

File Code 8340

RECORD OF DECISION AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

EA Log No. UT-066-89-34

Lease or
Serial No. _____

Project Off-Road Vehicle Implementation Plan

Applicant BLM

Project
Location _____, SLB&M

Address 900 North 700 East, Price, UT

County Carbon/Emery, Utah

BLM Office Price River R.A.

Phone No. (801) 637-4584

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision: The following is the decision of the Bureau.

I have reviewed the Price River Off-Road Vehicle Designation Environmental Assessment, and have decided to implement the proposed action.

Rationale:

The proposed action was amended to incorporate the public comments. I feel that the interim protection afforded under this plan will provide for necessary resource protection and diversity of recreation opportunities until a comprehensive RIP is completed.

Environmental Considerations: I have considered the environmental consequences of this decision as documented in the accompanying environmental assessment or categorical exclusion, referenced above. Except as noted in the Rationale, all environmental considerations have been adequately addressed in the accompanying document.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the accompanying environmental assessment, referenced above, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant. Therefore an environmental impact statement is not required.

Mark E. Bailey
Area Manager

24 July 90
Date

Wang 12111
UT-060-1790-2
July 1986

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The off-road vehicle implementation plan has been reviewed in the attached environmental assessment. I have determined that the proposed action would not constitute a major federal action affecting the quality of the human environment, therefore, the action does not require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Mark E. Bailey

Mark Bailey, Price River R.A., Area Manager

24 July 90

Date

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT COVER SHEET

EA Log No. UT-066-89-34 Lease or Serial No. _____

Project Off-Road Vehicle Implementation Plan

Applicant BLM Project Location _____, SLB&M

Address 900 North 700 East
Price, Utah County Carbon/Emery, Utah

BLM Office Price River RA Phone No. (801) 637-4584

LIST OF PREPARERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resources Assigned</u>
<u>Terry Humphrey</u>	<u>Recreation Planner</u>	<u>Recreation, Wilderness Visual Resources</u>
<u>Dennis Willis</u>	<u>Chief, Range Staff</u>	<u>Vegetation/Livestock</u>
<u>David Mills</u>	<u>Wildlife Biologist</u>	<u>Wildlife Resources</u>
<u>Bunny Sterin</u>	<u>Hydrologist</u>	<u>Water Resources</u>
<u>Blaine Miller</u>	<u>Archaeologist</u>	<u>Cultural Resources</u>
<u>Dean Nyffeler</u>	<u>Chief, Realty & Minerals</u>	<u>Geology/Minerals</u>
<u>Dan Cressy</u>	<u>Nat. Res. Prot. Special.</u>	<u>Soil Resources</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Terry R. Humphrey
Team Leader Signature

Outdoor Recreation Planner
Title

7/24/90
Date

File Code 1691/8340

CHECKLIST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA Log No. UT-066-89-34

Lease or
Serial No. _____

Project OFF-ROAD VEHICLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Applicant BLM

Project
Location _____, SLB&M

Address 900N 700E, PRICE, UT

County CARBON / EMERY, Utah

BLM Office PRICE RIVER R.A.

Phone No. (801) 637-4584

The following mandatory items have been considered for this environmental assessment. Items that may be impacted have been discussed within the environmental assessment; the remainder will not be affected and are not discussed.

Proposed Action: TO IMPLEMENT THE ORV PLAN AS REQUIRED UNDER

THE PRICE RIVER MFP.

	<u>May Be Impacted</u>	<u>Will Not Be Affected</u>		<u>Specialist Signature/Date</u>
1. a.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Threatened or Endangered Plants	<u>[Signature] 8-30-89</u>
b.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Threatened or Endangered Animals	<u>[Signature] 8-25-89</u>
2.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floodplains and Wetlands	<u>[Signature] 8-28-89</u>
3.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wilderness Values	<u>Jerry A. Humphrey 6/19/89</u>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	<u>Jerry A. Humphrey 6/19/89</u>
5.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visual Resource Management	<u>Jerry A. Humphrey 6/19/89</u>
6.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Resources	<u>[Signature] 8/28/89</u>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality	<u>[Signature] 8/28/89</u>
8.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural or Historic Resources	<u>Blaine A. Miller 8/28/89</u>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paleontological Resources	<u>[Signature]</u>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prime or Unique Farmlands	<u>[Signature] 8/28/89</u>
11.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wild and Scenic Rivers	<u>Jerry A. Humphrey 6/19/89</u>

The above project has been analyzed for conformance with BLM plans and consistency with local government plans. Significant discrepancies are discussed in the body of the environmental assessment.

BLM Plan and Date: PRICE RIVER MFP-1983

Local Government Plans and Dates: _____

a) Discuss the impact the action would have on the wilderness characteristics of the areas that were identified in the Intensive Wilderness Inventory Report. Impacts must be quantified in terms of what, how, where, when, how much (e.g., what is the extent of the disturbance? What is the time frame of the disturbance, etc.).

This action would result in greater protection of wilderness values through the restriction of ORV use.

Impacts to:

Naturalness:

The action is intended to prevent new surface disturbance from occurring within the wilderness study areas, protecting outstanding scenic and natural values. Closure of the Range Creek way would improve the natural quality of the Desolation Canyon WSA.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude would be preserved by restricting vehicles to previously impacted areas along the boundary of the WSAs. Closure of the Range Creek way would restore solitude to that portion of the Desolation Canyon WSA.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

This action would protect primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities by restricting ORV use in critical areas.

Supplemental Values (e.g., ecological, geological, other scientific, educational, scenic or historical):

Scenic values would be preserved by reducing ORV scars to the landscape.

b) Ability of the areas to be reclaimed effectively. What is the probability of successful reclamation to the point where impacts would appear substantially unnoticeable in the area as a whole by the time the Secretary reports to the President? Consider among other things the area's soil type, erosion potential, vegetation type, topography, and climate, including precipitation rates. If a reclamation plan is not available or is inadequate, what additional measures would be needed to return the area to the required condition within the allotted reclamation period?

N/A

c) Cumulative impacts to the area's wilderness suitability when considered in conjunction with impacts from other actions (past or current) in the area:

1) If the project's impacts (after reclamation) had existed at the time of intensive inventory, would those impacts have disqualified the area from being identified as a wilderness study area? Why?

N/A

2) Will the addition of this action produce an aggregate effect upon the area's wilderness characteristics that would constrain the Secretary's recommendation with respect to the area's suitability or unsuitability for preservation as wilderness, considering the area in its expected condition at the time the Secretary sends his recommendation to the President? Why?

N/A

d) In areas that are pristine in character, will the addition of this proposal significantly reduce the overall wilderness quality of the area: Why?

No, wilderness values will be protected by restriction of ORV use.

8500
Wang 0003I, 9/89

Moab District
Off-Road Vehicle Designations
Price River Resource Area
Environmental Assessment

I. PURPOSE AND NEED

The Bureau of Land Management is required by Executive Order 11644 to place all public lands which it administers into one of three categories for off-road vehicle (ORV) use. These categories are "open" meaning open to all ORV travel; "closed" meaning no ORV travel is permitted; and "limited" meaning that ORV travel may have seasonal or other restrictions. These designations are also now necessary because the state off-highway vehicle law passed during the 1987 Utah legislative session states that all roads and lands are closed to use by vehicles designed for off-highway use unless the land managing agency specifically designates the roads or lands open to such use.

The purpose of the Price River Resource Area off-road vehicle implementation plan is to define and document the specific actions needed to implement the off-road vehicle (ORV) decisions described in the Price River Management Framework Plan completed in September 1983. The implementation plan identifies only those actions essential to implement the ORV-related decisions of the MFP. Consideration has been given to funding availability for signs, publication of brochures and maps, and enforcement of closures and limitations.

The MFP considered the extent and type of ORV use that was occurring and the identified resource conflicts that needed to be resolved. Public meetings were held and public comments were received and incorporated in the 1983 decisions. Public comments addressing the adequacy of this EA/FONSI will be incorporated; however, comments relating to the MFP decisions will not be incorporated at this time.

All public lands in the Price River Resource Area will be designated as either open, limited, or closed for ORV use.

Areas identified for either limited use or closure would be signed at logical access points to identify that the traveler is entering a travel-restriction zone and that maps are available which show the specific restrictions.

Executive Order 11644 and 43 CFR 8342.3 requires that the effects of the use of ORVs be monitored on public lands, and authorized the amendment of designations when appropriate. Executive Order 11989 further provides that amendments shall be made whenever it is determined "that the use of ORVs will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, or cultural or historical resources of particular areas or trails." ORV designations for public lands will be reviewed periodically and a determination made whether or not changes should be made in existing designations.

It is BLM policy not to restrict use by ORVs in Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) solely because they are under wilderness review. The publication "Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review" states in Section III A 3,

"No lands will be designated as closed solely because they are under wilderness review, but if increasing impacts threaten to impair wilderness suitability, the BLM will move to control those impacts and may designate the areas as closed to the type of vehicles causing the problem in order to control the impacts. The Bureau also has the authority under other programs to regulate ORV use to minimize damage to wildlife and other resource values." (IMP Policy III A 3.)

In addition, it is BLM policy, as explained in Instruction Memorandum W.O. 87-8 that,

"As part of normal IMP surveillance and monitoring efforts, a concerned effort should be made to evaluate and monitor current ORV use and potential conflicts. If current use or potential conflicts appear to create unacceptable impacts or not meet the nonimpairment criteria, emergency action should be taken. Actions which may be taken include emergency closure or initiating strict limitations on use. This may be accomplished by following the existing procedures as outlined in the BLM Manual, Section 8341.2 (conditions of use - off-road vehicles)."

The following is a selection of definitions which clarify the meaning of the designations and can be found in 43 CFR 8340.

1. "Off-road vehicle" means any motorized or nonmotorized vehicle capable of, or designed for, travel on or immediately over land, water, or other natural terrain, excluding:
 - a. Any nonamphibious registered motor boat;
 - b. Any military, fire, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes;
 - c. Any vehicle which use is expressly authorized by the authorized officer, or otherwise officially approved;
 - d. Vehicles in official use; and
 - e. Any combat or combat-support vehicle when used in times of national defense emergencies.
2. "Public lands" means any lands the surface of which is administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
3. "Official use" means by an employee, agent, or designated representative of the Federal Government or one of its contractors, in the course of his employment, agency, or representation.
4. "Open areas and trails" are designated areas and trails where off-road vehicles may be operated subject to operating regulations and vehicle standards set forth in 43 CFR 8341 and 8343.

5. "Limited areas and trails" are designated areas and trails where the use of off-road vehicles is subject to restrictions deemed appropriate by the authorized officer. Restrictions may limit the number or types of vehicles allowed, dates and times of use, and similar matters. Limited areas and trails may be designated for special or intensive use, including but not limited to organized events, and may be subject to but not limited to rules set forth in 43 CFR 8341.2.

6. "Closed areas and trails" are designated areas and trails where the use of off-road vehicles is permanently or temporarily prohibited.

All ORV use is also subject to applicable state law as to registration, operator, and use requirements.

II. PROPOSED ACTION

A. DESIGNATIONS

A total of 545,536 acres would be in the open category with no restrictions on off-road vehicle use. Some type of limitation would be placed on off-road vehicle use on 541,376 acres, while 445 acres would be closed to off-road vehicle use. This action would implement the Price River Management Framework Plan decisions relating to ORV use.

Maps 1 and 2 show the general location and type of ORV designation decisions developed through the planning process. Identifying labels have been used to indicate the applicable designation (C1 - Closed Area #1; L1 - Limited Area #1; etc.). A narrative briefly describing the decision and rationale for each closed or limited use area follows.

Certain areas within the Price River Resource Area would be closed to ORV use. In these areas, the exclusion of vehicles from areas off existing maintained roads would protect the specific resource values discussed below.

AREA	PURPOSE
C-1/ Price Canyon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To avoid ORV tracking and noise; b. For public safety in the developed area and along the day-use hiking trail; c. To protect facility investment in the developed area.

Price Canyon is a developed recreation area of 160 acres with overnight and day-use facilities.

- C-2/
Cleveland-
Lloyd
- a. To protect scientific and educational values associated with surface geology and paleontology;
 - b. To protect surface dinosaur bone outcrops and values associated with the National Natural Landmark (Antiquities Act);
 - c. To avoid ORV tracking and noise;
 - d. For public safety in the developed area and along the day-use hiking trail;
 - e. To protect facility investment in the developed area.

The Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry (80 acres) includes a National Natural Landmark and a developed recreation area with visitor center, excavation buildings, and day-use facilities. The paleontological resources of this area are of national significance.

- C-3/
Cedar
Mountain
- a. To avoid ORV tracking and noise;
 - b. For public safety in the developed area and along the day use hiking trail;
 - c. To protect facility investment in the developed area.

Cedar Mountain Recreation Area is a developed recreation area of 205 acres, with overlooks and day-use facilities.

ORV travel within certain portions of the Price River Resource Area is limited in order to protect specific resource values. The following section describes the size of the affected area (BLM-administered acres), the type of limitation and the resources involved.

AREA	TYPE OF LIMITATION	PURPOSE
L-1 Emma Park ----- 4,270 acres	a. Do not authorize competitive or organized events	a. Potential for negative impacts to sage grouse nesting habitat would be reduced
L-2 West Benches* ----- 44,280 acres	a. Close between December 15 and March 15	a. Eliminate vehicle use during deer and elk use of critical winter range,

- | | |
|---|---|
| b. Do not authorize competitive or organized events | b. Potential for negative impacts to raptor nesting habitat and forage for wintering elk and deer would be reduced. |
|---|---|

*There is an overlap of 6,120 acres between the West Benches and the Mancos Shale designation areas.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| L-3/
Nine Mile
Canyon

10,326 acres | a. Limit to designated existing roads and trails (including only BLM and county-maintained roads) | a. To protect archeological and historical sites of potential National Register quality. |
| L-4/
Desolation
Canyon/
Turtle
Canyon

244,300 acres | a. Limit to designated existing roads and trails. (There are no designated routes within the WSAs.) | a. To protect primitive scenic, natural, and recreational values; to protect the historical setting associated with the Powell Expedition; protect archeological values associated with Flat Canyon Archeological District. (Historic Sites and Preservation Act) |
| | b. Close Range Creek jeep trail 1 1/4 miles from the Green River. | b. Protect primitive scenic, natural, and recreational values; protect water quality and archeological values; ensure cleanliness. |
| L-5/
Mancos
Shale*

212,700 acres | a. Do not authorize competitive or organized events between March 1 and May 15 (soil condition dependent) | a. Protect sensitive watershed areas from excessive erosion leading to increased salinity in the Colorado River system. |
| L-6/
Mexican
Mountain

30,600 acres | a. Limit ORV use to designated existing roads and trails (There are no designated routes within the WSA.) | a. Protect primitive, scenic, natural, and recreational values. |

L-7/01d Spanish Trail ----- 1,020 acres	a. Limit to designated existing roads and trails. (There are no designated routes within the area.)	a. To protect archeological and historical sites of potential National Register quality.
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* There is an overlap of 6,120 acres between the West Benches and the Mancos Shale designation areas.

Out of the four areas that are limited to designated existing roads and trails, only Nine Mile Canyon contains any designated routes. The routes include only BLM and county roads that are currently maintained. Additional routes will not be designated under this plan.

A series of 1:100,000 scale base maps have been prepared as part of the implementation effort. These maps, prepared from MFP overlays, show the ORV designations in a level of detail adequate for field identification and public information purposes.

B. DESIGNATION ACTIONS

1. Brochures and Maps

The brochure/map produced would be the primary source of public information concerning ORV designations within Price River Resource Area.

Objective:

To produce an ORV designation brochure that:

- a. Clearly portrays designations to the public in a positive manner,
- b. Helps resolve conflicts between ORV use and other resource uses and values,
- c. Provides information about recreation opportunities in the Price River Resource Area,
- d. Provides information about ORV use ethics, and
- e. Contains useful general information about ORV safety.

Actions:

- a. Base maps and narratives would be prepared by the resource area in a manner consistent with the above objectives.
- b. The Utah State Office would design and prepare the brochure/ map in a manner consistent with the above objectives.

2. Signs

Signing would emphasize identifying areas where closures and limitations apply to ORV use. Signs would be located along the primary routes of access into the area of concern. Signs would be a secondary source of public information concerning ORV designations.

Objectives:

- a. To erect an adequate number of signs to identify, in combination with available brochures and maps, the designation areas.
- b. Utilize minimum number of signs necessary to supplement available brochures and maps.

Actions:

- a. Erect signs at the locations shown on the maps in Appendix A once formal designations are in place.
- b. Evaluate additional signing as a tool for resolving persistent use problems or conflicts, when appropriate.
- c. Install additional signs where they are determined to be needed and expected to be effective based on ORV monitoring.
- d. Maintain a record in the resource area office of all ORV designation signs installed.

A summary of signs which are presently planned for installation follows in Table 1.

TABLE 1: ORV SIGN LOCATIONS (see maps in Appendix A)

LOCATION	TYPE OF NOTICE	AREA AFFECTED
1. T.12S., R.9E., Sec. 21	Closure	Price Canyon
2. T.17S., R.11E., Sec. 28	Closure	Cleveland Lloyd
3. T.19S., R.11E., Sec. 13	Closure	Cedar Mountain (west)
4. T.19S., R.12E., Sec. 18	Closure	Cedar Mountain (east)
5. T.13S., R.9E., Sec. 23	Seasonal Closure	West Benches--Spring Canyon
6. T.13S., R.9E., Sec. 33	Seasonal Closure	West Benches--Consumers Wash
7. T.14S., R.9E., Sec. 21	Seasonal Closure	West Benches--Porphyry Bench
8. T.15S., R.9E., Sec. 21	Seasonal Closure	West Benches--North Spring
9. T.12S., R.14E., Sec. 5	Limited to R&T*	Nine Mile--Nine Mile Canyon
10. T.12S., R.15E., Sec. 28	Limited to R&T	Nine Mile--Dry Canyon

11. T.12S., R.18E., Sec. 6	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Horse Bench
12. T.13S., R.16E., Sec. 8	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Indian Swale
13. T.13S., R.17E., Sec. 7	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Jack Creek
14. T.13S., R.16E., Sec. 20	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Pine Spring Draw
15. T.13S., R.16E., Sec. 33	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Cedar Ridge
16. T.16S., R.15E., Sec. 3	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Range Creek
17. T.17S., R.15E., Sec. 18	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Little Park
18. T.18S., R.15E., Sec. 20	Limited to R&T	Desolation Cyn.--Price River
19. T.20S., R.12E., Sec. 11	Limited to R&T	Old Spanish Tr.--Big Hole
20. T.19S., R.13E., Sec. 28	Limited to R&T	Old Spanish Tr.--RR Grade (north)
21. T.19S., R.13E., Sec. 33	Limited to R&T	Old Spanish Tr.--RR Grade (south)
22. T.20S., R.12E., Sec. 6	Limited to R&T	Mexican Mtn.--Prickly Pear
23. T.20S., R.13E., Sec. 10	Limited to R&T	Mexican Mtn.--RR Grade (north)
24. T.20S., R.13E., Sec. 25	Limited to R&T	Mexican Mtn.--RR Grade (south)
25. T.21S., R.14E., Sec. 4	Limited to R&T	Mexican Mtn.--Smith Cabin

* Limited to designated existing roads and trails.

3. Physical Constraints

Physical barriers such as fences, boulders, turnstyles, etc. would be erected where it is necessary to control and direct vehicles away from areas which are not open to vehicle use. Barriers would generally be used where brochures, maps, and signing are not expected to be effective in accomplishing the the objectives of the closure or limitation.

Objectives:

- a. Install barriers as needed to supplement available brochures, maps, and signs in implementing ORV designations.
- b. Use the minimum number of barriers needed to supplement brochures, maps, and signs in implementing designations.

Actions:

- a. Erect barriers at the locations shown on the maps in Appendix A after designation formally occurs.
- b. Evaluate additional barriers as a tool for resolving persistent use problems or conflicts, when appropriate.
- c. Install additional barriers where they are determined to be needed and expected to be effective based on ORV monitoring.
- d. Maintain a record in the resource area office of all vehicle barriers installed.

A summary of barriers which are presently planned for installation follows in Table 2.

TABLE 2: ORV BARRIERS (see maps in Appendix A)

LOCATION	TYPE OF BARRIER	AREA AFFECTED
A. T.17S., R.11E., Sec. 27	Fence	Cleveland Lloyd
B. T.14S., R.9E., Sec. 24	Gate	West Benches--Haley Canyon
C. T.13S., R.9E., Sec. 27	Fence and Gate	West Benches--Gordon Creek
D. T.17S., R.16E., Sec. 36	Boulders	Desolation Cyn.--Range Creek
E. T.20S., R.12E., Sec. 14	Fence	Mexican Mtn.--Box Flat

The fences and gates at the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, in Haley Canyon, and in Gordon Creek already exist. The gate in Gordon Creek is on private surface and is seasonally closed by agreement with the owner. The fence at the south end of Box Flat already exists, but would have to be reworked in order to exclude vehicles but not livestock.

4. Public Announcements

Public notices will be issued to inform the public of the ORV implementation plan. The target date for completion of the ORV implementation plan is August, 1990.

Objectives:

- a. To develop a program that informs and educates the general public and ORV user groups about the purpose and location of ORV designations.
- b. To stress the positive aspects of the ORV designation process and recreation opportunities within the resource area.

Actions:

In 1990, the resource area would:

- a. Publish informational news articles,
- b. Issue spot announcements for radio, and
- c. Send letters to key interest groups.

C. POST-DESIGNATION ACTIONS

1. Installation Schedule for Signs and Physical Constraints

The target date for erecting all the signs and barriers identified in this plan is October 30, 1991. Installation would depend on available funding and would be accomplished by designation area in the following order of priority:

1. Desolation Canyon
2. Mexican Mountain
3. Nine Mile Canyon
4. Price Canyon Recreation Area
5. Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry
6. Cedar Mountain Recreation Area
7. West Benches
8. Old Spanish Trail

The priorities are based largely on present vehicle access and use. The priority order established above may be modified if ORV monitoring indicates a more pressing need based on ORV use patterns and resource concerns.

2. Use Supervision and Monitoring

ORV use supervision and monitoring would be accomplished using all resource area staff and volunteers who spend time in the field (driving, flying, hiking, on horseback, etc.). Visitor contacts would be made as ORV users are encountered. Evidence of ORV use in limited-use or closed areas would be noted as it is encountered. Any violations of the designation requirements for an area would be reported to the resource area recreation planner and the Area Manager. Specific intensive monitoring actions would be developed on an as-needed basis, but the monitoring schedule shown in Table 3 would be accomplished as a yearly minimum.

TABLE 3: MONITORING SCHEDULE

AREA	NUMBER OF VISITS	TIMING
C1/Price Canyon	9	May-October
C2/Dinosaur Quarry	9	Yearlong (at least 3 times between September and April)
C3/Cedar Mountain	5	March-September
L1/Emma Park	None	Not Applicable

L2/West Benches	4	December-March
L3/Nine Mile	9	Yearlong
L4/Desolation Canyon	12	Yearlong
L4/Turtle Canyon	6	May-October
L5/Mancos Shale	None	Not Applicable
L6/Mexican Mountain	9	Yearlong
L7/Old Spanish Trail	1	Spring

Areas with no minimum number of monitoring visits scheduled are those areas where the limitation applies to competitive or organized events which require a special recreation permit. These limitations can be applied at the time of application.

No intensive monitoring points or study locations are planned at this time. If areas are identified where this is needed in order to establish changes in use or trend, photo trend studies would be used.

3. Enforcement

Resource area personnel would first seek voluntary compliance with designations, using public contacts, information programs and ORV user involvement as primary tools.

In areas where problems persist, law enforcement actions may be undertaken utilizing Utah State Parks staff or BLM law enforcement rangers. (BLM off-road vehicle designations have been incorporated under the Utah Off-Highway Vehicle Regulations.)

4. Maintenance

Signs and barriers would be maintained as needed to continue their effectiveness and neat appearance.

Signs would be maintained to standards established in BLM manual Section 9130. Replacement signs would be ordered for all ORV signs at the time of the initial order and when a replacement sign is used to replace a damaged or missing sign.

Public safety would be a primary concern in the maintenance of both signs and barriers.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Price River Resource Area includes 1,087,357 acres of BLM-administered lands. The PRRA is generally a semiarid environment of mancos lowlands and open country, with low-lying, flat-topped to conical rolling shale hills dominating in some areas. There are also some fairly extensive pediment remnants rising 100 to 400 feet above stream levels. Elevation ranges from 4,080 feet at Green River to 10,285 feet at Bruin Point. The area is bounded by the Wasatch Plateau escarpment on the west and includes the Book Cliffs and Roan Cliffs on the north and east. Most of the area behind these escarpments ranges from 5,000 to 9,000 feet in elevation. Lowland floor elevations range from 5,000 to 6,000 feet. The area is drained by the Green River (the eastern boundary of the area) and its tributaries, the Price and San Rafael rivers.

The general climate is semiarid, with annual precipitation ranging from 6 to 25 inches. Mean annual precipitation on the Book Cliffs and Roan Cliffs is 16 inches. The long-term precipitation average on the lowlands ranges from 6.06 inches at Green River to 11.23 inches at Sunnyside (Price is 9.88 inches). On the Wasatch Plateau average precipitation is 25 inches, mostly during the winter. Droughts occur one out of every five years and may last for one to two years. The potential evapotranspiration rate is high (up to 33 inches in desert areas) and generally exceeds precipitation in the area. Most summer moisture comes in the form of thunderstorms of high intensity and short duration. In the lowlands, the majority of precipitation occurs from May to August. Temperatures in the area range from 100°F to 100°F. The average annual temperature at Green River is 52°F, while at Sunnyside it is 46°. The average frost-free days range from 120 to 160 (Green River 160 days, Sunnyside 130).

Air quality in the area is generally good, with occasional occurrences of blowing dust which exceed particulate levels established by National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The area is currently classified as Class II under Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) standards. This classification allows some deterioration normally accompanying well-controlled growth.

Water Resources

The Price River Resource Area is within the Upper Colorado River Basin and includes portions of smaller drainages, including the Price, San Rafael, and Green Rivers.

Major perennial drainages in the resource area include: Nine Mile Creek, Range Creek, Rock Creek, Price River and the Green River. Several other streams have perennial flow, but are almost totally diverted for irrigation. These include, but are not limited to: Coal Creek, Soldier Creek, Whitmore Canyon, Gordon Creek, Miller Creek, and Willow Creek.

Waters in the resource area are used primarily for agriculture, municipal, and industrial purposes. Recreation and fish and wildlife are also important uses, but as a rule, do not consume appreciable quantities of water. Stock watering is also important.

Geology/Minerals

The Price River Resource Area lies within the Colorado Plateau physiographic province of the western United States. The Colorado Plateau is a region of highly dissected mesas with altitudes ranging from 4,500 to 7,000 feet, sedimentary basins, uplifts, and intrusions. The physiographic province is further subdivided into the following physiographic sections in the Price River Resource Area: Wasatch Plateau, Book Cliffs-Roan Cliffs, Mancos Shale lowlands, San Rafael Swell, and Green River desert.

The Wasatch Plateau lies along the western edge of the PRRA. The steep eastern front is not related to faulting, but is an erosional continuation of the Book Cliffs.

On the north edge of the resource area between the Uinta Basin and the Mancos Shale valleys of Carbon, Emery, and Grand counties lies one of Utah's most rugged areas. The underlying structure is relatively simple; strata of Cretaceous and tertiary ages rise gradually southward and upward from the center of the Uinta Basin to reach elevations of between 8,000 and 10,000 feet, where they are abruptly cut off in great erosional cliffs and descend in giant steps to the valleys cut in the Mancos to the south where elevations are between 4,000 and 5,000 feet. The great systems of linear cliff make an impressive sight when one approaches from the south. The lower cliffs, the most visible and best known, are the Book Cliffs. Above, and separated by a bench in places ten miles wide, are the Roan Cliffs and a third relatively short system, the Badland Cliffs.

The Mancos Shale Lowlands form the largest region of fairly level land in eastern Utah in the shape of a large recumbent "S", extending roughly between the town of Emery and the Colorado line. Included within the PRRA lowlands are two so-called valleys: Castle Valley, and Clark Valley, with loose, indeterminate boundaries. The Mancos Shale Lowlands form a broad border on the west, north, and northeast sides of the San Rafael Swell and then swing eastward parallel to the Book Cliffs in conformity within the southern contours of the Uinta Basin. The lowland is crossed by only two permanent streams, but is cut by a great number of intermittent washes draining the cliffs to the north or west. Sloping pediments, rugged badlands, and narrow, flat-bottomed alluvial valley dominate the landscape.

The San Rafael Swell is a great anticlinal, kidney-shaped unwarped lying entirely within Emery County. The entire swell is 75 miles long and 30 miles wide, but all boundaries, except the eastern limits, must be arbitrarily placed. Alternating hard and soft formations of Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous ages ring a central core of late Paleozoic outcrops. The east side is a spectacular easterly-dipping monocline, with almost vertical Triassic and Jurassic sandstone beds.

In the very southeast corner of the Price River Resource Area (PRRA) is most of the Green River Desert section. The entire rectangular section lies between the San Rafael Swell on the northwest, the Orange Cliffs to the southeast, the

Mancos Shale Lowlands to the northeast, and the Dirty Devil River to the southwest. The area is low and relatively flat, with many patches of shifting sand that chokes and obliterates the ephemeral drainages.

The PRRA contains within its boundaries the following minerals: coal, oil and gas, tar sands, uranium, and mineral materials in the form of sand and gravel and flagstone. In the past, carbon dioxide has been produced for dry ice, and more recently, mining claims have been staked for gold in the Mancos Shale.

Recreation

Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, Price Canyon Recreation Area, and Cedar Mountain Recreation Area receive over 12,000 visitor days of use annually; however, recreational ORV use generally does not occur within these areas due to the confined nature of the recreation sites.

Very little ORV use occurs within the Emma Park area, and no proposals have been received for organized ORV events. A very limited amount of snowmobile use has been occurring in the West Benches area during the winter months. Nine Mile Canyon has been receiving increased use by sightseers and mountain bike users; however, the use has been occurring on existing maintained roads.

The Mexican Mountain, Desolation Canyon, and Turtle Canyon WSAs have been receiving a limited amount of ORV use (less than 100 visitor days) adjacent to boundary roads. The Williams Draw area in Turtle Canyon WSA has been receiving occasional ATV use. The Price River Canyon and lower Range Creek areas in Desolation Canyon WSA have recently shown increases in 4x4, ATV, and motorcycle use.

The River Management Plan adopted in 1979 for Desolation and Gray Canyons proposes closing Range Creek to public vehicle use 1 1/4 miles from the Green River, unless users adhere to the following conditions:

1. Fire pans will be utilized.
2. No vehicles parked where they are visible from the river.
3. All litter will be carried out.

Over the past decade, user conflicts between river runners seeking a wilderness experience and users of the Range Creek jeep trail have continued, with no improvement. In addition, off-road vehicles appear to be hampering the recovery of riparian vegetation in Range Creek and causing streambank damage and increased sedimentation.

According to river patrol reports for the last few seasons, fire rings and fire pits are nearly always encountered at Range Creek Bottom, and large quantities of trash have been left behind on the ground or buried. A recent survey of the area (Dennis Willis, 6-21-89) revealed approximately four miles of vehicle tracks and trails on the 85-acre bottom, with loss of some cottonwood and willow reproduction and evidence of ATV use right to the river shore.

Rangers have observed 4x4 trucks, motorcycles, and ATVs along the river on several occasions. Signs warning users of the firepan, litter, and vehicle restrictions have been destroyed by vandals on several occasions.

The type of visitor use now taking place at and near the mouth of Range Creek is inconsistent with objectives of the River Management Plan to maintain the natural character of the canyon environment and provide a continuing opportunity for a quality wilderness-type experience.

Wilderness

Four wilderness study areas lie within the resource area:

1. Desolation Canyon	UT-060-068A	289,650 acres
2. Turtle Canyon	UT-060-067	33,690 acres
3. Jack Canyon	UT-060-068C	7,500 acres
4. Mexican Mountain	UT-060-054	30,600 acres*

*Acreage within Price River RA only

See the Recreation section for a description of ORV use within WSAs.

Vegetation

The following table lists endangered, threatened, and candidate plant species known to occur or likely to occur within the resource area and the ORV designation areas where they may be expected. Candidate species are listed by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as either Category 1 or Category 2. Category 1 species have current information supporting the appropriateness of proposals to list the species as threatened or endangered. Category 2 taxa have current information indicating that listing is possibly appropriate, but conclusive data on biological vulnerability and threat are not available.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Designation</u>		
		<u>Open</u>	<u>Limited</u>	<u>Closed</u>
Sclerocactus wrightiae	endangered	X	L6	
Sclerocactus glaucus	endangered	X	L4	
Pediocactus despainii	endangered	X	L6	
Cycladenia humilis var jonesii	threatened	X	L5	
Erigeron maguirei	endangered	X	L6	

Gaillardia flava	Cat. 2		L4
Psoralea polyadenia var. jonesii	Cat. 2		L4, L5
Hedysarum occidentale var. canone	Cat. 1	X	
Hymenoxys depressa	Cat. 2	X	
Lygodesmia entrada	Cat. 2		L5
Penstemon grahamii	Cat. 1	X	L3, L4

The "X" signifies that the plant is known to occur in that particular area. None of the listed plants are known to occur within the areas proposed for closure to ORVs.

Livestock Grazing

Six livestock grazing permittees currently use vehicles in support of their operations in the Desolation Canyon/Turtle Canyon area (L-4). These permittees use four-wheel-drive vehicles to travel on existing trails to tend their livestock. Precluding vehicle use will require increased use of horses. However, the longest trail currently used by the permittees is less than two miles long. Two permittees currently use four-wheel-drive vehicles in the Mexican Mountain area (L-6). Vehicles are used to check on and tend livestock. This use is very occasional, as the ranchers mostly use horses in this area.

Soils

Price Canyon Recreation Area (C-1)

These soils are on mountain slope of 15 to 50 percent. They are typically moderately deep to deep (20 to 60 inches to bedrock), well drained, slightly to moderately alkaline (Ph 7.4 to 8.4) and nonsaline. The surface layer is typically a stony loam, which is moderately erodible. Much of this soil is covered by a thin layer of forest duff.

Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry (C-2)

The affected soils typically occur on shale and limestone hills with slopes of 3 to 25 percent. They are very shallow to shallow in depth (5 to 20 inches to bedrock), strongly to very strongly alkaline (Ph greater than 8.5), and nonsaline. The surface is moderately erodible.

Cedar Mountain (C-3)

The affected soils above the cliff escarpment are typically on slopes of 1 to 8 percent and are moderately deep (20 to 40 inches to bedrock), well drained, moderately alkaline (Ph 7.9 to 8.4), and nonsaline. The surface layer is typically gravelly, fine sandy loams which are moderately erodible.

West Benches (L-2)

The terrain is a complex of benches, low-lying hills, mesas, pediments, and outwash plains. Slopes are nearly level to 70 percent. Only those sections outside of the Mancos Shale are described in this section.

The soils of the bench tops, mesa tops, and outwash plains are generally formed on moderately deep to very deep alluvium (20 to greater than 60 inches to bedrock) on slopes of 1 to 5 percent. They are well drained, slightly to strongly alkaline (Ph 7.4 to 9.0), and nonsaline. The surface layers are typically loams, with rock fragment content ranging from none to very stony. They are slightly to moderately erodible. A cemented caliche layer 5 to 15 inches below the surface is common on the bench and mesa tops.

The soils of the hills and pediments and the bench and mesa sideslopes generally are shallow to moderately deep (10 to 40 inches to bedrock), well drained, slightly to strongly alkaline (Ph 7.4 to 9.0) and nonsaline. Slopes are 3 to 70 percent. The surface layers are typically loams and sandy loams. The soils on the steeper slopes commonly have well-developed rock pavements ranging to extremely bouldery. These soils are slightly to moderately erodible. They are commonly complexed with rock outcrop and badlands.

Nine Mile Canyon (L-3)

The affected soils are moderately to strongly alkaline (Ph 7.9 to 9.0) and formed on flood plains, stream terraces, and alluvial fans of canyon floors (0 to 8 percent slopes), on steep canyon walls (40 to 75 percent slopes) and on bench and flat ridge tops (1 to 20 percent).

The soils of the canyon floor formed in very deep alluvium and may be broken into three main types:

Nearly level, imperfectly drained flood plains and stream terrace soils with seasonable high water tables. They are slightly saline. The surface layers are typically silt loams which are highly erodible. These soils are primarily located in Nine Mile Canyon and support tamarisk, willows, saltgrass, sedges, and cottonwood.

Well-drained soils on flood plains, stream terraces, and alluvial fans with slopes of 1 to 8 percent. These soils lack rock fragments and are nonsaline. The surface layers are typically loams which are moderately erodible. These soils are located in Nine Mile Canyon and its side canyons and support big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, greasewood, galleta and cheatgrass.

Well-drained soils on flood plains, stream terraces, and alluvial fans with slopes of 1 to 8 percent. They have high rock fragment content and are nonsaline. The surface layers are typically bouldery, sandy loams which are slightly erodible. The soils are found primarily in the side canyons and support big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, greasewood, galleta, and cheatgrass.

The steep canyon walls and mesa tops have a complex of very shallow to very deep soils and rock outcrop. They are nonsaline. The surface typically has loamy textures and has well developed rock pavements which makes it only slightly erodible. Some soils of the mesa tops lack pavement and are moderately erodible. Typical vegetation is pinyon, juniper, sagebrush, birchleaf, mountain mahogany, salina wildrye, and Indian ricegrass.

Desolation/Turtle Canyon (L-4)

The soils and topography of this large area are diverse. The affected soils formed on flood plains, stream terraces, and alluvial fans of canyon floors (0 to 8 percent slopes), steel canyon walls (40 to 75 percent slopes) and benches and flat ridgetops overlooking the canyons (1 to 20 percent).

The soils of the canyon floors formed in very deep alluvium are a complex of three main types:

Nearly level, imperfectly drained soils with seasonable high water tables. They are slightly saline. The surface layers are typically silt loams which are highly erodible. These soils support tamarisk, willows, saltgrass, sedges, and cottonwoods.

Well-drained soils on slopes of 1 to 8 percent. These soils lack rock fragments and are nonsaline. The surface layers are typically loams which are moderately erodible. They support big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, greasewood, galleta, and cheatgrass.

Well-drained soils with slopes of 1 to 8 percent. These soils have high rock fragment content and are nonsaline. The surface layers are typically bouldery loams which are slightly erodible. They support big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, greasewood, galleta, and cheatgrass.

The steep canyon, benches, and flat ridgetops have a complex of very shallow to very deep soils and rock outcrop. They are nonsaline. The surface layers are typically loamy and well-developed rock pavements which make them only slightly erodible. Some soils of the benches, however, lack pavements and are moderately erodible. Typical vegetation is pinyon, juniper, Douglas fir, sagebrush, birchleaf, mountain mahogany, salina wildrye and Indian ricegrass.

Mancos Shale (L-5)

The soils of the Mancos Shale area may be generally categorized as follows:

1. Shallow, well-drained soils over marine shale on hills and pediments with slopes of 2 to 70 percent. The surface layers are typically silty clay loams which are highly erodible. These soils are moderately to strongly alkaline and are moderately saline. They support mat saltbush, nuttall saltbush, and Castle Valley clover. Badlands are typically associated with this soil type. They support virtually no vegetation, are highly erodible, and likely strongly saline.

2. Shallow, well-drained soils over marine shale on hills and pediments with slopes of 1 to 20 percent. The surface layers are typically loams and are moderately erodible. These soils are moderately to strongly alkaline and are only slightly saline. They support galleta grass, Indian ricegrass, and shadscale.

3. Very deep, mostly well-drained soils on floodplains, valley floor, and alluvial fans with slopes of 1 to 6 percent. Many of these areas are gullied. The surface layers are typically fine sandy loams, loams, or silty clay loams which are moderately to highly erodible. These soils are moderately to strongly alkaline and slightly to strongly saline. They support greasewood, alkali sacaton, galleta grass, and shadscale. There are small, imperfectly drained areas supporting wet meadow vegetation.

4. Very deep, well-drained soils formed from very gravelly and cobbly glacial outwash deposited over marine shale. They occupy the tops of mesas and benches on slopes of 1 to 10 percent. The thin surface layers are typically loams and very cobbly sandy clay loams over caliche. They are slightly to moderately erodible. These soils are moderately alkaline and nonsaline. They support blue grama, Indian ricegrass, shadscale, and Wyoming big sagebrush.

The upper sideslopes of the mesa and benches have shallow colluvial deposits of this outwash over marine shale. The toes of the sideslopes are soils formed from marine shale or badlands.

Mexican Mountain (L-6)

Generally, this area is a complex of slick rock and very shallow soils on cuestas dipping 1 to 15 percent. These cuestas are highly dissected with steep-sided drainages. These steep-sided slopes are a complex of soils, rubbleland, rock outcrop, and badlands. The more prominent drainages have very deep alluvium as flood plains and alluvial fans.

The very shallow soils typically are very gravelly, fine sandy loams which are somewhat excessively drained, moderately to strongly alkaline, and nonsaline. The surface layer is slightly erodible.

The alluvium at the drainage bottoms are typically well-drained stratified soils of loamy fine sands and very fine sandy loams, moderately to strongly alkaline, and nonsaline. Some locations have small areas of seasonably high water tables and very strong alkalinity. The surface layers are moderately erodible.

Old Spanish Trail (L-7)

The affected area is a complex of shallow soils and slick rock on slopes of 3 to 15 percent. The shallow soils are typically somewhat excessively drained, moderately to strongly alkaline, and nonsaline. The texture is typically a loam which is moderately erodible.

Wildlife

A wide variety of wildlife species occur in the area affected by the proposed ORV designation. Species significantly impacted by elements of ORV designation include mule deer, elk, desert bighorn, Rocky Mountain bighorn, antelope, sage grouse, golden eagle, ferruginous hawk, aquatic species, and riparian habitat.

Threatened or endangered species occurring in the area and potentially affected by designation include peregrine falcon and black-footed ferret.

Emma Park (L-1)

The Emma Park area is used by sage grouse for strutting, nesting, and brood rearing. Mule deer and elk are also present in this area and use the area for fawning and calving.

West Benches (L-2)

The West Benches include mule deer winter and critical winter range for the northeast Manti herd unit and elk winter range for the Manti elk herd unit. This area supports high densities of mule deer and elk during the winter period, November 1 to May 15.

Mule deer and elk are forced into this area in late fall and winter by heavy snow or extreme cold. Habitat conditions on this range are considered to be a significant limiting factors for these herds. Changes to these conditions directly affect herd size and health. Severe winters on this critical winter range commonly result in high mule deer winter mortality.

Desolation Canyon/Turtle Canyon (L-4)

This area supports a large diversity of wildlife. Rocky Mountain bighorn, mule deer, elk, black bear, mountain lion, numerous raptor species are some of the species that could be affected by ORV designations. Riparian and aquatic habitats in Range Creek could also be affected.

Mule deer and elk use this area primarily for winter or critical winter ranges. Bighorn use the area, usually within one or two miles of the river or stream courses on a yearlong basis. Black bear and mountain lion are both secretive species notably sensitive to human intrusion.

Riparian and aquatic habitat conditions in Range Creek, particularly the lower reach included in this area, are in poor to fair condition.

While Range Creek supports a brown and rainbow trout fishery in its upper reaches, the lower reach is presently void of these species due to summer water temperature regimes and generally poor fisheries habitat conditions. Habitat conditions are being impacted by ORV use, notably numerous stream crossings (as many as 10 per mile) and a constantly changing ORV trail. The result of those impacts is reduced streambank vegetative cover (i.e. cottonwoods and willows) which causes increased water temperatures (reduced shading) and increased sedimentation due to less stable streambanks.

Mancos Shale (L-5)

The Mancos Shale area provides habitat for ferruginous hawks, golden eagles, antelope, prairie dogs, and potential habitat for black-footed ferrets. Ferruginous hawks nest in the area on low cliffs, juniper trees, and on the ground. Golden eagles nest in the area, usually on low cliffs. The nesting season is March 15 to June 15 for ferruginous hawks and February 15 to July 15 for golden eagles. Both raptors are sensitive to disturbances within one-half mile of their nest sites during the nesting period.

Pronghorn antelope occur in the area on a yearlong basis and are sensitive to impacts during the fawning period May 15 to June 20. During this period, does isolate themselves and seek out habitat areas such as flat drainage bottoms with optimum visibility and cover to avoid predators. Antelope stay in these areas up to a few weeks after fawns have dropped.

Prairie dogs occur throughout the area as towns or as scattered burrows. Prairie dog towns or town complexes of 200 acres in size or larger are considered potential habitat for black-footed ferrets.

Mexican Mountain (L-6)

The Mexican Mountain area is recognized for its importance to nesting peregrin falcons and desert bighorn sheep. The peregrine falcon eyrie is identified within the Mexican Mountain area. Desert bighorn sheep use this area on a yearlong basis. Both species are sensitive to disturbances during the spring.

Cultural Resources

Price River Resource Area contains between 8,000 and 17,000 cultural resources. Most of them are unrecorded and their locations are unknown. During cultural resource sampling projects, from which this estimate is based, semi-permanent and permanent streams and their immediate terraces were not

adequately sampled. As a result, cultural resources are not addressed in statistical summaries in areas such as Nine Mile Canyon and Range Creek, where many unrecorded sites are known.

Early studies in Nine Mile Canyon and Range Creek (Morss, 1931; Leh, 1936; Gillin, 1938; Gunnerson, 1969) established these canyons as significant archaeological areas, even though most specific site information remains unrecorded and unknown. Many other areas within the Price River Resource Area have similar significant cultural resources, but have not received the notoriety.

IV. ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

It is assumed that use would continue at approximately its present rate on all areas in the resource area not proposed for limited use or closure. Since the proposed action involves areas that are generally inaccessible or undesirable for ORV users, the users would not be displaced into open areas. Impacts on these areas would remain unchanged and therefore will not be discussed in this EA. The analysis will focus on areas identified for more restrictive use which could result in impact to specific resources.

Water Resources

Water quality is highly variable in the resource area, depending on time of year, flow, and physical location. Stream water quality is primarily limited by high sediment load and dissolved solids concentrations.

Runoff from public lands tends to accumulate salts and sediment and transports them into the main drainages during storms, adding salt to the Green River.

Ground water quality is highly variable, depending on the formation in which the aquifer is located.

Impacts to water can be measured by change of the quality of surface and ground water. Surface water quality is generally a tertiary impact governed by soil loss resulting from surface disturbance. Sediment and salts are added to the water systems with surface-disturbing activities.

ORV use will contribute sediments and salts to the river systems and therefore degrade the water quality due to, but not limited by, some of the following causes discussed by Webb and Wellshire (1983):

1. ORVs often establish a major network of rills and gullies which concentrate and channel runoff, increasing erosion on and off the site. Soil is often lost in these newly created and unvegetated channels.
2. On steep slopes, ORVs make deep grooves which are then deepened by runoff energies, thus transporting more soil particles. Erosion becomes more severe if slopes exceed 20 percent, but slope does not limit the machines until it exceeds 40 percent.

3. ORVs can compact and disrupt the soil surface which 1) reduces the infiltration capacity, causing more water to run off and allowing more soil transport; 2) reduces the soil's capability to absorb water, leaving less water available to the plants; 3) allows more soil particles to be available for transport by disrupting the soil's crust; and 4) results in a loss of plant cover, which opens areas to wind erosion onsite and offsite. Soil particles, particularly sands, can spread downward, burying and killing vegetation that was not directly damaged by ORVs.
4. The quality of water at the ORV site is reduced by increased runoff that results from the removal of vegetation cover and soil compaction. ORV tracks become partly sealed to infiltration and act as channels for the overland flow, again increasing runoff.
5. ORV use can greatly increase erosion, and thus salinity, from mancos-derived soils. The BLM salinity team recommends that ORV use should be severely curtailed on this soil type. The sparse vegetation and easily compacted soil are not capable of absorbing the impacts of repeated compaction from vehicles. Once rilling is started, gully erosion occurs very rapidly.
6. Increased runoff and decreased plant cover can cause an increase in the frequency and magnitude of flooding.
7. Much of the soil that is eroded from the land by ORV use ultimately enters surface waters, where it contributes to the sediment and salt load and accelerates siltation of the streams.
8. ORV users can add biological and chemical contaminants to the soils, and hence, to the surface or ground water, with small quantities of gas or oil spilled or leaked from their machines.

Therefore, any areas left open to ORV use could allow a continued increase in sediment and salt, because of increased surface disturbance (destruction of vegetation, soil compaction, disruption of the soil surface, destruction of surface stabilizers, reduction of infiltration capacity, increased frequency and intensity of runoff and concentration and channeling of runoff) caused by ORV traffic.

Erosion from areas left open to designated roads and trails should be minimal, as most of the disturbance has already occurred. However, continued use of these roads and trails may cause small amounts of sediment movement and increased runoff. In open areas, intensive ORV use could create critical erosion problems where use is concentrated.

ORV use in the Range Creek area has reduced the amount of riparian vegetation, creating increased water temperatures and higher sediment loads. Under the proposed action, closure of this area to ORVs would improve the water quality of lower Range Creek.

Minerals/Geology

Since all coal mining is underground and surface facilities are located adjacent to coal outcrops, with the coal being hauled from there by paved roads to rail loadouts or directly to customers, there should be no impacts on coal production from these ORV restrictions. Areas projected for coal delineation and development are not in the currently proposed restricted or closed zones.

ORV limitations could increase the cost of conducting seismic operations by requiring equipment to be hand carried or transported by helicopter.

Drilling and assessment work on claims will be affected by the imposition of these regulations. The cost of doing the assessment required to hold these claims will increase, which could mean less drilling and development work will be done on the ground. The large impact will be to new prospectors who will be prevented from using four-wheel-drive vehicles in certain areas to search for new discoveries.

The PRRA has only three community pits which are all on existing roads near communities and the main paved road system. Therefore, these ORV restrictions and limitations should have no effect on the use of these materials.

Recreation

ORV recreation opportunities will generally be unaffected by closure of the developed recreation sites or restrictions on competitive or organized events with the Emma Park area. Land ownership patterns, topography, and vegetation provide a barrier to ORV opportunities in these areas. Scenic values in the developed recreation sites would be protected.

Opportunities for snowmobiling in the West Benches area would be eliminated; however, better opportunities are available on adjacent Forest Service lands. Protection of critical deer habitat would allow for better hunting opportunities in the West Benches.

Some ORV opportunities would be foregone in the Nine Mile Canyon area by limiting use to designated roads and trails. The limitation would avoid possible disturbance to significant historical and archaeological features, as well as diminishing impacts due to ORV tracking and VRM Class I and II areas.

The section of the Old Spanish Trail that would be limited to designated roads and trails includes only 1,020 acres, and therefore, there would be no significant impacts to ORV recreationists. The trail is susceptible to ORV damage, and the limitation would protect a small segment of trail with important historic values.

The Turtle Canyon, Desolation Canyon, and Mexican Mountain WSAs currently receive very little ORV use. Access into these areas is extremely limited by topography and vegetation; therefore, ORV opportunities will generally be

unaffected. The limitation would protect the visual character of the landscape from extensive ORV tracking, and protect the outstanding natural and primitive recreational values.

Closure of the Range Creek jeep trail would curtail ORV recreation opportunities over the last 1 1/4 miles of Range Creek from the Green River. The Green River would be within easy hiking distance of the road closure for those wishing to obtain hunting or fishing access. The closure would eliminate the unacceptable levels of litter, buried garbage, fire pits, archaeological vandalism, and extensive network of ORV tracks. As vehicles would not be visible from the river, the primitive recreation experience of boaters would be enhanced.

Restrictions on competitive or organized events between March 1 and May 15 (soil conditions dependent) within the Mancos Shale areas could reduce ORV opportunities during wetter-than-normal years. No proposals have been received for competitive or organized events within the Mancos Shale areas.

Extensive ORV tracking in open areas would not be consistent with maintaining VRM Class II where concentrated and evident from common viewpoints.

Wilderness

Monthly IMP surveillance and monitoring efforts being conducted for the WSAs within the resource area indicate that, although ORV use is minimal, ORV's are causing soil, water, and vegetation degradation within certain areas of the Desolation Canyon, Turtle Canyon, and Mexican Mountain WSAs. The proposed action would help to retain wilderness values within these areas (see the Nonimpairment Evaluation).

Vegetation

Direct impacts to vegetation caused by ORV use are attributed to removal of vegetative cover and tracking. Plants run over are directly impacted by crushing, breakage, or uprooting. Such traumatized plants, if not killed outright, are more susceptible to death through desiccation and invasion by parasites and pathogens. Indirect impacts to vegetation arise from impacts to the growing medium. Removal of cover exposes the soil to erosive forces of wind and water. Tracking on other-than-sandy soils increases the bulk density of the surface soil. This usually results in decreased infiltration of water into the soil and increased runoff. With removal of cover and reduction of organic matter, the soil warms more rapidly in the spring. Ruts and gullies created through tracking channel moisture from the site. This, combined with decreased infiltration, creates a drier microclimate for the vegetation. Over large areas, this and related processes are known as desertification.

Removal of cover on sandy soils exposes the sand to higher wind velocities at the soil surface. The vegetation also provides a place for deposition to occur. Cover loss can cause the dune to "blow out." Vegetated sand dunes concentrate and cycle nutrients in the top foot of sand. A blowout exposes a more barren substrate that is difficult to revegetate.

In any case, the impact of ORVs on vegetation is density dependent. The greater the use of ORVs, the greater the impact. Soil losses as a result of ORV traffic have been estimated to range from three to fifty tons per mile traveled, depending on soil type and kind of vehicle. These types of impacts are expected to continue at the present rate on areas designated as open.

The following discusses the impacts to vegetation of the limited and closed areas:

C-1 Price Canyon Recreation Area. This area presently receives little off-road vehicle use. Present vegetation is not expected to change as a result of these actions.

C-2 Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry. Presently, there is no ORV activity occurring in the area. The area is fenced to exclude livestock and serves as a reference area enclosure. Elimination of the threat of ORV damage will preserve the value of the area as an ecological preserve.

C-3 Cedar Mountain Recreation Area. This area presently receives minimal ORV use. No noticeable impacts to vegetation are anticipated as most of the ORV use occurs on a barren substrate.

L-1 Emma Park. No competitive events have occurred in this area, nor has interest been expressed in holding such events. Therefore, no changes in vegetation are anticipated as a result of this action.

L-2 West Benches. Some limited snowmobile use presently occurs on the West Benches. Snowmobile use generally does not impact vegetation, either directly or indirectly, at these lower elevations.

L-3 Nine Mile Canyon. Very limited ORV use has occurred in this area due to the large channel cuts and dense stands of brush. Limiting ORV use may protect possible habitat for Penstomen grahamii.

L-4 Desolation Canyon/Turtle Canyon. ORV use is presently occurring along existing trails along the Tavaputs Plateau and overland travel in the Nine Mile, Range Creek, Gunnison Butte and Price River Canyon area. Restricting ORV use will protect one of four known populations of Psorothamnus polyadenius var. jonesii. It will also protect potential habitat for Sclerocactus glaucus, in the extreme northern end of Desolation Canyon. The entire known habitat for Gaillardia flava is also within this designation. Penstomen grahamii, may occur, but its presence is not likely.

ORV use in the lower Range Creek area has fanned out into an extensive network of erratic trails, and several parallel jeep trails are intertwined in and out of the creek bottom. The resultant destruction of riparian vegetation has led to reduced streambank stability and increased water temperatures and sedimentation. Motorcycle and ATV users have been using the creek bottom as a trail, gouging ruts, crushing vegetation, and increasing sedimentation. Under the proposed action, closure of this area to ORVs would allow regeneration of riparian vegetation.

L-5 Mancos Shale. Mancos Shale soils are most prone to compaction when the soil moisture is high. Trafficking these soils when they are wet can cause the formation of a dense crust up to several inches thick. This crust is extremely hostile to seedling establishment and root development. The crusts are virtually impermeable to moisture. The Mancos sites tend to have very sparse vegetation and are low in productivity in an undisturbed state. Vegetative cover on these sites is generally 10 to 15 percent. Heavy ORV traffic can reduce cover to essentially zero. This limitation on ORVs will partially protect two of four known populations of Psoralea polyadenia var. jonesii.

L-6 Mexican Mountain. This area currently receives a considerable amount of ORV use. Enforcement of this restriction will protect known habitat of Sclerocactus wrightiae, Pediocactus despainii and Erigeron maguirei. The two cactus species have ORV use identified as a threat. Cycladenia humilis var. jonesii and Hymenoxys depressa may occur in this area.

L-7 Old Spanish Trail. This area currently receives a considerable amount of ORV use. Enforcement of this restriction may protect potential habitat of Sclerocactus wrightiae, Pediocactus despainii, Erigeron maguirei, Cycladenia humilis var. jonesii and Hymenoxys depressa.

In open areas, direct impacts to vegetation would occur, especially in areas with concentrated use. The following T&E plant species would be vulnerable to destruction by ORV traffic: Sclerocactus wrightiae, Sclerocactus glaucus, Pediocactus despainii, Cycladenia humilis var. jonesii, Erigeron maguirei, Hedysarum occidentale, Hymenoxys depressa, Penstemon grahamii.

Livestock Grazing

Under the proposed action, permittees could be authorized on a case-by-case basis to use existing access trails within limited access areas to tend livestock.

Soils

Price Canyon Recreation Area (C-1)

The risk of erosion to these soils from ORV traffic is moderate to severe once protective vegetation is eliminated. ORV use around the picnic and camping areas would create trails which would likely be sustained by foot traffic.

Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry (C-2)

The risk of erosion to these soils from ORV traffic is moderate to severe. These soils will easily rut and compact when wet. Loosened soils will tightly crust when impacted by raindrops. Even light ORV traffic may form scars of indefinite duration. Because of the shallowness of these soils, an acceleration of erosion should be considered significant. Poor soil physical properties with disturbance, high alkalinity, decreased productivity with erosion and droughty conditions due to low precipitation and increased runoff would combine to make revegetation extremely difficult.

Cedar Mountain (C-3)

The risk of erosion to these soils from ORV traffic is slight to moderate. These soils can handle occasional ORV traffic which infrequently passes over the same ground.

West Benches (L-2)

The risks of erosion are slight to moderate with ORV use on bench and mesa tops and outwash plains. These soils and vegetation can recover satisfactorily from light, periodic use. Repeated use of the same path can create lasting ruts, especially where rock fragment content at the surface is low.

On the bench and mesa sideslopes, pediments, and hills, the risk of erosion is slight to severe with off-road vehicle use. Where rock pavements are well developed, soils can tolerate infrequent light traffic on slopes up to 25 percent. However, continued use can displace these pavements exposing soils to severe erosion and creating lasting scars. Where rock pavements are poor or nonexistent, the soils on slopes less than 11 percent can tolerate light traffic which infrequently impacts the same ground.

Nine Mile Canyon (L-3)

The risks of rill and sheet erosion are slight to moderate. When confined to surfaces where seasonably high water tables are absent, light ORV use can be tolerated. However, vehicle use in and around gullies and stream banks can create severe compaction and channeling which can accelerate gully headcutting and streambank erosion. Besides eroding valuable soil and increasing stream sedimentation, such erosion may pose threats to water table levels. Fugitive dust would be a problem over much of these areas. The soils high in rock fragment content are the most stable to erosion and least dusty.

Most of the steep canyon slopes and mesa tops are inaccessible to off-road vehicles. Generally, where terrain allows, the soils can tolerate light, infrequent traffic on slopes less than 25 percent because of the protective rock pavements. However, continued use can displace these pavements, exposing soils to severe erosion and creating lasting scars. Where soils are very shallow, any loss is significant. The risk of significant damage with concentrated use is moderate on slopes between 4 to 9 percent and high on slopes greater than 9 percent.

Desolation/Turtle Canyon (L-4)

The risks of rill and sheet erosion are slight to moderate with off-road vehicle use in the canyon floors. When confined to these surfaces which are not wetted by a seasonably high water table, light infrequent ORV use can be tolerated. However, where rock fragment content is low, vehicle use in and around gullies and streambanks can create severe compaction and channeling which can accelerate gully headcutting and streambank erosion. Besides eroding valuable soil and increasing stream sedimentation, such erosion may pose threats to water table levels. Fugitive dust will be a problem where surfaces are loams and silt loams.

Most of the canyon slopes, benches, and flat ridgetops are inaccessible to off-road vehicles because of the absence of roads and because of terrain constraints. Where rock pavements are well developed, soils can tolerate light, infrequent traffic on slopes up to 25 percent. However, continued use can displace these pavements, exposing highly erodible soils and creating lasting scars. Any soil loss is significant where soil depths are very shallow. The risk of significant damage with continued use is moderate on slopes greater than 4 percent and high on slopes 4 to 9 percent.

The closure of the Range Creek jeep trail will result in stabilization of both streambank and sand dune areas.

Mancos Shale (L-5)

Off-road vehicle use on the moderate to strongly saline hills and pediments often results in severe impacts because these soils are highly erodible and compactible and also because revegetation is very difficult with disturbance. The tracks from light use are enough to create rills which are self-perpetuating, even on the more gentle slopes. These rills greatly increase runoff and erosion and leave the soils with significantly less moisture for plant growth. Since most of these soils are shallow, any significant loss of soil is critical. Increased runoff will aggravate the gulying problem on the alluvial lands below.

Dirt bikes have been able to climb directly up slopes to 70 percent. Four- and three-wheelers have been observed taking 50 percent slopes. Use on the steeper slopes will leave permanent scars which will continue to erode. Because of this soil's sensitivity to disturbance and because of its relatively high salinity, increasing ORV use could be a significant factor, influencing salinity loads entering the Colorado River drainage system.

Off-road vehicle use on the slightly saline soils of the hills and pediments will produce significant negative impacts with concentrated use. These soils, however, can tolerate light, infrequent ORV use on slopes less than 10 percent because they are less erodible and better able to revegetate. In many areas, these soils are associated with the more saline soils and badlands, making separate ORV designation impractical.

The very deep alluvial soils can also tolerate light, infrequent off-road use without significant erosion. However, vehicle use in and around gullies can create severe compaction and channeling which can accelerate gully head-cutting. Accelerated erosion of this nature would significantly contribute to salinity loads. Protective surface crusts become pulverized into powder with ORV disturbance. Areas of concentrated use can experience blowouts of this pulverized soil by wind action. Repeated use and blowouts over time can severely degrade the quality of the surface soil. With wetting, disturbed surfaces usually compress into a thick, nonporous crust which inhibits seedling emergence.

Poor physical properties with disturbance, relatively high salinity, and low precipitation cause revegetation to be slow and difficult.

In general, the alluvial outwash soils of the bench and mesa tops can tolerate the most off-road abuse with the least erosion. With light, infrequent use, recovery and revegetation is relatively quick. However, the topsoil is thin and where significant erosion does occur, productivity of the soil can be severely affected.

The soils are nonsaline and would contribute little to the salinity load.

Mexican Mountain (L-6)

The risk of erosion from ORV use on the 1 to 15 percent cuesta slopes is slight to moderate. Rock pavements afford these soils good protection. However, reoccurring use will take its toll where traffic is confined by topography to certain routes. High runoff due to the large coverage of slick rock and very shallow soils will easily carry away fines churned up by tires.

Noticeable long-term ruts would form from repeated use on the soils and badlands of the drainage sideslopes.

ORV traffic on the alluvium would cause ruts when wet. Concentrated use could cause significant streambank erosion and gullying.

Old Spanish Trail (L-7)

The risk of these soils to erosion from ORV use is slight to severe, depending on slope. High runoff due to the large coverage of slick rock and shallow soils depth easily will carry away soil from crushed surface crusts. ORV traffic around the Old Spanish Trail runs the risk of creating erosional scars and degrading the trail itself.

In open areas, there would be slight to moderate risk of erosion to soils from ORV traffic. Concentrated use, and use during very wet periods or on steep slopes, could pose severe risk to soils in these areas.

Wildlife

ORV use can significantly impact wildlife populations. Some of the more significant effects include displacement of wildlife from preferred habitats, increased stress to wildlife, destruction of wildlife, habitat alteration, etc.

Wildlife displaced from preferred habitats are subjected to increased predation and less suitable habitat conditions. ORV use generally increases stress to wildlife populations such as mule deer, antelope, and desert bighorn due to the ability to approach these species closer. Ground-nesting birds, small mammals and other low-mobility wildlife species (reptiles and amphibians) are actually destroyed by ORV use. Organized ORV events can result in habitat deterioration. More specifically, vegetative production and cover is sacrificed in high-use areas.

Emma Park (L-1)

Closing this area to organized ORV events will help protect sage grouse nesting activity, and minimize disturbance to mule deer and elk during the fawning and calving periods. Habitat alteration will be minimized in this important area due to this restriction.

West Benches (L-2)

ORV use, particularly snowmobiling, displaces mule deer and elk from preferred habitats, increasing stress, exposure to severe winter conditions, and exposure to predators. When conditions are suitable for snowmobiling, 12 to 16 inches or greater snow depth, mule deer, particularly fawns, are already stressed and in a weakened condition due to difficulty in movement and feeding. At these snow depths, most sagebrush is buried, forcing mule deer to rely on less nutritious forage.

Proposed ORV restrictions will minimize impacts to mule deer and elk from unintentional and intentional harassment. The ORV designations will remove one factor leading to increased winter mortality in these mule deer and elk herds.

Desolation Canyon/Turtle Canyon (L-4)

Proposed ORV restrictions for Desolation Canyon/Turtle Canyon will minimize impacts of ORV use to wildlife and wildlife habitats. The greatest benefit to wildlife will be seen in the Range Creek trail closure. This will eliminate a great deal of disturbance associated with stream crossings and off-road use and allow riparian habitat conditions to improve. Bighorn sheep use in the drainage would likely increase as a result of the closure. As streambank vegetation improves, water quality and fishery habitat conditions would improve, possibly to the point where lower Range Creek could support a trout fishery.

Mancos Shale (L-5)

The proposed ORV designation will provide partial protection for nesting raptors, especially ferruginous hawk and antelope. Specific protection for these species and black-footed ferrets must be developed on a case-by-case basis through the environmental assessment process.

Mexican Mountain (L-6)

Impacts to nesting peregrine falcons will be minimized by proposed ORV designation. Likewise, the proposed designation will reduce conflicts between ORVs and desert bighorn sheep. This will be particularly beneficial during the spring high recreational use period when ewes with lambs are less mobile and more dependent on free water.

Cultural Resources

ORV use is expected to produce the following impacts to cultural resources:

- Surface disturbance of archaeological and historic sites ranging from slight damage to total destruction.
- Mixing of occupational layers.
- Artifact alteration and elimination.
- Erosion of archaeological site features.
- Loss of site information potential.
- Alteration of internal site configuration by selective destruction of specific feature types.
- Desecration of burials and sacred areas.
- Introduction of visual elements which detract from a site's setting or purpose.

Closure or limiting of vehicle to existing roads and trails could prevent or reduce some of this impact.

Because of the general (nonsite specific) nature of this proposed action and the resulting ORV use, specific impacts to individual cultural resources cannot be identified at this time. Impacts to specific sites will have to be considered as they are identified. A letter of agreement between the BLM and the Utah State Historic Preservation Office formalizes this policy.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following organizations and individuals were sent copies of the EA:

*George Nickas
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*Jane Leeson
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Miles Moretti
 Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
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*Comments were received from these organizations.

The issues and suggestions below were raised by public comment. BLM's response to each item is also indicated. Copies of all comments received are available at the Price BLM office.

1. No alternatives to the proposed action were presented.

Alternatives were considered during the MFP process. Following the impact identification and multiple use analysis, alternatives were selected for each activity. Refer to the MFP for information on alternatives and the multiple use analysis.

2. No discussion of environmental impacts of ORVs in areas designated as open was provided.

Additional information was added to the impact section to clarify the analysis of impacts within areas designated as open.

3. The maps do not indicate where vehicle use will be allowed or mileage of roads or trails within the limited areas.

Out of the four areas that are limited to designated existing roads and trails, only Nine Mile Canyon contains any designated routes. The routes include only BLM and county roads that are currently maintained. Additional routes will not be designated under this plan. This clarification has been added to the proposed action.

4. Close Nine Mile Canyon and the three wilderness study areas to ORVs.

Refer to comment number (3).

5. There is no discussion of cumulative effects of concentrating ORV use to existing roads and trails.

Designated existing roads in this plan include only BLM and county-maintained roads. Cumulative effects of concentrated ORV use on BLM or county-maintained roads are insignificant. The roads are designed and maintained for public use.

6. There is no discussion of the specific criteria leading to closure or curtailment of ORV activities when the resultant damage threatens the health of the resources of the area.

Executive Order 11644 requires that the effects of the use of ORVs be monitored on public lands, and amendments can be made when it is determined that the use of ORVs will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, or cultural or historic resources of particular areas or trails. Resource specialists make recommendations based on professional judgement. The determination of considerable adverse effects is made by the authorized officer.

7. Close the Range Creek jeep trail at the confluence of Turtle Canyon to curtail the damage to the Range Creek riparian area.

The Price River MFP did not recommend closure of the upper portion of Range Creek due to land ownership patterns. The proposed barrier would be adjacent to the state land boundary. The major impacts to Range Creek are within 1 1/4 miles of the Green River, where the jeep trail crosses the creek over 21 times, and where concentrated ATV and motorcycle use has occurred near the mouth of Range Creek.

8. There is no discussion of plans for reclamation of areas disturbed by excessive ORV activity (such as Range Creek).

The Range Valley Mountain Coordinated Habitat Management Plan (HMP) is currently being developed. Reclamation plans will be evaluated through the HMP.

9. Rehabilitate and close the Beckwith Plateau and Bighorn Benches roads to enhance wilderness values, and protect wildlife, soil, and vegetation resources.

The Price River MFP did not recommend closure of the Beckwith Plateau or Bighorn Benches roads. Recreational ORV use currently occurs very infrequently in both of these areas. Since no immediate threat to the health of the resources exists, this suggestion will be considered during the RMP process.

10. Close the heavily salt-laden mancos shale areas, except for the major roads maintained to a level that limits erosion.

Very little recreational use is currently occurring in the mancos shale areas. These areas will be monitored, and recommendations will be made during the RMP process.

11. Eight threatened, endangered, or candidate species have been identified in areas now designated as open, and limitations should be extended to protect these species.

The MFP indicated that present use levels (1983), were not causing severe problems in the open areas. Locations with T&E concerns will be addressed during the Management Situation Analysis at the beginning of the upcoming RMP effort, and actions will be recommended through the RMP where conflicts exist.

12. There is no discussion of monitoring methodology or the availability of personnel and funding for monitoring of ORV activities and review of adverse environmental effects.

The monitoring section of the implementation plan has been included as part of this document.

13. The EA should contain a more detailed analysis of the problems of enforcement and its effects on execution of protective provisions.

The signing, use supervision, monitoring, enforcement, and maintenance portions of the implementation plan have been added to the proposed action.

14. The EA delineates critical periods for breeding, nesting, and calving of wildlife, but seasonal restrictions do not encompass the critical time periods.

In the West Benches and Emma Park areas, organized events or concentrated use is considered a significant impact, and is therefore prohibited. Casual or dispersed use is not considered to be a significant impact to wildlife in these areas, with the exception of snowmobile use in the West Benches area. Snowmobiles have a much greater accessibility to critical wildlife habitat. The December 15 to March 15 time frame covers the period in which snowmobile use can physically occur.

In the Mancos shale areas, dispersed or casual ORV use is generally considered not to be a significant impact to wildlife populations such as antelope and prairie dog towns. The density of nesting raptors in this area is so low due to prey availability that dispersed use should not pose a significant impact. Organized events which could pose a significant impact will be closely evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any area with potential for concentrated use is of the greatest concern, and will be addressed during the RMP.

Reference cited:

Webb, Robert H. and Howard G. Wilshire, 1983.
Environmental Effects of Off-Road Vehicles Springer-Verland
 New York, Inc.: New York, N. Y.