

Summary Document:

- ✓ Outstandingly Remarkable Values Issue Briefs:
 - Summary Statement
 - Status
 - Current Management Goals
 - Examples of Management Practices
 - Working Group Identified Issues, Opportunities and Concerns
 - Working Group's Ideas for Protection Tools and Strategies

- ✓ Brainstormed List of Landscape and Water Protection Tools and Strategies along with Summarized List of Issues, Opportunities and Concerns by Topic

- ✓ Range of Options Related to Management Questions Given to the Working Group by the Dolores Public Lands Office

This document is provided to the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group as a working paper. The document summarizes material presented in meetings along with the Issues, Opportunities and Concerns handout from July 7th and ideas brainstormed in the small groups discussions held from August to October of 2009. This document was prepared to summarize information presented and discussed to date in preparation for extended workshops. These workshops will help the group formulate its recommendations to the Dolores Public Lands Office (USFS/BLM). Information given in this document does not represent any final decisions.

November 11, 2009

Archeology/Cultural Resources, Scenery and Geology

ORV Issue Brief: Archeology/Cultural Resources

Summary Statement: Archeology is an ORV throughout each of the five Reaches studied due to rare and exemplary prehistoric and/or sacred sites, quarries used for stone tool-making, and/or the existence of large Pueblos. There are 1,500 estimated sites in Reaches 1 through 5.

Status: There are concerns about damage from recreationists and livestock. The disappearance of important artifacts is a concern. Funding to survey, monitor and protect this ORV is very limited. The BLM estimates that only 3.6% of all sites in Reaches 1-5 have been systematically surveyed. However, funding has now been secured and surveys began in summer 2009.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: The management goals stated in the 1990 Plan include:

1. Protect important cultural values from damaged cause by the public, erosion and vandalism
2. Develop suitable resources for public access and use (e.g. interpretive signs)
3. Identify and evaluate significant sites and resources
4. Periodically monitor resources to access for impacts
5. Complete a Cultural Resource Project Plan after an intensive inventory

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect the Archeology/Cultural Resources: (reaches denoted in parentheses)

- Limit motorized use to designated trails/roads
- No surface occupancy
- Manage interface with rafters and other visitors in certain areas (e.g. Reach 2)
- Do site stabilization, mapping and interpretation at identified sites
- Complete recently funded field work and surveys.
- Note: Site specific management actions are listed in the 1990 Management Plan(e.g. for Shaman Cave, panel near Bull Canyon, Coyote Wash campsite, etc.)

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

No one listed in Working Group handout specifically for archeology. There was discussion of a need for long term protection of the corridor coupled with concerns about any designations.

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Archeology/Cultural Resources: (from small group exercises)

1) How should the illegal OHV access into the Dolores Wilderness Study Area be managed?

- Put up permanent posted signs big enough to see
- Put up a physical barrier in Bull Canyon and Silvey's Pocket
- Answer the question: What is the damage being done?
- Do more education; don't let up

Archeology/Cultural Resources

2) How should the cultural sites currently being impacted from rafters be protected?

- Recommend that Shaman Cave be day-use only
- Put up signs about cultural resource ethics at launch sites and at registers, and in other key places
- Crowd Control: Put up small fences or low fences or other barriers; Close some social trails; Plant poison ivy
- Close camping @ archeological sites
- Use education/signage/peer pressure; Target a brochure to outfitters and guidebook information and other users/visitors

3) Should there be additional interpretation at Indian Henry's Cabin located in Bull Canyon?

- Yes: need sign and history of cabin; should protect it and offer education about history of cabin

ORV Issue Brief: Scenery

Summary Statement: Scenery is an ORV throughout the corridor and is a key reason recreation is prevalent and popular. The specific elements of this ORV include: cliffs, linear canyons, and old-growth Ponderosa Pine groves. Various activities occurring may have impacts on this ORV. The abundance of young “doghair” ponderosa puts the old growth groves at risk for catastrophic wildfire.

Status: In all five reaches, there have been no significant man-made changes since 1990 and the Ponderosa Pine stands are in “good condition.”

Current USFS/BLM Goals: The management goals stated in the 1990 Plan vary by reach.

Examples include:

1. Retain character
2. Minimize changes to landscape
3. Reduce impacts from management activities
4. Provide a naturally-appearing environment

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect the Scenery: (specific reaches denoted)

- No commercial gravel operation(3 and 4)
- No motorized watercraft (3 and 4)
- No surface occupancy and other extraction policies (3 and 4)
- OHV on designated routes only (3 and 4)
- Land acquisition; seasons road closure (3 and 4)

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

Opportunity: long-term protection tools such as a National Conservation Area or WSR designation

Concern: consequences and impacts of long term protection tools on private property and rights, water rights and land uses including concern about a federal reserved water right

Concern: Oil and gas and its impacts on scenic values: drilling in the bottom; footprint of the oil/gas/minerals infrastructure; general impacts of extraction; uranium leasing (below Disappointment); mineral leases between Disappointment and Big Gyp do not include NSO (as of 1990 Plan) (Reach 4); and incompatible mineral exploration/extraction at Bed Rock and Gyp Valley (Reach 5).

Opportunity: Jobs and income that come from the oil and gas industry

Concern: Desire to keep County Road open

Concern: Slick Rock: private land access issues, and potential BLM road access restrictions.

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Scenery: (from small group exercises)

- 1) What should the role of wild-land fire be within the corridor?
 - Use prescribed fire carefully
 - Suggested Policy: Let wildfire burn under right conditions; use as a tool when it makes sense
 - Protect scenic values (suggest as a goal)
 - Discussion around various rules and regulations related to the oil and gas

Scenery

2) How should Ponderosa Pines be managed?

- Managed to maintain this feature
- Use fire in some way to help them regenerate without burning them down; Ensure periodic burn
- Weed management

Reach 1:

- Controlled burn
- Protect recreational and scenic values, cottonwoods and archeology and private property
- To enhance wildlife habitat

Reach 2:

- Use fire to control danger of catastrophic fire due to dog hair ponderosa and sustain and enhance the unusual/relic populations of ponderosa.
- Let it burn under the right conditions.
- Consider burning after mechanical treatment (thinning)
- Protect Archeology.

3) Is there a threshold for use that if approached or exceeded, would mean further restrictions should be implemented? If so, what is the threshold(s) and what potential restrictions might these be?

Ideas for Threshold Indicators:

- Degradation of the natural environment is threshold (use BLM guidelines)
- Trashy camps
- If campsites exceed a certain level of saturation, then a permitting system might be needed
- Archeology (damage to and/or impacts on sites)
- 10 groups per day plus use days
- 20% of use season or number of launches per day
- If exceeded: potentially restrict permit, designate camps; voluntary sign-ups; no small groups at large sites
- Use biology to determine. Indicators could be:
 - Reach 1: Salient values (fishery and cottonwoods); Reach 2: Ponderosa, scenery, ecological baseline.
 - Other Ideas
 - Saturation per BLM management guides for assessing campsites
 - Monitor and evaluate – baby steps
 - Weekend permits only

4) Should we withdraw lands in the Dolores River Wilderness Study Area from mineral entry?

- No, surface occupancy stipulation should be enough
- Yes, they should be withdrawn

ORV Issue Brief: Geology

Summary Statement: Geology spans 100 million years in the corridor and is an ORV for Reaches 1-5 due to dramatic cretaceous sandstone cliffs and linear canyons. The northerly flow of the river is rare within the region and illustrates the geologic uplift of the Colorado Plateau and the subsidence of the Paradox Basin. The linear pattern of the canyon demonstrates unusual rapidity of the area's tectonic processes and the speed of the corresponding downward cutting of the river. There are paleontological resources in some places. The geology obviously relates to the ORV of scenery.

Status: The rock layers range from Wingate Sandstone at the bottom, dating from Early Jurassic Period about 200 million years ago, to the Dakota Sandstone at the top, which is approximately 100 million years old. Toll (1971) noted existence of sheer-walled Wingate Sandstone, Kayenta Formation, Navajo Sandstone with some Entrada sandstone and Morrison Formation above.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: The management goals stated in the 1990 Plan include:

1. Protect and enhance the resource through identification, documentation, monitoring and take appropriate management actions (e.g. paleontological sites may need managed).
2. Conduct paleontological overview of geological formations to determine scientifically important and interpretable fossil remains. Remains that are significant scientifically would be protected from unauthorized collection.

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect the Geology

- No surface occupancy in most reaches.
- Control incompatible mineral exploration at some sites (e.g. Mountain Sheep Point)
- No commercial gravel operations
Interpret Dinosaur tracks near La Sal Creek Rapid; Put in place associated monitoring or protective measures

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

None listed

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Geology: (from small group exercises)

- 1) Should we withdraw lands in the Dolores River Wilderness Study Area from mineral entry?
 - No, surface occupancy stipulation should be enough
 - Yes, they should be withdrawn

Recreation: Rafting and Hiking

ORV Issue Brief: Hiking in Bull Canyon and Coyote Wash

Summary Statement: There are hiking opportunities in Bull Canyon and Coyote Wash accessible mainly to rafters on day hikes or from campsites and roads at the top of these canyons. The pools in Bull Canyon are unique. In Coyote Wash, the usual flat sandy wash with vertical canyon walls are reasons hiking is an ORV in this section of the corridor.

Status: Oil, gas and mineral potential is high at the upper (non WSA) reaches of both Coyote Wash and Bull Canyon (DLMP). Upper reaches of both canyons are accessible by local, non-maintained roads.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: (1990 Plan)

1. Maintain isolation from sights/sounds of others
2. No more than 3 encounters per days between users
3. High risk, nature experience and self reliance

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect the Hiking:

- Resource protection (pack out trash and use porta-potties, regulate fires, monitoring and patrols, temporary closures, rotation of camp sites, etc.)
- Visitor services and education encouraging voluntary compliance with rules
- Limit rafting from Big Gyp Valley
- Limit those entering the WSA on weekends
- Permits for commercial groups

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns: “Social carrying capacity”: people being nice and ability to find campsites. These places can reach “saturation” on weekends and holidays in a predictable flow year. Careless OHV use is destroying pools and vegetation near Coyote Wash OHV drivers coming into WSA from Utah side. There was discussion about potential for rafting permits for recreational boaters to limit access to the canyon. This was also cited as a concern. Please refer to the rafting Issue Brief for more information. (Rick Ryan, BLM Ranger gave some input here.)

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Hiking: (from small group exercises)

- 1) How should the illegal OHV access into the Dolores Wilderness Study Area be managed?
 - o Put up permanent posted signs big enough to see
 - o Put up a physical barrier in Bull Canyon and Silvey’s Pocket (concern: physical barrier won’t work or will block Suckla’s)
 - o Better answer the question: What is the damage being done?
 - o Do more education; don’t let up

NOTE: Please refer to questions on rafting issue brief because they relate to this ORV since these areas are predominately accessed by rafters.

ORV Issue Brief: Rafting

Summary Statement: Rafting is an ORV in each of the five reaches. Rafting opportunities are considered “regionally significant.”

Status: The number of days of rafting at or above 800 cfs greatly fluctuates from year to year depending on the water availability out of the dam, and the timing and is highly unpredictable. There are varying ideas on what qualifies as a “rafting day” (in terms of Cubic Feet Per Second). There are currently 16 commercial multi-year permits. “Social carrying capacity issues” (noise, trash, human waste, etc.) are occurring. At certain times (e.g. holidays and weekends) and places (e.g. WSA), use may reach “saturation.”

Current USFS/BLM Goals: Goals vary by reach but examples include:

1. Manage to offer degree of risk and challenge AND infrequent contact w/other users
2. Manage to protect resources (requirements around trash, human waste, etc.)

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices:

- Permits required for commercial rafters
- Management of campsites, raft put-ins/take outs, bathroom and trash facilities
- Use of education and other visitor services (literature, sign in, Ranger contact, hot line, cooperative agreements)
- Water release management by BOR/DWCD (cfs, timing, ramping, communication, peaks, duration of “boatable flows”), etc.)
- Allocate use (launches) according to season.
- If possible acquire private property immediately upstream from the Slick Rock bridge (only if current access point becomes inaccessible)

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

Issues and Concerns:

- ✓ Adequate flows: balance adequate rafting flows out of the Dolores Project with water for other uses (e.g. fisheries, irrigation, municipal, industrial)
- ✓ Vehicle access via Dolores County Road to 1 mile below Snaggletooth Rapid
- ✓ Issues with too many people and interactions between rafting parties
- ✓ Some rafters camping on and using private land
- ✓ Concern about designations (e.g. WSR) and their impact of bringing in additional people (which impacts resource threshold issues and private lands)

Opportunities

- ✓ Keep County Road access open .
- ✓ Permitting system for recreational rafters (also cited as a concern)
- ✓ Better spill management.
- ✓ Do more permits but perhaps use permits only for busiest weekends (e.g. Memorial Day)

Rafting

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Rafting: (from small group exercises)

1) How should water managers balance both rafting with flushing flows for management of other resources?

Options:

- a. Implement DRD science recommendation for habitat restoration on “big water years” over consistent 800 cfs for boaters; Continue the Work of the DRD because it is addressing these issues; Keep science driving the process
- b. Set priorities between the fisheries and rafting
- c. General management should focus on rafting and ecology and trying to balance the two

2) For all reaches, should the outfitter and guide permits have reserved campsites?

Options:

- Keep First Come/ First Served policy
- Designate one camp in each for commercial trips
- Institute policy that outfitter and guide permits get reserved campsites (enforcement mechanisms would have to be created)
- Handle this through education (i.e., signage for private parties that they are reserved for commercial)
- Institute program of “preferred campsites” versus “permitted/assigned” (use signage to indicate)
- Monitor the situation and if it becomes worse, consider this policy

3) Should there be any additional recreational opportunities in any of the existing sites (applies to other recreation as well)?

- Institute a longer season for Ferris & Cabin recreation sites (after Labor Day through the end of hunting season)
- Keep policy(ies) the same; Nothing needs changed
- Bradfield: maintain presence during boating & hunting seasons; education over enforcement; public play area at bridge (COW site); put-in at Metaskas site to accommodate day trippers
- Reach 2: appears adequate; designate campsites/capacities; some active management (poison ivy control)
- Reach 2: designated sites; voluntary sign-ups; specific reaches (Coyote Wash, Slick Rock WSA)
- Institute a Policy: Yes but let usage dictate what needs done
- Disperse the campsites and regulate (more-so)

4) Should the Bradfield launch site be permitted?

- No, do not do it
- No, do not do it -- but do more education.
- Before you make the decision, rafting industry needs to be consulted

Rafting

- 5) Does the DPLO have the appropriate mix of outfitter guides to meet public needs?
- Yes
 - Monitor situation because of concern about impacts to camp sites
- 6) Should there be reserved camp sites on the river during rafting season?
- Institute a few campsites for commercial use that can be reserved
 - Use signage to manage this problem: *"If nobody is here by X o'clock its yours, otherwise you must give it up."*
 - First/Come-First/Served (can't do this idea without a permit system)
 - Educate small groups not to use large sites (idea: have a place to sign in and write what camp site they will try for and include a map at sign in that shows sites and size)
 - Reach 1: No
 - Reach 2: Yes (applies to Coyote Wash & Slick Rock WSA)
 - Don't make anything mandatory but institute new system based on honor system
- 7) Is there a threshold for use that if approached or exceeded, would mean further restrictions should be implemented? If so, what is the threshold(s) and what potential restrictions might these be?

Ideas for Threshold Indicators:

- Degradation of the natural environment is threshold (use BLM guidelines)
- Trashy camps
- If campsites exceed a certain level of saturation, then a permitting system might be needed
- Archeology (damage to and/or impacts on sites)
- 10 groups per day plus use days
- 20% of use season or number of launches per day
- If exceeded: potentially restrict permit, designate camps; voluntary sign-ups; no small groups at large sites
- Use biology to determine. Indicators could be:
 - Reach 1: Salient values (fishery and cottonwoods)
 - Reach 2: Ponderosa, scenery, ecological baseline.

Other Ideas

- Saturation per BLM management guides for assessing campsites
- Monitor and evaluate – baby steps
- Weekend permits only

- 8) How should camp sites along Reaches 3 and 4 be managed?
- Implement stricter rules about trash, waste, etc.
 - Manage as demanded by use - when level of use justifies, when conditions warrant a change, adjust management (related idea: watch for thresholds laid out in the 1990 plan)
 - Do not designate camp sites in these segments
 - Be respectful of private property (Reach 4) – (BLM work with land owners to coordinate private property signage...help boaters know where boundaries are)
 - Put up signage at put-in for river etiquette
 - Do not put signs at campsites; Continue to manage as primitive campsites
 - BLM Ranger/BLM gives out better information and more river patrols; add more BLM staff to do river patrols; Cross train staff to do their jobs AND patrol the river when they are out there
 - Continue current management

Rafting

- 9) How should the BLM/USFS interact with the private land owner to manage the Slick Rock boat launch?
- Consensus from one group: BLM should actively pursue a permanent access point with willing landowner or on BLM land - BLM should help ensure that waste, etc. is managed appropriately
 - BLM should commit more resources to help the land owners manage the site (i.e. signage); try to keep it open but accommodate land owner concern
 - Get CDOT involved and make it a rest area and then CDOT manages the site (idea: joint lease between BLM and CDOT)
 - Move the launch site to BLM land
 - BLM would purchase land or do land swap to acquire it (if landowners willing and using fair market price)
 - Launch at boat ramp, but move parking somewhere else (to BLM lands)
- 10) Should the Big Gyp recreation site be maintained as is, improved or decommissioned?
- No: the site does need sanitary facilities and better management of weeds and trash
 - Consider adding another put-in

Fish, Wildlife and Ecological

ORV Issue Brief: Roundtail Chub

Summary Statement: The Roundtail Chub is a warm-water fish native to the Colorado River Basin. The DPLO (USFS/BLM) identifies it as an ORV for the Dolores River from Reach 1 thru Reach 5. The Roundtail Chub has disappeared from about 45% of its historical range in upper Colorado River Basin (Bezzlerides and Bestgen 2002). The fish is listed as a BLM Sensitive Species, USFS Sensitive Species and a Colorado State Species of Special Concern. The CDOW identifies flows, flow management, and non-native predator fish as issues facing this species on the Lower Dolores River.

Status:

Reach 1: Historic habitat for roundtails, but now they are rare due to cold water flowing out of McPhee Dam. **Reach 2 and Reach 3:** Assumed to be common (versus abundant or rare) (J. White, CDOW, personal communication) based on spotty data (walking surveys just below Dove Creek Pumps). Reach 2 is probably colder now than what they prefer, due to the dam (J. White, CDOW, personal communication). Non-native predator fish are just appearing in Reach 2, prevalent in Reach 3.

Reach 4 to Disappointment: 2008 survey: very few natives; most abundant were smallmouth bass and brown trout. **Reach 5:** 2007 survey: Abundance of natives was low but species composition was mostly native fish.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: (1-Disappointment Creek only)

1. Identify all riparian and key wildlife areas in less than good condition: initiate actions to improve.
2. Monitor all key areas to maintain an overall condition class rating of good.
3. Determine present distribution of aquatic/macroinvertebrate species: implement actions to enhance conditions.
4. Determine factors influencing habitat conditions or restricting species from maintaining viable populations.
5. Survey and map all areas which provide unique habitat for species considered relic or unusual to area.

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices:

- Inventory aquatic, fishery and riparian habitats to the Montrose District Boundary.
- Identify essential wildlife habitat areas throughout corridor; monitor to ensure that downward trends do not develop.
- Establish permanent aquatic habitat monitoring sites. At least 2 sites in warm water sections. Monitor at least once every 5 years.
- Develop agreement with CDOW to sample fish populations in the Dolores every 5 yrs.
- Allow no vehicle use from approx. 1 mile downstream of Snaggletooth Rapid to ~1 mile upstream from Disappointment Creek between Feb. 1 and June 30.

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

Issues and Concerns: fisheries received much focus and research from DRD and State agencies; some species are declining; water flows managed under contracts and obligations; river diverted for 100 years; hard to determine what's native and what's non-native; difficult to address conflicting goals (restoring native fish, improving the sport fishery, restoring cottonwoods, providing irrigation water,

Roundtail Chub

etc.); need to prioritize; finite amount of habitat available for native fish; wish to keep them present in the river; not supported by many other streams in CO; MVIC studying potential for water lease to CWCB.

Opportunities: Examine the historic hydrology; compare pre- and post-McPhee conditions; preserve habitat for 3 native fish; avoid federal ESA listing; re-develop pools, remove silt; create sediment traps to improve pools and reduce sedimentation; keep current policies - apparently successful; solve problems together; prevent overuse of rafting campsites; change the constraints on water use (timing and amounts); use DRD to coordinate science efforts and keep things transparent; address these issues within the context of existing water rights and contracts, and available flows/spills.

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Roundtail Chub: (from small group exercises)

- 1) Is there a threshold for use that, if we approach or exceed, we would need to implement further :
See previous answers in Rafting Section
- 2) How do we cooperatively fund invasive species inventory and treatment?
 - Use partnerships with other groups/entities; Use outside means; Incorporate other people's work: graduate students; Tamarisk Coalition; DOL Tamarisk Action Group , Walton Family Foundation; develop unlikely partnerships; coordinated effort already underway, but emphasis on land agencies working with DOW and others; Engage Counties
 - Be more flexible in management and budgeting
 - Acquire more funding for BLM to use
 - Continue to inventory and do abatement and leverage other efforts
 - Force BLM/USFS Agency to manage money and opportunities better (an example was cited of bureaucratic procedure/rules interfering with ability to spend funds on control of invasives)
- 3) How should the 4x4 road/trail along the river from the Pump Station to Slickrock be managed?
 - Should be open but not maintained (two groups had consensus)
 - Seasonal closure (one group has consensus on this); If it's recommended closed seasonally it should be safeguarded by signage and/or surveillance, especially if the reason for closure is lambing – also should be closed to camping
 - Monitor current level of use to see if damage is occurring – close road if ecological damage is occurring – science first
 - Maintain road along river as it is now
- 4) How should BLM/FS interact with private land owners to protect private property values?
 - Respect private property rights
 - Leave the reach of river from the Slickrock area through Big Gypsum Valley out of any W&S proposal due to high # of private properties in relation to the rest of the corridor
 - BLM should work with rule with land owners regarding rafting

Roundtail Chub

- Develop a whole spectrum of tools along the river...not one tool fits all five Reaches
- Use what works now from current plan
- The Plan should give guidance, standards and directions to the BLM and other managing agencies to accomplish the following:
 - BLM should have authority to enforce rules to prevent impacts such as human waste management
 - allow vehicle access across public lands to private lands on historical routes
 - minimize the impacts of allowing reasonable access to private property on the landscape
 - the BLM should not assert that a bridge across the river, necessary to allow “reasonable access” to private property will affect the Outstanding Remarkable Values on the river
 - not use condemnation to acquire private property, trail access or scenic easements
 - make agencies consider the value of privacy to the private property owner
- Encourage the BLM to acquire riverfront lands from willing sellers via trade or direct payment and value these lands as if historical access routes were legal access easement
- Ensure that Federal appraisals will assume county zoning and ordinances as of 2004 – prior to the most recent W&S Eligibility Assessment
- BLM/USFS should not take action that encourages the County or State to zone against development along the river
- BLM, the USFS and the appropriate county should develop and enter an MOU regarding future management and zoning (future effects to property value) in exchange for promises from the private land owner regarding future land use/development on their property

5) If tamarisk is removed from the main Dolores and associated tributaries, how active should the subsequent restoration efforts be?

- Passive (because it's in WSA, but water could be an active restoration tool to release floods to improve habitat for cottonwoods and willows)

6) How should water managers balance rafting with flushing flows for management of other resources? How should water managers balance both rafting with flushing flows for management of other resources?

Options:

- Implement DRD science recommendation for habitat restoration on “big water years” over consistent 800 cfs for boaters; Continue the Work of the DRD because it is addressing these issues; Keep science driving the process
- Set priorities between the fisheries and rafting
- General management should focus on rafting and ecology and trying the balance the two

Also refer to overall protection tools by Reach (below).

ORV Issue Brief: Plants

Summary Statement: Two plant species and one plant community are identified as Ecological ORVs for the Lower Dolores: the Eastwood's Monkey Flower, the Kachina Daisy and the New Mexico Privet Riparian Shrubland.

Status: The New Mexico Privet riparian shrubland is only known to occur in Colorado and Utah and in Colorado, only in the Dolores River Basin. It is common on the Dolores and the trends in condition and extent are unknown. Concerns about this plant are: it requires a high water table and its habitat could be threatened by invasive plants (e.g. tamarisk). The Eastwood's Monkey Flower is only found in canyon lands of the Four Corners on the Gunnison, Dolores, Colorado and San Juan Rivers. It is listed as a BLM Sensitive Species. The trends for this plant are unknown. Drying of seeps is a concern and some human uses and activities may be a concern for this plant (e.g. energy development, hiking impacts, etc.). There are 15 known occurrences of the Kachina Daisy in the world, together comprising an estimated 7600 plants. Three of those occurrences are in Colorado. Coyote Wash has the largest population of this plant in Colorado. It is also a BLM Sensitive Species.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: (1990 Plan)

1. Protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Corridor while allowing compatible uses.
2. Maintain or improve the existing quality of riparian and wildlife habitat by identifying and implementing management opportunities and strategies.
3. Determine the present condition and ecological structure of riparian and aquatic communities. Identify areas which provide unique habitat features for species considered relic or unusual to region.
4. Provide full protection to threatened and endangered species. Determine distribution of and identify all areas that provide habitat for federally listed, state listed, and BLM sensitive species to ensure the continued existence of such species and the conservation of their habitats.

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect Ecological ORVs:

- Survey and map all areas that provide unique habit for species of plants and animals considered to be relic or unusual to this area of Colorado
- Initiate management opportunities and/or strategies
- Determine the present condition and ecological structure of riparian and aquatic communities
- Apply stipulations and mitigating measures to all BLM actions to prevent/mitigate degradation
- Cooperate with the recreational program to develop interpretive material and signs
- Manage grazing
- No specific management is listed for Eastwood's Monkey, nor for New Mexico Privet Shrubland

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

Issues and Concerns: problems with tamarisk; conflict goals and lack of priorities (in relation to fisheries and recreation); protecting the resource and yet, allowing people to use the land; Tribal plant gathering on public lands; concern about the federal Endangered Species Act and its influence/impact on economic goals

Opportunities: restoration of native plants; continue tamarisk removal programs; manage recreation to protect resource

Plants

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for Plants: (from small group exercises)

- 1) Is there a threshold for use that, if we approach or exceed, we would need to implement further restrictions for use? What threshold and restrictions?
 - *This question was posed for rafting but could be used to discuss plants.*
- 2) How do we cooperatively fund invasive species inventory and treatment?
 - Use partnerships with other groups/entities; Use outside means; Incorporate other people's work: graduate students; Tamarisk Coalition; DOL Tamarisk Action Group , Walton Family Foundation; develop unlikely partnerships; coordinated effort already underway, but emphasis on land agencies working with DOW and others; Engage Counties
 - Be more flexible in management and budgeting
 - Acquire more funding for BLM to use
 - Continue to inventory and do abatement and leverage other efforts
 - Force BLM/USFS Agency to manage money and opportunities better (an example was cited of bureaucratic procedure/rules interfering with ability to spend funds on control of invasives)

ORV Issue Brief: Canyon Tree Frog

Summary Statement: The Canyon Tree Frog is identified as an ORV for all 5 Reaches and for Summit Canyon. It is listed as a Colorado State Species of Special Concern and a BLM Sensitive Species. This frog breeds in canyon bottom pools often bounded by solid rock.

Status: There are 6 occurrences known on the DPLO lands: 1 in Summit Canyon, 1 in Reach 4 and 4 in Reach 5. The exact trend is unknown. It is thought to be in “stable condition” according to www.natureserve.org.

Current USFS/BLM Goals: (1990 Plan) For some reaches:

1. Identify all riparian and key wildlife areas which are in less than good condition. Initiate management to improve those sites. Monitor to maintain good condition.
2. Determine the present distribution of aquatic species. Develop /implement actions to enhance conditions.
3. Monitor selected aquatic species to determine factors influencing habitat conditions or restricting maintenance of viable populations.
4. Survey and map all areas which provide unique habitat for species of plants and animals considered as relic or unusual to this area of Colorado.

EXAMPLES of Current Management Practices to Protect the Canyon Tree Frog

- Inventory
- Monitoring

Working Group-Identified Issues, Opportunities or Concerns:

- None listed.

Relevant Management Questions for this ORV AND Working Group Ideas for Protection Tools/Strategies for the Canyon Tree Frog: (from small group exercises)

There were no specific questions related to this ORV. However, questions relating to the management of uses in the corridor could relate to the Canyon Tree Frog as well as the question about thresholds and potential restrictions if thresholds are exceeded. Please refer to other issue briefs.

**For Overall Land and Water Protections AND
Other Management Issues For Discussion (based on DPLO questions)**

Background

A stated charge to the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group is exploring the Wild and Scenic Rivers issue from many angles, including Alternatives. During the Working Group meetings to date, the WSR issue, along with ideas about Alternatives, is receiving attention in the form of presentations and discussions. What follows represents Issues, Concerns and Opportunities registered by the group in the meetings as well as list of ideas for consideration in the upcoming extended workshops. Note: nothing written in this section constitutes a final decision made by the Working Group.

Also, after the discussion of the WSR issues and alternatives, there is a list of DPLO-developed questions that the Working Group covered in their small group discussions. These questions did not fit with any specific ORV, but do pertain more generally to management and protection of the corridor and its values.

Landscape and Water Protections including WSR Issues and Alternatives

Issues and Concerns:

- Desire to revitalize the fisheries below the dam
- Want better flow management for fisheries
- Want to continue to allow historical uses of the area
- Respect private property and land owner rights (they should not be harmed)
- Protect the special Lower Dolores River area and preserve it for future generations – it's a rare place; Places like this are getting rarer; it needs long-term protections
- Questions (and concerns): If the river were a WSR: What types of uses would be allowed? What impacts would there be to private property owners and their rights? What impact would the designation have on water rights? Would it come with a federally reserved water right? What would the impact be for conditional rights and on other water users, including those upstream?
- Find ways to deal with any degraded/degrading resources in the corridor
- Without some type of a designation, the area will not be preserved
- Need to put more protection in place now before population pressures become too great
- Any federal intervention (Wilderness, NCA, Wilderness) are too restrictive

Opportunities

- This is the opportunity for local people to craft a recommended plan for the best management of the river (WG Member quote: *If we don't come up with our own plan, we'll be handed a plan*)
- Find an alternative to the WSR suitability status or designation that protects the ORVs and addresses concerns raised in the process
- Determine a strategy/tool that will protect the ORVs but account for economic issues, private property and land owners' rights and water rights, allocations and management
- MVIC is currently studying a water leasing program
- Continue to let the DRD do it's works around science, flows and solution-finding -- working within the context of existing water rights and contracts, and available flows/spills

- Preserve and protect habitat for three native fish; avoid federal ESA listing
- Change the constraints on water use (timing and amounts)
- Do channel work to help fish (more pools, reduce sediment)
- Keeping doing what the DPLO is doing; the area doesn't seem degraded; the 1990 Plan seems to be working ok – just need tweaking
- Determine how much water is actually needed to protect the ORVs?
- Solve problems together
- Become more educated on the WSR issue and alternatives
- Is there a way to craft WSR language be crafted to take into account concerns (e.g. property and water rights)?
- Can we discuss alternatives for each segment versus dealing with the whole stretch?
- Evaluate all tools and make sure the pros and cons are discussed
- Use Wilderness as a tool for protection (stand alone)
- Manage the extractive issues (grazing and mining) with another tool beside WSR

Overall Protection Tools

(Note: Some of these tools could be considered across reaches but are presented by reach because that is the way the small group discussions were structured.)

Overall, what protection tools might be recommended in Reaches 1-2 ?

- Leasing water for cold water fishery
- Support augmenting the minimum in-stream flow
- Budget money for monitoring
- Some type of conservation area or special management designation set up via legislation (one that doesn't come with a Federal Reserve water right)
- Keep the current 1990 plan in place (the intent, actions, goals, etc.) as its doing a decent job

Specific to Reaches (from one small group)

- Reach 1: DOW management for wildlife is a good protective tool – continue to manage for recreation
- Reach 2: WSR designation makes sense
- Reach 2: This reach protects itself due to topography

Overall, what protection tools might be recommended in Reaches 3-4?

- Maintain current levels of protection at least
- Better management of flows to improve ecological system (consensus from one group)
- No surface occupancy for mineral/gas development is a tool
- Designate the BLM Little Glen Canyon land as Wilderness River miles 52-55
- Leave private land out of any designation – research how adjacent property(ies) will be affected
- Physical protection during seasonal closure (gate) to prohibit motor access and camping
- Recommend that the S.M. County road that has been abandoned and now managed by BLM be closed permanently to all motorized

Overall, what protection tools might be recommended in Reach 5?

- Existing plan does a good job
- WSA should be designated as Wilderness
 - already pre-scripted as WSA
 - recommended for designation
 - language w/o federal reserved water right
- Protect the WSA in Reach 5 (General Agreement from one small group)
- Enforce everything in the current 1990 Plan now
- Proposal and agreement from one small group: remove Suitability in Reach 5 and just focus on Wilderness designation; solve the water rights language to meet approval of water community and wilderness community
- Keep it suitable but don't get it designated as W&S (because of Federal Reserve Water Right)

Because property rights and property owners' concerns have received much discussion in relation to protection tools, the answers to this question are stated again:

How should BLM/FS interact with private land owners to protect private property values?

- All private property rights should be respected
- Leave the reach of river from the Slickrock area through Big Gypsum Valley out of any W&S proposal due to high # of private properties in relation to the rest of the corridor
- BLM should work with rule with land owners regarding rafting
- Develop a whole spectrum of tools along the river...not one tool fits all five reaches
- Use what works now from current plan
- The Plan should give guidance, standards and directions to the BLM and other managing agencies to accomplish the following:
 - BLM should have authority to enforce rules to prevent impacts such as human waste management
 - allow vehicle access across public lands to private lands on historical routes
 - minimize the impacts of allowing reasonable access to private property on the landscape.
 - the BLM should not assert that a bridge across the river, necessary to allow "reasonable access" to private property will affect the Outstanding Remarkable Values on the river
 - not use condemnation to acquire private property, trail access or scenic easements
 - The BLM should be directed to consider the value of privacy to the private property owner.
- Encourage the BLM to acquire riverfront lands from willing sellers via trade or direct payment and value these lands as if historical access routes were legal access easement
- Ensure that Federal appraisals will assume county zoning and ordinances as of 2004 – prior to the most recent W&S Eligibility Assessment
- BLM/USFS should not take action that encourages the County or State to zone against development along the river
- BLM/USFS and the appropriate county should develop and enter an MOU regarding future management and zoning (future effects to property value) in exchange for promises from the private land owner regarding future land use/development on their property

Other Management Questions Discussed by the Working Group

The following questions and ideas are ones that did not fit in any of the ORV-specific issue briefs:

1) How should the Dolores Overlook site be managed?

- Keep if open – maintain current management
- Bathrooms need maintenance
- Interpretive sign would be fine - of river resources and geology
- Consensus that it is well managed
- Signage to overlook through the County Roads is not very good or clear - needs to be improved

2) How should the Dolores office coordinate river management with the downstream offices?

- Should coordinate management plan so management doesn't change when management boundaries are crossed
- Already coordinated – needs more private land owner input
- Makes sense to change management at end of WSA (not in the middle)

3) If you were granted one wish for the Dolores River, what would it be?

- Management plan is now good, with a few exceptions – would like to see plan more permanent – would like to keep 1990 plan (not everyone wished)
- Leave alone, limit advertising
- Manage spills for ecological benefits
- Rafting remain informal
- BLM retain and improve management
- Keep it a secret
- Long-term protection
- Keep it as it is and has been
- Not so many tourists
- Provide access to most of the river – provides important recreation area for low income folks

4) How should the Box Elder Campground site be managed?

- Do not preclude or discourage local historic community gatherings
- Better enforcement
- Negligible fees, especially for non-profit events/organizations
- Doesn't make sense to have a boat launch there
- It is well used
- No fee is good
- Bathrooms are good
- Group did not feel that the Box Elder Campground reached full capacity very often
- Consensus (of one group): signage to get there is good
- Consensus (of one group): fees not appropriate now, but donation box could be placed
- Improved parking through area – at campground and put in