

# Attachment I

## Small Group Questions and Input Summary

Lower Dolores Plan Working Group  
Small Groups Exercise  
9/21/09 -- Reach 5

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### Process/Ground Rules

- appoint a moderator (moderator can share views too) but helps keep the process on track
- appoint a person to take detailed notes
- be respectful of others' opinions, especially if you do not agree
- note where there is some agreement; if there is not agreement, please note why what is the range of opinion
- please give your notes to Ann at the end
- **NEW: please do not switch groups**

### Questions:

- 1) What are your groups' ideas about how the DPLO should manage this reach? Specifically address:  
(note: if group does not get to each of these, more time can be allowed in future meetings for discussions)
- 2) What is your input on the management goals and objectives? Are there goals or management objectives missing?
  - a) Similar to all reaches, should the outfitter and guide permits have reserved campsites.
  - b) Should we withdraw lands in the Dolores River Wilderness Study Area from mineral entry? (this means they would no longer be available for oil/gas, uranium or other mineral exploration and extraction or is a No Surface Occupancy Stipulation enough protection)
  - c) Should the Big Gypsum Recreation site be maintained as is, improved, or decommissioned? This is one of the main boat launches servicing Reach 5.
  - d) How should the Dolores Office coordinate river management with the downstream offices (Uncompahgre BLM (Montrose) and Grand Junction BLM)?
  - e) If (when) tamarisk is removed from the main Dolores and associated tributaries; how active (or passive) should the subsequent restoration efforts be?
  - f) How should the illegal OHV access into the Dolores Wilderness Study Area be managed/enforced? Coyote Wash, Bull Canyon, and areas west of Silvey's Pocket are being impacted.
  - g) How should the cultural sites currently being impacted from rafters be protected?
  - h) Should there be additional interpretation at Indian Henry's Cabin located in Bull Canyon?
  - i) According to the 1990 Dolores River Corridor Plan water managers are to provide a minimum raft-able release of 800 cfs. How should water managers balance both rafting with flushing flows for management of other resources (riparian, fisheries, etc.)?
  - j) If you were granted one wish for the Dolores River, what would it be?

List generated by the Dolores Public Lands Office. September 2009.

- 3) Overall, what protection tools might be recommended in this reach?

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Group 2 & 4

Group 5

Group 1 & 6

A. Similar to all reaches, should the outfitter and guide permits have reserved campsites?

- First come, first served, or designate one camp in each for commercial trips (no consensus)
- Is this a non-issue? Not much guiding and outfitting
- Very limited campsites
- How can we enforce?
- First come, first served most practical
- Yes, might help organize and address issues
- Since they have to have permits (to launch) anyway
- How can you enforce?
- Educate private parties with signage
- But a lot more bureaucracy – enforcement is a challenge
- How about “preferred campsites” versus assigned? (use signage to indicate)
- Wait until it’s a bigger problem and solve it then

B. Should we withdraw lands in the Dolores River Wilderness Study Area from mineral entry?

- No, surface occupancy stipulation should be enough
- Range – need oil – NSO working
- Stick with NSO and BMP’s because we need the energy (some agreement)
- Others: prefer withdrawal, but NSO good as long as stipulation cannot be waived
  - Volume of gas is small
  - Focus on energy alternatives
- Geology restricts anyway - don’t really know what volume/value is there - don’t trash the place

C. Should the Big Gypsum recreation site be maintained as is, improved, or decommissioned?

- Need sanitary facilities, otherwise no improvements – also, better management of weeds in recreation site
- Decommissioned is unrealistic
- Better maintenance – trash issues
- Improvement – better maintained

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- Don't decommission
- Don't know much about site
- Best access to river in area
- No strong need for improvements – don't improve because detracts from values
- Is it not meeting demand?
- The actual put-in ramp is very small - consider adding another put-in

### D. 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
- What does "coordination" mean between district?
- Already coordinated – needs more private land owner input
- By telephone
- Makes sense to change management at end of WSA (not in the middle)

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

- Should 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
- Knapweed control and seed sowing
- Not many weeds upstream of Coyote Wash
- Passive – grasses and willow and cottonwood will come back
- Should be active, at least to restore grasses and prevent invasion by knapweed and tamarisk (general agreement)
- Be realistic: don't get overambitious – it's extremely challenging to manage plants
- Make an honest effort
- What do you do if the bugs get there first?

### F. How should the illegal OHV access into the Dolores Wilderness Study Area be managed?

- Permanent posted signs big enough to see – most people may not know – are there multiple entry points? – physical barrier might help in Bull Canyon and Silvey's Pocket
- Physical barrier won't work or will block Suckla's
- Enforcement nearly impossible
- What is damage?
- "Actively discourage" illegal use – a few motorcycles already signed
- Education - don't let up
- Signage (although some have heard that signs routinely get removed)
- Start slow, don't get too heavy handed

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- Figure out where they are coming from, although others added: this is obvious, they are using the existing old road

### G. How should the cultural sites currently being impacted from rafters be protected?

- Recommend that Shoman Cave be day-use only – signage at major sites – visitation ethics posted at launch sites and registered – closing some social trails
- Remote sensing?
- Wild & Scenic – more damage, more people
- Spill – more people
- Education/signage/peer pressure
- Small fence or barrier
- Brochure with outfitters and guidebook information
- Education
- Close camping @ archeological sites
- 1% of the people cause the problem
- Use low fence around sites to remind people to keep a distance
- Plant poison ivy, etc.

### H. Should there be additional interpretation at Indian Henry's Cabin located in Bull Canyon?

- Need sign and history of cabin
- None of us have been there
- Yes, should protect and in favor of education about history of cabin

### I. How should water managers balance both rafting with flushing flows for management of other resources?

- DRD science recommendation for habitat restoration should be implemented on “big water years” over consistent 800 cfs for boaters
- Time with spawning better
- 800 cfs steady siltation is problematic
- 2000 max? Natification needed downstream
- Need to understand flushing better – what is the needed Q
- This is the basic issue that DRD struggles with
- Rafting is the priority (question raised: isn't management for fishery also a stated priority?)
- Keep science driving process
- Keep DRD effort focusing on this question
- Could re-operate under EIS if science supports
- BLM management plan is the wrong document to address this question
- General agreement: management focus should be changed to address not just rafting but also ecology - comment: this is just the reality

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### J. 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

### Overall, what protection tools might be recommended in this reach?

- Existing plan covers a lot
- Can have too many rules
- Wild & Scenic interpretation would help (Roy Smith)
- \*Use good scientific information
- WSA should be designated as Wilderness
  - already pre-scripted as WSA
  - recommended for designation
  - language w/o federal reserved water right
- Water rights are contentious in Wilderness issue, so look a different direction
- General Agreement: the WSA/Reach 5 is worth protecting
- Current Goal =“Not more than 3 group encounters per day between users”
- Is it realistic to be that specific?
- Raising the profile brings more people
- If we don't act, the area might get overrun with people in the future
  - Better to be proactive than to have to react to protect the resource
  - There are 2 sides to wilderness issue: impacts by use/impacts for people
- Limit use, but don't need Wilderness: Wilderness = an advertisement (like the Monument)
- Personal observation: Monument did not increase use of Sand Canyon, etc.
- Personal observation: Monument did increase use on north end, around Pleasant View
- Question: are we currently under the 1990 plan? Yes, although not all of it is implemented/enforced
- Is there a plan that can be enforced?
- W&S water language even less tractable than Wilderness

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- Proposal: 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 - general agreement of group.
- Agree as long as something happens to protect for the future
- Group member strongly supports the idea, would be pretty much the same management as currently exists - Concerns:
  - Prior and existing rights must be protected and honored
  - Grazing must continue
- Could live with suitability if knew it wouldn't get designated as W&S (because of Federal Reserve Water Right)