
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for management of public lands and its resources, based on the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Land Use Plans (LUP) provide management direction, determine appropriate multiple uses, allocate resources, develop strategies to manage and protect resources, and establish systems to monitor and evaluate the status of resources and effectiveness of management. LUPs are intended to guide management, allowing continuing uses of public land over extended time periods.

The Richfield Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS) identifies the Proposed RMP, which has been selected out of the range of alternatives in the Draft Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/DEIS) for the future management of public land and resources in the Richfield Field Office (RFO). The Proposed RMP was crafted primarily from the Preferred Alternative presented in the DRMP/DEIS (Alternative B) and includes other decisions within the range of alternatives (Alternatives N, A, C, and D) in response to public comments and internal review. The PRMP/FEIS includes a new analysis (presented in Chapter 4) to describe the environmental impacts of implementing the Proposed RMP. The BLM has removed the DRMP/DEIS Alternative B (the Preferred Alternative) from the PRMP/FEIS. The other four alternatives analyzed in the DRMP/DEIS are carried forward for comparative purposes and to correct minor errors that were pointed out by the public and during internal review.

This PRMP/FEIS addresses the future management of 2.1 million surface and mineral estate acres of public land and an additional 95,000 acres of federal mineral estate (underlying private or state surface) in Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, and Wayne counties, as well as portions of Garfield County. There are also 21,500 acres of Kane County within the planning area. However, these acres lie entirely within Glen Canyon National Recreation Area [NRA], which is managed by the National Park Service [NPS], so no decisions within this PRMP/FEIS will affect those lands. This PRMP/FEIS was prepared in cooperation with the five affected county governments, the State of Utah, several Native American tribes, and other federal agencies.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 1502.13) require the purpose and need of an environmental impact statement (EIS) to “briefly specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives.” The purpose and need section of this PRMP/FEIS provides a context and framework for establishing and evaluating the reasonable range of alternatives that are described in Chapter 2.

1.2.1 Purpose

Section 102 of FLPMA sets forth the policy for periodically projecting the present and future use of public lands and their resources, using the land use planning process. Sections 201 and 202 of FLPMA establish the BLM’s land use planning requirements. The BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1) provides guidance for implementing the BLM land use planning requirements that are established by Sections 201 and 202 of FLPMA and by the regulations in 43 CFR 1600.

The purpose, or goal, of the LUP is to provide a comprehensive framework for the BLM's management of the public lands within the planning area and to ensure that these public lands are managed in accordance with FLPMA and with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The purpose of this plan revision is to consolidate the existing LUPs and their amendments; to reevaluate, with public involvement, existing conditions, resources, and uses; and to reconsider the mix of resource allocations and management decisions that are designed to balance uses with the protection of resources, pursuant to FLPMA and other applicable law. This RMP revision will address the growing needs of the planning area and result in selection of a management strategy that best achieves a combination of the following:

- Employ a community-based planning approach to collaborate with federal, state, and local cooperating agencies.
- Resolve multiple-use conflicts or issues between resource values and resource uses. The resulting Proposed RMP will establish consolidated guidance and updated goals, objectives, and management actions for the public lands in the RFO. The Proposed RMP will be comprehensive in nature and will address issues that have been identified through agency, interagency, and public scoping efforts.
- Establish goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for management of resources and resource uses within the approximately 2.1 million surface and mineral estate acres and the additional 95,000 acres of federal mineral estate (underlying private or state surface) that are administered by the BLM's RFO, in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield.
- Identify LUP decisions to guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions.
- Identify management actions and allowable uses that are anticipated to achieve the established goals and objectives and to reach desired outcomes.
- Provide comprehensive management direction by making land use decisions for all appropriate resources and resource uses that are administered by the RFO.
- Provide for compliance with applicable tribal, federal, and state laws, standards, implementation plans, and BLM policies and regulations.
- Recognize the nation's needs for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber, and incorporate requirements of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) Reauthorization of 2000.
- Retain flexibility to adapt to new and emerging issues and opportunities and to provide for adjustments to decisions over time, based on new information and monitoring.
- Strive to be compatible with existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, tribal, and federal agencies and to be consistent with federal law, regulations, and BLM policy.

1.2.2 Need

The following six LUPs and subsequent amendments currently guide management of the public lands within the planning area. In addition, the following Mineral Leasing Activity Plans, Recreation Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans (HMP), and existing environmental assessments (EA) and EISs currently apply federal policy to resources at a more manageable level than the current situation.

1.2.2.1 Six LUPs and Subsequent Amendments

- *Forest Management Framework Plan (MFP)*, approved in 1977
- *Mountain Valley MFP*, approved in 1982
- *Henry Mountain MFP*, approved in 1982
- *Parker Mountain MFP*, approved in 1982
- *Cedar-Beaver-Garfield-Antimony RMP*, approved in 1986
- *San Rafael RMP*, approved in 1991

1.2.2.2 Mineral Leasing Activity Plans

- *Oil and Gas Leasing EA*, 1988
- *Designation of Hydrocarbon Lease Categories*, 1984

1.2.2.3 Recreation Management Plans

- *Henry Mountains Off-Road Vehicle Implementation Plan*
- *Parker Mountain Off-Road Vehicle Implementation Plan*
- *Mountain Valley Off-Road Vehicle Implementation Plan*
- *Forest Planning Unit OHV Implementation Plan*, 1983
- *Cedar-Beaver-Garfield-Antimony OHV Implementation Plan*

1.2.2.4 Habitat Management Plans

- *Parker Mountain HMP*
- *Henry Mountains Desert Bighorn Sheep HMP*
- *Antimony HMP*

1.2.2.5 Existing Environmental Assessments and Impact Statements

- *Utah BLM Statewide Wilderness EIS*, 1990
- *Utah Combined Hydrocarbon Leasing Regional EIS*, 1984
- *Henry Mountains Grazing EIS*, 1983
- *Parker Mountain Grazing EIS*, 1979
- *Mountain Valley Grazing EIS*, 1980
- *United States Forest Service (USFS)/BLM Motorized Events EA*, 2001 (J-050-01-024)

Through a formal evaluation completed in February 2001, the BLM identified the need, or requirement, to revise these six LUPs. Since completion of these LUPs, considerable changes have occurred within the planning area. Heightened public awareness, increased public demand for use of the lands, and increases in conflict between competing resource values and land uses continue to challenge the BLM's management goals and objectives. The RFO is facing a variety of issues that affect local communities, regional and state interests, and the health of the public lands. These emerging issues and changing circumstances resulted in the need to revise the existing plans. Given the nature of the issues that face the RFO and the overlap between federal, tribal, state, and local jurisdictions, the RFO will combine the six existing LUPs into one planning document—the Richfield Proposed RMP.

A number of new issues (such as new federal species listings), higher levels of controversy concerning existing issues, and new (unforeseen) public land uses and concerns have arisen over the years. These issues were not included or were not adequately addressed in the existing plans. These and other selected examples of new data, new and revised policies, and emerging issues and changing circumstances demonstrate the need to revise the existing plans.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

The planning area, located in south-central Utah, includes all of Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne counties and portions of Garfield and Kane counties, an area totaling 5.4 million acres (Map 1-1). The BLM administers 2.1 million acres of public land surface and mineral estate, and an additional 95,000 acres of federal minerals estate for which the surface estate is in non-federal (state or private) ownership.

The BLM also has administrative responsibility for 2,082,865 acres of mineral estate for which the surface is managed by other federal agencies (USFS and NPS). On these lands, leasing of federal minerals is subject to management as directed by the surface managing agency, and the decisions of this Proposed RMP will pertain only to the BLM’s role in administering the minerals. Proposed RMP decisions apply only to BLM-administered public lands and resources. Table 1-1 summarizes the surface land ownership within the planning area. In this document, the term “planning area” applies to all lands within the five-county area, regardless of surface ownership. It is important to note that the BLM can make decisions that affect only public lands and resources, but it is responsible for collaborative planning with the public and adjacent jurisdictions to consider the impacts of its actions on all resources in the region.

Table 1-1. Land Ownership—Richfield Planning Area

Ownership	Acres	Percentage of Planning Area
Public lands (BLM-administered)	2,128,200	39
National forests	1,476,400	27
National parks and recreation areas	608,500	11
Private	803,600	15
Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)	385,300	7
Other state, county, city, wildlife, park, and outdoor recreation areas	36,700	1
Tribal lands	1,200	<1
Total	5,439,900	100

1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

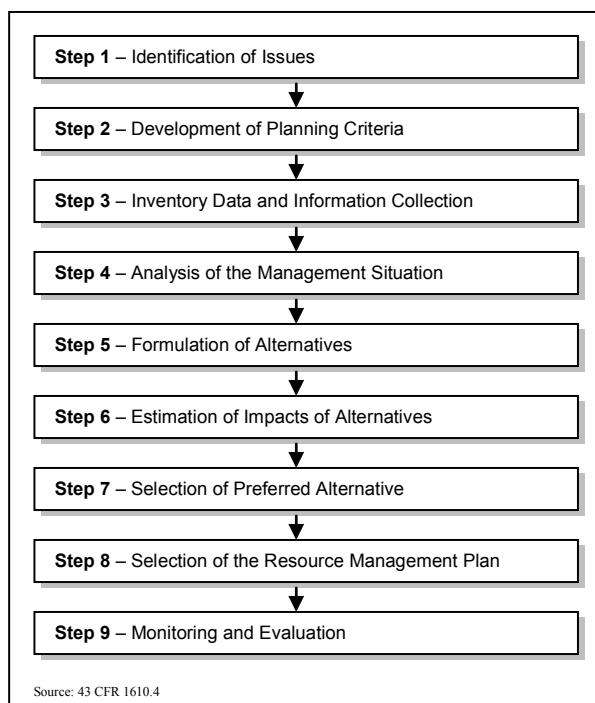
FLPMA requires BLM to use LUPs as tools by which “present and future use is projected” (43 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1701 [a][2]). FLPMA’s implementing regulations for planning, 43 CFR 1600, state that LUPs are a preliminary step in the overall process of managing public lands, “designed to guide and control future management actions and the development of subsequent, more detailed and limited scope plans for resources and uses” (43 CFR 1601.0-2). Public participation and input are important components of land use planning.

Revision of existing LUPs is a major federal action for the BLM. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, requires federal agencies to prepare an EIS for major federal actions (United States Department of the Interior [USDI] Departmental Manual, Part 516, Chapter 11.4A[1]); thus, the FEIS accompanies the revision of the existing plans. This PRMP/FEIS analyzes the impacts of five alternative scenarios, including the No Action Alternative, for management of the public lands and resources within the planning area. The No Action Alternative reflects current management (the existing plans). NEPA requires analysis of a No Action Alternative.

The BLM uses a nine-step planning process (Figure 1-1 **Error! Reference source not found.**) when developing and revising RMPs, as required by 43 CFR 1600 and by planning program guidance in the

BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1). The planning process is designed to help the BLM identify the uses that the public desires for BLM-administered lands and to consider these uses to the extent that they are consistent with the laws established by Congress and the policies of the executive branch of the Federal Government.

Figure 1-1. Nine-Step Planning Process



The planning process is issue-driven (Step 1). The plan revision process is undertaken to resolve management issues and problems as well as to take advantage of management opportunities. The BLM used the public scoping process to identify planning issues to direct (i.e., drive) the revision of the existing plans. The scoping process was also used to introduce the public to preliminary planning criteria, which set limits to the scope of the RMP revision (Step 2).

As appropriate, the BLM used existing data from a variety of sources and collected new data as necessary to address planning issues and to fill data gaps that were identified during public scoping (Step 3). Using these data, the planning issues, and the planning criteria, the BLM conducted an Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) (Step 4) to describe current management and to identify management opportunities for addressing the planning issues. Current management reflects management under the existing plans and management that would continue through selection of the No Action Alternative. The existing affected environment section from the AMS is summarized in Chapter 3 of the PRMP/FEIS. The AMS is included as part of the Administrative Record for this plan and is available in the RFO and on the RFO's planning website (www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/richfield/planning.html).

Results of the first four steps of the planning process clarified the purpose and need and identified key planning issues that need to be addressed in the new RMP. Key planning issues reflect the focus of the RMP revision and are described in more detail in the Planning Issues section of this chapter.

Alternatives constitute a range of management actions that are anticipated to achieve identified goals or objectives. During alternative formulation (Step 5), the BLM collaborated with cooperating agencies to identify goals and objectives (desired outcomes) for resources and resource uses in the planning area. These desired outcomes addressed the key planning issues, were constrained by the planning criteria, and incorporated the management opportunities identified by the BLM. Details of the alternatives were developed through the identification of management actions and allowable uses that are anticipated to achieve the goals and objectives. The alternatives represent a reasonable range for managing resources and resource uses within the planning area, under the multiple use and sustained yield mandate of FLPMA. Chapter 2 of this document describes and summarizes the alternatives.

This PRMP/FEIS also includes an analysis of the impacts of each alternative in Chapter 4 (Step 6). With input from cooperating agencies and BLM specialists and in consideration of planning issues, planning criteria, and the impacts of the alternatives, BLM has identified a Proposed RMP from among the five alternatives (Step 7). This Proposed RMP is documented in the PRMP/FEIS, which will be distributed to the public for review and comment (also Step 7).

Step 8 of the land use planning process will occur following receipt and consideration of public comments on the PRMP/FEIS. In preparing the PRMP/FEIS, the BLM considered all comments received during the public comment period. In developing the PRMP/FEIS, the Utah BLM State Director, who is the decision maker for this plan revision, has the authority and discretion to select an alternative in its entirety or to combine components of the various presented alternatives to prioritize differing resources or uses, consistent with the multiple use and sustained yield mandate. The regulations at 43 CFR 1610 provide, prior to the approval of the Proposed RMP, a 60-day period for the Governor of Utah for “consistency review” and a 30-day period to protest the Proposed RMP to the BLM Director for “any person who participated in the planning process and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the approval” of the PRMP/FEIS.

Step 9 is the monitoring and evaluation process. Monitoring is the repeated measurement of activities and conditions over time. Evaluation is a process in which the plan and monitoring data are reviewed to see if management goals and objectives are being met and if management direction is sound. Monitoring data gathered over time is examined and used to draw conclusions on whether management actions are meeting stated objectives, and if not, why. Conclusions are then used to make recommendations on whether to continue current management or what changes need to be made in management practices to meet objectives.

The two types of monitoring that are tied to the planning process include implementation and effectiveness monitoring. Land use plan monitoring is the process of (1) tracking the implementation of land use planning decisions and (2) collecting and assessing data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of land use planning decisions. The two types of monitoring are described below.

Implementation Monitoring: Implementation monitoring is the most basic type of monitoring and simply determines whether planned activities have been implemented in the manner prescribed by the plan. Some agencies call this compliance monitoring. This monitoring documents BLM’s progress toward full implementation of the land use plan decision. There are no specific thresholds or indicators required for this type of monitoring.

Effectiveness Monitoring: Effectiveness monitoring is aimed at determining if the implementation of activities has achieved the desired goals and objectives. Effectiveness monitoring asks the question: Was the specified activity successful in achieving the objective? This requires knowledge of the objectives established in the RMP as well as indicators that can be measured. Indicators are established by technical

specialists in order to address specific questions, and thus avoid collection of unnecessary data. Success is measured against the benchmark of achieving desired conditions established by the plan.

Regulations at 43 CFR 1610.4-9 require that the Proposed RMP establish intervals and standards, as appropriate, for monitoring and evaluation of the plan, based on the sensitivity of the resource decisions involved. Progress in meeting the plan objectives and adherence to the management framework established by the plan is reviewed periodically. CEQ regulations implementing NEPA state that agencies may provide for monitoring to assure that their decisions are carried out and should do so in important cases (40 CFR 1505.2(c)). To meet these requirements, the BLM will review the plan on a regular schedule in order to provide consistent tracking of accomplishments and provide information that can be used to develop annual budget requests to continue implementation.

Land use plan evaluations will be used by BLM to determine if the decisions in the RMP, supported by the accompanying NEPA analysis, are still valid. Evaluation of the RMP will generally be conducted every five years per BLM policy, unless unexpected actions, new information, or significant changes in other plans, legislation, or litigation triggers an evaluation. Land use plan evaluations determine if decisions are being implemented, whether mitigation measures are satisfactory, whether there are significant changes in the related plans of other entities, whether there is new data of significance to the plan, and if decisions should be changed through amendment or revision. Evaluations will follow the protocols established by the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 in effect at the time the evaluation is initiated. Specific monitoring and evaluation needs are identified by resource/uses throughout Chapter 2.

1.5 DECISION FRAMEWORK

As stated in the previous section, identifying the planning issues and developing planning criteria are the first steps in defining the scope of the RMP revision. The planning issues and criteria provide the framework in which planning decisions are made. Planning decisions refer to what is established or determined by the Approved RMP. The Approved RMP provides guidance for planning decisions according to the following categories:

- Physical, biological, and cultural resources
- Resource uses
- Special designations

In the context of these categories, management strategies were developed to provide viable options for addressing planning issues. The management strategies provide the building blocks from which general management scenarios and more-detailed resource management alternatives were developed. The resource management alternatives reflect a reasonable range of management options that fall within limits set by the planning criteria. The planning issues and planning criteria used to revise the existing plans are described in the following sections.

1.5.1 Planning Issues

The BLM conducted an early and open scoping process to determine the scope, or range, of issues to be addressed in this PRMP/FEIS. Scoping identifies the affected public and agency concerns, defines the relevant issues and alternatives that will be examined in detail in the RMP/EIS, and eliminates those that are not significant. The BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1), defines planning issues as "...disputes or controversies about existing and potential land and resource allocations, levels of resource use, production, and related management practices."

Public scoping was designed to meet the public involvement requirements of FLPMA and NEPA. This cooperative process included soliciting input from interested state and local governments, tribal governments, other federal agencies and organizations, and individuals, to identify the scope of issues to be addressed in the plan and to assist in the formulation of reasonable alternatives. The scoping process was an excellent method for opening dialogue between the BLM and the general public about management of the public lands and for identifying the concerns of those who have an interest in the area.

As part of the scoping process, the BLM also requested that the public submit nominations for potential areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) and nominations of rivers for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS).

The scoping period for the Richfield RMP began on November 1, 2001, with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*, and ended on April 1, 2002. Scoping included open-house meetings in five Utah communities (Richfield, Junction, Manti, Loa, and Salt Lake City). In addition, news releases were used to notify the public regarding the scoping period and the planning process and to invite the public to provide written comments. The RFO received written comments via e-mail, fax, and postal mail. Comments obtained from the public during the scoping period were used to define the relevant issues that would be addressed by a reasonable range of alternatives.

For the Richfield planning process, scoping comments received were placed in one of three categories:

- Issues to be resolved in the PRMP/FEIS
- Issues to be addressed through other policy or administrative action (and therefore not addressed in the PRMP/FEIS)
- Issues to be eliminated from detailed analysis because they are beyond the scope of the PRMP/FEIS

During the scoping process, the public and various agencies identified some important issues to be addressed in the RMP. The *Richfield RMP/EIS Scoping Report* (available for review on the RMP planning webpage at www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/richfield/planning.html) summarizes the scoping process. The issues that were identified in the Scoping Report fall into 1 of 12 broad categories. Other resource and use issues are identified in the BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* H-1601-1. All these issues were considered in developing the alternatives brought forward in this PRMP/FEIS.

1.5.1.1 Issues to Be Addressed in the Richfield RMP

Those planning issues that were determined to be within the scope of the EIS were used to develop one or more of the alternatives or are addressed in other parts of the EIS. For example, as planning issues were refined, the BLM collaborated with cooperating agencies to develop a reasonable range of alternatives designed to address or resolve key planning issues, such as which areas, if any, contain unique or sensitive resources that require special management. A reasonable range of alternatives provides various scenarios for how the BLM and cooperating agencies can address this and other key planning issues, including the management of resources and resource uses in the planning area. In other words, key planning issues serve as the rationale for alternative development. The key planning issues identified for developing alternatives in this FEIS are as follows:

Issue 1: Where and to what extent can transportation and access be managed to satisfy public demand while protecting natural and cultural resource values?

Use (for recreation, commercial uses, and general enjoyment) of the public lands in southern Utah has grown in popularity in recent years. With this popularity has come a demand for greater variety and

availability of access opportunities, including off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. With the number of visitors growing, resource and user conflicts are becoming more common. OHV use needs to be managed, including identifying areas to be restricted or closed for the protection of other resource values.

Issue 2: Which areas should be designated for special management (e.g., ACECs and Wild and Scenic Rivers [WSR]), and how should these areas be managed?

FLPMA and BLM policy require the BLM to give priority to designation and protection of ACECs during the land use planning process. The Wild and Scenic River Act directs federal agencies to consider the potential for including watercourses into the NWSRS during the land use planning process. The alternatives analyzed in this PRMP/FEIS include a range of management prescriptions for managing potential ACECs, as well as for managing the eligible rivers as suitable WSRs.

Issue 3: How should non-wilderness study area (WSA) lands with wilderness characteristics be managed?

The RFO includes lands that are outside designated WSAs but that contain the wilderness characteristics of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation. The PRMP/FEIS analyzes alternative decisions and levels of protection for non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics to protect, preserve, and maintain their wilderness characteristics.

Issue 4: How should recreation activities be managed to satisfy public demand while protecting natural and cultural resource values?

Recreation in southern Utah has grown in popularity in recent years. With this popularity has come a demand for a greater variety and availability of recreation opportunities such as motorized and non-motorized trails (including equestrian trails), climbing, mountain biking, hiking, and camping. With the number of visitors growing, resource and user conflicts are becoming more common. Recreational use needs to be managed, including identifying special recreation management areas (SRMA) in which management attention is needed to highlight important recreational opportunities or to deal with problems such as conflicts between users or impacts on other resources.

Issue 5: Which areas will be available for mineral development, and which restrictions should be imposed?

Mineral development is considered a major issue for the planning area, not only for economic reasons but also for the degree to which it can potentially affect other resources (including soils, vegetation, water quality, wildlife habitat and naturalness, solitude, and opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation). Throughout this PRMP/FEIS, energy and mineral development are analyzed in the context of the need for protection of other resources. BLM has management discretion in four areas, and the alternatives include a range of options for each:

- Areas closed or open to oil and gas leasing and the stipulations on leasing within the open areas
- Areas closed or open to disposal of salable minerals (mineral materials)
- Areas proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws
- Areas available for further consideration for coal leasing (coal unsuitability)

Issue 6: Which areas will be available for livestock grazing, in light of resource conflicts?

The Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, manages approximately 264 million acres of public rangelands throughout the western United States. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, FLPMA, and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 together guide the BLM's management of livestock grazing on public lands. The objectives for grazing administration regulations are to “promote healthy sustainable rangeland ecosystems; accelerate restoration and improvement of public rangelands to properly functioning condition; efficiently and effectively administer domestic livestock grazing; and provide for the sustainability of the Western livestock industry and communities that are dependent upon productive, healthy public rangelands” (43 CFR § 4100.0–2).

This PRMP/FEIS will review and update the status of lands available or unavailable for livestock grazing, as referred to in 43 CFR 4130.2. When rangeland health assessment, monitoring data, inventory data, or other inputs indicate that changes are needed for resource improvement, these changes will be pursued at the implementation level on a site-specific basis, in accordance with BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1).

Issue 7: How can resources such as vegetation, soils, and wildlife be protected, maintained, or restored?

Some resource uses (e.g., grazing, mineral development, OHV use, recreation) can affect the natural function and condition of plant communities that provide habitat for wildlife. A healthy cover of perennial vegetation stabilizes the soil, increases infiltration of precipitation, reduces runoff, provides clean water to adjacent streams, and minimizes noxious weed invasion. Healthy plant communities provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species, including special status species (SSS).

The alternatives address wildlife and wildlife habitat in terms of the interactions of other resources and resource uses (such as oil and gas leasing, OHV area and route designations, and development of rights-of-way [ROW]) with wildlife and its habitat.

The management of habitat for plant and animal species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), such as the Mexican spotted owl, Wright fishhook cactus, and Utah prairie dog, as well as other species considered sensitive, such as the Greater sage-grouse and the pygmy rabbit, was raised as an issue by the BLM, other federal and state agencies, and the public. In recognition of the importance of these species, the alternatives address them separately from other wildlife species.

Issue 8: Where is fire desired and not desired, and in which areas could fire be used as a management tool for vegetative treatments?

Drought and beetle infestation in southern Utah have contributed to hazardous fuel loading, increasing the threat of wildfires. Areas of pinyon die-off and dry grasslands have also created areas of higher risk for fire hazard and could require treatment. A fire management plan is to be developed to address high-risk areas, fire prevention, prescribed burns, rehabilitation and restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, and the protection of life and property.

Issue 9: Which lands within the planning area should be identified as targets for acquisition, disposal, or withdrawal?

As mandated by Section 102 (a)(1) of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. § 1701), public lands are retained in federal ownership, the exception being those public lands that have future potential for disposal (e.g., sale or exchange), as described under Section 203(a) and Section 206 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. §§ 1713 and 1716).

Public lands cannot be effectively administered without legal and physical access. Therefore, public lands have potential for disposal when they are isolated or difficult to manage. Lands that are identified for disposal must meet public objectives, such as community expansion and economic development. Disposals would be accomplished by using a variety of methods, including land sales, land exchange, and sale or lease under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act of 1926. Public lands can be considered for disposal other than through FLPMA sale, on a case-by-case basis. Disposal actions are usually in response to a public request or application and result in a title transfer, wherein the lands leave the public domain. In addition, the BLM will consider acquisition of non-federal lands that meet resource management objectives, through negotiated purchase, donation, or exchange from willing sellers. In a withdrawal of lands, an area of public land is withheld from settlement, sale, location, or entry, for the purpose of limiting activities to maintain other public values.

Although the PRMP/FEIS does not include specific decisions on social and economic factors, the impacts of the management actions contained within the alternatives are analyzed for their impacts on socioeconomic conditions. Social and economic factors are identified in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment) and analyzed in Chapter 4 (Environmental Consequences). Other issues related to resources and resource uses are required to be considered during land use planning efforts, in accordance with BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1610-1) and NEPA regulations and policy. These include decisions for soil and water, management of ROWs, environmental justice, and air quality.

1.5.1.2 Issues Considered But Not Further Analyzed

Issues Addressed Through Policy or Administrative Action

Policy or administrative actions include those actions that are implemented by the BLM because they are standard operating procedure, because federal law requires them, or because they are BLM policy. Administrative actions do not require a planning decision to implement. Issues that can be addressed by policy or administrative actions are eliminated from detailed analysis in this planning effort. Such issues include the following:

- Compliance with existing laws and policies (e.g., FLPMA, NEPA, ESA, American Antiquities Act, Clean Air Act of 1970 [CAA], Clean Water Act of 1977 [CWA], National Historic Preservation Act [NHPA]).
- The allocation of forage between livestock and wildlife and the application of specific management practices on allotments within the RFO, as provided for through the application of Utah's *Standards for Rangeland Health, Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management*, and supporting monitoring data. When monitoring and inventory data indicate a need, changes to the allocation of forage for livestock and wildlife are made after coordination with permittees, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), and other affected interests to ensure that resource objectives are met. Livestock grazing management practices may also be adjusted to ensure that grazing practices are compatible with other uses of the public lands. These allocation and management adjustments are implementation decisions according to the BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* (H-1601-1) and are made on an allotment or other site-specific basis.
- Education, enforcement and prosecution, vandalism, and volunteer coordination.
- Assistance in resolving, to the extent possible, inconsistencies between federal and non-federal agency plans, and in establishing consistency with state and local plans to the maximum extent, consistent with federal law and the purposes of FLPMA.
- Management of cultural resources, including up-to-date inventories, non-disclosure of sensitive sites, proposal of cultural sites for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and Native American consultation.

- Management of the RFO's 11 existing WSAs (approximately 446,900 acres) under the *Interim Management Policy (IMP) for Lands Under Wilderness Review* (BLM Handbook H-8550-1). The BLM is statutorily (FLPMA Section 603[c]) required to manage these areas to protect their suitability for congressional designation for the National Wilderness Preservation System unless and until Congress either designates an area as wilderness or releases it from further consideration. The BLM's discretion to make planning decisions about management of WSAs is limited to designating WSAs as visual resource management (VRM) Class I and to determining whether the WSAs will be limited or closed to OHV use.
- Completion of inventory of riparian and wetland areas and the use of monitoring and mitigation to help protect these resources.
- Recreation management improvements, including a comprehensive sign system and maps.
- Administration of existing mineral leases, permits, and other authorized uses.
- Administration of valid existing rights.
- Monitoring wildlife and biodiversity.
- Monitoring air quality.
- Mitigation measures for site-specific projects.
- Noxious weed control.
- Eligibility standards for specially designated areas.
- Protection of threatened, endangered, or sensitive species.
- Coordination with local, state, and federal agencies.
- Cooperation with user groups.

Issues Beyond the Scope of the RMP

Issues beyond the scope of the RMP process include all issues that are not related to decisions that would occur as a result of the planning process. Such decisions include those that are not under the jurisdiction of the RFO or are beyond the capability of the BLM to resolve as part of the planning process. Issues identified in this category include the following:

- The State of Utah and Garfield, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne counties may hold valid existing ROWs in the planning area, pursuant to Revised Statute (RS) 2477, Act of July 28 1866, Chapter 262, 8, 14 Stat. 252, 253, codified at 43 U.S.C. 932. On October 21, 1976, Congress repealed RS 2477 through passage of FLPMA. This RMP does not adjudicate, analyze, or otherwise determine the validity of claimed ROWs. However, nothing in the RMP extinguishes any valid ROW, or alters in any way the legal rights that the state and counties have to assert and protect RS 2477 rights or to challenge in federal court or other appropriate venue any RMP-imposed use restrictions that they believe are inconsistent with their rights.
- New proposals for WSAs or wilderness.
- Activities and uses beyond the jurisdiction of the BLM.
- Changing of existing laws, policies, and regulations.
- Availability of funding and personnel for managing programs.

1.5.2 Planning Criteria

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610) require the preparation of planning criteria preliminary to the development of all RMPs. Planning criteria are the standards, rules, and guidelines that help to guide the planning process. These criteria influence all aspects of the planning process, including inventory and data collection, developing issues to address, formulating alternatives, estimating impacts, and selecting the Proposed RMP. In conjunction with the planning issues, planning criteria ensure that the planning process is focused and incorporates appropriate analyses. Planning criteria are developed from

appropriate laws, regulations, and policies as well as from public participation and coordination with cooperating agencies, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Native American tribes.

Planning criteria used in the development of this RMP are as follows:

- The RMP will recognize the existence of valid existing rights.
- The RMP will comply with applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, and BLM supplemental program guidance.
- Planning decisions will cover BLM-administered public lands, including split-estate lands for which the Federal Government has retained the sub-surface mineral estate.
- Planning decisions will use and observe the principles of multiple use and sustained yield that are set forth in FLPMA and other applicable law (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][1]).
- The BLM will use a systematic interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][2]).
- Areas potentially suitable for ACEC or other special designations will be identified and, where appropriate, brought forward for analysis in the EIS (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][3]).
- The BLM will rely on, to the extent it is available, the inventory of public lands, their resources, and other values (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][4]).
- The BLM will consider present and potential uses of the public lands (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][5]).
- The BLM will consider the relative scarcity of the values involved and the availability of alternative means (including recycling) and sites for the realization of those values (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][6]).
- The BLM will consider the relationship between short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity.
- Decisions in the RMP will comply with applicable pollution control laws, including state and federal air, water, noise, or other pollution standards or implementation plans (43 U.S.C. 1701 [c][8]).
- To the extent consistent with the laws governing the administration of the public lands (FLPMA 202 b[9]), BLM will be consistent with existing officially adopted and approved resource-related plans, policies, or programs of other federal agencies, state agencies, Native American tribes, and local governments that may be affected (43 CFR 1610.3-1 [c][9]).

1.6 CHANGES FROM THE DRAFT RMP TO THE PROPOSED RMP

Review of and comments on the DRMP/DEIS have resulted in several changes to that document. Changes were in response to a combination of public comments, meetings with cooperating agencies, and changes in BLM policy and management direction. None of the changes described here and further detailed in Appendix 20 meet the regulatory definition for significance in 40 CFR 1508.27(a) and (b) because these changes resulted in minor modifications to what was considered in the DRMP/DEIS and would not greatly affect the impacts analysis. These regulations require an agency preparing a NEPA document to review the changes for significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the Proposed RMP or its impacts, using context and intensity as the trigger for significance. The BLM has reviewed each change according to this regulatory standard and has determined that none of the changes, individually or collectively, require a supplement to this PRMP/FEIS. The DRMP/DEIS Preferred Alternative (Alternative B) has been revised and renamed the Proposed RMP.

The BLM has made numerous changes between the DRMP/DEIS and PRMP/FEIS. These changes are described in this section and detailed in Appendix 20. The BLM has prepared Appendix 20 to document whether changes between the DRMP/DEIS and the PRMP/FEIS resulted in a significant change in

circumstances or conditions or whether the PRMP/FEIS contains updated information from that which was presented to the public in the DRMP/DEIS. Finally, the BLM wanted to confirm that all changes made to the PRMP/FEIS fall within the range of alternatives that were presented and analyzed in the DRMP/DEIS. If changes that were made to the PRMP/FEIS are outside the range of alternatives that were analyzed in the DRMP/DEIS, this section and Appendix 20 provide an explanation for the need to make the change and the determination of whether the change is or is not significant.

The regulation controlling whether or not a supplement is required is found at 40 CFR 1502.9(c), which provides that agencies:

- (1) Shall prepare supplements to either draft or final environmental impact statements if:
 - (i) The agency makes substantial changes in the proposed action that are relevant to environmental concerns; or
 - (ii) There are significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impact (as defined by NEPA in 40 CFR 1508.27).
- (2) May also prepare supplements when the agency determines that the purposes of the Act will be furthered by doing so.

All changes to the RFO DRMP/DEIS were made in response to public comment and internal review. The majority of the changes were editorial changes made to add clarity to the document. In some cases, alternatives presented in the DRMP/DEIS were modified in the PRMP/FEIS to reflect technical corrections and data updates. In other cases, such as in Chapter 3, incorporation of updated information was necessary to refine the analysis in Chapter 4, which was incomplete or needed augmentation.

1.6.1 Summary of Changes To Decisions Between the Preferred Alternative (Draft EIS) and the Proposed RMP (Final EIS)

The following list identifies some of the specific differences between the Preferred Alternative of the DRMP/DEIS and the Proposed RMP:

- **Air Quality.** Air quality emissions calculations were completed for each alternative.
- **Fish and Wildlife.** Wildlife habitat maps were changed to reflect the most current UDWR data.
- **Livestock Grazing.** Temporary non-renewable use of grazing was added to reduce site-specific fuels (i.e., cheat grass).
- **Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics.** Management prescriptions for 12 non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics areas (78,600 acres) were added to the Proposed RMP to protect, preserve, and maintain their wilderness characteristics.
- **Recreation.**
 - Under the Proposed RMP, the size of the Factory Butte SRMA was increased to 24,400 acres and the size of the Big Rocks SRMA was decreased to 90 acres.
 - Established three RMZs in the Factory Butte SRMA including the OHV Open Play Area RMZ (8,500 acres), the Motorized Touring RMZ (11,300 acres) and the Landmarks RMZ (4,600 acres).
- **Travel Management.**
 - The boundary of the Factory Butte Play Area was adjusted to designate OHV play areas while avoiding sensitive plant species.
 - The size of the Big Rocks Trails Area and the Glenwood Play Area were decreased.
 - The Mayfield Open Area was eliminated from the Proposed RMP.
 - Increased the miles of designated routes by 46 miles.

- Increased the miles of designated routes with seasonal closures or size/width restrictions by 55 miles.
- Increased the miles of closed routes by 141 miles.
- **WSRs.** The Fremont River in the Fremont River Gorge would be managed as suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS with a tentative classification of “wild”. The Dirty Devil segment was not carried forward as a suitable river for inclusion in the NWSRS.

1.6.2 Summary of Changes Made Between the DRMP/DEIS and the PRMP/FEIS

1.6.2.1 Chapter 1

The following changes were made to Chapter 1, based on public comment and BLM review:

- Revised the language regarding RS 2477.
- Revised the language regarding tar sands, based on the *Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing*.
- Added a section to describe the changes from the DRMP/DEIS to the PRMP/FEIS.
- Revised the PRMP/FEIS based on the UDWR wildlife habitat maps.

1.6.2.2 Chapter 2

The following clarifications/modifications were made to Chapter 2:

- Italicized and added an asterisk and footnote to identify implementation-level decisions.
- Added the Air Quality common to all management actions, based on discussions with the State of Utah.
- Revised the SSS management actions to allow no surface disturbing or otherwise disruptive activities within 2 miles of a greater sage-grouse lek from March 15 to July 15 to protect sage grouse breeding and brood-rearing habitat.
- Revised the SSS management actions to manage oil and gas leasing as open subject to major constraints (NSO) within ½ mile of greater sage-grouse leks.
- Revised the SSS management action to allow no surface disturbing or otherwise disruptive activities in greater sage-grouse winter habitat from December 15 through March 14.
- Added the Minerals and Energy common to all management actions.
- Revised the Lands and Realty management decisions to give land exchanges with the State of Utah priority consideration to resolve inholdings issues.
- Revised the WSA common to all management actions to address ways in WSAs.
- Revised the WSR common to all management actions to work with upstream and downstream water users and applicable agencies to ensure that water flows are maintained at a level sufficient to sustain the values for which affected river segments were designated.
- Revised the Travel management common to all management actions to allow limitations on the types of vehicles that are allowed on specific designated routes (especially off-road travel in an area that is limited to designated routes), if monitoring indicates that a particular type of vehicle is causing disturbance to the soil, wildlife habitat, cultural, or vegetative resources.
- Revised the Transportation common to all management actions to clarify that the State of Utah may be provided reasonable access to state lands for economic purposes per the Cotter decision, on a case-by-case basis.
- Revised the Vegetation common to all management actions to implement noxious weed and invasive species control actions as per national guidance and local weed management plans.

- Revised the Wildlife common to all management actions to allow for maintenance of the land use plan when minor adjustments to crucial wildlife habitat boundaries are periodically made by the UDWR.
- Revised the Wildlife management actions in the Proposed RMP to allow for compensatory mitigation on an “as appropriate” basis when it can be performed onsite, and on a voluntary basis when it is performed offsite, in accordance with current guidance.
- Clarified the wording for the No Leasing Alternative and the Livestock Grazing Adjustments Alternative that were considered but eliminated from detailed analysis.

1.6.2.3 Chapter 3

The following changes were made to Chapter 3, based on public comment and BLM review:

- Clarified that the Cotter decision would apply in providing access to SITLA lands.
- Added language to recognize the importance of climate change and the potential effects it may have on the natural environment.
- Clarified the limitation of the application of the size criteria for non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics.

1.6.2.4 Chapter 4

The following changes were made to Chapter 4, based on public comment and BLM review:

- Conducted emissions calculations for each of the Alternatives and the Proposed RMP.
- Added cultural language to describe the Section 106 consultation process.
- Revised the non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics impact analysis to address lands that are carried forward in the Proposed RMP and those lands that are not carried forward in the Proposed RMP.
- Revised the ACEC section to clarify other resource decisions that provide protection to relevant and important values of potential ACECs. In addition, this section was formatted to be consistent with other sections in Chapter 4.
- Revised the cumulative impact analysis section to clarify incremental effects from past, present and future actions.
- Moved the sage grouse impact analysis from the fish and wildlife section to the special status species section.
- Revised the sage grouse impact analysis to address the management action changes described in chapter 2.
- Added to the socioeconomic section an impact analysis from non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics to Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) lands.
- Added language to address global climate change.

1.6.2.5 Maps

The maps were revised based on public comment and BLM review:

- A disclaimer was added to the wildlife habitat maps to provide the UDWR data publication dates and a reference to the exceptions, waivers, and modifications listed in Appendix 11.
- Included sage-grouse winter habitat on map 3-6.
- Maps were updated to reflect changes in the Proposed RMP and to correct errors.

1.6.2.6 Appendices

The following appendices were added or revised, based on public comment and BLM review:

- **Appendix 11.** The BLM has updated and clarified Appendix 11 Oil and Gas Leasing Stipulations for the Proposed RMP, based on comments and internal review. New lease notices for threatened and endangered (T&E) species created by USFWS have been included. The “Other Scenic Lands” no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation has been replaced with a CSU stipulation for VRM Class 2. Proposals for surface disturbing activities involving construction on slopes greater than 30 percent would be avoided if possible (subject to CSU) to protect fragile soils throughout the planning area. The BLM specified the conditions for waivers and modifications for wildlife habitat. Added a sage grouse seasonal restriction for 2 miles around leks and added a no surface occupancy stipulation of 1/2 miles around sage grouse leks.
- **Appendix 16.** Summary of Management of Non-WSA Lands with Wilderness Characteristics for the Richfield Field Office Proposed RMP/Final EIS
- **Appendix 17.** Utah Public Lands Study: Key Social Survey Findings for Garfield, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, and Wayne Counties
- **Appendix 18.** Factory Butte SRMA recreation management zones (RMZs) and Management Prescriptions
- **Appendix 19.** Wildland Fire Resource Protection Measures and Reasonable and Prudent Measures, Terms and Conditions, and Reporting Requirements Identified through Section 7 Consultation
- **Appendix 20.** Summary of Changes from the DRMP/DEIS to the PRMP/FEIS
- **Appendix 21.** State of Utah Air Quality Letter

1.7 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROGRAMS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

1.7.1 Other Related Plans

FLPMA requires that the BLM, when developing or revising LUPs, shall abide by the following:

...to the extent consistent with the laws governing the administration of the public lands, coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management of activities of or for such lands with the land use planning and management programs of other Federal departments and agencies and of the States and local governments within which the lands are located...and assure that consideration is given to those State, local and tribal land use plans for public lands [and] assist in resolving, to the extent practical, inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal Government plans...(43 U.S.C. S 1712 [c][9])

The BLM must keep apprised of the many ongoing programs, plans, and policies that are being implemented in the planning area by other federal, state, local, and tribal governments. The BLM will seek to be consistent with or complementary to other management actions whenever possible. Plans that need to be considered during the RFO's planning effort are identified in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2. Plans to Be Considered in the Richfield Resource Management Plan

Plan Types	Specific Plans
County Plans	Garfield County General Plan, 1998 General Plan for Piute County, 1994

Plan Types	Specific Plans
	Sanpete County General Plan, 1997 Sevier County General Plan, 1998 General Plan for Wayne County, 1994 Utah Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (State Wildlife Action Plan), 2005
State of Utah	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), 2000 Utah Water Quality Plan
National Forest Plans	Manti-LaSal National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Dixie National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Fishlake National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan
National Park Service Plans	Capitol Reef National Park General Management Plan, 1988 Glen Canyon National Recreation Area General Management Plan Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Grazing Management Plan Canyonlands National Park General Management Plan Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Minerals Management Plan, 1980
Other BLM Surrounding Offices	Kanab Field Office LUPs - Escalante MFP, Paria MFP, Vermilion MFP, Zion MFP and Cedar-Beaver-Garfield-Antimony RMP Cedar City Field Office LUPs, MFPs - Pinyon Grazing EIS (1982), Cedar-Beaver-Garfield-Antimony RMP grazing decisions (1984), Utah BLM Statewide Wilderness EIS (1990) Fillmore Field Office- House Range Resource Management Plan and Warm Springs Resource Management Plan Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument LUP-Monument Management Plan 1999 Price Field Office LUPs-the Price River Resource Area Management Framework Plan and the San Rafael Resource Management Plan Salt Lake Field Office LUPs- Randolph MFP (1980), Box Elder RMP (1986), Pony Express RMP (1990), Park City MFP (1975) and Isolated-Tract Planning Analysis Evaluation (1985)
Habitat Plans	Parker Mountain Habitat Management Plan Henry Mountains Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat Management Plan Antimony Habitat Management Plan
Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Plans	Maguire Daisy Recovery Plan, 1995 Mexican Spotted Owl Recovery Plan, 1995 Utah Reed-Mustards Recovery Plan, 1994

Plan Types	Specific Plans
	Last Chance Townsendia Recovery Plan, 1993 Northern States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan, 1983 Wright Fishhook Cactus Recovery Plan, 1985 Southwest Willow Flycatcher Recovery Plan, 2001 Utah Prairie Dog Recovery Plan, 1991 Utah Prairie Dog Interim Conservation Strategy, 1997 Central Utah Navajo Sandstone Endemics Conservation Agreement, 2006 Conservation Agreement and Strategy for the Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, 1997 Conservation Agreement for the Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, 2006 Range-Wide Conservation Agreement for Roundtail Chub <i>Gila robusta</i> , Bluehead Sucker <i>Catostomus discobolus</i> , and Flannelmouth Sucker <i>Catostomus latipinnis</i> , 2004 Conservation Strategy and Agreement for the Management of Northern Goshawk Habitat in Utah, 1999
BLM Programmatic Environmental Analyses	Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Oil Shale and Tar Sands Leasing West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS Utah Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire and Fuels Management, 2005 Wind Energy Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, 2005 Vegetation Treatments on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report, 2007 Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, 2007 Final Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States and associated Records of Decision, 1991

Consistency with national forest plans is ongoing because three of the four national forests that share boundaries with the RFO are revising their LUPs. In developing their respective management plans, the USFS and BLM have coordinated OHV area and route designations, potential WSR evaluations, and other resources of mutual concern.

1.7.2 Energy Policy and Conservation Act

In May 2001, the Bush administration's Comprehensive National Energy Policy was issued. This Policy directed the Secretary of the Interior to do the following:

... examine land status and lease stipulation impediments to Federal oil and gas leasing, and review and modify those where opportunities exist (consistent with the law, good environmental practice and balanced use of other resources).

Under this directive, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management delivered to Congress an inventory of U.S. oil and gas resources in five western basins, as well as a description of

the extent and nature of any restrictions or impediments to their development. This report was prepared at the request of Congress under the provisions of the 2000 Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA).

In April 2003, the BLM Washington Office (WO) issued an Instruction Memorandum (IM No. 2003-233) which requires the integration of EPCA inventory results in the land use planning process. The IM establishes direction, consistent with FLPMA, to enhance BLM's ability to protect the environment and other resources, as well as facilitates energy development, where appropriate. The IM outlines strategy for integrating the EPCA inventory results into land use plans, restates BLM's commitment to providing responsible and balanced access to the public lands for energy exploration and development; and reinforces BLM's obligation to monitor and adaptively manage public lands and resources.

In August 2005, the Bush administration's national energy plan was issued which encourages energy efficiency and conservation, promotes alternative and renewable energy sources, reduces our dependence on foreign sources of energy, increases domestic production, modernizes the electricity grid, and encourages the expansion of nuclear energy.

1.7.3 Tar Sands and Oil Shale Resources Programmatic EIS

The RFO contains areas of tar sands resources. These resources have been and are available for lease under the Combined Hydrocarbon Leasing Act of 1981 and in accordance with the decisions in the existing BLM LUPs.

The major tar sand resources lay only in Utah, within 11 designated Special Tar Sands Areas (STSA) managed by the BLM's Vernal, Price, Richfield, and Monticello Field Offices (FO). The RFO manages one of these STSAs. One of these STSAs lies within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument where leasing is prohibited.

When the Richfield RMP was initiated in 2001, there was no reasonably foreseeable development expectation for tar sands over the life of the plan. The mineral report identified these resources but did not foresee any leasing or development because of prevailing and anticipated economic factors.

Since the start of this RMP revision, Congress has enacted the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Section 369 of the Energy Policy Act requires the Secretary of the Interior to "complete a programmatic environmental impact statement for a commercial leasing program for oil shale and tar sands resources on public lands, with an emphasis on the most geologically prospective lands within each of the States of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming." On December 13, 2005, the BLM published an NOI in the *Federal Register*, initiating a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to support a commercial oil shale and tar sands leasing program on federal lands in those three states. Since that time, the scope of the PEIS has been revised. The BLM is no longer using the PEIS as the document that supports the NEPA requirements for leasing. Given that the development technologies for in-situ production of oil shale are just emerging, there is a lack of information regarding resource use and associated impacts. Consequently, the BLM has changed this document to a resource allocation document that identifies the BLM-managed lands for which applications to lease oil shale and tar sands resources would be accepted in the future. However, although applications would be accepted, additional NEPA analysis would be performed before any leasing of the area would be considered.

All decisions related to land use planning decisions (i.e., regarding areas open to application for potential leasing) for tar sands resources in this RMP will be made in accordance with the ongoing PEIS for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Resources. The ROD on the Final PEIS will amend the PRMP/FEIS by making land use planning decisions based on whether or not lands will be available for future application, leasing, and

development of tar sands on public lands for those areas where the resource is present. Additional site-specific NEPA analysis would be completed on each lease application before any leases would be issued.

As part of the site-specific NEPA analysis, the environmental consequences of specific resource values and uses within the areas and any alternative actions would be analyzed. Any decision to offer the lands for lease would be based on a full disclosure of the impacts. If a decision were made to offer the lands for lease, specific mitigation measures would be developed to ensure that the commercial operations use practices that minimize or mitigate impacts.

This pre-leasing NEPA analysis would include the same opportunities for public involvement and comment that are part of this PEIS process and every other land use planning and NEPA process that the BLM undertakes. The decisions associated with the PEIS will be incorporated into the RFO RMP as it is finalized, or the RFO RMP will be amended. Additional opportunities for public involvement and comment will occur when the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final PEIS is available.

However, this RMP will develop allocation decisions for conventional oil and gas leasing and the Combined Hydrocarbon Leases (CHL) in the STSAs.

1.7.4 West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS

Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (designation of west-wide energy corridors) is being implemented through the current development of an interagency PEIS. The PEIS will address numerous energy corridor-related issues, including the utilization of existing corridors (i.e., enhancements and upgrades), identification of new corridors, supply and demand considerations, and compatibility with other corridor and project planning efforts. It is likely that the identification of corridors in the PEIS will affect the RFO, and the decisions in the Approved PEIS will be carried forward into the Approved RMP, or, depending on timing, the PEIS will amend the RFO RMP.

1.7.5 Utah Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire and Fuels Management

The decisions that were reached through the *Utah Land Use Plan Amendment for Fire and Fuels Management* process, approved in September 2005, are common to all alternatives, and the analysis is incorporated by reference. The fire plan amendment does the following:

- Establishes landscape-level fire management goals and objectives
- Describes desired wildland fire conditions (DWFC) by Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) and describes the management strategies and actions to meet DWFC and land use allocations
- Describes areas in which fire may be restored to the ecosystem through wildland fire use for resource benefit and areas in which wildland fire use is not appropriate
- Identifies criteria that would be used for establishing fire management priorities
- Identifies maximum burned areas and treatment acres for wildfire, wildland fire use for resource benefit, prescribed fire treatments, non-fire fuel treatments, and emergency stabilization and rehabilitation (ESR) actions

1.7.6 Wind Energy Programmatic EIS

The ROD for the *Wind Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*, which implements a comprehensive wind energy development program to administer the development of wind energy resources on BLM-administered public lands in 11 western states (including Utah), was approved

in December 2005. The decisions that were reached through the Wind Energy Development PEIS process are common to all alternatives in the RFO RMP, and the analysis is incorporated by reference. The decision established policies and best management practices (BMP) for the administration of wind energy development activities and established minimum requirements for mitigation measures.