
Bureau of Land Management Emerald Mountain Management Plan

Excerpts from the

**Emerald Mountain Land Exchange and
Resource Management Plan Amendment
Routt and Moffat Counties, Colorado
EA CO-100-2006-089**

U.S. Department of Interior

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Introduction

Four alternatives were analyzed in the Environmental Assessment for the Little Snake Resource Management Plan RMP amendment (EA CO-100-2006-089). Alternative 2 was selected as the preferred alternative and recommended for approval in the Decision Record signed October 4, 2006. The plan amendment decision became final after the conclusion the 30 day protest period. The selected alternative (Alternative 2) has been extracted for the reader's convenience in this document

The Bureau of Land Management formally closed on 4,139-acre Emerald Mountain parcel west of Steamboat in a land exchange with the Colorado State Land Board Springs on February 22, 2007. exchange that brings the parcel under its management. Initially, BLM management of Emerald Mountain will limit public access to day-use, foot travel only, and all dogs must be leashed. These provisions will remain in effect to protect the area's resource values until a detailed recreation implementation plan for the area is completed. The implementation plan will be developed in cooperation with the Emerald Mountain Partnership, City of Steamboat Springs and other partners.

Through the implementation plan, BLM will manage Emerald Mountain as a Special Recreation Management Area with two zones, each targeting different non-motorized recreation opportunities. One zone will emphasize strenuous outdoor activities including mountain biking and cross-country skiing. The other zone will emphasize wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding. Hunting will be managed in both zones in cooperation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

For more information about Emerald Mountain, visit the Little Snake Field Office web site at www.co.blm.gov/lspa or call the BLM Little Snake Field Office at 970-826-5000.

9.0 Resource Management Plan

The following section analyzes the second proposed action to amend the Little Snake Resource Management Plan (RMP). The RMP amendment includes land use plan decisions that would guide the future management of the Emerald Mountain parcel if the exchange is approved. Since the Emerald Mountain parcel has been managed by the Colorado State Land Board (SLB), the BLM is evaluating four alternatives to determine which alternative best fits the management goals and objectives of the BLM and the public. The four potential alternative management plans are described in Section 9.0 of this document, and evaluated for impacts to resources resulting from management prescriptions identified for each alternative. [*Note: the following excerpts are for Alternative 2 - the selected alternative*]

The RMP would also be amended to allow acquisition of the Emerald Mountain parcel. The majority of lands in the RMP planning unit surrounding Emerald Mountain are identified for disposal. This amendment to the existing RMP would identify Emerald Mountain as an acquisition area to consolidate federal lands. The Emerald Mountain parcel would then become a retention area to be managed under multiple use concepts.

As outlined in the BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1)*, the alternatives must “identify a range of reasonable combinations of resource uses and management practices.” Further, the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) require that an Environmental Assessment (EA) explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives to a proposed action. Based on these requirements and internal input from BLM resource specialists, four alternatives were developed for management of the Emerald Mountain parcel following the proposed land exchange.

Figure 3 illustrates the boundary of the BLM Management Area for the Emerald Mountain parcel. In addition, adjacent lands owned by the City of Steamboat Springs, the State of Colorado, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and private lands with conservation easements are indicated because these may be relevant to public access opportunities.

9.1 Management Objectives

Three community based meetings and plan amendment scoping were conducted over a two month period to develop a set of management objectives that would guide the BLM in formulating the Resource Management Plan amendment for the Emerald Mountain parcel. The following comprehensive management objectives were developed through this process and were common to all four alternatives:

- Preserve and protect the area for the enjoyment of present and future generations.
- Allow continued management of grazing leases and permits in accordance with current BLM policy.
- Promote collaboration between the BLM and the grazing permittees to manage grazing for sustainability and conservation in accordance with land health guidelines and standards for rangeland health.
- Establish travel management goals and actions limiting motorized and mechanized vehicle use to designated roads and trails.
- Expand environmental education and interpretation opportunities.
- Enhance wildlife habitat.

9.2.2 Alternative 2 – Modified Use

The area is managed as two adjoining Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) and two Recreation Management Zones (RMZs). SRMA North (RMZ 1) has a destination recreation management strategy targeting visitors to Steamboat Springs (not exclusive of local residents) wanting to participate in strenuous and challenging mountain biking and Nordic skiing on primitive trails close to town. SRMA South (RMZs 2) is managed under a community recreation market strategy primarily for local residents to engage in wildlife viewing and hunting in a backcountry setting. Other recreation activities are allowable to the extent they are compatible with the targeted activities. The area is closed to recreational motorized use. A combined Recreation Activity Management Plan (RAMP) and TMP will be developed in cooperation with local community partners to identify specific management actions. Until the RAMP is approved, the area will only be open to the following recreational uses: day use; human pedestrian travel, dogs on leash, and hunting on foot and with horses. The area is designated as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II where a low level of landscape change is allowed

9.4 Alternatives Discussion by Resource

This section describes management of 18 resource categories under each of the four management plan alternatives. For 13 of the resource categories, management would be the same under all four alternatives. These categories are summarized below in Section 9.4.1. Management of five additional resource categories, including Minerals and Energy Resources, Wildlife, Special Status Species, Recreation, and Travel Management would vary under the four alternatives. Management of these resource categories is described separately for each of the four alternatives in Sections 9.4.2 through 9.4.5.

9.4.1 Resources Common to All Alternatives

The following resource categories would be managed similarly under all four alternative plans, and are therefore summarized below: Land and Rights-of-way, Soils, Surface & Ground Water, Climate & Air Quality, Noise, Vegetation, Weed Management, Forestry, Fire Management, Rangeland, Cultural Resources, Paleontology, and Visual Resource Management.

9.4.1.1 Lands and Rights-of-Way

The BLM would consider acquisition of additional lands in the vicinity of Emerald Mountain if such acquisition would enhance management of identified resource values and public benefits.

Rights-of-Way (ROW) proposals would be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to constraints to protect sensitive resource values, and address issues identified in the Emerald Mountain planning process.

Utility line proposals would be required to be located along the existing power line corridor or underground and along the edge or within roadways. Additions or modifications to aboveground utilities would only be considered within the existing utility corridors where aboveground facilities presently exist. Power line construction should conform to standards identified by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC 1996) to minimize Bald Eagle and other raptor collisions and electrocutions.

Additional communication sites would be considered if the proposed use was located adjacent to the existing communication towers on Emerald Mountain. The facilities would involve minimal, low, unlighted tower structures. Collocation on existing facilities would be preferred. No additional communication sites would be considered at other areas. The BLM reserves the right to develop minor communication facilities for administrative purposes at existing sites.

No major wind energy or solar sites would be allowed. A cadastral survey would be completed to locate public land boundaries.

9.4.1.2 Soils

To encourage the protection of soils, the BLM would follow Best Management Practices (BMP), examples of BMP are proper site selection, avoid ridge tops, design trails and follow the contour of the landform or mimic lines in the vegetation, and exercise careful placement of proposed trails and facilities. Recreation, access and travel routes, and grazing would be managed to minimize erosion, salinity, selenium yields and compaction.

9.4.1.3 Water Resources

Surface Water. The BLM would manage all activity within the acquired lands to ensure that water quality standards are met or exceeded, using BLM Land Health Standards as the water quality indicator.

All water sources, including both surface water and ground water sources, would be inventoried to determine their exact location, flow rates and volumes, and types of beneficial uses of water at the location. In addition, the condition and type of water development, and documentation of any sensitive species dependent on the water source would be included in the inventory.

The recreation, range management, and wildlife programs would identify the location and type of any water shortages that prevent them from meeting management objectives.

BLM would acquire water rights on all water sources within the acquired lands that BLM uses to meet management objectives. Water rights would be sought for livestock, wildlife, and recreation on all water sources that support those uses when BLM acquires the water rights. BLM would follow the procedural and substantive provisions of Colorado water law.

Any activity within the acquired lands would incorporate mitigation into management actions to protect water resources. Measures designed to minimize erosion and water quality deterioration would continue to be required in site-specific plans for any activity requiring surface disturbance within the acquired lands. Measures to minimize erosion and water quality effects would be further analyzed in environmental assessments for any surface disturbing activities within the acquired lands per requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Ground Water. The BLM would continue to manage, preserve and protect ground water resources, including springs, and would complete an inventory of springs. Inventoried springs in the ERMA may be developed and would continue to be used by a variety of users and wildlife, as well as to sustain associated riparian areas. The BLM would continue to utilize existing water wells for stock watering purposes.

The recreation, range management, and wildlife programs would identify the location and type of water shortages that prevent them from meeting management objectives.

BLM would acquire water rights on all water sources within the ERMA that BLM uses to meet management objectives. Water rights would be sought for livestock, wildlife, and recreation on all water sources that support those uses. BLM would follow the procedural and substantive provisions of Colorado water law.

In the event ground water is used or affected by mineral activities, BLM would ensure protection of the ground water resource and follow the procedural and substantive provisions of Colorado water law.

9.4.1.4 Climate and Air Quality

Activities and projects on BLM acquired lands would comply with applicable local, state, and federal air quality regulations. National Ambient Air Quality Standards would be met, or exceeded, for all activities occurring within the acquired lands. Mitigation to minimize air quality degradation would be incorporated into project proposals as appropriate.

9.4.1.5 Noise

Public lands would be managed in accordance with Colorado NS 25-12-106.

9.4.1.6 Vegetation

Plant communities on Emerald Mountain would be managed to maintain and/or improve the quality and health of native plant communities. Plant communities would be managed for a variety of seral stages depending on current conditions, site-specific concerns and capabilities, and multiple-use considerations.

Per 43 CFR 4180, all vegetation would be managed to meet the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health. More specifically, upland plant communities would be managed in conformance with Standard 3 of the Colorado Public Land Health Standards which states, “Healthy, productive plant... communities of native and other desirable species are maintained at viable population levels commensurate with the species and habitat’s potential. Plants... at both the community and population level are productive, resilient, diverse, vigorous, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and ecological processes.”

Where it is determined that a plant community does not meet this standard based on established indicators, BLM would use monitoring data to identify significant causal factors that are contributing to the standard(s) not being met. If the causal factor is determined to be livestock, BLM would work with the lessee to take corrective actions within 2 years after the determination was made (43 CFR 4180.2). If monitoring indicates the causal factor is an activity or condition other than livestock grazing, corrective actions would also be taken, but the. Treatments and manipulation of vegetation to meet land health objectives can include, but are not limited to, changes in livestock use, prescribed fire, herbicide treatments, and mechanical treatments. Any areas that receive treatments consisting of direct manipulation of vegetation would be rested from livestock grazing for a minimum of two growing seasons.

9.4.1.7 Weed Management

The BLM would manage noxious weeds using an Integrated Weed Management (IWM) approach. Weed management would focus on controlling and preventing the spread of noxious weeds and other undesirable plant species. Weeds occurring on Emerald Mountain include whitetop, Dalmatian toadflax, Canada thistle, houndstongue, and coast tarweed. A partnership with Routt County would be developed to continue the weed management activities that the county has been conducting on Emerald Mountain.

9.4.1.8 Forestry

Forestry management would focus on maintaining healthy woodland and forest ecosystems. Basic information on the condition class, fire regime, current fire potential and current stand condition would be collected to determine forest health. Fuel wood and fence post cutting would only be allowed in conjunction with projects to improve forest health. Limited cutting to facilitate clearing trees for trails, recreation projects or habitat improvement projects would be considered.

9.4.1.9 Fire Management

Emerald Mountain would be managed in accordance with the current Fire Management Plan for the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Program. BLM would coordinate with Routt County concerning wildfire issues. Fire management objectives for this parcel would be:

- 1) Protect the community of Steamboat Springs from wildfire.
- 2) Reduce the risk of wildfire escaping public lands.
- 3) Reduce the risk of large, high intensity wildfires.
- 4) Improve or maintain healthy ecosystems.

Hazardous fuels reduction projects would be identified to mitigate any existing fire hazards. Prescribed fire or mechanical methods may be used to reduce fire hazards or improve resource conditions.

9.4.1.10 Livestock Grazing

Livestock grazing would be managed in accordance with the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (P.L. 73-482), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-579), Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-514), 43 CFR Subchapter D (4000), and BLM Policy. Pursuant to 43 CFR 4110.1-1, existing grazing leases issued by the State Land Board (SLB) would be honored by the BLM under the existing terms and conditions of those leases in effect at the time of acquisition and would not be subject to the provisions of 43 CFR 4110.1 which specifies the mandatory qualifications an operator must have to graze on BLM lands. A lease would continue to be exempt from the mandatory qualifications regulations until the lease is transferred, adjustments in grazing preference are necessary, or the lease is due for renewal at which time all provisions of 43 CFR 4100 would become applicable. Currently, all existing grazing leases issued by the SLB on the parcel to be acquired are renewed on an annual basis; therefore, the period for exemption from mandatory qualifications would be one year or less.

Upon expiration of State Land Board-issued grazing leases, BLM would renew grazing leases in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by preparing Environmental Assessments (EA's) to analyze the impacts of each specific grazing lease. During the renewal process, BLM would work with applicants to specify levels and timing of grazing that would maintain and/or improve forage, soil, wildlife habitat, water quality, and other resources. Renewal EAs may also analyze the need for and impacts of any additional range improvements needed to facilitate management goals. Holders of existing leases would be given preference to receive a renewed lease. Renewed leases would be for a period of ten years where the operator owns the offered base property. For operators who offer leased base property, renewed leases would coincide with the expiration of the base property lease, but would not exceed ten years. Grazing leases would not convey any interest, right, or title in any lands or resources held by the United States.

Existing range improvements would be assigned a BLM project number and a Cooperative Agreement for Range Improvements would be prepared for each project to document development and construction costs and to specify and assign maintenance responsibilities to one or more livestock operators. Per 43 CFR 4120.3-2 (b), title to each existing range improvement would be recognized commensurate with each lessee's contribution to project development and construction costs prior to BLM's acquisition of the Emerald Mountain parcel. Any future range improvement construction would be implemented under 43 CFR 4120.3.

Allotments would be created based on private land base and existing lease boundaries. Changes in allotment boundaries may be made in accordance with 43 CFR 4110.2-4, if necessary, to facilitate proper management of the range resource. Changes in permitted use may occur based on ecological site inventories, monitoring data (including, but not limited to, utilization and actual use), or other acceptable information at any time during a lease term.

9.4.1.11 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources would be managed according to existing legislation, regulations, Executive Orders, and BLM policy. Measures to protect and manage cultural resources would be required in all land use activity plans. Measures would be designed in conjunction with appropriate consulting parties as defined by the BLM National Programmatic Agreement, Colorado State Protocol, and BLM Manual (8100 series) addressing cultural resource management.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) would be completed for federally funded or licensed undertakings prior to all surface-disturbing or other activities that could affect cultural resources. Cultural resources and areas of religious and cultural importance that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places would be identified and assigned to the appropriate cultural resource use allocation. Mitigation should be completed on historic properties that are adversely affected by the undertaking. Preservation of resources in place is the preferred mitigation strategy.

Proposed activities would not be approved until compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA has been completed and documented. Cultural resource condition would be monitored during implementation.

9.4.1.12 Paleontology

The BLM would manage paleontological resources of the area guided by the BLM 8270 Manual and Handbook for the Management of Paleontological Resources, the Colorado Statewide Oil and Gas Development and Leasing EIS, and the Little Snake Field Office Management Plan.

The ERMA would be open to recreational collecting of common invertebrate and plant fossils. Scientific collecting would be allowed by valid BLM Paleontological Resources Use Permit only.

Monitoring data and other information would be compiled, updated, and analyzed at least annually to help in management decisions concerning appropriate uses, education, interpretation, and protection and preservation of paleontological resources.

9.4.1.13 Visual Resource Management

The Emerald Mountain parcel would be designated as a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II (low levels of landscape change allowed).

9.4.3 Alternative 2 – Modified Use

9.4.3.1 Minerals and Energy Resources

Due to the low mineral potential on the Emerald Mountain parcel, it is recommended that if the parcel becomes administered by the BLM, the mineral estate should be withdrawn from mineral entry and leasing. This would prevent speculative leasing to gain access to the parcel as well as fraudulent mining claims that could be used for surface occupancy residences near the town of Steamboat Springs.

Valid existing rights would be processed within specified or applicable time frames.

One exception is that sand and gravel and other materials used for road base could be developed on a limited basis to maintain or improve designated roads and trails.

9.4.3.2 Wildlife

Land uses would be managed to assure wildlife habitats meet the Colorado Public Land Health Standards and native plant communities would be maintained to provide quality habitat for a variety of species. Biological diversity and ecosystem health would be maintained in order to contribute to healthy wildlife populations. Important elk habitat may be enhanced to improve habitat conditions. Other habitat improvement projects for a variety of wildlife species would be implemented when necessary and feasible. Trails and other facilities would be designed and located to minimize disturbances to wildlife. BLM would coordinate with CDOW on wildlife related issues.

Emphasis would be placed on allowing a variety of non-motorized recreational opportunities while still protecting wildlife resources. Partnerships would be developed to provide educational opportunities on Emerald Mountain. These may be in the form of interpretive sites, interpretive trails or watchable wildlife sites.

9.4.3.3 Special Status Species

Land uses affecting special status species and their habitat would be managed to assure compliance with the Endangered Species Act and BLM special status species policies. Conservation measures in the Canada Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy would be followed in potential lynx habitat. Should any Bald Eagle nest or roosting site be identified on the parcel, they will be protected from disturbances within ½ mile by timing limitations (December 15 – June 15 for nesting; November 16 – April 15 for

winter roosts) and a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) within a 0.25-mile buffer zone. USFWS would be consulted on any proposed action which may affect Canada lynx, Yellow-billed Cuckoo or Bald Eagles or their habitat.

Activities and uses would be designed to protect healthy, native plant communities which provide quality habitat for BLM sensitive species. Columbian sharp-tailed grouse habitat would be managed to provide a mosaic of seral stages necessary for breeding, nesting and brood rearing. The BLM would coordinate with partners to conduct surveys to determine habitat use by greater sage grouse, ferruginous hawks and northern goshawks.

9.4.3.4 Recreation

Emerald Mountain is managed as two adjoining SRMAs (See Appendix-B for definitions and Figure 10 for RMZs in Alternative 2). Emerald Mountain North SRMA (RMZ 1) would be managed under a destination recreation-tourism market strategy targeting Steamboat Springs area visitors (not exclusive of local residents) wanting to participate in strenuous and challenging mountain biking and Nordic skiing on primitive trails which are close to town. Emerald Mountain South SRMA (RMZ 2) would be managed under a community recreation market strategy primarily for Steamboat Springs area residents in RMZ 2 to engage in wildlife viewing and hunting in a backcountry setting. Other recreation activities are allowable to the extent they are compatible with the primary targeted activities. The area is closed to recreational motorized use. A combined Recreation Activity Management Plan (RAMP) and TMP will be developed in cooperation with local community partners to identify specific management actions. Until the RAMP is approved, the area will only be open to the following recreational uses: day use; human pedestrian travel, dogs on leash, and hunting on foot and with horses.

Recreation Management Zone 1 - Mountain Ridge

Management Objective: Provide opportunities primarily for Steamboat Springs area visitors (and others) to engage in strenuous, challenging mountain biking, Nordic skiing, and similar activities on primitive trails which are close to town, so that by the year 2010 their mean (average) response is at least a “moderate” (i.e., 3.0 on a probability scale where 1=not at all, 2=somewhat, 3=moderate, 4=complete/total realization) attainment of the following experiences and benefits:

Targeted Recreational Opportunities and Outcomes for RMZ 1 - Mountain Ridge (See Appendix B for definitions and Figure 4). These are not exclusive of other activities, experiences and benefit outcomes which are compatible with the management objectives of the RMZ.

Activity Opportunities	Mountain biking and Nordic skiing
Experience Opportunities and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing skills and abilities • enjoying strenuous outdoor physical exercise • enjoying having access close to town for outdoor activities.
Benefit Opportunities and Outcomes	
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved skills and abilities • Greater competence • Greater confidence • Improved cardio and muscle strength • Improved capacity for outdoor physical activity • Improved understanding of our community’s dependence and impact on public lands and adjoining private lands
Household/Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced outdoor oriented lifestyle • Increased pride in the community

Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced health maintenance costs • Increased desirability of Steamboat as a place to visit, live, or retire
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved respect for public and privately-owned lands

Prescribed Setting Character for RMZ 1 - Mountain Ridge: The following are the natural resource setting conditions prescribed to produce activity, experience and benefit opportunities: and facilitate the attainment of the targeted outcomes. The prescriptions would be accomplished by sustaining some existing recreation setting characteristics and carrying out implementation actions designed to change some characteristics of the recreation setting (See Appendix C for definitions and Figures 10-12).

Prescribed Physical Setting Summary	The area would generally retain its existing remoteness and naturally appearing landscape. Trails would be marked and maintained. Trailheads with basic toilets would be provided.
Prescribed Social Setting Summary	Visitors can expect a moderate amount of contacts with others and group sizes averaging up to 12 people per group. Some evidence of visitor use, vehicle tracks and worn vegetation likely.
Prescribed Administrative Setting Summary	Mechanized and authorized motorized use (2X4s & 4x4s) acceptable. Brochures, maps and some BLM staff/volunteers occasionally available to assist visitors. Periodic enforcement presence. Occasional signing with rules clearly posted at access points. Domestic animals present, non-working dogs must be on a leash. Individual user fees possible.

Recreation Management RMZ 2 - East Cow Creek

Management Objective: Provide opportunities primarily for Steamboat Springs area residents (and others) to engage wildlife viewing, hunting, and similar activities in a backcountry setting so that by the year 2010 their mean (average) response is at least a “moderate” (i.e., 3.0 on a probability scale where 1=not at all, 2=somewhat, 3=moderate, 4=complete/total realization) attainment of the following experiences and benefits:):

Targeted Recreational Opportunities and Outcomes for RMZ 2 - East Cow Creek (See Appendix B for definitions and Figures 10-12). These are not exclusive of other activities, experiences, and benefit outcomes which are compatible with the management objectives of the RMZ.

Activity Opportunities	Wildlife viewing, Hiking, Horseback riding, and Hunting
Experience Opportunities and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enjoying natural aesthetics and wildlife • enjoying escape from the crowds • enjoying tranquility and peacefulness
Beneficial Opportunities and Outcomes	
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer relationship with nature • Improved appreciation of nature • Positive change in mood and emotion • Reduced stress • More holistic sense of well-being
Household/Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater community involvement in recreation and land use decisions • Enhanced awareness of community dependence on public lands

Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased desirability of Steamboat Springs as a place to work, live, visit, or retire
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater protection of wildlife and plant habitat from growth, development, a public use impacts • Reduced wildlife harassment and predation by domestic pets

Prescribed Setting Character for RMZ 2 - East Cow Creek. The following are the natural resource setting conditions prescribed to produce activity, experience and benefit opportunities and facilitate the attainment of the targeted outcomes. The prescriptions would be accomplished by sustaining some existing recreation setting characteristics and carrying out implementation actions designed to change some characteristics of the recreation setting (See Appendix C for definitions and Figures 10-12).

Prescribed Physical Setting Summary	The area would generally retain its existing remoteness and naturally appearing landscape. Some trails would be marked and maintained. Trailheads with basic toilets would be provided.
Prescribed Social Setting Summary	Visitors would have few encounters with other groups that average 4-6 people per group. Some evidence of visitor use, vehicle tracks and worn vegetation likely.
Prescribed Administrative Setting Summary	Mechanized and authorized motorized use (2X4s & 4x4s) acceptable. Brochures, maps and some BLM staff/volunteer occasionally available to assist visitors. Periodic enforcement presence. Occasional signing with rules clearly posted at access points. Domestic animals present, non-working dogs must be on a leash. Individual user fees possible.

Activity Planning Framework - Alternative 2 (see Appendix B for definitions)

Management

The natural resource setting condition prescriptions would be created by sustaining some existing recreation setting characteristics and carrying out management actions designed to change some characteristics of the recreation setting.

North SRMA (RMZ 1): Management would be geared towards enhancing recreation activity opportunities for visitors to the Steamboat Springs area (not exclusive of area residents). For example, trails would be developed for mountain bikers and Nordic skiers and similar activities.

South SRMA (RMZ 2): Management would be geared towards enhancing recreation activity opportunities for residents of the Steamboat Springs area. For example, informational signing and materials would be provided for wildlife viewing, hunting, and other targeted activities.

Marketing

Basic visitor/marketing information will describe what experience and benefit opportunities are targeted, the character of recreation settings, and the service environment that exists for each Recreation Management Zone (RMZ). The BLM would work with its community partners to develop one set of RMZ-specific information materials that would simultaneously facilitate effective management and promotion. The RAMP would identify principal marketing materials and conduits to reach recreation-tourism markets targeted in this plan. The collaborative management partnership would review marketing materials to ensure consistency with the above and to ensure that what is being marketed is in fact what is being provided. All agency-specific visitor services initiatives (e.g., interpretation, promotion, special events, etc.) would be constrained to ensure that only those required to achieve the planning objectives are implemented.

Monitoring

The indicators and standards are set by the SRMA objectives and prescriptions in the plan amendment. The RAMP would outline procedural frameworks, methods and schedules for monitoring: 1) the attainment of targeted outcomes, 2) maintenance of prescribed setting character conditions and 3) implementation of planned actions.

Administration

BLM will engage the key local government, recreation-tourism industry, and other interested parties as community partners. The partners may include, but are not limited to:

City of Steamboat/Routt County	Steamboat Chamber and Resort Assn
Division of Wildlife	Colorado Tourism Office
Steamboat Nordic Council	Routt County Riders Mtn. Bike Club
Emerald Mountain Partnership Board of Directors	

A Recreation Activity Management Plan (RAMP) will be developed in collaboration with local community partners to identify specific management actions for the area.

- Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) would be issued as per the Colorado Special Recreation Permit Handbook.

Interim Recreation Management Actions

- Open the area only to the following activities until a RAMP is developed and implemented in collaboration with community partners:
 - day use only
 - human pedestrian travel
 - dogs on leash
 - small game hunting on foot or big game hunting by foot and horseback

9.4.3.5 Travel Management and Access

Comprehensive travel management planning addresses all resource use aspects and accompanying modes and conditions of travel on the public lands, not just motorized or vehicle activities. Land use plan decisions must: 1) delineate travel management areas and 2) designate off-highway vehicle management areas.

1. Delineation of Travel Management Areas (TMAs). The TMA consists of all public lands within the Emerald Mountain parcel. The TMA delineation is:

- a. *Muscle-powered travel* (i.e. foot, ski, horse, stock) *is open all year*. Open TMA delineation means cross-country foot, horse and other stock travel is permitted everywhere in the TMA.
- b. *Mechanized travel* (non-motorized wheeled conveyance) *is limited to designated routes all year*. Limited TMA delineation means mechanized travel and access is allowed only on designated routes identified on maps available onsite or at the Little Snake Field Office.

The TMA delineations are subject to additional restrictions (i.e. seasonal, area, type and number) set forth in the Decision Record (DR) for the EA or in subsequent travel planning.

In developing this designation the BLM considered the following:

- a. Consistency with management objectives aimed at conserving and protecting traditional uses and protecting natural resources;
- b. Traditional users (i.e. grazing permittees);
- c. Resource objectives for allowing travel in the area and the primary means of travel allowed to accomplish the objectives; and
- d. Landscape characteristics to be maintained for the Class II VRM designation).

2. Designation of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management Areas. The entire area is designated closed to OHV travel on public lands, with the exception of Cow Creek Road (Routt County Road 45). OHV includes any motorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel off an improved road and on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain.

The designation excludes:

1. Any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes;
2. Any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved (i.e. grazing permittee, CDOW personnel).
3. Vehicles in official use. Official use means use by an employee, agent, or designated representative of the Federal Government or one of its contractors, in the course of his employment, agency, or representation [43 CFR 8340.0-5(a)(1-5)].

A decision defining an on-the-ground designated road and trail network is deferred to a subsequent TMP. The intent is to allow more time for field personnel to: 1) inventory the existing travel network; 2) work with partners and the public to designate an appropriate road and trail network to meet management objectives; and 3) obtain necessary funding.

The TMP would address: the road and trail selection strategy, restrictions/constraints and implementation actions would be directed towards: 1) achieving resource objectives, 2) protecting visitor health and safety, 3) reducing use and user conflicts, and 4) achieving management objectives including creating the prescribed recreation setting character for each RMZ.

The following general tasks and timeline would be followed to complete the TMP dependent on adequate staffing and funding:

<u>TASK</u>	<u>ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME</u>
1. Existing road and trail inventory (field work & GIS duties) completed.	Six months after the signing of the DR for the EA.
2. Implementation level planning and public collaboration completed.	Ten months after the signing of the DR for the EA.
3. The road and trail selection process completed and signed.	One year after the signing of the DR for the EA.

3. Interim Travel Management Actions

- BLM would initially close the entire area except for Cow Creek Road (Routt County Road 45) to motorized, mechanized and equestrian use (except for equestrian big game hunting) until the TMP can be completed. Existing routes would remain open for BLM administrative, authorized, and emergency uses. (Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-005, Clarification of OHV Designations and Travel Management in the BLM Land Use Planning Process, on Oct. 6, 2003). An interim road and trail network map would be developed when inventory work is completed.
- Establish and mark one or more legal access points and parking areas along the Cow Creek Road. Parking area identification and development may be delayed until the RAMP is approved and funds become available.

Appendix C

Alternative 2 - Recreation Management Zone 1 (Mountain Ridge)

NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION SETTINGS Criteria for Classification and Prescriptions

Existing

Prescribed

PHYSICAL – RESOURCES & FACILITIES: character of the natural landscape

* Primary recreation setting characteristic

	Primitive		Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
	Pristine	Transition					
* Remoteness:	More than 10 mi. from any road	More than 3 mi. from any road	More than ½ mile from any kind of road, but not as distant as 3 miles, and no road is in sight	On or near four-wheel drive roads, but at least ½ mile from all improved roads, though they may be in sight	On or near improved country roads, but at least ½ mile from all highways	On or near primary highways, but still within a rural area	On or near primary highways, municipal streets, and roads within towns or cities
Naturalness:	Undisturbed natural landscape		Naturally-appearing landscape having modifications not readily noticeable	Naturally-appearing landscape except for obvious primitive roads	Landscape partially modified by roads, utility lines, etc., but none overpower natural landscape features	Natural landscape substantially modified by agriculture or industrial development	Urbanized developments dominate this landscape
Facilities:	None		Some primitive trails made of native materials such as log bridges and carved wooden signs	Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments, improved signs, and very basic toilets	Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as camp grounds, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs	Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and occasional exhibits	Elaborate full-service facilities such as laundry, groceries, and book stores

SOCIAL – VISITOR USE & USERS: character of recreation & tourism use

	Primitive		Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
	Pristine	Transition					
Group Size (other than your own):	Fewer than or equal to 3 people per group		4-6 people per group	7-12 people per group	13-25 people per group	26-50 people per group	Greater than 50 people per group
* Contacts (with other groups):	Fewer than 3 encounters/day at camp sites and fewer than 6 encounters/day on travel routes		3-6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7-15 encounters/day on travel routes	7-14 encounters/day off travel route (e.g., staging areas) and 15-29 encounters/day en route	15-29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more encounters/day en route	People seem to be everywhere, but human contact is still intermittent	Other people constantly in view
Types of Encounters:	Users plan trips to avoid others altogether	Take evasive actions for face-to-face avoidance	Users step aside to avoid unsafe conditions or user conflicts, sometimes grudgingly	Users may be unnerved but may not necessarily move off routes, areas, or sites to accommodate others	Users here routinely expect, welcome, and accommodate other visitors	Because crowd tolerance is a necessary condition for being here, encounters tend to be impersonal	Here people accept but routinely ignore multiple crowd interaction
Personal Gear & Equipment:	Very basic gear, cell phones usually don't work here	Some convenience gear like cell phones but not radios	Expect hiking, climbing, & mountain bike gear (e.g., colorful sportswear, bicycle helmets, etc.). Radios may also be playing	Expect to see gear associated with vehicle or off-highway vehicle use (e.g., coolers, body armor, etc.); some radios and music	Variety of traditional camper trailers, pop-up tents, & conventional tents; radio and music common	Upscale motor homes common, dependent on utility hookups or having generators to support home conveniences and gadgetry	Very specialized gear dependent on service provider assistance (e.g., boat slips, grounds keepers, caretakers)
Evidence of Use:	Only footprints may be observed		Footprints plus slight vegetation trampling at campsites & travel routes. Only infrequent litter	Vehicle tracks and occasional litter and soil erosion. Vegetation becoming worn	Well-worn soils and vegetation, but often gravel surfaced for erosion control. Litter may be frequent.	Paved routes protect soils and vegetation, but noise, litter, and facility impacts are pervasive	A busy place with what seems like constant noise. Unavoidable litter seems to be a lifestyle choice

ADMINISTRATIVE – ADMINISTRATIVE & SERVICE SETTING: How Public Land Managers, County Commissioners and Municipal Governments, and Local Businesses Care for the Area and Serve Visitors and Local Residents

	Primitive		Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural	Urban
	Pristine	Transition					
Visitor Services:	None is available on-site		Basic maps, but area personnel seldom available to provide on-site assistance	Area brochures and maps, plus area personnel occasionally present to provide on-site assistance	Information materials describe recreation areas and activities. Area personnel are periodically available	Everything described to the left in this row, and describe experiences/benefits available. Area personnel do on-site education	Everything described to the left in this row, plus regularly scheduled on-site outdoor skills demonstrations and clinics
Management Controls:	No visitor controls apparent. No use limits. Enforcement presence very rare.		Signs at key access points on basic user ethics. May have back country use restrictions. Enforcement presence rare	Occasional regulatory signing. Motorized and mechanized use restrictions. Random enforcement presence	Rules clearly posted with some seasonal or day-of-week use restrictions. Periodic enforcement presence	Regulations prominent. Total use limited by permit, reservation, etc. Routine enforcement presence.	Continuous enforcement to redistribute use and reduce user conflicts, hazards, and resource damage
Domestic Animals:	Domestic animals neither present nor allowed	No domestic animals except for working dogs or pack stock	Non-working as well as working domestic animals (e.g., sheep dogs, sled dogs, etc.) under owner's voice/whistle control	Leash-free area for dogs, and pack stock may be packed, ridden or tethered anywhere	Within recreation areas, all dogs on leash, and separate areas provided for pack stock; all animals controlled elsewhere	Domestic animals prohibited at recreation sites and other high-use areas; all animals controlled elsewhere	Domestic animals seemingly everywhere present, but subject to at least some kind of controls or restrictions (e.g., horse diapers)
Individual User Fees:	No individual user fees		Individual user fees charged within certain back country areas	Additional fees charged individuals at some developed recreation sites, but not for any dispersed recreation use	Individual user fees charged at all developed sites, but not yet for any dispersed recreation use	Individual user fees charged at all developed sites and for dispersed use within high-use areas only	Individual user fees charged for all recreation use
* Mechanized Use (any):	None whatsoever		Mountain bikes and perhaps other mechanized use, but all is non-motorized	Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, or snowmobiles in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use	Two-wheel drive vehicles predominant, but also four wheel drives and non-motorized, mechanized use	Ordinary highway auto and truck traffic is characteristic	Wide variety of street vehicles and highway traffic is ever-present

Alternative 2 - Recreation Management Zone 2 (East Cow Creek)

NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION SETTINGS
Criteria for Classification and Prescriptions

Existing

Prescribed

PHYSICAL – RESOURCES & FACILITIES: character of the natural landscape

* Primary recreation setting characteristic

	<i>Pristine</i>	<i>Primitive</i>	<i>Transition</i>	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>
* Remoteness:	<i>More than 10 mi. from any road</i>	<i>More than 3 mi. from any road</i>	<i>More than 1/2 mile from any kind of road, but not as distant as 3 miles, and no road is in sight</i>	<i>On or near four-wheel drive roads, but at least 1/2 mile from all improved roads, though they may be in sight</i>	<i>On or near improved country roads, but at least 1/2 mile from all highways</i>	<i>On or near primary highways, but still within a rural area</i>	<i>On or near primary highways, municipal streets, and roads within towns or cities</i>	
Naturalness:	<i>Undisturbed natural landscape</i>			<i>Naturally-appearing landscape having modifications not readily noticeable</i>	<i>Naturally-appearing landscape except for obvious primitive roads</i>	<i>Landscape partially modified by roads, utility lines, etc., but none overpower natural landscape features</i>	<i>Natural landscape substantially modified by agriculture or industrial development</i>	<i>Urbanized developments dominate this landscape</i>
Facilities:	<i>None</i>			<i>Some primitive trails made of native materials such as log bridges and carved wooden signs</i>	<i>Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments, improved signs, and very basic toilets</i>	<i>Improved yet modest, rustic facilities such as camp grounds, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs</i>	<i>Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and occasional exhibits</i>	<i>Elaborate full-service facilities such as laundry, groceries, and book stores</i>

SOCIAL – VISITOR USE & USERS: character of recreation & tourism use

	<i>Pristine</i>	<i>Primitive</i>	<i>Transition</i>	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>
Group Size (other than your own):	<i>Fewer than or equal to 3 people per group</i>			<i>4-6 people per group</i>	<i>7-12 people per group</i>	<i>13-25 people per group</i>	<i>26-50 people per group</i>	<i>Greater than 50 people per group</i>
* Contacts (with other groups):	<i>Fewer than 3 encounters/day at camp sites and fewer than 6 encounters/day on travel routes</i>			<i>3-6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7-15 encounters/day on travel routes</i>	<i>7-14 encounters/day off travel route (e.g., staging areas) and 15-29 encounters/day en route</i>	<i>15-29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more encounters/day en route</i>	<i>People seem to be everywhere, but human contact is still intermittent</i>	<i>Other people constantly in view</i>
Types of Encounters:	<i>Users plan trips to avoid others altogether</i>	<i>Take evasive actions for face-to-face avoidance</i>		<i>Users step aside to avoid unsafe conditions or user conflicts, sometimes grudgingly</i>	<i>Users may be unnerved but may not necessarily move off routes, areas, or sites to accommodate others</i>	<i>Users here routinely expect, welcome, and accommodate other visitors</i>	<i>Because crowd tolerance is a necessary condition for being here, encounters tend to be impersonal</i>	<i>Here people accept but routinely ignore multiple crowd interaction</i>
Personal Gear & Equipment:	<i>Very basic gear, cell phones usually don't work here</i>	<i>Some convenience gear like cell phones but not radios</i>		<i>Expect hiking, climbing, & mountain bike gear (e.g., colorful sportswear, bicycle helmets, etc.). Radios may also be playing</i>	<i>Expect to see gear associated with vehicle or off-highway vehicle use (e.g., coolers, body armor, etc.); some radios and music</i>	<i>Variety of traditional camper trailers, pop-up tents, & conventional tents; radio and music common</i>	<i>Upscale motor homes common, dependent on utility hookups or having generators to support home conveniences and gadgetry</i>	<i>Very specialized gear dependent on service provider assistance (e.g., boat slips, grounds keepers, caretakers)</i>
Evidence of Use:	<i>Only footprints may be observed</i>			<i>Footprints plus slight vegetation trampling at campsites & travel routes. Only infrequent litter</i>	<i>Vehicle tracks and occasional litter and soil erosion. Vegetation becoming worn</i>	<i>Well-worn soils and vegetation, but often gravel surfaced for erosion control. Litter may be frequent.</i>	<i>Paved routes protect soils and vegetation, but noise, litter, and facility impacts are pervasive</i>	<i>A busy place with what seems like constant noise. Unavoidable litter seems to be a lifestyle choice</i>

ADMINISTRATIVE – ADMINISTRATIVE & SERVICE SETTING: How Public Land Managers, County Commissioners and Municipal Governments, and Local Businesses Care for the Area and Serve Visitors and Local Residents

	<i>Pristine</i>	<i>Primitive</i>	<i>Transition</i>	<i>Back Country</i>	<i>Middle Country</i>	<i>Front Country</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>
Visitor Services:	<i>None is available on-site</i>			<i>Basic maps, but area personnel seldom available to provide on-site assistance</i>	<i>Area brochures and maps, plus area personnel occasionally present to provide on-site assistance</i>	<i>Information materials describe recreation areas and activities. Area personnel are periodically available</i>	<i>Everything described to the left in this row, and describes experiences/benefits available. Area personnel do on-site education</i>	<i>Everything described to the left in this row, plus regularly scheduled on-site outdoor skills demonstrations and clinics</i>
Management Controls:	<i>No visitor controls apparent. No use limits. Enforcement presence very rare.</i>			<i>Signs at key access points on basic user ethics. May have back country use restrictions. Enforcement presence rare</i>	<i>Occasional regulatory signing. Motorized and mechanized use restrictions. Random enforcement presence</i>	<i>Rules clearly posted with some seasonal or day-of-week use restrictions. Periodic enforcement presence</i>	<i>Regulations prominent. Total use limited by permit, reservation, etc. Routine enforcement presence.</i>	<i>Continuous enforcement to redistribute use and reduce user conflicts, hazards, and resource damage</i>
Domestic Animals:	<i>Domestic animals neither present nor allowed</i>	<i>No domestic animals except for working dogs or pack stock</i>		<i>Non-working as well as working domestic animals (e.g., sheep dogs, sled dogs, etc.) under owner's voice/whistle control</i>	<i>Leash-free area for dogs, and pack stock may be packed, ridden or tethered anywhere</i>	<i>Within recreation areas, all dogs on leash, and separate areas provided for pack stock; all animals controlled elsewhere</i>	<i>Domestic animals prohibited at recreation sites and other high-use areas; all animals controlled elsewhere</i>	<i>Domestic animals seemingly everywhere present, but subject to at least some kind of controls or restrictions (e.g., horse diapers)</i>
Individual User Fees:	<i>No individual user fees</i>			<i>Individual user fees charged within certain back country areas</i>	<i>Additional fees charged individuals at some developed recreation sites, but not for any dispersed recreation use</i>	<i>Individual user fees charged at all developed sites, but not yet for any dispersed recreation use</i>	<i>Individual user fees charged at all developed sites and for dispersed use within high-use areas only</i>	<i>Individual user fees charged for all recreation use</i>
* Mechanized Use (any):	<i>None whatsoever</i>			<i>Mountain bikes and perhaps other mechanized use, but all is non-motorized</i>	<i>Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, or snowmobiles in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use</i>	<i>Two-wheel drive vehicles predominant, but also four wheel drives and non-motorized, mechanized use</i>	<i>Ordinary highway auto and truck traffic is characteristic</i>	<i>Wide variety of street vehicles and highway traffic is ever-present</i>