

NWCOS Subcommittee Goals and Objectives Dots Exercise Results

This document contains the results of the dots exercise undertaken on April 19 and 20 by members of the NWCOS subcommittees on vegetation and habitat, travel and recreation, energy and minerals, and special designations. The purpose of the exercise was to identify areas of agreement and areas of divergence in the comments submitted by NWCOS members to BLM regarding BLM's goals and objectives for several resources. (The original goals and objectives document is available at <http://www.nwcoss.org/79505/index.html>.)

Participants had four green dots and two red dots, and they were asked to put green dots next to comments that they thought had potential and/or that they were open to and red dots next to comments that they did not agree with at all and/or did not see as feasible. Participants were not allowed to put green dots on comments submitted by members of their sector.

BLM and Keystone will work together to incorporate as many of these comments as possible, paying particular attention to the comments that received many green dots. NWCOS will receive an update on how comments were (or were not) incorporated into a new version of this document at the May 18 full NWCOS meeting.

Comments on Draft Goals and Objectives—Little Snake RMP
--Reed Morris, Colorado Wilderness Network

Vegetation

A. native plant and animal species

A.3. Maintain juniper and other woody species within their historic range of natural variability.

A.4. Restore natural disturbance regimes such as natural fire, and use prescribed fire and mechanical treatments as necessary to accomplish biodiversity objectives. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Sagebrush Management

A. Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species.

Weed Management

A3. NEW: Disallow new land uses that will likely spread noxious weeds to uncontaminated areas. **(no green dots; 2 red dots)**

Forests/Woodlands

A.1. Increase the species diversity and distribution of age classes within the forest and woodland ecosystems, while promoting and retaining rare element occurrences such as old growth stands. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

A.3. Provide forest and woodland products on a sustainable basis, consistent with other multiple use goals.

Cultural Resources

B. In high-value cultural areas, avoid land uses that are likely to compromise or degrade cultural resources.

Visual Resources

A.3. NEW: Maintain pristine viewsheds/minimize degradation in high-use, scenic, or culturally important landscapes.

Air

A.3. NEW: Ensure that new land use decisions to not degrade neighboring Class I airsheds.

Minerals and Energy

A. Allow for the availability of the federal oil and gas estate (to include CBM) for exploration and development consistent with existing law. **(2 green dots; 1 red dot)**

A.1. Identify and make available federal oil and gas estate (to include CBM) for exploration and development in potentially productive areas consistent with other multiple use. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

A.3. Promote the use of Best Management Practices, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Reed Morris comments, continued

B. Allow for the availability of federal locatable minerals, mineral materials, non-energy leasable minerals, and others for exploration and development consistent with existing law. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

B.1. Identify and make available[...]as consistent with other multiple use goals.

B.5. Promote the use of Best Management Practices, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

C. ... consistent with existing law.

C.1. Identify and make available [...] as consistent with other multiple use goals. **(1 green dot; 2 red dots)**

C.3. Promote the use of Best Management Practices, including implementation of sound reclamation standards. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Transportation and Access

A.1. Within two years of the RMP revision complete a comprehensive transportation plan that identifies and designates major transportation routes needed for land management purposes, including county roads. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

B. Provide a mix of motorized, non-motorized, and non-mechanized legal public access to public lands, as necessary and consistent with other multiple use goals. **(3 green dots; no red dots)**

B.1. Within two years of the completion of the RMP revision an access plan will be developed that identifies additional legal public access needs to public lands and redundant or damaging routes that should be closed and rehabilitated. **(no green dots; 3 red dots)**

B.2. Note: This objective should be dropped. Access should be determined by sound land management policy. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Travel Management

A. Provide for acceptable modes of access and travel that will protect resources, reduce conflicts, and provide a mix of motorized, non-motorized, and non-mechanized recreation. **(1 green dot; 1 red dot)**

A.1. Within two years of the completion of the RMP revision a road and trail system will be identified and designated throughout the resources area. **(no green dots; 2 red dots)**

A.2. Assess whether the current trail system is adequate to meet recreation needs.

A.3. All roads and trails should be designated, numbered and signed on the ground.

Signing will include allowed uses and activities. **(no green dots; 1 red dot)**

A.4. Identify and designate a managed road, route and trail system within the planning area. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Grazing

A. Manage livestock grazing to sustain resources, preserve biodiversity, maintain stable watersheds, and continue production of forage. **(4 green dots; 1 red dot)**

A.3. Manage plant utilization by all foraging species at a level that maintains plant health and protects watersheds, biodiversity and imperiled species.

Reed Morris comments, continued

Lands and Realty

- A.1. Identify all the lands for exchange, sale, or disposal in all of Routt County and in eastern Moffat County in a manner that benefits public land management and resource protection on behalf of the American public.
- A.2. Comment: Why wouldn't BLM want to acquire and consolidate lands in backcountry?
- B.2. Improve or create legal public access to public lands, including lands with no current access, as consistent with multiple use goals and sound management.
- B.6. NEW: Look at exchange or acquisition of state and private land in-holdings in proposed wilderness areas and Wilderness Study Areas.
- C.1. Provide access
- C.2. Provide access
- C.3. Identify and establish major utility and transportation corridors within the planning area as consistent with other multiple use goals.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

- A. Sustain the integrity of the sagebrush biome to maintain viable populations of greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**
- C.7. New/Comment: missing prairie dogs and other sensitive or imperiled species. **(no green dots; 2 red dots)**
- E.2. Control access and restrict land use disturbances in crucial habitats. **(no green dots; 4 red dots)**
- F.3. Comment: not clear on what "encourage" means. Stocking? If so, we recommend striking the line.

Recreation

- A.1. Provide adequate quality and quantity of managed motorized and non-motorized use trails. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**
- A.2. Provide adequate....
- A.5. Focus the non-motorized/non-mechanized trail system in WSAs and backcountry areas. **(3 green dots; 1 red dot)**

Special Management Designations

- A.3. Review current ACECs and analyze proposed areas to determine relevance and importance criteria and determine if current management is adequate and make agency proposals to address other important scenic, ecological, wilderness character lands, and cultural resources that are currently unprotected. **(4 green dots; 4 red dots)**
- A.5. NEW: Research, analyze and make management determinations for proposed wilderness lands for which significant new information has been supplied. **(1 green dot; 2 red dots)**

Water

- A.2. NEW: Disallow new land uses that are likely to significantly degrade groundwater quality or quantity. **(1 green dot; 1 red dot)**

Reed Morris comments, continued

B.6. NEW: Ensure that new land uses employ Best Management Practices to ensure adequate protection of surface water resources. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Fire

B.1. Reduce fire hazards in ecosystems as necessary to restore ecosystems to their historic range of natural variability and restore ecological community functions.

B.4. Use mechanical or other vegetative treatments to reduce fire hazards when appropriate and necessary.

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Comments on goals and visions Marianna Raftopoulos March 30, 2005

Overarching RMP Goals/Vision

Add:

1. Implement multiple-use in a way that best serves our communities and society. **(3 green dots; no red dots)**
2. Incorporate indicators to be monitored using best available science to determine if desired future conditions are being met while minimizing any negative impacts to the social and economic health of the community. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**
3. Recognize the custom and culture of the local community and how to enhance this custom and culture while achieving the Resource Management Plan goals. **(1 green dot; 1 red dot)**
4. Recognize valid and existing rights that are present within the Little Snake Resource Management Plan. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

RMP Resource Goals

Vegetation: (Add)

1. Provide a baseline of the current condition of vegetation for key ecosystem types (e.g., grasslands, sagebrush steppe, Douglas-fir forest, etc.)
2. Recognize BLM's multiple-use objectives and outcomes, identify the future desired condition of vegetation for key ecosystem types and what will it take to achieve this. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**
3. Identify indicators which should be monitored using best available science to determine if desired future conditions are being met. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Sagebrush Management

Identify areas of sagebrush habitat where strips of sagebrush are more beneficial to the habitat than large patches.

Riparian/Wetlands

Delete section B, and add identify ways to work with users to improve riparian areas.

Weed Management

Add: under B1 #2--BLM through the RMP needs to identify budget line item to participate financially in reducing the occurrence of noxious weeds and undesirable plant species. This process should be done on a landscape basis with participation from other users such as a partnership with the county, oil and gas industry, permittees, and other users. **(3 green dots; no red dots)**

Paleontological Resources

Add: Given the BLM's multiple use objectives and outcomes, identify archaeological, paleontological, and historical resource which should be protected in the Little Snake Resource Area. Recognize that certain significant areas should be protected, while meeting multiple use objectives.

Work in a cooperative effort with other users to protect significant areas while allowing the uses on that land to continue.

Marianna Raftopoulos comments, continued

Minerals and Energy

Comment: This is very comprehensive and follows the general outline we providing in NWCOS scoping comments. The concern of maximize is answered in the second bullet point which states that it has to be environmentally sound. **(1 green dot; 3 red dots)**

Livestock Grazing

Add: Provide a desired outcome for the RMP for grazing which will sustain and enhance livestock grazing allotments.

Identify areas appropriate for livestock grazing and under what conditions. **(2 green dots)**

Identify indicators which should be monitored using best available science to determine if desired future conditions are being met.

Lands and Realty

Add: Under C

Recognize RS2477 and Moffat County's roads, byways, trails and right a ways.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Delete the section on maintain large patches of sagebrush and replace with sustainable habitat for sagegrouse through adequate patches of sagebrush. **(no green dots; 2 red dots)**

Add: Under D, Cooperate with the Colorado Division of Wildlife **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Seek input from permittees on managing wildlife on public lands

Add: Under E Allow year round drilling on a limited basis in certain areas, working with the industry to enhance wildlife habitat.

Special Management Designations

Add: #5 Complete a map with the areas for WSA's, ACEC's, Research Natural Area, Special Recreation Management Areas, and Citizen's Proposed Wilderness Area, and the Horse Management Area. **(6 green dots; 1 red dot)**

Add a section on Socio-economic factors.

Establish the current contribution of the LSRA lands to local, state, and national socioeconomic conditions. Develop a program of how management decisions in the RMP will positively and/or negatively affect these socioeconomic values at the local, state, and national level.

April 5, 2005

455 Emerson Street
Craig, CO 81625

Jeremy Casterson,

Moffat County appreciates the opportunity to comment on “Attachment C” addressing draft goals, alternatives, and visions for the RMP. Our comments are as follows:

Overarching RMP Goals/Vision

- 1) Add the following Goal: Shift resource management from prescriptive management to “adaptive management” through greater use of science and monitoring. **(7 green dots; 1 red dot)**
- 2) At the end of the sixth bullet point, add “...and social values.” **(2 green dots; 2 red dots)**

Vegetation

- 1) We do not understand the intent of “maintaining connections” mentioned in the second bullet point, please clarify. If this is to encourage continuous corridors between a variety of plant communities, we would suggest deleting this bullet point. **(no green dots; 1 red dot)**
- 2) We suggest adding a bullet point to say “Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and manage for Desirable Plant Communities.”

Sagebrush Management

- 1) change the first bullet from “maintain large patches...” to “maintain patches appropriate for maintaining high quality sagebrush habitats.” We are concerned that large contiguous patches are more susceptible to wildfire and range-wide habitat destruction than smaller disconnected patches. **(2 green dots; 1 red dot)**
- 2) Clarify the wording of “connections” between sagebrush habitats, especially in the venue of our previous comment.
- 3) The first bullet under part B. speaks of “reconnecting” large patches of sagebrush. Again please clarify this language.

Riparian/Wetlands

- 1) Bullet point A3, please add “maintain or improve watershed hydrology.
- 2) Bullet point B1 change wording from “removing” existing sources of degradation to “work with stakeholders to improve or remedy”
- 3) Change bullet point “B” from being solely dependent on Proper Functioning Condition to using Proper Functioning Condition as one tool to monitor. We do ourselves a great injustice if we only achieve PFC’s and not address other goals. We recommend a goal be added that quantitative assessments occur along-side of PFC assessments with a complete interdisciplinary team and not one individual.
- 4) Change Bullet B1 from protecting against new sources of degradation to “minimizing degradation”

Weed Management

- 1) Add a bullet to “encourage land users to participate in the Northwest Colorado Weed Cooperative Partnership.” **(3 green dots; no red dots)**

Forests/ Woodlands

- 1) No Comment

Wild Horses

- 1) Change A2 to read “reduce conflicts between wild horses, livestock and other uses/resources.” **(2 green dots; no red dots)**
- 2) We support language to reevaluating and adjusting existing AML’s to assure that wild horse use is balanced with other uses. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Moffat County comments, continued

Paleontological Resources

- 1) No Comment

Cultural Resources

- 1) Add “develop models and sampling methods to aid in releasing selected areas from cultural restrictions.” This will help prevent the avoidance issues that typically prevent new developments or land uses. It will also help identify when sufficient samples of cultural resources are recovered so that multiple uses can continue.
- 2) Add “conduct cultural reviews of the Union Cellular Tower site to determine if the “temporary close to motorized access” designation is warranted are able to be released.

Visual Resources

- 1) add a bullet point to collaborate with stakeholders to identify VRM objectives
- 2) remove “based on BLM guidance” from the second bullet

Air

- 1) No Comment

Minerals and Energy

- 1) We support the existing language which is consistent with current national energy policy. **(5 green dots; 3 red dots)**

Transportation and Access

- 1) A bullet will likely need to be added to accommodate the response of the BLM solicitors office on RS 2477. **(3 green dots; no red dots)**

Travel Management

- 1) Same comment as above.

Livestock Grazing

- 1) Add a bullet to “Collaborate with stakeholders to identify and manage for Desirable Plant Communities.”
- 2) Add a bullet to “credit livestock producers for using AUM’s to manage rare species or habitats.” **(3 green dots; no red dots)**
- 3) Change Bullet A1 by adding “...as well as livestock needs.” At the end of the sentence.
- 4) Change bullet A3 from managing for utilization to using utilization and other monitoring efforts as a vegetation monitoring tools. The current language highlights a severe mismanagement dilemma if BLM is going to manage for utilization.

Lands and Realty

- 1) We recommend removing goal A3. In the absence of removing this goal, we recommend removing the reference to Thornburg and Vermillion. In the absence of removing these references, we recommend adding “...where local governmental support exists.”

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

- 1) Bullet A1 and A2 remove or justify the “large patch” and “connection or connectivity” statements throughout the entire section. **(1 green dot; 2 red dots)**
- 2) Bullet C, add a goal to “Manage wildlife habitats based on sound science and adaptive management.”
- 3) Bullet D1, add ... without diminishing existing permitted forage allocations.
- 4) Bullet E1 and E2, add ...without infringing on existing rights to access i.e. RS 2477 routes.

5) Bullet F3 places native fish populations on a pedestal to sport fish. This goal should be reworded to 'comply with the 'USFWS Recovery Program' goals which attempt a balance between sportfish and endangered fish.

Special Status Species

- 1) Bullet A1 A2 A3, add "...while incorporating safe-harbor incentives for land users. The intent with this language is to provide assurances that land users are not simply "kicked off" the ground and rare species placed on a pedestal above traditional uses. Where there is sound science to show traditional uses are in conflict with rare species management, BLM needs to not always go to removing these uses as the first option, there should be legitimate effort placed into balancing the uses with protection of the species.
- 2) Change the word "continue" to "Prioritize" in Bullet A4

Recreation

No Comments

Special Management Designations

1. Add a bullet to "Evaluate whether or not existing ACEC designations offer "additional protection" above and beyond what can be protected through traditional management, stipulations, or adaptive management."

Soils

1. No Comment

Water

- 1) Change bullet B1 from "minimize" to "Use Best Management Practices in and near streams..."
- 2) Change bullet point B3 from having a sole goal of Proper Functioning Condition to using Proper Functioning Condition as one tool to monitor general stream health. We do ourselves a great injustice if we only achieve PFC's and not address other goals. We recommend a goal be added that quantitative assessments occur along-side of PFC assessments with a complete interdisciplinary team and not one individual.
- 3) Change B4 from "removing existing sources of degradation" to "cooperatively implementing best management practices to minimize degradation." The impetus here is to not provide a tool to blame one use for a poorly functioning stream, but to address all issues and cooperatively come to resolution, rather than assuming that "removal" of a use is the answer. **(1 green dot; no red dots)**
- 4) Change B5 from "prevent" to "minimize"

Fire

No Comments, nicely worded.

Sincerely,

Moffat County

April 8, 2005

Vermillion Ranch Limited partnership
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Jeremy Casterson
Little Snake resource Area
455 Emerson
Craig Colo.

Comments to the Goals and objective Document

Vegetation

A. Add and meets the needs of livestock and wildlife users.

Sage brush management

B. Create mosaic of canopy cover as well as seral stages **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Riparian

A1 should say mimic natural role of disturbance instead of minimize
(These areas evolved under disturbance)

Wild horses

Aml should be lowered to fit year long grazing capacity. **(2 green dots; 1 red dot)**
Remove horse outside herd area period. **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Cultural resources

Unsure what is proposed? Needs more clarification

Visual Resources

VRM objectives must meet and respect local needs

Air

Provide exemptions for allowing prescribe burning

Transportation

Recognize county and private landowner road ROW's **(3 green dots; 1 red dot)**

Livestock

Section wholly inadequate

Goal

Sustain and enhance industry **(no green dots; 2 red dots)**

Objective

By creating DPC that maintains historic preference **(2 green dots; no red dots)**

Vermillion Ranch comments, continued

See county land use plan and earlier comments to AMS and scoping

Reserve common allotments were rejected in earlier blm initiatives and they should not be created here **(1 green dot; no red dots)**

Livestock should be the emphasis of this section not the management tool

Many of the fish and wildlife habitat objectives should be include in livestock section as well

Lands and realty

Western Moffat County has lands that should be consolidated exchanged sold or disposed of as well

Fish and wildlife

Section shall include reducing game populations to sustainable carrying capacities respecting other users **(3 green dots; 1 red dot)**

Special management Areas

Goal Minimize management fragmentation of the landscape **(6 green dots; no red dots)**

Objective

1 create maximum management flexibility for landscape scale management **(4 green dots; 1 red dot)**

2 reduce and minimize eliminate special land designations **(4 green dots; 3 red dots)**

Vermillion ranch incorporates and endorses Moffat county's comments herein

Vermillion ranch reserves the right to revise and extend our comments on this document in the future.

We wish to thank the BLM for this opportunity to comment

Sincerely

T. Wright Dickinson