

# **COLORADO RIVER VALLEY FIELD OFFICE**

## **ROAN PLATEAU PLANNING AREA**

Including Naval Oil Shale Reserves Numbers 1 & 3

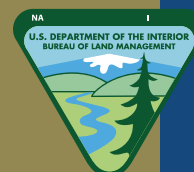
**Record of Decision and**

**Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment**

**BLM/CO/PL-17/002**



**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Colorado State Office**



**NOVEMBER 2016**



# **BLM's Mission**

To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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**Record of Decision**  
**and**  
**Approved**  
**Resource Management Plan Amendment**  
**for the**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Roan Plateau Planning Area**  
**Colorado River Valley Field Office and**  
**White River Field Office**

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**BLM/CO/PL-17/002**

**Prepared by:**

**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Colorado River Valley Field Office**  
**Silt, Colorado**

**Cooperating Agencies:**

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Colorado Parks and Wildlife**  
**Garfield County**  
**Mesa County**  
**Rio Blanco County**  
**Town of Parachute**  
**City of Rifle**

**November 2016**

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# United States Department of the Interior



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In Reply Refer To:  
1610 (CO-910)

NOV 14 2016

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is pleased to announce that after several years of hard work and collaboration the Roan Plateau Planning Area Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (Approved RMPA) is complete. The Approved RMPA amends the existing Resource Management Plans for the Glenwood Springs Resource Area and White River Resource Area and will provide guidance for the management of approximately 73,600 acres of Federal land administered by the BLM in Garfield and Rio Blanco counties.

The enclosed Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved RMPA have been prepared in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The approval of this ROD serves as the final decision for all land use planning and implementation decisions described in the enclosed Roan Plateau Planning Area Approved RMPA.

The Proposed RMP/Final Supplemental EIS was subject to a 30-day protest period that ended on August 1, 2016. No protest letters were received. The 60-day Governor's consistency review period for the Proposed RMP/Final EIS, to ensure consistency with State government plans or policies, concluded August 30, 2016. The Governor did not identify any inconsistencies with State government plans or policies.

The ROD and Approved RMPA are available at:

[https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa\\_register.do](https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do). Limited printed copies or CD copies may be obtained from the Colorado River Valley Field Office, 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO 81652, or by calling (970) 876-9000.

The BLM greatly appreciates all those who contributed to the completion of the Roan Plateau Planning Area Approved RMPA particularly our cooperating agencies, which include Federal, state and local governments and Native American tribes. The extensive public interest and involvement in this planning process has ensured that the Approved RMPA will sustain the health, diversity and productivity of BLM lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Sincerely,

Ruth Welch  
Colorado State Director

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADH	all designated habitat
AMP	Allotment Management Plan
BAR	Burned Area Rehabilitation
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CARPP	Comprehensive Air Resource Protection Protocol
CDOW	Colorado Division of Wildlife
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Colorado
COA	Condition of Approval
CPW	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
CRCT	Colorado River cutthroat trout
CRVFO	Colorado River Valley Field Office
CSU	Controlled Surface Use
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	[U.S.] Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESR	Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
FRCC	Fire Regime Condition Class
FSEIS	Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
GHMA	General Habitat Management Area
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRSG	Greater Sage-Grouse
GSRA	Glenwood Springs Resource Area
I-70	Interstate 70
LUP	Land Use Plan
LUPA	Land Use Plan Amendment

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MDP	Master Development Plan
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MZ	management zone
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGD	No Ground Disturbance
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOSR	Naval Oil Shale Reserve
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NSO	No Surface Occupancy
OHV	off-highway vehicle
ORV	outstandingly remarkable values
PDF	Preferred Design Feature
PFC	Proper Functioning Condition
PFYC	Potential Fossil Yield Classification
PHMA	Priority Habitat Management Area
Planning Area	Roan Plateau Planning Area
RDF	Required Design Feature
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RMPA	Resource Management Plan Amendment
Roan RMPA/FEIS	Final Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	right-of-way
SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
SRP	Special Recreation Permit
SSR	Site-Specific Relocation
T&E	threatened and endangered
TL	Timing Limitation



## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TMA	Travel Management Area
TMP	travel and transportation management planning
Transfer Act	National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998
U.S.C.	U. S. Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WMA	Watershed Management Area
WRFO	White River Field Office
WRRRA	White River Resource Area
WSA	Wilderness Study Area
WSR	Wild and Scenic River

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (Approved RMPA) for the Roan Plateau Planning Area (Planning Area), prepared by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) in Silt, Colorado. The Approved RMPA covers the entire 73,800-acre Planning Area and amends the existing Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the Glenwood Springs Resource Area (GSRA) and White River Resource Area (WRRRA). BLM has prepared this ROD and Approved RMPA in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

### Plan Foundation

A Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) was needed to address the 73,800 acres of lands for which management was transferred to BLM from the U.S. Department of Energy via the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-85, 111 Stat. 1629 (1997) (Transfer Act). The 73,800 acres of Federal lands in the Planning Area include 55,354 acres in Naval Oil Shale Reserves (NOSRs) Numbers 1 and 3. Since the Transfer Act, the NOSRs have been the subject of a coordinated planning process and are currently managed by direction provided by the 1997 WRRRA RMP and the 1984 GSRA RMP, revised in 1988 and amended in 1991, 1996, 1997, 1999, and 2002. The GSRA RMP, as amended, was replaced by the CRVFO RMP in July 2015. However, the CRVFO RMP does not address the Planning Area.

The Glenwood Springs Field Office, now the CRVFO, began development of the RMPA for the Planning Area with a Notice of Intent (NOI) and public scoping in November 2000. The Draft RMPA/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was published in November 2004. The Final RMPA/EIS (FEIS) was published in August 2006 (Roan RMPA/FEIS). The 2006 Roan RMPA/FEIS analyzed options for implementing the Transfer Act, which directed BLM to enter into leases, as soon as practicable, with one or more private entities for the purpose of exploration, development, and production of petroleum. In addition, the Transfer Act stipulated that the transferred lands be managed in accordance with FLPMA and other laws applicable to public lands. FLPMA requires the preparation of land use plans for public lands. The RMPA established management prescriptions, resource objectives, and land use allocations for the Planning Area.

Following publication of the 2006 Roan RMPA/FEIS, BLM issued two RODs, the first in June 2007 (2007 ROD), which included management decisions for the majority of resources in the Planning Area, and the second in March 2008 (2008 ROD), which pertained to Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) only.

A lawsuit was filed in July 2008 that challenged BLM's oil and gas leasing and management decisions for the Roan Plateau. On June 22, 2012, the U.S. District Court issued a decision, *Colorado Environmental Coalition v. Salazar*, 875 F. Supp. 2d 1233 (D. Colo. 2012) (Judicial Order), that upheld BLM's interpretation of the Transfer Act and its consideration of a No Leasing Alternative. However, the Judicial Order set aside the Roan RMPA/FEIS, including provisions for leasing for oil and gas, and remanded the matter to BLM for further action to address noted issues. Because the court set aside the RMPA, no land use plan existed for the Planning Area at that point.

In view of the Court's ruling, BLM determined that a supplemental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and a new RMPA, were warranted. This analysis considered information and alternatives that were analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS, supplemented with additional analyses to address issues identified in the Judicial Order and through internal and external scoping for the Supplemental EIS (SEIS). Major issues raised by the Judicial Order, agencies, and public scoping included specific alternatives, air resources and air quality, management for Greater Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), Wild and Scenic River (WSR) eligibility, oil and gas leasing and development, socioeconomics, management of lands with wilderness characteristics, ecological resources, water resources, and riparian habitat and wetlands.

In 2014, during litigation subsequent to the Judicial Order, BLM and other parties entered a Settlement Agreement (*Conservation Colorado Education Fund v. Jewell*, Nos. 12-1322, -1339 (10th Cir. Nov. 19, 2014)). In the Settlement Agreement, BLM agreed to consider an alternative that included closing certain lands on top of the plateau to new oil and gas leasing while keeping other lands in the Planning Area open for leasing, exploration, and development subject to certain conditions.

BLM issued an NOI to prepare an SEIS associated with the development of the RMPA for the Planning Area on January 28, 2013. The NOI identified the need for the RMPA/SEIS and provided information about the Planning Area and the future planning process, preliminary planning issues and criteria in the resource area, and contact information. The NOI also initiated a 90-day scoping period, which closed on March 30, 2013.

Beginning on November 17, 2015, the Roan Draft RMPA/SEIS document, including maps and appendices, was available for download from the BLM project website. BLM published the Notice of Availability of the Draft RMPA/SEIS in the *Federal Register* on November 20, 2015. Following a 90-day comment period, BLM finalized the Proposed RMPA/Final SEIS (FSEIS), which was released to the public on July 1, 2016. The 30-day protest period ended August 1, 2016.

This Approved RMPA was developed with input from the following Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; State of Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Garfield County, Colorado; Rio Blanco County, Colorado; Mesa County, Colorado; Town of Parachute, Colorado; and the City of Rifle, Colorado.

## **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of amending the existing RMPs for the Planning Area was to provide an integrated land use plan that guides future site-specific analysis and decisions in accordance with specific goals and objectives based on the direction provided by laws, mandates, policies, and plans. The complete purpose and need for this Approved RMPA/FSEIS is described fully in Section 1.1.1, Purpose and Need for the RMPA, of the ROD.

The need for the SEIS was established by the Judicial Order, which set aside the Roan RMPA/FEIS and remanded the matter to BLM to more fully address three issues:

1. The “Community Alternative” that various local governments, environmental organizations, and individual members of the public recommended;
2. The cumulative air quality impacts of the RMPA decision in conjunction with anticipated oil and gas development on private lands outside the Planning Area; and
3. Potential ozone impacts from proposed oil and gas development.

The SEIS for this process addressed the information and alternatives analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS, supplemented with additional analyses in response to the Judicial Order and new issues raised in the scoping process for this SEIS. In addition, BLM’s NEPA Handbook H-1790-1 directs BLM to consider any significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its effects. These new circumstances and information are integrated into this Approved RMPA, including the following:

- Significant new data;
- Changed resource conditions;
- Changed regulatory status (e.g., threatened and endangered [T&E] species status) or other new regulations; and
- Changes in use of public land that occurred since the Roan RMPA/FEIS and other associated management/ activity plans were completed.

### **Management Alternatives**

Management alternatives and associated environmental impacts were analyzed as part of the requirements for the 2006 Roan Proposed RMPA/FEIS and 2016 Roan Proposed RMPA/FSEIS pursuant to NEPA. The five alternatives that were analyzed in the 2006 Roan RMPA/FEIS and the four analyzed in the 2016 Roan RMPA/FSEIS represented possible amendments to the current management of the Planning Area. They reflected a reasonable range of potential future land use and resource management scenarios based on information received as part of the public scoping process. Scoping input was received from BLM staff, other resource or land management agencies, local governments, individual citizens, environmental groups, industry, and other interested parties.

The five alternatives analyzed in the previous planning process for the 2006 Roan RMPA/FEIS process are summarized below.

#### **▪ Alternative I – No Action Alternative**

This alternative represented the No Action Alternative required by NEPA. This represented no change from current management.

#### **▪ Alternative II**

Alternative II was designated as the most environmentally protective alternative in the Roan RMPA/FEIS and placed a greater emphasis on protective restrictions and management actions aimed at preserving or improving sensitive resource values than the other alternatives. This alternative accommodated some oil and gas development above and below the rim. Four ACECs would have been designated and three areas having wilderness character would have been managed to protect and maintain wilderness characteristics. Streams and stream corridors found

to be suitable would have been recommended for addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System. Finally, under this alternative, other resources would have been managed to protect their ecological and visual character, and a Special Recreation Management Area for off-highway vehicles on Hubbard Mesa would have been designated.

- **Alternative III – The Preferred Alternative**

The Roan RMPA/FEIS Preferred Alternative emphasized multiple resource use in the Planning Area. The most important ecological values would have been protected through the development of management prescriptions intended to limit surface disturbance, implement active management, and mitigate effects of resource development. Also included in this alternative were management actions to meet Land Health Standards on a landscape basis. Under this alternative, two ACECs would have been designated, a Watershed Management Area (WMA) would have been designated for the entire portion of the Parachute Creek drainage atop the plateau, less than 10,000 acres would have been managed to protect naturalness and roadlessness, and some streams and stream corridors found to be eligible for WSR designation would have been managed to maintain that eligibility until a suitability decision was made. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing, but lands above the rim would only be leased after a specified threshold of development below the rim had been reached. (Note: “the rim” is the line that represents the visible edge on top of the south-facing Roan Cliffs).

- **Alternative IV**

Alternative IV also emphasized multiple resource use in the Planning Area. Under this alternative, the most important ecological values would have been protected through the development of management prescriptions intended to limit surface disturbance, implement active management, and mitigate effects of resource development. This alternative also included management actions to meet Land Health Standards on a landscape basis. Under this alternative, two ACECs would have been designated, a WMA for Trapper/Northwater Creek would have been designated to protect Colorado River cutthroat trout, and some streams and stream corridors found to be eligible for WSR designation would have been managed to maintain that eligibility until a suitability decision was made. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing.

- **Alternative V**

Alternative V accommodated energy and other non-renewable resource development throughout the Planning Area. This alternative would have permitted ecological values and biological diversity to be modified by ground-disturbing activities related to resource development. Under this alternative, key resources would have been protected on a site-specific basis through active management and mitigation to meet legal requirements and Land Health Standards. No ACECs or WMAs would have been designated, and WSR-eligible streams and stream corridors would not have been recommended for designation as WSRs. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing.

The four alternatives analyzed in the 2016 Approved RMPA/FSEIS process are summarized below.

- **Alternative I** was the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative represents management of the Planning Area prior to the 2007 and 2008 RODs for the Roan RMPA/FEIS. Therefore, it was essentially the same No Action Alternative that was analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS.

- **Alternative II** was the Roan RMPA/FEIS Proposed Plan Alternative. This alternative provided for management of a full array of multiple-use activities as under the 2006 Proposed RMPA/FEIS. The overarching goal of Alternative II was to protect key ecological, visual, and recreational values while allowing for the leasing and subsequent development of oil and gas resources under strict performance-based standards. Under this alternative, no BLM surface would be closed to oil and gas leasing. Leasing decisions would allow for future phased and clustered oil and gas development under a unitization scenario with limits on un-reclaimed surface disturbance.
- **Alternative III**, the Community Alternative, was developed in response to public comment on the Draft RMPA/EIS in 2005, as well as public scoping comments for the RMPA/SEIS in 2013. Where public comments suggesting the Community Alternative and scoping were silent as to specific resource management, these management actions were the same as those presented for Alternative II. In accordance with public comments, no BLM surface in the Planning Area would be closed to oil and gas leasing under this alternative, but surface disturbance on BLM lands above the rim would be limited.
- **Alternative IV** was titled the Settlement Alternative, and it was BLM's Preferred Alternative. The terms of the Settlement Agreement formed the basis for Alternative IV. Under this alternative, approximately 1,830 acres above the plateau rim and 30,170 acres below the rim would be open to oil and gas leasing and development (32,000 acres). Approximately 34,780 acres of BLM surface land would be closed to oil and gas leasing. Above the rim, lands available for oil and gas leasing and development would be subject to the same stipulations as those prescribed by the 2007 ROD (and contained in leases issued for those lands in 2008), except as modified by the terms and conditions detailed under Exhibit 2 of the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I). These include specific limits on the number of well pads to be allowed, maximum surface disturbance per well pad, timing/phasing of well pad construction, allowable access roads, colocation of associated infrastructure, and development of a Master Development Plan (MDP). Below the rim, lands available for oil and gas leasing and development would be subject to the same stipulations as those prescribed by the 2007 ROD (and contained in leases issued for those lands in 2008), except as modified by the terms and conditions detailed under Exhibit 3 of the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I). These specify that a proposed MDP must be submitted prior to exploration and/or lease development so as to include consultation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Where the Settlement Agreement is silent on the management of specific resources and resource uses, these management actions are the same as those presented under Alternative II.

## Environmental Consequences

Impacts of land use and resource management actions on the physical, biological, human, and management environments of the Planning Area for each of five alternatives were analyzed in detail in the Roan RMPA/FEIS and for four alternatives in the Approved RMPA/FSEIS. The analysis of environmental consequences for an RMPA includes the impacts of specific alternative management scenarios for every resource or resource use, both on that specific resource or resource use and on all other resources and resource uses. These impacts are categorized as direct and indirect onsite impacts, offsite impacts, and cumulative impacts. Some types of impacts for resources or resource uses could be confined to BLM lands (such as specific disturbances to vegetation from rangeland improvement projects). Some actions may have offsite/indirect impacts on resources on Federal mineral estate (such as oil and gas, and requirements to protect such resources as special status species and cultural resources from such activity), or other land jurisdictions (e.g., private or State holdings).

To enable comparison with the Roan RMPA/FEIS being supplemented, the impact analysis in the Approved RMPA/FSEIS integrated a qualitative approach for summarizing impacts to specific resources and resource uses. Each category of potential impacts ranged in degrees of beneficial or adverse; these categories (negligible, minor, moderate, and major), applied to both beneficial and adverse impacts, allowed for a relative comparison of impacts for each resource or resource use, by alternative. A comparison of general impact levels from management of specific resources under the four alternatives, as a range for each resource or resource use, was summarized, from the most beneficial to the most adverse, under each alternative.

This is the decision document for the Approved RMPA/FSEIS process for the Planning Area. The first chapter of this document comprises the ROD, which documents the approval of the Approved RMPA. Chapter 2 details the Approved RMPA, which provides overall direction for management of all resources on BLM lands and Federal mineral estate within the Planning Area. The Approved RMPA integrates the supplemental analyses required by the Judicial Order, as well as new significant resource information and revised maps and tables, based on updated geospatial data, since publication of the 2007 and 2008 RODs.



## **CHAPTER 1**

# **RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE ROAN PLATEAU PLANNING AREA APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**



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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document is the Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment (Approved RMPA) for the Roan Plateau Planning Area (Planning Area), prepared by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO) in Silt, Colorado. The Approved RMPA covers the entire 73,800-acre Planning Area and amends the existing Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the Glenwood Springs Resource Area (GSRA) and White River Resource Area (WRRRA). BLM has prepared this ROD and Approved RMPA in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

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The Glenwood Springs Field Office, now the CRVFO, began development of the RMPA for the Planning Area with a Notice of Intent (NOI) and public scoping in November 2000. The Draft RMPA/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was published in November 2004. The Final RMPA/EIS (Roan RMPA/FEIS) was published in August 2006. The Roan RMPA/FEIS analyzed options for implementing the Transfer Act, which directed BLM to enter into leases, as soon as practicable, with one or more private entities for the purpose of exploration, development and production of petroleum. In addition, the Transfer Act stipulated that the transferred lands be managed in accordance with FLPMA and other laws applicable to public lands. FLPMA requires the preparation of land use plans for public lands. The RMPA established management prescriptions, resource objectives, and land use allocations for the Planning Area.

Following publication of the Roan RMPA/FEIS, BLM issued two RODs, the first in June 2007, which included management decisions for the majority of resources in the Planning Area, and the second in March 2008, which pertained to Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) only.

A lawsuit was filed in July 2008 that challenged the BLM's oil and gas leasing and management decisions for the Roan Plateau. On June 22, 2012, the U.S. District Court issued a decision, *Colorado Environmental Coalition v. Salazar*, 875 F. Supp. 2d 1233 (D. Colo. 2012) (Judicial Order) that upheld BLM's interpretation of the Transfer Act and its consideration of a No Leasing Alternative. However, the Judicial Order set aside the Roan RMPA/FEIS, including provisions for leasing for oil and gas, and remanded the matter to BLM for further action to address noted issues. Because the court set aside the RMPA, no land use plan existed for the Planning Area at that point.

In view of the Court's ruling, BLM determined that a supplemental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and a new RMPA, were warranted. This analysis considered information and alternatives that were analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS, supplemented with additional analyses to address issues identified in the Judicial Order and through internal and external scoping for a Supplemental EIS (SEIS). Major issues raised by the Judicial Order, agencies, and public scoping included specific alternatives, air resources and air quality, management for Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG;

*Centrocercus urophasianus*), Wild and Scenic River (WSR) eligibility, oil and gas leasing and development, socioeconomics, management of lands with wilderness characteristics, ecological resources, water resources, and riparian habitat and wetlands.

In 2014, during litigation subsequent to the Judicial Order, BLM and other parties entered into a Settlement Agreement (*Conservation Colorado Education Fund v. Jewell*, Nos. 12-1322, -1339 (10th Cir. Nov. 19, 2014)). As part of this agreement, BLM agreed to consider an alternative that included closing certain lands on top of the plateau to new oil and gas leasing while keeping other lands in the Planning Area open for leasing, exploration, and development subject to certain conditions.

As part of the Settlement Agreement, BLM cancelled 17 leases held by Bill Barrett Corporation. BLM prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed cancellation, and after the leases were cancelled, the lessees were reimbursed rent and bonus bids paid for the leases. Environmental impacts of this action were disclosed in an EA DOI-BLM-CO-N040-2015-0023: Cancellation of 17 Federal Oil and Gas Leases in the Roan Plateau Planning Area, Garfield County, Colorado.

### **1.1.1 Purpose and Need for the RMPA**

The purpose of amending the existing RMPs for the Planning Area is to provide an integrated plan that guides future site-specific analysis and decisions in accordance with the following goals and objectives:

- Implement BLM’s mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations;
- Facilitate management of the natural resources of the Planning Area for multiple use and sustained yield, recognizing that the mix of permitted and allowable uses will vary from area to area and over time;
- Comply with the provisions of the Transfer Act, which transferred approximately 56,540 acres within NOSRs 1 and 3 to BLM from the Department of Energy; and
- Ensure a consistent, coordinated approach to managing lands within the Planning Area.

To achieve these goals, BLM has conducted the following actions and integrated the results into the RMPA:

- Identified desired outcomes, allowable uses, and management actions that restore and maintain the health of the land; preserve natural and cultural heritage; reduce threats to public health, safety, and property; and provide for environmentally responsible recreational and commercial activities;
- Evaluated the need for designation of ACECs for areas that contain resource values that meet BLM’s criteria for relevant and important values;
- Evaluated the need for designation of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), Watershed Management Areas (WMAs), and Back Country Byways;
- Evaluated management to protect wilderness characteristics;
- Established plan-level travel designations that replace interim travel designations on transferred lands and affirm or change travel designations on lands in the remainder of the Planning Area;

- Established conservation measures for all species listed as threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, or BLM sensitive. Species listed as BLM sensitive are designed to prevent the need for listing additional species. Conservation measures are designed to prevent the need for listing of additional species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to improve the condition of all special status species and their habitats to a point where their special status recognition is no longer warranted. (See August 30, 2000, Interagency Memorandum of Agreement for Programmatic ESA Section 7 Consultation and BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Management);
- Applied BLM Rangeland Health Standards (BLM Manual 4180-1) to recommendations and information from land health assessments to develop direction that enhances or restores physical function and biological health and achieves Land Health Standards at the watershed scale;
- Recognized valid existing rights, including oil and gas leases, mineral leases, mining claims, and rights-of-way (ROWs); and
- Integrated the management of the Planning Area with the GSRA and WRRRA by applying management techniques that are successful in other portions of these areas.

The goals and objectives of the Approved RMPA are based on the direction provided by numerous laws, mandates, policies, and plans, including:

- NEPA;
- FLPMA;
- Transfer Act;
- Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended;
- Energy Policy Act of 2005;
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended;
- Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing and Reform Act of 1987;
- ESA, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and other environmental laws;
- BLM Planning Regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1600);
- BLM Grazing Administration Regulations (43 CFR 4100);
- BLM Land Use Planning Handbook, H-1601-1, updated January 5, 2001 and March 11, 2005;
- BLM Manual 1601 (Land Use Planning);
- BLM Manual 1613 (ACECs);
- BLM Manual 6840 (Special Status Species Management); and

- BLM Manual 4180 (Rangeland Land Health Standards).

This RMPA was needed to address 73,800 acres of lands for which management was transferred to BLM from the Department of Energy. A supplemental NEPA analysis of the RMPA, in the form of an SEIS, was needed to respond to a Judicial Order, which set aside the RMPA and remanded the matter to BLM to more fully address three issues:

1. The “Community Alternative” that various local governments, environmental organizations, and individual members of the public recommended;
2. The cumulative air quality impacts of the RMPA decision in conjunction with anticipated oil and gas development on private lands outside the Planning Area; and
3. Potential ozone impacts from proposed oil and gas development.

This ROD addresses the information and alternatives analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS, supplemented with additional analyses in response to the Judicial Order.

In accordance with BLM’s NEPA Handbook H-1790-1, BLM must address significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its effects (40 CFR 1502.9(c)(1)(ii)). The new circumstances and information integrated into these documents includes the following:

- Significant new data;
- Changed resource conditions;
- Changed regulatory status (e.g., threatened and endangered [T&E] species status) or other new regulations; and
- Changes in use of public land that occurred since the Roan RMPA/FEIS and other associated management/activity plans were completed.

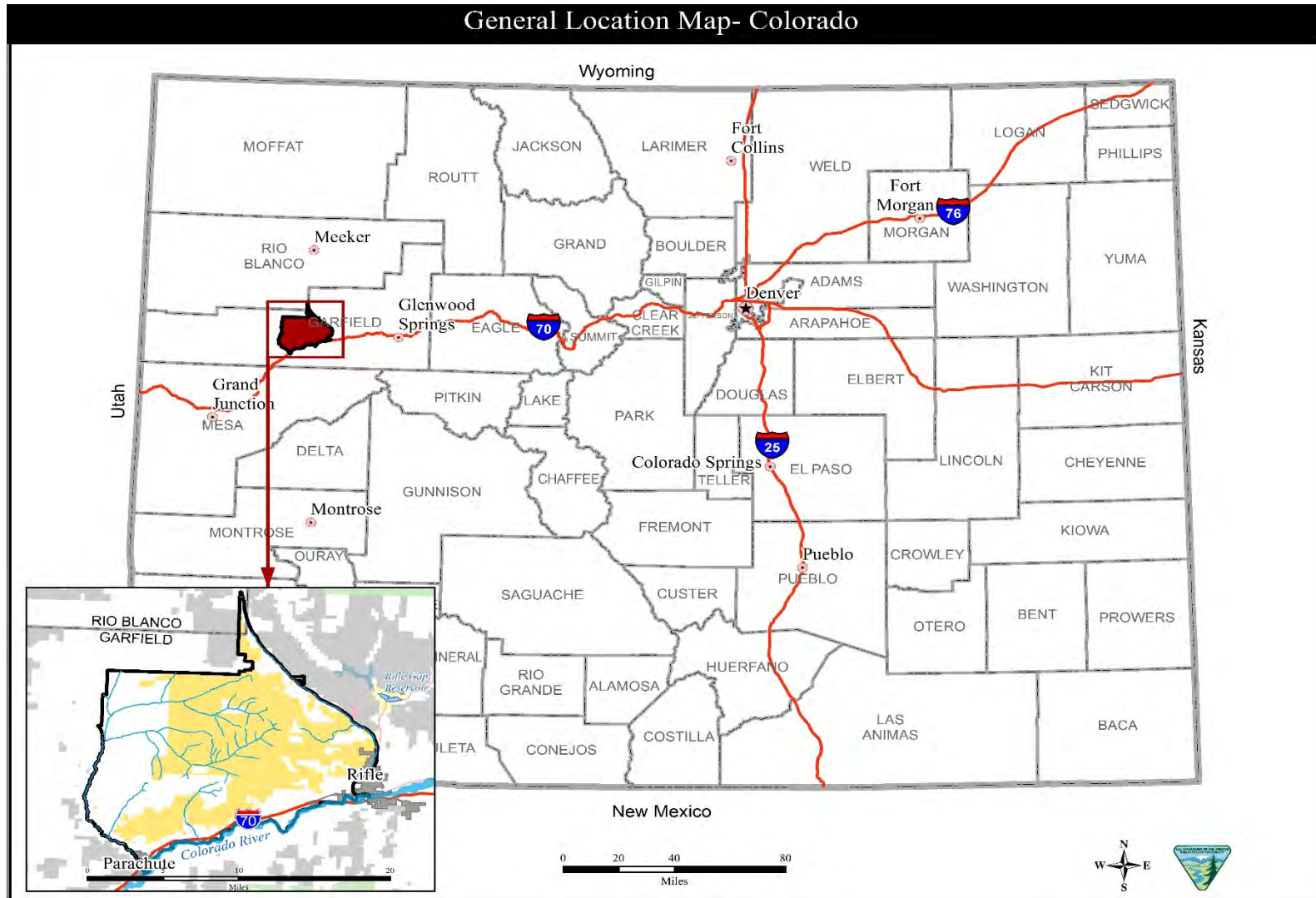
### **1.1.2 Lands within the Roan Plateau Planning Area Resource Management Plan Administrative Boundary**

BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area include 73,800 acres of public lands within the CRVFO, mostly in Garfield County, Colorado. The Planning Area is generally bounded on the east by State Highway 13, on the south by the Colorado River, on the west by Parachute Creek, and on the north by the line between Township 4 South and Township 5 South of the Sixth Principal Meridian. The Planning Area comprises 66,780 acres with BLM surface and minerals (including 4,730 acres managed by the White River Field Office [WRFO]) and 7,020 acres with private surface and Federal minerals (Figure 1.2). A small area in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area extends into Rio Blanco County (Figure 1.1). The proportion of public land is higher on top of the plateau (65 percent) than below the rim.

Although the Planning Area includes both BLM and non-BLM lands, the Approved RMPA applies only to public lands administered by BLM. “Public lands” in this context include lands with a split estate (i.e., private surface but Federal minerals), although BLM management authority on these lands is limited to activities (both surface and subsurface) related to exploration and development of the mineral estates.

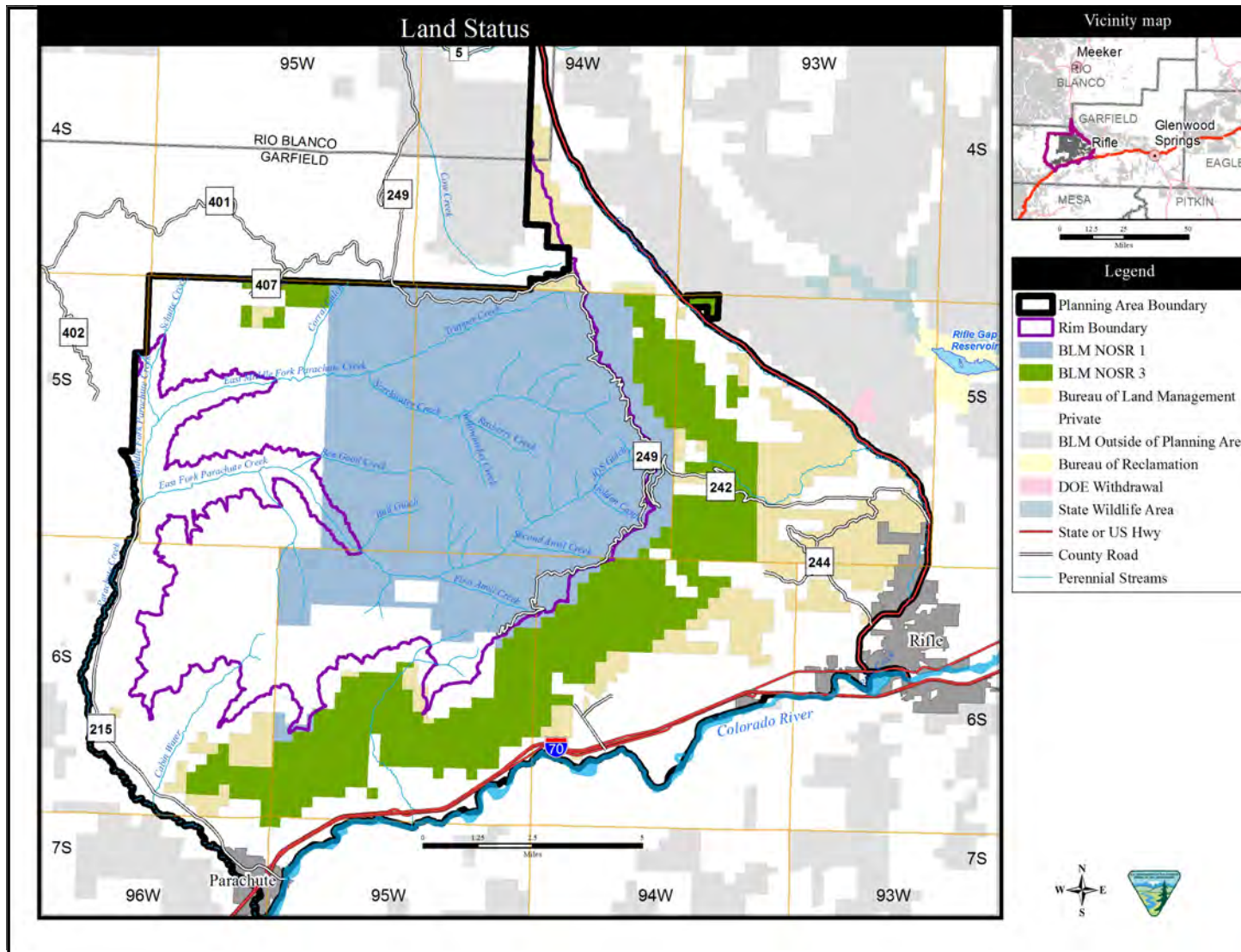
Figures 1.2 and 1.3 show the location of the line used to differentiate areas referred to as lying “above the rim” or “atop the plateau” versus “below the rim” or “below the cliffs.” This distinction is important for the Planning Area because of the very different resources and existing land uses associated with these two topographically and ecologically disparate areas. Note that, as shown on Figure 1.2, this line (“the rim”) is not present along the northern edge of the Planning Area, which is separated from adjacent lands to the north by a gradual slope rather than a sheer escarpment.

**Figure 1-1**  
**General Location Map**  
**Roan Plateau Planning Area**  
**ROD/Approved RMPA**

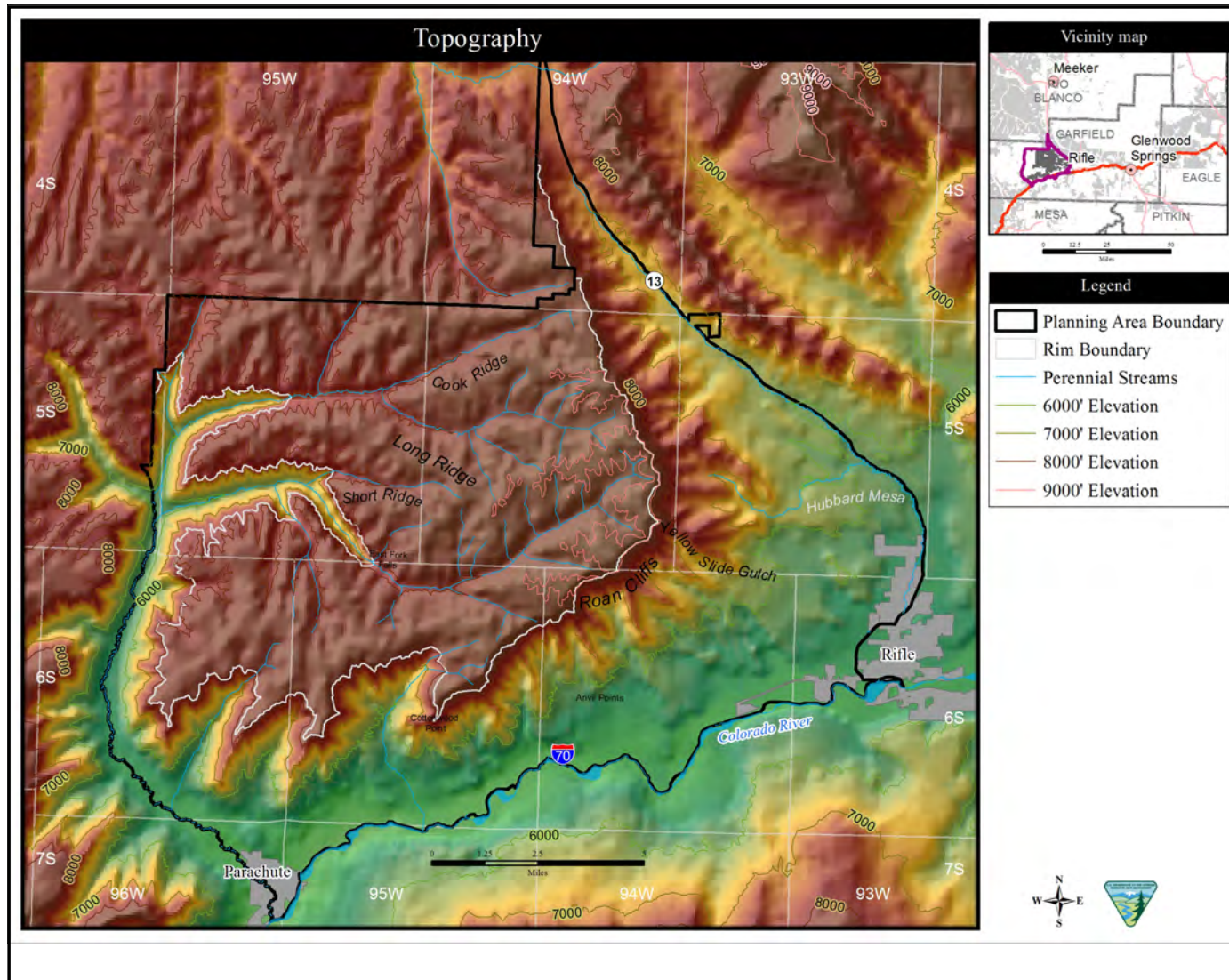




**Figure 1-2  
Land Status  
Roan Plateau Planning Area  
ROD/Approved RMPA**



**Figure 1-3**  
**General Roan Plateau Planning Area**  
**View with Topography**  
**ROD/Approved RMPA**



## **1.2 ALTERNATIVES**

NEPA requires the development and consideration of a reasonable range of management alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, to analyze impacts and guide decision makers in developing and selecting the Approved RMPA. The following sections discuss the alternatives analyzed during the Roan RMPA/SEIS process, including those in the 2006 Proposed RMPA/FEIS and those in the 2016 Proposed RMPA/FEIS.

### **1.2.1 RMPA/FEIS Process**

The five alternatives analyzed in the Roan 2006 Proposed RMPA/FEIS are summarized below.

#### **Alternative I – No Action Alternative**

This alternative represented the No Action Alternative required by NEPA. This represented no change from current management.

#### **Alternative II**

Alternative II was designated as the most environmentally protective alternative in the Roan RMPA/FEIS and placed a greater emphasis on protective restrictions and management actions aimed at preserving or improving sensitive resource values. This alternative would have accommodated some oil and gas development above and below the rim. Four ACECs would have been designated and three areas having wilderness character would have been managed to protect and maintain wilderness characteristics. Streams and stream corridors found to be suitable would have been recommended for addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System. Finally, under this alternative, other resources would have been managed to protect their ecological and visual character, and an SRMA for off-highway vehicles (OHVs) on Hubbard Mesa would have been designated.

#### **Alternative III – The Preferred Alternative**

The Roan RMPA/FEIS Preferred Alternative emphasized multiple resource use in the Planning Area. The most important ecological values would have been protected through the development of management prescriptions intended to limit surface disturbance, implement active management, and mitigate effects of resource development. This alternative also included management actions to meet Land Health Standards on a landscape basis. Under this alternative, two ACECs would have been designated, a WMA would have been designated for the entire portion of the Parachute Creek drainage atop the plateau, less than 10,000 acres would have been managed to protect naturalness and roadlessness, and some streams and stream corridors found to be eligible for WSR designation would have been managed to maintain that eligibility until a suitability decision was made. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing, but lands above the rim would only be leased after a specified threshold of development below the rim had been reached.

#### **Alternative IV**

Alternative IV also emphasized multiple resource use in the Planning Area. The most important ecological values would have been protected through the development of management prescriptions intended to limit surface disturbance, implement active management, and mitigate effects of resource development. This alternative also included management actions to meet Land Health Standards on a landscape basis. Under this alternative, two ACECs would have been designated, a WMA for Trapper/Northwater Creek would have been designated to protect Colorado River cutthroat trout (CRCT), and some streams and stream corridors found to be eligible for WSR designation would have been

managed to maintain that eligibility until a suitability decision was made. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing.

### **Alternative V**

Alternative V was designed to accommodate energy and other non-renewable resource development throughout the Planning Area. This alternative would have permitted ecological values and biological diversity to be modified by ground-disturbing activities related to resource development. Under this alternative, key resources would have been protected on a site-specific basis through active management, and mitigation to meet legal requirements and Land Health Standards. No ACECs or Watershed Management Areas (WMAs) would have been designated, and WSR-eligible streams and stream corridors would not be recommended for designation as WSRs. All BLM lands would have been open to oil and gas leasing.

### **1.2.2 Draft RMPA/SEIS**

The BLM planning team reviewed the issues raised during scoping for the RMPA/SEIS with the public, other agencies, and within BLM. Based on the Analysis of the Management Situation, Judicial Order, planning criteria, goals and objectives of the RMPA, and the Settlement Agreement, four alternatives were formulated for detailed analysis in the Draft SEIS. These four alternatives were selected to represent a reasonable range of implementable alternatives, as well as to respond to the Judicial Order and comply with the Settlement Agreement. The alternatives integrated management of the CRVFO and WRFO portions of the Planning Area and considered management techniques that have proven successful in other parts of these resource areas. The alternatives also addressed compliance with FLPMA's multiple use and sustainable yield mandates and the requirements of the Transfer Act. In general, the most substantial differences between alternatives are centered on the respective oil and gas leasing and development scenarios, summarized in Section 1.2.5, Alternatives Considered in Detail. Each alternative represented a complete potential RMPA for the Planning Area.

### **1.2.3 Alternatives Considered in Detail**

The 2006 Proposed RMPA/FSEIS analyzed four alternatives in detail. These alternatives represented four management directions that could be taken to resolve the issues identified through the scoping process. Each action alternative was intended to be consistent with law, regulation, and policy while providing varying levels of compatible resource uses and development opportunities. The alternatives also integrated new and significant resource information and the GRSG management and stipulations from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015). The alternatives developed and analyzed during the planning process reflected a reasonable range of potential management actions. General overviews of each alternative are provided below.

### **Alternative I – No Action Alternative**

This alternative represents the No Action Alternative. Because the 2016 Proposed RMPA/FSEIS supplemented the 2006 Roan Proposed RMPA/FEIS, the No Action Alternative represented management of the Planning Area prior to the 2007 and 2008 RODs for the Roan RMPA/FEIS; that is, essentially the same No Action Alternative that was analyzed in the Roan RMPA/FEIS. This alternative is “no action” in the sense of “no change from prior management.” In general, current uses and conditions would continue. The exceptions relate to resources for which BLM initiated implementation of the 2007 ROD before the Judicial Order was issued. For those resources, the No Action Alternative would require BLM to take certain actions to return to previous conditions. For example, travel management decisions made in the 2007 ROD for NOSRs 1 and 3, restricting OHV travel to designated routes, would be vacated. Similarly, BLM would cancel oil and gas leases issued in 2008 for lands within the Planning Area to return to previous conditions.



## **Alternative II – 2006 Roan FSEIS Proposed Plan Alternative**

This alternative is based on the approved plan adopted as a result of the 2006 Roan RMPA/FEIS, which resulted from BLM's response to public input and the consultation and coordination process. New and significant resource information, GRSG management, and stipulations identified in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015) were integrated into the Roan FEIS Proposed Plan to create this alternative. This alternative also includes minor changes to reflect updated resource mapping and objectives and management strategies consistent with BLM's overall air quality management strategy.

## **Alternative III – Community Alternative, BLM Environmentally Preferred Alternative**

Alternative III, the Community Alternative, was designed, in part, to address specific issues identified in the Judicial Order. This alternative was constructed from public comments received on the Draft RMPA/EIS in 2005, as well as public scoping comments received for the RMPA/SEIS in 2013. In accordance with public comment, this alternative allows oil and gas leasing throughout the Planning Area but limits surface disturbance on BLM lands above the rim. Because it provides for multiple use while creating the least damage to all natural systems, this alternative was considered to be the environmentally preferred alternative. This alternative emphasizes management of lands with wilderness characteristics, and under it all eligible rivers in the Planning Area would be determined to be suitable for designation as WSRs. New and significant resource information, GRSG management and stipulations, and BLM Colorado's air quality strategy were integrated into this alternative. Where public comments and scoping were silent as to other specific resource management, these management actions are the same as Alternative II.

## **Alternative IV – Proposed RMPA**

The terms of the Settlement Agreement formed the basis for Alternative IV. Approximately 1,830 acres above the rim and 30,170 acres below the rim would be open to oil and gas leasing and development. Approximately 28,660 acres above the rim and 6,120 acres below the rim would be closed to oil and gas leasing and development. Above the rim, lands open to oil and gas leasing and development would be subject to the same stipulations as those prescribed by the 2007 ROD (and contained in leases issued for those lands in 2008), except as modified by the terms and conditions detailed under Exhibit 2 of the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I). These include specific limits as to the number of well pads to be allowed, maximum surface disturbance per well pad, timing/phasing of well pad construction, allowable access roads, colocation of associated infrastructure, and development of a Master Development Plan (MDP). Below the rim, lands open to oil and gas leasing and development would be subject to the same stipulations as those prescribed by the 2007 ROD (and contained in leases issued for those lands in 2008), except as modified by the terms and conditions detailed under Exhibit 3 of the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I). These specify that a proposed MDP be submitted prior to exploration and/or lease development so as to include consultation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). Where the Settlement Agreement is silent on the management of specific resources and resource uses, these management actions are the same as those presented under Alternative II.

### **1.2.4 Alternatives Considered, But Not Further Analyzed**

The following alternative components and specific management actions were identified during the scoping process for the 2016 RMPA/SEIS. These were carefully considered but not brought forward for further analysis for several reasons: because they were outside the scope of an RMPA, because they did not meet the purpose and need of the RMPA, or because they contained elements that were sufficiently captured by other alternatives. The following specific alternative components were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis:

- Cancel All Leases on Top of the Plateau;
- Expand ACECs to 40,945 Acres;
- Reevaluate Six Additional ACECs;
- Consider Other ACEC Protections for Sage-Grouse Habitat, Native Trout Streams, and Big Game Winter Range and Migration Corridor;
- A Full Development Alternative with Approximately 3,000 Wells;
- A Conservation Alternative;
- Convert Controlled Surface Use (CSU) in the Parachute Creek Watershed Management Area to a No Surface Occupancy (NSO);
- Separate the Leases Above and Below the Rim (i.e., lease lands transferred to BLM through the Transfer Act through different management actions);
- Cancel All Leases;
- Change Leasing Regulations; and
- Divide the Planning Area into a Checkerboard with Five-year Open and Closed Areas and Progressive Development Requirements.

### **1.2.5 Proposed RMPA/FSEIS**

Based on substantive comments from other governmental agencies and the public on the Draft RMPA/SEIS, BLM prepared a Final SEIS (FSEIS), which included identification of the Proposed RMPA. The basis of the Proposed RMPA was Alternative IV from the Draft RMPA/SEIS.

Alternative III analyzed in the FSEIS was revised in response to comments received on the Draft RMPA/SEIS regarding recreation to include Alternatives III A and III B. Alternative III A specifically applied firearm use restrictions to address one of the more pressing recreation/urban interface issues near the town of Rifle, Colorado, while Alternative III B applied firearm use restrictions to the entire Hubbard Mesa Open OHV Riding Area. Additionally, it was clarified that over snow travel would not be authorized above the rim within lands with wilderness characteristics under Alternative III.

## **1.3 CHANGES MADE BETWEEN THE PROPOSED AND APPROVED RMPA**

The following changes have been made to the Proposed RMPA and are reflected in the Approved RMPA; these changes are not considered significant.

The format and structure of the Proposed RMPA has been changed to present the Approved RMPA as a formal decision document. Each decision is numbered to correspond to the appropriate program and decision type, and to designate whether a specific decision is a goal, objective, or management action/allowable use. Management actions/allowable uses have been re-ordered to facilitate the numbering, as well as readability. An introduction in Section 2.1.1, Decisions, explains the structure of the Approved RMPA. Appendices from the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS are included, as necessary, to support the decisions

in the Approved RMPA. These appendices have been re-formatted, as necessary, for reference only to the alternative chosen as the Approved RMPA.

The management action stipulations in the Approved RMPA are updated in tables and appendices throughout.

Besides the editorial changes described above, minor errors in the Proposed RMPA have been corrected and language has been added to specific locations to improve clarity. These changes are detailed below:

- Language clarifying application of decisions in the Approved RMPA to oil and gas leases issued before the date of this ROD has been added. This added language comprises the second paragraph of Section 1.4.3.
- The following was incorrectly referenced as a component of Terrestrial Wildlife management under Alternative IV, as well as Alternative II, in Table 2.1 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS:

*Atop the plateau, require clustered and sequenced development of oil and gas resources; location of drilling pads not closer than 2,640 feet, and on slopes of 20% or less along ridgetops; limit direct surface disturbance not yet meeting reclamation standards to less than 1% of the land area (350 acres); require successful reclamation (five-year standard) prior to development of other ridgetop areas. (See Tables 2.3 and C-1).*

Despite this editorial error, this misplaced management action was correctly included in the analysis of Alternative II in the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS (under Fluid Mineral Leasing and Permitting), and was not included in the analysis of Alternative IV, which reflected on the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

- Two stipulations were incorrectly referred to on page 2-71 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS. These have been corrected in the RMPA and Appendix B, Stipulations, as follows:
  - CRVFO-CSU-Roan-1: Settlement Terms and Conditions is correctly referred to as one of the two following, as appropriate:  
CRVFO-CSU-Roan-17: Lease Area Above the Rim or  
CRVFO-CSU-Roan-18: Lease Area Below the Rim.
- Text for three specific management actions was clarified to include reference to surface use restrictions when the combination of surface use restriction/stipulation is cited (i.e., the No Ground Disturbance [NGD] surface use restriction for a specific resource was included with reference to an NSO stipulation for the same resource; and the Site-Specific Relocation [SSR] surface use restriction for a specific resource was included with reference to a CSU stipulation for the same resource).
- Eight management actions for Vegetation Resources, inadvertently not referenced as components of Alternative IV in Chapter 2 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS, are included in the Approved RMPA. These management actions were part of Alternative IV and were included in the impact analysis of Alternative IV.
- In approved stipulations reference to “TES” was changed to “T&E” to be consistent with usage in the FSEIS.

- In approved stipulations, reference to the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment/FEIS (NWCOGSG FEIS) has been changed to Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).
- References to Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) were updated to CPW.
- Locatable Minerals Management Action LMI-MA-01 has not been carried forward into the Approved RMPA. It proposed the revocation of the Naval Oil Shape Withdrawal for locatable minerals. This management action was considered in Chapter 4 of the Roan RMPA/FEIS, which concluded that "although no locatable minerals (e.g., metals) are known or believed to occur in the Planning Area, revocation of the withdrawal of NOSRs 1 and 3 from entry under the Mining Act of 1872 could conceivably result in speculative claim filings, including in some sensitive resource areas. This potential is considered remote." Because this management action has remote but potentially adverse effects, and because it conflicts with Management Action LRT-MA-04, it has not been included in the Approved RMPA.

The most current geospatial data (Geographic Information System [GIS]) representing resource information and management action allocations and boundaries is integrated into the Approved RMPA.

## 1.4 DECISIONS IN THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT

### 1.4.1 Types of Land Use Plan Decisions

Land use plan decisions for BLM fall into two categories: desired outcomes (goals and objectives) and allowable (including restricted or prohibited) uses and management actions anticipated to achieve desired outcomes. The Approved RMPA is structured to express all allowable use decisions as management actions.

**Desired Outcomes.** Land use plans must identify desired outcomes expressed in terms of specific goals and objectives. Goals and objectives direct BLM's actions in most effectively meeting legal mandates; regulatory responsibilities; national policy, including the BLM Strategic Plan goals; State Director guidance (see 43 CFR 1601.0-4(b)); and other resource or social needs.

**Goals** are broad statements of desired outcomes that usually are not quantifiable.

**Objectives** identify specific desired outcomes for resources. Objectives are usually quantifiable and measurable and may have established time frames for achievement (as appropriate).

**Allowable Uses and Management Actions.** After establishing desired outcomes, BLM identifies allowable uses (land use allocations) and management actions, comprising different alternatives analyzed through NEPA, which are anticipated to achieve the goals and objectives.

**Allowable Uses.** Land use plans must identify uses, or allocations, that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited on the public lands and mineral estate. These allocations identify surface lands and/or subsurface mineral interests where uses are allowed, including any restrictions that may be needed to meet goals and objectives. Land use plans also identify lands where specific uses are excluded to protect resource values. Certain lands may be open or closed to specific uses based on legislative, regulatory, or policy requirements or criteria to protect sensitive resource values.



**Management Actions.** Decisions in land use plans also guide future land management actions. These decisions establish the management actions needed to achieve desired outcomes, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health. Management actions include proactive measures, such as action taken to enhance watershed function, as well as measures or criteria that will be applied to guide day-to-day activities occurring on public land. Land use plans also establish administrative designations such as ACECs, recommend withdrawals, recommend and establish land tenure zones, and recommend or make findings of suitability for congressional designations (such as components of the National Wild and Scenic River System).

## **1.4.2 Implementation Decisions**

BLM is using this decision document to approve the RMPA decisions as well as certain implementation decisions. Implementation decisions take action to implement land use plan decisions. Implementation decisions generally constitute BLM's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed and require appropriate site-specific planning and NEPA analysis. Such decisions may be incorporated into implementation plans (activity or project plans) or may exist as stand-alone decisions.

Unlike land use plan decisions, implementation decisions are not subject to protest under the planning regulations. Instead, implementation decisions are subject to various administrative remedies, particularly appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (under 43 CFR 4.410). Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by the specific resource program regulations after BLM resolves the protests to land use plan decisions and makes a decision to adopt the RMP.

For example, the specific route designation is an implementation level decision, rather than a land use plan decision. Consequently, individual route designations are subject to a separate appeals process. All route designations within the Planning Area are finalized with this ROD and may be appealed at this time.

## **1.4.3 Valid Existing Rights**

The decisions made in this Approved RMPA are subject to valid existing rights. All lands in the Planning Area, including those covered by leases that were issued in 2008, are subject to the decisions in this ROD except as limited by pre-2007 valid existing rights or by valid existing rights acquired at a later date outside the scope of the 2007 ROD. The decisions related to oil and gas leasing and development reflect the terms of the 2014 Settlement Agreement. On January 16, 2015, BLM cancelled 17 of the leases issued in 2008. BLM will ensure, through one or more separate implementation decisions, that the remaining leases issued in 2008 are modified, as necessary, to conform with the Approved RMPA.

Oil and gas lease stipulations and lease notices in the Approved RMPA will be applied to all new leases. On existing leases, BLM will seek voluntary compliance or will develop Conditions of Approval (COAs) for Applications for Permits to Drill or other authorizations, consistent with valid pre-2008 rights, to achieve resource objectives reflected in the lease stipulations contained in the Approved RMPA.

## **1.5 MITIGATION MEASURES**

All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm, commensurate with the landscape-level of planning, are included in the Approved RMPA and appendices. In developing the alternatives, BLM used a variety of management methods and tools, including the identification of allowable uses; temporal, spatial, and/or methodological restrictions on uses; where specific uses would be prohibited; and specific actions that are needed to achieve the goals and objectives. Restrictions on land uses include seasonal closures, stipulations on surface disturbances, and the application of Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Appendix F provides a list of BMPs that are applicable to land use activities authorized by the Approved RMPA. BMPs are state-of-the-art mitigation measures that may be applied on a site-specific basis to avoid, minimize, reduce, rectify, or compensate for adverse environmental or social impacts of land use activities. The BMPs included in the Approved RMPA are not intended to be a complete list but are displayed to show land use project proponents examples of commonly used practices that may be required to reduce impacts of surface-disturbing activities, use, or occupancy. More explicit BMPs based on local conditions and resource-specific concerns could be developed once a specific proposal is being evaluated through the NEPA process. Additional BMPs can be proposed by project applicants for activities on BLM lands within the Planning Area.

## **1.6 THE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **1.6.1 Policies and Legislative Constraints**

BLM's land use planning process is primarily guided by two statutes, FLPMA and NEPA. FLPMA is also referred to as BLM's organic act and requires BLM both to "develop, maintain, and, when appropriate, revise land use plans which provide by tracts or areas for the use of the public lands" (43 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] 1712(a)), and to "manage the public lands under principles of multiple use and sustained yield, in accordance with the land use plans" (43 U.S.C. 1732(a)). NEPA provides the basic national charter for environmental responsibility and requires the consideration and public availability of information on the environmental impacts of major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

RMPs are the primary mechanism for guiding BLM activities so that the mission and goals outlined in the BLM Strategic Plan are achieved. RMPs are the primary mechanism for guiding BLM activities to ensure that BLM lands are managed in accordance with the intent of Congress as stated in FLPMA, under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. RMPs also guide BLM in fulfilling the mission and goals outlined in the BLM Strategic Plan.

As required by FLPMA, as well as by other laws and BLM policies and guidelines, public lands must be managed in a manner that protects the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; and that will:

- Preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition, where appropriate;
- Provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic animals;
- Provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use; and
- Recognize the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands.

In addition to FLPMA and NEPA (and their associated regulations), BLM must comply with the mandate and intent of all laws, regulations, guidelines, and policies that apply to BLM-administered lands and Federal mineral estate. The planning process is intended to develop RMP decisions that resolve conflicts between program priorities, policies, and guidelines and that meet the multiple use and sustained yield mandates of FLPMA.

The designation of off-road vehicle use area and of individual trails in this ROD is done in accordance with the requirements of 43 CFR 8342. BLM complied with the procedural requirements of 43 CFR 8342.2 by considering the impacts of the proposed designations on all resources and uses in the Planning

Area, as documented in Chapter 4 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS, and by notifying and consulting with all relevant parties, as documented in Sections 1.6 and 1.8 of this ROD and in Chapter 6 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS. One public meeting, which took place in Rifle, Colorado, on January 14, 2016, focused specifically on the designation of the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area, while considerable additional public discussion and comment focused on conflicts between OHV use and recreational target shooting within the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area. BLM developed the Approved RMPA to minimize conflicts between users throughout the Planning Area and the surrounding Field Offices.

In deciding which areas and routes to designate as open, limited, or closed, BLM considered the criteria set forth in 43 CFR 8342.1. As documented in Chapter 4 of the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS, all designations are based on the protection of the resources of the public lands, the promotion of the safety of all the users of the public lands, and the minimization of conflicts among various uses of the public lands. Additional documentation of these commitments is provided in Chapter 2, the Approved RMPA. BLM's consideration of the criteria of 43 CFR 8342.1 resulted in the decisions included in this ROD, including the following: RIP-MA-06; RIP-MA-07; TEW-MA-02; TEW-MA-04; TEW-MA-05; SSP-MA-06; SSW-MA-04; TMA-MA-02; TMA-MA-03; TMA-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01; TMA-GRSG-MA-01 through -09; OHV-MA-01; OHV-MA-02; OHV-MA-03; OHV-MA-06; TRR-Objective-01; and the additional discussion provided in Section 2.1.3.4 under the heading "Transportation Routes."

No open routes or areas are designated within officially designated wilderness, primitive, or natural areas, which do not exist in the Planning Area.

New planning criteria include addressing issues and requirements from the Judicial Order; complete integration with the Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse RMPA; water quality regulatory changes and designations; and BLM air quality modeling efforts. An additional criterion was to use as much of the information from the Roan Planning Area FEIS process as possible in the SEIS.

### **1.6.2 Relationship to the Northwest Colorado BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment and Final EIS**

BLM released the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD on September 22, 2015. That land use plan amendment did not include the Roan Plateau Planning Area. Therefore, decisions for management of GRSG habitat in the Planning Area were included in the planning criteria for the Approved RMPA. These decisions are based on habitat designations used in the Greater Sage-Grouse ROD/Approved RMPA and track specific management actions contained therein.

In conjunction with this planning effort, CPW, formerly named Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), mapped the Planning Area for habitat for GRSG, which is a BLM Sensitive Species. This mapping effort designates three categories of habitat. These are illustrated within the Planning Area in Map 13 (Appendix A) and comprise:

- Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) – Areas identified as having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable populations, include breeding, late brood rearing, and winter concentration areas;
- General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) – Areas of seasonal or year-round habitat within occupied range outside PHMA; and
- Linkage/Connectivity Habitat – Areas identified as broader regions of connectivity important to facilitate movement and maintain ecological processes.

Collectively, PHMA, GHMA, and linkage/connectivity habitat are referred to as “all designated habitat” (ADH). The entire Planning Area above the rim was mapped as ADH (Map 13). With the exception of 30 acres in the far northwest corner of the Planning Area, all of the ADH is GHMA. This very small polygon in the northwest corner of the Planning Area is considered PHMA, all of which is on private land.

## **1.7 RMPA MONITORING, EVALUATION, MAINTENANCE, AMENDMENT, AND REVISION**

### **1.7.1 RMPA Monitoring**

Land use plan decision monitoring is a continuous process that occurs over the life of the RMPA. The aim is to maintain a dynamic RMPA that reflects current conditions and trends. Monitoring data are collected, examined, and used to draw conclusions on: (1) whether planned actions have been implemented in the manner prescribed by the RMPA (implementation monitoring); and (2) whether RMPA allowable use and management action decisions, and the resulting implementation actions, are effective in achieving program-specific desired outcomes (effectiveness monitoring).

Conclusions are then used to make recommendations on whether to continue current management or determine what changes need to be made to implementation practices to better achieve RMPA decisions. Indicators, methods, locations, units of measures, frequency, and action triggers can be established by national policy guidance, in RMPAs, or by technical specialists in order to address specific issues.

Based on staffing and funding levels, monitoring is annually prioritized consistent with the goals and objectives of the RMPA. BLM may work in cooperation with local, State, and other Federal agencies or use data collected by other agencies and sources when appropriate and available.

As the Approved RMPA is being implemented, BLM will monitor how well the plan is guiding the Planning Area toward desired or acceptable resource conditions. Monitoring and evaluation methods and protocols are described in Appendix G, Disturbed Site Reclamation Standards and Implementation. If management issues are not being resolved, or suitable conditions are not being met, the RMPA may be amended or revised, subject to valid existing rights.

### **1.7.2 RMPA Evaluation**

In accordance with BLM’s Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), the Approved RMPA will be evaluated periodically to determine whether the land use plan decisions are still valid and whether the plan is being implemented effectively. More specifically, the Approved RMPA will be evaluated to determine if: (1) decisions remain relevant to current issues; (2) decisions are effective in achieving or making progress toward achieving the desired outcomes specified in the plan; (3) any decisions need revision or cancellation; and (4) any new decisions are required.

In making these determinations, the evaluation will consider whether mitigation measures—such as those presented in the Approved RMPA—are satisfactory, whether there are significant changes in the related plans of other entities, and whether there is significant new information.

In addition to periodic evaluations, special evaluations may also be required to consider unexpected management actions or significant changes in the related plans of Native American tribes, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments or to evaluate legislation or litigation that has the potential to trigger an amendment or revision. Evaluations may identify resource needs and means for correcting deficiencies and addressing issues through plan maintenance, amendments, or revisions. They should also identify where new and emerging issues and other values have surfaced.

As the Approved RMPA is being implemented, BLM will evaluate how well the plan is guiding the Planning Area toward the desired resource conditions. If management issues are not being resolved or suitable conditions are not being met, the RMPA may be further amended or revised within the constraints of valid existing rights.

### **1.7.3 RMPA Maintenance**

During the life of the RMPA, BLM expects that new information gathered from field inventories and assessments, other agency studies, and other sources will be used to update GIS data and BMPs. To the extent that this new information addresses issues covered in the plan, BLM may integrate new information into the RMPA. BLM regulations in 43 CFR 1610.5-4 provide that RMP decisions and supporting documentation can be revised to reflect minor changes in data through plan maintenance. Maintenance is limited to further refining, documenting, or clarifying a previously approved decision incorporated in the plan. Maintenance must not expand the scope of resource uses or restrictions or change the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved RMP.

Maintenance may be especially necessary to update acreage figures presented throughout the RMPA. Acreages are based on GIS data, which are subject to constant refinement. Any potential discrepancies within the acreage figures or future refinements in the data may be corrected or updated in the RMPA through plan maintenance.

### **1.7.4 RMP Amendments and Revision**

RMPA Evaluation and Monitoring may also reveal the need for more extensive changes to the RMPA than can be accomplished through plan maintenance. In such an event, the RMPA may be further amended (43 CFR 1610.5-5) or may be entirely replaced through a plan revision (43 CFR 1610.5-6). Plan amendments are most often prompted by the need to consider a proposal or action that does not conform to the plan; implement new or revised policy that changes land use plan decisions; respond to new, intensified, or changed uses on BLM land; or consider significant new information from resource assessments, monitoring, or scientific studies that change land use plan decisions.

## **1.8 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The BLM land use planning process is conducted in accordance with the requirements of Council on Environmental Quality and BLM regulations, and with DOI policies and regulations, for implementing NEPA and FLPMA. NEPA and FLPMA and the associated regulatory and policy framework require BLM to involve the interested public in its decision making. BLM has made open public dialogue integral to this RMPA planning process. In doing so, BLM recognized the interests of a wide range of public, private, and governmental representatives in the management of BLM lands and Federal mineral estate. The most important opportunities for public input during this process are identified below.

### **1.8.1 Public Scoping**

The NOI is the legal document notifying the public of BLM's intent to initiate the planning process and, in this case, to prepare an SEIS for a major Federal action. The NOI invites the participation of the affected and interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public in determining the scope and significant issues to be addressed in the planning alternatives and analyzed in the SEIS.

A formal scoping period for the Roan RMPA/EIS began with an NOI dated November 16, 2000, and ended January 31, 2001. A public open house was held on December 13, 2000, during which BLM accepted verbal comments. BLM also received written comments throughout the scoping period. An additional public comment period, publicized by legal notices, was held for 30 days beginning October

14, 2002. In the announcement for this comment period, BLM summarized amended planning criteria and preliminary alternatives and requested additional comments on the scope of the RMPA/EIS. After this scoping period, BLM developed six preliminary alternatives that were described in a document dated October 14, 2002, which was mailed to interested parties and presented during public meetings in the towns of Rifle, Parachute, and Glenwood Springs, Colorado. In November 2002, following a 30-day comment period, BLM resource experts, planners, and legal advisors consolidated the six alternatives into five.

An NOI to prepare an SEIS associated with the development of the RMPA for the Planning Area was issued by the DOI on January 28, 2013. The NOI also initiated a 90-day scoping period, which closed March 30, 2013. During this period, BLM held two public scoping meetings to answer questions from attendees and to collect written comments regarding the RMPA/SEIS. This notice included scoping meeting locations, times, and other mechanisms for submitting scoping comments. This information was subsequently published in the Denver Post, Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, and Glenwood Springs Post-Independent.

### **1.8.2 Public Review and Comment of the Draft RMPA/EIS and the Draft RMPA/SEIS**

The Draft RMPA/EIS was released to the public on November, 19, 2004, and the public comment period officially began on December 3, 2004, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register. On February 14, 2005, BLM extended the public comment period for an additional 60 days. The public comment period ended on April 14, 2005.

Three public meetings were held in the communities of Parachute (Battlement Mesa), Rifle, and Glenwood Springs, Colorado. The public meetings were announced on the project website and in local newspapers. As noted in the NOA and all public announcements, only written comments were accepted. The majority of the comments were submitted electronically.

Beginning on November 17, 2015, the Draft RMPA/SEIS document, including maps and appendices, was available for download from the BLM project website. BLM published the NOA of the Draft RMPA/SEIS in the *Federal Register* on November 20, 2015. The NOA summarized BLM's procedure for announcing public meetings during the comment period and indicated the availability of hard copies of the Draft RMPA/SEIS at the BLM CRVFO. The Draft RMPA/SEIS was available for public comment for 90 calendar days.

Three public meetings were held in communities near the Roan Plateau Planning Area within 60 days of the release of the Draft RMPA/SEIS. The dates, times, and locations of these meetings were announced on the project website and via press release on January 7, 2016. These public meetings provided the public with opportunities to ask questions about the project and planning process, to meet the RMPA team members, and to offer written comments.

### **1.8.3 Public Review and Protest of the Proposed RMPA/FEIS and Proposed RMPA/SEIS**

Pursuant to BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the Roan Plateau Planning Area RMPA planning process and has an interest that may be adversely affected by the planning decisions was permitted to protest the proposed planning decisions within 30 days from the date the NOA was published in the Federal Register by the EPA.

The Proposed RMPA/FEIS was released to the public on September 7, 2006, and was followed by a 30-day protest period. BLM received 42 protest letters during the protest period. Ten unique protest letters were received. BLM addressed the protests without making significant changes to the Proposed RMPA/FEIS. However, BLM decided to prepare a separate ROD for ACEC designation.

The Proposed RMPA/FSEIS was released to the public on July 1, 2016. The 30-day protest period ended on August 1, 2016. No protests were received.

#### 1.8.4 Results of the Governor’s Consistency Reviews

The BLM regulations in 43 CFR 1610.3- 2(e) require a review period for BLM to receive comments from the Governor of the affected state on the consistency of the Proposed RMPA/FEIS or FSEIS with state plans or policies.

The consistency review period for the 2006 Proposed RMPA/FEIS closed January 5, 2007. BLM received a reply from Governor Ritter on the Proposed RMPA/FEIS asking for an extended review period. No inconsistencies were ultimately identified.

The consistency review period for the 2016 Proposed RMPA/FSEIS concluded on September 5, 2016. BLM received notice from the office of Governor John W. Hickenlooper before the end of the consistency review period, noting that the Governor would not be providing a review letter. Therefore, it is assumed that no inconsistencies with Colorado State government plans or policies were identified in the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS.

### 1.9 COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

The following subsections document BLM’s consultation and coordination efforts during the RMPA/SEIS process.

#### 1.9.1 Cooperating Agencies

A cooperating agency is a Federal agency other than a Lead Agency which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative) for legislation or other major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment (40 CFR s. 1508.5). More specifically, “Cooperating Agencies” work with the BLM, sharing knowledge and resources, to achieve desired outcomes for public lands and communities within statutory and regulatory frameworks” (BLM *Land Use Planning Handbook* H-1601-1).

The Cooperating Agencies listed in Table 1.1 were involved in the Roan RMPA/EIS process, which occurred between November 2000 and March 2008.

**Table 1.1 Cooperating Agencies, Roan Plateau Planning Area RMPA/EIS Process**

<b><i>Federal Agencies</i></b>
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<b><i>State Agencies</i></b>
Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Colorado Geological Survey

**Table 1.1 Cooperating Agencies, Roan Plateau Planning Area  
RMPA/EIS Process**

Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
Colorado State Parks
<b><i>Local Agencies</i></b>
Garfield County
Rio Blanco County
Town of Parachute
City of Rifle
City of Glenwood Springs

In June 2013, BLM mailed letters to Federal, State, and local representatives inviting them to participate as Cooperating Agencies for the Roan Plateau RMPA/SEIS. Table 1.2 lists the agencies that accepted an invitation to be cooperators and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BLM for this purpose. The Cooperating Agencies met with BLM periodically throughout the SEIS process to discuss issues as a group. Cooperating Agencies are expected to participate in the SEIS process at the earliest possible time, including during scoping, and are available to enhance the interdisciplinary capability of the Lead Agency by providing needed information throughout the NEPA process.

**Table 1.2 Cooperating Agencies, Roan Plateau Planning Area  
RMPA/SEIS Process**

<b><i>Federal Agencies</i></b>
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<b><i>State Agencies</i></b>
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
<b><i>Local Agencies</i></b>
Garfield County
Mesa County
Rio Blanco County
Town of Parachute
City of Rifle

The six Cooperating Agency meetings, conducted at the CRVFO and the Garfield County Administrative Building between July 2013 and June 2015, focused on the SEIS process and issues, Settlement Agreement, socioeconomics, and alternatives. The last two Cooperating Agency meetings addressed the Draft RMPA/SEIS and Proposed RMPA/FSEIS, respectively.

In addition to the feedback provided at these meetings, Cooperating Agencies were provided the opportunity to submit comments on specific sections (relevant to their jurisdiction or expertise) of the Administrative Draft RMPA/SEIS. Several Cooperating Agencies also submitted comments in response to the public Draft RMPA/SEIS. During this process, the Cooperating Agencies did not identify any



inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies, or programs, and BLM is not aware of any such inconsistencies.

### **1.9.2 Tribal Consultation and Indian Trust Assets**

Native American tribes have a unique legal and political relationship with the government of the United States. Executive Order 13175 directs Federal agencies to coordinate and consult on a government-to-government basis with sovereign Native American tribal governments whose interests may be directly and substantially affected by activities on federally administered lands. Other laws, regulations, DOI guidance, and executive orders require consultation to identify the cultural values, religious beliefs, traditional practices, and legal rights of Native American people that could be affected by BLM actions on Federal lands. These include the NHPA (as amended), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, DOI Secretarial Order No. 3215 (2000), DOI Secretarial Order No. 3317 with DOI Tribal Consultation Policy (2011), 512 Department Manual Chapter 2 (1995), BLM Manual Handbook H-8160-1, and Executive Order 13007, *Indian Sacred Sites* (1996).

Consultation with Native American tribes is also part of the NEPA scoping process. Tribal consultation regarding the RMPA/SEIS began on October 12, 2013, when a letter inviting scoping comments was sent to regional Native American tribes with potential interest in the RMPA/SEIS. No responses were received. Letters notifying tribes of the availability of the Draft RMPA/SEIS were sent in November 2015. Three Native American tribes and organizations were notified: the Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah and Ouray Bands), Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.

American Indian trust resources are legal interests in assets held in trust by the Federal government for federally recognized Indian tribes or nations or for individual Indians. These assets can be real property, natural resources, or intangible property. Examples are lands, minerals, water rights, hunting and fishing rights, other natural resources, or money. BLM has no trust administration responsibilities in the Planning Area.

### **1.9.3 Consultation Efforts with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office**

BLM relies on the 2012 National Programmatic Agreement that it entered into with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, and on the Colorado State Protocol entered into by BLM and the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), for compliance with the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA, 54 U.S.C. § 306108, and its regulations at 36 CFR Part 800. The National Programmatic Agreement and the Colorado State Protocol set forth the alternative process and stipulations for satisfying Section 106, including a required process for SHPO's involvement during the development stage and all subsequent phases of land use planning in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.3 and Colorado State Protocol at Section V. The Colorado State Protocol also provides for a process of engaging Native American tribes and other consulting parties. In 2015, BLM invited the Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah and Ouray Bands), Southern Ute Tribe, and Ute Mountain Ute tribal governments to participate in the RMP revision. None of the tribes that were invited accepted the invitation. BLM coordinated with SHPO on the Draft RMPA/EIS. The SHPO was notified regarding the availability of the Draft RMPA/SEIS and Proposed RMPA/FSEIS for review and comment. BLM sought information from the Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah and Ouray Bands), Southern Ute Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe governments regarding cultural resources of importance, and integrated the received information into the development of the Approved RMPA. BLM also requested information from local governmental entities and the public. The Approved RMPA includes the information received from all interested parties and will inform future review and consideration of implementation-level decisions.

With respect to BLM's travel and transportation management planning (TMP) decisions, BLM is following the alternative procedures for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA as set forth in Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Protocol. This procedure establishes a phased process for compliance with Section 106 for TMP decisions, beginning with three phased steps for identifying historic properties. With regard to the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area, BLM complied with Section 106 by consulting with the SHPO, Native American tribes, and other consulting parties, completing a Class III inventory, and resolving any adverse effects prior to designation. Initial letters regarding the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area were sent to Native American tribes on September 9, 2016; to the SHPO on August 22, 2016; to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) on September 7, 2016; and to Garfield County and the City of Rifle on September 22, 2016. Additional correspondence between the SHPO and BLM occurred subsequent to these letters. Information was also shared during a face-to-face meeting on September 20, 2016. A second correspondence letter was sent to the SHPO on September 27, 2016. This correspondence discussed the results from the Class III inventory of the Open OHV area to meet Section 106 requirements. The BLM also conducted a field visit to the project area with the Native American tribal representatives on August 2, 2016. Since historic properties were identified within the area of potential effect, a determination of Adverse Effect was made for the project. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was written between BLM and the SHPO to mitigate the adverse effect and includes Native American tribes as consulting parties to the MOA. The ACHP, Garfield County, and City of Rifle declined to participate in the consultation process and drafting of the MOA. The MOA was signed on October 21, 2016, between BLM and the SHPO resolving adverse effects to historic properties in the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area, fulfilling BLM's Section 106 responsibilities.

Apart from the Hubbard Mesa Open OHV area, the TMP decisions only provide designations for existing routes and do not open new routes or provide locations for new camping or staging areas; thus, the use of a phased process without completing Class III surveys is appropriate pursuant to Attachment F of the 2014 State Protocol. BLM consulted with the SHPO and interested Native American tribes during the planning process, and incorporated received comments into the Approved RMPA. Following this ROD, BLM will follow the implementation plan for completing the phased identified process for priority areas that require Class III cultural resource inventories pursuant to Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Protocol. Consultation with Native American tribes and other interested parties regarding these implementation actions is ongoing and will follow the process in Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Protocol. BLM will continue to work with the SHPO consistent with Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Protocol. If adverse effects are identified, mitigation measures, including avoidance, will be considered in consultation with the SHPO, Native American tribes, and other consulting parties to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the effects pursuant to Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Protocol.

#### **1.9.4 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been a Cooperating Agency for this planning effort and has provided input to BLM throughout the planning process, including on endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species, and designated Critical Habitat in the Planning Area. This input was evaluated in the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS. BLM submitted a Biological Assessment based on the Proposed RMPA/FSEIS on April 11, 2016. A consultation memorandum was received from the USFWS on May 19, 2016, in which the USFWS concurred with BLM's effects determination of may affect, but not likely to adversely affect endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species, and designated Critical Habitat, in the Planning Area.

## **1.10 CONSIDERATIONS IN SELECTING THE ROAN PLATEAU PLANNING AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

### **1.10.1 Management in Accordance with the FLPMA Under the Principles of Multiple Use and Sustained Yield**

The Approved RMPA seeks the best combination of management decisions to meet the purpose and need for this land use plan in consideration of the planning issues and management concerns identified through the planning process. It has been prepared to ensure that the public lands in the Planning Area are managed in accordance with FLPMA under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Section 103(c) of FLPMA defines “multiple use,” in part, as “management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people.” FLPMA also requires that the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values be protected as a result of the planning process.

These principles and direction were supported during the development of the Roan Approved RMPA. The process began with direction in the Transfer Act for BLM to enter into leases, as soon as practicable, with one or more private entities for the purpose of exploration, development, and production of petroleum in the Roan Plateau area, a highly visible landscape regarded as “pristine” and natural by public and stakeholders. The Approved RMPA represents a combination of decisions that allow for oil and gas leasing and development without affecting valid existing rights while recognizing the limits of the ecosystems’ sustainability. The oil and gas leasing and development scenario represented by the Approved RMPA is based on the Settlement Agreement and represents a compromise to allow for immediate resource development, on a limited basis, while protecting natural resources, with the possibility of additional future resource development at the end of the RMPA period.

### **1.10.2 Consistency with Existing Plans and Policies of Local, State, and Federal Agencies and Local Native American Tribes**

Management decisions in the Approved RMPA are compatible and consistent with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, State, and Federal agencies and Native American tribes to the extent consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of Federal law and regulations applicable to BLM lands and Federal mineral estate. No comments were received from Federal or State agencies or tribal governments indicating that the Proposed RMPA was inconsistent with other existing plans or policies.

As noted above, the Governor’s Office did not identify any inconsistencies concerning State or local plans, policies, and programs as a result of the 60-day Governor’s Consistency Review of the Roan Plateau Planning Area Proposed RMPA/FSEIS.

## **1.11 AVAILABILITY OF THE ROAN PLATEAU PLANNING AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

Electronic copies on DVD of the Approved RMPA are available by request at the BLM CRVFO at 2300 River Frontage Road in Silt, Colorado 81652 and the WRFO at 220 East Market Street, Meeker, Colorado 81641. The Approved RMPA is also available online at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=65892&dctmId=0b0003e880c22088>.

## **1.12 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

The Approved RMPA will be implemented as funding and workforce allow. The BLM will develop an implementation strategy to identify and prioritize the work needed to meet the goals and objectives of the RMPA. Most of the land use plan decisions are effective upon approval of this document. However, some decisions will take a number of years to implement on the ground. Implementation monitoring will track which decisions have been implemented and when.

### 1.13 APPROVAL

The decision is hereby made to approve the Roan Plateau Planning Area Resource Management Plan Amendment. This Record of Decision serves as the final decision for the decisions in the Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment, which becomes effective on the date of signature.

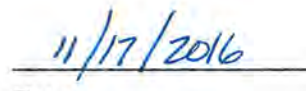
#### FIELD OFFICE MANAGER RECOMMENDATION

Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated impacts, and public and agency input, I recommend the approval and implementation of the attached Resource Management Plan Amendment as the Roan Plateau Planning Area Resource Management Plan Amendment.

Recommended:



Karl Mendonca  
Field Manager, Colorado River Valley Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management

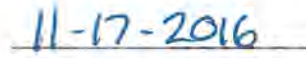


Date

Recommended:



<sup>for</sup> Kent Walter  
Field Manager, White River Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management



Date

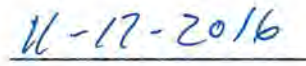
#### DISTRICT MANAGER CONCURRENCE

I recommend to adopt and implement the Roan Plateau Planning Area Resource Management Plan Amendment.

Concurrence:



Andrew Archuleta  
District Manager, Northwest District Office  
Bureau of Land Management



Date

**STATE DIRECTOR CONCURRENCE**

I recommend to adopt and implement the Roan Plateau Planning Area Resource Management Plan Amendment.

Concurrence:



Ruth Welch  
Colorado State Director  
Bureau of Land Management

11/17/16

Date

**PLAN APPROVAL**

In consideration of the foregoing, the decision is hereby made to approve the attached Resource Management Plan Amendment for administration of Bureau of Land Management lands and Federal mineral estate administered by the Colorado River Valley Field Office and the White River Field Office in the Roan Plateau Planning Area.



Neil Kornze  
Director  
Bureau of Land Management

11/17/16

Date



## CHAPTER 2

### ROAN PLATEAU PLANNING AREA APPROVED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT



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## 2.1 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT DECISIONS

### 2.1.1 Decisions

The Approved RMPA describes goals, objectives, and decisions established for BLM lands and Federal mineral estate managed by the BLM CRVFO and WRFO in the Planning Area. Decisions take the form of allowable uses (land use allocations) and management actions designed to achieve program goals and objectives. Collectively, these are coded as goals, objectives, and management actions in the Approved RMPA. The decisions are detailed by program in Section 2.1.3, Decisions by Program, under four category headings: Resources, Resource Uses, Special Designations, and Support, as summarized in Table 2.1. In the digital versions of this document, selection of a resource from Table 2.1 will direct a reader to the specific management actions and implementation decisions for that resource in the following sections.

**Table 2.1 Categories, Programs, and Abbreviations**

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
<a href="#">Colorado Public Land Health Standards</a>	LHS
<a href="#">Geological Resources</a>	GEO
<a href="#">Paleontological Resources</a>	PAL
<a href="#">Soil Resources</a>	SOI
<a href="#">Water Resources</a>	WTR
<a href="#">Climate and Air Quality Resources</a>	AIR
<a href="#">Ecological Values</a>	ECO
<a href="#">Vegetation Resources</a>	VEG
<a href="#">Riparian/Wetland Resources</a>	RIP
<a href="#">Noxious Weeds</a>	NOX
<a href="#">Terrestrial Wildlife</a>	TEW
<a href="#">Avian Wildlife</a>	AVW
<a href="#">Aquatic Wildlife</a>	AQW
<a href="#">Special Status Plants and Significant Plant Communities</a>	SSP
<a href="#">Special Status Fish and Wildlife Species</a>	SSW
<a href="#">Visual Resources</a>	VIS
<a href="#">Lands with Wilderness Characteristics</a>	LWC
<a href="#">Cultural Resources</a>	CUL
<b>Resource Uses</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
<a href="#">Lands and Realty</a>	LRT
<a href="#">Grazing and Rangeland Management</a>	GRM
<a href="#">Fluid Minerals</a>	FMI
<a href="#">Oil Shale</a>	OIS
<a href="#">Solid Minerals</a>	SOM
<a href="#">Locatable Minerals</a>	LMI
<a href="#">Salable Minerals</a>	SAM
<a href="#">Forest Products</a>	FOR

**Table 2.1 Categories, Programs, and Abbreviations**

<b>Special Designations</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
<a href="#">Areas of Critical Environmental Concern</a>	ACC
<a href="#">Parachute Creek Watershed Management Area</a>	WMA
<a href="#">Streams Eligible for Management Under the Wild and Scenic River Act</a>	WSR
<b>Support</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
<a href="#">Travel Management Areas</a>	TMA
<a href="#">Designation of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management Areas</a>	OHV
<a href="#">Transportation Routes</a>	TRR
<a href="#">Recreation</a>	REC
<a href="#">Public Health and Safety/Hazardous Materials</a>	PHS
<a href="#">Fire Management</a>	FIR

For ease of identification, each decision is numbered. The numbering sequences for the decisions are by program. Each program has an identified abbreviation (Table 2.1) and each decision in that program is numbered in coordination with the program abbreviation, type of decision, and decision number. Some examples are as follows:

**AIR-GOAL-01:** First climate and air quality program goal.

**AIR-OBJECTIVE-01:** First climate and air quality program objective.

**AIR-MA-01.** First climate and air quality program management action or allowable use decision.

**AIR-MA-02.** Second climate and air quality program management action or allowable use decision.

**AIR-IMP-01.** First climate and air quality program implementation decision.

Specific goals, objectives, and management actions for GRSG habitat management track to those in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015). These are indicated by use of the GRSG abbreviation after a program abbreviation. For example, the first specific management action for GRSG habitat under Grazing and Rangeland Management would be indicated as: GRM-GRSG-MA-01.

Please note that all acreages and maps presented in the Approved RMPA are estimations based on current data at publication.

### **2.1.2 Maps and Appendices**

Table 2.2 lists supporting information for the decisions contained in the Approved RMPA located in the appendices to this document.

**Table 2.2 List of Appendices**

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Contents</b>
A	Maps
B	Stipulations
C	Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes and Objectives
D	BLM Recreation Guidelines to Meet Public Land Health Standards in Colorado
E	Management and Setting Prescriptions for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
F	Best Management Practices (BMPs)
G	Disturbed Site Reclamation Standards and Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation
H	Comprehensive Air Resource Protection Protocol
I	Settlement Agreement

### 2.1.3 Decisions by Program

The following sections lay out management goals, objectives, and decisions, organized by program. Note that specific standards attached to each stipulation are detailed in Appendix B.

#### 2.1.3.1 Resources

##### *Colorado Public Land Health Standards*

**LHS-GOAL-01:** Implement appropriate management actions on a landscape basis that would result in meeting Colorado Public Land Health Standards and associated guidelines, with emphasis on outcome-based adaptive management.

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##### *Geological Resources*

**GEO-GOAL-01:** Protect and preserve Geological Heritage Resources.

**GEO-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect and preserve the existing scientific and historic geological values associated with the Anvil Points Claystone Cave and karst system.

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**GEO-MA-01.** Restrict activities that could cause direct or indirect impacts, such as structural collapse or dewatering, through the application of a NGD/NSO stipulation. Consider public education opportunities to help achieve goals.

**GEO-MA-02.** Manage significant caves in accordance with the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act.

**GEO-MA-03.** Manage Anvil Points Claystone Cave in accordance with the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act.

**GEO-MA-04.** Manage caves to retain their current physical, social, and operational settings.

**GEO-MA-05.** Manage the Anvil Points Claystone Cave to maintain remoteness and natural appearance by not allowing new facilities, roads, or trails to access the Cave.

**GEO-MA-06.** Manage the Anvil Points Claystone Cave for scientific purposes and to allow safe use.

**GEO-MA-07.** Limit Anvil Points Claystone Cave use and monitor use.

**GEO-MA-08.** Initiate the nomination, evaluation, and designation of other potentially significant caves.

**GEO-MA-09.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan 21: Anvil Points Claystone Cave. NSO to protect 120 acres encompassing the Anvil Points Claystone Cave. No ground disturbing activities in the area encompassing the cave opening, subsurface features, and watersheds overlying the caves.

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### ***Paleontological Resources***

**PAL-GOAL-01:** Protect and preserve paleontological resources.

**PAL-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect Sharrard Park's scientifically significant Eocene fossil mammal localities from surface-disturbing activities, and recover such resources and associated data through an authorization process.

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**PAL-MA-01.** Apply a SSR/CSU surface use restriction/stipulation to protect the paleontological resources in Sharrard Park.

#### **Standards:**

- Require survey and mitigation prior to any surface-disturbing activities in Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) 4 and 5 areas and some PFYC 3 areas.

**PAL-MA-02.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-18: Sharrard Park Paleontological Resources. CSU to protect 1,020 acres of the Sharrard Park paleontological resource. The BLM may require special survey, design, construction, operation, and reclamation measures, or relocation by more than 200 meters in identified portions of Wasatch Formation outcrops in Sharrard Park. Prior to any ground disturbing activity, the operator must have the paleontological resources surveyed within 200 meters of the proposed disturbance by a BLM approved paleontologist. Other special measures include requirements that (a) on-site personnel are informed of the potential for fossils, (b) the proponent will notify BLM if any fossils are found, and (c) activities do not disturb fossils in any way.

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### ***Soil Resources***

**SOI-GOAL-01:** Maintain watershed soil stability and productivity.

**SOI-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage to meet Land Health Standards for soils on a watershed scale, and support other resource needs.

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**SOI-MA-01.** Maintain site stability and site productivity on steep slopes and erosive soils throughout the Planning Area by applying NGD/NSO and SSR/CSU surface use restrictions/stipulations, COAs, BMPs, and other site-specific mitigation.

**Standards:**

- Apply NGD/NSO on slopes greater than 50% to maintain site stability.
- Apply COAs, BMPs, and other site-specific mitigation to minimize erosion, encourage rapid reclamation, retain soils using stormwater mitigation structures, maintain soil stability, and support other resources (including fisheries habitat).

**SOI-MA-02.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-22: Steep Slopes (>0%). NSO on slopes greater than 50 percent. No ground-disturbing activities on the 13,840 acres of slopes steeper than 50 percent.

**SOI-MA-03.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-04: Erosive Soils and Slopes Greater Than 30%. CSU for erosive soils with slopes greater than 30 percent. The BLM may require special analysis, design, construction, operation, mitigation, reclamation measures, monitoring, and/or relocation by more than 200 meters to protect the soil resource, minimize impacts to other resources, and ensure reclamation success in the 23,550 acres with highly erosive soils on slopes steeper than 30 percent, but less than or equal to 50 percent.

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***Water Resources***

**WTR-GOAL-01:** Meet all State and Federal water quality standards and support water quantity and quality needs of other resources.

**WTR-OBJECTIVE-01:** Ensure authorized activities comply with all applicable water quality standards.

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**WTR-MA-01.** Establish baseline water quality data and a monitoring program for drainages prior to allowing surface-disturbing activities. Assess disturbance-related water quality changes. Identify and implement mitigation measures, as needed, to meet water quality standards.

**Standards:**

- Implement those actions associated with the Parachute Creek Watershed Area.

**WTR-MA-02.** Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-Roan-4. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities within: 1) the primary zone of a source water protection area for a permitted public water system; or 2) 1,000 horizontal feet on either side of a classified surface water supply stream segment (measured from the average high water mark) for a distance of 5 miles upstream of a public water supply intake with the classification “Water Supply” by the State of Colorado used as a public (municipal) water supply. A permitted public water system will have a number assigned by the State of Colorado. A watershed that serves a public water system as defined by the State of Colorado is a system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least 15 service connections or regularly serves an average of at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year.

**WTR-MA-03.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-29. Colorado River Corridor. NSO to protect approximately 320 acres of high-quality habitat and wildlife areas, water quality benefits, and scenic qualities along the Colorado River. No ground-disturbing activities within 0.5 mile of high-water mark on either side of river.

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## *Climate and Air Quality*

**AIR-GOAL-01:** Within the scope of BLM’s authority, ensure that air quality and air quality-related values are adequately protected by analyzing the effects of activities or resource uses authorized by BLM and cumulative actions. Protect air resources in accordance with the methodology and provisions outlined in the Comprehensive Air Resource Protection Protocol (CARPP).

**AIR-OBJECTIVE-01:** If warranted by the results of analyses conducted following the CARPP, control or reduce air pollutants associated with construction and industrial activities to help protect human health and ecosystems (meeting State and Federal standards), and conform with the Colorado Regional Haze State Implementation Plan to improve visibility, reduce atmospheric deposition, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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**AIR-MA-01.** Based on project-level analyses, as described in the CARPP (Appendix H), during the construction phase, reduce emissions of fugitive dust by requiring operators to implement watering (a minimum of twice daily during dry conditions) or application of other dust-suppressant agents at construction areas, including access roads used during construction. The Authorized Officer may direct the operator to change the level and type of dust abatement if the measures being used are insufficient to prevent visible plumes of fugitive dust or deposition of excessive dust on nearby surfaces in conjunction with vehicular traffic, equipment operations, or wind events. Require fugitive dust control plans in conjunction with oil and gas MDPs.

**AIR-MA-02.** As described in the CARPP, air quality monitoring may be required for large proposed oil and gas development projects in locations where no representative air quality monitoring data exists, or over the life of large projects to be used as a validation tool in conjunction with projected air quality modeling.

**AIR-MA-03.** Based on project-level analyses, as described in the CARPP, require that industrial operators use gravel (in combination with watering or other dust suppressant), chip-seal, asphalt, or other road-surfacing material to minimize fugitive dust emissions from BLM-authorized access roads (“local” and “resource” roads) during long-term production and maintenance operations.

**AIR-MA-04.** Based on annual review required by the CARPP and on the rate of actual oil and gas development, require phased-in use of improved drilling and completion engines that meet or exceed Tier 4 non-road diesel emission standards (40 CFR 1039).

**AIR-MA-05.** Based on annual review required by the CARPP and on the rate of actual oil and gas development, require “no-bleed” pneumatic devices at well pads and production facilities.

**AIR-MA-06.** Require that oil and gas operators use reduced-emission completion technologies (i.e., “green” completions), as defined in Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission Rule 805 and the New Source Performance Standards for Crude Oil and Natural Gas Production at 40 CFR Part 60 subpart OOOO, for all wells on BLM lands and wells that access Federal minerals. An exemption may be granted on a case-by-case basis if the installation of necessary infrastructure is impracticable.

**AIR-MA-07.** Require flaring of natural gas during well completions that are exempted from green completion technology.

**AIR-MA-08.** Prohibit venting of natural gas except during emergency situations.

**AIR-MA-09.** Require that natural-gas-fired reciprocating internal combustion engines at BLM-authorized field compression facilities comply with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Air Quality Control Commission Regulation No. 7, 5 Colorado Code of Regulations 1001-9, Section XVII.E.2 (Emission Standards for New and Relocated Engines) and Section XVII.E.3 (for existing engines).

**AIR-MA-10.** Require compliance with applicable New Source Performance Standards and National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for all internal combustion engines.

**AIR-MA-11.** Powering centralized compression facilities with electricity may be required in the future based on implementation of the CARPP (Appendix H), future availability of adequate electricity, and advances in compression technology.

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### ***Ecological Values***

**ECO-GOAL-01:** Protect key ecological values and natural processes.

**ECO-OBJECTIVE-01:** Provide protection for candidate and sensitive species in addition to supporting important ecological processes throughout the Planning Area.

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**ECO-MA-01.** Apply NGD/NSO, SSR/CSU, COAs, and BMPs to provide protections to minimize impacts to an acceptable level and support sustainable ecosystem processes.

**ECO-MA-02.** Design and implement COAs, BMPs, other mitigation, and monitoring on a site-specific basis to mitigate the effects of surface disturbance.

**ECO-MA-03.** Designate four ACECs. Specific stipulations and mitigation measures are identified independently of ACEC designation for protection of various resources and are detailed in Section 2.1.3.3, Special Designations.

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### ***Vegetation Resources***

**VEG-GOAL-01:** Manage vegetation resources in a long-term, sustainable manner, protecting the soil, hydrologic, and watershed conditions that support them.

**VEG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Enhance the health, productivity, and ecological condition of native and other desirable plant communities, including the integrity of native stands of aspen, mountain shrubs, grasslands, and conifers.

**VEG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Optimize forage production, given other uses and objectives.

**VEG-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01.** Use habitat restoration as a tool to create and/or maintain landscapes that benefit GRSG.

**VEG-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02.** Use Integrated Vegetation Management to control, suppress, and eradicate, where possible, noxious and invasive species per BLM Handbook H-1740-2.

**VEG-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-03:** In all Sagebrush Focal Areas and Priority Habitat Management Areas, the desired condition is to maintain a minimum of 70% of lands capable of producing sagebrush with 10 to 30% sagebrush canopy cover. The attributes necessary to sustain these habitats are described in Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (BLM Tech Ref 1734-6).

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**VEG-MA-01.** Require reclamation practices, BMPs, and performance-based success criteria as COAs in all surface-disturbing project proposals designed to reestablish and maintain native species.

**VEG-MA-02.** Require reclamation plans, reclamation monitoring plans, and weed management plans for all disturbances larger than 1.0 acre in size. Reclamation plans would contain specifics such as elevation, precipitation dependent seed mixes, topsoil management, site preparation, etc.

**VEG-MA-03.** Require annual monitoring/reporting of reclamation status and success for all disturbances larger than 1.0 acre in size until reclamation meets five-year reclamation standards or until defined revegetation success criteria are achieved (Appendix G).

**VEG-MA-04.** Develop and implement economically feasible grazing systems and range improvements.

**VEG-MA-05.** Defer grazing use for two growing seasons on disturbed areas larger than 0.5 acre (e.g., a fire event, reclamation of disturbed lands, or vegetation treatment), or until site-specific analysis and monitoring data indicate that vegetation cover, species composition, and litter accumulation are adequate to support and protect watershed values and meet vegetation objectives. The method of enclosure would depend on land health assessments and site-specific factors, as part of an implementation level decision.

**VEG-MA-06.** Establish vegetative site potential using Ecological Site Inventories, based on Natural Resource Conservation Service procedures and standards (or a comparable methodology) incorporating soil and vegetation data, for at least the 10 most extensive vegetation communities in the Planning Area to aid in the development of site-specific reclamation standards.

**VEG-MA-07.** Develop desired future condition objectives that support quantitative assessment of revegetation success and adaptive management decisions for other resources.

Incorporate vegetation management objectives for the most extensive vegetation communities into activity siting decisions, project proposals, mitigation requirements for permits, and COA decisions.

**VEG-MA-08.** Utilize range, fuels and fire, and vegetation management activities that protect and/or enhance the health and productivity of native and other desirable plant communities and wildlife habitat.

**Standards:**

- Use only native plant species for revegetation (preferably locally adapted), unless in areas with a high risk of becoming dominated by cheatgrass or other undesirable species under conditions where only nonnative species have been proven effective and not within a 0.62-mile (1.0-kilometer) buffer around any T&E plant species occurrence (as consistent with BLM Manual 1745 or Handbook 1742-1).
- Activities should be designed to maintain or improve ecological condition.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-01.** In All Designated Habitat (ADH), when planning restoration treatments in GRSG habitat, identify seasonal habitat availability, and prioritize treatments in areas that are thought to be limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance, in accordance with the Prioritization section of the narrative for Alternative D, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**VEG-GRSG-MA-02.** The habitat objectives for GRSG (Table 2-5 in Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]) are a list of indicators



and values that describe GRSG seasonal habitat conditions. The values for the indicators were derived using a synthesis of current local and regional GRSG habitat research and data and reflect variability of ecological sites. The habitat cover indicators are consistent with existing indicators used by BLM.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-03.** When determining if a site is meeting habitat objectives, the measurements from that particular site would be assessed based on the range of values for the indicators in Table 2-5. Table 2-5 is one component of GRSG multi-scale habitat assessment (see Appendix F, Greater Sage-Grouse Monitoring Framework) (Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]). The results of the habitat assessment would be used during the land health evaluation to ascertain if the land health standard applicable to GRSG habitat (e.g., special status species habitat standard) is being met.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-04.** When authorizing activities in GRSG habitat, the BLM would consider if habitat objectives are being achieved. If the habitat objectives are not being achieved and the site has the potential for achieving these objectives, the BLM would determine the causal factor(s) and make the necessary management adjustments to address the causal factor(s), following current BLM regulations and policy.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-05.** Treat areas that contain *Bromus tectorum* and other invasive or noxious species to minimize competition and favor establishment of desired species.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-06.** Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied GRSG habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and principles like those included in the Fire and Invasives Assessment Team report (Chambers et. al. 2014) and other ongoing modeling efforts to address conifer encroachment will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-07.** In GRSG GHMA, when planning restoration treatments in GRSG habitat, identify seasonal habitat availability and prioritize treatments in areas that are thought to be limiting GRSG distribution and/or abundance, in accordance with the Prioritization section of the narrative for Alternative D, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**VEG-GRSG-MA-08.** In GRSG PHMA, include GRSG habitat parameters or if available, State GRSG Conservation plans and appropriate local information in habitat restoration objectives. Make meeting these objectives within GRSG PHMA areas a high restoration priority.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-09.** In GRSG GHMA require use of native plant seeds that are beneficial for GRSG, for vegetation treatments based on availability, adaptation (site potential), probability for success, and the vegetation management objectives for the area covered by the treatment. Where probability of success or native seed availability is low, use species that meet soil stability and hydrologic function objectives as well as vegetation and GRSG habitat objectives.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-10.** In GRSG PHMA, design post-restoration management to ensure long-term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing, wild horse and burro, and travel management, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) projects to benefit GRSG.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-11.** In GRSG GHMA, manage for a habitat objective that is primarily sagebrush with a mosaic of seral stages and sagebrush in all age classes.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-12.** On a site-by-site basis, do not allow treatments that would adversely affect GRSG populations.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-13.** Remove conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitats. Prioritize treatments closest to occupied sage-grouse habitats and near occupied leks, and where juniper encroachment is phase 1 or phase 2. Use of site-specific analysis and principles like those included in the FIAT report and other ongoing modeling efforts to address conifer encroachment will help refine the location for specific priority areas to be treated, in Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**VEG-GRSG-MA-14.** In GRSG GHMA, make reestablishment of sagebrush and desirable understory plant cover (relative to ecological site potential) the highest priority for restoration efforts.

**VEG-GRSG-MA-15.** Consider GRSG habitat requirements in conjunction with all resource values managed by the BLM, and give preference to GRSG habitat unless site-specific circumstances warrant an exemption.

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### ***Riparian/Wetland Resources***

**RIP-GOAL-01:** Ensure healthy and vigorous riparian plant communities.

**RIP-OBJECTIVE-01:** Achieve a minimum condition rating of Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) and late-seral stage plant community development, and provide high-quality fisheries habitat atop the plateau.

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**RIP-MA-01.** Establish condition ratings based on Ecological Site Indices (or equivalent assessments of potential natural vegetation based on site and soil characteristics and conditions). Manage to improve riparian-related fisheries habitat atop the plateau based on site potential findings.

**RIP-MA-02.** Apply NGD/NSO protections to riparian vegetation to avoid direct impacts.

**RIP-MA-03.** Apply SSR/CSU stipulations to riparian/wetland areas to avoid indirect impacts.

**RIP-MA-04.** Avoid or mitigate activities that could cause a downward trend in the condition of riparian resources or functioning condition.

**RIP-MA-05.** Initiate activity plans that identify habitat improvement projects to achieve desired conditions.

**RIP-MA-06.** Close, reclaim, or relocate routes that are negatively impacting the stream and/or riparian zones.

**RIP-MA-07.** Locate new routes outside riparian zones to reduce or eliminate negative impacts.

**RIP-MA-08.** Initiate riparian restoration projects within those systems that have been identified as not functioning, or functioning at risk with a downward or static trend, and in those reaches of streams where fisheries habitat can be enhanced.

**RIP-MA-09.** Implement grazing management on riparian/wetland areas that would result in achieving PFC and late-seral stage plant community development and improve fisheries habitat.

**Standards:**

- Mitigate or relocate activities that would fall within 500 feet of the outer edge of the riparian vegetation.
- Avoid surface-disturbing activities within a 0.5-mile buffer on either side of the Colorado River.
- Management actions in and near riparian areas atop the plateau should not only result in a PFC rating surpassing the minimum standards, but also provide for high-quality fisheries habitat for the CRCT.

**RIP-MA-10.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-23: Riparian and Wetland Habitat. NSO to protect approximately 130 acres of riparian or wetland vegetation. Ground-disturbing activities including oil and gas facilities, roads, pipelines, electric transmission lines, communication facilities, and other sources of surface disturbance are limited to areas beyond the outer edge of riparian or wetland vegetation.

**RIP-MA-11.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-07: Riparian and Wetland Habitat. CSU to protect 3,770 acres of riparian and wetland habitat. The BLM may require special design, construction, operation, mitigation, or reclamation measures, and/or relocation by more than 200 meters for any ground-disturbing activities, electric transmission lines, and other sources of disturbance within 500 feet of riparian or wetland vegetation to protect the values and functions of these areas. Measures required will be based on the nature, extent, and value of the area potentially affected.

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***Noxious Weeds***

**NOX-GOAL-01:** Maintain healthy native vegetation free of noxious weeds and exotic (introduced) species on Federal lands within the Planning Area.

**NOX-OBJECTIVE-01:** Promote natural processes and healthy native plant communities to deter noxious weeds while minimizing and, to the extent practicable, eradicating noxious weeds and undesirable exotic species on Federal lands within the Planning Area.

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**NOX-MA-01.** Implement an integrated weed management program (which includes a weed management plan; pre-disturbance weed mapping; and mechanical, biological, and chemical control techniques).

**NOX-MA-02.** For activities creating a surface disturbance larger than 1.0 acre, require a weed management plan that emphasizes and details prevention, inventory, detection, eradication, monitoring efforts, corrective measures, and other weed control actions.

**NOX-MA-03.** Require weed-free seed for reclamation activities.

**NOX-MA-04.** Require the use of weed-free hay and feed for livestock.

**NOX-MA-05.** Require weed control actions for all disturbances, including those less than 1.0 acre in size.

**NOX-MA-06.** Require prompt reclamation of all disturbed areas with native species.

**Standards:**

- To the extent practicable, eradicate all noxious weeds and minimize the occurrence of exotic species within the Planning Area.
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***Terrestrial Wildlife***

**TEW-GOAL-01:** Protect important wildlife habitats atop the plateau and below the rim.

**TEW-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect wildlife security areas, habitat connectivity, habitat carrying capacity, and winter range.

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**TEW-MA-01.** Within the constraints of other resource management objectives and activities, maintain or enhance habitats capable of sustaining existing or increasing populations of wildlife.

**TEW-MA-02.** Minimize loss of habitat connectivity and displacement of wildlife through design and siting of allowed activities.

**TEW-MA-03.** Maintain or enhance big game habitat through vegetation management to improve habitat quantity and quality.

**TEW-MA-04.** Apply travel restrictions on new and existing routes atop the plateau and within or near wildlife security areas.

**TEW-MA-05.** Cluster disturbances to limit fragmentation, or loss of roadless wildlife habitat, below the rim.

**TEW-MA-06.** Encourage offsite mitigation across the landscape, in consultation with CPW, to offset impacts to wildlife habitat.

**TEW-MA-07.** Stipulation CSU-NSO-Roan-27: Wildlife Seclusion Areas Below the Rim. NSO to protect important wildlife security areas below the rim, especially those for deer and elk. No ground-disturbing activities in approximately 6,830 acres that provide high-value habitats along and below the base of the Roan Cliffs.

**TEW-MA-08.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-09: Wildlife Security Areas Above the Rim. CSU to protect important wildlife security areas above the rim, especially deer and elk. Ground disturbing activities may be relocated more than 200 meters to avoid approximately 2,020 acres of wildlife security areas above the rim.

**TEW-MA-09.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-10. Big Game Migration Corridors. CSU to protect contiguity and extent of big game migration corridors. Ground-disturbing activities may be relocated more than 200 meters to avoid approximately 580 acres of big game migration corridors.

**TEW-MA-10.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-11. Sensitive Bat Species Habitat. CSU to protect and preserve bat habitat values of the Anvil Points Claystone Cave. Special design, construction, implementation, and/or mitigation measures including relocation of operations by more than 200 meters to protect approximately 120 acres of habitat may be required for those species listed as sensitive by BLM.

**TEW-MA-11.** Stipulation GS-TL-Roan-13. Big Game Winter Range. Timing Limitation (TL) to protect and maintain physical and biological components important to deer and elk winter range (approximately

31,410 acres) and the obligate species, both on Federal lands and across the landscape as a whole, as opportunities present. This includes reducing or eliminating stress-induced impacts to deer and elk associated with human activity during critical winter months when animals are already stressed by environmental factors and concentrated on limited winter range. Surface disturbance and human activities that lessen the quality of the deer and elk winter range will not be allowed from December 1 to April 30. Ongoing drilling and other activities and operations will be designed and implemented such that the well bore is adequately secured and that all drilling and surface-disturbing operations cease by December 1 in important and critical deer and elk winter habitats. In the event of unforeseeable and unplanned events, extensions not exceeding two weeks in duration may be authorized to ensure safe shutdown of drilling operations, and conservation of mineral resources.

Human activities, including visitations for production activities and well monitoring from December 1 to April 30, will be designed and carried out to minimize impacts.

This includes well monitoring through telemetry, scheduling of all nonemergency well maintenance activities outside the December 1 to April 30 timeframe, conducting unavoidable and necessary on-the-ground visits between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., and minimizing on-the-ground visitations.

**TEW-MA-12.** Stipulation CRVFO-TL-Roan-3: Elk Production Area. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface disturbing activities from April 15 to June 30 in mapped elk production areas to reduce behavioral disruption during parturition and early young rearing period. This stipulation does not apply to operation and maintenance of production facilities.

**Exception:** The Field Manager may grant an exception if an environmental analysis indicates that the Proposed Action can be conditioned so as not to interfere with habitat function or compromise animal condition within the project vicinity. An exception may also be granted if the proponent, BLM, and CPW negotiate compensation that would satisfactorily offset anticipated impacts to big game production or habitat condition, or an agreement can be reached whereby a Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission wildlife mitigation plan can be accommodated consistent with established RMP objectives and decisions. An exception may also be granted for actions intended to enhance the long-term utility for availability of suitable habitat.

**Modification:** The Field Manager may modify the size and time frames of this stipulation if CPW monitoring information indicates that current animal use patterns are inconsistent with dates established for animal occupation.

**Waiver:** This stipulation may be waived if CPW determines that the area is no longer utilized by big game for production purposes.

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### *Avian Wildlife*

**AVW-GOAL-01:** Protect raptor nests and nesting raptors from human disturbances. Avoid the construction of facilities hazardous to raptors.

**AVW-OBJECTIVE-01:** Comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Avoid destruction or abandonment of the nest or reduction in nesting productivity.

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**AVW-MA-01.** Apply NSO and TL stipulations to nest sites. The cliff nesting complex for peregrine falcon on the cliffs and wildlife seclusion areas above the rim would be protected with SSR/CSU, rather than NGD/NSO restrictions, because the peregrine falcon is now a sensitive species rather than threatened or endangered.

**Standards:**

- No surface disturbances would be allowed within a 0.125-mile radius of a nest site for owls, ospreys, golden eagles, hawks, accipiters, and falcons (except kestrels).
- The buffer for the peregrine falcon cliff nesting complex and bald eagle roost or nest sites would be a 0.25-mile radius.
- TL stipulations would apply during the roosting and nesting season of each species.

**AVW-MA-02.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-25: Raptor Nest Sites. NSO to protect approximately 590 acres around raptor nest areas not protected by the ESA or other species-specific stipulation. No ground-disturbing activities within 0.125 mile of an active nest (i.e., containing eggs or young or being attended by adults in preparation for nesting).

**AVW-MA-03.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-26: Bald Eagle Nest or Winter Roost Sites. NSO to protect approximately 380 acres of bald eagle nest, winter roost sites, and winter range. No ground disturbing activities within 0.25 mile of designated bald eagle nesting or roosting habitat, within bald eagle winter range, or within 0.25 mile of Fravert Reservoir (subject to valid existing rights and authorizations).

**AVW-MA-04.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-08: Peregrine Falcon Cliff Nesting Complex. CSU to protect approximately 10 acres of peregrine falcon cliff nesting complex. Ground-disturbing activities may be relocated outside of the cliff-nesting complex along the Roan Cliffs.

**AVW-MA-05.** Stipulation GS-TL-Roan-14: Raptor Nest Sites. TL to protect approximately 2,300 acres of nesting and fledging habitat for raptors not protected by species-specific measures. This includes owls, northern harriers, accipiters, hawks, golden eagle, osprey, and falcons except the American kestrel.

Within a 0.25-mile radius of a nest, no activities or other sources of disturbance with the potential to cause the nest not to be used or lead to nest failure, abandonment, or mortality of fledglings will be allowed. Stipulations will be applied annually from February 1 through August 15.

**AVW-MA-06.** Stipulation GS-TL-Roan-15: Bald Eagle Nest or Winter Roost Sites. TL to protect approximately 510 acres of nesting, fledging, and winter roost habitat of the bald eagle. Within a 0.5-mile radius of a nest, no activities or other sources of disturbance that could cause the nest not to be used or lead to nest abandonment, failure, or mortality of fledglings will be allowed. Stipulations will be applied annually from November 15 through June 15.

**AVW-MA-07.** Stipulation GS-TL-Roan-16: Peregrine Falcon Cliff Nesting Complex. TL to protect approximately 130 acres of nesting and fledging habitat of the State-listed threatened peregrine falcon. Within a 0.5-mile radius of the cliff-nesting complex on the Roan Cliffs, no activities or other sources of disturbance that could cause abandonment of a nest or established territory will be allowed. Stipulations will be applied annually, from March 15 through July 31.

**AVW-MA-08.** Stipulation GS-TL-Roan-17: Waterfowl and Shorebird Nesting Areas. TL to protect approximately 90 acres of nesting and brood-rearing habitats at the Fravert Reservoir Watchable Wildlife Area. No ground-disturbing activities or other sources of disturbance, from April 15 through July 15, or until all young have hatched and dispersed from the production area, or that could cause waterfowl and shorebirds not to nest or lead to nest failure or abandonment within 0.25 mile of the nesting and production area of Fravert Reservoir will be allowed.

**AVW-MA-09.** Stipulation CRVFO-TL-Roan-1: Migratory Bird Nesting Season. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities from May 15 to July 15. The stipulation would be applied based on biological surveys and species habitat preferences.

**Purpose:** To protect use of nesting and fledgling habitat for Birds of Conservation Concern.

**Exception:** Standard exceptions apply. The application of the timing limitation would consider the type of equipment to be used, the scale, and the duration of the project; species potentially present; habitat types present; breeding phenology; weather conditions; elevation; distance to known nests; and terrain.

**Modification:** Standard modifications apply.

**Waiver:** Standard waivers apply.

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### ***Aquatic Wildlife***

**AQW-GOAL-01:** Maintain and enhance habitats important to CRCT and other native fish.

**AQW-OBJECTIVE-01:** Maintain or improve water quality, natural stream flow, and stream ecological function by preventing or minimizing direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts to CRCT or their habitat.

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**AQW-MA-01.** Prior to conducting surface disturbance in the WMA, collect baseline data to assess current local hydrological and ecological conditions.

**AQW-MA-02.** Continue water quality monitoring throughout development of surface-disturbing activities until reclamation is complete.

**AQW-MA-03.** Require project-specific design and mitigation such that proposed actions and site locations would prevent or minimize reductions in natural stream flow, additional sedimentation or other degradation of water quality, or adverse impacts to stream ecological function for reaches containing cutthroat trout habitat, and reaches upstream from occupied habitat.

#### **Standards:**

- Required design components may include construction design, implementation of BMPs, mitigation, reclamation, revegetation, monitoring (to guide adaptive management), and erosion control. Project design would incorporate baseline studies, other results as available, and require monitoring of mitigation components sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness.
- Relocate activities, as necessary, to minimize negative impacts to water quality and stream ecological function.
- Recognize valid existing water rights.
- Design culvert and bridge installations such that erosion and sedimentation would be minimized, structures would function properly with anticipated water flows, and fish passage would be facilitated.
- Consider activities designed to provide long-term habitat improvement or protection, such as culvert or bridge installation or bank stabilization actions.

- Assess terms of indicator values for Public Land Health Standard #2 – Riparian Systems, #3 – Plant and Animal Communities, #4 – Special Status Species, and #5 – Water Quality.

**AQW-MA-04.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-28: High-value Special Status Fish Species Habitat. NSO to protect CRCT from direct and indirect impacts in high-value habitat. No ground-disturbing activities in approximately 1,820 acres that would result in loss or degradation of areas designated as high-value habitat for CRCT.

**AQW-MA-05.** Stipulation CRVFO-TL-01: Salmonid and Native Non-Salmonid Fishes. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities during species-specific spawning periods to reduce impacts to breeding adults, eggs, emerging larval fish, and avoid stream channel disturbances.

**Non-Special Status Species:**

- Rainbow trout: March 1 to June 15
- Brown trout: October 1 to May 1
- Brook trout: August 15 to May 1

**Special Status Species:**

- Cutthroat trout: May 1 to September 1
- Bluehead sucker: May 1 to July 15
- Flannelmouth sucker: April 1 to July 1
- Roundtail chub: May 15 to July 15
- Mountain sucker: May 1 to July 15

**Purpose:** To promote recruitment by protecting adult fish, redds (egg masses) in the gravel, and emerging fry during spawning periods. Exception: Standard exceptions apply.

**Modification:** Standard modifications apply.

**Waiver:** Standard waivers apply.

***Special Status Plants and Significant Plant Communities***

**SSP-GOAL-01:** Prevent the need for listing of proposed, candidate, and sensitive species under the ESA and improve the condition of special status species and their habitats to a point where their special status recognition is no longer warranted. Promote recovery of special status plant species that may become listed.

**SSP-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage listed, proposed, or candidate threatened or endangered species to comply with the provisions of the ESA and promote their recovery. Manage BLM sensitive and significant plant communities consistent with the Colorado Standards for Public Land Health and with BLM policy on Special Status Species Management (BLM Manual 6840).



**SSP-MA-01.** Any species that is listed in the future or moved to candidate status would be protected through application of a NGD/NSO.

**SSP-MA-02.** Sensitive species and significant plant communities would be protected through the application of a SSR/CSU.

**SSP-MA-03.** Designate four ACECs. ACECs serve to highlight the importance of natural values. Specific stipulations and mitigation measures are identified independently of ACEC designation for protection of various resources and are detailed in Section 2.1.3.3, Special Designations.

**SSP-MA-04.** Within the WMA, prevent disruption, alteration, or interruption of surface and subsurface water flows that support rare and/or significant natural plant communities. Implement WMA management prescriptions, as detailed in Section 2.1.3.3, Special Designations.

**SSP-MA-05.** Take action to protect against invasion and establishment of noxious weeds or other aggressive exotic plants, including nonnative species used for reclamation or vegetation treatments.

**SSP-MA-06.** Close selected routes to protect special status species and significant plant communities.

**SSP-MA-07.** Prohibit collection of rare plants or plant parts, except for scientific research as approved by USFWS in the case of T&E plants, and with a valid collection permit.

**SSP-MA-08.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-24: Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Species Habitat. NSO to protect occupied habitat, designated critical habitat, and immediately adjacent potential habitat crucial for the maintenance or recovery of species listed under the ESA or by the State of Colorado as threatened or endangered (including proposed or candidate species under the ESA). No ground-disturbing activities within approximately 290 acres of habitat currently mapped as occupied, critical habitat, or immediately adjacent to potential habitat.

**SSP-MA-09.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-12: Habitat for BLM Sensitive Plant Species Populations and Significant Plant Communities. CSU to protect approximately 8,030 acres of special status plant species or significant plant communities. The BLM may require special design, construction, operation, mitigation, or reclamation measures, and/or relocation by more than 200 meters for any ground-disturbing activities, electric transmission lines, and other sources for disturbance within a watershed that would disturb, alter, or interrupt the hydrologic or ecological processes that support special status plant species or significant plant communities.

Special status plants include the following: DeBeque milkvetch (*Astragalus debequaeus*), DeBeque phacelia (*Phacelia submutica*), hanging garden sullivania (*Sullivantia hapemani*), Parachute penstemon (*Penstemon debilis*), Piceance bladderpod (*Lesquerella parviflora*), Roan Cliffs blazingstar (*Mentzelia rhizomata*), sun-loving meadowrue (*Thalictrum heliophilum*), and Utah fescue (*Argillochloa dasyclada*).

### ***Special Status Fish and Wildlife Species***

**SSW-GOAL-01:** Protect, preserve, restore, recover, and enhance special status fish and wildlife species and their habitats.

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-01:** Implement actions originating from laws, regulations, and policies and conform to day-to-day management, monitoring, and administrative functions not specifically addressed in the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-02:** Conserve, enhance, and restore the sagebrush ecosystem upon which GRSG populations depend in an effort to maintain or increase their abundance and distribution, in cooperation with other conservation partners.

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-03:** Comply with State and Federal laws, regulations, policies, and standards, including FLPMA multiple-use mandates.

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-04:** Implement actions originating from laws, regulations, and policies and conform to day-to-day management, monitoring, and administrative functions not specifically addressed (see Appendix G, Mitigation Strategy; Appendix F, Monitoring Framework (Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-05:** Preserve valid existing rights, which include any leases, claims, or other use authorizations established before a new or modified authorization, change in land designation, or new or modified regulation is approved. Existing fluid mineral leases are managed through COAs.

**SSW-GRSG-GOAL-06:** Collaborate with adjacent landowners, Federal and State agencies, local governments, tribes, communities, other agencies, and other individuals and organizations, as needed, to monitor and implement decisions to achieve desired resource conditions.

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect supporting habitat and ecosystem integrity and function; maintain or improve water quality and stream flow; and manage, in accordance with recovery plans and Conservation Agreement and Strategies for the CRCT, the three species (bluehead sucker, flannelmouth sucker, and roundtail chub), and Colorado River endangered fishes (Colorado pike minnow, razorback sucker, bonytail chub, and humpback chub).

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-02:** Manage the Colorado River Endangered Fishes (Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, bonytail, and humpback chub) in accordance with existing recovery plans and consultations completed with the USFWS.

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-03:** Implement the strategies outlined in the Conservation Agreement and Strategy for CRCT in the States of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-04:** Implement the strategies outlined in the Range-Wide Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Roundtail Chub, Bluehead Sucker, and Flannelmouth Sucker.

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-05:** Manage special status fish and wildlife consistent with the Colorado Standards for Public Land Health and BLM direction for the management of special status species in BLM Manual 6840.

**SSW-OBJECTIVE-06:** Protect habitat for the Townsend's big-eared bat that inhabits the Anvil Points Claystone Cave. This includes preventing or minimizing direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts to this species' habitats.

**SSW-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Promote maintenance and recovery of Greater Sage-Grouse by protecting occupied and adjacent habitat consistent with the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**SSW-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Maintain and enhance populations and distribution of GRSG by protecting and improving sagebrush habitats and ecosystems that sustain GRSG populations.

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**SSW-MA-01.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-24: Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Species Habitat. NSO to protect occupied habitat, designated critical habitat, and immediately adjacent potential habitat crucial for the maintenance or recovery of species listed under the ESA or by the State of Colorado as threatened or endangered (including proposed or candidate species under the ESA). No ground-disturbing activities within approximately 290 acres of habitat currently mapped as occupied, critical habitat, or immediately adjacent to potential habitat.

**SSW-MA-02.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-11: Sensitive Bat Species Habitat. CSU to protect and preserve bat habitat values of the Anvil Points Claystone Cave. Special design, construction, implementation, and/or mitigation measures, including relocation of operations by more than 200 meters to protect approximately 120 acres of habitat, may be required for species listed as sensitive by BLM.

**SSW-MA-03.** Temporary closures will be considered in accordance with 43 CFR 8364 (Closures and Restrictions); 43 CFR 8351 (Designated National Area); 43 CFR 6302 (Use of Wilderness Areas, Prohibited Acts, and Penalties); and 43 CFR 8341 (Conditions of Use).

**SSW-MA-04.** Temporary closure or restriction orders under these authorities are enacted at the discretion of the authorized officer to resolve management conflicts and protect persons, property, and public lands and resources. Where an authorized officer determines that OHVs are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects on soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources, the affected areas shall be immediately closed to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence (43 CFR 8341.2). A closure or restriction order should be considered only after other management strategies and alternatives have been explored. The duration of temporary closure or restriction orders should be limited to 24 months or less; however, certain situations may require longer closures and/or iterative temporary closures. This may include closure of routes or areas.

**SSW-MA-05.** In undertaking BLM management actions, and consistent with valid and existing rights and applicable law in authorizing third-party actions, BLM will apply the lek buffer distances identified in the U.S. Geological Survey Conservation Buffer Distance Estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse – A Review (Open File Report 2014-1239) in accordance with Appendix B, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**SSW-MA-06.** In all sage-grouse habitat, in undertaking BLM management actions, and, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, in authorizing third-party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, BLM will require and ensure mitigation that provides a net conservation gain to the species, including accounting for any uncertainty associated with the effectiveness of such mitigation. This will be achieved by avoiding, minimizing, and compensating for impacts by applying beneficial mitigation actions.

**SSW-GRSG-MA-01.** Stipulation GRSG-NSO-46e1. NSO within 2 miles of Active GRSG leks; on GRSG GHMA, no exceptions anticipated.

Stipulation GRSG-NSO-46e2. Exceptions, modifications, and waivers on the remainder of PHMA. Authorized Officer could grant an exception or modification in consultations with the State of Colorado.

Note: Incorporates stipulation NSO-46e(2) from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**SSW-GRSG-MA-02.** Stipulation GRSG-TL-46e. No activity associated with construction, drilling, or completions within 4 miles from active leks during lekking, nesting, and early brood rearing (March 1-July 15).

**SSW-GRSG-MA-03.** Stipulation GRSG-TL-PHMA-ROW-TL. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface disturbing activities associated with BLM ROW permits within 4 miles from active leks during lekking, nesting, and early brood rearing (March 1- July 15).

Note: Incorporates stipulation GRSG-TL-PHMA-ROW-TL from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**SSW-GRSG-MA-04.** Stipulation GRSG-PHMA-LN-46e. Any lands leased in PHMA are subject to the restrictions of 1 disturbance per 640 acres calculated by CO management zone to allow clustered development.

Note: Incorporates stipulation GRSG-PHMA-LN-46e from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**SSW-GRSG-MA-05.** Stipulation GRSG-PHMA-LN-54e. Within PHMA operators would be encouraged to complete Master Development Plans in consultation with the State of Colorado, instead of single well Applications for Permit to Drill for all exploratory wells.

Note: Incorporates stipulation GRSG-PHMA-LN-54e from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

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## ***Visual Resources***

**VIS-GOAL-01:** Protect and maintain visual and aesthetic qualities in sensitive areas, while allowing for changes to visual quality in less sensitive areas.

**VIS-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage changes in the landscape to maintain and protect visual qualities, as identified by Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class designations throughout the Planning Area.

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**VIS-MA-01.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-31: East Fork Falls Viewshed (CRM Class I). NSO to protect East Fork Falls Viewshed (VRM Class I).

**VIS-MA-02.** Stipulation GS-NSO-Roan-30: Interstate 70 (I-70) Viewshed (Class II). NSO to protect 9,780 acres of the VRM Class II, I-70 viewshed. No ground-disturbing activities on slopes steeper than 30 percent with high visual sensitivity in the I-70 viewshed. These are lands within 5 miles of the highway, of moderate to high visual exposure, where details of vegetation and landform are readily discernible, and changes in contrast can be easily noticed by the casual observer on I-70.

**VIS-MA-03.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-14: VRM Class II Areas Below the Rim. CSU to protect approximately 23,740 acres in VRM Class II areas. The BLM may require special design, construction, operation, mitigation, or reclamation measures, or relocation by more than 200 meters in VRM Class II areas below the rim to retain the existing landscape character and allow only limited changes.

**VIS-MA-04.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-15: VRM Class III Areas Above the Rim. CSU to protect 4,190 acres of VRM Class III areas on top of the plateau. The BLM may require special design, construction, operation, mitigation, or reclamation measures, or relocation by more than 200 meters in VRM Class III areas.

**VIS-MA-05.** Manage lands below the rim adjacent to Highway 13 and urban areas as VRM Class IV, which allow for major modifications to the existing landscape character.

**VIS-MA-06.** Restrictions based on VRM would not apply to the existing utility corridor.

**VIS-MA-07.** VRM Classes (acres):

- Class I: 1,620
  - Class II: 30,400
  - Class III: 33,510
  - Class IV: 8,280
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### ***Lands with Wilderness Characteristics***

**LWC-GOAL-01:** Reduce impacts to wilderness characteristics to preserve the social, cultural, economic, scientific, and ecological benefits they provide to current and future generations.

**LWC-OBJECTIVE-01:** Achieve indirect protection of some wilderness characteristics through application of protections for other natural resources.

**LWC-MA-01.** No areas would be managed specifically to maintain wilderness characteristics. However, protections for various resources may have the effect of maintaining some wilderness characteristics (e.g., roadlessness and naturalness) within NGD/NSO allocations.

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### ***Cultural Resources***

**CUL-GOAL-01:** Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations (FLPMA Sec. 103(c), 201(a), 202(c); NHPA Sec. 110(a); Archeological Resources Protection Act Sec. 14(a)).

**CUL-GOAL-02:** Reduce imminent threats and resolve potential conflicts from natural or human-caused deterioration or potential conflict with other resource uses by ensuring that all authorizations for land use and resource use will comply with Section 106 of the NHPA.

**CUL-OBJECTIVE-01:** Implement the site use allocations as listed in Appendix C of the Class I Cultural Resource Overview of the Roan Plateau Management Area, Garfield County, Colorado and apply use allocations for cultural resources identified since 2002 and in the future according to their nature and relative preservation value (BLM Manual Section 8110.42 and Planning Handbook H-1601-1 Appendix C).

**CUL-OBJECTIVE-02:** Comply with the NHPA, National Programmatic Agreement/2014 State Protocol Agreement, WO-IB-2002-101, and other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

**CUL-OBJECTIVE-03:** Use the sensitivity model developed from the Class I Cultural Resource Overview of the Roan Plateau Management Area, Garfield County, Colorado in the Section 106 compliance process.

**CUL-OBJECTIVE-04:** Fulfill the requirements of “Section 106” of the NHPA, now codified at 54 U.S.C. § 306108 (formerly 16 U.S.C. § 470f), for the travel and transportation management decisions, as set forth in Attachment F of the 2014 Colorado State Agreement (Protocol) between the Colorado SHPO and BLM. For existing routes (for which continued use is proposed under all alternatives), Attachment F establishes a phased process for the identification and evaluation of adverse effects to historic properties eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and for resolution of those potential adverse effects in consultation with the SHPO. In accordance with Attachment F, BLM will comply with the steps in the Section 106 regulations for proposed designations of new routes or areas as open to cross country travel prior to issuing a decision designating such new routes or areas, including consultation with the SHPO, Native American tribes, and other consulting parties, completion of a Class III inventory, and, as appropriate, resolution of adverse effects prior to designation.

**CUL-MA-01.** Cultural Resources Fieldwork Actions by Sensitivity Area and Location:

Sensitivity Zone	Survey Management			Management of Cultural Resource Locations		
	Project Location	Areas Not Inventoried	Inventoried Areas (No Resources)	Sites Needing Data	NRHP Eligible Sites	NRHP Not Eligible Sites
High	Atop the plateau	Class III – 100% Inventory	Monitor <sup>1</sup>	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	Monitor <sup>1</sup>
	Below the rim	Class III – 100% Inventory	Monitor <sup>1</sup>	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	No further work
Moderate	Atop the plateau	Class III – 100% Inventory	Monitor <sup>1</sup>	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	Monitor <sup>1</sup>
	Below the rim	Class II – Reconnaissance	No further work	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	No further work
Low	Atop the plateau	Class I – Records Search	No further work	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	No further work
	Below the rim	Class I – Records Search	No further work	Avoid or test <sup>2</sup>	Avoid or implement data recovery plan <sup>3</sup>	No further work

<sup>1</sup> Monitor refers to having a qualified archaeologist onsite during construction/maintenance activities as determined by the Cultural Resource Specialist.

<sup>2</sup> Test refers to evaluative testing and excavation of a site to determine National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility.

<sup>3</sup> Data recovery refers to large-scale excavation of the site for mitigation purposes.

All authorizations for land and resource use would comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, consistent with and subject to the objectives established in the RMPA for the proactive use of cultural properties in the public interest (NHPA Sec. 106, 101(d)(6), 110(a)(2)(E); BLM-ACHP-NCSHPO Programmatic Agreement of March 1997).

Proposed activities would not be authorized until compliance with Section 106 of NHPA has been completed and documented, including, where applicable, consultation with Native American tribes.

Native American consultation for identification and protection of culturally sensitive properties and use areas would occur under all alternatives.

Level of proactive work and/or need for National Register District or ACEC based on Class I overview data and potential impacts of a proposed action.

### 2.1.3.2 Resource Uses

#### *Lands and Realty*

**LRT-GOAL-01:** Provide for compatible land use authorizations within the framework of laws and regulations. Provide for land tenure adjustments and sales to benefit the public interest and facilitate effective land management.

**LRT-OBJECTIVE-01:** Meet agency and public ROWs, utility, land exchange, land tenure adjustments, and consolidation of ownership needs when in the public interest and within the constraints for other resources.

**LRT-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage the Lands and Realty program to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the loss of GRSG habitat and habitat connectivity through the authorizations of ROWs, land tenure adjustments, proposed land withdrawals, agreements with partners, and incentive programs.

**LRT-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Effects of infrastructure projects, including siting, will be minimized using the best available science and updated as monitoring information on current infrastructure projects becomes available.

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**LRT-MA-01.** Acquisition of in-holdings and other lands with important resource values would be encouraged or allowed.

**LRT-MA-02.** Allow development in the existing ROWs corridor along State Highway 13 and I-70.

**LRT-MA-03.** Retain lands atop the plateau and acquire in-holdings atop the plateau. Below the rim, lands would be considered for sale, acquisition, or exchange on a case-by-case basis.

**LRT-MA-04.** Recommend modification of the current oil shale withdrawal affecting the transferred lands to allow for land tenure actions while keeping land closed to mineral location and entry, but retain oil shale withdrawal (without modification) for Anvil Points Facility Repositories 1 and 2 for consistency with perpetual ROW on repositories.

**LRT-MA-05.** Recommend withdrawal of Anvil Points Oil Shale Facility Repository 3.

**LRT-MA-06.** Retain BLM ROW on Anvil Points Facility Repositories 1, 2, and 3.

**LRT-MA-07.** Stipulation CRVFO-NSO-Roan-32: Anvil Points Spent Shale Repositories. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities for spent shale repositories 1, 2, and 3.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-01.** For lands in GHMA that are identified for disposal, the BLM would only dispose of such lands consistent with the goals and objectives of this Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA), including, but not limited to, the LUPA objective to maintain or increase GRSG abundance and distribution, in Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-02.** Manage areas within PHMA as avoidance areas for BLM ROW permits. (See Special Stipulations applicable to GRSG PHMA ROW Avoidance, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-03.** Manage areas within GHMA as avoidance areas for major (transmission lines greater than 100 kilovolts and pipelines greater than 24 inches) and minor BLM ROW permits. (See

Special Stipulations applicable to GRSG PHMA ROW Avoidance, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-04.** No new roads or above-ground structures would be authorized within 1 mile of an active lek.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-05.** Above-ground structures are defined as structures that are located on or above the surface of the ground, including but not limited to: roads, fences, communication towers, and/or any structure that would provide perches.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-06.** Above ground structures would only be authorized if:

- 1) It is consistent with the overall objective of the RMP Amendment;
- 2) The effect on GRSG populations or habitat is nominal or incidental;
- 3) Allowing the exception prevents implementation of an alternative more detrimental to GRSG or similar environmental concern; and
- 4) Rigid adherence to the restriction would be the only reason for denying the action.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-07.** PHMA and GHMA are designated as avoidance areas for high-voltage transmission line ROWs. All authorizations in these areas must comply with the conservation measures outlined here, including the RDFs and avoidance criteria presented in this document.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-08.** GRSG PHMA ROW Avoidance, (Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]) ROWs would not adversely affect GRSG populations based on the following criteria:

- Location of proposed activities in relation to critical GRSG habitat areas as identified by factors, including, but not limited to, average male lek attendance and/or important seasonal habitat.
- An evaluation of the potential threats from proposed activities that may affect the local population as compared to benefits that could be accomplished through compensatory or off-site mitigation (see Section 2.7.3, Regional Mitigation).
- An evaluation of the proposed activities in relation to the site-specific terrain and habitat features. For example, within 4 miles from a lek, local terrain features such as ridges and ravines may reduce the habitat importance and shield nearby habitat from disruptive factors.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-09.** Any new projects within PHMA would be subject to the 3% disturbance cap as described in Appendix H, Guidelines for Implementation of the Proposed Plan (Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]). If the 3% disturbance cap is exceeded in PHMA in any Colorado MZ, no new ROW would be authorized in PHMA within that biologically significant unit (Colorado populations) and proposed project analysis area (Colorado MZ), unless site-specific analysis documents no impact to GRSG.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-10.** GRSG PHMA ROW TL: Prohibit surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities associated with BLM ROW within 4 miles from active leks during lekking, nesting, and early brood-rearing (March 1 to July 15). (See Special Stipulations applicable to GRSG PHMA ROW TL,



Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-11.** (PHMA) Only issue ROWs after documenting that the ROWs will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities (independent of disturbance cap), except where such limitation would make accessing valid existing rights impracticable.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-12.** Construct new roads to the appropriate Gold Book standard and add the surface disturbance to the total disturbance in the PHMA.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-13.** Any new ROW authorizations would be subject to the 3% disturbance cap, and would be evaluated based on an analysis of the following:

- Location of proposed activities in relation to critical GRSG habitat areas as identified by factors, including, but not limited to, average male lek attendance and/or important seasonal habitat.
- An evaluation of the potential threats from proposed activities that may affect the local population as compared to benefits that could be accomplished through compensatory or off-site mitigation (see Section 2.7.3, Regional Mitigation).
- An evaluation of the proposed activities in relation to the site-specific terrain and habitat features. For example, within 4 miles from a lek, local terrain features such as ridges and ravines may reduce the habitat importance and shield nearby habitat from disruptive factors.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-14.** Stipulation GRSG-TL-PHMA-ROW-TL. Prohibit surface occupancy and surface disturbing activities associated with BLM ROW permits within 4 miles from active leks during lekking, nesting, and early brood rearing (March 1- July 15).

Note: Incorporates stipulation GRSG-TL-PHMA-ROW-TL from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-15.** In GRSG PHMA, new ROWs may be collocated within approved ROW corridors that are encumbered by existing ROW authorizations. Apply special stipulations in Appendix D, Stipulations Applicable to Fluid Mineral Leasing and Land Use (Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-16.** In GRSG PHMA, issue ROWs only after documenting that the ROWs will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities (independent of disturbance cap) except where such limitation would make accessing valid existing rights impracticable.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-17.** Any new ROW authorizations would be subject to the 3% disturbance cap, and would be evaluated based on an analysis of the following:

- Location of proposed activities in relation to critical GRSG habitat areas as identified by factors including, but not limited to, average male lek attendance and/or important seasonal habitat.
- An evaluation of the potential threats from proposed activities that may affect the local population as compared to benefits that could be accomplished through compensatory or offsite mitigation. (See Mitigation Strategy, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

- An evaluation of the proposed activities in relation to the site-specific terrain and habitat features. For example, within 4 miles from a lek, local terrain features such as ridges and ravines may reduce the habitat importance and shield nearby habitat from disruptive factors.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-18.** In GRSG PHMA, or within 4 miles of an active lek, for ROW renewals, where existing facilities cannot be removed, buried, or modified, require perch deterrents.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-19.** In GRSG PHMA, reclaim and restore ROWs per regulatory requirements (43 CFR 2805.12(i)(1); 43 CFR 2885.11(b)(9)(i)).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-20.** Designate new ROW corridors in GRSG PHMAs only where there is a compelling reason to do so and location of the corridor within PHMAs will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-21.** Manage areas within GHMA as avoidance areas for major (transmission lines greater than 100 kilovolts and pipelines greater than 24 inches) and minor BLM ROW permits. (See Special Stipulations applicable to GRSG PHMA ROW Avoidance, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**LRT-GRSG-MA-22.** Retain public ownership of GRSG PHMA. Consider exceptions where there is mixed ownership and land exchanges would allow for additional or more contiguous Federal ownership patterns within the GRSG PHMA area.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-23.** In GRSG PHMA, in isolated Federal parcels, only allow tract disposals that are beneficial or neutral to long-term management of GRSG populations.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-24.** For GRSG GHMA:

- 1) For parcels in GHMA for which land retention was analyzed in one alternative (i.e., not analyzed for disposal in every alternative), the allocation for that piece of GHMA should be “retention” in the Proposed Plan.
- 2) For pieces of land in GHMA for which land retention was never analyzed (i.e., analyzed for disposal in every alternative), the lands will remain identified for “disposal” subject to the following drop in: For lands in General Habitat that are identified for disposal, the BLM will only dispose of such lands consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan, including, but not limited to, the land use plan objective to maintain or increase GRSG abundance and distribution.

**LRT-GRSG-MA-25.** In GRSG PHMA, consider petitioning for withdrawal on a case-by-case basis from mineral entry based on risk to GRSG and its habitat.

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### ***Grazing and Rangeland Management***

**GRM-GOAL-01:** Provide livestock forage while maintaining or enhancing healthy landscapes.

**GRM-OBJECTIVE-01:** Grazing management would conform to BLM grazing regulations (43 CFR 4180) and BLM Colorado’s Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Management.

**GRM-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** GRSG objectives and well-managed livestock operations are compatible because forage availability for livestock and hiding cover for GRSG are both dependent on healthy plant communities. Agreements with partners that promote sustainable GRSG populations

concurrent with sustainable ranch operations offer long-term stability. In the context of sustainable range operations, manage the range program to: (1) maintain or enhance vigorous and productive plant communities; (2) maintain residual herbaceous cover to reduce predation during GRSG nesting and early brood rearing; (3) avoid direct adverse impacts to GRSG-associated range project infrastructure; and (4) employ grazing management strategies that avoid concentrating animals on key GRSG habitats during key seasons.

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**GRM-MA-01.** Regularly monitor rangeland health and evaluate existing grazing management practices.

**GRM-MA-02.** Continue to implement the BLM CRVFO Monitoring Plan (Appendix G) and current Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) in conjunction with Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Management to assess overall rangeland health.

**GRM-MA-03.** Develop, implement, and review AMPs on a regularly scheduled basis with grazing permittees with priority for allotments determined not to be meeting Land Health Standards. Apply guidelines and BMPs (Appendix F) to rest and defer grazing of riparian areas.

**GRM-MA-04.** Ensure that Land Health Standards are being met through Land Health surveys and application of the most current version of the CRVFO Monitoring Plan (Appendix G). Use a combination of administrative solutions (season-of-use revisions, livestock exclusion, and stocking level adjustments) and rangeland projects (fences, ponds, etc.) to direct livestock use to meet resource objectives and Land Health Standards, following the latest version of BLM Technical Reference 1734-6 or equivalent documents.

**GRM-MA-05.** Modify or abandon and rehabilitate rangeland projects that do not function to maintain resource values and meet management objectives.

**GRM-MA-06.** Identify criteria for determining the beginning and end of droughts (or droughty periods whether officially declared or not) on the basis of scientifically credible methods, data, and BLM policy (e.g., Palmer Drought Severity Index, Crop Moisture Index, and soil moisture).

**GRM-MA-07.** The authorized officer has the authority to modify grazing based on resource conditions and objectives and the need to protect resources from imminent likelihood of resource damage (43 CFR 4110.3-3(b)).

**GRM-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG GHMA, incorporate GRSG habitat objectives and management considerations into all BLM grazing allotments through Allotment Management Plans or permit renewals.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-02.** In GRSG GHMA, work cooperatively on integrated ranch planning within GRSG habitat. Develop management strategies that are seamless with respect to actions on public and private lands within BLM grazing allotments.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-03.** In GRSG PHMA, the BLM will prioritize:

- the review of grazing permits/leases, in particular to determine whether modification is necessary prior to renewal, and
- the processing of grazing permits/leases in PHMAs.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-04.** In setting workload priorities, precedence will be given to existing permits/leases in these areas not meeting Land Health Standards, with focus on those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-05.** The BLM may use other criteria for prioritization to respond to urgent natural resource concerns (e.g., fire) and legal obligations.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-06.** In GRSG GHMA, conduct land health assessments that include (at a minimum) indicators and measurements of structure/condition/composition of vegetation specific to achieving GRSG habitat objectives. If local/State seasonal habitat objectives are not available, use GRSG habitat recommendations from Connelly et al. 2000 and Hagen et al. 2007.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-07.** In GRSG GHMA, develop specific objectives—through NEPA analysis conducted in accordance with the permit/lease renewal process—to conserve, enhance, or restore GRSG habitat. Base benchmarks on Ecological Site/Range Site Descriptions. When existing Ecological Site/Range Site Descriptions have not been developed, or are too general to serve adequately as benchmarks, identify and document local reference sites for areas of similar potential that exemplify achievement of GRSG habitat objectives and use these sites as the benchmark reference. Establish measurable objectives related to GRSG habitat from baseline monitoring data, ecological site descriptions, or land health assessments/evaluations, or other habitat and successional stage objectives.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-08.** In GRSG GHMA, manage for vegetation composition and structure consistent with ecological site potential and within the reference state subject to habitat objectives, including successional stages.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-09.** In GRSG GHMA, include terms and conditions on grazing permits and leases that address disruptive activities that affect GRSG and that ensure plant growth requirements are met and residual forage remains available for GRSG hiding cover.

Specify as necessary:

- 1) Season or timing of use;
- 2) Numbers of livestock (include temporary non-use or livestock removal);
- 3) Distributions of livestock use;
- 4) Intensity of use (utilization or stubble height objectives);
- 5) Kind of livestock (e.g., cattle, sheep, horse, llama, alpaca, and goat);
- 6) Class of livestock (e.g., yearlings versus cow/calf pairs); and
- 7) Locations of bed grounds, sheep camps, trail routes, etc.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-10.** In GRSG GHMA, develop drought contingency plans at the appropriate landscape unit that provide for a consistent/appropriate BLM response. Plans should establish policy for addressing ongoing drought and post-drought recovery for GRSG habitat objectives.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-11.** In GRSG PHMA, the NEPA analysis for renewals and modifications of livestock grazing permits/leases that include lands within PHMAs would include specific management thresholds

based on GRSG Habitat Objectives Table and Land Health Standards (43 CFR 4180.2) and defined responses that would allow the authorizing officer to make adjustments to livestock grazing without conducting additional NEPA.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-12.** Allotments within PHMAs, focusing on those containing riparian areas, including wet meadows, would be prioritized for field checks to help ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grazing permits. Field checks could include monitoring for actual use, utilization, and use supervision.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-13.** In GRSG GHMA, manage riparian areas and wet meadows for proper functioning condition.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-14.** In GRSG GHMA, manage wet meadows to maintain diverse species richness, including a component of perennial forbs, relative to site potential (i.e., reference state).

**GRM-GRSG-MA-15.** In GRSG GHMA, establish permit/lease terms and conditions (see above) in conjunction with grazing strategies to ensure that the timing and level of utilization results in wet meadows with diverse species richness, including a component of perennial forbs, relative to site potential (i.e., reference state).

**GRM-GRSG-MA-16.** In GRSG GHMA, authorize new water development only after determining that the project will not adversely impact GRSG due to habitat loss. Ensure that adequate long-term grazing management is in effect before authorizing water developments that may increase levels of use or change season of use. Give specific consideration to adjacent or downstream wetland habitat when a project entails a diversion from a spring or seep.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-17.** In GRSG GHMA, analyze springs, seeps, and associated pipelines to determine whether modifications are necessary to maintain the continuity of the predevelopment riparian area. If necessary to maintain GRSG populations or reverse a downward population trend caused by habitat loss, modify the project as necessary to restore the applicable wetland habitat.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-18.** In GRSG GHMA, manage for a habitat objective that is primarily sagebrush with a mosaic of seral stages and sagebrush in all age classes. On a site-by-site basis, do not allow treatments that would adversely affect GRSG populations.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-19.** In GRSG PHMA, evaluate the role of existing seedings that are currently composed of primarily introduced perennial grasses in and adjacent to GRSG PHMA to determine whether they should be restored to sagebrush or habitat of higher quality for GRSG. If these seedings are part of an Allotment Management Plan or if they provide value in conserving or enhancing the rest of the PHMA, then no restoration would be necessary. Assess the compatibility of these seedings for GRSG habitat or as a component of a grazing system during the land health assessments (or other analyses only). For example, some introduced grass seedings are an integral part of a livestock management plan and reduce grazing pressure in important sagebrush habitats or serve as a strategic fuels management area.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-20.** In GRSG GHMA, design new range improvement projects to enhance livestock distribution and control the timing and intensity of utilization. Examples of structural range improvement projects are cattle guards, fences, corrals, pipelines, troughs, storage tanks, windmills, ponds/reservoirs, solar panels, and spring developments.

Include a plan to monitor and control invasive plant species following any related ground disturbance.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-21.** Place mineral or salt supplements away from water sources and leks in locations that enhance livestock distribution.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-22.** In GRSG PHMA, where conditions create the potential for impacts from West Nile virus from developments or modification of water developments, use BMPs to mitigate the potential impacts. See Appendix I, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**GRM-GRSG-MA-23.** In GRSG ADH, at the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease, the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was authorized should remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other resource management objectives, such as reserve common allotments or fire breaks. When a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes grazing preference, consider conversion of the allotment to a reserve common allotment that will remain available for use on a temporary, nonrenewable basis for the benefit of GRSG habitat. Authorize temporary nonrenewal permits in Reserve Common Allotments to meet resource objectives elsewhere such as rest or deferment due to fire or vegetation treatments. Temporary use of reserve common allotments would not be allowed due to drought or overuse of customary allotments.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-24.** In GRSG GHMA, mark fences in high-risk areas.

In GRSG PHMA, where marking fences does not reduce fence-related GRSG mortality, modify fences. Where modification does not reduce GRSG mortality and the fence-related mortality is sufficient to adversely affect GRSG populations, remove fences.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-25.** In GRSG GHMA, monitor for and treat invasive species associated with existing range improvements.

**GRM-GRSG-MA-26.** In ADH, at the time a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes a permit or lease, the BLM will consider whether the public lands where that permitted use was authorized shall remain available for livestock grazing or be used for other resource management objectives, such as reserve common allotments or fire breaks. This does not apply to or impact grazing preference transfers, which are addressed in 43 CFR 4110.2-3.

When a permittee or lessee voluntarily relinquishes grazing preference, consider conversion of the allotment to a reserve common allotment that will remain available for use on a temporary, nonrenewable basis for the benefit of GRSG habitat. Authorize temporary nonrenewal permits in Reserve Common Allotments to meet resource objectives elsewhere, such as rest or deferment due to fire or vegetation treatments. Temporary use of reserve common allotments would not be allowed due to drought or overuse of customary allotments.

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### ***Fluid Minerals***

**FMI-GOAL-01:** Make lands available, as appropriate for oil and gas leasing in an environmentally sound manner, under multiple use mandates. Conduct oil and gas leasing on leasable lands in accordance with the Transfer Act, Mineral Leasing Act, and the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Reform Act of 1987 and applicable regulations under 43 CFR 3100 and in accordance with the decisions made through application of FLPMA and other laws applicable to public lands. Regulations governing onshore oil and gas operations can be found at 43 CFR 3160.

**FMI-OBJECTIVE-01:** Limit lands open to oil and gas leasing and development atop the plateau. Open lands below the rim of the plateau to oil and gas leasing and development. All leases would be subject to

lease notices, stipulations, and standard lease terms and conditions, except as modified by CRVFO-CSU-Roan-17: Lease Area Above the Rim and CRVFO-CSU-Roan-18: Lease Area Below the Rim (Appendix B).

**FMI-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage fluid minerals to avoid, minimize, and compensate for: 1) direct disturbance, displacement, or mortality of GRSG; 2) direct loss of habitat or loss of effective habitat through fragmentation; and 3) cumulative landscape-level impacts. Priority will be given to leasing and development of fluid mineral resources, including geothermal, outside PHMA and GHMA. When analyzing leasing and authorizing development of fluid mineral resources, including geothermal, in PHMA and GHMA, and subject to applicable stipulations for the conservation of GRSG, priority will be given to development in non-habitat areas first and then in the least suitable habitat for GRSG. The implementation of these priorities will be subject to valid existing rights and any applicable law or regulation, including, but not limited to, 30 U.S.C. 226(p) and 43 CFR 3162.3-1(h).

**FMI-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Utilize Federal authority to protect GRSG habitat on split estate lands to the extent provided by law.

**FMI-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-03:** Where a proposed fluid mineral development project on an existing lease could adversely affect GRSG populations or habitat, the BLM will work with the lessees, operators, or other project proponents to avoid, reduce, and mitigate adverse impacts to the extent compatible with lessees' rights to drill and produce fluid mineral resources. The BLM will work with the lessee, operator, or project proponent in developing an Application for Permit to Drill for the lease to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to GRSG or its habitat and will ensure that the best information about GRSG and its habitat informs and helps guide development of such Federal leases.

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**FMI-MA-01.** GS-LN-Roan-34: ESA Consultation.

In addition to standard stipulations, all lands made available for lease would be subject to the following special stipulation:

The lease area may now or subsequently contain threatened, endangered, or other special status species of plants or animals or their habitats. BLM may recommend modifications to exploration and development proposals to further its conservation and management objective to avoid BLM-approved activity that will contribute to a need to list such species or their habitat under the ESA, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). BLM will require modifications to, or disapprove, a proposed activity that is likely to result in jeopardy to the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat. BLM will not approve any ground-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until it completes its obligations under applicable requirements of the ESA, including any required procedure for conference or consultation.

**FMI-MA-02.** Limited areas above the rim would be available for oil and gas leasing and development. Well drilling, well pad construction, and associated actions and facilities, such as upgrading existing roads and constructing well sites, new roads, pipelines, and compressor stations, would be sited and constructed in compliance with CRVFO-CSU-Roan-17: Lease Area Above the Rim (Appendix B).

**FMI-MA-03.** For leases below the rim, prior to exploration and/or lease development, the operator shall submit a proposed MDP identifying its projected activities. Prior to submitting the MDP, the operator shall consult with the CPW and BLM to develop terms that minimize impacts to wildlife and other resources. Agreed-upon terms shall be included in the operator's MDP (CRVFO-CSU-Roan-18: Lease Area Below the Rim [Appendix B]).

**FMI-MA-04:** On lands where exploration and development activities are subject to standard lease terms and conditions plus a stipulation for the protection of species under the ESA, mitigation measures, which may be in the form of COAs, would be developed through the impact analysis process.

**FMI-MA-05:** Stipulation CRVFO-CSU-Roan-17: Lease Area Above the Rim.

- A. No more than seven well pads may be located on the Retained Leases, including pads drilled for either exploration or production activities. Subject to onsite inspection and approval by BLM and other regulatory agencies, well pads shall be located approximately as depicted in the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I).

Each well pad may disturb no more than 10 acres of the surface when drilling operations are occurring, and may be limited to a smaller size if BLM determines 10 acres are not needed for projected drilling operations. Each well pad shall be limited to approximately 3 acres of un-reclaimed surface during production.

There shall be no more than four pads on the Retained Leases at any time that take up more than 3 acres each of un-reclaimed surface. Those four pads may take up to a total of approximately 40 acres of un-reclaimed surface, with drilling operations occurring on no more than two of the pads at any one time. For purposes of this requirement, surface is considered reclaimed if BLM determines that its interim reclamation requirements have been met.

The Retained Leases are not required to be joined in a Federal unit.

- B. Primary access shall be limited to designated roads approximately as depicted in the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I), subject to BLM's onsite inspection and approval. Operators may not use Cow Creek Road or the Rim Road east of the retained leases for access except in emergencies. For purposes of this requirement, an "emergency" means unforeseeable physical inaccessibility for other routes or an unforeseeable condition creating a significant risk of environmental harm or injury to persons. Limitations on contractual access from the south or west, or foreseeable delays in obtaining access for drilling, site preparation, completion activities, or regularly scheduled maintenance and other activities, do not represent an emergency. Where an emergency situation exists, access for maintenance of ongoing active drilling and completion operations, and service for existing production, is allowed.
- C. Pipeline and gathering line infrastructure, water lines, and utility lines, shall be collocated with designated access roads as depicted in the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I), subject to BLM's onsite inspection and approval, and may depart from designated access roads if BLM determines that doing so reduces net disturbance or visual impacts. No less than 90 percent of the total pipeline length shall be collocated.
- D. Prior to exploration and/or lease development on the Retained Leases, the operator must submit a proposed MDP identifying projected activity (including well locations, roads, pipelines, facilities and associated infrastructure) and appropriate monitoring and methodologies in conformance with the requirements of the resource management plan as adopted to incorporate the Settlement Agreement.
- E. Prior to submitting the MDP, the operator shall consult with the CPW and BLM to develop terms that minimize impacts to wildlife and other resources. Agreed-upon terms shall be included in the operator's proposed MDP.



F. The following will be required in any approved MDP, and incorporated as COAs for all drilling permits:

- a) Road engineering standards to minimize disturbance associated with road improvements;
- b) Requirements for removing unnecessary infrastructure as soon as feasible;
- c) The required reclamation plan will include reclamation processes that can be reasonably expected to meet the five-year reclamation standard within three growing seasons;
- d) Closed-loop drilling systems and/or tanks shall be used instead of pits, except for pits used solely to store fresh water;
- e) Telemetry for remote monitoring of producing wells;
- f) Wellheads to be subject to appropriate measures for visual impact mitigation;
- g) Conveyance by pipeline of drilling water, water used for hydraulic fracturing and completions, and flowback water, to minimize truck traffic;
- h) Centralized water management during drilling, completion, and production (i.e., not every location will have pits);
- i) Recycling of water used during well completions, and recycling of produced water while well completion activities are in progress;
- j) Conveyance by pipeline of produced water and condensate to centralized facilities to minimize truck traffic;
- k) Utilize centralized compression, storage, separation, and dehydration facilities;
- l) No more than three centralized facilities will be constructed for all centralized management purposes in Paragraph F.h., F.j., and F.k. in the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I), and those facilities will be located on three of the potential locations in the Settlement Agreement (Appendix I);
- m) Disclosure of all chemicals used during drilling and production activities. Chemicals used during completion activities shall be disclosed pursuant to Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission rules;
- n) Tier III equivalent or lower emissions for drill rigs for all wells;
- o) Vapor combustors or vapor recovery on all condensate tanks, water tanks and dehydrators, and no/low-bleed control valves on all facilities;
- p) Reduced-emission (“green”) completions, as defined by 40 CFR § 60.5430; and
- q) Utilize liquids lifting practices to limit venting, including plunger lifts or alternative technologies that are at least as effective in limiting venting.

G. Potential COAs identified in the applicable ROD replace those identified in the 2006 Proposed RMPA/FEIS and associated RODs.

**FMI-MA-06:** Stipulation CRVFO-CSU-Roan-18: Lease Area Below the Rim. Prior to exploration and/or lease development on it Base Leases, an operator shall submit a proposed MDP identifying its projected activities. Prior to submitting the MDP, an operator shall consult with the CPW and BLM to develop terms that minimize impacts to wildlife and other resources. Agreed-upon terms shall be included in the operator's MDP.

**FMI-MA-07:** GS-LN-Roan-14: Master Development Plan (MDP). A MDP will be required of oil and gas operators prior to exploration or development activities.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-01.** No new leasing 1 mile from active leks in ADH.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-02.** NSO without waiver or modification in PHMA. See Appendix D (Stipulations Applicable to Fluid Mineral Leasing and Land Use Authorizations, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]) for exceptions

**FMI-GRSG-MA-03.** In GHMA, any new leases would include appropriate TL stipulations to protect GRSG and its habitat. In addition, in GHMA, NSO with waivers, exceptions, and modification within 2 miles of active leks (Appendix D, Stipulations Applicable to Fluid Mineral Leasing and Land Use Authorizations, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**FMI-GRSG-MA-04.** 3% disturbance cap in PHMA (by biologically significant unit) with disturbances limited to one disturbance per 640 acres density calculated by Colorado MZ and proposed project analysis area would apply to new lease activities.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-05.** No new leasing in PHMA if disturbance cap exceeds 3% calculated by biologically significant unit (Colorado populations) and proposed project analysis area (Colorado MZ) or one disturbance per 640 acres density is exceeded.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-06.** Stipulation GRSG-NSO-46e1. NSO within 2 miles of active GRSG leks, in GRSG ADH, no exceptions anticipated.

Note: Incorporates stipulation NSO-46e(1) from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-07.** Stipulation GRSG-NSO-46e2. Exceptions, modifications, and waivers on the remainder of PHMA. Authorized Officer could grant and exception or modification in consultations with the State of Colorado.

Note: Incorporates stipulation NSO-46e(2) from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-08.** Stipulation GRSG-TL-46e. No activity associated with construction, drilling, or completions within 4 miles from active leks during lekking, nesting, and early brood rearing (March 1- July 15).

Note: Incorporates stipulation TL-46e from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-09.** GRSG-PHMA-LN-46e. Any lands leased in PHMA are subject to the restrictions of 1 disturbance per 640 acres calculated by CO management zone to allow clustered development.

Note: Incorporates stipulation LN-46e from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), by reference.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-10.** In GRSG PHMA, allow geophysical exploration within GRSG PHMAs to obtain information for existing Federal fluid mineral leases or areas adjacent to State or fee lands within GRSG PHMAs. Allow geophysical operations only using helicopter-portable drilling, wheeled, or tracked vehicles on existing roads, or other approved methods conducted in accordance with seasonal timing limitations and other restrictions that may apply. Geophysical exploration shall be subject to seasonal restrictions that preclude activities in breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitats during their season of use by GRSG.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-11.** Within 1 mile of active leks, disturbance, disruptive activities, and occupancy are precluded.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-12.** If it is determined that this restriction would render the recovery of fluid minerals infeasible or uneconomic, considering the lease as a whole, or where development of existing leases requires that disturbance density exceeds one disturbance per 640 acres and/or the 3% disturbance cap, use the criteria below to site proposed lease activities to meet GRSG habitat objectives and require mitigation as described in Appendix G (Greater Sage-Grouse Mitigation Strategy; Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).

**FMI-GRSG-MA-13.** In PHMA and within 4 miles of an active lek, the criteria below would be applied to guide development of the lease or unit that would result in the fewest impacts possible to GRSG.

Based on site-specific conditions, prohibit construction, drilling, and completion within PHMA within 4 miles of a lek during lekking, nesting, and early brood-rearing (March 1 to July 15). In consultation with the State of Colorado, this TL may be adjusted based on application of the criteria below.

**Criteria:**

- Location of proposed lease activities in relation to critical GRSG habitat areas as identified by factors, including, but not limited to, average male lek attendance and/or important seasonal habitat.
- An evaluation of the potential threats from proposed lease activities that may affect the local population as compared to benefits that could be accomplished through compensatory or off-site mitigation (see Section 2.7.3, Regional Mitigation, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015] ).
- An evaluation of the proposed lease activities, including design features, in relation to the site-specific terrain and habitat features. For example, within 4 miles from a lek, local terrain features such as ridges and ravines may reduce the habitat importance and shield nearby habitat from disruptive factors. This is particularly likely in Colorado MZ 17, which has an atypical GRSG habitat featuring benches with GRSG habitat interspersed with steep ravines.

To authorize an activity based on the criteria above, the environmental record of review must show no significant direct disturbance, displacement, or mortality of GRSG.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-14.** In GRSG PHMA COA, BLM should closely examine the applicability of categorical exclusions in PHMA. If extraordinary circumstances review is applicable, the BLM should determine whether those circumstances exist.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-15.** Stipulation GRSG PHMA LN-54e. Within PHMA operators would be encouraged to complete Master Development Plans in consultation with the State of Colorado, instead of single well Applications for Permit to Drill for all exploratory wells. (Refer to Appendix D, Stipulations Applicable to Fluid Mineral Leasing and Land Use Authorizations, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015].)

**FMI-GRSG-MA-16.** In GRSG PHMA, conduct effective mitigation, first within the same Colorado Management Zone where the impact is realized and, if not possible, then conduct mitigation within the same population as the impact, or in other Colorado GRSG populations, in consultation with the State of Colorado.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-17.** In GRSG PHMA, when necessary, conduct effective mitigation in (1) GRSG PHMA areas; or, less preferably, (2) GHMA (dependent upon the area-specific ability to increase GRSG populations and in consultation with the State of Colorado).

**FMI-GRSG-MA-18.** In GRSG PHMA, allow applicants and partners to offset impacts from development and disruption with conservation easements.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-19.** In GRSG GHMA, for future actions, require a full reclamation bond specific to the site in accordance with 43 CFR 3104.2, 3104.3, and 3104.5. Ensure bonds are sufficient for costs relative to reclamation that would result in full restoration of the lands to the condition they were found prior to disturbance. Base the reclamation costs on the assumption that contractors for the BLM will perform the work.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-20.** The range of alternatives is articulated in the specific Preferred Design Features/Required Design Features (PDFs/RDFs) sections.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-21.** In GRSG PHMA, where the Federal government owns the mineral estate in PHMAs and GHMAs, and the surface is in non-Federal ownership, apply the same stipulations, COAs, and/or conservation measures and RDFs applied if the mineral estate is developed on BLM-administered lands in that management area, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, and in coordination with the landowner.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-22.** Allow geophysical exploration within GRSG PHMA areas to obtain information for existing Federal fluid mineral leases or areas adjacent to State or fee lands within GRSG PHMA areas. Allow geophysical operations only using helicopter-portable drilling, wheeled, or tracked vehicles on existing roads, or other approved methods conducted in accordance with seasonal timing limitations and other restrictions that may apply. Geophysical exploration shall be subject to seasonal restrictions that preclude activities in breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and winter habitats during their season of use by GRSG.

**FMI-GRSG-MA-23.** In GRSG PHMA and GHMA, where the Federal government owns the surface and the mineral estate is in non-Federal ownership in PHMA and GHMA, apply appropriate surface use COAs, stipulations, and mineral RDFs/PDFs through ROW grants or other surface management instruments, to the maximum extent permissible under existing authorities, in coordination with the mineral estate owner/lessee.

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## *Oil Shale*

**OIS-GOAL-01:** Conduct oil shale leasing in conformance with the Approved RMPA/ROD for Oil Shale and Tar Sands Resources to Address Land Use Allocations in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming and Final Programmatic EIS.

**OIS-OBJECTIVE-01:** Conduct potential oil shale leasing in conformance with surface disturbance stipulations identified in Appendix B. Resource condition objectives identified in this RMPA will guide reclamation activities of areas to be developed before their abandonment.

**OIS-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Utilize Federal authority to protect GRSG habitat on split estate lands to the extent provided by law.

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## *Solid Minerals*

**SOM-GOAI-01:** Provide opportunities for leasing, exploration, and development of coal to meet local and national energy and mineral needs, consistent with 43 CFR 4320.1-4.

**SOM-OBJECTIVE-01:** Facilitate environmentally sound exploration and development of coal resources using the best available technology.

**SOM-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage solid mineral programs to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent practical under the law and BLM jurisdiction.

**SOM-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Utilize Federal authority to protect GRSG habitat on split estate lands to the extent provided by law.

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**SOM-MA-01.** No lands are currently identified as containing potentially developable coal resources based on geologic and economic constraints and lack of expressions of interest. Only areas of potentially developable coal resources may be identified at the land use planning level as acceptable for further consideration for leasing (43 CFR 3420.1-4). Therefore, no lands are currently identified as acceptable for further consideration for coal leasing.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG GHMA, Existing Coal Leases: During the term of the lease, encourage the lessee to voluntarily follow PDFs (Appendix I, Required Design Features, Preferred Design Features, and Suggested Design Features, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]) to reduce and mitigate any adverse impacts to GRSG.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-02.** At the time an application for a new coal lease or lease modification is submitted to the BLM, the BLM will determine whether the lease application area is “unsuitable” for all or certain coal mining methods pursuant to 43 CFR 3461.5. PHMA is essential habitat for maintaining GRSG for purposes of the suitability criteria set forth at 43 CFR 3461.5(o)(1).

**SOM-GRSG-MA-03.** To authorize expansion of existing leases, the environmental record of review must show no significant direct disturbance, displacement, or mortality of GRSG based on the criteria below:

- Critical GRSG habitat areas as identified by factors including, but not limited to, average male lek attendance and/or important seasonal habitat.

- An evaluation of the threats affecting the local population as compared to benefits that could be accomplished through compensatory or offsite mitigation (See Chapter 2, Mitigation Strategy, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).
- An evaluation of terrain and habitat features. For example, within 4 miles from a lek, local terrain features such as ridges and ravines may reduce the habitat importance and shield nearby habitat from disruptive factors.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-04.** In GRSG PHMA, no new surface coal mine leases would be allowed in PHMA.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-05.** At the time an application for a new coal lease or lease modification is submitted to the BLM, the BLM would determine whether the lease application area is “unsuitable” for all or certain coal mining methods pursuant to 43 CFR 3461.5. PHMA is essential habitat for maintaining GRSG for purposes of the suitability criteria set forth at 43 CFR 3461.5(o)(1).

**SOM-GRSG-MA-06.** New Underground Coal Mine Leases would be subject to special stipulations:

- All surface disturbances will be placed more than 2 miles from active leks.
- No surface disturbance on remainder of PHMA, subject to the following conditions:

If, after consultation with the State of Colorado, and in consideration of the following criteria, there is no significant direct disturbance, displacement, or mortality of GRSG or impact to GRSG habitat;

- 3% disturbance cap in PHMA with disturbances limited to one per 640-acre density calculated by CO Management Zone would apply to new lease activities.
- No new leasing in PHMA if disturbance cap exceeds 3% for the CO Management Zone or one disturbance per 640 acres is exceeded.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-07.** In GRSG GHMA, underground mining exemption criteria for new leases:

- 1) Federal lands with coal deposits that would be mined by underground mining methods shall not be assessed as unsuitable where there would be no surface coal mining operations, as defined in 43 CFR 3400.0-5 (mm) of this title, on any lease, if issued.
- 2) Where underground mining will include surface operations and surface impacts on Federal lands to which a criterion applies, the lands shall be assessed as unsuitable unless the surface management agency find that a relevant exception or exemption applies. See 43 CFR 3461.1(b). Where practicable, limit permitted disturbances as defined in Appendix E, Methodology for Calculating Disturbance Caps, from the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015) to 5% in any Colorado MZ. Where disturbance exceeds 5% in any Colorado MZ, make additional, effective mitigation necessary to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-08.** In GRSG PHMA, see 43 CFR 3461.4 (a) and (b) Exploration. Authorized exploration activities may be conducted only if the Authorized Officer reviews any application for an exploration license on such lands to ensure that any exploration does not harm any value for which the area has been assessed as unsuitable and determines that the exploration will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities or that the impact can be fully mitigated. Where

practicable, limit permitted disturbances as defined in Appendix E, Methodology for Calculating Disturbance Caps, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015), to 5% in any Colorado MZ. Where disturbance exceeds 5% in any Colorado MZ make additional, effective mitigation necessary to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat.

**Disturbance Cap Exception Criteria:**

Where data-based documentation is available to warrant a conclusion that GRSG populations in the applicable Colorado GRSG MZ are healthy and stable at objective levels or increasing, and that the development will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities, the Authorized Officer may authorize disturbance in excess of the 5% disturbance cap without requiring additional mitigation. In many cases, this exception will require project proponents to fund studies necessary to secure the “data-based documentation” requirement.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-09.** In GRSG PHMA - Underground Mining – Lease Renewals:

- Require that all surface mining appurtenant facilities for underground mining be located outside of PHMA (unless the lessee establishes that that such location is not technically feasible).
- If surface mining facilities must be located in PHMA, require the facilities be located in areas of existing disturbance and to have the smallest footprint possible utilizing design strategies to minimize disturbance such as those identified in the PDF section of this table.
- Apply as conditions of lease renewal all appropriate conservation measures, PDFs, and mitigation designed to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-10.** In GRSG GHMA - Surface Mining – Lease Renewals/ Readjustments:

Apply as conditions of lease renewal all appropriate conservation measures, PDFs, and mitigation designed to avoid and minimize impacts to GRSG.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-11.** In GRSG GHMA, recommend or require as appropriate during all relevant points of the coal leasing and authorization process, minimization of surface-disturbing or disrupting activities (including operations and maintenance) where needed to reduce the impacts of human activities on important seasonal GRSG habitats. Apply these measures during activity-level planning (jurisdiction is managed by the State). The Office of Surface Mining or a delegated State regulatory authority under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 authorizes surface disturbance activities of active coal mining operations on Federal mineral estate. The BLM coordinates with the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 regulatory authority in overseeing coal leasing and permitting on Federal lands. The resource recovery and protection plan for which BLM recommends approval to the Secretary integrates the reclamation plan recommended by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 regulatory authority for active coal mines on Federal mineral estate. Approval of coal mining plans on lands containing leased Federal coal is reserved to the Secretary of the Interior (30 CFR 740.4). BLM issues coal leases and exploration licenses for right of entry to promote development of minerals on Federal lands. See the following in regards to BLM exploration: 43 CFR 3461.4. Exploration. States with delegated authority on Federal lands from the Office of Surface Mining may have their own GRSG guidance in association with State wildlife agencies, and such guidance may differ from state to state.

**SOM-GRSG-MA-12.** In GRSG GHMA:

- (a) Assessment of any area as unsuitable for all or certain stipulated methods of coal mining operations pursuant to Section 522 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1272) and the regulations of this subpart does not prohibit exploration of such area under 43 CFR 3410 and 43 CFR 3480. 43 CFR 3461.4(a).
- (b) An application for an exploration license on any lands assessed as unsuitable for all or certain stipulated methods of coal mining shall be reviewed by the BLM to ensure that exploration does not harm any value for which the area has been assessed as unsuitable. 43 CFR 3461.4(b).
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### ***Locatable Minerals***

**LMI-GOAL-01:** Make lands available for mining claim location.

**LMI-OBJECTIVE-01:** Allow mineral exploration and development activities.

**LMI-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage solid mineral programs to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent practical under the law and BLM jurisdiction.

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**LMI-MA-01.** Exploration/development activities would be subject to 43 CFR 3809, but not the NGD/NSO or SSR/CSU surface use restrictions/stipulations identified in the Approved RMPA. Rights granted under the mining law cannot be modified by NGD/NSO or SSR/CSU stipulations.

**LMI-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG PHMA, in plans of operations required prior to any proposed surface-disturbing activities, include, as appropriate, effective mitigation for conservation in accordance with existing policy (BLM Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 2008-204).

**LMI-GRSG-MA-02.** In GRSG PHMA, apply seasonal restrictions if deemed necessary to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation.

**LMI-GRSG-MA-03.** In GRSG GHMA, an application for an exploration license on any lands assessed as unsuitable for all or certain stipulated methods of coal mining shall be reviewed by the BLM to ensure that exploration does not harm any value for which the area has been assessed as unsuitable. 43 CFR 3461.4(b). The range of alternatives is articulated in Appendix I, Required Design Features, Preferred Design Features, and Suggested Design Features, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

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### ***Salable Minerals***

**SAM-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage solid mineral programs to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent practical under the law and BLM jurisdiction.

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**SAM-GRSG-MA-01.** Close PHMA to new mineral material sales. However, these areas would remain open to free use permits and the expansion of existing active pits, only if the following criteria are met:

- The activity is within the biologically significant unit and the project area disturbance cap
- The activity is subject to the provisions set forth in the mitigation strategy (Appendix G, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD [September 22, 2015]).



- All applicable required/preferred design features are applied; and [if applicable] the activity is permissible under the regional screening criteria (Appendix H, Guidelines for Implementation, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**SAM-GRSG-MA-02.** In GRSG GHMA, restore salable mineral pits no longer in use to meet GRSG habitat conservation objectives. Require reclamation/restoration of GRSG habitat as a viable long-term goal to improve the GRSG habitat.

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### ***Forest Products***

**FOR-GOAL-01:** Maintain and promote forest health consistent with other resource objectives.

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### **2.1.3.3 Special Designations**

#### ***Areas of Critical Environmental Concern***

ACECs have been identified for designation based on the presence of various relevant and important values. Various protective measures and management actions are identified here to guide management of these values. These measures and actions are specific to identified resources; they are being applied independently of ACEC designation. ACEC designation highlights the resource values present. Designation does not carry or require any particular measures or actions. Wilderness characteristics are separate and distinct from the relevant and important resource values for ACECs. ACEC designation is separate and distinct from any management action to maintain and protect wilderness characteristics.

**ACC-GOAL-01:** Highlight management of relevant and important resource values.

**ACC-OBJECTIVE-01:** Designate four ACECs where special management is applied through special designations, recognize the unique values on BLM lands that require special management in order to protect resource values. Protect important geologic, botanic, historic, cultural, and scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, and other natural systems (rare or exemplary) that are vulnerable to adverse change and protect human life and property from natural hazards.

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**ACC-MA-01.** Designate four ACECs in which risk of impacts to significant values would be minimized through management prescriptions on 25,010 acres:

- East Fork Parachute Creek: 7,110 acres (visual, fish/wildlife, botanical/ecological);
  - Trapper/Northwater Creek: 6,290 acres (fish/wildlife, botanical/ecological);
  - Magpie Gulch: 4,710 acres (visual, wildlife, botanical/ecological); and
  - Anvil Points: 6,900 acres (visual, wildlife, botanical/ecological).
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*The following sections detail additional management objectives and actions specific to each ACEC.*

#### ***Anvil Points Area of Critical Environmental Concern***

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**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect visual resources on lands that are most visible from I-70 and where changes to the visual character would be the most noticeable.

**ACC-AP-MA-01.** Apply NGD/NSO restrictions to lands over 30 percent slopes which are within 5 miles of, and visible from, I-70 to retain the existing natural character of the landscape. The level of allowed change to the characteristic landscape would be low. Management activities may be visible but not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-02:** Preserve the existing natural character of the landscape on lands below the cliffs to the casual observer.

**ACC-AP-MA-02.** Apply SSR/CSU to VRM Class II lands to retain the existing natural character of the landscape. The level of allowed change to the characteristic landscape would be low. Management activities may be visible but not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-03:** Protect identified raptor nest sites.

**ACC-AP-MA-03.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. For the protection of raptors, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within a 0.125-mile radius of nest sites. Raptors include owls, osprey, golden eagles, buteos, accipiters, and falcons except American kestrel. (For the protection of peregrine falcon, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within 0.25-mile radius of cliff-nesting complexes).

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-04:** Prevent raptor nest abandonment and reductions in nesting productivity.

**ACC-AP-MA-04.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. Avoid drilling or other high-disturbance activities within a 0.25-mile buffer around nest sites from February 1 through August 15. For protection of peregrine falcons, apply a 0.5-mile buffer around the cliff-nesting complex from March 16 through July 31 to prevent abandonment and desertion of established territories.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-05:** Maintain habitat connectivity and avoid displacement of wildlife.

**ACC-AP-MA-05.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. Allow no new long-term (longer than two growing seasons) human use-related ground disturbing activities within the unroaded wildlife habitat located below the cliffs.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-06:** Protect and minimize disturbance to wintering big game and allow for their use of limited winter range habitats during the critical winter months.

**ACC-AP-MA-06.** Apply a TL to protect wintering big game. Avoid high-disturbance activities (such as oil and gas drilling) from December 1 through April 30 within winter habitat as mapped by the CPW, unless impacts have been mitigated.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-07:** Protect occupied and critical habitat, and identified suitable or marginally suitable habitat, and the immediately adjacent ecosystem processes that support Federally listed and candidate plants.

**ACC-AP-MA-07.** Apply NGD/NSO restrictions within occupied habitat, critical habitat, identified suitable habitat, or within the immediately adjacent ecosystem processes that support Federally listed plants.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-08:** Allow for the long-term viability and recovery of Federally listed plant species, and protect and maintain critical habitat, potential habitat, and the ecosystem processes that support them.

**ACC-AP-MA-08.** Apply SSR/CSU restrictions within potential habitat/ecosystem processes outside of designated critical habitat for Federally listed plants.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-09:** Maintain the current ecological integrity and function of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-AP-MA-09.** Revegetate using only native species (preferably locally adapted), unless in areas with a high risk of becoming dominated by cheatgrass or other undesirable species under conditions where only non-native species have been proven effective and not within a 0.62-mile (1.0-kilometer) buffer around any TES plant species occurrence (as consistent with BLM Manual 1745 or Handbook 1742-1).

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-10:** Allow natural ecosystem processes such as rockslides to continue.

**ACC-AP-MA-10.** Manage significant grassland and shrubland communities to retain mid- to late-seral stage condition.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-11:** Minimize fragmentation of habitat and the risk of invasion by noxious weeds and other aggressive non-native species, which may compromise ecosystem function and the long-term viability of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-AP-MA-11.** Minimize disturbance to habitat and ecosystem processes that support habitat for listed and rare plants and significant plant communities. Where practicable, restore to a naturally functioning state any existing human-caused disturbance that is impairing natural ecosystem processes affecting habitat for rare plant species or significant plant communities. Actions may include burying pipelines and utilities in roads or relocation of facilities to minimize impacts.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-12:** Ensure the long-term survival and reproductive capability of rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-AP-MA-12.** Prohibit collection of plants, plant materials, and seeds, except for scientific or research purposes. Such collection must have no detrimental impact on long-term survival and reproduction of rare species or significant communities.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-13:** Maintain healthy native plant communities, minimizing competition from non-native invasive species.

**ACC-AP-MA-13.** Control noxious weeds using integrated control techniques. Utilize focused control techniques in areas with rare species or significant plant communities to avoid damage to non-target species.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-14:** Maintain populations of rare plants and significant plant communities that are healthy, productive, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and ecological processes. Provide adequate opportunities for recovery, regrowth, and seed dissemination and establishment.

**ACC-AP-MA-14.** Manage livestock grazing within occupied or potential habitat for rare plants or significant plant communities to promote plant health, maintain sufficient residual vegetation, and sustain overall watershed functions, as defined in the Colorado Livestock Grazing Management Guidelines.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-15:** Maintain site stability and productivity.

**ACC-AP-MA-15.** Apply NGD/NSO on slopes greater than 50 percent to minimize impacts on site productivity, to adequately control surface runoff, to reduce accelerated erosion and increase likelihood of successful reclamation.

**ACC-AP-OBJECTIVE-16:** Maintain site stability and minimize potential for erosion.

**ACC-AP-MA-16.** On slopes greater than 30 percent, require special design, construction, operation, and reclamation measures.

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### ***Magpie Gulch***

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**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect visual resources on lands that are most visible from I-70 and where changes to the visual character would be most noticeable.

**ACC-MG-MA-01.** Apply NGD/NSO restrictions to lands over 30 percent slopes which are within 5 miles of, and visible from I-70 to retain the existing natural character of the landscape. The level of allowed change to the characteristic landscape would be low. Management activities may be visible but not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Preserve the existing natural character of the landscape on lands below the cliffs to the casual observer.

**ACC-MG-MA-02.** Apply SSR/CSU to VRM Class II lands to retain the existing natural character of the landscape. The level of allowed change to the characteristic landscape would be low. Management activities may be visible but not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-03:** Protect identified raptor nest sites.

**ACC-MG-MA-03.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. For the protection of raptors, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within a 0.125-mile radius of nest sites. Raptors include owls, osprey, golden eagles, buteos, accipiters, and falcons except American kestrel. For the protection of peregrine falcon, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within 0.25-mile radius of cliff nesting complexes.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-04:** Prevent raptor nest abandonment and reductions in nesting productivity.

**ACC-MG-MA-04.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. Avoid drilling or other high-disturbance activities within a 0.25-mile buffer around nest sites from February 1 through August 15. For protection of peregrine falcons, apply a 0.5-mile buffer around the cliff-nesting complex from March 16 through July 31 to prevent abandonment and desertion of established territories.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-05:** Maintain habitat connectivity and avoid displacement of wildlife.

**ACC-MG-MA-05.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. Allow no new long-term (longer than two growing seasons) human use-related ground disturbing activities within the unroaded wildlife habitat located below the cliffs.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-06:** Protect and minimize disturbance to wintering big game and allow for their use of limited winter range habitats during the critical winter months.

**ACC-MG-MA-06.** Apply a TL to protect wintering big game. Avoid high-disturbance activities (such as oil and gas drilling) from December 1 through April 30 within winter habitat as mapped by CPW, unless impacts have been mitigated.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-07:** Protect the current extent, ecological integrity, and function of the old-growth Douglas-fir community.

**ACC-MG-MA-07.** Apply a SSR/CSU within old-growth Douglas-fir remnant communities, including removal of any size-class trees.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-08:** Protect occupied and critical habitat, and identified suitable or marginally suitable habitat, and the immediately adjacent ecosystem processes that support Federally listed and candidate plants.

**ACC-MG-MA-08.** Apply NGD/NSO restrictions within occupied habitat, critical habitat, identified suitable habitat, or within the immediately adjacent ecosystem processes that support Federally listed plants.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-09:** Allow for the long-term viability and recovery of Federally listed plant species, and protect and maintain critical habitat, potential habitat, and the ecosystem processes that support them.

**ACC-MG-MA-09.** Apply SSR/CSU restrictions within potential habitat/ecosystem processes outside of designated critical habitat for Federally listed plants.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-10:** Maintain the current ecological integrity and function of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-MG-MA-10.** Revegetate using only native species (preferably locally adapted), unless in areas with a high risk of becoming dominated by cheatgrass or other undesirable species under conditions where only non-native species have been proven effective and not within a 0.62-mile (1.0-kilometer) buffer around any T&E plant species occurrence (as consistent with BLM Manual 1745 or Handbook 1742-1).

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-11:** Allow natural ecosystem processes such as rockslides to continue. Manage fire primarily to meet resource objectives, consistent with fire management objectives.

**ACC-MG-MA-11.** Manage significant grassland and shrubland communities to retain mid- to late-seral stage condition.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-12:** Minimize fragmentation of habitat and the risk of invasion by noxious weeds and other aggressive non-native species, which may compromise ecosystem function and the long-term viability of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-MG-MA-12.** Minimize disturbance to habitat and ecosystem processes that support habitat for Federally listed rare plants, and significant plant communities. Where practicable, restore to a naturally functioning state any existing human-caused disturbance that is impairing natural ecosystem processes affecting habitat for rare plant species or significant plant communities. Actions may include burying pipelines and utilities in roads or relocation of facilities to minimize impacts.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-13:** Ensure the long-term survival and reproductive capability of rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-MG-MA-13.** Prohibit collection of plants, plant materials, and seeds, except for scientific or research purposes. Such collection must have no detrimental impact on long-term survival and reproduction of rare species or significant communities. Prohibit collection of rare plants or plant parts, except for scientific research as approved by the USFWS in the case of T&E plants, and with a valid collection permit.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-14:** Maintain healthy native plant communities, minimizing competition from non-native invasive species.

**ACC-MG-MA-14.** Control noxious weeds using integrated control techniques. Utilize focused control techniques in areas with rare species or significant plant communities to avoid damage to non-target species.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-15:** Maintain populations of rare plants and significant plant communities that are healthy, productive, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and ecological processes. Provide adequate opportunities for recovery, regrowth, and seed dissemination and establishment.

**ACC-MG-MA-15.** Manage livestock grazing within occupied or potential habitat for rare plants or significant plant communities to promote plant health, maintain sufficient residual vegetation, and sustain overall watershed functions, as defined in the Colorado Livestock Grazing Management Guidelines.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-16:** Maintain site stability and productivity.

**ACC-MG-MA-16.** Apply NGD/NSO on slopes greater than 50 percent to minimize impacts on site productivity, to adequately control surface runoff, to reduce accelerated erosion and increase likelihood of successful reclamation.

**ACC-MG-OBJECTIVE-17:** Maintain site stability and minimize potential for erosion.

**ACC-MG-MA-17.** On slopes greater than 30 percent, require special design, construction, operation, and reclamation measures.

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### ***East Fork Parachute Creek***

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**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-01:** Preserve the existing character of landscape for East Fork Falls viewshed to meet VRM Class I objectives.

**ACC-EF-MA-01.** Apply NGD/NSO to maintain the natural character and scenic quality of the landscape to provide for ecological changes and restrict landscape modifications. Limited activities may be allowed if the basic landscape elements (line, form, color, and texture) are repeated and changes are not evident, and appear natural.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-02:** Partially retain the character of the remainder of the landscape within the ACEC.

**ACC-EF-MA-02.** Apply SSR/CSU to partially retain the existing character of the landscape on all lands designated as Class III. Activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the elements found in the natural features of the characteristic landscape.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-03:** Protect CRCT from direct impacts.

**ACC-EF-MA-03.** Apply NGD/NSO to high and moderate risk habitat areas. Allow no loss or degradation of fish habitat that supports CRCT high risk habitat.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-04:** Protect CRCT from indirect impacts.

**ACC-EF-MA-04.** Apply NGD/NSO to high and moderate risk habitat areas. Allow no loss or degradation of fish habitat that supports CRCT moderate risk habitat.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-05:** Monitor livestock grazing impacts at key areas within the ACEC. Make management changes if bank alteration exceeds the allowable amount as defined in AMPs.

**ACC-EF-MA-05.** Manage livestock grazing within the ACEC so that streambank damage does not exceed 10 percent of the stream length.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-06:** Maintain the current ecological integrity and function of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-EF-MA-06.** Revegetate using only native species (preferably locally adapted), unless in areas with a high risk of becoming dominated by cheatgrass or other undesirable species under conditions where only non-native species have been proven effective and not within a 0.62-mile (1.0-kilometer) buffer around any T&E plant species occurrence (as consistent with BLM Manual 1745 or Handbook 1742-1).

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-07:** Allow natural ecosystem processes such as rockslides to continue. Manage fire primarily to meet resource objectives, consistent with fire management objectives.

**ACC-EF-MA-07.** Manage significant grassland and shrubland communities to retain mid- to late-seral stage condition.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-08:** Minimize fragmentation of habitat and the risk of invasion by noxious weeds and other aggressive non-native species, which may compromise ecosystem function and the long-term viability of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-EF-MA-08.** Minimize disturbance to habitat and ecosystem processes that support habitat for Federally listed, rare plants, and significant plant communities. Where practicable, restore to a naturally functioning state any existing human-caused disturbance that is impairing natural ecosystem processes affecting habitat for rare plant species or significant plant communities. Actions may include burying pipelines and utilities in roads or relocation of facilities to minimize impacts.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-09:** Ensure the long-term survival and reproductive capability of rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-EF-MA-09.** Prohibit collection of plants, plant materials, and seeds, except for scientific or research purposes. Such collection must have no detrimental impact on long-term survival and reproduction of rare species or significant communities. Prohibit collection of rare plants or plant parts, except for scientific research as approved by USFWS in the case of T&E plants, and with a valid collection permit.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-10:** Maintain healthy native plant communities, minimizing competition from non-native invasive species.

**ACC-EF-MA-10.** Control noxious weeds using integrated control techniques. Utilize focused control techniques in areas with rare species or significant plant communities to avoid damage to non-target species.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-11:** Maintain populations of rare plants and significant plant communities that are healthy, productive, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and ecological processes. Provide adequate opportunities for recovery, regrowth, and seed dissemination and establishment.

**ACC-EF-MA-11.** Manage livestock grazing within occupied or potential habitat for rare plants or significant plant communities to promote plant health, maintain sufficient residual vegetation, and sustain overall watershed functions, as defined in the Colorado Livestock Grazing Management Guidelines.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-12:** Maintain site stability and productivity.

**ACC-EF-MA-12.** Apply NGD/NSO on slopes greater than 50 percent to minimize impacts on site productivity, to adequately control surface runoff, to reduce accelerated erosion and increase likelihood of successful reclamation.

**ACC-EF- OBJECTIVE-13:** Maintain site stability and minimize potential for erosion.

**ACC-EF-MA-13.** On slopes greater than 30 percent, require special design, construction, operation, and reclamation measures.

**ACC-EF-OBJECTIVE-14:** Maintain proper hydrologic function and protect adjacent areas that provide habitat for special status fish and wildlife species, important riparian values, water quality, waterfowl shorebird production, amphibian habitat, and high scenic and recreation values. Allow continued access to and use of these habitats by fish and wildlife species.

**ACC-EF-MA-14.** Roads, transmission lines, storage facilities and similar human-induced surface disturbances will be restricted to an area beyond the outer edge of the riparian vegetation. A SSR/CSU would apply within 500 feet of the outer edge of the wetland or riparian area.

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***Trapper/Northwater Creek***

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**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-01:** Protect identified raptor nest sites.

**ACC-TN-MA-01.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. For the protection of raptors, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within a 0.125-mile radius of nest sites. Raptors include owls, osprey, golden eagles, hawks, accipiters, and falcons except American kestrel. (For the protection of peregrine falcon, apply NGD/NSO restrictions within a 0.25-mile radius of cliff nesting complexes.)

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-02:** Prevent raptor nest abandonment and reductions in nesting productivity.

**ACC-TN-MA-02.** Apply NGD/NSO within wildlife security areas below the rim. Avoid drilling or other high-disturbance activities within a 0.25-mile buffer around nest sites from February 1 through August 15. For protection of peregrine falcons, apply a 0.5-mile buffer around the cliff-nesting complex from March 16 through July 31 to prevent abandonment and desertion of established territories.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-03:** Protect CRCT from direct impacts.



**ACC-TN-MA-03.** Apply NGD/NSO to high and moderate risk habitat areas. Allow no loss or degradation of fish habitat that supports CRCT high risk habitat.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-04:** Protect CRCT from indirect impacts.

**ACC-TN-MA-04.** Apply NGD/NSO to high and moderate risk habitat areas. Allow no loss or degradation of fish habitat that supports CRCT moderate risk habitat.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-05:** Minimize direct impacts to streambanks resulting from livestock grazing.

**ACC-TN-MA-05.** Monitor livestock grazing impacts at key areas within the ACEC. Make management changes if bank alteration exceeds the allowable amount as defined in AMPs.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-06:** Maintain the current ecological integrity and function of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-TN-MA-06.** Revegetate using only native species (preferably locally adapted), unless in areas with a high risk of becoming dominated by cheatgrass or other undesirable species under conditions where only non-native species have been proven effective and not within a 0.62-mile (1.0-kilometer) buffer around any T&E plant species occurrence (as consistent with BLM Manual 1745 or Handbook 1742-1).

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-07:** Allow natural ecosystem processes such as rockslides to continue. Manage fire primarily to meet resource objectives, consistent with fire management objectives.

**ACC-TN-MA-07.** Manage significant grassland and shrubland communities to retain mid- to late-seral stage condition.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-08:** Minimize fragmentation of habitat and the risk of invasion by noxious weeds and other aggressive non-native species, which may compromise ecosystem function and the long-term viability of the rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-TN-MA-08.** Minimize disturbance to habitat and ecosystem processes that support habitat for listed and rare plants, and significant plant communities. Where practicable, restore to a naturally functioning state any existing human-caused disturbance that is impairing natural ecosystem processes affecting habitat for rare plant species or significant plant communities. Actions may include burying pipelines and utilities in roads or relocation of facilities to minimize impacts.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-09:** Ensure the long-term survival and reproductive capability of rare plants and significant plant communities.

**ACC-TN-MA-09.** Prohibit collection of plants, plant materials, and seeds, except for scientific or research purposes. Such collection must have no detrimental impact on long-term survival and reproduction of rare species or significant communities. Prohibit collection of rare plants or plant parts, except for scientific research as approved by USFWS in the case of T&E plants, and with a valid collection permit.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-10:** Maintain healthy native plant communities, minimizing competition from non-native invasive species.

**ACC-TN-MA-10.** Control noxious weeds using integrated control techniques. Utilize focused control techniques in areas with rare species or significant plant communities to avoid damage to non-target species.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-11:** Maintain populations of rare plants and significant plant communities that are healthy, productive, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and ecological processes. Provide adequate opportunities for recovery, regrowth, and seed dissemination and establishment.

**ACC-TN-MA-11.** Manage livestock grazing within occupied or potential habitat for rare plants or significant plant communities to promote plant health, maintain sufficient residual vegetation, and sustain overall watershed functions, as defined in the Colorado Livestock Grazing Management Guidelines.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-12:** Maintain site stability and productivity.

**ACC-TN-MA-12.** Apply NGD/NSO on slopes greater than 50 percent to minimize impacts on site productivity, to adequately control surface runoff, to reduce accelerated erosion and increase likelihood of successful reclamation.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-13:** Maintain site stability and minimize potential for erosion.

**ACC-TN-MA-13.** On slopes greater than 30 percent, require special design, construction, operation, and reclamation measures.

**ACC-TN-OBJECTIVE-14:** Maintain proper hydrologic function and protect adjacent areas that provide habitat for special status fish and wildlife species, important riparian values, water quality, waterfowl and shorebird production, amphibian habitat, and high scenic and recreation values. Allow continued access to and use of these habitats by fish and wildlife species.

**ACC-TN-MA-14.** Roads, transmission lines, storage facilities and similar human-induced surface disturbances will be restricted to an area beyond the outer edge of the riparian vegetation. A SSR/CSU would apply within 500 feet of the outer edge of the wetland or riparian area.

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### ***Parachute Creek Watershed Management Area***

**WMA-GOAL-01:** Maintain or improve CRCT habitat. This may be accomplished by habitat improvement and by preventing or minimizing impacts to ecological function throughout the WMA.

**WMA-GOAL-02:** Maintain or improve special status plant populations, significant plant communities, and their habitat.

**WMA-GOAL-03:** Maintain the hydrologic regime and ecological integrity/function that provide existing habitat for special status plant populations and significant plant communities in the WMA.

**WMA-OBJECTIVE-01:** Maintain or improve water quality, natural stream flow, and stream ecological function throughout the WMA by preventing or minimizing direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts to CRCT or their habitat.

**WMA-OBJECTIVE-02:** Maintain or improve surface and subsurface water flows, and the ecological integrity and function that supports rare and/or significant natural plant communities.

**WMA-OBJECTIVE-03:** Prevent disruption, alteration, or interruption of surface and subsurface water flows that support rare and/or significant natural plant communities, and protect against invasion of noxious weeds or other aggressive exotic plants.

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**WMA-MA-01.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-13: Parachute Creek High Value Watershed and Watershed Management Area. CSU to protect 4,450 acres within the Parachute Creek high-value watershed and WMA. Provide resource protections through actions that minimize disturbance and habitat fragmentation, and protect key habitats from disturbance.

*The following sections detail additional management objectives and actions specific to each WMA resource.*

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### **Fisheries:**

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**WMA-FI-GOAL-01:** Maintain or improve CRCT habitat. This may be accomplished by habitat improvement and by preventing or minimizing impacts to ecological function throughout the WMA.

**WMA-FI-OBJECTIVE-01:** Maintain or improve water quality, natural stream flow, and stream ecological function throughout the WMA by preventing or minimizing direct, indirect, or cumulative adverse impacts to CRCT or their habitat.

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**WMA-FI-MA-01.** Prior to conducting surface disturbance in the WMA, collect baseline data to assess current local hydrological and ecological conditions.

**WMA-FI-MA-02.** Require project-specific design and mitigation such that proposed actions and site locations will prevent or minimize: reductions in natural stream flow; additional sedimentation or other degradation of water quality; or adverse impacts to stream ecological function, for reaches containing cutthroat trout habitat, and reaches upstream from occupied habitat. Required design components may include construction design, implementation of BMPs, mitigation, reclamation, revegetation, monitoring (to guide adaptive management), and erosion control. Project design will establish baseline environmental conditions and monitor post development conditions, other results as available, and require monitoring of mitigation components sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness.

**WMA-FI-MA-03.** Relocate activities as necessary to minimize negative impacts to water quality and stream ecological function.

**WMA-FI-MA-04.** Recognize valid existing water rights.

#### **Standards:**

- Consider activities designed to provide long-term habitat improvement or protection, such as culvert or bridge installation or bank stabilization actions.
- Assess terms of indicator values for Public Land Health Standard #2 – Riparian Systems, #3 – Plant and Animal Communities, #4 – Special Status Species, and #5 – Water Quality.

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### **Botanical Resources:**

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**WMA-BO-GOAL-01:** Maintain or improve special status plant populations, significant plant communities, and their habitat.

**WMA-BO-OBJECTIVE-01:** Maintain or improve surface and subsurface water flows, and the ecological integrity and function that supports rare and/or significant natural plant communities.

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**WMA-BO-MA-01.** Prior to conducting surface disturbance, collect baseline data of current local hydrological conditions as well as current ecological condition in terms of indicator values for Public Land Health Standards #3 – Plant and Animal Communities and #4 – Special Status Species.

**WMA-BO-MA-02.** Require project-specific design and mitigation such that proposed actions and site locations will prevent or minimize: reduction of natural stream flows, degradation of water quality, or loss stream ecological function. Required design components may include construction design, implementation of BMPs, mitigation, reclamation, revegetation, monitoring (to guide adaptive management), and erosion control.

**WMA-BO-MA-03.** Consider exceptions for short duration, one-time events designed to enhance ecological function to provide long-term habitat protection, such as culvert or bridge installation or bank stabilization actions.

**WMA-BO-MA-04.** Relocate activities as necessary to minimize negative impacts to the hydrologic regime and ecological integrity/function that provide existing habitat for special status plant populations and significant plant communities, and the habitat which supports them.

**Standards:**

- Project design will incorporate baseline and other relevant study results, as available, and require monitoring of mitigation components sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness.
- Review project-specific design plans submitted by the proponent before approving an exception.

**WMA-BO-GOAL-02:** Maintain the hydrologic regime and ecological integrity/function that provide existing habitat for special status plant populations and significant plant communities in the WMA.

**WMA-BO-OBJECTIVE-02:** Prevent disruption, alteration, or interruption of surface and subsurface water flows that support rare and/or significant natural plant communities, and protect against invasion of noxious weeds or other aggressive exotic plants.

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**WMA-BO-MA-05.** Prior to approval of proposed surface disturbance, conduct baseline studies of current local hydrological conditions as well as current ecological condition in terms of indicator values for Public Land Health Standards #3 – Plant and Animal Communities and #4 – Special Status Species.

**WMA-BO-MA-06.** Assess all activities for potential impacts that may change or reduce local surface or subsurface flow volumes directly, indirectly, or cumulative to existing conditions and other human impacts or otherwise cause degradation of indicators for Public Land Health Standards #3 – Plant and Animal Communities and #4 – Special Status Species.

**WMA-BO-MA-07.** Require project-specific design and mitigation plans prior to approval of proposed actions that may affect habitat for existing rare plant populations and significant plant communities.

**WMA-BO-MA-08.** Consider exceptions for short-duration, one-time events designed to provide long-term habitat protection, such as culvert or bridge installation or bank stabilization actions. Move proposed locations of ground-disturbing activities, as required, to minimize negative impacts to the hydrologic

regime and ecological integrity/function that provide existing habitat for special status plant populations and significant plant communities.

**Standards:**

- Design projects such that proposed actions and site locations will not contribute to reduction of natural stream flows or other degradation of water quality or stream ecological function.
- Required design components may include construction design, implementation of BMPs, mitigation, reclamation, revegetation, monitoring (to guide adaptive management), and erosion control. Incorporate baseline study results into project design. Require that designs and mitigation components be demonstrated effective under similar ecological conditions.
- Review project-specific design plans submitted by the proponent before approving an exception.

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***Municipal Water Quality:***

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**WMA-MU-GOAL-01:** Protect and maintain or enhance resource values, especially water quantity and quality, in the Parachute Creek WMA.

**WMA-MU-OBJECTIVE-01:** Ensure sufficient water supply and water quality is available for use by the Town of Parachute and natural hydrologic systems now and in the future. To minimize cumulative impact to the Parachute Creek WMA resource values.

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**WMA-MU-MA-01.** Prior to conducting surface disturbance, or new surface disturbing activities, collect baseline data of local hydrological conditions. Data parameters will include physical, chemical, and biological characteristics.

**WMA-MU-MA-02.** Require project-specific design and mitigation such that actions do not measurably decrease water quality (including physical, chemical, or biological characteristics) at any collection or diversion point utilized by the Town of Parachute for municipal purposes.

**WMA-MU-MA-03.** Monitor and evaluate mitigation efforts on a regular basis for ground-disturbing activities that disturb, either separately or in combination with other activities, within a disturbance area greater than 5 acres.

**WMA-MU-MA-04.** Limited areas above the rim would be available for oil and gas leasing and development. Well drilling, well pad construction, and associated actions and facilities such as upgrading existing roads and constructing well sites, new roads, pipelines, and compressor stations would be sited and constructed in compliance with CRVFO-CSU-Roan-1: Settlement Terms and Conditions (Appendix B).

**WMA-MU-MA-05.** For leases below the rim, prior to exploration and/or lease development, the operator shall submit a proposed MDP identifying its projected activities. Prior to submitting the MDP, the operator shall consult with the CPW and BLM to develop terms that minimize impacts to wildlife and other resources. Agreed-upon terms shall be included in the operator's MDP (CRVFO-CSU-Roan-1: Settlement Terms and Conditions [Appendix B]).

**Standards:**

- Design any activities, facilities (including wells, pads, and roads), or site locations to prevent or minimize adverse impacts to natural stream flow volume or other degradation of water quality or stream ecological function.
- Required design components may include construction design, implementation of BMPs, mitigation, reclamation, revegetation, monitoring (to guide adaptive management), and erosion control.
- Project design will incorporate baseline and other relevant study results and require monitoring mitigation components sufficient to demonstrate effectiveness. Apply stringent requirements where recommended by State of Colorado practices.
- Relocate activities as necessary to minimize negative impacts to quality and quantity of the current and future water supply of the Town of Parachute.

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***Hydrologic Function and Ecosystem Stability:***

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**WMA-HY-GOAL-01:** Ensure protection of overall hydrologic function, ecosystem stability, functionality of wildlife habitat and botanical habitats, and enhancement of fisheries habitat, while making lands available for oil and gas leasing in an environmentally sound manner, under multiple use management.

**WMA-HY-OBJECTIVE-01:** Provide resource protections through actions that minimize disturbance, habitat fragmentation, and protect key habitats from disturbance, while providing for oil and gas leasing accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act and the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987 and applicable regulations under 43 CFR 3100 and in accordance with the decisions made through application of FLPMA and other laws applicable to public lands.

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**WMA-HY-MA-01.** Limited areas above the rim would be available for oil and gas leasing and development. Well drilling, well pad construction, and associated actions and facilities such as upgrading existing roads and constructing well sites, new roads, pipelines, and compressor stations would be sited and constructed in compliance with CRVFO-CSU-Roan-1: Settlement Terms and Conditions (Appendix I).

- For leases below the rim, prior to exploration and/or lease development, the operator shall submit a proposed MDP identifying its projected activities. Prior to submitting the MDP, the operator shall consult with the CPW and BLM to develop terms that minimize impacts to wildlife and other resources. Agreed-upon terms shall be included in the operator's MDP (CRVFO-CSU-Roan-1: Settlement Terms and Conditions [Appendix I]).
  - Limit open and administrative motorized routes to approximately 138 miles. Allow exceptions only where necessary to reduce impacts, such as using a longer route to avoid a sensitive resource or reduce visual impacts and direct habitat loss.
  - Implement innovative reclamation and performance-based monitoring standards.
  - Consolidate natural gas production facilities, roads, pipelines, and staging areas along roadways to minimize disturbance.
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### ***Streams Eligible for Management Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act***

**WSR-GOAL-01:** Manage suitable river segments and identify suitable segments for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System, protecting outstandingly remarkable values (ORV) in accordance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and BLM guidance.

**WSR-OBJECTIVE-01:** Apply interim protection for all suitable segments to protect the free-flowing nature, ORVs, water quality, and tentative classification, pending congressional action or for the duration of the RMPA in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.4-9.

**WSR-MA-01.** Determine all eligible rivers in the Planning Area as not suitable for designation and release them from interim management protections afforded eligible segments. This would conclude the suitability study phase for these rivers.

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#### **2.1.3.4 Support**

### ***Travel Management Areas***

**TMA-GOAL-01:** Travel Management Area (TMA) delineation addresses other modes of travel not covered by OHV area designations (43 CFR 8342.1).

**TMA-OBJECTIVE-01:** Identify appropriate TMA conveyances to supplement and complement goals and objectives for other resources atop the plateau, and to accommodate recreational demand in Hubbard Mesa.

**TMA-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage travel and transportation to: (1) reduce mortality from vehicle collisions; (2) limit change in GRSG behavior; (3) avoid, minimize, and mitigate habitat fragmentation; (4) limit the spread of noxious weeds; and (5) limit disruptive activity associated with human access.

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**TMA-MA-01.** Within the Roan Plateau Planning Area TMA, allow muscle-powered (e.g., foot, ski, horse, stock) travel cross-country year-round. Mechanized (wheeled conveyance) travel in the Roan Plateau Planning Area TMA is limited to designated routes year-round as signed or identified on maps available onsite or at the CRVFO.

**TMA-MA-02.** Future travel plans will minimize disturbance and redundant routes in order to outline criteria for future route development.

**TMA-MA-03.** Within the Hubbard Mesa TMA (same boundary as the Hubbard Mesa OHV Riding Area), allow muscle-powered (e.g., foot, ski, horse, stock) travel and mechanized (wheeled conveyance) travel cross-country year-round consistent with the “open” OHV designation for motorized travel.

**Standards:** All TMA delineations are subject to additional restrictions (i.e., seasonal, area, type, and number) set forth in the ROD or in subsequent travel planning.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG PHMA, limit motorized travel to existing roads, primitive roads, and trails, at a minimum.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-02.** In GRSG PHMA, evaluate and consider permanent or seasonal road or area closures as needed to address a current threat.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-03.** In GRSG PHMA, complete activity-level travel plans as soon as possible, subject to funding. During activity-level planning, where appropriate, designate routes with current administrative/agency purpose or need to administrative access only.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-04.** In GRSG PHMA, complete activity-level travel plans as soon as possible, subject to funding. Limit route construction to routes that will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-05.** In GRSG PHMA, use existing roads or realignments whenever possible. If it is necessary to build a new road, and the use of existing roads would cause adverse impacts to GRSG, construct new roads to the appropriate minimum Gold Book standard and add the surface disturbance to the total disturbance in the priority habitat management area if it meets the criteria in Appendix E, Methodology for Calculating Disturbance Caps, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**TMA-GRSG-MA-06.** Construct no new roads if the CO Management Zone is over the 3% disturbance cap, unless there is an immediate health and safety need, or to support valid existing rights that cannot be avoided. Evaluate and implement additional, effective mitigation necessary to offset the resulting loss of GRSG habitat.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-07.** In GRSG PHMA, allow upgrades to existing routes after documenting that the upgrade will not adversely affect GRSG populations due to habitat loss or disruptive activities.

**TMA-GRSG-MA-08.** In GRSG PHMA, conduct restoration of roads, primitive roads, and trails not designated in travel management plans. This also includes primitive routes/roads that were not designated in WSAs and within lands with wilderness characteristics that have been selected for protection in previous Land Use Plans (LUPs).

**TMA-GRSG-MA-09.** In GRSG PHMA, when reseeding roads, primitive roads, and trails, use appropriate native seed mixes and require the use of transplanted sagebrush.

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### ***Designation of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Management Areas***

**OHV-GOAL-01:** Motorized recreation opportunities coexist with fragile resources.

**OHV-OBJECTIVE-01:** Provide for motorized recreational opportunities in the Hubbard Mesa Area, while managing for non-motorized and non-mechanized travel-based recreation opportunities in other portions of the Planning Area.

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**OHV-MA-01.** Hubbard Mesa is designated as *Open* to OHV travel. Travel on all other public lands is classified as limited to designated routes, except for snowmobiles, which are allowed to travel cross-country on top of the Roan Plateau if there is at least 12 inches of snow (43 CFR 8340-0.5). The designation excludes vehicles in emergency, official, and authorized use (by permit holders, lessee, etc.). OHV travel and access may also be limited at certain times/seasons, in certain areas, and/or to certain vehicular types and numbers of vehicles.

**OHV-MA-02.** Authorization for oil and gas development may modify route designations to reduce conflict and ensure public health and safety.



**OHV-MA-03.** New routes associated with oil and gas would be designated administrative access only (BLM use), unless specific objectives for other resources (e.g., recreational travel routes or access to recreational sites) are present that warrant other designations on a case-by-case basis.

**OHV-MA-04.** Designate 2,330 acres, the Hubbard Mesa, as OHV Open Area.

**OHV-MA-05.** Designate 64,450 acres as OHV Limited Area, where all OHV use is limited to designated routes.

**OHV-MA-06.** Designate 32,680 acres as OHV Limited Area. Within this area, over snow use would be allowable cross-county with a minimum snow depth of 12 inches. Over snow travel would not be allowed in lands managed for wilderness characteristics above the rim. Aside from the over-snow exception, all OHV use is restricted to designated routes.

**OHV-MA-07.** Stipulation GS-CSU-Roan-16: Hubbard Mesa Open OHV Riding Area. CSU to protect recreation opportunities and settings in the Hubbard Mesa OHV Riding Area 2,320-acre SRMA. The BLM may require special design, construction, operation, mitigation, and reclamation measures, including relocation by more than 200 meters.

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### ***Transportation Routes***

Route discussion applies only to currently existing routes, unless otherwise noted. Additional routes that may be authorized as part of permitted activities would generally be for administrative access only in order to reduce impacts to wildlife and habitat fragmentation, but such routes may be open to limited use by recreationists, or for other resource management purposes. Such future identification would not require an RMPA, but would be addressed in site-specific NEPA analyses.

Where OHVs are causing or will cause considerable adverse effects on soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness characteristics, other authorized uses, or other resources, the affected areas shall be immediately closed to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence.

**TRR-GOAL-01:** Provide a network of roads and trails open to administrative, recreational, and permitted uses that accommodates environmental and resource concerns.

**TRR-GOAL-02:** Maintain the present visual quality and character associated with the JQS Road.

**TRR-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage routes as open if they provide recreational opportunities, needed administrative access (including permitted uses), are not redundant with other routes, and do not pose a potential risk to other resources. Restrict use to administrative purposes to avoid or minimize conflicts. Close routes that are redundant, conflict with management objectives, or pose threats to the various resources present, and are not needed for administrative purposes. The primary purpose in implementing closures and administrative use limitations is to minimize impacts to wildlife and to reduce habitat fragmentation.

**TRR-OBJECTIVE-02:** Maintain the JQS Road in its present condition and allow for present uses.

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**TRR-MA-01.** The JQS Road is not suitable as a main access for oil and gas drilling equipment and other long or heavy equipment due to steep grades and switchbacks.

It is assumed that oil and gas lessees would access the top of the plateau across private lands from the west.

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**TRR-IMP-01.** Open to motorized and mechanized use: 195 miles (96 miles atop the plateau, 99 miles below the rim) (Map 24).

**TRR-IMP-02.** Open only for administrative motorized use: 54 miles (47 miles atop the plateau, 7 miles below the rim) (Map 24). Administrative roads in the Hubbard Mesa OHV Riding Area would be open to the public.

**TRR-IMP-03.** Closed to motorized and mechanized travel use: 24 miles (23 miles atop the plateau, 1 mile below the rim) (Map 24).

**Standards:**

- Routes atop the plateau would be managed to not exceed approximately 138 miles of open and administrative routes, although some exceptions may apply.
  - Routes are subject to closure or restrictions for public safety or environmental protection.
  - Closed routes would be rehabilitated and may be designated/managed for foot and horse travel, and/or other non-motorized uses, including mountain bikes.
  - The JQS Road would be managed to allow for only historical and recreational use and would be maintained in approximately its current condition. It is not suitable as a main access route for industrial or other long/heavy equipment due to steep grades and switchbacks. Improvements to accommodate such use would not be permitted.
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## ***Recreation***

**REC-GOAL-01:** Manage the entire Planning Area as undesignated for recreation management.

**REC-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage to meet basic recreation and visitor services and resource stewardship needs:

- 1) Visitor Health and Safety – Ensure that participants in dispersed recreational activities have a low potential for serious accidents (fewer than two accidents/year that require hospitalization) due to human-created conditions and no (zero) exposure to hazardous health conditions.
- 2) Use and User Conflicts – Limit incidents of conflict that impede gas production (as determined by BLM Natural Resource Specialists) to three or fewer per year by increasing the understanding of participants in traditional dispersed recreational activities about gas production and the phasing of development.
- 3) Resource Protection – Create an increased awareness, understanding, and sense of stewardship in recreational activity participants so their conduct safeguards natural resource values within ACECs and overall land health (as defined by ACEC objectives or Land Health Standards).

**REC-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage Recreation to avoid activities that: (1) disrupt GRSG; (2) fragment GRSG habitat; or (3) spread noxious weeds.

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**REC-MA-01.** Management activities would include custodial recreation management actions only.

**REC-MA-02.** Marketing/Interpretation: Mitigate conflicts through visitor outreach efforts.

**REC-MA-03.** Monitoring: BLM staff would monitor conflicts with other uses (i.e., oil and gas production, grazing, ACEC management and land health), and private lands.

**REC-MA-04.** Administration: Mitigate conflicts directly by way of recreation use restrictions, realignments, signage, and closures.

**REC-MA-05.** Permitted special events and Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) for commercial use, organized group use, competitive events, and vending use would be allowed consistent with other management objectives for other resources and uses.

**REC-MA-06.** Allow the discharge of firearms for recreational target shooting on BLM lands outside areas with firearm use restrictions, provided that the firearm is discharged toward a proper backstop sufficient to stop the projectile's forward progress beyond the intended target. Targets shall be constructed of wood, cardboard, and paper or similar non-breakable materials. All targets, clays, and shells are considered litter after use and must be removed and properly discarded.

Prohibit the discharge of firearms for recreational target shooting in developed recreation sites (existing and future). The purpose of the restriction is to protect visitor safety by minimizing potential for accidental shootings (43 CFR 8365.2-5).

**REC-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG PHMA, do not allow SRPs with the potential to adversely affect GRSG or GRSG habitat.

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### ***Public Health and Safety/Hazardous Materials***

**PHS-GOAL-01:** Protect lives, resources, and property to improve the quality of life in local communities.

**PHS-OBJECTIVE-01:** Ensure that BLM lands provide safe facilities and conditions for visitors, users, and employees, with minimum conflict among users and minimum damage to BLM lands and resources, as defined by the DOI Performance and Accountability Report measures.

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**PHS-MA-01.** Inspect incidents and injuries as a result of reported events in accordance with Notice to Lessees and Operators of Onshore Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases (NTL-3A) in order to ensure that all contributing factors in which BLM has jurisdictions are identified and, where appropriate, plans are formulated to take corrective actions.

**PHS-MA-02.** CRVFO-LN-Roan-35: Emergency Response Plan. The operator is required to prepare and maintain a current emergency response plan. The plan shall be provided to BLM, Colorado State Patrol, the affected county and communities, and the general public. The plan shall contain information sufficient to describe the potential for emergency incidents related to fluid minerals development that pose an immediate danger to human health and safety and would normally require immediate actions by the operator to remove the threat, such as for hazardous materials spills, actions to be taken by the operator in the event of such an incident, and a communications plan to inform appropriate authorities and potentially affected citizens.

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## ***Fire Management***

**FIR-GOAL-01:** Recognizing that management of wildfires is inherently dangerous, give first priority to public and firefighter safety when determining what actions would be necessary to protect property and natural and cultural resources from fire.

**FIR-GOAL-02:** Consistent with risk management principles, manage fires to meet natural and cultural resource objectives.

**FIR-GOAL-03:** Suppress wildfires at the minimum cost, considering firefighter and public safety and potential resource benefits and values to be protected.

**FIR-OBJECTIVE-01:** Integrate fire and fuels management across all BLM programs to restore and maintain resilient landscapes.

**FIR-OBJECTIVE-02:** Pursue opportunities to work with neighbors and partners across jurisdictional boundaries to improve land health and address wildland-urban interface concerns.

**FIR-OBJECTIVE-03:** In partnership with local, State, and Federal partners, conduct fire mitigation and fire-prevention activities to reduce human-caused wildfire ignition and improve public safety.

**FIR-OBJECTIVE-04:** For the emergency stabilization program, determine the need to prescribe and implement emergency treatments to minimize threats to life or property or to stabilize and prevent unacceptable degradation to natural and cultural resources from the effects of a wildfire.

**FIR-OBJECTIVE-05:** The purpose of the Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) program is:

- 1) To evaluate actual and potential long-term, post-fire impacts to critical cultural and natural resources and identify those areas unlikely to recover naturally from severe wildfire damage.
- 2) To develop and implement cost-effective plans to emulate historical or pre-fire ecosystem structure, function, diversity, and dynamics consistent with RMP objectives or, if that is infeasible, then restore or establish a healthy, stable ecosystem in which native species are well represented.
- 3) To repair or replace minor facilities damaged by wildfire.

**FIR-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-01:** Manage the fuels program to avoid GRSG habitat loss and restore damaged habitat.

**FIR-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-02:** Manage fire to maintain and enhance large blocks of contiguous sagebrush.

**FIR-GRSG-OBJECTIVE-03:** Use ESR to address post-wildfire threats to GRSG habitat.

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**FIR-MA-01:** Use a full range of wildfire management options, from full suppression to management of unplanned ignitions to meet resource and protection objectives. Allow the use of naturally caused wildfires to be managed for multiple objectives, including protection and resource benefit in specific geographic areas on 53,775 acres. On remaining acreage of BLM lands, fire will be managed to meet the single objective of protection.

**FIR-MA-02:** Use fuels treatments to meet Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) objectives (see Appendix F for types of treatments and relevant BMPs). In FRCC 2 areas, apply moderate levels of restoration treatments; in FRCC 3 areas, apply higher levels of restoration treatments to restore to the fire regime condition class.

**FIR-MA-03:** Prioritize vegetation treatments to strategically reduce wildfire threat in areas of high fire risk and low potential for natural recovery.

**FIR-MA-04:** Use signage, mass media, personal contacts, assistance with Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and other associated activities to reduce human ignition and other threats from wildfire.

**FIR-MA-05:** Coordinate fire restrictions closely with State, county, and local partners, while considering economic and social effects on local communities.

**FIR-MA-06:** Design ESR treatment actions based on the severity of the wildfire impacts. ESR priorities include, but are not limited to, areas where:

- Life, safety, or property requires protection.
- Unique or sensitive cultural resources are at risk.
- Soils are highly susceptible to accelerated erosion, or water quality protection is required.
- Perennial grasses and forbs are not expected to provide soil and watershed protection within two years.
- Unacceptable vegetation, such as noxious weeds, may invade and become established.
- It is necessary to quickly restore threatened, endangered, or special status species habitat populations to prevent adverse impacts.
- Stabilization and rehabilitation are necessary to meet RMP resource objectives.

**FIR-MA-07:** Design BAR treatment actions based on the severity of the wildfire impacts. BAR priorities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repair or improve lands unlikely to recover naturally.
- Weed treatment to remove invasive species and planting native or nonnative species to restore or establish healthy ecosystems.
- Plant trees to reestablish native trees.
- Repair or replace minor facilities (e.g., fences, campgrounds, interpretive signs, shelters, wildlife guzzlers, etc.).

**FIR-GRSG-MA-01.** In GRSG PHMA, do not reduce sagebrush canopy cover to less than 15% in a project area unless a vegetation management objective requires additional reduction in sagebrush cover to meet strategic protection of GRSG PHMA and conserve habitat quality for the species, in consultation with the State of Colorado.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-02.** In GRSG PHMA, apply appropriate seasonal restrictions for implementing vegetation management treatments according to the type of seasonal habitats present in a Colorado MZ. See Table 2.5, Existing Habitat Timing Limitations by Field Office, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**FIR-GRSG-MA-03.** In GRSG PHMA, allow no treatments in known winter range unless the treatments are designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around or in the winter range and will maintain winter range habitat quality, unless in consultation with the State of Colorado it is deemed necessary to reduce risk to life.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-04.** In ADH, do not use fire to treat sagebrush in less than 12-inch precipitation zones (e.g., Wyoming big sagebrush or other xeric sagebrush species) (Connelly et al. 2000; Hagen et al. 2007; Beck et al. 2009). However, if as a last resort and after all other treatment opportunities have been explored, and site-specific variables allow, the use of prescribed fire or natural ignition fire for fuels breaks that would disrupt fuel continuity or enhance land health could be considered where cheatgrass is deemed a minor threat.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-05.** If prescribed fire is used in GRSG habitat, the NEPA analysis for the burn plan will address:

- why alternative techniques were not selected as viable options;
- how GRSG goals and objectives would be met by its use;
- how the COT report objectives would be addressed and met;
- a risk assessment to address how potential threats to GRSG habitat would be minimized.

Prescribed fire as a vegetation or fuels treatment shall only be considered after the NEPA analysis for the burn plan has addressed the four bullets outlined above. Prescribed fire could be used to meet specific fuels objectives that would protect GRSG habitat in PHMA (e.g., creating fuel designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and designed to protect winter range habitat quality, breaks that would disrupt the fuel continuity across the landscape in stands where annual invasive grasses are a minor component in the understory, burning slash piles from conifer-reduction treatments, or being used as a component with other treatment methods to combat annual grasses and restore native plant communities).

**FIR-GRSG-MA-06.** Prescribed fire in known winter range shall only be considered after the NEPA analysis for the burn plan has addressed the four bullets outlined above. Any prescribed fire in winter habitat would need to be designed to strategically reduce wildfire risk around and/or in the winter range and designed to protect winter range habitat quality.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-07.** In GRSG GHMA, monitor and control invasive vegetation post-treatment.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-08.** In GRSG GHMA, rest treated areas from grazing for two full growing seasons unless vegetation recovery dictates otherwise.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-09.** In GRSG GHMA, require use of native plant seeds for vegetation treatments based on availability, adaptation (site potential), probability for success, and the vegetation management objectives for the area covered by the treatment. Where probability of success or native seed availability

is low, use species that meet soil stability and hydrologic function objectives, as well as vegetation and GRSG habitat objectives.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-10.** In GRSG PHMA, design post fuels management to ensure long-term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing, wild horse and burro, and travel management, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of ESR projects to benefit GRSG.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-11.** In GRSG GHMA, design vegetation treatments in GRSG habitats to strategically facilitate firefighter safety and reduce wildfire threats and extreme fire behavior. This may involve spatially arranging new vegetation treatments with past treatments, vegetation with fire-resistant serial stages, natural barriers, and roads in order to constrain fire spread and growth. This may require vegetation treatments to be implemented in a more linear versus block design.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-12.** In GRSG GHMA, during fuels management project design, consider the utility of using livestock to strategically reduce fine fuels, and implement grazing management that will accomplish this objective. Consult with ecologists to minimize impacts to native perennial grasses consistent with the objectives and conservation measures of the grazing section.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-13.** In GRSG PHMA, prioritize suppression immediately after firefighter and public safety. Consider GRSG habitat requirements commensurate with all resource values at risk managed by the BLM. See Appendix O GRSG Wildland Fire & Invasive Species Assessment, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**FIR-GRSG-MA-14.** In GRSG GHMA: The protection of human life is the single, overriding priority. Setting priorities among protecting human communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources will be conducted based on the values to be protected, human health and safety, and the costs of protection. Consider GRSG habitat requirements commensurate with all resource values at risk managed by the BLM.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-15.** In GRSG GHMA, prioritize suppression immediately after firefighter and public safety. Consider GRSG habitat requirements commensurate with all resource values at risk managed by the BLM. See Appendix O GRSG Wildland Fire & Invasive Species Assessment, Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-Grouse Approved RMPA/Rocky Mountain Region ROD (September 22, 2015).

**FIR-GRSG-MA-16.** In GRSG PHMAs and GHMAs, temporary closures would be considered in accordance with 43 CFR subpart 8364, 43 CFR subpart 8351, 43 CFR subpart 6302, and 43 CFR subpart 8341.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-17.** In GRSG GHMA, require use of native plant seeds that are beneficial to GRSG for vegetation treatments based on availability, adaptation (site potential), probability for success, and the vegetation management objectives for the area covered by the treatment. Where attempts to use native seeds have failed, or native seed availability is low, use species that meet soil stability and hydrologic function objectives, as well as vegetation and GRSG objectives

**FIR-GRSG-MA-18.** In GRSG GHMA, design post-fire ESR and Burn Area Emergency Rehabilitation management to ensure long-term persistence of seeded or pre-burn native plants. This may require temporary or long-term changes in livestock grazing, wild horse and burro, and travel management, etc., to achieve and maintain the desired condition of ESR and Burn Area Emergency Rehabilitation projects to benefit GRSG.

**FIR-GRSG-MA-19.** In GRSG GHMA, rest burned areas from grazing for two full growing seasons unless vegetation recovery dictates otherwise.