

# APPENDIX R-16

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS STUDY PROCESS

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (October 2, 1968, Public Law 90-542) establishes the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, designed to preserve free-flowing rivers with outstandingly remarkable values (ORV) in their natural condition for the benefit of present and future generations, balancing the nation's water resource development policies with river conservation and recreation goals.

The Act states, "In all planning for the use and development of water and related land resources, consideration shall be given by all federal agencies involved to potential national wild, scenic and recreational river areas..." [Section 5(d) (1)]. Federal agencies consider potential rivers by evaluating a river's eligibility, tentative classification, and suitability for designation under the Act. This study process is part of the resource management planning effort for the Price Field Office (PFO).

Eligibility and tentative classification consist of an inventory of existing conditions. Eligibility is an evaluation of whether or not a river or river segment is free flowing and possesses one or more ORVs. If found eligible, a river is analyzed to determine its current level of development (e.g., water resources projects, shoreline development, and accessibility) and segmented accordingly. Each river segment is given one of three tentative classifications—Wild, Scenic, or Recreational—based on the degree of development. The final procedural step, suitability, provides the basis for determining whether or not to recommend a river as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

On December 13, 1994, an Interagency Agreement was signed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (Utah State Office), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (Intermountain Region), and the National Park Service (Rocky Mountain Region). The agreement calls for the three agencies to "work cooperatively to define common criteria and processes for use in determining the eligibility and suitability of Utah rivers for potential inclusion by Congress in the [National Wild and Scenic Rivers System]." The product of this agreement is the *Wild and Scenic River Review in the State of Utah: Process and Criteria for Interagency Use* guidance published in June 1996. This publication supplements the Act by providing clear, specific criteria for identifying eligible rivers.

Guidance used for this study is also contained in the Wild and Scenic Rivers—Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation, and Management, Bureau of Land Management Manual—8351. In addition, various technical papers published by the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordination Council relating to the evaluation of rivers were used. These publications can be found at [www.nps.gov/rivers/publications.html](http://www.nps.gov/rivers/publications.html).

### II. ELIGIBILITY AND TENTATIVE CLASSIFICATION

#### Eligibility Determination Considerations

For a river to be eligible for inclusion in the national system of rivers, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act specifies that the criteria described below be met.

These criteria not only apply to each potentially eligible river but also to their immediate environment, which is defined as a river corridor extending a quarter mile from both sides of the high water mark. For

purposes of the eligibility inventory, attention was not given to land ownership other than to ensure that at least some portion of a river segment crosses federal lands administered by the PFO. The status of land ownership, however, is evaluated as a consideration in the suitability step of the study process and is presented in detail in Section III of this appendix.

## Free-Flowing Character

To be considered a free-flowing river, a river must be a flowing body of water, or estuary, or section, portion, or tributary thereof, including rivers, streams, creeks, runs, kills, rills, and small lakes (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act Section 16 (a)). A river can be any size or length and does not have to be floatable or boatable. For purposes of eligibility determination, a river's flow is sufficient as long as it sustains or complements the ORV(s) for which the river has been found eligible. The body of water must be existing or flowing in a natural condition without major modification of the waterway, such as channelization, impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the waterway; however, some minor modifications can be allowed, such as low dams, diversion works, and minor structures (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Section 16 (b)). The river can lie between impoundments or major dams.

## Outstandingly Remarkable Values

The Act specifies that rivers “with their immediate environment, must possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar value” (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Section 1 (b)).

The “Process and Criteria for Interagency Use” further describes values and characteristics of each ORV that are used to determine which values are outstandingly remarkable and at least regionally significant. The following summarizes the characteristics of each value that would render it rare, unique, or exemplary:

- **Scenic:** Diversity of view, special features, seasonal variations, and cultural
- **Recreational:** Diversity of use, experience quality, length of season, access, level of use, attraction, sites and facilities, and associated opportunities
- **Geologic:** Feature abundance, diversity of features, educational/scientific importance
- **Fish:** Habitat quality, diversity of species, values of species, abundance of fish, natural reproduction, size and vigor of fish, quality of experience, cultural/historic importance, recreational importance, access
- **Wildlife:** Habitat quality, diversity of species, abundance of species, natural reproduction, size and vigor of fish, quality of experience, cultural/historic importance, recreational importance, access
- **Historic:** Significance, site integrity, education/interpretation, and listing in or eligibility for National Register of Historic Places
- **Cultural:** Significance, current uses, number of cultures, site integrity, education/interpretation, and listing in or eligibility for National Register of Historic Places
- **Ecological:** Species diversity, ecological function, rare communities, and educational/scientific.

Because these values must be at least regionally significant to be considered outstandingly remarkable, a region of comparison is necessary to guide the evaluation of a value's significance. On May 8, 2002, an

interagency team consisting of representatives of various National Forests, National Parks, and BLM offices within Utah concluded that using applicable ecological sections, or combinations of these sections, would be the most appropriate way of delineating regions of comparison.

Ecological sections provide clear parameters of major ecological systems as defined by geology, topography, climate, and are typically the most distinct, visible features of the landscape. They offer an excellent context with relative consistency of scenic, wildlife, and other values for comparison, and are large enough to encompass areas with similar values without forcing comparison of disparate values.

For this evaluation, BLM decided that the Tavaputs Plateau, Northern Canyonlands, and Utah High Plateaus and Mountains ecological sections (Clealand et al. 1997, Summary National Hierarchical Framework of Terrestrial Ecological Units: ECOMAP, USDA Forest Service, Washington, DC) would be most appropriate for comparing values of streams within the PFO. These sections, which include Carbon and Emery counties, are combined to form a region of comparison that largely coincides with the portion of the Colorado Plateau within Utah. Several of the streams evaluated for eligibility flow through more than one of these three ecological sections.

It is important to note that the region of comparison is intended only to guide the evaluation and not to be used invariably.

## Tentative Classification

Eligible rivers are given a tentative classification. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provides for three possible classifications: Wild, Scenic, or Recreational. These classifications, when applied to eligible rivers, are based on the type and degree of human development associated with the river and adjacent lands present at the time of inventory. They also prescribe what management activities would be allowed to occur along a river, as long as no ORV is compromised.

- **Wild:** The Wild classification, the most restrictive of management activities, is given to rivers free of impoundments and those generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. Water quality must meet minimum criteria for desired types of recreation except where such criteria would be exceeded by natural background conditions and aesthetics and capable of supporting propagation of aquatic life normally adapted to habitat of the stream.
- **Scenic:** The Scenic classification is given to rivers that are generally free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped but accessible in places by roads.
- **Recreational:** The Recreational classification, the least restrictive, is given to rivers easily accessible by road or railroad, and may have some development along their shorelines, and substantial evidence of human activity.

BLM may consider alternative tentative classifications at the time of evaluating suitability in accordance with BLM Manual 8351.33C to resolve potential conflicts with other management objectives (whether BLM's or those of another official entity), provide continuity of management prescriptions, or because of other management considerations within the river area. Final classification of a river segment is determined if and when a river is designated for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

## Eligibility Determinations Process

### Coordination

In November 1997, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the State of Utah and BLM by former Governor Mike Leavitt, and former BLM State Director William Lamb, to establish a cooperative effort for Wild and Scenic River study processes for BLM Field Offices in Utah. Emery County had previously established a cooperative agreement with BLM for land use planning in an MOU signed April 29, 1996. Likewise, Carbon County agreed to cooperate in a similar MOU signed August 26, 2003. These agreements enabled BLM to extend an interdisciplinary team of specialists, formed for this study process, to include representatives from these governments. In addition to numerous internal meetings, a series of meetings were held with cooperating agencies to review potentially eligible rivers.

### Rivers Considered

All streams identified on a 1:100,000 scale map of the planning area were considered for potential eligibility. From these streams, BLM focused on those identified as potentially eligible. Other sources provided lists of potentially eligible rivers. Table R16-1 is a list of all rivers specifically identified for consideration from their various sources.

Table R 16-1. Documentation of Eligibility: Free-Flowing Rivers Considered

River Name	Source for Consideration*	Segment Description
Barrier Creek	a, b, d	Canyonlands National Park boundary to mouth at Green River
Bear Canyon Creek	e	Headwater to mouth at Rock Creek
Buckhorn Wash	e	Road crossing at Buckhorn Flat to mouth at San Rafael River
Buckskin Canyon Creek	e	Headwaters to mouth at Rock Creek
Cane Wash	b, d, e	Head of wash to mouth at San Rafael River
Chimney Canyon	e	Head of canyon to mouth at Muddy Creek
Coal Creek	e	Length of reach
Coal Wash	e	Confluence of North and South Forks of Coal Wash to mouth at North Salt Wash
Cottonwood Canyon	e	Head of canyon to mouth at Nine Mile Creek
Cottonwood Wash	b, d, e	Head of wash to county road where wash exits reef
Desert Seep Wash	d	Desert Lake Waterfowl Management Area to mouth at Price River
Devils Canyon	b, d, e	Road crossing to mouth at South Salt Wash
Dry Canyon	e	Head of Canyon to mouth at Nine Mile Creek
Dugout Creek	e	Length of reach
Eagle Canyon	b, d, e	Springs at head of canyon to Secret Mesa road crossing
		Secret Mesa road crossing to confluence with North Salt Wash
Fish Creek	e	Scofield Reservoir to confluence with White River

River Name	Source for Consideration*	Segment Description
Flat Canyon	d	Headwaters to mouth at Green River
Goodwater Canyon	e	Length of reach
Gordon Creek	d, e	Confluence of Bob Wright and Mud Water Canyons to mouth at Price River
Grassy Trail	d, e	Length of reach
Green River	a, b, d, e	County line near Nine Mile Creek to Chandler Canyon
		Chandler Canyon to Florence Creek
		Florence Creek to Nefertiti boat ramp
		Nefertiti boat ramp to I-70 bridge
		I-70 bridge to mile 91 below Ruby Ranch
		Mile 91 below Ruby Ranch to Hey Joe Canyon
		Hey Joe Canyon to Canyonlands National Park Boundary
Icelander Creek	d	Town of Sunnyside to mouth at Grassy Trail Creek
Iron Wash	d	From spring to mouth at Strait Wash
Ivie Creek	d, e	Highway 10 to mouth at Muddy Creek
Jack Creek	d, e	Headwaters to mouth at Green River
Keg Spring Canyon	e	Head of canyon to mouth at Green River
Last Chance Wash	d	Last Chance Wash Cutoff Road (925) to mouth at Salvation Creek
Lockhart Draw	e	Head of draw to mouth at San Rafael River
McCarty Canyon	b, d	Length of reach
Mesquite Wash	e	Head of wash to mouth at North Salt Wash
Molen Seep Wash	d	Through Molen Reef to mouth at North Salt Wash
Muddy Creek	e	Manti-La Sal National Forest boundary to I-70**
	a, b, d, e	I-70 to Lone Tree Crossing
		Lone Tree Crossing to South Salt Wash
		South Salt Wash to county road downstream of North Caineville Reef
Nates Canyon	e	Length of reach
Nine Mile Creek	d, e	Headwaters to confluence with Minnie Maude Creek
	a, d, e	Confluence with Minnie Maude Creek to Bulls Canyon
		Bulls Canyon to mouth at Green River
North Fork Coal Wash	e	Head of wash to Fix It Pass route
North Salt Wash		Fix It Pass route to confluence with South Fork Coal Wash
North Salt Wash	b, d, e	Confluence with Horn Silver Gulch to mouth at San Rafael River
Oil Well Draw	e	Length of reach
Pace Creek	e	Length of reach
Price River	e	Confluence of Fish Creek and White River to Price City water treatment plant

River Name	Source for Consideration*	Segment Description
		Price City water treatment plant to Poplar Street bridge in Helper
		Poplar Street bridge in Helper to Mounds bridge
		a, e Mounds bridge to Book Cliffs escarpment
		a, b, d, e Book Cliffs escarpment to mouth at Green River
Quitchupah Creek	d, e	Manti-La Sal National Forest boundary to mouth at Ivie Creek
Range Creek	a, b, d, e	Headwaters to Trail Canyon
		Trail Canyon to drill holes below Turtle Canyon
		Drill holes below Turtle Canyon to mouth at Green River
Red Canyon	e	Length of reach
Rock Creek	d, e	North Fork headwaters to mouth at Green River
	d	Length of South Fork
Saddle Horse Canyon	b, d	Length of reach
Salt Wash	d	Headwaters to mouth at Muddy Creek
Salvation Creek	d	Headwaters to mouth at Muddy Creek
San Rafael River	a, b, d, e	Confluence of Ferron and Cottonwood Creeks to Fuller Bottom
		Fuller Bottom to Johansen corral
		Johansen corral to Lockhart Wash
		Lockhart Wash to Tidwell Bottom
		Tidwell Bottom to mouth at Green River
Soldier Creek	e	Length of reach
South Fork Coal Wash	e	Head of wash to Eva Conover route
		Eva Conover route to confluence with North Fork Coal Wash
South Salt Wash	e	Length of reach
Spring Canyon	e	Length of reach
Three Canyon (Carbon County)	d	Headwaters to mouth at Green River
Three Canyon (Emery County)	e	Length of reach
Trail Canyon	d	Headwaters to mouth at Green River
Two Mile Canyon	e	Length of reach
Virgin Springs Canyon	e	Length of reach
Willow Creek	e	Length of reach

River Name	Source for Consideration*	Segment Description
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\* The key below indicates the Source for Consideration:

a—Nationwide Rivers Inventory List

b—American Rivers Outstanding Rivers List

c—1970 USDA/US Department of the Interior List

d—Utah Rivers Council/Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance List

e—Identified by federal agencies, state, tribal, or other governments

F—Identified during public scoping of Resource Management Plan (RMP)

\*\* River segment determined not to be free flowing because of presence of impoundments and dropped from further consideration

## Identification of Outstandingly Remarkable Values

BLM reviewed all potentially eligible rivers to determine which possess ORVs. Table R16-2 identifies and describes these values for each river.

Table R 16-2. Documentation of Eligibility: Identification of Outstandingly Remarkable Values of Potentially Eligible Rivers

<b>Barrier Creek</b>	
<b>Cultural</b>	
<p>This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Rock art panels in the adjacent Horseshoe Canyon Unit of Canyonlands National Park are the type-site for Barrier Canyon rock art styles. Other rock art sites are present downstream to the confluence with the Green River. Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.</p>	
<b>Recreational</b>	
<p>The most well-known features of Barrier Creek are in the Canyonlands National Park extension. This is a popular destination for visitors willing to hike 2 miles and 800 vertical feet to visit the Great Gallery pictographs. This canyon has cultural sites throughout its length and provides significant opportunity to view these sites. Barrier Creek is also a popular side canyon hike for people traveling through Labyrinth Canyon. They are rewarded for their efforts with a clean water stream with wetlands and cottonwoods. There are many technical climbing routes in this canyon, including the spectacular Tyrolean traverse and free rappel featured in the first Eco-Challenge.</p>	
<b>Ecological</b>	
<p>This isolated segment is undisturbed except by foot travel. As a natural preserve, it is an excellent example of a desert riparian, vegetative community. The water table underlying the San Rafael Desert seeps at hanging gardens along the canyon walls that enclose the rich, verdant riparian zone</p>	
<b>Bear Canyon Creek</b>	
<b>Fish</b>	
<p>This creek possesses an outstandingly remarkable fish value because of its high-quality fish habitat. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as sensitive by BLM and the State of Utah), has been approved by the State of Utah Resource Development Coordination Committee (RDCC) and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides excellent fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Existing fish species are abundant below the cascades but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout will be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches. The quality of the fishing experience is high because of the scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon. (There is a beautiful cascade about 1 mile above the confluence with Rock Creek.) Bear Canyon Creek has low recreational use but could be important to anglers wanting a remote fishing experience.</p>	
<b>Buckhorn Wash</b>	
<b>Historic</b>	
<p>Values consist of sites that retain their original character; are associated with farming or ranching, transportation, and the Civilian Conservation Corps; which are important for interpreting associated historic events. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.</p>	
<b>Cultural</b>	
<p>This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites retain integrity and are important for interpreting regional prehistory. The Buckhorn Rock Art Site is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many other sites are eligible for the National Register.</p>	
<b>Recreational</b>	
<p>The recreation opportunity here is "Roaded Natural" in the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum. A drive through with a few stops gives the visitor a significant sampling of the splendors of canyon country, in general, and the San Rafael Swell, in particular. In addition to a dramatic canyon, the recreational user has the opportunity to visit dinosaur tracks and bones, prehistoric sites representing 8,000 years of cultures, and cold war relics in the form of the Morrison Knudson tunnels and uranium exploration. It has the great variety of attraction sites in very a short canyon that makes the recreational opportunity outstandingly remarkable. In addition to the "windshield tourism" opportunity, there are several technical climbing routes in the canyon.</p>	
<b>Scenic</b>	
<p>The visual experience of entering Buckhorn Wash is particularly dramatic. The distant horizon is almost immediately replaced by topographic grandeur. The canyon provides scenic displays of geologic layers,</p>	

sequentially exposed, rising to towering benches, varnished walls, high pour-offs, and deep alcoves. A rincon remains as an isolated pinnacle. A verdant riparian zone marking the canyon bottom provides a striking contrast to the stark desert scene. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery because of these features.

### **Wildlife**

The wash provides ideal habitat for Desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, and numerous migratory birds. The wash, lined with riparian vegetation, provides water and forage for these species. The wash is considered a good choice for observing the Desert bighorn sheep as they graze along the wash bottom, scree slopes, and cliffs on either side of the wash.

#### **Buckskin Canyon Creek**

##### **Fish**

This creek possesses an outstandingly remarkable fish value because of its high-quality fish habitat. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as sensitive by the BLM and the State of Utah), has been approved by the RDCC and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides excellent fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Existing fish species are abundant below the cascades but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout will be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches. The quality of the fishing experience is high because of the scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon. (There are scenic cascades about 2 miles rincon above the confluence with Rock Creek.) Buckskin Canyon Creek has low recreational use but could be important to anglers wanting a remote fishing experience.

#### **Cane Wash**

##### **Cultural**

This wash contains a significant example of Barrier Canyon rock art. Other features are unknown but likely present. The rock art site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

##### **Recreational**

This wash is a popular hike and horseback ride from the San Rafael Bridge Recreation Site or as an alternate route to the Little Grand Canyon of the San Rafael River. This wash also provides for recreational petrified wood collection. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.

##### **Scenic**

A huge fin of the Wingate Formation is located in the lower portion of the wash and was formed by erosion on one side by Cane Wash and the other by the San Rafael River. High on this fin is a window in the rock, which is visible from the Wedge Overlook. Much of the wash is incised within the surrounding stone or is bordered by high cliffs and alcoves. Cane Wash would be categorized as Class "A" scenic quality under BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) system.

#### **Chimney Canyon**

Upon evaluating Chimney Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

#### **Coal Creek**

Upon evaluating Coal Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

#### **Coal Wash**

##### **Historic**

Values consist of sites that retain their original character, are associated with ranching and mining; and which are important for interpreting associated historic events.

##### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

##### **Scenic**

Large sand dunes climb high on the Navajo sandstone escarpments that narrowly enclose the meandering wash bottom. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.

##### **Recreational**

Coal Wash is a popular destination for motorized recreationists, hikers, and horseback riders because of its rich

scenic, wildlife, and cultural features. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.
<b>Cottonwood Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating Cottonwood Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Cottonwood Wash</b>
<b>Cultural</b>
This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples (mainly rock art) representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features are significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
<b>Scenic</b>
Cottonwood Wash is an incised bifurcated canyon cutting through the eastern side of northern San Rafael Reef. It is exceedingly scenic because of the color and variation of the striking geological setting, the intermittent live water, and cottonwood trees.
<b>Desert Seep Wash</b>
Upon evaluating Desert Seep Wash, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Devils Canyon</b>
<b>Wildlife</b>
This narrow canyon and surrounding slickrock topography provides ideal habitat for Desert bighorn sheep.
<b>Recreational</b>
This canyon provides an easily accessible, primitive opportunity to hike through one of the premiere slot canyon narrows in the San Rafael Swell. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.
<b>Scenic</b>
Ponderosa pines provide contrast against sandstone domes textured by the cross bedding of petrified dunes. The domes drain into beautifully sculpted, slot canyon narrows. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery because of these features.
<b>Dry Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating Dry Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Dugout Creek</b>
Upon evaluating Dugout Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Eagle Canyon</b>
<b>Scenic</b>
Dark pockets of Ponderosa pines provide contrast to the soft tones of the sandstone walls. Eagle Canyon Arch highlights the upper portion of the canyon, which opens to a picturesque serpentine valley of sandstone domes, slickrock, and vegetated sand dunes. Narrow side drainages are also studded with Ponderosa pines. Below a huge, dramatic pour-off the canyon narrows to a meandering slot, exposing scenic patterns of sandstone cross-bedding. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery because of these features.
Information was provided to BLM identifying geology as an ORV. Upon evaluating this information, BLM determined that this value was not at least regionally significant.
<b>Fish Creek</b>
<b>Fish</b>
This segment is a high-quality coldwater fishery. Designated a Blue Ribbon Fishery, this segment has substantial regulatory protection under Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) proclamation rules and agreements. Releases from Scofield Reservoir are arranged to sustain the fishery, and instream flow rights are under consideration.
<b>Flat Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating Flat Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

<b>Goodwater Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating Goodwater Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Gordon Creek</b>
<b>Historic</b>
Gordon Creek (original known as Garden Creek) is the location of the first historic era settlement in Carbon County. One ranch site is associated with one of the three original settlers. Values include sites associated with community development and decline, farming or ranching, communication, transportation, irrigation, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. They retain original character and are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as a district for both its historic and prehistoric values.
<b>Cultural</b>
This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. Because of the short period of historic occupation, the sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory and comparing prehistoric and historic agricultural settlement patterns of the same area.
<b>Grassy Trail</b>
Upon evaluating Grassy Trail, BLM recognized that the stream has unique geologic features but determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.
<b>Green River</b>
<b>Upper Green River (Desolation and Gray Canyons):</b>
<b>Cultural</b>
The upper segments of Green River show evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples. It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. It also includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been largely isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Flat Canyon Archaeological District, within Desolation Canyon, is listed on the Register.
<b>Historic</b>
Much of this river corridor is a National Historic Landmark because of its recognition as the least changed of the river corridors associated with John Wesley Powell and the exploration of the Green and Colorado Rivers. Other historic values are associated with settlement, farming or ranching, mining, Prohibition, recreational river running, waterworks, and reclamation. Sites have been largely isolated and therefore retain their original character.
<b>Recreational</b>
A trip through Desolation and Gray Canyons of the Green River, consecutive canyons within the Tavaputs Plateau, is a premier, wilderness recreation experience. The 84-mile trip from Sand Wash to Swaseys Beach is world renowned. Located in Utah's deepest canyon and largest WSA, Desolation and Gray Canyons offer outstanding white water boating with roughly 60 rapids and riffles. There is also ample opportunity for land-based activity such as hiking in the more than 60 side canyons. BLM receives more than 3,000 applications per year for the 450 available trip permits issued to self-outfitted users. Eighteen commercial outfitters market trips through these canyons both nationally and internationally.
<b>Scenic</b>
At more than 1 mile deep, Desolation Canyon is Utah's deepest canyon, cutting through the youngest exposed strata on the Colorado Plateau. Desolation and Gray Canyons consist of complexes of many canyons draining to the Green River. Outstanding scenic values are dictated primarily by the domination of geologic features. In addition to canyon walls rising thousands of feet, there are also many interesting rock formations such as arches and hoodoos. Although the landscape is mostly dry and austere, pleasing contrasts are found in the green ribbon of life along the river and the hanging gardens and pockets of huge fir trees scattered within the cliffs. Desolation Canyon is inventoried by BLM as being Class "A" scenic quality under the BLM's VRM system.
<b>Geologic</b>
The Upper Green River is an outstanding example of an antecedent river cutting through structural geology that should have been impassable to it. As the land surface rises toward the south, the Green River continues to flow to the south and decreases in elevation despite the trend of the surrounding landscape. This results in the deepest canyon in Utah—Desolation Canyon. The corridor of the Green River in this stretch also provides the region's best examples of reattachment bars and separation bars formed by the processes of fluvial geomorphology in bedrock

canyons.

### **Fish**

This portion of the Green River provides habitat for four federally listed fish species—Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, bonytail chub, and razorback sucker. Of notable significance, this river contains designated critical habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow. Spawning areas for this species have been confirmed within this river, which is also considered important for Colorado pikeminnow young.

Known populations of humpback chub and razorback sucker have been confirmed within this river, while bonytail chub is suspected to occur. This river is considered regionally important for the recovery of these four federally listed species.

### **Wildlife**

This portion of the Green River is considered to have remarkable value for both avian and terrestrial wildlife populations. With regard to avian species, this river corridor is regionally significant, both for its diversity of avian species and for supporting habitats for federally listed and BLM Sensitive avian species.

Confirmed present federally listed species include bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl and southwestern willow flycatcher. BLM Sensitive Species known to occur include peregrine falcon, yellow-breasted chat, and yellow-billed cuckoo. The river corridor is presently used by bald eagles during the winter but is also considered potential nesting habitat. Mexican spotted owls have been verified nesting within this river corridor. The corridor designated critical habitat for Mexican spotted owls is believed to be significant for their expansion.

The Green River segment is also important for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and elk. The entire corridor is regionally significant as lambing habitat for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and considered important winter range for mule deer and elk.

### **Ecological**

The Green River hosts a variety of avian, terrestrial, and aquatic species populations. The river and its properly functioning riparian area provide a corridor of habitat through an otherwise arid region for many sensitive and federally listed species of birds and fish, and populations of bighorn sheep, deer, elk, black bear, mountain lion, and beaver. The corridor supports rare plant species, including a recently discovered species of columbine. The stability of this ecosystem, largely unchanged since the passage of John Wesley Powell, contributed to the designation of Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark.

#### **Lower Green River (Labyrinth Canyon):**

### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples and includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. Its rock art and other features remain significant to some Native American populations today. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been largely isolated, retain integrity, and are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Historic**

Historic values include sites associated with early river exploration, recreational and commercial river running, farming and ranching, mining, waterworks, and reclamation. Sites have been largely isolated and therefore retain their original character.

### **Recreational**

Labyrinth Canyon of the Green River is roughly 68 miles in length. The character of this canyon is completely different from Desolation Canyon. This stretch of river has no rapids, making it suitable for canoe paddling. It provides a 4- to 7-day backcountry paddling experience. There are also great opportunities for dispersed camping and hiking to cultural sites, unique geologic features, and other attractions. Roughly 7,000 people per year take this popular trip. The section is also suitable for powerboat use at some water levels and provides for much of the annual Friendship Cruise route, a powerboat event that has been held for decades. This section of the Green River has been widely reported on in the popular press in newspapers from coast to coast and in specialty publications such as *Paddler Magazine*.

### **Scenic**

Scenic values are largely a product of the geology. The Green River meanders through a deeply incised canyon. Explorer John Wesley Powell named the canyon for its many intricate twists and turns. At Bowknot Bend, one travels a distance of 7 river miles to end within a quarter mile of the starting point. Varnished cliffs are cut in places by the narrow mouths of shaded side canyons where mature cottonwood trees are harbored. In the lower parts of the canyon, vertical cliffs of Windgate sandstone rise 1,000 feet above the river. Dramatic topography, dizzying cliffs bisected by the Green River and its associated ribbon of life in an otherwise barren landscape make this corridor Class "A" scenery under BLM's VRM system.

<b>Fish</b>
This portion of the Green River provides habitat for four endangered fish, including spawning habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow. The river contains critical habitat as designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for these species.
<b>Paleontology</b>
Dinosaur bones visible in Morrison Formation outcrop have been reported by reliable sources (Dr. Paul Bybee, Professor of Geology at Utah Valley State College in Orem, Utah). They are reported to be visible from the river.
<b>Icelander Creek</b>
Upon evaluating Icelander Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Iron Wash</b>
Upon evaluating Iron Wash, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Ivie Creek</b>
Upon evaluating Ivie Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Jack Creek</b>
Upon evaluating Jack Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Keg Spring Canyon</b>
<b>Cultural</b>
This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples, and includes probably the most scientifically important site in the area. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
<b>Scenic</b>
This canyon is scenic, tightly confined in slickrock walls that are punctuated with enticing alcoves and dramatic amphitheaters. The lively little stream adds a water feature, and brilliant green vegetation winds through a landscape of rock, and its association with the Green River makes for Class "A" scenery quality under the BLM's VRM system.
<b>Recreational</b>
This canyon is less visited, with access for hikers primarily from Labyrinth Canyon of the Green River and some from Antelope Valley Road. This canyon provides an opportunity to experience solitude in an area rich in scenic quality. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.
<b>Last Chance Creek</b>
Upon evaluating Last Chance Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Lockhart Draw</b>
Upon evaluating Lockhart Draw, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>McCarty Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating McCarty Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Mesquite Canyon</b>
<b>Wildlife</b>
The canyon provides ideal habitat for Desert bighorn sheep and small mammals. The canyon with cliffs and slickrock provide exemplary escape cover and forage for Desert bighorn sheep as evidenced by the number present in the canyon.
<b>Scenic</b>
The narrow canyon alternates between towering walls and slickrock domes that provide outstanding scenes. Side canyons have patches of Ponderosa pine and juniper providing striking contrast in pattern and color. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" in BLM's VRM system because of these features.

<b>Molen Seep Wash</b>
Upon evaluating Molen Seep Wash, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Muddy Creek</b>
<b>Historic</b>
Values consist of sites associated with uranium exploration and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
<b>Cultural</b>
This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. It includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
<b>Recreational</b>
Muddy Creek offers mostly a primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunity. When water flows are adequate, Muddy Creek provides a challenging whitewater experience. During low flows, it provides hikers with an opportunity to traverse through the heart of the San Rafael Swell. The Chute, a deep, narrow slot through which Muddy Creek flows, is one of the most popular floating and hiking routes in the San Rafael Swell. This area is well known and draws visitors from throughout the nation.
<b>Scenic</b>
This segment traverses a variety of geologic strata providing variety in landform and color. Dramatic cliffs rising hundreds of feet dominate the view and are decorated with rock formations, such as pinnacles, arches, and hoodoos. The Chute of Muddy Creek provides exceptional slot canyon scenes, with the creek meandering from wall to wall.
<b>Nates Canyon</b>
Upon evaluating Nates Canyon, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.
<b>Nine Mile Creek</b>
<b>Historic</b>
Nine Mile Creek provides one of the best examples of a Non-City of Zion settlement, an unusual pattern in Utah. Values include sites associated with community development and decline, fur trade and exploration, farming or ranching, military history, communication, transportation, irrigation, and Civilian Conservation Corps. These sites retain original character and their values are important for interpreting associated historic events. This area is currently being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for both its historic and prehistoric values.
<b>Cultural</b>
Nine Mile Canyon has the greatest concentration of prehistoric rock art in the world. It also has some of the most visible and best preserved remains of the Fremont culture. It is part of the study area Noel Morss used in defining the Fremont culture. Rock art and other features remain significant to some Native American populations today. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Nine Mile Canyon is eligible for the National Register and is currently being nominated for this special designation.
<b>Scenic</b>
Nine Mile Canyon was dedicated as a backcountry byway in 1990. The main visual features are the dramatic topography of high canyon walls, dissected by steep-sided canyons and punctuated with isolated buttes, mesas, and outcrops. A lush riparian zone of willow and cottonwood marks the canyon bottom. A series of farms and ranches add a rural appearance to an otherwise very wild looking landscape. Prehistoric rock art adorn the canyon walls adding intrinsic interest to foreground views. Water features include the flowing stream and beaver ponds. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery under BLM's VRM system for its dramatic topography, picturesque vegetation, and water features. The numerous cultural sites invite the eye to wander and study the details and small-scale scenery in this immense canyon.
<b>North Fork Coal Wash</b>
<b>Historic</b>
Values consist of sites associated with ranching and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Scenic**

A sandstone landscape of domes, pinnacles, alcoves, and extended cliff lines drop into the incised canyon bottom. Groves of pinyon and juniper opening to grassy parks are terraced over the cottonwood-lined canyon bottom. The enormous reach of Slipper Arch provides a premier scenic feature.

**Recreational**

Coal Wash is a popular destination for off-highway vehicle (OHV) users, hikers, and horseback riders because of its rich scenic, wildlife, and cultural features. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.

**North Salt Wash****Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features are significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Wildlife**

This canyon provides habitat for a number of wildlife species, including Desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, prairie falcons, and red-tailed hawks. The riparian vegetation in the bottom of this canyon, along with the intermittent water, provide important habitat for these species.

**Scenic**

The cottonwood-lined canyon has a scenic combination of sandstone cliffs, alcoves, and a rincon that is augmented by live water, rock art, and stable vegetated sand dunes.

**Recreational**

This area is a popular destination for hiking and horseback riding because of the scenic, wildlife, and cultural features described above. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.

**Oil Well Draw**

Upon evaluating Oil Well Draw, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

**Pace Creek**

Upon evaluating Pace Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

**Price River****Historic**

Historic values are associated with settlement, farming or ranching, and transportation (early railroads), which are important for interpreting associated historic events. Most sites have been somewhat isolated and therefore retain their original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Fish**

From the confluence of Lower Fish Creek and White River downstream through Helper, this river provides a potentially high-quality coldwater fishery. There is a plan currently underway (in conjunction with a Total Maximum Daily Load) to improve the fishery and correct temperature discrepancies that exist in part of the reach. The river is stocked annually with trout as far downstream as the Helper gauging station. In the last decade, habitat improvement projects, such as the construction of stone pool-forming structures, have been completed along the Helper parkway by UDWR with the support of Trout Unlimited. UDWR has also spent effort and money on improvements to direct access to the river along Highway 6, which provides access along most of this reach, to enhance opportunities to fish. The White River watershed is also currently undergoing restoration by UDWR partly for the purpose of improving the fishery below its confluence with the Price River.

The lower Price River segment is considered to be important for several federally listed fish species. The mouth of this river segment is important habitat for young Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail chub, and razorback sucker might also use this river segment.

**Wildlife**

The lower Price River is important to numerous avian wildlife species, notably the Mexican spotted owl, peregrine falcon, and southwestern willow flycatcher. The river segment provides excellent nesting and roosting habitat for the Mexican spotted owl and the peregrine falcon, although these species have not been confirmed present to date. The river segment is also important lambing habitat for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

**Geologic**

Exposed in the walls of the lower canyon of the Price River are excellent examples of delta sediments deposited during the Cretaceous period. The repeated retreat and advance of the inland seaway is vividly recorded in the exposures of the Mesa Verde Group. Major oil companies bring geologists on field trips to this escarpment to study these exposures.

**Quitchupah Creek**

The creek's riparian zone supports wildlife and ecological values; however, BLM determined that these values are not at least regionally significant.

**Range Creek****Historic**

Historic values are associated with settlement, farming, or ranching, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. Sites have been largely isolated and therefore retain their original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Scenic**

Unlike most of the side canyons entering the Green and Colorado Rivers, Range Creek carved a "U" shaped rather than a "V" shaped valley. In this canyon, lush, river bottom land suddenly gives way to dramatic cliffs and mountains that rise 4,000 feet to the top of the Tavaputs Plateau. The canyon passes through several life zones, from high alpine forest and meadows down to a salt shrub desert. The pattern of vegetation habitat types and the way they vary with elevation and slope aspect create a varied and interesting scene. Dramatic topography and unusual rock formations split by a mountain stream creates a stimulating visual experience. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery under BLM's VRM system for its dramatic topography, varied relief, geologic structures, vegetation, and water features.

**Wildlife**

The Range Creek segment is unique and regionally significant for the diversity of avian and terrestrial wildlife. The upper drainage provides summer range for mule deer and elk while the lower drainage provides winter range for these species. The lower drainage is important lambing habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The Range Creek drainage is designated critical habitat for the Mexican spotted owl although occupied territories have yet to be confirmed.

**Red Canyon**

Upon evaluating Red Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

**Rock Creek****Scenic**

Of the more than 60 tributary canyons to Desolation and Gray Canyon, Rock Creek provides the most dramatic and exceptionally high quality scenery. There is tremendous topographic relief as the canyon rises more than 5,000 feet from the mouth of the creek to the top of the plateau. The canyon bottom has a verdant riparian zone along a clear, coldwater creek. The creek itself has a pool and drop structure, cascading in places, providing intrinsically interesting sights accented by the sounds of flowing, splashing water. The canyon walls are resplendent. Lower elevation pinyon and juniper give way to Douglas fir at the mid- to higher elevations. These stands of dark green timber are punctuated with outcrops and ledges of red sandstone. All these features add up to Class "A" scenery under the BLM's VRM system.

**Recreational**

Rock Creek, a much anticipated respite for river travelers, is the most visited area in Desolation Canyon. Visitors are attracted to the cool, clear, refreshing waters meandering through the lush riparian zone in addition to the well-preserved historic structures. Rock Creek offers the most popular hike in Desolation Canyon. Hikers enjoy the varied scenery and the abundant rock art seen along the canyon walls. A coldwater fishery rounds out the variety of recreational opportunity to be experienced along Rock Creek.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. The sites have been largely isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Historic**

Rock Creek provides an example of historic homesteading. The historic architecture and manipulated landscape are well-preserved. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Fish**

Rock Creek contains increasingly rare and highly desirable coldwater fish habitat. It is capable of sustaining wild hatcheries of environmentally sensitive fish species. Water quality is high and is often used by recreational boaters as a source of culinary water. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as sensitive by the BLM and the State of Utah), has been approved by the State's RDCC and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides ideal fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Fish are abundant below cascade features but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout are planned to be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches or larger. The scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon also contribute to the high quality of the fishing experience. The upper reaches of Rock Creek receive low recreational use but could be important to anglers wanting a remote fishing experience.

**Saddle Horse Canyon**

BLM identified Saddle Horse Canyon to have quality riparian vegetation and scenic values but it does not consider these values to be at least regionally significant

**Salt Wash**

Upon evaluating Salt Wash, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

**Salvation Creek**

Upon evaluating Salvation Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

**San Rafael River****Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Historic**

Values include sites associated with farming or ranching, transportation, and the Civilian Conservation Corps, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character. The Swinging Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other sites are eligible for the National Register.

**Scenic**

The Little Grand Canyon is named for its grandeur. Here, the San Rafael has carved a dramatic canyon of rock with very little vegetation on the canyon walls. The green ribbon of the riparian zone provides respite from the barren canyon. In addition to the geologic scenic features, the canyon provides wildlife viewing opportunities and numerous cultural sites.

Deep, narrow canyon walls dominate the scenery through the Black Boxes. The confined river meandering the few yards from wall to wall is visually unique—a slot canyon on a grand scale.

These features add up to Class "A" scenic quality under the BLM's VRM system.

**Recreational**

This river provides a great variety of recreational opportunities. The segment through the area known as the Little

Grand Canyon of the San Rafael offers a greater variety of experiences than any other segment in the PFO. At higher water levels, it is floated by a variety of watercraft, from canoes and kayaks to small rafts. In addition to boating, this segment is also traversed by backpackers and equestrians. There are greatly dispersed campsites and attraction sites throughout this segment.

The segment downstream of Swinging Bridge is known as the Black Boxes, named for the Upper and Lower Black Box Canyons of the San Rafael. Here, the San Rafael traverses canyons that are hundreds of feet deep and tens of feet wide. At lower water levels, the Black Boxes provide a moderately difficult canyoneering experience. Canyoneers find themselves hiking, climbing and rock scrambling, and swimming on a typical trip. At high water, the canyons are the domains of the high-end expert kayakers. At high flows, these canyons provide one of Utah's most challenging kayak runs. This attraction is known nationally and written up in regional guidebooks and on canyoneering websites.

### **Wildlife**

The San Rafael River provides habitat for a number of wildlife species, including Desert bighorn sheep, migratory birds, mule deer, chukar, and fish. Portions of this river are important to the Desert bighorn sheep and mule deer because they provide water and forage, while the riparian vegetation along the river provides important nesting and foraging habitat. Peregrine falcons are known to nest on the high cliffs bordering the river where they find prey (migratory birds). The San Rafael River provides habitat for a number of fish, including the federally endangered Colorado pikeminnow and State-sensitive roundtail chub. A portion of this river flows through steep walled canyons that are considered potential habitat for the endangered Mexican spotted owl.

### **Soldier Creek**

Upon evaluating Soldier Creek, BLM determined that this stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

### **South Fork Coal Wash**

#### **Historic**

Values consist of sites associated with ranching and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Scenic**

The varying landscape is accentuated by near and distant pinnacles detached from sandstone fins; high, varnish-stained pour-offs; wind-scooped alcoves; and Ponderosa pines stark against pale cliffs. Middleground and background features provide a balanced, horizontal relief.

#### **Recreational**

Coal Wash is a popular destination for OHV users, hikers, and horseback riders because of its rich scenic, wildlife, and cultural features. BLM determined that this value is not at least regionally significant.

### **South Salt Wash**

Upon evaluating South Salt Wash, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

### **Spring Canyon**

An arch in Spring Canyon provides a geologic value, and the canyon provides an opportunity for hiking but neither is considered by BLM to be at least regionally significant. Rock art near the mouth of Spring Canyon is within a quarter mile of the San Rafael River and supports the cultural value for that eligible river.

### **Three Canyon (Carbon County)**

Upon evaluating Three Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

### **Three Canyon (Emery County)**

Upon evaluating Three Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

### **Trail Canyon**

Upon evaluating Trail Canyon, BLM determined that its stream did not possess values that are at least regionally significant.

<b>Two Mile Canyon</b>
Two Mile Canyon contains scenic quality and a unique geologic feature, Five Hole Arches but BLM has determined that these values are not river-related.
<b>Virgin Springs Canyon</b>
BLM recognized the presence of recreational, wildlife, and cultural values but determined these values are not at least regionally significant.

## Rivers Determined Eligible

Table R16-3 lists rivers that were determined to be free flowing and possess ORVs that are regionally or nationally significant, and, therefore, are eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. (Reasons for tentative classification are provided on Table C-4.) Some rivers are found to possess ORVs; however, because these rivers are determined to be ephemeral in nature, flowing unpredictably only during flood events, they were not carried forward as eligible.

Table R 16-3. Rivers Determined Eligible To Be Designated for Inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

Segment Name	Segment Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Value(s)	Tentative Classification	Percent of River Corridor That Is BLM-Administered Land
Barrier Creek	Canyonlands National Park boundary to mouth at Green River	recreational, cultural, ecological	Wild	99
Bear Canyon Creek	Headwaters to mouth at Rock Creek	fish	Wild	43
Buckskin Canyon Creek	Headwaters to mouth at Rock Creek	fish	Wild	51
Cane Wash	Head of wash to mouth at San Rafael River	cultural, scenic	Scenic	89
Coal Wash	Confluence of North and South Forks of Coal Wash to mouth at North Salt Wash	cultural, historic	Recreational	100
Cottonwood Wash	Head of wash to county road at T. 20 S., R. 13 E., Sec. 14	scenic, cultural	Wild	80
Fish Creek	Scofield Reservoir to confluence with White River	fish	Scenic	15

Segment Name	Segment Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Value(s)	Tentative Classification	Percent of River Corridor That Is BLM-Administered Land
Gordon Creek	Confluence of Bob Wright and Mud Water Canyons to mouth at Price River	cultural, historic	Scenic	44
Green River*	County line near Nine Mile Creek to Chandler Canyon	scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, ecological	Wild	66
	Chandler Creek to Florence Creek	scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, ecological	Scenic	
	Florence Creek to Nefertiti boat ramp	scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, ecological	Wild	
	Nefertiti boat ramp to Swaseys boat ramp	scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, ecological	Recreational	
	Swaseys boat ramp to I-70 bridge	scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, ecological	Recreational	
	I-70 bridge to mile 91 below Ruby Ranch	scenic, recreational, historic, enriching, fish, paleontologic	Scenic	
	Mile 91 below Ruby Ranch to Hey Joe Canyon	scenic, recreational, historic, cultural, fish	Wild	
	Hey Joe Canyon to Canyonlands National Park boundary	scenic, recreational, historic, cultural, fish	Scenic	
Keg Spring Canyon	Head of canyon to mouth at Green River	scenic, cultural	Wild	91
Muddy Creek	I-70 to Lone Tree Crossing Lone Tree Crossing to South Salt Wash South Salt Wash to county road below San Rafael and North Caineville Reefs	scenic, recreational, historic, cultural scenic, recreational, historic, cultural scenic, recreational, historic, cultural	Wild Scenic Wild	92

Segment Name	Segment Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Value(s)	Tentative Classification	Percent of River Corridor That Is BLM-Administered Land
Nine Mile Creek	Minnie Maude Creek to Bulls Canyon Bulls Canyon to mouth at Green River	historic, cultural, scenic historic, cultural, scenic	Recreational Wild	44
North Fork Coal Wash	Head of wash to Fix It Pass route Fix It Pass route to confluence with South Fork Coal Wash	scenic, cultural, historic scenic, cultural, historic	Wild Recreational	85
North Salt Wash	Confluence with Horn Silver Gulch to mouth at San Rafael River	scenic, wildlife, cultural	Wild	97
Price River	Confluence of Fish Creek and White River to Poplar Street bridge in Helper Mounds bridge Book Cliffs escarpment Book Cliffs escarpment to mouth at Green River	Fish cultural, historic cultural, geologic, wildlife, fish	Recreational Scenic Wild	68
Range Creek	Headwaters to Trail Canyon Trail Canyon to drill holes at T. 17 S., R. 16 E., Sec. 27 Drill holes at T. 17 S., R. 16 E., Sec. 27 to mouth at Green River	cultural, scenic, historic, wildlife cultural, scenic, historic, wildlife cultural, scenic, historic, wildlife	Wild Recreational Wild	55
Rock Creek	North Fork headwaters to mouth at Green River	scenic, recreational, cultural, historic, fish	Wild	70

Segment Name	Segment Description	Outstandingly Remarkable Value(s)	Tentative Classification	Percent of River Corridor That Is BLM-Administered Land
San Rafael River	Confluence of Ferron and Cottonwood Creeks to Fuller Bottom	cultural, scenic, recreational, historic, wildlife	Scenic	82
	Fuller Bottom to Johansen corral	cultural, scenic, recreational, historic, wildlife	Wild	
	Johansen corral to Lockhart Wash	cultural, scenic, recreational, historic, wildlife	Scenic	
	Lockhart Wash to Tidwell Bottom	cultural, scenic, recreational, historic, wildlife	Wild	
	Tidwell Bottom to mouth at Green River	cultural, scenic, recreational, historic, wildlife	Scenic	
South Fork Coal Wash	Head of wash to Eva Conover route	scenic, cultural, historic	Wild	94
	Eva Conover route to confluence with North Fork Coal Wash	scenic, cultural, historic	Recreational	

\*BLM lands on the east side of the Green River corridor are administered by the Moab Field Office. The Price Field Office considered and included in the eligibility determinations for the Green River any ORVs present on those BLM lands.

## Tentative Classification

Upon a determination of eligibility, the rivers were given a tentative classification. Table R16-4 describes the reason each river was given its tentative classification.

Table R 16-4. Documentation of Eligibility: Tentative Classification of Eligible Rivers

Segment Name	Segment Description	Tentative Classification	Reason for Classification
Barrier Creek	Canyonlands National Park boundary to mouth at Green River	Wild	Primitive area within Horseshoe Canyon WSA
Bear Canyon Creek	Headwaters to mouth at Rock Creek	Wild	Primitive area within Desolation Canyon WSA
Buckskin Canyon Creek	Headwaters to mouth at Rock Creek	Wild	Primitive area within Desolation Canyon WSA
Cane Wash	Head of wash to mouth at San Rafael River	Scenic	Much of reach is paralleled by OHV route; lower portion is within Sids Mountain WSA
Coal Wash	North and South Forks of Coal Wash to confluence with North Salt Wash	Recreational	Presence of OHV route

Segment Name	Segment Description	Tentative Classification	Reason for Classification
Cottonwood Wash	Head of wash to county road at T. 20 S., R. 13 E., Sec. 14	Wild	Primitive area within Mexican Mountain WSA
Fish Creek	Scofield Reservoir to confluence with White River	Scenic	Presence of railroad, mostly inconspicuous and has low traffic
Gordon Creek	Confluence of Bob Wright and Mud Water Canyons to mouth at Price River	Scenic	Road, gas field development present, but mostly inconspicuous; segment crossed by railroad trestle and powerlines
Green River	County line near Nine Mile Creek to Chandler Canyon	Wild	Primitive area; majority of segment forms boundary for Desolation Canyon WSA
	Chandler Creek to Florence Creek	Scenic	Presence of road inconspicuous except for short stretches; annual traffic on road is seasonal and very minimal
	Florence Creek to Nefertiti boat ramp	Wild	Primitive area that forms boundary for Desolation Canyon WSA
	Nefertiti boat ramp to I-70 bridge	Recreational	Presence of roads, developed recreation sites, agricultural development and structures, private residences, and the town of Green River
	I-70 bridge to mile 91 below Ruby Ranch	Scenic	Some road access; presence of private ranches
Keg Spring Canyon	Mile 91 below Ruby Ranch to Hey Joe Canyon	Wild	Primitive area with a portion forming boundary for Horseshoe Canyon WSA
	Hey Joe Canyon to Canyonlands National Park boundary	Scenic	Paralleled by road inconspicuous except for short stretches
	Head of canyon to mouth at Green River	Wild	Primitive area within Horseshoe Canyon WSA
Muddy Creek	I-70 to Lone Tree Crossing	Wild	Primitive area
	Lone Tree Crossing to South Salt Wash	Scenic	Presence of road and spur roads
	South Salt Wash to county road below San Rafael and North Caineville Reefs	Wild	Majority is within Muddy Creek WSA and adjacent to Crack Canyon WSA; primitive area with route access to river corridor at Tomsich Butte and Hidden Splendor Mine
Nine Mile Creek	Minnie Maude Creek to Bulls Canyon	Recreational	Presence of road, private ranches, and agricultural development and structures
	Bulls Canyon to mouth at Green River	Wild	Primitive area

Segment Name	Segment Description	Tentative Classification	Reason for Classification
North Fork Coal Wash	Head of wash to Fix It Pass route Fix It Pass route to confluence with South Fork Coal Wash	Wild Recreational	Primitive area within Sids Mountain WSA Presence of OHV route
North Salt Wash	Confluence with Horn Silver Gulch to mouth at San Rafael River	Wild	Primitive area largely within Sids Mountain WSA
Price River	Confluence of Fish Creek and White River to Poplar Street bridge in Helper	Recreational Scenic	Presence of Highway 6, railroad, bridges; and residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal development
	Mounds bridge Book Cliffs escarpment		Crossing of Highway 6 and railroad, facilities at Woodside, two private ranches, and a few access roads
	Book Cliffs escarpment to mouth at Green River	Wild	Except for road present for short distance within escarpment, the area is primitive and largely within Desolation Canyon WSA
Range Creek	Headwaters to Trail Canyon	Wild	Primitive area
	Trail Canyon to drill holes at T. 17 S, R. 16 E., Sec. 27	Recreational Wild	Presence of road and private ranches
	Drill holes at T. 17 S., R. 16 E., Sec. 27 to mouth at Green River		Primitive area with large portion within Desolation Canyon WSA
Rock Creek	North Fork headwaters to mouth at Green River	Wild	Primitive area within Desolation Canyon WSA
San Rafael River	Confluence of Ferron and Cottonwood Creeks to Fuller Bottom	Scenic	Accessible by road; presence of gauging station and enclosure with swing panels
	Fuller Bottom to Johansen corral	Wild	Primitive area within Sids Mountain WSA
	Johansen corral to Lockhart Wash	Scenic	Accessible by road; presence of bridge and developed recreation site
	Lockhart Wash to Tidwell Bottom	Wild	Primitive area within Mexican Mountain WSA
	Tidwell Bottom to mouth at Green River	Scenic	Crossing of I-70, SR 24, and county road; additional road access in places
South Fork Coal Wash	Head of wash to Eva Conover route Eva Conover route to confluence with North Fork Coal Wash	Wild Recreational	Primitive area within Sids Mountain WSA Presence of OHV route

## III. SUITABILITY

### Determination of Suitability

Rivers determined to be eligible for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System are further evaluated to determine their suitability for inclusion into the national system.

The purpose of the suitability step of the study process is to determine whether or not eligible rivers would be appropriate additions to the national system by considering tradeoffs between corridor development and river protection. Suitability considerations include the environment and economic consequences of designation and the manageability of a river if it were designated by Congress.

The Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS evaluates impacts that would result if the eligible rivers were determined suitable and managed to protect their free-flowing nature, tentative classification, and ORVs. It also addresses impacts that would result if the eligible rivers were not determined suitable and their values were not provided protective management. The range of alternatives include the No Action Alternative, which does not address or provide for decisions on suitability but leaves rivers eligible, and Alternatives C and E, which finds all eligible rivers suitable. Alternative A finds none of the eligible rivers as suitable, while Alternatives B and Proposed RMP find some eligible rivers as suitable. Alternative tentative classifications are also evaluated.

In addition to the impact analysis addressed by alternative, the following suitability considerations are applied to each eligible river in Table 0-3:

- Characteristics that do or do not make the area a worthy addition to the national system
- Status of land ownership and use in the area
- Uses, including reasonably foreseeable potential uses, of the area and related waters that would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the area were included in the national system of rivers, and the values that could be foreclosed or diminished if the area were not protected as part of the national system
- Interest by federal, tribal, State, local, and other public entities in designation or non-designation of a river, including the extent to which the administration of the river, including the costs thereof, can be shared by the above mentioned entities
- Ability of the agency to manage and protect the values of a river area if it were designated, and other mechanisms to protect identified values other than Wild and Scenic Rivers designation
- The estimated cost, if necessary, of acquiring lands, interests in lands, and administering the area if it were included in the national system
- The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments.

### Coordination

A series of BLM meetings were held from June 2003 through December 2004 to support the suitability step of the study process. Cooperating agencies also attended these meetings and participated in this process.

## Suitability Study

Public comments received on the Draft RMP/EIS have been used to improve the documentation of the suitability considerations discussed below and the documentation of impacts that would result from the various alternatives. The actual determination of whether or not each eligible river segment is suitable is a decision that will be made in the Record of Decision for the Price RMP.

### Barrier Creek

#### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river segment possesses outstandingly remarkable cultural, recreational, and ecological values. These values are described in detail below.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Rock art panels in the adjacent Horseshoe Canyon Unit of Canyonlands Nation Park are the type-site for Barrier Canyon rock art styles. Other rock art sites are present downstream to the confluence with the Green River. Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Recreational**

The most well-known features of Barrier Creek are in the Canyonlands National Park extension. This is a popular destination for visitors willing to hike 2 miles and 800 vertical feet to visit the Great Gallery pictographs. This canyon has cultural sites throughout its length and provides significant opportunity to view these sites. Barrier Creek is also a popular side canyon hike for people traveling through Labyrinth Canyon. They are rewarded for their efforts with a clean water stream with wetlands and cottonwoods. There are many technical climbing routes in this canyon, including the spectacular Tyrolean traverse and free rappel featured in the first Eco-Challenge.

#### **Ecological**

This isolated segment is undisturbed except by foot travel. As a natural preserve, it is an excellent example of a desert riparian, vegetative community. The water table underlying the San Rafael Desert seeps at hanging gardens along the canyon walls that enclose the rich, verdant riparian zone.

#### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 99-percent federal (BLM lands) with a small portion (1 percent) of State lands.

This river segment is within Horseshoe Canyon WSA and is managed according to the *Interim Management Policy (IMP) for Lands Under Wilderness Review*. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity. The river corridor provides a popular hike, with the opportunity to observe scenic and cultural treasures.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct and/or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural, recreational, and ecological) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures, would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild; however, no such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

This segment of Barrier Creek is almost exclusively within the WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs, in addition to protection already afforded by the WSA status. Failure to include Barrier Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as those for the Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), would also preserve and enhance such values, if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of Barrier Creek that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence; however, to date, the remoteness and difficult access have limited visitation. Resources are fragile and would suffer degradation if visitation were to increase with designation. Wild and Scenic River designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and all identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would

be associated with the establishment of the Lower Green River ACEC and Labyrinth Canyon SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded the river because it is almost entirely within the Horseshoe Canyon WSA, which is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, ACEC, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

No funding for acquisition would be needed because there is no private land within the river corridor. State lands could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange. The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies and monitoring and additional BLM presence in the area.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## **Bear Canyon Creek**

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses an outstandingly remarkable fish value because of its high-quality fish habitat. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as sensitive by the BLM and State of Utah), has been approved by RDCC and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides excellent fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Existing fish species are abundant below the cascades but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout will be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present, and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches. The quality of the fishing experience is high because of the scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon. (There is a scenic cascade about 1 mile above the confluence with Rock Creek.) Bear Canyon Creek has low recreational use but could be important to anglers preferring a remote fishing experience.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 43-percent federal (BLM lands), 34-percent State, and 23-percent private.

Upper reaches of this river are used for livestock grazing. The majority of the river involving federal lands is within Desolation Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Much of the public lands within this segment of Bear Canyon Creek are within the Desolation Canyon WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future. Designation of the stream would provide additional protection to the fish value.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded by the WSA status. Failure to include Bear Canyon Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (high-quality fish habitat) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild; however, no such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions of this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of Bear Canyon Creek that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Manageability of Bear Canyon Creek, if designated, would be limited by the low percentage of public lands within the stream corridor.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs on public lands could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the Desolation Canyon WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Desolation Canyon SRMA. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change. The isolation of the stream as a result of very limited public access and extreme topography inevitably provides another protective circumstance.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (34 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however, 23 percent of the segment is private, and funding would be necessary for purchase if the management plan identified it as a need and the private landowner were willing to sell.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

**Buckskin Canyon Creek***1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses an outstandingly remarkable fish value because of its high-quality fish habitat. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as sensitive by the BLM and the State of Utah), has been approved by the RDCC and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides excellent fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Existing fish species are abundant below the cascades but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout will be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches. The quality of the fishing experience is high because of the scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon. (There are beautiful cascades about 2 miles above the confluence with Rock Creek.) Buckskin Canyon Creek has low recreational use but could be important to anglers wanting a remote fishing experience.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 51-percent federal (BLM lands), 4-percent State, and 45-percent private.

Upper reaches of this river are used for livestock grazing. The majority of the river involving federal lands is within Desolation Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Much of the public lands within this segment of Buckskin Canyon Creek are within the Desolation Canyon WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future. Designation of the stream would provide additional protection to the fish value.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded by the WSA status. Failure to include Buckskin Canyon Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (excellent fish habitat) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild; however, no such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions of this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, wildlife, or fish values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of the Buckskin Canyon Creek area that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Manageability of Buckskin Canyon Creek, if designated, would be limited by the low percentage (about 51 percent) of public lands within the stream corridor.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs on public lands could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the Desolation Canyon WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Desolation Canyon SRMA. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change. The isolation of the stream because of limited public access and extreme topography inevitably provides another protective circumstance.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies and monitoring and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (4 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however,

45 percent of the segment is private, and funding would be necessary for purchase if the management plan identified it as a need, and the private landowner were willing to sell.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## **Cane Wash**

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values. These values are described in detail below.

### **Cultural**

This wash has an outstanding example of Barrier Canyon rock art. Other features are unknown but likely present. The rock art site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Scenic**

A huge fin of the Wingate Formation is in the lower portion of the wash and was formed by erosion on one side by Cane Wash and the other by the San Rafael River. High on this fin is a window in the rock, which is visible from the Wedge Overlook. Much of the wash is incised within the surrounding stone or is bordered by high cliffs and alcoves. Cane Wash would be categorized as Class “A” scenic quality under BLM’s VRM system.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 89-percent federal (BLM lands) and 11-percent State lands.

Present within or along the majority of Cane Wash is a designated OHV route, so vehicle-based recreation occurs on the route. The lower portion of Cane Wash is within Sids Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. Hiking and horseback riding are common because of the area’s scenic and cultural treasures. The area is also used for livestock grazing.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

The lower reach of Cane Wash is within the Sids Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded the lower portions of the river corridor by the WSA status. Within the WSA, failure to include Cane Wash in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area’s WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions

considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision. For portions of the corridor outside of the WSA, the level of protection necessary to ensure preservation of the scenic value would not be provided.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and scenic) or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. No such projects inside or outside of the river area are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of Cane Wash that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. Wild and Scenic River designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could, for the most part, be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with visual and cultural resource management and the San Rafael SRMA. The exception would be an area comprising roughly one-fifth of the length of the corridor where a VRM IV classification would be applied to the scenic value. Protection is also currently afforded a portion of the stream corridor by Sids Mountain WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (11 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## Coal Wash

### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river segment possesses outstandingly remarkable historic and cultural values. Historic values consist of sites associated with ranching and mining, which are important for interpreting associated events. They retain their original character. This area also has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the corridor is entirely federal (BLM lands).

An OHV route follows the wash bottom, and it is a popular route for vehicle-based recreation. Other uses include more primitive types of recreation, such as hiking and horseback riding, livestock grazing, and wildlife habitat. Much of this segment is within Sids Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

This segment of Coal Wash is largely within the Sids Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The corridor of the stream, including the portion within the WSA, serves as an OHV route. This circumstance would put at odds the protection of the stream's values and the opportunity for OHV travel within the corridor. If the stream were congressionally designated for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and OHV travel was determined to degrade the quality of the water or affect the cultural and historical values, it would not be allowed.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded the lower portions of the river corridor by the WSA status. Failure to include this segment of Coal Wash in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and scenic) or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. No such projects inside or outside of the river area are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen water uses of this portion of Coal Wash that would be affected. Individual citizens and groups have also expressed much concern that the designation of this stream would affect the use of the OHV route within the corridor, if not preclude its use altogether.

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Management of Coal Wash, if designated, would pose a substantial challenge to the presence of the popular OHV route that follows the stream's corridor. Continued vehicle use of this route would likely be in conflict with protection of the outstandingly remarkable historical and cultural values. The route might also hinder the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's objective of maintaining or enhancing a designated stream's water quality.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the San Rafael Swell SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Sids Mountain WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## **Cottonwood Wash**

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river segment possesses outstandingly remarkable cultural and scenic values. These values are described in detail below.

### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples (mainly rock art) representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features are significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They

are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Scenic**

Cottonwood Wash is an incised bifurcated canyon, cutting through the eastern side of northern San Rafael Reef. It is exceedingly scenic because of the color and variation of the striking geological setting, the intermittent live water, and cottonwood trees.

#### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 80-percent federal (BLM lands) and 20-percent State lands.

Current uses include primitive types of recreation, such as hiking, horseback riding, and rock art viewing, and livestock grazing. This river segment is within Mexican Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

#### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS.

The BLM portion of Cottonwood Wash is within the Mexican Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded the lower portions of the river corridor by the WSA status. Failure to include Cottonwood Wash in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and scenic) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild. No such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions of this segment considering, the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

#### *4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or

foreseen water uses of Cottonwood Wash that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence; however, to date, the remoteness and difficult access have limited visitation. Resources are fragile and would suffer degradation if visitation were to increase with designation. Wild and Scenic River designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the San Rafael Swell SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Mexican Mountain WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## Fish Creek

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This segment is a high-quality coldwater fishery. Designated a Blue Ribbon Fishery, this segment has substantial regulatory protection under UDWR proclamation rules and agreements. Releases from Scofield Reservoir are arranged to sustain the fishery, and instream flow rights are under consideration.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 15-percent federal (BLM lands), 58-percent private, and 27-percent State lands or other lands.

Current uses of the river and area include a railroad corridor, dispersed recreation, livestock grazing, coldwater fishery, private timber harvesting, and wildlife habitat. It also provides a corridor for railroad transportation, water diversion, and development.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Outfitting and fishing could be enhanced as a result congressional designation of this river. Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs (coldwater fishery); however, inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (coldwater fishery), water quality, or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. No dams are currently proposed but additional diversions and other water development could be proposed in the future given the importance of this water source to downstream users.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

With the large amounts of private land included in this segment, there is a potential for conflicts between protection and the future need for water development. Local citizens have also raised concerns that congressional designation of Fish Creek could eliminate current uses, such as livestock grazing and timber harvesting, which is unlikely unless these uses are degrading water quality.

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Because only 15 percent of the river area is federally owned, management of this river as Wild and Scenic by BLM would not be practical.

This river is a Blue Ribbon Fishery. Because this river is indispensable to the water supply of Carbon County, current county zoning and regulations are adequate to ensure non-degradation of the watershed and associated values.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area.

State lands (involving 27 percent of the river area) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however, if BLM were to pursue acquisition of private lands (involving 58 percent of the river area), costs would be excessive.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

**Gordon Creek***1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable historic and cultural values. Gordon Creek (original known as Garden Creek) is the location of the first historic era settlement in Carbon County. One ranch site is associated with one of the three original settlers. Values include sites associated with community development and decline, farming or ranching, communication, transportation, irrigation, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. They retain original character and are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as a district for both its historic and prehistoric values.

This area also has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. Because of the short period of historic occupation, the sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory and comparing prehistoric and historic agricultural settlement patterns of the same area.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 44-percent federal (BLM lands), 39-percent State lands, and 17-percent private.

The river corridor is within a developed coalbed natural gas field. Other uses include recreation, particularly horseback riding, hiking, and OHV travel; livestock grazing; and wildlife habitat. Gordon Creek is also developed for irrigation water, and enters a residential area at its lower reach.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

The Price River Water Conservancy District has proposed that a water storage reservoir be constructed within this segment. Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and historic) or free-flowing condition. (Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment.)

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional determination of this stream. Local and state agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Manageability of Gordon Creek if designated would be limited by the low percentage of public lands (44 percent) within the stream corridor.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (39 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however, 17 percent of the segment is private, and funding would be necessary for purchase if the management plan identified it as a need and the private landowner were willing to sell.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## Green River

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

The Green River possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, wildlife, historic, cultural, fish, geologic, and ecologic values, many of which are nationally significant. These values for the upper and lower segments of Green River are described in detail in below.

### Upper Green River

#### Cultural

The upper segments of Green River show evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples. It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. It also includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been largely isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Flat Canyon Archaeological District, within Desolation Canyon, is listed on the Register.

#### Historic

Much of this river corridor is a National Historic Landmark because of its recognition as the least changed of the river corridors associated with John Wesley Powell and the exploration of the Green and Colorado Rivers. Other historic values are associated with settlement, farming or ranching, mining, Prohibition, recreational river running, waterworks and reclamation. Sites have been largely isolated, and therefore, retain their original character.

#### Recreational

A trip though Desolation and Gray Canyons of the Green River, consecutive canyons within the Tavaputs Plateau, is a premier, wilderness recreation experience. The 84-mile trip from Sand Wash to Swaseys Beach is world renowned. Located in Utah's deepest canyon and largest WSA, Desolation and Gray Canyons offer outstanding white water boating with roughly 60 rapids and riffles. There is also ample opportunity for land-based activity, such as hiking in the more than 60 side canyons. BLM receives more

than 3,000 applications per year for the 450 available trip permits issued to self-outfitted users. Eighteen commercial outfitters market trips through these canyons both nationally and internationally.

### **Scenic**

At more than 1 mile deep, Desolation Canyon is Utah's deepest canyon, cutting through the youngest exposed strata on the Colorado Plateau. Desolation and Gray Canyons consist of complexes of many canyons draining to the Green River. Outstanding scenic values are dictated primarily by the domination of geologic features. In addition to canyon walls rising thousands of feet, there are also many interesting rock formations such as arches and hoodoos. Although the landscape is mostly dry and austere, pleasing contrasts are found in the green ribbon of life along the river and the hanging gardens and pockets of huge fir trees are scattered within the cliffs. Desolation Canyon is inventoried by BLM as being Class "A" scenic quality under the BLM's VRM system.

### **Geologic**

The Upper Green River is an outstanding example of an antecedent river cutting through structural geology that should have been impassable to it. As the land surface rises towards the south, the Green River continues to flow to the south, and hence decrease in elevation despite the trend of the surrounding landscape, which results in the deepest canyon in Utah—Desolation Canyon. The corridor of the Green River in this stretch also provides the region's best examples of reattachment bars and separation bars formed by the processes of fluvial geomorphology in bedrock canyons.

### **Fish**

This portion of the Green River provides habitat for four federally listed fish species—Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, bonytail chub, and razorback sucker. Of notable significance, this river contains designated critical habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow. Spawning areas for this species have been confirmed within this river, which is also considered important for pikeminnow young.

Known populations of humpback chub and razorback sucker have been confirmed within this river, while bonytail chub is suspected to occur. This river is considered regionally important for the recovery of these four federally listed species.

### **Wildlife**

This portion of the Green River is considered to have remarkable value for both avian and terrestrial wildlife populations. With regard to avian species, this river corridor is regionally significant, both for its diversity of avian species and for supporting habitats for federally listed and BLM Sensitive avian species.

Confirmed federally listed species present include bald eagle, Mexican spotted owl and southwestern willow flycatcher. BLM sensitive species known to occur include peregrine falcon, yellow-breasted chat, and yellow-billed cuckoo. The river corridor is presently used by bald eagles during the winter but is also considered potential nesting habitat. Mexican spotted owls have been verified nesting within this river corridor. The corridor, designated critical habitat for Mexican spotted owls, is believed to be significant for their expansion.

The Green River segment is also important for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and elk. The entire corridor is regionally significant as lambing habitat for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and considered important winter range for mule deer and elk.

## **Ecological**

The Green River hosts a variety of avian, terrestrial, and aquatic species populations. The river and its properly functioning riparian area provide a corridor of habitat through an otherwise arid region for many Sensitive and federally listed species of birds and fish, and populations of bighorn sheep, deer, elk, black bear, mountain lion, and beaver. The corridor supports rare plant species, including a recently discovered species of columbine. The stability of this ecosystem, largely unchanged since the passage of John Wesley Powell, contributed to the designation of Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark.

## **Lower Green River**

### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples and includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. Its rock art and other features remain significant to some Native American populations today. The prehistoric use represent more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been largely isolated and retain integrity and are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Historic**

Historic values include sites associated with early river exploration, recreational and commercial river running, farming and ranching, mining, waterworks, and reclamation. Sites have been largely isolated and therefore retain their original character.

### **Recreational**

Labyrinth Canyon of the Green River is roughly 68 miles in length. The character of this canyon is completely different from Desolation Canyon. This stretch of river has no rapids, making it an ideal for canoe paddling. It provides a 4- to 7-day backcountry paddling experience. There are also plenty of opportunities for dispersed camping and hiking to cultural sites, unique geologic features, and other attractions. Roughly 7,000 people per year take this popular trip. The section is also suitable for powerboat use at some water levels and provides for much of the annual Friendship Cruise route, a powerboat event that has been held for decades. This section of the Green River has been widely reported on in the popular press in newspapers from coast to coast and in specialty publications such as *Paddler Magazine*.

### **Scenic**

Scenic values are largely a product of the geology. The Green River meanders through a deeply incised canyon. Explorer John Wesley Powell named the canyon for its many intricate twists and turns. At Bowknot Bend, one travels a distance of 7 river miles to end within a quarter mile of the starting point. Varnished cliffs are cut in places by the narrow mouths of shaded side canyons where mature cottonwood trees are harbored. In the lower parts of the canyon, vertical cliffs of Windgate sandstone rise 1,000 feet above the river. Dramatic topography, dizzying cliffs bisected by the Green River and its associated ribbon of life in an otherwise barren landscape make this corridor Class "A" scenery under BLM's VRM system.

### **Fish**

This portion of the Green River provides habitat for four endangered fish, including spawning habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow. The river contains critical habitat as designated by USFWS for these species.

## Paleontology

Dinosaur bones visible in Morrison Formation outcrop have been reported by reliable sources (Dr. Paul Bybee, Professor of Geology at Utah Valley State College in Orem, Utah). They are reported visible from the river.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the eligible river corridor is 66-percent federal (BLM lands), 18-percent Indian reservation, 1-percent State lands, and 15-percent private. Although the west bank is mostly BLM owned, the east bank of the river corridor in Desolation and Gray Canyons is Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation for about 66 miles. A large majority of the private land is concentrated near the town of Green River.

The upper river segment through Desolation and Gray Canyons is managed according to the Desolation and Gray Canyons River Management Plan (1979), which provides for the allocation of private and commercial boating trips. The segment through Labyrinth Canyon is also managed for recreational boating through an MOU between the BLM and the State of Utah.

Desolation and Gray Canyons receive high levels of primitive recreation use from early spring to late fall. Six private and commercial river launches of up to 25 people per launch are permitted every day of the high-use season (May 15 to August 15). Total user day capacity for the area is 35,000 user days per season. Desolation Canyon SRMA has been established to give focus to recreation management along the river corridor and side canyons.

The river corridor and adjacent lands through Labyrinth Canyon, also a SRMA, attracts a large number of recreationists seeking a scenic river float. Roughly 3,000 to 4,000 visitors experience this flatwater float annually.

About 66 of the roughly 80 miles of eligible river through Desolation and Gray Canyons either form the eastern boundary of Desolation Canyon WSA or bisect it. Also, roughly 22 of the 50 miles of river between the mouth of the San Rafael River and where the river enters Canyonlands National Park (the stretch of river through Labyrinth Canyon) form the eastern boundary of Horseshoe Canyon WSA. The river corridor within the WSAs is managed according to the IMP.

Downstream of where the river exits Gray Canyon, below Swaseys Rapid, the river is considered a navigable waterway with State jurisdiction. Much of the lands between Swaseys Rapid and the confluence with the San Rafael River is private, used for agriculture, and has residential, commercial, and municipal development in and around the town of Green River. There is a large diversion dam at Tusher Wash, upstream of the town of Green River. A wide variety of activities occur within the river corridor.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded portions of the river corridor by its WSA status. Those portions of the Green River corridor within WSAs have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this river for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of these areas.

Local municipalities, industries, and other water users have expressed concerns that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within

the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments; however, for the reasons discussed below, congressional designation of the Green River for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be expected to have no effect on water use, allocation, or flow regimes.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occur within the designated segment and have direct or adverse effects on the ORVs or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild. This wild classification is in keeping with the scenic easement committed to in a MOU between the U.S.

Department of the Interior and the Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation for transfer of previous oil shale reserve lands on the east bank of the river to the Ute Tribe (described in more detail below). No development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions of this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act infers a federal reserved water right upon designation, rather than establishing an amount, it actually imposes a limit, stating that any such right is to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of the Act. Such a right would have to be adjudicated through the State and would be junior to any existing rights.

Under normal operations, reservoir releases through Flaming Gorge power plant, the primary influence of river flows outside of spring run-off flows, range from 800 to 4,600 cubic feet per second (cfs). These flows adhere to the interim operating criteria for Flaming Gorge Dam established by the Bureau of Reclamation in September 1974. Under these criteria, the Bureau of Reclamation agreed to provide (1) a minimum flow of 400 cfs at all times, (2) flows of 800 cfs under normal circumstances and for the foreseeable future, and (3) flows exceeding 800 cfs when compatible with other Colorado River Storage Project reservoir operations. These minimum flows are maintained to enhance the use of the river for fishing, fish spawning, and boating (United States Department of the Interior 2003).

The Bureau of Reclamation completed the final EIS on the operation of Flaming Gorge Dam in February 2006. The purpose of the proposed action in the *Record of Decision, Operation of Flaming Gorge Dam, Final Environmental Impact Statement, February 26, 2006*, is to protect and assist in recovery of the populations and designated critical habitat of the four endangered fishes, while maintaining all authorized purposes of the Flaming Gorge Unit of the Colorado River Storage Project, including those related to the development of water resources in accordance with the Colorado River compact. Table 0-3 identifies components of the outstandingly remarkable fish value for the Green River. BLM supports these recommendations and recognizes that the proposed minimum flow release from Flaming Gorge Dam would be sufficient to maintain or enhance the values for which the river was determined eligible. Because this minimum flow release would be adequate to maintain the ORVs, BLM sees no need for and would not pursue a federal reserved water right in any recommendation that is forwarded to Congress.

On the other hand, failure of Congress to include these segments of the Green River in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue. Likewise the Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark, the Desolation Canyon and Labyrinth Canyon SRMAs, and current ACECs along lower portions of the Green River provide for the protection and enjoyment of certain values within the river corridor. With the exception of the Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark, the status of the WSAs, SRMAs, ACECs, and other management prescriptions are subject to change as a result of

congressional action or future revisions to land use plans. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted congressional designation of the Green River.

The BLM Vernal Field Office found their Lower Green River segment, which ends at the Carbon/Uintah County line as “suitable” as a “scenic” WSR segment in their 1994 Diamond Mountain RMP. This segment is immediately north of the PFO.

The Navajo Tribe supports designation of the Green River, recognizing the river as a Traditional Cultural Property.

Members of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation Ute Tribal Council have expressed concerns pertaining to the effects of designation on potential use of tribal lands within the designated corridor; however, there is an agreement in place between the tribe and the Department of the Interior to administer the river corridor, including Reservation lands, consistent with “Wild” Wild and Scenic River classification. (The agreement is discussed in more detail under the below criterion.)

The State of Utah has also expressed concerns regarding the designation of the Green River; however, it is supportive of designating portions of the Green River only if the Department of the Interior does not seek to acquire a federal reserved water right to ensure a minimal instream flow for the river. The State recognizes that the proposed minimum flow releases from Flaming Gorge Dam would be sufficient to maintain or enhance the river values that make the river eligible for designation and that no change in water use or allocation would be necessary or prudent.

Emery County, instead of expressing outright support for the designation of the Green River, is resolved to accept designation under the same conditions as those specified by the State of Utah.

Carbon County, however, opposes “all facets” of Wild and Scenic river designation within the county. Carbon County’s Master Plan states that it intends to “work with fully informed local elected officials to identify impacts [on] the local economy and lifestyles, then register written and verbal opposition to any Wild and Scenic River designations whatsoever in the County.” Carbon County further identifies as a strategy addressing Wild and Scenic rivers to “express to all concerned that Carbon County is not interested in any kind of compromise on this issue; compromise is too often seen as support” (Carbon County 2005). Recent correspondence indicates that a concession might be made by Carbon County on certain segments of the Green River if the PFO were to not find suitable other portions of the river in an area Carbon County considers to have mineral development potential.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this river if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. Congressional designation of the Green River for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would increase Utah BLM’s ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency’s ability to deal with recreational and other management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Designation of the Green River would not result in a substantial shift in management of the river corridor from current management, particularly those portions of the Green River within Desolation, Gray, and

Labyrinth Canyons. The Desolation and Gray Canyons River Management Plan is consistent with the objectives of congressional Wild and Scenic river designation. Other protective management prescriptions currently in place that would complement National Wild and Scenic Rivers System management, if designated, are those for OHV use, fluid minerals leasing, SRMAs, ACECs, WSAs, the National Historic Landmark, riparian habitat, and visual resources. The current management would provide a high degree of continuity and make the adjustment to Wild and Scenic management easy because current objectives are substantially similar to those of congressional designation.

The U.S. Department of the Interior and the Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation (among other government entities) signed the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Transfer of Naval Oil Shale Reserves Numbered 2, dated February 11, 2000. As part of the MOU agreement, a “Green River Protective Corridor” was established, which conveyed a scenic easement to the U.S. Department of the Interior for the river area lying within one-quarter mile east of the Green River within the Hill Creek Extension of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. This MOU included a commitment by the Ute Tribe to administer this corridor consistent with the Wild tentative classification, while preserving and protecting its values. This MOU is clearly, if not intentionally, consistent with potential congressional Wild and Scenic river designation.

Another MOU between the State of Utah and BLM provides for the cooperative management of recreational boating through Labyrinth Canyon. The MOU established a permit system to ensure the scenic river experience is maintained, while reducing some of the negative impacts, whether on recreational or other river values, associated with a popular river float. This cooperative management would be perpetuated and likely enhanced if the Green River were congressionally designated.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could be effectively managed with existing and other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. With exception of the Desolation Canyon National Historic Landmark, the status of the WSAs, SRMAs, ACECs, and other management prescriptions are subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

#### *6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. Funding is not expected to be sought for the acquisition of private land (given willing sellers) because adequate management of the designated segments would not require acquisition of these lands.

#### *7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

Local governments have made clear it that they would not share management costs if the Green River were designated.

The State of Utah would probably limit its support to the cooperative management of Labyrinth Canyon in accordance with the MOU between the State and the BLM.

## Keg Spring Canyon

### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic and cultural values. These values are described in detail below.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples, and includes probably the most scientifically important site in the area. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Scenic**

This canyon is wonderfully scenic, tightly confined in slickrock walls that are punctuated with enticing alcoves and dramatic amphitheaters. The stream adds a water feature and green vegetation winds through a landscape of rock. These features, and the canyon's association with the Green River, make for Class "A" scenery quality under the BLM's VRM system.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 91-percent federal (BLM lands) and 9-percent State lands.

This stream is within Horseshoe Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP, which provides for primitive recreation. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity. The stream corridor offers a scenic, solitary backcountry experience.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (scenic and cultural) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild; however, no such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

This segment of Keg Spring Canyon is almost exclusively within the WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs, in addition to protection already afforded by the WSA status. Failure to include Keg Spring Canyon in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as those for the ACEC and SRMA, would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of Keg Spring Canyon that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence; however, to date, the remoteness and difficult access have limited visitation. Resources are fragile and would suffer degradation if visitation were to increase with designation. Wild and Scenic River designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and all identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the establishment of the Lower Green River ACEC and Labyrinth Canyon SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded the river because it is almost entirely within the Horseshoe Canyon WSA, which is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, ACEC, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

No funding for acquisition would be needed because there is no private land within the river corridor. State lands could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange. The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs of designated streams.

## Muddy Creek

### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable historic, cultural, recreational, and scenic values. These values are described in detail below.

#### **Historic**

Values consist of sites associated with uranium exploration and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. It includes some of the area of study used by Noel Morss in defining the Fremont culture. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Recreational**

Muddy Creek offers mostly a primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunity. When water flows are adequate, Muddy Creek provides a challenging white water experience. During low flows, it provides hikers an opportunity to traverse through the heart of the San Rafael Swell. The Chute, a deep, narrow slot through which the Muddy Creek flows, is one of the most popular floating and hiking routes in the San Rafael Swell. This area is well known and draws visitors from throughout the nation.

#### **Scenic**

This segment traverses a variety of geologic strata providing a variety in landform and color. Dramatic cliffs raising hundreds of feet dominate the view. These are decorated with picturesque rock formations, such as pinnacles, arches, and hoodoos. The Chute of Muddy Creek provides exceptional slot canyon scenes, with the creek meandering from wall to wall.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 92-percent federal (BLM lands), 7-percent State lands, and 1-percent private lands.

Uses include livestock grazing and trailing, recreation, and wildlife habitat. Much of Muddy Creek flows through Muddy Creek and Crack Canyon WSAs and is managed according to the IMP, which provides for primitive recreation. The Muddy Creek corridor is also within areas managed as an ACEC (Muddy Creek) and a SRMA (San Rafael Swell).

A number of activities that occur outside (upstream) of the eligible segments of Muddy Creek bear on the water volume and water quality of these segments. As is typical of water uses in the more rural areas of Utah, agriculture is the largest water user, followed by municipal and industrial uses, with the latter having potential to increase over time with expanding development.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts analysis of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

If eligible segments of Muddy Creek were found not to be suitable and subsequently not designated by Congress, the values for which the segments were found to be eligible would not necessarily diminish. River segments are largely within Muddy Creek and Crack Canyon WSAs. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation and are currently managed according to the IMP. The IMP's non-impairment standard inevitably affords river values protection. Several other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as Muddy Creek and Lower Muddy Creek ACECs, would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented; however, none of these prescriptions are permanent and are subject to change.

If segments of Muddy Creek were congressionally designated, the ORVs, free-flowing nature of the stream, and water quality would be provided permanent protection. Designation would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the WSAs. A river management plan would be prepared upon designation. As part of that effort, certain activities can be monitored to ensure that these activities are consistent with the goals of the designation. Despite congressional designation, existing upstream uses would continue to degrade water quality in some cases.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural, historical recreational, and scenic) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. On federal lands within designated river areas classified as wild, other projects, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location; however, no such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within this segment considering much of the area's WSA status. New water-related projects proposed upstream of the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, historical, or cultural values within the designated segment. Such development outside the segment is likely to be proposed because of multiple upstream water uses.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted designation.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Along with various water users and municipalities, they oppose designation primarily because of perceptions that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments; however, water-related development is unlikely to be proposed within the segment because of the high percentage of federal ownership and the area's WSA status. Any upstream or downstream development would only be affected if it were federal authorized or funded, and even then, only if the project would invade or unreasonably diminish fish, wildlife, recreational, and scenic values identified within the river segment at the time of designation.

Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act infers a federal reserved water right upon designation, rather than establishing an amount, it actually imposes a limit, stating that any such right is to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of the Act. Such a right would have to be adjudicated through the State and would be junior to any existing rights.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Management of Muddy Creek if designated would be aided by the fact that the large majority (92 percent) of the eligible river corridor is public lands managed by the BLM. The majority of these public lands are currently managed as WSAs, an ACEC, and/or is within a SRMA. The Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS evaluates management prescriptions that would perpetuate these special emphases. If no segments of Muddy Creek were designated, management objectives and prescriptions related to the WSAs, ACEC, and SRMA would provide a level of protection that may be sufficient to protect the river-related values that make the river eligible.

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence; however, to date, the remoteness and difficult access have limited visitation. Resources are fragile and would suffer degradation if visitation were to increase with designation. Congressional Wild and Scenic river designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The identified ORVs could, for the most part, be effectively managed under land use prescriptions being in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS should congressional designation not occur and if other protective management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with visual and cultural resource management and the San Rafael SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded a portion of the stream corridor by Muddy Creek and Crack Canyon WSAs. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change. In the future, the free-flowing nature and water quality of this stream may be at risk from upstream water development.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. Funding is not needed to acquire State lands because exchange could be used. Funding is also not needed for the acquisition of private land (given willing sellers) because only 1 percent of the river area is private, and its acquisition would not be necessary for management of the segment.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have it made clear that they would not share management costs if Muddy Creek were designated.

**Nine Mile Creek***1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable historic, cultural, and scenic values. This river area, informally referred to as "The World's Longest Art Gallery" is at least nationally significant for its concentration of prehistoric rock art and evidence of Native American habitation. These values are described in detail below.

## Historic

Values include sites associated with community development and decline, fur trade and exploration, farming or ranching, military history, communication, transportation, irrigation, and Civilian Conservation Corps. These sites retain original character, and their values are important for interpreting associated historic events. The area is currently being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for both its historic and prehistoric values.

## Cultural

Nine Mile Canyon has the greatest concentration of prehistoric rock art in the world. It also has some of the most visible and best preserved remains of the Fremont culture. It is part of the study area Noel Morss used in defining the Fremont culture. Rock art and other features remain significant to some Native American populations today. The prehistoric use represents more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Nine Mile Canyon is eligible for the National Register and is currently being nominated for National Historic Landmark designation.

## Scenic

Nine Mile Canyon was dedicated as a backcountry byway in 1990. The main visual features are the dramatic topography of high canyon walls, dissected by steep-sided canyons and punctuated with isolated buttes, mesas, and outcrops. A lush riparian zone of willow and cottonwood marks the canyon bottom. A series of farms and ranches add a rural appearance to an otherwise very wild looking landscape. Prehistoric rock art adorn the canyon walls adding intrinsic interest to foreground views. Water features include the flowing stream and beaver ponds. This canyon is inventoried as Class "A" scenery under BLM's VRM system for its dramatic topography, interesting vegetation, and water features. The numerous cultural sites invite the eye to wander and study the details and small-scale scenery in this immense canyon.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the eligible river corridor is 44-percent federal (BLM lands), 48-percent private, and 7-percent State lands.

Current uses include farming or ranching; recreation, especially rock art viewing and touring; tourist services and outfitting; oil and gas development; transportation; and utility and a gas pipeline corridor.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS.

This area is promoted for its prehistoric rock art and other cultural and historical values by local and regional tourism boards. Designation would further promote national and public recognition of the cultural, historic, and scenic values, and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on certain values or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segments would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish the historical, cultural, or scenic values

within the designated segment. If the stream were designated, current industrial uses within the stream's corridor, such as oil and gas development, transportation, and pipeline corridors could be limited or precluded depending on the degree that they affect these sensitive values.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to prescriptions included in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS regarding the establishment of an ACEC and a SRMA. Failure to include Nine Mile Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the ACEC and SRMA would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary, and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision. There is currently a proposal before Congress to designate much of Nine Mile Canyon a National Historic Landmark.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted congressional designation of this stream.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Along with various water users and municipalities, they oppose designation because of perceptions that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Manageability of Nine Mile Creek if designated would be limited by the low percentage of public lands within the stream corridor. BLM only manages 44 percent of the corridor. Because of the large amount of industrial activities within the corridor, both current and reasonably foreseeable, and agricultural activities associated with the private lands, management for the protection of the cultural, historical, and scenic values would prove challenging.

On the other hand, given the proposed establishment of the Nine Mile Canyon ACEC, SRMA, other prescriptions proposed in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, the potential National Historic Landmark, and other laws protecting cultural resources, the stream's ORVs would be afforded a large degree of protection. With the exception of the potential National Historic Landmark, the status of the ACEC, SRMA, and other management prescriptions are subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation, and could include additional studies, monitoring, and increased BLM presence in the area. State lands (7 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however, 48 percent of the segment is private, and funding would be necessary for purchase if the management plan identified it as a need and the private landowner were willing to sell.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if Nine Mile Creek were designated.

## North Fork Coal Wash

### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river segment possesses outstandingly remarkable historic, cultural, and scenic values. These values are described in detail below.

#### **Historic**

Values consist of sites associated with ranching and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Scenic**

A sandstone landscape of domes, pinnacles, alcoves, and extended cliff lines drop into the incised canyon bottom. Groves of pinyon and juniper opening to grassy parks are terraced over the cottonwood-lined canyon bottom. The enormous reach of Slipper Arch provides a premier scenic feature.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 85-percent federal (BLM lands) and 15-percent State lands.

An OHV route follows the wash bottom, and it is a popular route for vehicle-based recreation. Other uses include more primitive types of recreation, such as hiking and horseback riding, livestock grazing, and wildlife habitat. Much of this segment is within Sids Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS.

North Fork Coal Wash is within the Sids Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The corridor of the stream, including the portion within the WSA, serves as an OHV route. This circumstance would put at odds the protection of the stream's values and the opportunity for OHV travel within the corridor. If the stream were congressionally designated for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and OHV travel was determined to degrade the quality of the water or affect the cultural and historical values, it would not be allowed.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded the lower portions of the river corridor by the WSA status. Failure to include North Fork Coal Wash in the National Wild and

Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they would occur within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and scenic) or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. No such projects inside or outside of the river area are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because they are concerned that potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen water uses of North Fork Coal Wash that would be affected. Individual citizens and groups have also expressed much concern that the designation of this stream would affect the use of the OHV route within the corridor, if not preclude its use altogether.

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Management of North Fork Coal Wash, if designated, would pose a substantial challenge to the presence of the popular OHV route that follows the stream's corridor. Continued vehicle use of this route would likely be in conflict with protection of the outstandingly remarkable historical and cultural values. The route might also hinder the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's objective of maintaining or enhancing a designated stream's water quality.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the San Rafael Swell SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Sids Mountain WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration cost thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (15 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if North Fork Coal Wash were designated.

## North Salt Wash

### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic, wildlife, and cultural values. These values are described in detail below.

#### **Scenic**

The cottonwood-lined canyon has a scenic combination of sandstone cliffs, alcoves, and a rincon augmented by live water, rock art, and stable vegetated sand dunes.

#### **Wildlife**

This canyon provides habitat for a number of wildlife species, including Desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, prairie falcons, and red-tailed hawks. The riparian vegetation in the bottom of this canyon, along with the intermittent water, provide important habitat for these species.

#### **Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features are significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 97-percent federal (BLM lands), with 3-percent State lands located at the mouth of the river.

Uses include recreation, particularly horseback riding and hiking; livestock grazing; and wildlife habitat. This segment is largely within Sids Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

If eligible segments of North Salt Wash were found not to be suitable and subsequently not designated by Congress, the ORVs (cultural, scenic, and wildlife) for which the segments were found eligible would not necessarily diminish. River segments are largely within Sids Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation and are currently managed according to the IMP, which provides river values a certain level of protection. Several other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS, such as the San Rafael Swell SRMA, would also preserve and enhance rivers values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

If segments of North Salt Wash were designated, river values would be provided permanent protection. Designation would also be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the WSAs, and would be consistent with other management objectives of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS. A river

management plan would be prepared upon designation that would evaluate the effects of current activities to ensure that they would be consistent with the goals of the designation.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted congressional designation of this stream.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Along with various water users and municipalities, they oppose designation primarily because of perceptions that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing this stream if it were designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence. Resources are fragile and would suffer degradation if visitation were to increase with designation. Wild and Scenic River designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to deal with recreational management of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and all identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the San Rafael Swell SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded the river because it is largely within Sids Mountain WSA, which is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration cost thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (3 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if North Salt Wash were designated.

## Price River

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

The Price River possesses outstandingly remarkable historic, cultural, fish, wildlife, and geologic values. These values are described in detail below.

## Historic

Historic values are associated with settlement, farming or ranching, and transportation (early railroads), which are important for interpreting associated historic events. Most sites have been somewhat isolated and therefore retain their original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

## Cultural

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

## Fish

From the confluence of Lower Fish Creek and White River downstream through Helper, this river provides a potentially high-quality coldwater fishery. Currently, a plan is underway (in conjunction with a Total Maximum Daily Load) to improve the fishery and correct temperature discrepancies that exist in part of the reach. The river is stocked with trout annually as far downstream as the Helper gauging station. In the last decade, habitat improvement projects, such as the construction of stone pool-forming structures have been completed along the Helper parkway by UDWR with the support of Trout Unlimited. UDWR has also spent effort and money on improvements to direct access to the river along Highway 6, which provides access along most of this reach, to enhance opportunities to fish. The White River watershed is currently undergoing restoration by UDWR partly for the purpose of improving the fishery below its confluence with the Price River.

The lower Price River segment is considered to be important for several federally listed fish species. The mouth of this river segment is important habitat for young pikeminnow. Bonytail Chub and Razorback Sucker may also use this river segment.

## Wildlife

The lower Price River is important to numerous avian wildlife species, notably the Mexican spotted owl, peregrine falcon, and southwestern willow flycatcher. The river segment provides excellent nesting roosting habitat for the Mexican spotted owl and the peregrine falcon, although these species have not been confirmed present to date. The river segment is also important lambing habitat for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

## Geologic

Exposed in the walls of the lower canyon of the Price River are excellent examples of delta sediments deposited during the Cretaceous period. The repeated retreat and advance of the inland seaway is vividly recorded in the exposures of the Mesa Verde Group. Major oil companies bring geologists on field trips to this escarpment to study these exposures.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 68 percent federal (BLM lands), 8-percent State lands, and 24-percent private lands.

The private lands are predominantly around Helper, Price, Wellington, and Woodside. There is extensive residential, agricultural, industrial, transportation, and municipal development in these areas. In less developed areas, uses include livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, and recreation, particularly fishing, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, and seasonal kayaking. This river is an essential source of culinary and irrigation water for Carbon County. There are a number of diversions throughout this river area. The lower segment of the Price River is within Desolation Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for permanent structures or surface disturbing activities.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts analysis of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS.

Local municipalities, industries, and other water users have expressed concerns that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments. Inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural, historical, geologic, fish, and wildlife) or free-flowing condition. Such water-related development is likely to be proposed in the future because of the location of the river along a major roadway and going through several towns.

Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures may be allowed along the segments classified by Congress as Recreational or Scenic as long as they are consistent with the level of development permitted within each of these classifications. Such projects would not be permitted along the lower reach of the Price River if it were designated Wild by Congress. New water-related projects proposed upstream of the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. Such development outside the segment is likely to be proposed because of multiple water uses.

Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act infers a federal reserved water right upon designation, rather than establishing an amount, it actually imposes a limit, stating that any such right is to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of the Act. Such a right would have to be adjudicated through the State and would be junior to any existing rights.

If the lower segment of Price River were found not to be suitable and subsequently not designated by Congress, the values for which the segments was found to be eligible would not necessarily diminish. River segments are largely within Desolation Canyon WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation and are currently managed according to the IMP. The IMP's non-impairment standard inevitably affords river values protection. Several other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as the Desolation Canyon SRMA, would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented; however, none of these prescriptions are permanent and are subject to change.

If segments of Price River were congressionally designated, the ORVs, free-flowing nature of the stream, and water quality would be provided permanent protection. Designation would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the WSAs. A river management plan would be prepared upon designation. As part of that effort, current activities can be monitored to ensure that these activities are consistent with the goals of the designation.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted congressional designation of this stream.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Along with various water users and municipalities, they oppose designation primarily because of perceptions that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments. Water development is likely to be proposed in the future, considering the stream's proximity to a highway and several communities. There are large amounts of State (8 percent) and private (24 percent) lands within the river corridor, and therefore potential for conflicts between protection and the future need for water development.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

The upper segment of the Price River would be especially difficult to manage because of the low percentage of public lands within the corridor and because of the extensive use of the corridor for transportation, power generation, and commercial and residential areas. The middle portion would also be difficult to manage because of the location of private ranches within the river corridor. Although a 200-meter corridor is considered for the Price River in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS to protect riparian values from development, the upper and middle reaches of the stream would be open to mineral leasing without special stipulations, would allow for visual intrusions consistent with VRM Class III, and would be without any special management afforded by an ACEC or SRMA designation. Most of the ORVs would be at some risk of compromise.

BLM would be capable of managing the lower stream segment if congressionally designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence on the Price River. Congressional Wild and Scenic river designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to manage recreational and other uses of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Protection is also currently afforded ORVs in the lower river corridor by Desolation Canyon WSA. The corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP, which allows for no new permanent developments or surface disturbing activities. Other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as the Desolation Canyon SRMA, would also preserve and enhance this segment's ORVs if implemented. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions are subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation, and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area.

State lands (involving 8 percent of the river area) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, so funds would not be needed for their purchase; however, if BLM were to pursue acquisition of private lands (involving 24 percent of the river area)—owners willing—costs would be excessive.

There would be no need for any funding for acquisition if only the lower segment were congressionally designated.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if Price River were designated.

## Range Creek

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

Range Creek possesses outstandingly remarkable cultural, historic, scenic, and wildlife values. These values are described in detail below.

### Cultural

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### Historic

Historic values are associated with settlement, farming or ranching, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. Sites have been largely isolated and therefore retain their original character. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

### Scenic

Unlike most of the side canyons entering the Green and Colorado Rivers, Range Creek carved a “U” shaped rather than a “V” shaped valley. In this canyon, lush, river bottom land suddenly gives way to dramatic cliffs and mountains that rise 4,000 feet to the top of the Tavaputs Plateau. The canyon passes through several life zones, from high alpine forest and meadows down to a salt shrub desert. The pattern of vegetation habitat types and the way they vary with elevation and slope aspect create a varied and interesting scene. Dramatic topography and unusual rock formations split by a mountain stream creates a stimulating visual experience. This canyon is inventoried as Class “A” scenery under BLM’s VRM system for its dramatic topography, varied relief, geologic structures, vegetation, and water features.

### Wildlife

The Range Creek segment is unique and regionally significant for the diversity of avian and terrestrial wildlife. The upper drainage provides summer range for mule deer and elk while the lower drainage provides winter range for these species. The lower drainage is important lambing habitat for Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The Range Creek drainage is designated critical habitat for the Mexican spotted owl although no occupied territories have yet to be confirmed.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 55-percent federal (BLM lands), roughly 17-percent State lands, and about 28-percent private lands.

Because much of the river area is privately owned and behind locked gates, public access along Range Creek is limited. Utah Division of Wildlife Resources manages much of the corridor along middle portions of the stream. A permit system is in place allowing certain non-motorized, recreational access to these State lands because of the sensitive resources of the area. Uses include ranching, livestock grazing, timber harvesting, wildlife habitat, and recreation, particularly hunting, hiking, and horseback riding. The lower end of Range Creek (lower 1.5 miles) is within Desolation Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP, which does not allow for new development or surface disturbing activities.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

Two primary objectives for the management of the lands administered by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources are to protect the area's remarkably preserved cultural resources, and to enhance the streams coldwater fisheries habitat and populations. Designation would directly contribute to these objectives while providing for the protection of the other values within the stream corridor.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural, historical, geologic, fish, and wildlife) or free-flowing condition.

Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, recreational facilities, or other structures may be allowed along the segment classified by Congress as recreational. Such projects would not be permitted along the upper and lower reaches of Range Creek if it were designated Wild by Congress.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to the current WSA status of the lower reach of Range Creek and prescriptions included in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS regarding the establishment of an ACEC or SRMA. Failure to include Range Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the ACEC, WSA, and management implemental by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources would also preserve and enhance such values. Prescriptions for the ACEC or SRMA would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. These governments oppose designation primarily because of perceptions that existing water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

If this stream were designated, management would be limited because of the low percentage of public lands within the river corridor.

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources is currently developing a management plan for administration of its lands along the middle portions of the stream corridor. Objectives of this management plan include the preservation of the stream's values. The Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS proposes establishing an ACEC or SRMA adjacent to these State lands to provide specific management prescriptions for the protection of the area's values, primarily the sensitive cultural resources. The Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS also proposes eliminating motorized access along lower portions of Range Creek to protect the stream's riparian zone. Cooperation management of Range Creek between the BLM and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources would be necessary if the stream were to become congressionally designated, which would be productive because current federal and State objectives for the area are consistent.

#### *6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration cost thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. BLM would not make efforts to acquire State lands. Instead, BLM would seek to work cooperatively with the State of Utah for the management of Range Creek upon designation. If BLM were to pursue acquisition of private lands (involving 28 percent of the river area)—owners willing—costs would be excessive.

#### *7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

Local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if Range Creek were designated. Any cooperative management of Range Creek between BLM and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources would potentially require commitments from both entities for adequate funding.

## **Rock Creek**

#### *1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, cultural, historic, and fish values. These values are described in detail below.

### **Scenic**

Of the more than 60 tributary canyons to Desolation and Gray Canyon, Rock Creek provides the most dramatic and exceptionally high quality scenery. There is tremendous topographic relief as the canyon rises more than 5,000 feet from the mouth of the creek to the top of the plateau. The canyon bottom has a verdant riparian zone along a clear, coldwater creek. The creek itself has a pool and drop structure, cascading in places, providing intrinsically interesting sights accented by the sounds of flowing, splashing water. The canyon walls are resplendent. Lower elevation pinyon and juniper give way to Douglas fir at the mid- to higher elevations. These stands of dark green timber are punctuated with outcrops and ledges of red sandstone. All these features add up to Class "A" scenery under the BLM's VRM system.

### **Recreational**

Rock Creek, a much anticipated respite for river travelers, is the most visited area in Desolation Canyon. Visitors are attracted to the cool, clear, refreshing waters meandering through the lush riparian zone in addition to the well-preserved historic structures. Rock Creek offers the most popular hike in Desolation Canyon. Hikers value the varied scenery and the abundant rock art along the canyon walls. A coldwater fishery rounds out the variety of recreational opportunity along Rock Creek.

## Cultural

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). It includes rock art and other features that remain significant to some Native American populations today. The sites have been largely isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

## Historic

Rock Creek provides an excellent example of historic homesteading. The historic architecture and manipulated landscape are well preserved. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

## Fish

Rock Creek contains increasingly rare and highly desirable coldwater fish habitat. It is capable of sustaining wild hatcheries of environmentally sensitive fish species. Water quality is high and is often used by recreational boaters as a source of culinary water. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, a rare species (listed as Sensitive by the BLM and the State of Utah), has been approved by the State's Resource Development Coordinating Committee and is expected to be implemented in the reasonably foreseeable future. The stream provides ideal fish habitat because of its multiple pools, cascades, and lush riparian vegetation. Fish are abundant below cascade features but are currently absent above the cascades where the Colorado River cutthroat trout are planned to be introduced. The natural reproduction of fish is high in the portion of the stream where fish are present and is expected to be high where fish will be introduced. The size of trout ranges up to 20 inches or larger. The scenic and pristine nature of the stream and canyon also contribute to the high quality of the fishing experience. The upper reaches of Rock Creek receive low recreational use but could be important to anglers wanting a remote fishing experience.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 70-percent federal (BLM lands), 5-percent State lands, and 25-percent private lands.

Current uses include livestock grazing and recreation. Hiking and rock art viewing are especially popular along lower reaches of the stream. The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future. Most of the river area is within Desolation Canyon WSA and managed according to the IMP, which does not allow for new development or surface disturbing activities. The stream is also within the Desolation Canyon SRMA.

### *3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS.

Much of the public lands within this segment of Rock Creek are within the Desolation Canyon WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The introduction of native Colorado River cutthroat trout is expected to be implemented by UDWR in the reasonably foreseeable future. Designation of the stream would provide additional protection to the fish value.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded by the WSA status. Failure to include Rock Creek in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue, and many of the other land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented. Such prescriptions would be temporary and could be changed through plan amendment or plan revision.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (high-quality fish habitat) or free-flowing condition. None are currently proposed. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this segment as wild. No such development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions of this segment considering the area's WSA status. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish fish values within the designated segment. None are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because of concerns that current and potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen uses of Rock Creek that would be affected. Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Manageability of Rock Creek, if designated, would be complemented by the fact that the majority of the stream corridor is within the Desolation Canyon WSA and SRMA. The current status of the WSA and SRMA affords the stream's values a certain degree of protection.

The isolation of the stream because of limited public access and extreme topography inevitably provides another protective circumstance. Rock Creek is most accessible by the Green River, involving a multi-day boat trip. From the top of the West Tavaputs Plateau, Rock Creek is accessed through a pack trail down Van Duesen Ridge; however, this route is not available to the general public because access is through private lands.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs on public lands could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the Desolation Canyon WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Desolation Canyon SRMA. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change because of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and additional BLM presence in the area. State lands (5 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding; however, 25 percent of the segment is private, and funding would be necessary for purchase if the management plan identified it as a need and the private landowner were willing to sell.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if Rock Creek were designated.

**San Rafael River***1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river possesses outstandingly remarkable cultural, historic, scenic, recreational, and wildlife values and flows through an area nationally recognized for its heritage, recreation, and scenery. These values are described in detail below.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Historic**

Values include sites associated with farming or ranching, transportation, and the Civilian Conservation Corps, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character. The Swinging Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other sites are eligible for the National Register.

**Scenic**

The Little Grand Canyon is named for its grandeur. Here, the San Rafael has carved a dramatic canyon of rock with very little vegetation on the canyon walls. The green ribbon of the riparian zone provides respite from the barren canyon. In addition to the geologic scenic features, the canyon provides great wildlife viewing opportunities and numerous cultural sites.

Deep, narrow canyon walls dominate the scenery through the Black Boxes. The confined river meandering the few yards from wall to wall is visually unique and outstanding—a slot canyon on a grand scale.

These features add up to Class “A” scenic quality under the BLM’s VRM system.

**Recreational**

This river provides a great variety of recreational opportunities. The segment through the area known as the Little Grand Canyon of the San Rafael offers a greater variety of experiences than any other segment

in the PFO. At higher water levels, it is floated by a variety of watercraft, from canoes and kayaks to small rafts. This segment is also traversed by backpackers and equestrians. There are greatly dispersed campsites and attraction sites throughout this segment.

The segment downstream of Swinging Bridge is known as the Black Boxes, named for the Upper and Lower Black Box Canyons of the San Rafael. Here, the San Rafael traverses canyons that are hundreds of feet deep and tens of feet wide. At lower water levels, the Black Boxes provide a moderately difficult canyoneering experience. Canyoneers find themselves hiking, climbing and rock scrambling, and swimming on a typical trip. At high water, the canyons are the domains of the high-end expert kayakers. At high flows, these canyons provide one of Utah's most challenging kayak runs. This attraction is known nationally and written up in regional guidebooks and on canyoneering websites.

## **Wildlife**

The San Rafael River provides habitat for a number of wildlife species, including Desert bighorn sheep, migratory birds, mule deer, chukar, and fish. Portions of this river are important to the Desert bighorn sheep and mule deer for water and forage while the riparian vegetation along the river provides important nesting and foraging habitat. Peregrine falcons are known to nest on the high cliffs bordering the river where they can find prey (migratory birds). The San Rafael River provides habitat for a number of fish, including the federally endangered Colorado pikeminnow and State-sensitive roundtail chub. A portion of this river flows through steep-walled canyons that are considered as potential habitat for the endangered Mexican spotted owl.

### *2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the eligible river corridor is 82-percent federal (BLM lands), 7-percent State lands, and 11-percent private lands.

Uses within the eligible river corridor include recreation as described above, livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, and some limited ranching. Much of the river is within Sids Mountain and Mexican Mountain WSAs and managed according to the IMP.

A number of activities that occur outside (upstream) of the eligible segments of the San Rafael River influence the water quality and volume of these segments. As is typical of water uses in the more rural areas of Utah, agriculture is the largest water user, followed by municipal and industrial uses, with the latter expected to increase with expanding development.

Calculations of the total water produced in the San Rafael River basin are presented in the *Utah State Water Plan* prepared by UDWR in August 2000. This "yield" is defined as outflow of the basin plus human-caused depletions minus the basin's inflow (if any), or essentially the water a basin would produce without the influence of human activities. The San Rafael River yields 233,000 acre feet of water annually (based on years 1961 to 1990). Of this water yield, roughly 25 percent is depleted through irrigation of crops, and another 14 percent is depleted by industrial use and use by the several communities in Emery County, including Huntington, Cleveland, Castle Dale, and Ferron. The great majority of municipal and industry caused depletion is to accommodate the coal-fired electrical power generated at the Huntington and Hunter power plants. Upon calculating these depletions and those caused by evapo-transpiration, and factoring in any export or import of water to or from other drainages, the output of the San Rafael River, which flows into the Green River, is about 40 percent of the river's yield, translating to about 93,000 acre-feet per year.

Like many areas in Utah, the San Rafael River has a problem in overall supply and use with regard to water rights. Considering the San Rafael River's perfected water rights (308,00 acre feet) versus its yield (233,000 acre feet), the river is heavily over appropriated (State of Utah 2000).

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated, and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded portions of the river corridor by its WSA status. Those portions of the San Rafael River corridor within WSAs have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this river for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of these areas. A river management plan would be prepared upon designation that would evaluate the effects of certain activities to ensure that these activities would be consistent with the goals of the designation. In spite of congressional designation, existing upstream uses would continue degrading water quality in some cases.

Local municipalities, industries, and other water users have expressed concerns that existing and future water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments. In fact, inclusion of a river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs or free-flowing condition. The prospective impoundment described below could be affected. Other projects on federal lands within the designated river area, such as construction of roads, pipelines, or other structures would not be allowed, and the lands would be closed to mineral location if Congress were to classify this river as wild; however, in the preferred alternative considered in the Draft RMP/EIS, the recommendation is that Congress classify the river as Scenic, which would allow for various activities and certain levels of development. No development is currently proposed or foreseeable within the federal portions that are within a WSA. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. How impoundment of water needed for addition power plant units would be affected is described below. Because of the importance of the water for upstream communities, other upstream water projects are also likely.

Regarding existing and future water rights, although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act infers a federal reserved water right upon designation, rather than establishing an amount, it actually imposes a limit, expressing that any such right is to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of the Act. Such a right would have to be adjudicated through the State and would be junior to any existing rights; however, in the case of the San Rafael River, existing instream flows have already been adjudicated for wildlife purposes. These flows are sufficient to support all of the ORVs; therefore, in any recommendation to Congress, BLM would not recommend that a federal reserved water right be pursued.

PacifiCorp's Huntington and Hunter power plants rely heavily on water from two major tributaries of the San Rafael River—Huntington Creek and Cottonwood Creek, respectively. The ability to generate electricity is directly dependent on PacifiCorp's ability to divert, impound, and otherwise use these sources of water. Up to approximately 6,700 acre feet of water per year is needed to operate one power generating unit. (The Huntington power plant has two units and the Hunter plant has three.) (PacifiCorp 2004).

PacifiCorp is developing a proposal to add a fourth unit to the Hunter plant. If such a plan were implemented, an additional water supply would need to be developed or otherwise made available. The

impoundment of water at a new location is recognized as the most probable potential source (PaciCorp 2004).

If the San Rafael River were to be designated by Congress, any federal authorized or funded water-related project proposed on a tributary of the river (or anywhere upstream or downstream of designated river segments) must be evaluated to ensure that it would not invade or unreasonably diminish the designated segment's fish, wildlife, recreational, or scenic values identified within the river segment at the time of designation. Designation of the San Rafael River would not preclude the development of upstream or downstream impoundments or other water-related projects as long as this criterion was met.

The UDWR has identified a prospective impoundment site in the upper segment (upstream of Fuller Bottom) of the San Rafael River to be developed for potential demands. Congressional designation of this segment of the San Rafael River would preclude the construction of this impoundment within the designated river corridor.

If eligible segments of the San Rafael River were found not to be suitable and subsequently not designated, the values for which the segments were found to be eligible would not necessarily diminish. River segments are largely within Sids Mountain and Mexican Mountain WSAs. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation and are currently managed according to the IMP, which inevitably affords protection to the ORVs. Several other land use prescriptions being within the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS, such as the San Rafael Canyon ACEC, would also preserve and enhance such values if implemented.

In addition, a committee was established in Emery County to address the mandates of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to improve water quality in the San Rafael River and other streams. A key objective of this committee is to bring federal, State, private, and local financial assistance to the county's watersheds, which could occur with or without congressional designation of the river; however, congressional designation of the San Rafael River for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would help meet this objective, providing an opportunity for the various entities to work collaboratively to address the mandates of the EPA while achieving the goals of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted congressional designation of this river.

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Along with various water users and municipalities, they oppose designation primarily because of perceptions that existing and future water rights could be affected and that opportunities for future water development for communities could be foreclosed, not only within the designated river segments, but also upstream or downstream of these segments.

Any upstream or downstream development would only be affected if federally authorized or funded, and even then only if the project would invade or unreasonably diminish fish, wildlife, recreational, and scenic values identified within the river segment at the time of designation. Also, although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act infers a federal reserved water right upon designation, rather than establishing an amount, it actually imposes a limit, stating that any such right is to be the minimum necessary for the purposes of the Act. Such a right would have to be adjudicated through the State and would be junior to any existing rights.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

BLM would be capable of managing the San Rafael River if congressionally designated, particularly with adequate funding. BLM currently has little to no on-the-ground presence on the river. Congressional Wild and Scenic river designation would increase Utah BLM's ability to compete for agency dollars, and with increased funding and focused management, the agency's ability to manage recreational and other uses of the area would improve. Designation would promote national and public recognition of the values associated with this stream and further the goals and policy established by Congress in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Management of the San Rafael River if designated would be aided by the fact that the large majority (82 percent) of the eligible river corridor is public lands managed by BLM. The majority of these public lands is currently managed as WSAs, an ACEC, or is within an SRMA. The Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS evaluates management prescriptions that would perpetuate these special emphases. If no segments of the San Rafael River were designated, management objectives and prescriptions related to the WSAs, ACEC, and SRMA would provide a level of protection that might be sufficient to protect the river-related ORVs that make the river eligible; however, these prescriptions are subject to change through congressional action or plan revision, while protection afforded through congressional designation for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be permanent. Also, without designation, the free-flowing nature of the stream and water quality would be at some risk from upstream development. Other approaches could be followed, such as using the committee established in Emery County to address the mandates of the EPA to improve water quality in the San Rafael River and other streams.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration costs thereafter would involve plan implementation, and could include additional studies, monitoring, and BLM presence in the area. State lands (involving 7 percent of the river area) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, so funds would not be needed for their purchase. If BLM were to pursue acquisition of private lands—owners willing—(involving 11 percent of the river area), costs would be excessive. Funding is not expected to be sought for the acquisition of private land because adequate management of the segments, if designated, would not require acquisition of these lands.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have made it clear that they would not share management costs if the San Rafael River were designated.

## **South Fork Coal Wash**

*1. Characteristics that would or would not make it a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*

This river segment possesses outstandingly remarkable scenic, historic, and cultural values. These values are described in detail below.

### **Scenic**

The varying landscape is accentuated by near and distant pinnacles detached from sandstone fins; high, varnish-stained pour-offs; wind-scooped alcoves; and Ponderosa pines stark against pale cliffs. Middleground and background features provide a balanced, horizontal relief.

**Historic**

Values consist of sites associated with ranching and mining, which are important for interpreting associated historic events. They retain original character.

**Cultural**

This area has evidence of significant occupation and use by prehistoric peoples representing more than one cultural period (Archaic, Fremont, and Numic). Some features remain significant to Native American populations today. The sites have been somewhat isolated and retain integrity. They are important for interpreting regional prehistory. Many sites are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

*2. Land ownership and current use*

Ownership within the river corridor is 94-percent federal (BLM lands) and 6-percent State lands.

An OHV route follows the wash bottom, and it is a popular route for vehicle-based recreation. Other uses include more primitive types of recreation, such as hiking and horseback riding, livestock grazing, and wildlife habitat. Much of this segment is within Sids Mountain WSA and managed according to the IMP. The IMP does not allow for new developments or surface disturbing activity.

*3. Uses, including reasonably foreseeable uses, that would be enhanced or curtailed if designated; and values that would be diminished if not designated*

Uses and values that would be affected by congressional designation are also addressed in the cumulative impacts section of the Price Proposed RMP/Final EIS.

South Fork Coal Wash is within the Sids Mountain WSA. These lands have been recommended by BLM to Congress for wilderness designation. Designation of this stream for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would be compatible with and enhance wilderness use and management of the area.

The corridor of the stream, including the portion within the WSA, serves as an OHV route. This circumstance would put at odds the protection of the stream's values and the opportunity for OHV travel within the corridor. If the stream were congressionally designated for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and OHV travel was determined to degrade the quality of the water or affect the cultural and historical values, it would not be allowed.

Congressional designation would provide permanent protection specifically of the free-flowing condition of the river, its water quality, and ORVs in addition to protection already afforded the lower portions of the river corridor by the WSA status. Failure to include South Fork Coal Wash in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System would not necessarily diminish the values for which the river was determined eligible inasmuch as the area's WSA status would continue.

Inclusion of a river into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System could preclude dams or other water-related projects if they occurred within the designated segment and had direct or adverse effects on the ORVs (cultural and scenic) or free-flowing condition. Water-related projects proposed outside the segment would be precluded only if they would invade or unreasonably diminish scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values within the designated segment. No such projects inside or outside of the river area are currently proposed.

*4. Interest of federal, public, State, tribal, local, or other public entity in designation or non-designation, including administration sharing*

State and local governments are unsupportive of congressional designation of this stream. Local and State agencies, water users, and municipalities oppose designation primarily because of concerns that potential water use of this or any eligible stream could be affected; however, there are no current or foreseen water uses of South Fork Coal Wash that would be affected. Individual citizens and groups have also expressed much concern that the designation of this stream would affect the use of the OHV route within the corridor, if not preclude its use altogether.

Some private citizens and regional and national conservation groups have promoted the suitability of this stream for congressional designation.

*5. Manageability of the river if designated, and other means of protecting values*

Management of South Fork Coal Wash, if designated, would pose a substantial challenge to the presence of the popular OHV route that follows the stream's corridor. Continued vehicle use of this route would likely be in conflict with protection of the outstandingly remarkable historical and cultural values. The route might also hinder the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's objective of maintaining or enhancing a designated streams water quality.

The free-flowing nature of this stream is not currently at risk, and the identified ORVs could be effectively managed under land use prescriptions considered in the Price Proposed RMP/ Final EIS should designation not occur and if the management prescriptions were implemented. These prescriptions would be associated with the San Rafael Swell SRMA. Protection is also currently afforded river values by Sids Mountain WSA. The river corridor within the WSA is managed according to the IMP. The status of the WSA, SRMA, and other management prescriptions is subject to change as a result of congressional action or revised land use plans; therefore, the protection they afford the river values is subject to change.

*6. The estimated costs of administering the river, including costs for acquiring lands*

The initial costs of administration for the first 3 years would involve management plan preparation. Yearly administration cost thereafter would involve plan implementation and could include additional studies, monitoring, and BLM presence in the area. State lands (6 percent of the segment) could be identified for possible acquisition through exchange, which would require no funding.

*7. The extent to which administration costs will be shared by local and State governments*

State and local governments have it made clear that they would not share management costs if South Fork Coal Wash were designated.

## **REFERENCES:**

Carbon County, Utah, 2005. Master Plan, Public Lands and Resources Section.

PacifiCorp, 2004. Correspondence from Michael G. Jenkins, Office of General Counsel.

State of Utah, Division of Water Resources, 2000. Utah State Water Plan.

United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Record of Decision, Operation of Flaming Gorge Dam, Final Environmental Impact Statement, February 26, 2006.