them. Many high quality loop trail options would be signed for OHV users of various skill levels. Non-motorized areas would be clearly identified on the ground. BLM hopes such actions would aid self-regulation by the user. It would take several years to complete and maintain signage on all routes (designated or not designated) within the million acre San Rafael area. However, controversial routes and routes requiring immediate resource protection would be signed in priority order. BLM and volunteers would continue to sign WSA boundaries and maintain signs in the Sid's Mountain WSA as a top priority.

User compliance of any route or area designations would be required and enforced. Where non-compliance is detected, law enforcement personnel would issue citations or warnings. The Price Field Office law enforcement ranger would coordinate ongoing law enforcement patrol and surveillance provided by the surrounding state park rangers and the Emery County Sheriff's Office. BLM would continue to support, and enhance where possible, law enforcement efforts from these agencies. The BLM would also seek support and partnerships with other Federal, state, and local agencies to assist with law enforcement actions. BLM would explore other opportunities for law enforcement capability to implement the San Rafael Route Designation Plan.

Partnerships and volunteer agreements would be aggressively sought by BLM to help implement the San Rafael Route Designation Plan. Existing partnerships and volunteers have been and

continue to work with the BLM to mark WSA boundaries, rehabilitate resource damaged areas, collect monitoring data, and provide information on users in the San Rafael area. It is expected that after the decision is final, partners and volunteers would assist BLM by signing designated routes and closed routes on the ground, and lend physical energy to complete rehabilitation proposals. Some of these proposals may include blocking routes that were not designated for vehicle travel through natural means, such as soil berms, rocks and boulders, and vegetation. Efforts would be made, where feasible, to rehabilitate routes by discing, contouring and re-seeding. Others projects could include the installation of fences and gates to prevent OHV travel on closed routes.

Specific measures to help implement the San Rafael Travel Plan could include the following, among many other actions:

- Constructing a route around Mexican Seep Spring in Cane Wash to improve riparian conditions.
- Coordinating with SITLA to consider closure of the OHV access to Segar's Hole to eliminate route proliferation and protect the scenic values of the Segar's Hole ACEC.
- Providing signage and/or barricades to restrict OHV access at slot canyons along the Behind the Reef route that forms the northern boundary of Crack Canyon WSA.
- Reducing unnatural trail markers and barricades on the four routes in Sid's Mountain WSA as user compliance increases on the established trail system.

Some of these actions, and many others that could be considered, would need to be analyzed in supplemental NEPA documents prior to any project's approval.

Monitoring Plan: The success of management actions to accomplish management goals can only be determined based on monitoring. Monitoring can be accomplished at different levels. No single approach is appropriate for all situations. The least complex form of monitoring includes general and incidental written observations related to compliance of OHV activities in the San Rafael area. The most complex level includes scientific studies that can become extremely time intensive and costly due to the amount of labor involved. Monitoring has been and continues to be conducted throughout the San Rafael area. For example, in the Sid's Mountain WSA the level of monitoring has been more intense than elsewhere. Although not considered a "scientific study," it is still considered a formal level of monitoring with a specific monitoring protocol at observation sites, consistent monitoring schedules, and photographic documentation.

The monitoring methods for the Price Field Office San Rafael route designation area would be in conformance with the monitoring methods being developed by the Utah Statewide OHV team. Specific resources, including, but not limited to, viewsheds, wilderness, cultural and historical sites, paleontological resources, sensitive wildlife and their critical habitats, and riparian areas would continue to be monitored. The various specialists must notify the BLM manager when resources are in jeopardy due to OHV activities. The BLM would respond when external or internal indicators show a need for change. A case-by-case study of each situation could be warranted prior to remedial actions being taken. Resource integrity would be the major factor in any decision resulting from monitoring.

All routes open for motorized travel in the Sid's Mountain would remain under a "conditionally open" status. These routes would remain open only if motorized travel does not impair the suitability of the WSA for congressional wilderness designation. The routes would continue to be frequently monitored.

Based on resource monitoring, travel routes could be adjusted if substantive, unanticipated impacts are found. When brought to the BLM manager's attention, changes to this plan would be considered when warranted. A NEPA document with full public input would be completed prior to

BLM making any decisions that would change this plan. However, emergency situations concerning resources shall be resolved immediately through public notice to protect persons, property, and public lands and resources."

23. Page 85, *Designated Routes*: Delete sentence and replace with "Roads and trails that have been officially designated by BLM as open for motorized use. These routes are often signed on the ground and marked on maps to indicate the designation."