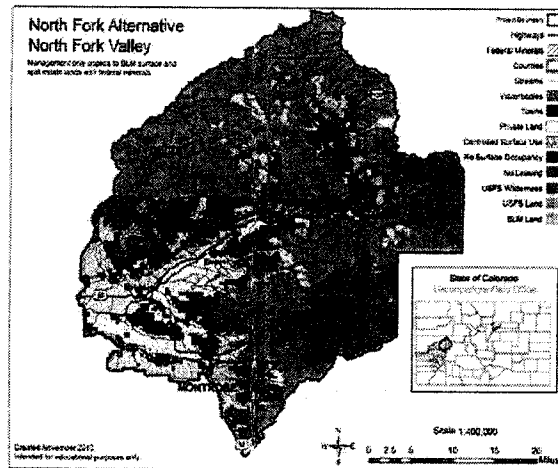




BLM UFO Resource Management Plan (RMP) The North Fork Alternative Plan Fact Sheet – August 2016



Overview of the BLM RMP's "B.1" Alternative

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently released its draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) which considers alternative management scenarios for BLM lands in the Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO). In the RMP, the BLM is considering a community alternative based on the North Fork Alternative Plan.

The objective of submitting the North Fork Alternative Plan (NFAP) to BLM was to ensure that the agency considered its strongest levels of protections for the North Fork Valley's public lands resources. The NFAP is a resource-based proposal that provides strict protections for the North Fork Valley and watershed as a whole, specifically in regard to future oil and gas.

The North Fork Alternative Plan came about from a collaborative effort that included the Western Slope Conservation Center, Valley Organic Growers Association, the West Elk Winery Association and others. It also received formal support from the Town of Paonia, the Paonia Chamber of Commerce, North Fork Valley Realtors, and Western Colorado Congress. But consideration of these protections is not enough. They are not an aspiration but a minimum level of management needed to ensure that the value of the North Fork's public lands, its healthy lands and water, air quality, scenic and recreational attributes are not diminished.

Tell BLM what you think by November 1st and why you think it!

Email comments to: uformp@blm.gov

Please cc: info@theconservationcenter.org

Mail comments to:

UFO Draft RMP /Uncompahgre Field Office 2465 Townsend Ave. Montrose, Colorado 81401

How you can support B1+ the Community Alternative!

The North Fork Alternative Plan (NFAP) was developed through stakeholder, small group, and public meetings, shared with local and state government officials, and presented to national BLM officials and others on several trips back to DC before being submitted to the BLM.

Tell BLM that the North Fork Alternative, B1, and all other conservation protections in Alternative B, are the only reasonable action currently being considered by the BLM for protecting the resources essential to the health and well-being of our communities.

In your comment, encourage the BLM to:

- **Protect our rural culture and existing economies**, including our agriculture, water supplies, and recreational landscapes.
- **Protect our rivers, landscapes & wildlife to ensure protection of key natural resources** including riparian areas, river corridors, sensitive species, air and water quality, and the valley's scenic qualities and visual resources
- **Choose Alternative B1 as the BLM's proposed action for oil and gas leasing in the North Fork Valley**, including areas of No Leasing, No Surface Occupancy (NSO), and Controlled Surface Use as included in the draft RMP.

Also let the BLM know that:

- **Controlled Surface Use stipulations in the "Preferred Alternative" (Alt. D) will not provide the necessary protections for our communities, rivers, air, water, wildlife, and landscapes.** Unlike stipulations under the other alternatives in the draft EIS, under Alternative B-1 the NSO restrictions could not be waived or modified.

This is the time to make it clear that stakeholders at all levels are in support of the strongest level of protections for the valley's lands and resources, and that Alternative B1. The North Fork Alternative protections that exist in none of the other alternatives include:

- **No Leasing – 75% of the North Fork area.** No Leasing is a rarely used BLM tool that closes certain areas—based on specific resource concerns—to oil and gas leasing (for the life of the plan).
- **No Surface Occupancy & Setbacks – 20% of the North Fork area** (in addition to No Leasing areas). Setbacks require No Surface Occupancy (NSO) for a certain distance from a feature. NSO can also blanket a sensitive resource, like erodible soils and geologic hazards.
- **Controlled Surface Use: - < 5% of the North Fork area.** The small amount of public lands that would not be closed to leasing and that are without surface occupancy prohibitions, would be managed with CSU stipulations to protect areas with moderate geologic hazard and vistas.

For residents of the North Fork concerned about oil and gas development, Alternative B-1: The North Fork Alternative provides the strongest, most protective management currently being considered by the BLM for its revised plan.