
CHAPTER 2—ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 describes the alternatives for a Resource Management Plan (RMP), including the Preferred Alternative, that would guide management of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-administered lands (referred to as surface tracts) and non-U. S. Forest Service Federal mineral ownership (non-USFS FMO) in Alabama and Mississippi identified in Chapter 1 (Table 1-1 and Table 1-2). An interdisciplinary team developed the alternatives to present a reasonable range of management options for guiding resource management and activities. The management alternatives evaluated in this Draft RMP-Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were developed to meet resource condition objectives and minimize adverse impacts to cultural and natural resources while providing for compatible resource use and development opportunities consistent with current laws, regulations, and policies.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires development and consideration of a reasonable range of management alternatives, including a No Action Alternative. Alternatives must be viable and reasonable; meet the stated purpose and need for the plan; provide a mix of resource protections, management use, and development; be responsive to issues identified during scoping; and meet established planning criteria (outlined in Chapter 1), as well as Federal laws, regulations, and BLM policies. Each management alternative evaluated in the Draft RMP-EIS represents a reasonable approach to managing resources and activities. BLM has the discretion to select an alternative in its entirety or to combine aspects of the various alternatives presented in this draft to develop the Proposed RMP and Final EIS.

2.1.1 How to Read This Chapter

This chapter is divided into four sections:

- **Introduction (Section 2.1)**—presents an overview of the development and consideration of management alternatives and provides direction on How to Read This Chapter (Section 2.1.1).
- **Alternative Components (Section 2.2)**—presents the alternative structure and describes components that are considered for each alternative.
- **Standard Management Common to All Alternatives (Section 2.3)**—describes management actions that are applicable or common to all alternatives.
- **Alternatives Analyzed in Detail (Section 2.4)**—presents four alternatives for management of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO and surface tracts.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE COMPONENTS

Decisions in RMPs guide future land management actions and subsequent site-specific implementation decisions. The RMP alternatives described in this chapter represent approaches to addressing key planning issues (presented in Chapter 1) and to managing resources and resource uses in the planning area. Each alternative comprises two categories of land use planning decisions: (1) desired outcomes for resource management (goals and objectives) and (2) the measures needed to achieve these goals and objectives (allowable uses and management actions). These two categories are discussed below.

- **Desired Outcomes (Goals and Objectives).** Land use plans must identify desired outcomes expressed in terms of specific goals and objectives. Goals and objectives direct BLM's actions in

most effectively meeting legal mandates; numerous regulatory responsibilities; national policy; and other resource or social needs. Desired outcomes should be identified for and pertain to resources (such as natural, biological, and cultural), resource uses (such as minerals and lands and realty), and other factors (such as social and economic conditions). Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes (e.g., maintain ecosystem health and productivity, promote community stability, ensure sustainable development) that usually are not quantifiable. Objectives identify specific desired outcomes for resources. Objectives may be quantifiable and measurable and may have established time frames for achievement (as appropriate).

- **Allowable Uses and Management Actions.** After establishing desired outcomes, BLM identifies allowable uses and management actions for different alternatives that are anticipated to achieve the goals and objectives. Land use plans must identify uses, or allocations, that are allowable, restricted, or prohibited on the public lands and mineral estate. These allocations identify surface lands and/or mineral interests where uses are allowed, including any restrictions that may be needed to meet goals and objectives. Land use plans also identify lands where specific uses are excluded to protect resource values. Certain lands may be open or closed to specific uses based on legislative, regulatory, or policy requirements or criteria to protect sensitive resource values. Land use plans must identify the actions anticipated to achieve desired outcomes, including actions to maintain, restore, or improve land health. These actions include proactive measures (e.g., measures that will be taken to enhance watershed function and condition), as well as measures or criteria that will be applied to guide day-to-day activities occurring on public land. Land use plans also establish administrative designations such as areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs), recommend proposed withdrawals, land tenure zones, and recommend or make findings of suitability for congressional designations (such as components of the National Wild and Scenic River System).

Two types of management actions are included in the alternatives in this RMP. The first is standard management common to all alternatives (Section 2.3), which will apply regardless of which alternative is selected. The second is management actions and allowable uses by alternative (Section 2.4), which represent the choice(s) considered across alternatives. Management actions and allowable uses included in this chapter would apply to all BLM-administered surface tracts and non-USFS FMO in the planning area. Although anticipated to achieve desired outcomes, the management actions and allowable uses described in Section 2.4 may not be achieved during the planning period due to limitations in funding or staffing, changing policies or priorities, or new information. These factors could also affect the rate of RMP implementation. It is important to note that the RMP is strategic in nature, and, while it provides an overarching vision for managing resources in the planning area, it must also be flexible to changing priorities, information, and circumstances.

2.3 STANDARD MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

The following standard management would apply regardless of which alternative is selected. These management actions are a result of specific limitations on management of resources and land use programs defined in various laws and regulations that govern BLM management decisions.

2.3.1 Air Quality

Actions authorized on BLM-administered lands and non-USFS FMO would need to be conducted so as to comply with Clean Air Act requirements, including the applicable national Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) (Section 109); the State Air Quality Implementation Plan (SIP) (Section 110);

control of pollution from Federal facilities (Section 118); prevention of significant deterioration, (PDS) including visibility impacts to mandatory Federal Class I areas (Section 160 et seq.); and conformity analyses and determinations (Section 176(c)). Section 118 of the Clean Air Act requires Federal agencies to comply with all Federal, state, and local air pollution requirements. Section 176(c) prohibits Federal agencies from taking any actions that contribute to a new violation of Ambient Air Quality Standards, increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation, or delay the attainment of a Standard. It also requires Federal agencies to conform to SIPs. BLM policy provides requirements to minimize air quality impacts. For example, prescribed burns must comply with BLM Manual 9214 for air quality maintenance requirements, to minimize air quality impacts from particulates such as smoke.

2.3.2 Soil Resources

Standards and goals under the Clean Water Act (CWA) require measures to minimize non-point source pollution and soil erosion. Measures for minimizing accelerated soil erosion would continue to be made on a site-specific basis through evaluation of management actions and implementation of best management practices (BMPs). Examples of soil BMPs can be found in the *Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development, Gold Book (BLM 2006)* and at <http://www.blm.gov/bmp>.

2.3.3 Unique and Prime Farmland

Before any decision authorizing surface disturbance, a determination would be made as to if prime or unique farmland as defined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 U. S.C. 4201 et seq.) is in an area that may be affected by a proposed action. If prime or unique farmland is present, then an appropriate level of analysis would be prepared to determine if the proposed action may have an adverse effect and identify appropriate mitigation measures to minimize any unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses.

2.3.4 Water Resources

Standards and goals under the CWA and water quality management objectives developed by the States, as required by the 1987 Water Quality Act Amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, were created to protect the quality of States' waters and to prevent, abate, and control water pollution. BLM is required to maintain water quality where it presently meets Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved State water quality standards and to improve water quality on public lands where it does not meet standards as defined by Section 303(d) of the CWA. Any water discharged on the surface by industry is controlled through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. Actions authorized on BLM lands must also comply with the mitigation requirements defined by the Office of Surface Mining regulations for coal leasing and by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit requirements. Management actions would be conducted in conformance with the various regulations in the CWA, the State regulations, and the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) to achieve the water quality classifications and standards for surface and ground waters developed by the States.

Management actions would be conducted in a manner conforming to water quality management objectives developed by the States. Standards and goals under the CWA require measures to minimize non-point-source pollution and soil erosion. Measures for minimizing accelerated soil erosion would continue to be made on a site-specific basis through evaluation of management actions and implementation of BMPs. Examples of soil BMPs can be found in the *Surface Operating Standards and*

Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development, Gold Book (BLM 2006) and at <http://www.blm.gov/bmp>.

2.3.5 Vegetative Communities

BLM's role in the management of vegetative communities is to provide habitats that support desired plants and animals. BLM would manage for desired outcomes of vegetative communities, including control of noxious and invasive species, that incorporate the conservation actions identified in the approved state comprehensive conservation strategies. Unless otherwise specified in an alternative, vegetation manipulation, including prescribed burning, mechanical alteration, chemical treatment, manual, and biological would be allowed if needed to meet resource management objectives.

2.3.6 Fish and Wildlife

BLM's role in the management of fish and wildlife is to provide habitats that support desired animal species. BLM would support and coordinate with the State and other partners on habitat improvements and protection in compliance with approved comprehensive State fish and wildlife conservation strategies. This may include actions such as control of invasive plant species, use of prescribed fire, and wetland enhancements. Hunting regulations and game management are under the authority of the State fish and wildlife agency.

2.3.7 Special Status Species

Special status species include all Federal and state-listed species, proposed or candidates for Federal or state listing, and those species identified by BLM as sensitive species. BLM Eastern States policy designates as "BLM sensitive" those additional species that are considered to be critically imperiled (S-1) or imperiled (S-2) by the State Natural Heritage programs.

BLM would avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of any Federally-listed, State-listed, or proposed species; actively promote species recovery; and work to improve the status of candidate and sensitive species. If a Federally-listed species may be affected by a proposed management action, there would be consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended (16 United States Code [USC] 1531 *et seq.*). If a proposed management action might impact a State-listed species, there would be consultation with the appropriate State game and fish agency. Harvesting of any sensitive species would be prohibited, except when explicitly authorized for scientific purposes by an appropriate State and/or Federal agency.

If a proposed activity could affect candidate or sensitive species or their habitat, BLM would avoid activities that would contribute to a need to list such species or their habitat. Thus, BLM could require modifications to or reject a proposed activity that could jeopardize the continued existence of a proposed or listed threatened or endangered species, or result in destruction or adverse modification of a designated or proposed critical habitat. BLM would not approve any surface-disturbing activity that may affect any such species or critical habitat until obligations are met under applicable requirements of ESA, as amended, including completion of any required procedure for conference or formal consultation.

2.3.8 Wildland Fire Ecology and Management

Unless a separate, site-specific plan is in place, all wildfires would be suppressed. Agreements, as needed, would be pursued with Federal, State, and local government fire protection agencies for fire suppression.

Prescribed burning would be allowed on a case-by-case basis if needed to meet vegetative communities or fish and wildlife habitat management objectives.

2.3.9 Cultural Resources

Management actions would comply with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended (16 USC 470), which provides protection for significant cultural resources. An appropriate level of inventory would be conducted for all actions with a potential to affect these resources, in compliance with the requirements of Section 110 of the NHPA. Actions would require additional consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), in compliance with Section 106 of NHPA, and/or the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800).

Cultural resources would be identified and protected on a case-by-case basis, according to site-specific needs. Any significant sites discovered would be available for scientific, conservation, traditional, or interpretation uses. A site that is not significant (as determined by BLM with SHPO consultation) would be released from management concerns.

2.3.10 Paleontological Resources

Significant paleontological sites are protected under FLPMA. FLPMA charges BLM to (1) manage public land so as to protect the quality of scientific and other values and (2) see that land and resources are periodically and systematically inventoried. Known paleontological resources would be managed according to the BLM 8270 *Handbook* and the BLM *Manual for the Management of Paleontological Resources*.

If discovered, paleontological resources would be managed to protect their important scientific values. Area closures, restrictions, or other mitigation requirements for the protection of paleontological values would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Collecting of scientifically significant vertebrate and invertebrate fossils by qualified paleontologists would be allowed by permit only.

2.3.11 Visual Resources

Because of their small size, the surface tracts are a relatively small component of the visual landscape. Consequently, they have not been the subject of a traditional BLM visual resource management (VRM) inventory and are not assigned VRM classes (defined in Section 3.2.9). Case-by-case processing of land use and mineral development proposals would consider impacts to visual resources where these have been identified as public concerns. All surface tracts would be managed as VRM Class III, except for the Coosa River tracts in Alabama and Hancock County tract in Mississippi, which would be managed as VRM Class II.

2.3.12 Minerals

Federal mineral estate would be available for conveyance to owners of the surface estate as provided in Section 209 of FLPMA. Section 209 provides for this conveyance if there are no known mineral values in the land or if reservation of the mineral rights to the United States is interfering with or precluding appropriate surface development of the land and such development is a more beneficial use of the land. BLM would retain the FMO with known mineral value.

As discussed in Section 1.3, BLM-administered non-USFS FMO in the planning area includes Federal mineral estate underlying lands of BLM or other Federal surface managing agencies (excluding USFS)

and split-estate whereby the Federal Government owns all or a portion of the mineral estate but the surface estate is State or privately owned (i.e., non-Federal). BLM-administered non-USFS FMO under the jurisdiction of another Federal surface managing agency would be available for exploration and development as directed by the surface managing agency. Split-estate (i.e., non-USFS FMO underlying private or state-owned surface lands) would be subject to stipulations deemed necessary to protect existing surface improvements or use. BLM would apply stipulations to oil and gas leases as determined through this plan; however, surface management agencies may provide their own stipulations that would be attached to a lease during the lease approval process.

After this plan is approved it is expected that additional FMO tracts will be identified or acquired. If these tracts are similar in resource values and within the environmental issues analyzed in this plan, the new tracts will be managed according to the guidance of this plan and incorporated into the plan through plan maintenance.

Coal leasing potential within the planning area is limited to the Warrior Basin¹ in Alabama because of the distinctive presence of the appropriate geological conditions (e.g., continuity of coalbeds, thickness of coal, quality of coal seams) and existing infrastructure (e.g., existing subsurface mining operations and access roads) for development of coal resources. BLM-administered non-USFS FMO available for coal leasing is located in Walker, Fayette, Jefferson, and Tuscaloosa counties. Coal is also present to a lesser degree in Marion and Winston Counties, but the development of Federal coal in these counties is unlikely. Non-USFS FMO in the Warrior Basin would be available for further coal leasing consideration and limited to underground mining methods. BMPs would be applied as appropriate when processing a Lease by Application (LBA).

2.3.13 Recreation

BLM surface tracts are open to dispersed recreational use, including hunting, fishing, hiking, and nature study. Case-by-case processing of land use and mineral development proposals would consider impacts to recreation where it has been identified as a public concern. Due to the scattered nature of the small surface tracts and lacking recreation interest, special recreation management areas (SRMAs) would not be designated within this RMP and all surface tracts would be managed as extensive recreation management areas (ERMAs).

2.3.14 Lands and Realty

All land use proposals would be evaluated for conformance with plan objectives and land use decisions. Case-by-case processing would include analysis of environmental impacts through the NEPA compliance process. Land disposals would be conducted to meet the requirements identified under applicable authorities. To be considered suitable for disposal through sale, lands must meet the following criteria outlined in Section 203 of the FLPMA:

- (1) such tract because of its location or other characteristics is difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public lands, and is not suitable for management by another Federal department or agency
- (2) such tract was acquired for a specific purpose and the tract is no longer required for that or any other Federal purpose

¹ The term Warrior Basin is a geologic province. The Black Warrior Basin is the drainage area of the Black Warrior River.

(3) disposal of such tract will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development, which cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land and which outweigh other public objectives and values, including, but not limited to, recreation and scenic values, which would be served by maintaining such tract in Federal ownership.

Lands may be exchanged as authorized by Section 206 of the FLPMA when the exchange would serve the national interest and benefit BLM programs or the programs of other Federal agencies. Lands may be conveyed to State and local government agencies and other qualified organizations under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926 (R&PP), as amended. Under R&PP, lands may be conveyed or leased only for an established or proposed project for which there are development and management plans, as well as adequate funding by the R&PP applicant to complete the development and a reasonable timetable of development.

Specific surface tracts identified for disposal under the various management alternatives would be evaluated for the presence of significant resource values before such action. Resources to be evaluated would include minerals, recreation, cultural resources, wetlands, and special status species. This evaluation would also be applied before disposal of any additional BLM-administered surface tracts that are identified or verified after approval of the RMP.

Some tracts may have uncertain titles. These are cases in which the tracts are claimed by private owners but government land records show that they were not transferred from Federal ownership. Tracts with uncertain titles would be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Color-of-Title Act, under which claimants may apply for transfer of these tracts and, if qualified, purchase the tracts to obtain title. Appendix B provides a list of lands of uncertain title occurring within the planning area.

Existing withdrawals (listed in Appendix I) would be subject to review to determine if they are serving their intended purpose. BLM has the authority to revoke, modify, extend, or change withdrawals in accordance with the provisions and limitations of Section 204 of FLPMA.

After this plan is approved it is expected that some additional surface tracts may return to BLM administration after revocation of withdrawals, reversion of R&PP lands and resolution of title. These additional surface tracts will be managed according to applicable guidance of this plan.

This plan does not identify specific utility corridors because of fragmented BLM surface land ownership within the planning area and uncertainties in demand. Right-of-way (ROW) avoidance areas established for protection of sensitive resources and tracts that may be suitable for corridors are identified in the management alternatives presented in Section 2.4. Tracts identified as available for disposal through sale or exchange would be managed as avoidance areas if granting of a ROW might adversely affect tract marketability, unless otherwise specified in the alternatives.

Resolution of unauthorized use would be pursued on a case-by-case basis. Resolution would include termination of use and payment of damages, including reclamation of disturbed land, if needed. In some cases, use may be authorized through ROWs, permits, leases, or land disposal. Valid authorizations would be protected if the land undergoes disposal.

2.3.15 Hazardous Materials

Proposed activities on BLM-administered surface tracts and non-USFS FMO would be evaluated for their potential to release hazardous materials into the environment. Authorized use of hazardous materials must comply with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Disposal of hazardous materials is

prohibited. Discovery of “unpermitted” hazardous materials would be handled in accordance with the reporting, removal, and remediation requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

2.4 ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

This section presents four alternatives for BLM-administered surface tracts and non-USFS FMO. Each alternative represents a direction to guide future management of BLM-administered public lands and resources in Alabama and Mississippi. Alternative 3 was selected as the Preferred Alternative because it protects sensitive resources, while allowing mineral development and providing management efficiency through disposal of most of the scattered surface tracts.

Management themes represented in each alternative include the following:

- **Alternative 1 (No Action)**—represents the No Action Alternative (i.e., continuation of current management). BLM would continue the current management approach by retaining all BLM-administered surface tracts and employing custodial management. BLM management actions would occur in response to an application for use presented by another entity or compliance actions required by regulation and policy (as described in Section 2.3, Standard Management Common to All Alternatives). Potential impacts and mitigation would be identified and assessed when application is made for activity on a specific piece of BLM-administered land.

There would be 760,570 acres of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO that would be open to oil and gas leasing. Management of oil and gas leasing, exploration, and development would be subject to the standard lease terms and conditions that are included on the lease form.

- **Alternative 2**—proposes that BLM would retain specific BLM-administered surface tracts. BLM would investigate opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with other agencies or organizations. Use of the tracts would be consistent with management objectives and other land use decisions. Tract-specific constraints for resource uses, such as ROW access, would be based on the presence of sensitive resources (e.g., special status species and important cultural resources). In addition to the management for fish and wildlife habitat, special status species, and cultural resources outlined in Alternative 1, more proactive management would occur on specific tracts to protect important natural and cultural resources. Management actions for specific tracts, as needed, could include installing walkovers and sand fencing on actively used tracts to protect special status species habitat, vegetation treatments to enhance or improve native landscapes on actively used tracts, and habitat management to achieve objectives in established fish and wildlife conservation strategies.

There would be 760,452 acres of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO that would be open to oil and gas leasing; since an additional 365 acres would be closed to protect habitat of the Federally-listed Alabama beach mouse. In addition to standard terms and conditions, conservation measures would be applied as stipulations to oil and gas leases and BMPs would be used to reduce adverse effects caused surface-disturbing or disruptive activities associated with oil and gas operations on BLM-administered non-USFS FMO. Conservation measures, including no surface occupancy (NSO), controlled surface use (CSU), seasonal stipulations, and BMPs are presented in Appendix D. Under this alternative, lease stipulations would include a 1,000-foot NSO buffer from aquatic habitats and Alabama beach mouse habitat would not be available for lease. The stipulations in Appendix D would be applied in addition to the standard lease terms and conditions on the lease form. For each stipulation there are provisions for waiver, modification, and exception provided in Appendix D, which could be applied as appropriate. The BMPs would be considered

mandatory to reduce adverse impacts to specific resources and would be applied to oil and gas operations on new and existing leases. There would be some flexibility in implementation of each BMP, depending on site-specific conditions. Where there is potential to affect Federally-listed, proposed, or candidate species or designated critical habitat, application of BMPs and/or waiver, modification and exception to stipulations would normally require coordination and possible formal consultation with USFWS.

- **Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative)**—All of the BLM-administered surface tracts would be available for disposal except the Hancock County tract in Mississippi. For some of the surface tracts, there would be conditions placed on the disposal that development and use of the tract would be consistent with the resource management objectives and allowable uses established for the tract. Restrictions on use after disposal would be provided in the patent transferring ownership. Valid existing rights and other valid authorizations would be protected if disposal occurred.

Until the surface tracts are disposed, management would apply tract-specific constraints for resource uses, such as ROW access, based on the presence of sensitive resources (e.g., special status species and important cultural resources). In addition to the management for fish and wildlife habitat, special status species, and cultural resources outlined in Alternative 1, more proactive management would occur on specific tracts to protect important natural and cultural resources. Management actions for specific tracts, as needed, could include vegetation treatments to enhance or improve native landscapes on actively used tracts and habitat management to achieve objectives in established fish and wildlife conservation strategies.

There would be 760,570 acres of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO that would be open to oil and gas leasing. Similar to Alternative 2, Alternative 3 uses conservation measures that would be applied as lease stipulations and BMPs to reduce adverse effects caused by surface-disturbing or disruptive activities associated with oil and gas operations on BLM-administered non-USFS FMO. The stipulations in Alternative 3 are different from Alternative 2 in two ways. First, Alabama beach mouse habitat would be available for lease, subject to a NSO stipulation. Second, the buffer from aquatic habitats would be reduced to 250 feet.

- **Alternative 4**—Alternative 4 proposes that all BLM-administered surface tracts would be made available for disposal from Federal ownership with no specific condition on use after disposal. Valid existing rights and other valid authorizations would be protected in the event of disposal. Under this alternative, management of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO would be the same as Alternative 3.

2.4.1 Management of Non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership

The discussion of proposed management of mineral leasing and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO presented in this section is limited to oil and gas leasing. Non-USFS FMO includes mineral ownership underlying BLM-administered surface tracts. Proposed management for coal leasing is presented in Section 2.3, Standard Management Common to All Alternatives. Where non-USFS FMO is concerned, decisions of this RMP will pertain only to BLM's role in administering the minerals.

Alternatives 1 through 4 were developed to present a reasonable range of options for where leasing can occur to guide decision making for managing mineral leasing and development. There are four oil and gas leasing categories:

- **Open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms and conditions**—includes areas in which standard lease terms and conditions are determined to be sufficient to protect other land uses or resource values.
- **Open to leasing, subject to minor constraints**—comprises areas in which moderately restrictive lease stipulations such as timing limitations or distance setbacks are required to mitigate impacts to other land uses or resource values. Such constraints are often referred to as CSU.
- **Open to leasing, subject to major constraints**—encompasses areas in which highly restrictive lease stipulations, such as NSO, are required to mitigate impacts to other land uses or resource values.
- **Closed to leasing**—is designated for areas where other land uses or resource values cannot be adequately protected with even the most restrictive lease stipulations. Appropriate protection can be ensured only by closing the lands to leasing.

The acreage of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO available for oil and gas leasing in Alabama and Mississippi by alternative is shown in Table 2-1 and Table 2-2. Federal oil and gas leases contain standard lease terms that are included on the lease form, many of which are designed to protect natural resources. As described above, special stipulations can be attached to a lease to respond to specific environmental or resource concerns for a particular lease area. Special stipulations are developed during the land use planning process, such as this RMP. Stipulations are attached to and made part of the lease and modify standard lease terms or the manner in which operations may be conducted. The variation of acreage by alternative for leasing stipulations associated with oil and gas potential in Alabama and Mississippi is shown in Table 2-3 and Table 2-4. Conservation measures, including stipulations and BMPs, are provided in Appendix D.

Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario for Minerals

Alabama and Mississippi have been classified as having high occurrence potential for oil and gas resources, based on the reasonably foreseeable development scenario (RFDS) prepared by BLM. It is estimated that 20 wells would be drilled on non-USFS FMO in Alabama and 10 wells would be drilled on non-USFS FMO in Mississippi over the next 20 years (BLM Mineral Report 2005). These actions are expected to disturb a total of 105 acres in Alabama and 55 acres in Mississippi.

Table 2-1. Oil and Gas Leasing Categories in Alabama by Alternative

Oil and Gas Leasing Category	Alternative 1 (No Action) (Acres)	Alternative 2 (Acres)	Alternative 3 (Preferred) (Acres)	Alternative 4 (Acres)
Open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms and conditions	305,640	119,231	144,895	144,895
Open to leasing, subject to minor constraints	0	91,702	117,506	117,506

Oil and Gas Leasing Category	Alternative 1 (No Action) (Acres)	Alternative 2 (Acres)	Alternative 3 (Preferred) (Acres)	Alternative 4 (Acres)
Open to leasing, subject to major constraints	0	94,589	43,239	43,239
Closed to leasing	8,179	8,297	8,179	8,179
TOTAL	313,819^a	313,819^a	313,819^a	313,819^a

Notes:

a Represents all BLM-administered non-USFS FMO within the State of Alabama.

Table 2-2. Oil and Gas Leasing Categories in Mississippi by Alternative

Oil and Gas Leasing Category	Alternative 1 (No Action) (Acres)	Alternative 2 (Acres)	Alternative 3 (Preferred) (Acres)	Alternative 4 (Acres)
Open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms and conditions	454,930	270,615	359,640	359,640
Open to leasing, subject to minor constraints	0	123	3,021	3,021
Open to leasing, subject to major constraints	0	184,192	92,269	92,269
Closed to leasing	63,004	63,004	63,004	63,004
TOTAL	517,934^a	517,934^a	517,934^a	517,934^a

Notes:

a Represents all BLM-administered non-USFS FMO within the State of Mississippi.

Table 2-3. Leasing Stipulations in Alabama by Alternative^a

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a, b}
ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	3,384
Department of Defense (DoD) (Maxwell Air Force Base)	1,495
National Park Service (NPS)	3,300

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a, b}
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	8,179
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	305,640
ALTERNATIVE 2	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	3,384
DoD (Maxwell Air Force Base)	1,495
NPS	3,300
Alabama beach mouse suitable habitat or Federally-designated critical habitat	365
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	8,544
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Bald eagle nests (1,500-ft. buffer around active or inactive nests and communal roost sites)	30
Red-cockaded woodpecker (0.5 mile of a cluster plus a 200-ft. buffer zone surrounding that area)	888
Sea turtle suitable nesting habitat (100-ft. buffer from the mean high tide line of coastal beaches)	513
Gray bat, Indiana bat, Alabama cave shrimp, Alabama cave fish (600-ft. buffer around caves, fractures, large sinkholes or 250-ft. buffer around perennial or intermittent streams in or adjacent to counties with documented populations)	12,898
Gray bat or Indiana bat summer roost or gray bat wintering cave hibernacula (0.5-mile buffer)	3,044
Freshwater aquatic species (1,000-ft. buffer around river, stream, wetland spring, headwaters, wet meadows, wet pine savannas, pond, tributary, lake, coastal slough, sand bars, vernal pools on granite outcrops, calcareous seepage marshes, or small, marshy calcareous streams)	90,930
Piping plover/least tern habitat (from the debris rack line to the low tide line of coastal beaches)	2,131
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	110,434
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Bald eagle nests (no tree removal within 1.5-mile buffer zone around active or inactive bald eagle nests and communal roost sites)	848
Gopher tortoise burrow (600-ft. buffer)	ND

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a, b}
Gray bat/Indiana bat hibernacula (1.5-mile buffer)	11,573
Identified karstic habitat or any hydrologic network connected to caves used by listed bat species or other listed cave species	112,368
Sensitive plant species habitat	103
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	96,871
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Bald eagle nest or communal roosting sites (timing restriction within 1.5 miles between December 1 and August 1)	1,299
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	1,299
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	119,231
ALTERNATIVE 3 (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE) and ALTERNATIVE 4	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	3,384
DoD (Maxwell Air Force Base)	1,495
NPS	3,300
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	8,179
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Bald eagle nests (1,500-ft. buffer around active or inactive nests and communal roost sites)	30
Red-cockaded woodpecker (0.5 mile of a cluster plus a 200-ft. buffer zone surrounding that area)	888
Sea turtle suitable nesting habitat (100-ft. buffer from the mean high tide line of coastal beaches)	513
Alabama beach mouse suitable habitat or Federally designated critical habitat	365
Gray bat, Indiana bat, Alabama cave shrimp, Alabama cave fish (600-ft buffer around caves, fractures, large sinkholes or 250-ft. buffer around perennial or intermittent streams in or adjacent to counties with documented populations)	12,898
Gray bat or Indiana bat summer roost or gray bat wintering cave hibernacula (0.5-mile buffer)	3,044
Freshwater aquatic species (250-ft. buffer around river, stream, wetland spring, headwaters, wet meadows, wet pine savannas, pond, tributary, lake, coastal slough, sand bars, vernal pools on granite outcrops, calcareous seepage marshes, or small, marshy calcareous streams; buffer may be extended up to 600 ft. if slope exceeds 10%)	38,111
Piping plover/least tern habitat (from the debris rack line to the low tide line of coastal beaches)	2,131
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	58,049

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a, b}
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Bald eagle nests (no tree removal within 1.5-mile buffer zone around active or inactive bald eagle nests and communal roost sites)	848
Gopher tortoise burrow (600-ft. buffer)	ND
Gray bat/Indiana bat hibernacula (1.5-mile buffer)	11,573
Identified karstic habitat or any hydrologic network connected to caves used by listed bat species or other listed cave species	112,368
Sensitive plant species habitat	103
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	125,044
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Bald eagle nest or communal roosting sites (timing restriction within 1.5 miles between December 1 and August 1)	1,299
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	1,299
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	144,895

Notes:

a All Federal mineral estate in Alabama has high potential for oil and gas resources.

b Total acres under each alternative do not represent accurate totals shown in Table 2-1 because of the overlap of land resources and land use restrictions.

ND No habitat data available to estimate affected area.

Table 2-4. Leasing Stipulations in Mississippi by Alternative^a

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a, b}
ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION)	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	60,207
NPS	2,797
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	63,004
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	0
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	454,930

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a,b}
ALTERNATIVE 2	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	60,207
NPS	2,797
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	63,004
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Hancock County Marsh	1,810
Bald eagle nests (1,500-ft. buffer around active or inactive nests and communal roost sites)	1,089
Red-cockaded woodpecker (0.5 mile of a cluster plus a 200-ft. buffer zone surrounding that area)	11,710
Sea turtle suitable nesting habitat (100-ft. buffer from the mean high tide line of coastal beaches)	997
Gray bat, Indiana bat (600-ft. buffer around caves, fractures, sinkholes or 250-ft. buffer around perennial or intermittent streams in or adjacent to counties with documented populations)	2,564
Gray bat or Indiana bat summer roost or gray bat wintering cave hibernacula (0.5-mile buffer)	7,073
Freshwater aquatic species (1,000-ft. buffer around river, stream, wetland spring, headwaters, wet meadows, wet pine savannas, pond, tributary, lake, coastal slough, sand bars, vernal pools on granite outcrops, calcareous seepage marshes, or small, marshy calcareous streams)	168,383
Louisiana black bear (1,500-ft. buffer around den trees in occupied bottomland hardwood and floodplain forest habitats) ^c	ND
Piping plover/least tern habitat (from the debris rack line to the low tide line of coastal beaches)	4,237
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	197,863
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Bald eagle nests (no tree removal within 1.5-mile buffer zone around active or inactive bald eagle nests and communal roost sites)	8,917
Gopher tortoise burrow (600-ft. buffer)	122
Gray bat/Indiana bat hibernacula (1.5-mile buffer)	1
Identified karstic habitat or any hydrologic network connected to caves used by listed bat species or other listed cave species	ND
Sensitive plant species habitat	ND
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	9,040
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Bald eagle nest or communal roosting sites (timing restriction within 1.5 miles between December 1 and August 1)	13,742
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	13,742

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a,b}
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres) ^b	270,615
ALTERNATIVE 3 (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE) AND ALTERNATIVE 4	
NO LEASE	
Other Surface Management Agency Lands	
USFWS	60,207
NPS	2,797
Total Affected Area (in acres) ^b	63,004
NO SURFACE OCCUPANCY/NO SURFACE DISTURBANCE	
Hancock County Marsh	1,810
Bald eagle nests (1,500-ft. buffer around active or inactive nests and communal roost sites)	1,089
Red-cockaded woodpecker (0.5 mile of a cluster plus a 200-ft. buffer zone surrounding that area)	11,710
Sea turtle suitable nesting habitat (100-ft. buffer from the mean high tide line of coastal beaches)	997
Gray bat, Indiana bat (600-ft. buffer around caves, fractures, sinkholes or 250-ft. buffer around perennial or intermittent streams in or adjacent to counties with documented populations)	2,564
Gray bat or Indiana bat summer roost or gray bat wintering cave hibernacula (0.5-mile buffer)	7,073
Freshwater aquatic species (250-ft. buffer around river, stream, wetland spring, headwaters, wet meadows, wet pine savannas, pond, tributary, lake, coastal slough, sand bars, vernal pools on granite outcrops, calcareous seepage marshes, or small, marshy calcareous streams; buffer may be extended up to 600 ft. if slope exceeds 10%)	68,656
Louisiana black bear (1,500-ft. buffer around den trees in occupied bottomland hardwood and floodplain forest habitats) ^c	ND
Piping plover/least tern habitat (from the debris rack line to the low tide line of coastal beaches)	4,237
Total Affected Area (in acres) ^b	98,136
CONTROLLED SURFACE USE	
Bald eagle nests (no tree removal within 1.5-mile buffer zone around active or inactive bald eagle nests and communal roost sites)	8,917
Gopher tortoise burrow (600-ft. buffer)	122
Gray bat/Indiana bat hibernacula (1.5-mile buffer)	1
Identified karstic habitat or any hydrologic network connected to caves used by listed bat species or other listed cave species	ND
Sensitive plant species habitat	ND
Total Affected Area (in acres) ^b	9,040

Area	Total non-Forest Service Federal Mineral Ownership (Acres) ^{a,b}
SEASONAL LIMITATIONS	
Bald eagle nest or communal roosting sites (timing restriction within 1.5 miles between December 1 and August 1)	13,742
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	13,742
OPEN TO LEASING SUBJECT TO STANDARD LEASE TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Total Affected Area (in acres)^b	359,640

Notes:

- a All Federal mineral estate in Mississippi has high potential for oil and gas resources.
- b Total acres under each alternative do not represent accurate totals shown in Table 2-2 because of the overlap of land resources and land use restrictions.
- c No habitat data available to estimate affected area. No surface disturbance, including removal of potential den trees, is permitted within a 1,500-foot buffer around den trees in occupied bottomland hardwood and floodplain forest habitats.
- ND No habitat data available to estimate affected area.

2.4.2 Management of Surface Tracts

For the purposes of this plan, the surface tracts were grouped on the basis of geographic proximity and similar management needs. The surface tract groups to be discussed in this section include the Coosa River Tracts, Fort Morgan Beach Tracts, Fort Morgan Highway Tracts, Fowl River Tract, Geneva Tract, and Jordan Lake Tract in Alabama and the Hancock County Tract in Mississippi. These surface tracts and their associated acreage, county, and legal description are listed in Table 2-5. Proposed planning decisions for each surface tract grouping, by alternative, are detailed in Table 2-6 – Table 2-12. These tables are accompanied by maps depicting the tract locations (Maps 2-1 – 2-7).

Table 2-5. Surface Tracts in Alabama and Mississippi

Name of Tract Group	Acres	County	Legal Description ^a
Alabama			
Coosa River Tracts			
St. Stephens Meridian			
Foshee Islands	9.58	Coosa	T. 22N, R. 16E, Sec. 5, Lots 1, 2, & 5
	3.25	Coosa	T. 22N, R. 16E, Sec. 8, Lot 1
Little Rock Island	0.45	Coosa	T. 22N, R. 16E, Sec. 5, Lot 3
Big Rock Island	6.09	Coosa	T. 22N, R. 16E, Sec. 5, Lot 4
Gilchrist Island	4.38	Coosa	T. 23N, R. 16E, Sec. 32, Lot C
Huntsville Meridian			
Unnamed Island	0.07	Calhoun	T. 14S, R. 5E, Sec. 24, Lot 2
Smith Island	5.58	Shelby	T. 20S, R. 2E, Sec. 24, Lot 1
Prince Island	12.74	Talladega	T. 20S, R. 2E, Sec. 24, Lot 2
			T. 20S, R. 2E, Sec. 13, Lot 1
			T. 20S, R. 3E, Sec. 18, Lot 1
Total Acreage of Tract Group	42.14		

Name of Tract Group	Acres	County	Legal Description ^a
Fort Morgan Beach Tracts			
			St. Stephens Meridian
Fort Morgan Beach Tract	0.84	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 1E, Sec. 25, Lot 24
Fort Morgan Beach Tract	5.32	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 1E, Sec. 26, Lots 13 & 14
Fort Morgan Beach Tract	10.60	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 2E, Sec. 27, Lots 54 & 55
Fort Morgan Beach Tract	11.94	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 2E, Sec. 25, Lots 73 & 74
Total Acreage of Tract Group	28.70		
Fort Morgan Highway Tracts			
			St. Stephens Meridian
Fort Morgan Highway Tract	20.16	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 1E, Sec. 25, Lot 5
			T. 9S, R. 1E, Sec. 26, Lot 15
Fort Morgan Highway Tract	8.88	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 2E, Sec. 28, Lot 43
Fort Morgan Highway Tract	12.24	Baldwin	T. 9S, R. 2E, Sec. 27, Lot 56
			T. 9S, R. 2E, Sec. 28, Lot 44
Total Acreage of Tract Group	41.28		
Fowl River Tract			
			St. Stephens Meridian
Fowl River Tract	41.73	Mobile	T. 7S, R. 2W, Sec. 25, Lots 2–5
Geneva County Tract			
			Tallahassee Meridian
East Fork Choctawhatchee River Tract	0.95	Geneva	T. 7N, R. 16W, Sec. 22, Lot 4
Jordan Lake Tract			
			St. Stephens Meridian
Jordan Lake Tract	4.3	Chilton	T. 21N, R. 16E, Sec. 14, Lot 1
Total Surface Estate in Alabama	159.10		
Mississippi			
Hancock County Tract			
			St. Stephens Meridian
Hancock County	174.25	Hancock	T. 9S, R. 15W, Sec. 25, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, SESE
Total Surface Estate in Mississippi	174.25		

a The legal description is abbreviated according to a rectangular survey system in which T. 22N, R. 16E, Sec. 5, Lot 1 means that the area is located at Lot 1 of Section 5 in Township 22 North, Range 16 East, in the meridian specified above. Townships are divided into 36 numbered sections. A standard section comprises 1 square mile or 640 acres of land and consists of aliquot parts of sections (e.g., half section of 320 acres, quarter section of 160 acres, 16th section of 40 acres). The township number indicates how far in a given direction (north or south) of a surveyed parallel the township is located. The range number indicates how far in a given direction (east or west) of a surveyed meridian the township is located.

Table 2-6. Alternatives for Coosa River Tracts (Maps 2-1a, 2-1b, 2-1c)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.	Protect mature stands of mixed hardwood/pine overstory and a diversity of understory species.		No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Remove invasive species, such as mimosa (<i>Albizia julibrissin Durazz L.</i>) by hand and with selective, hand application of herbicide.		No specific actions are proposed.
	Conduct baseline inventories for special status plants.		
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Monitor fledgling success of active bald eagle nests.		No specific actions are proposed.
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would be open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tracts would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation of a 1,000-ft. buffer from aquatic habitats, and stipulations to protect bald eagle nesting and roosting habitat, as described in Appendix D.		The tracts would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation of a 250-ft. buffer from aquatic habitats, and stipulations to protect bald eagle nesting and roosting habitat, as described in Appendix D.
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use and travel compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Support water-based recreation opportunities consistent with the Coosa River Recreation Plan (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC] Project Nos. 2146, 082 and 618).			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would remain open to recreation use.	The tracts would be open to recreation use including fishing, picnicking, rest stops of boaters and canoeists, and wildlife observation.		
The tracts would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tracts would be designated as closed.		
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would be retained by BLM.	The tracts would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with other agencies and organizations.	The tracts would be available for disposal under the condition that uses would be consistent with the resource management goals and objectives and allowable uses and management actions established under this alternative. In the case of R&PP conveyance, use after disposal would be controlled through approval of and compliance with the plan of development. In the case of FLPMA disposal (e.g., sale), restrictive covenants would be required to protect sensitive resources.	The tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. Disposal may not be allowed if they would jeopardize Federally-listed species. Land exchanges to benefit Federally-listed species would be permitted.
The tracts would remain open to ROW applications.	These island tracts would be avoidance areas for ROWs to protect native vegetative communities and adjacent aquatic habitat.		

Map 2-1a Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Coosa River Tracts (42.14 total acres)
Unnamed Island (0.07 acres)
Calhoun County, AL

T. 14 S., R. 6 E.
Sec. 24, Lot 2

Huntsville Meridian

 Public Domain Lands

Projection: UTM, Zone 16 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)

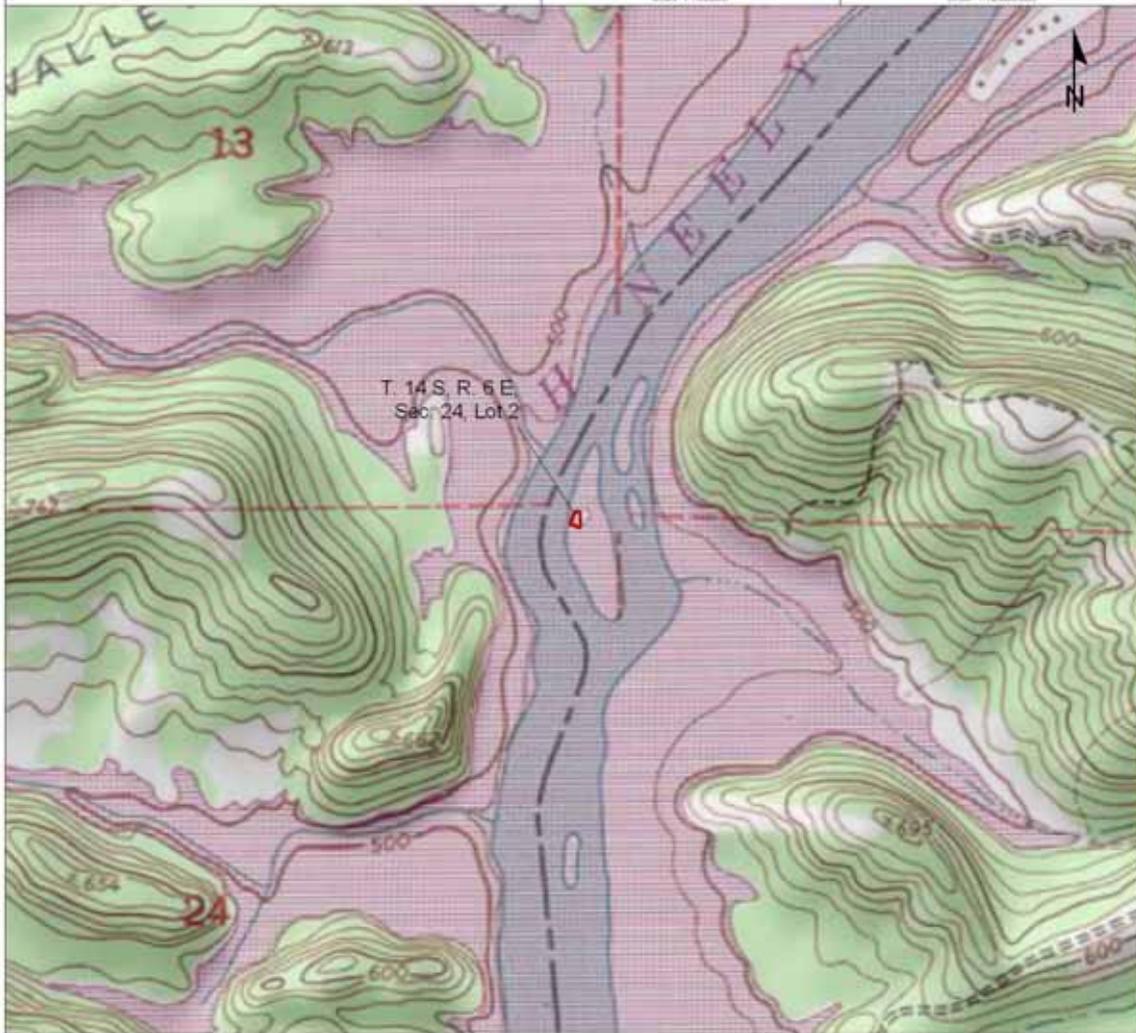
Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2000 National Geographic Maps



Scale: 1:100,000



Scale: 1:12,000,000



Scale 1:12,000



0 260 520 1,040 1,560 2,080

Feet

1 inch equals 1,000 feet

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



Map 2-1b Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Coosa River Tracts (42.14 total acres) Coosa County, AL

- Big Rock Island* (6.09 acres)
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 4
- Foshee Islands* (12.63 acres)
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 1
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 2
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 3
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 4
- Gilchrist Island* (4.38 acres)
T. 23 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 32, Lot C
- Little Rock Island* (0.45 acres)
T. 22 N. R. 16 E. Sec. 5, Lot 3

St. Stephens Meridian

Public Domain Lands

Projection: UTM, Zone 16 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)

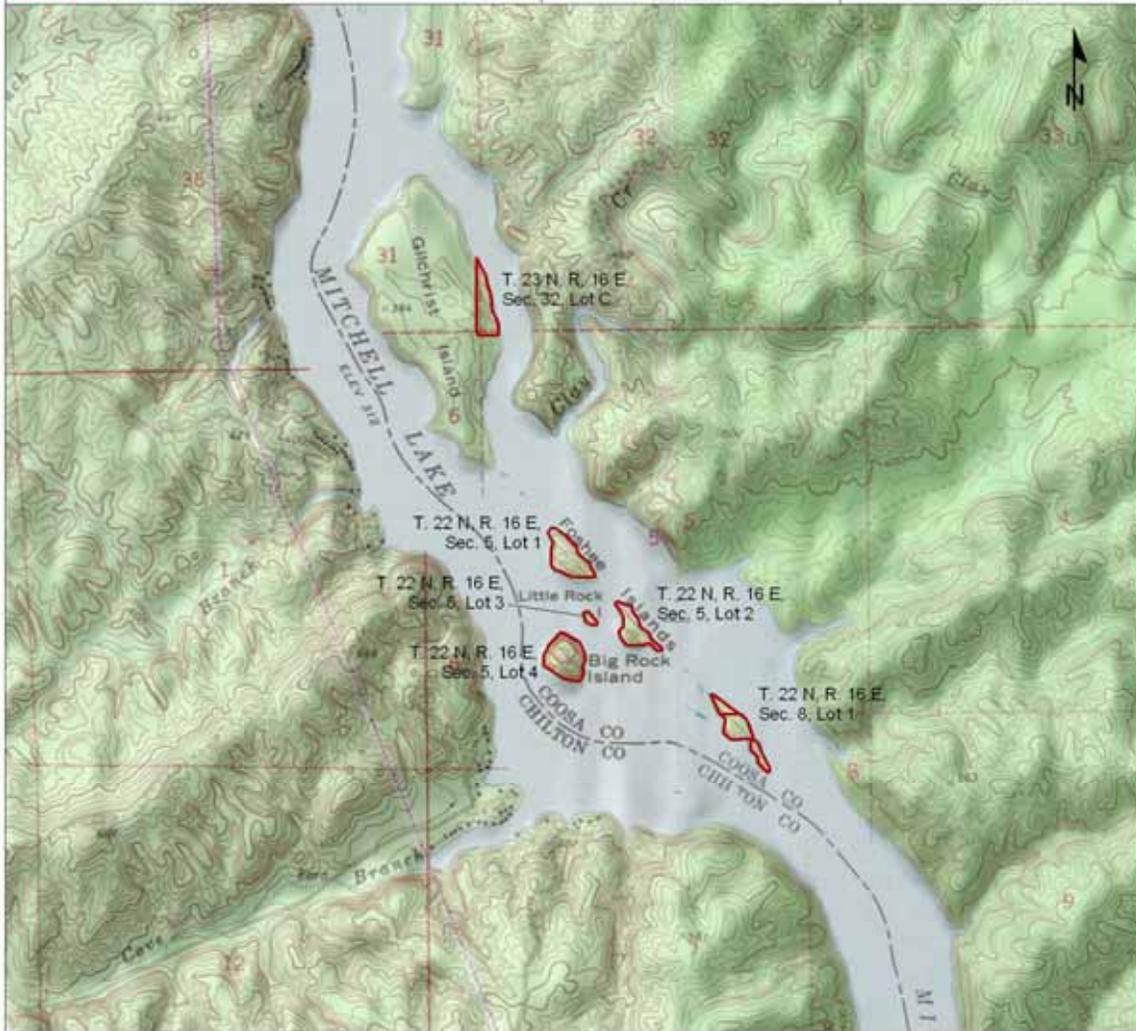
Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2003 National Geographic Maps



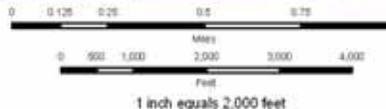
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Scale: 1:12,000,000



Scale 1:24,000



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



Map 2-1c Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Coosa River Tracts (42.14 total acres)

Shelby County, AL
Smith Island (5.58 acres)
T. 20 S, R. 2 E, Sec. 24, Lot 1

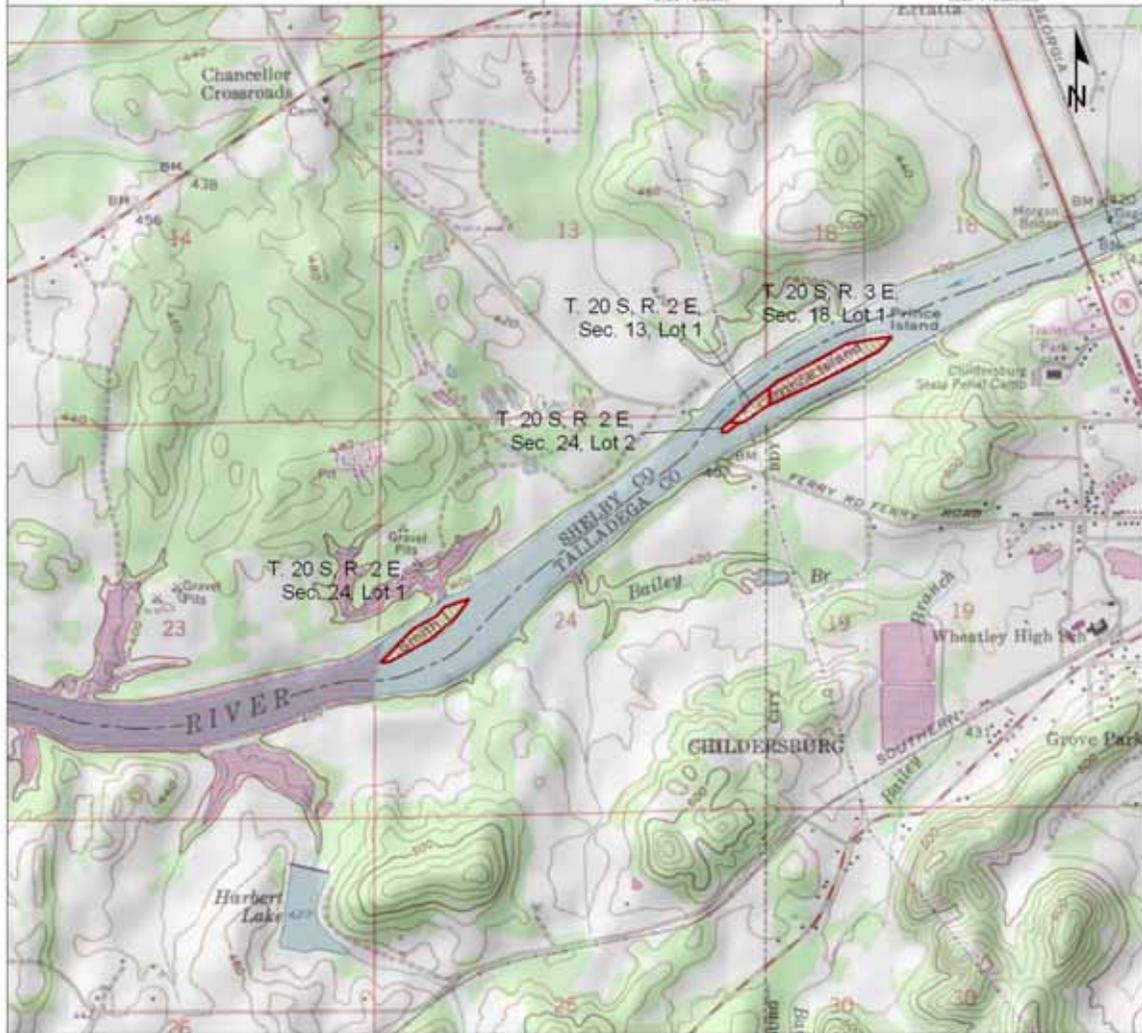
Talladega County, AL
Prince Island (12.74 acres)
T. 20 S, R. 2 E, Sec. 13, Lot 1
T. 20 S, R. 2 E, Sec. 24, Lot 2
T. 20 S, R. 3 E, Sec. 18, Lot 1

Huntsville Meridian

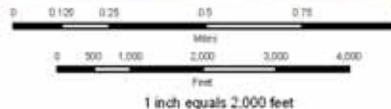
 Public Domain Lands

Projection: UTM, Zone 18 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2000 National Geographic Map



Scale 1:24,000



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



Table 2-7. Alternatives for Fort Morgan Beach Tracts (Map 2-2)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions proposed.	Promote establishment and retention of native coastal dune vegetative communities by planting native species and installing sand fence to protect existing dune habitat.	No specific actions are proposed.	
	Control invasive species through hand pulling, as needed.		
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.	Maintain existing Fish and Wildlife Habitat diversity. Actively promote the recovery of Federally-listed species such as Alabama beach mouse, piping plover/least turn, nesting sea turtles, and other special status species.	No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.	
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Construct protective two dune walk-over structures (approx. 300 feet each) and install sand fence to enhance and protect existing dune habitat.	No specific actions are proposed.	
	Reintroduce Alabama beach mice in suitable unoccupied habitat.		
	Monitor sea turtle nesting and mark active nests for protection to maximize nestling survivorship.		
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would be open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tracts would be closed to leasing to protect designated critical habitat for Alabama beach mouse.	The tracts would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) to protect habitat for Alabama beach mouse, piping plover/least tern, and sea turtle nesting habitat.	
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use, beach access, and travel compatible with other resource management objectives.			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would remain open to recreation use.	The tracts would be open to recreation compatible with habitat management including use of the beach and saltwater fishing.		
The tracts would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tracts would be designated as closed.		
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
Lots 24 (Section 25), 13 and 14 (Section 26), and 54 and 55 (Section 27) (Table 2-1 and Map 2-2) would be retained by BLM.	Lots 24 (Section 25), 13 and 14 (Section 26), and 54 and 55 (Section 27) (Table 2-1 and Map 2-2) would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with USFWS and other agencies and organizations.	Lots 24 (Section 25), 13 and 14 (Section 26), and 54 and 55 (Section 27) (Table 2-1 and Map 2-2) would be available for transfer to the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Secondarily, the lots would be available for disposal under the condition that uses would be consistent with the resource management goals and objectives and allowable uses and management actions established under this alternative. In the case of R&PP conveyance, use would be controlled through approval of and compliance with the plan of development. In the case of FLPMA disposal (e.g., sale), restrictive covenants would be required to protect sensitive resources.	The tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. Disposal may not be allowed if they would jeopardize Federally-listed species or designated critical habitat. Land exchanges to benefit Federally-listed species would be permitted.
Lots 24 (Section 25), 13 and 14 (Section 26), and 54 and 55 (Section 27) would remain open to ROW applications.	Lots 24 (Section 25), 13 and 14 (Section 26), and 54 and 55 (Section 27) would be avoidance areas for ROWs because of the presence of listed species and designated critical habitat.		
Lots 73 and 74 would be transferred to the USFWS as part of the Bon Secour NWR because they occur within the boundaries of the refuge.			

Map 2-2 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Ft. Morgan

Beach Tracts (28.70 total acres)

Baldwin County, AL

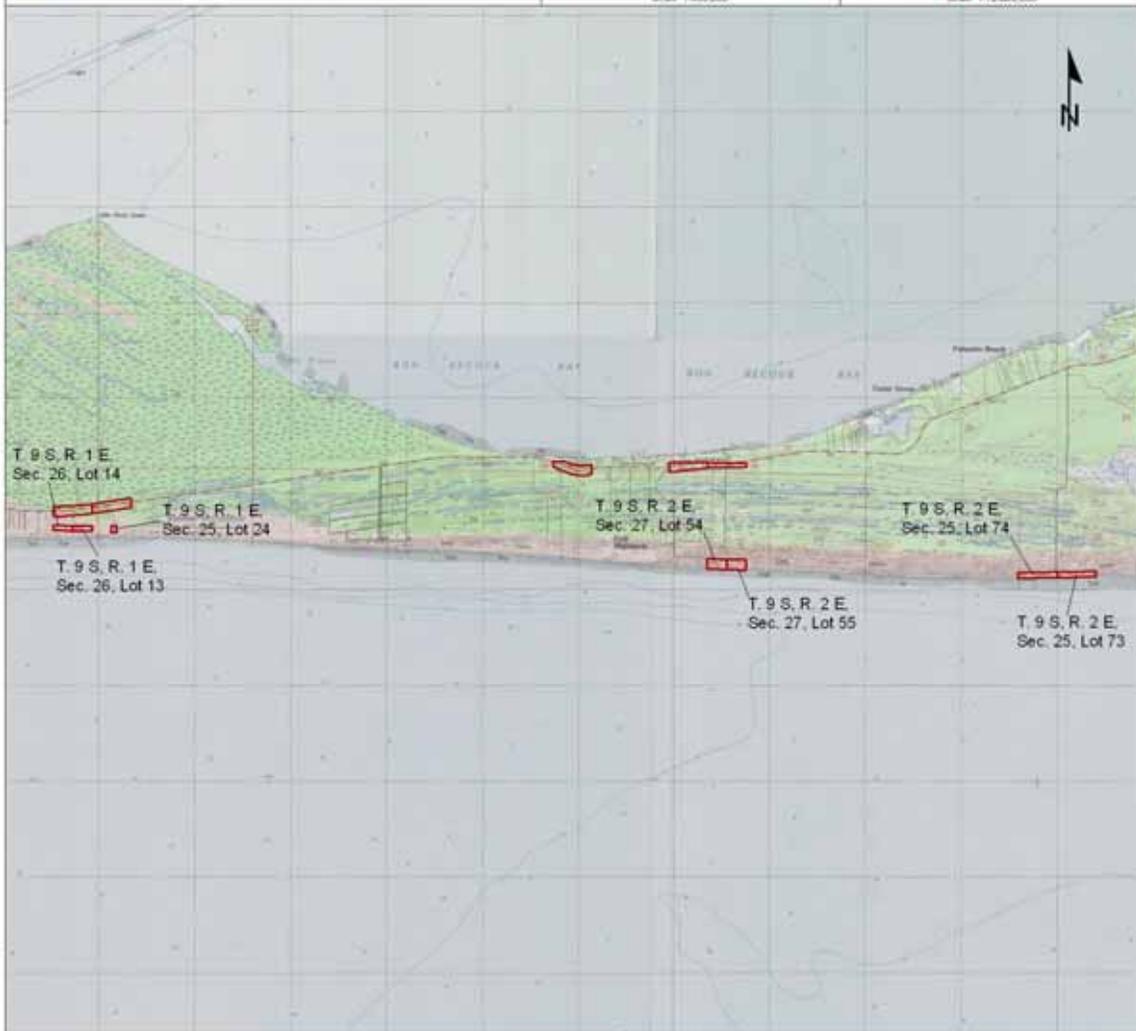
- T. 9 S., R. 1 E., Sec. 25, Lot 24
- T. 9 S., R. 1 E., Sec. 26, Lot 13
- T. 9 S., R. 1 E., Sec. 26, Lot 14
- T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 25, Lot 73
- T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 25, Lot 74
- T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 27, Lot 54
- T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 27, Lot 55

Projection: UTM, Zone 18 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

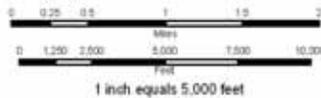
St. Stephens Meridian

 Public Domain Lands

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2000 National Geographic Maps



Scale 1:60,000



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



Table 2-8. Alternatives for Fort Morgan Highway Tracts (Map 2-3)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions proposed.	Remove invasive species such as cogon grass and Chinese tallow using an integrated program of hand removal and selective, hand application of herbicide.	No specific actions are proposed.	
	Establish baseline inventories of special status plant species.		
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.	Maintain existing fish and wildlife habitat diversity. Actively promote the recovery of the Federally-listed Alabama beach mouse and other endemic species, particularly migratory songbirds and raptors, using the flatwood, scrub, and wetland habitats occurring on these tracts.	No specific management goals and objectives are proposed.	
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Incorporate Lots 5 and 15 (29 acres) into future prescribed burns conducted on adjacent Bon Secour NWR land to improve habitat values for migratory birds and scrub endemics as needed, depending on resource conditions, and in cooperation with the FWS.	No specific actions are proposed.	
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tracts would be closed to leasing to protect designated critical habitat for Alabama beach mouse.	The tracts would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) to protect habitat for Alabama beach mouse and a 250-ft. buffer from wetlands and aquatic habitat.	
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would remain open to recreation use.	The tracts would be open to recreation compatible with habitat management including sightseeing and hiking.		

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
The tracts would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tracts would be designated as closed.		
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tracts would be retained by BLM.	The tracts would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with USFWS and other agencies and organizations.	The tracts would be available for transfer to the Bon Secour NWR. Secondly, the tracts would be available for disposal under the condition that uses would be consistent with the resource management goals and objectives and allowable uses and management actions established under this alternative. In the case of R&PP conveyance, use after disposal would be controlled through approval of and compliance with the plan of development. In the case of FLPMA disposal (e.g., sale), restrictive covenants would be required to protect sensitive resources.	The tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. Disposal may not be allowed if they would jeopardize Federally-listed species or designated critical habitat. Land exchanges to benefit Federally-listed species would be permitted.
The tracts would remain open to ROW applications.	Existing facilities within the highway ROW corridor would be allowed. New disturbance would be avoided because of the presence of Federally-listed species and designated critical habitat.		

Map 2-3 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

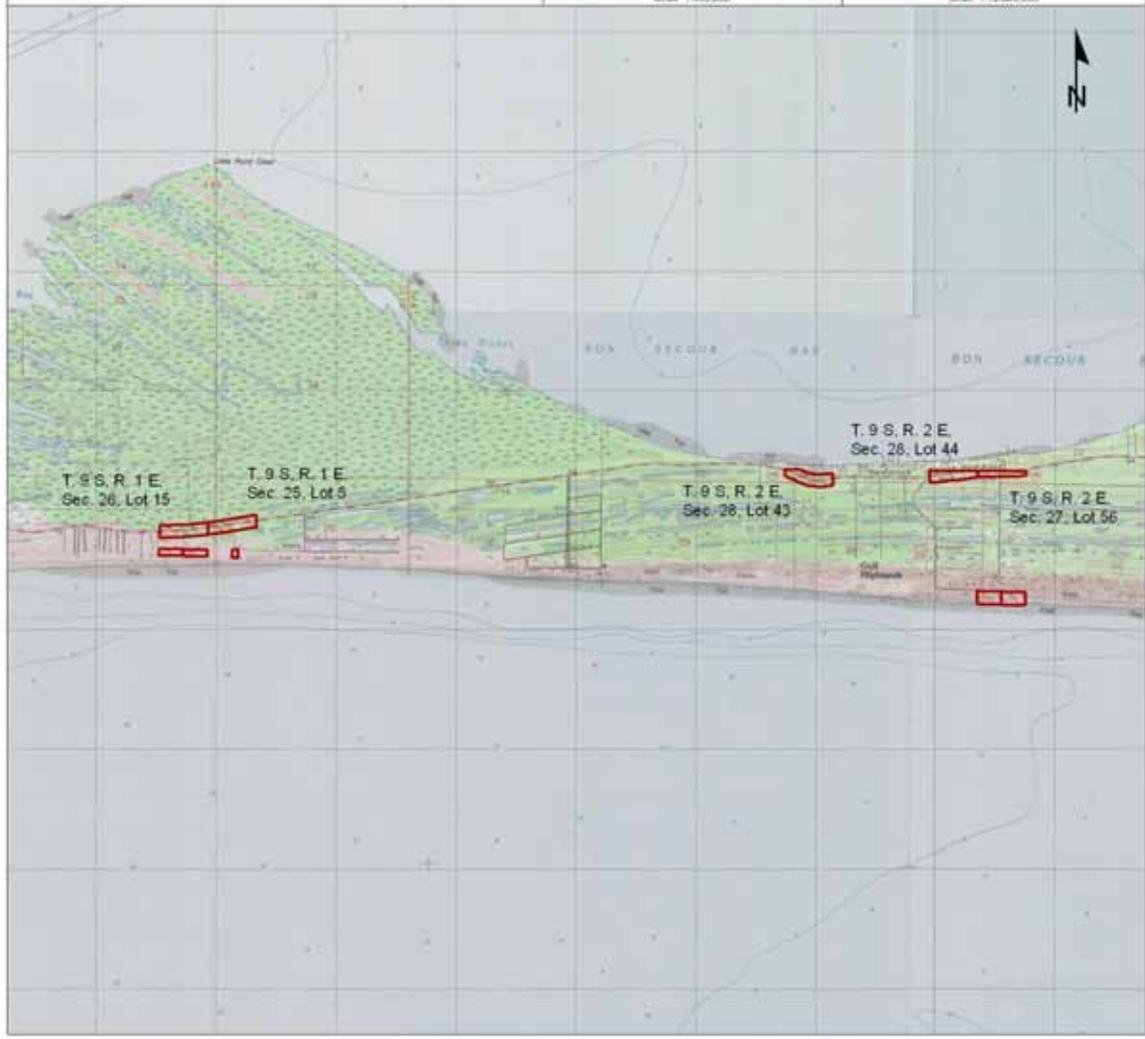
**Ft. Morgan
Highway Tracts (41.28 total acres)**
Baldwin County, AL
T. 9 S., R. 1 E., Sec. 25, Lot 5
T. 9 S., R. 1 E., Sec. 26, Lot 15
T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 27, Lot 56
T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 28, Lot 43
T. 9 S., R. 2 E., Sec. 28, Lot 44

St. Stephens Meridian

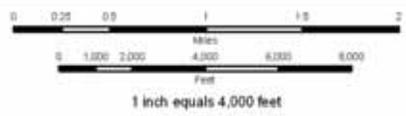
 Public Domain Lands

Projection: UTM, Zone 16 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPIC, 2000 National Geographic Maps



Scale 1:48,000



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Table 2-9. Alternatives for Fowl River Tract (Map 2-4)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
No specific goals and objectives are proposed.	Promote establishment and retention of native wetland and flatwood plant communities.		No specific goals and objectives are proposed.
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions proposed.	Remove invasive species such as mimosa (<i>Albizia julibrissin Durazz L.</i>) by hand and with selective, hand application of herbicide.		No specific actions are proposed.
	Establish baseline inventories to monitor plant communities.		
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Monitor fledgling success of active bald eagle nests.		No specific actions are proposed.
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation of a 1,000-ft. buffer from wetlands and aquatic habitat, and stipulations to protect bald eagle nesting and roosting habitat, as described in Appendix D.		The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation of a 250-ft. buffer from wetlands and aquatic habitat, and stipulations to protect bald eagle nesting and roosting habitat, as described in Appendix D.
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would remain open to recreation use.	The tract would be open to recreation use including access for fishing, canoeing and kayaking.		

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
The tract would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tract would be designated as closed.		
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be retained by BLM.	The tract would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with other agencies and organizations.	<p>The tract would be available for disposal under the condition that uses would be consistent with the resource management goals and objectives and allowable uses and management actions established under this alternative.</p> <p>In the case of R&PP conveyance, use after disposal would be controlled through approval of and compliance with the plan of development. In the case of FLPMA disposal (e.g., sale), restrictive covenants would be required to protect sensitive resources.</p>	The tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. Disposal may not be allowed if they would jeopardize Federally-listed species, associated with adjacent wetland/aquatic habitat. Land exchanges to benefit Federally-listed species would be permitted.
The tract would remain open to ROW applications.	The tract would be an avoidance area for ROWs to protect native vegetative communities and adjacent wetland/aquatic habitat.		

Map 2-4 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Fowl River Tract (41.73 total acres)
Mobile County, AL

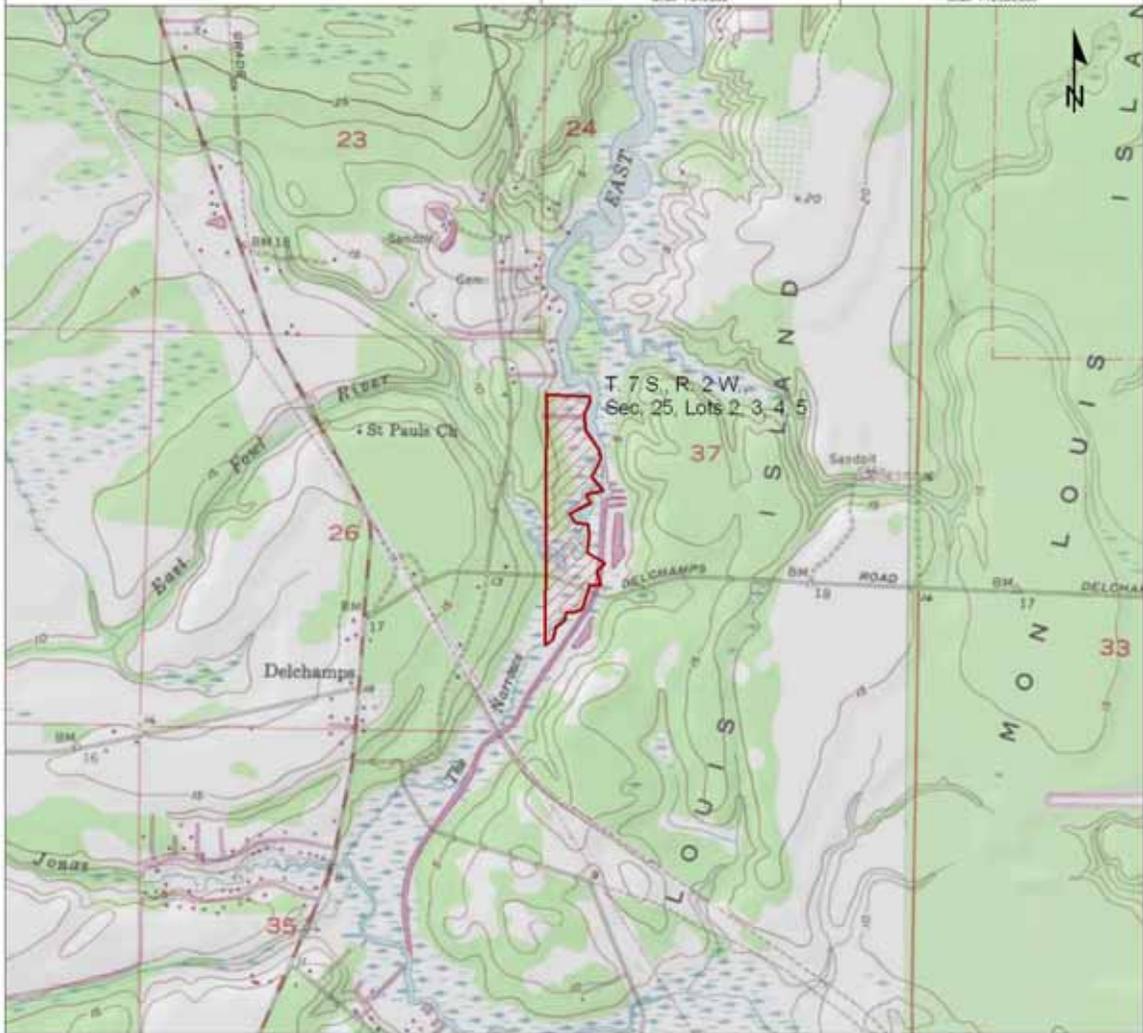
T. 7 S., R. 2 W.,
Sec. 25, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5

St. Stephens Meridian

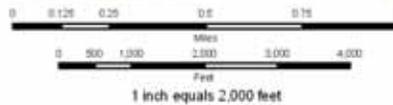
Projection: UTM, Zone 16 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

 Public Domain Lands

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2000 National Geographic Maps



Scale 1:24,000



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Table 2-10. Alternatives for Geneva Tract (Map 2-5)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions proposed.	Monitor and remove invasive species, as needed.	No specific actions are proposed.	
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Monitor changes in the tract that could affect Fish and Wildlife Habitat utilization.	No specific actions are proposed.	
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) of a 1,000-ft. buffer from aquatic habitat.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) of a 250-ft. buffer from aquatic habitat.	
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would remain open to recreation use.	The tract would be open to recreation use including canoeing, kayaking and fishing.		
The tract would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tract would be designated as closed.		
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be retained by BLM.	The tract would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tracts in partnership with other agencies and organizations.	The tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership.	
The tract would remain open to ROW applications.	The tract would be a ROW avoidance area because it is in a floodplain and critical habitat for Gulf sturgeon.		

Map 2-5 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Geneva Tract (0.95 total acres)
East Fork Choctawhatchee River
Geneva County, AL

T. 7 S., R. 2 W.
Sec. 25, Lot 2

Tallahassee Meridian

Projection: UTM, Zone 16 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

 Public Domain Lands

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPIC, 2000 National Geographic Maps

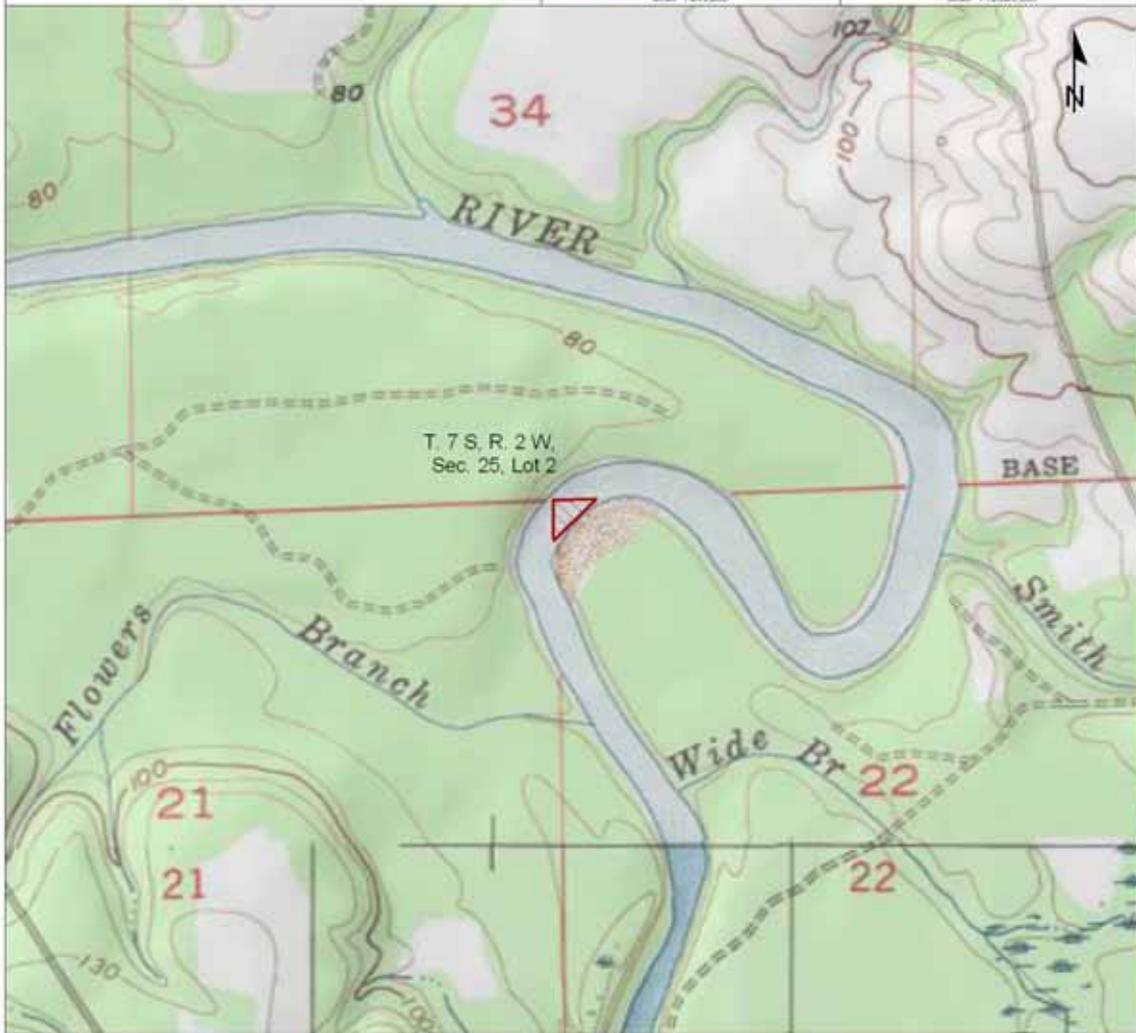


Scale: 1:240,000



Geneva County

Scale: 1:12,000,000



Scale 1:12,000



1 inch equals 1,000 feet

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of this data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.



Table 2-11. Alternatives for Jordan Lake Tract (Map 2-6)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions proposed.	Monitor and remove invasive species, such as mimosa, Chinese tallow, and cogon grass, as needed, by hand and with selective, hand application of herbicide.	No specific actions are proposed.	
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Conduct inventory of fish and wildlife and special status species to establish baseline diversity.	No specific actions are proposed.	
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) of a 1,000-ft. buffer from aquatic habitat.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) of a 250-ft. buffer from aquatic habitat.	
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would remain open to recreation use.	The tract would be open to recreation use including access to Jordan Lake for swimming and fishing.		
The tract would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tract would be designated as limited. Motorized vehicle use would be limited to State or county maintained roads or other transportation routes specifically designated by a BLM-issued ROW. Other motorized vehicle access would be limited to administrative use and emergency response.		

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be retained by BLM.	The tract would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tract in partnership with other agencies and organizations.	The tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership.	
The tract would remain open to ROW applications.	The tract would be open for ROWs due to adjacent development and uses. ROWs would be collocated if possible.		

Map 2-6 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Jordan Lake Tract (4.30 total acres)
Chilton County, AL

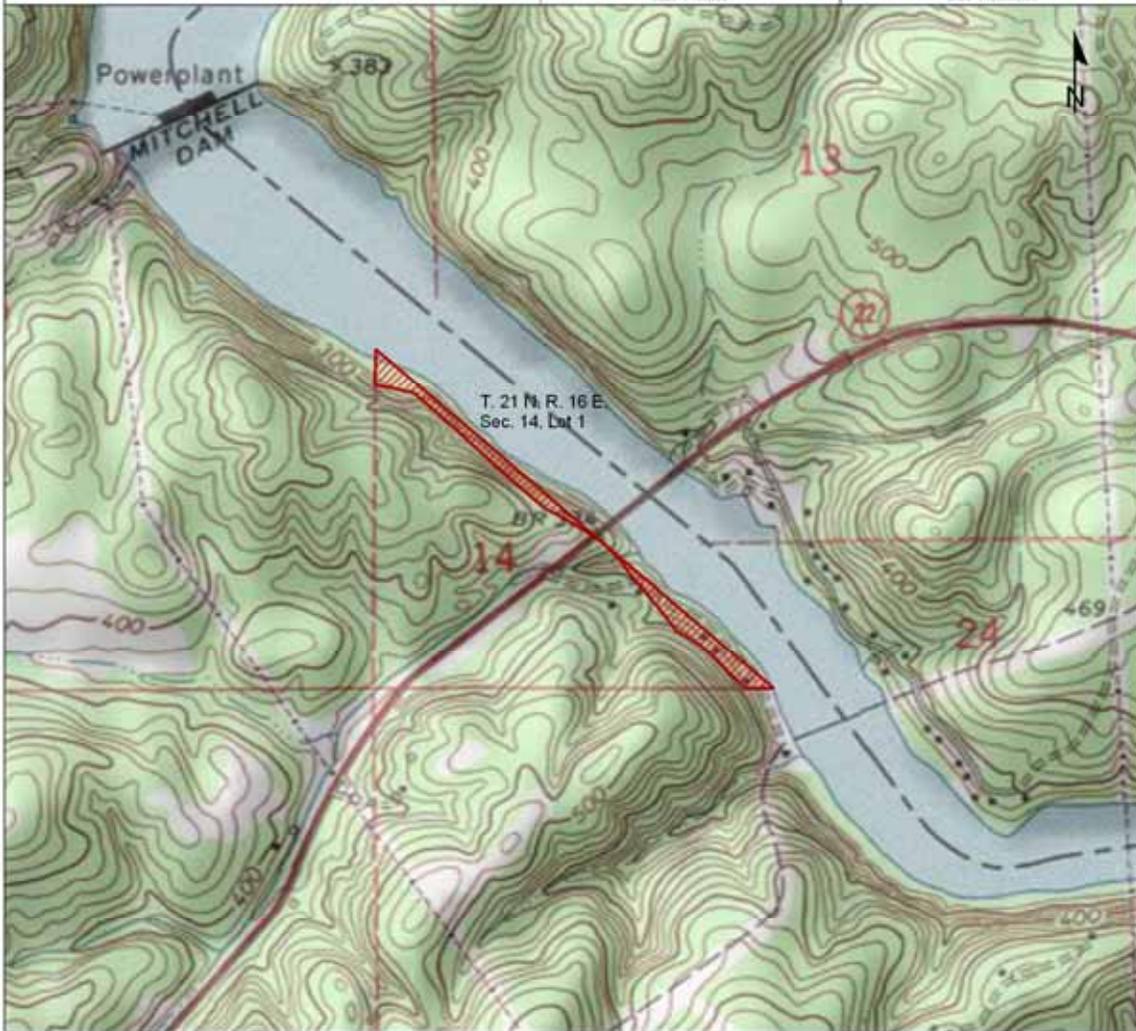
T. 21 N. R. 16 E.
Sec. 14, Lot 1

St. Stephens Meridian

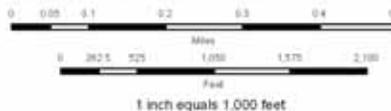
Projection: UTM, Zone 18 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

 Public Domain Lands

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
USGS - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2003 National Geographic Maps



Scale 1:12,000



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Table 2-12. Alternatives for Hancock County, Mississippi, Tract ¹ (Map 2-7)

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Vegetative Communities			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status plant species and imperiled plant communities.			
Control noxious and invasive plant species.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Monitor for early detection of invasive plant species such as cogon grass and Chinese tallow. If detected, invasive species would be removed by hand or through selective, hand application of herbicide.		No specific actions are proposed.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage vegetative communities to protect, preserve, or enhance Federally-listed and other special status fish and wildlife species and their habitat.			
No specific goals and objectives are proposed.	Protect and enhance the estuarine coastal wetland marshes in support of the Mississippi Coastal Preserve System.		No specific goals and objectives are proposed.
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
No specific actions are proposed.	Prescribed burns would be used, as needed, depending on resource conditions, and in cooperation with the State of Mississippi to promote marsh health.		No specific actions are proposed.
Minerals			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Provide for leasing, exploration, and development of BLM-administered non-USFS FMO, while protecting other resource values.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions.	The tract would be open to leasing and subject to standard lease terms and conditions and BMPs, except for an NSO stipulation (as described in Appendix D) for protection of Hancock County Marshes.		
Recreation and Travel Management			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Allow recreation use compatible with other resource management objectives.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would remain open to motorized vehicle use.	The tract would be open to recreation use including fishing and waterfowl hunting.		
The tract would remain open to recreation use, including motorized vehicle use.	The tract would be designated as limited to motorized boats in areas of open water. Other motorized vehicle use would be limited to administrative use and emergency response.		

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Lands and Realty			
Management Goals and Objectives			
Manage the land ownership pattern, withdrawal, and use of public lands to promote efficiency of management and protect important resource values.			
Make public lands available for purposes such as transportation routes or utilities, when consistent with other resource goals.			
Allowable Uses and Management Actions			
The tract would be retained by BLM.	The tract would be retained by BLM. BLM would pursue opportunities to manage the tract in partnership with other agencies and organizations.		The tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. Disposal may not be allowed if they would jeopardize Federally-listed species, associated with wetland/aquatic habitat. Land exchanges to benefit Federally-listed species would be permitted.
The tract would remain open to ROW applications.	The tract would be an avoidance area for ROWs to protect wetland habitat.		

1 These allowable uses and management actions would not occur unless the R&PP patent were to revert to BLM.

Map 2-7 Alabama and Mississippi RMP-EIS

Hancock County Tract (174.25 total acres)
Hancock County, MS

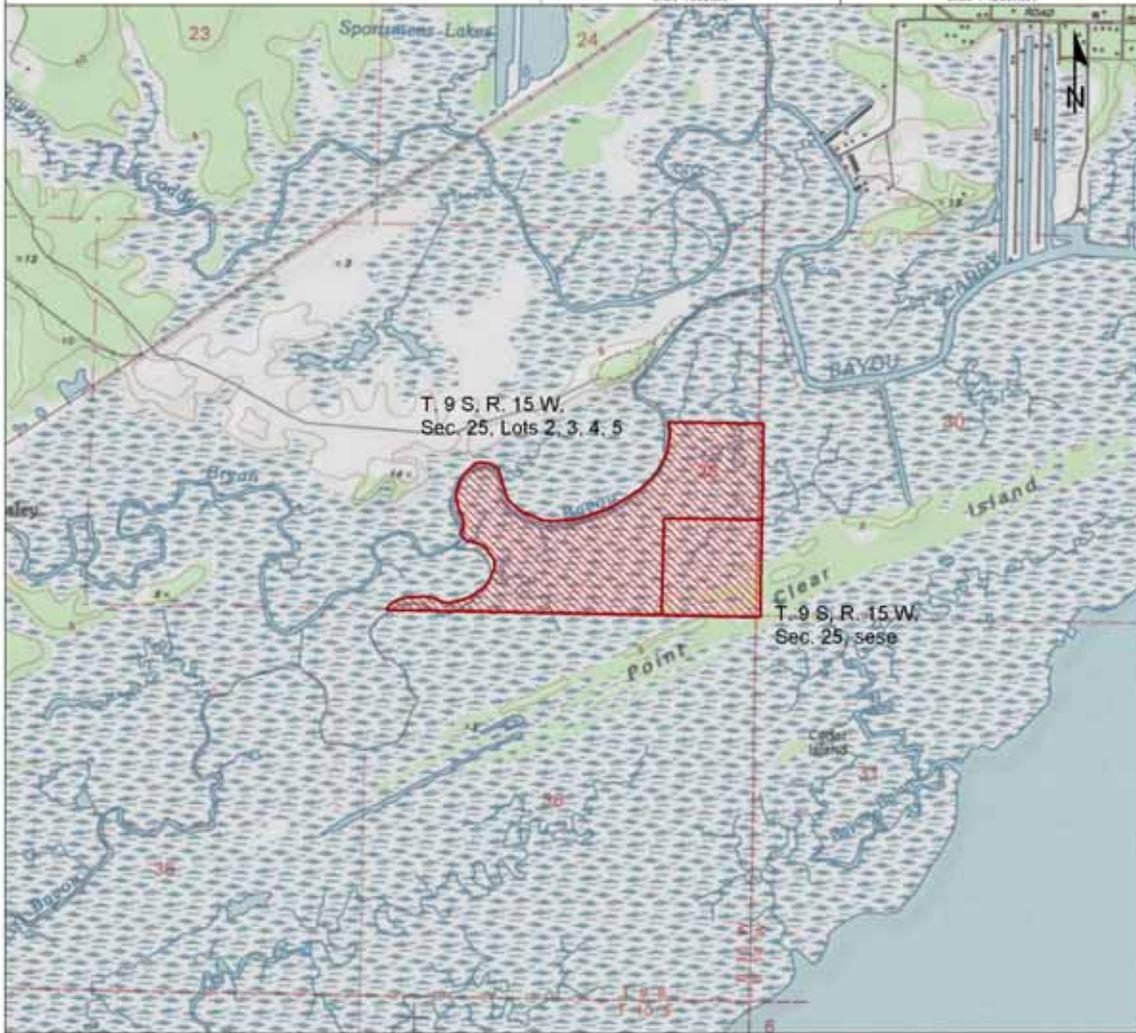
T. 9 S, R. 15 W, Sec. 25,
Lots 2, 3, 4, 5
T. 9 S, R. 15 W, Sec. 25,
SESE

Projection: UTM, Zone 18 North
Datum: North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27)

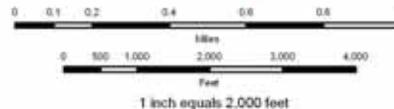
St. Stephens Meridian

 Public Domain Lands

Sources: BLM, Jackson Field Office
1:250,000 - National Elevation Data
Environmental Systems Research Institute
TOPOI, 2003 National Geographic Maps



Scale 1:24,000



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Table 2-13. Comparison of Impacts For Alabama

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Air Quality			
Wildfire could lead to air emissions. Suppression of all fires would result in short term localized impacts, but not anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions.			
Management actions on the surface tracts (159 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, would not be anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions.	Although more management actions are proposed for the surface tracts (159 acres), including vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat treatments, these actions would not be anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions. Since the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) would be managed as avoidance areas, there would be less potential for emissions associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.		Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) as avoidance areas would result in a decreased potential for emissions associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.
Estimated emissions from development of 20 oil and gas wells on non-USFS FMO would be responsible for less than one percent of emissions from the mineral development across Alabama for Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x), Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂), Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀), Carbon Monoxide (CO), and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Those emissions would likely occur over a dispersed area and would not cause any noticeable or measurable effect. Potential oil and gas development on some non-USFS FMO tracts would be in close proximity to the Sipsey Wilderness and the Birmingham nonattainment area. Oil and gas emissions in those tracts could impact wilderness air quality values and jeopardize attainment of ambient air quality. Based on expected emissions, air quality impacts would not be anticipated.			
Estimated emissions from 1.9 million tons of Federal coal produced annually over the next 20 years would be responsible for less than one percent of emissions from other mineral development in the Black Warrior Coal Basin for NO _x , SO ₂ , PM ₁₀ , CO, and VOCs.			
Soil Resources			
Management actions on the surface tracts (159 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, could impact soils through vegetation clearing activities and ground disturbance. Wind and water erosion, and subsequent loss in soil productivity would occur in disturbed areas where revegetation does not occur. These effects would be localized and short term in areas where revegetation is enhanced or permitted. The effect would be long term but localized if roads or structures were constructed on the	Management actions proposed for the surface tracts (159 acres), such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, could increase site-specific erosion in the short term. Sand deposition would be facilitated by planting native coastal dune vegetation as part of dune restoration activities after damage by major storms. Over the long term, improving vegetation communities and fish and wildlife habitat would reduce erosion and overland flows. Since the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva	Impacts from management actions proposed for the surface tracts (159 acres) would be the same as Alternative 2, except disposing the surface tracts from Federal ownership could increase the chances for subsequent development and associated impacts on soils. However, following disposal, development and use of the tract would be consistent with RMP objectives, which would prevent disposal-related impacts from occurring.	Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) as avoidance areas would result in a decreased potential for soil impacts associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1. Disposal the surface tracts from Federal ownership without conditions could increase chances for subsequent development and

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
tracts.	tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) would be managed as avoidance areas, there would be less potential for ground disturbance and increased erosion associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.		associated impacts on the tracts. Subsequent development of the tracts could result in impacts to soils from vegetation-clearing activities and construction ground disturbance, which could increase surface runoff and erosion.
<p>Oil and gas development could result in both a slight decline in soil productivity and an increase in surface runoff. Cut and fill areas to support well pads and access routes can contribute to local soil erosion. Except for 8,179 acres closed to leasing by other surface managing agencies, non-USFS FMO would be open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions (305,640 acres). The estimated development of 20 wells in Alabama over the next 20 years would disturb approximately 105 non-USFS FMO acres. Required reclamation by Federal and State laws and the minimal surface that might be disturbed would produce only localized effects on soils.</p> <p>Operation of the oil and gas wells could also impact the surrounding soils by potential contamination from accidental spills or improper management of hazardous materials or waste; however, Federal, State, and local regulations would require site characterization and corrective action to restore soil integrity and productivity.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 105 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (91,702 acres), and NSO (94,589 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which reduces disturbance to soils within the protected areas.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 105 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (117,506 acres), and NSO (43,239 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to soils within the protected areas. Under this alternative, the 1,000-foot NSO area around aquatic habitats identified in Alternative 2 would be reduced to 250-feet, which would reduce protections to soils within these areas. In most cases, this buffer is expected to prevent construction activities from increasing erosion to the point that sedimentation of local drainages and wetlands increases. In areas with slopes over 25 percent, additional measures may be needed to stabilize disturbed soils.</p>	
<p>Future coal development is not anticipated to disturb the surface; therefore, impacts to soils are not anticipated.</p>			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Water Resources			
<p>Management actions on the surface tracts (159 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, could result in short term and site-specific increases in erosion and surface run-off, which increases nutrient levels and turbidity and decreases water quality. Impacts would be short term in areas where revegetation was enhanced or permitted. The effect would be long term but localized if roads or structures were constructed on the tracts.</p>	<p>Management actions proposed for the surface tracts (159 acres), such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, could increase site-specific erosion, which increases nutrient levels and turbidity and decreases water quality in the short term. Over the long term, improving vegetation communities would reduce erosion and overland flows.</p> <p>Since the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) would be managed as avoidance areas, there would be less potential for ground disturbance and increased erosion associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1. No coastal wetland habitats or water bodies occur on or adjacent to the Fort Morgan Highway tracts. Development of additional transportation routes and ROW on the Jordan Lake tract could contribute to the already degrading water quality of the Coosa River.</p>		<p>Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama) as avoidance areas would result in a decreased potential for impacts to water resources associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.</p>
<p>Except for 8,179 acres closed to leasing by other surface managing agencies, non-USFS FMO would be open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions (305,640 acres). The estimated development of 20 wells in Alabama over the next 20 years would disturb approximately 105 non-USFS FMO acres. Required reclamation by Federal and State laws and the minimal surface that might be disturbed would produce only localized effects on water resources.</p> <p>Oil and gas development could result in surface run-off, which increases nutrient levels and turbidity and decreases water quality. Leakage of drill fluids, hazardous waste spills, or leakage from reserve pits could be introduced into the ground water as well. Additionally, access roads and well pads can alter the local hydrology reducing surface flow to mesic areas and diverting or</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 105 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. A 1,000-foot NSO buffer around aquatic habitats and applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (91,702 acres), and NSO (94,589 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to water resources within the protected areas. This stipulation could be applied to an estimated 90,930 acres or 29 percent of the non-USFS FMO available for leasing in Alabama. In most cases, this buffer is expected to prevent construction activities from increasing the sedimentation of local drainages and wetlands.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 105 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (117,506 acres), and NSO (43,239 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to water resources within the protected areas. Under this alternative, the 1,000-foot NSO area around aquatic habitats identified in Alternative 2 would be reduced to 250-feet, which would allow development to occur in close proximity to water resources and the potential for impacts to occur. In most cases, this buffer is expected to prevent construction activities from increasing the sedimentation of local drainages and wetlands. In areas with slopes over 25 percent, additional measures may be needed to stabilize disturbed soils above wetlands or aquatic habitats to the point they aren't impacted by increased sedimentation.</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>degrading surface water. Because surface discharge of produced water would be a permitted activity requiring standards of water quality, direct impacts to water quality from the disposal of water produced from oil and gas production on non-USFS FMO would be minimized.</p>			
<p>Coal development in the Warrior Basin would involve mining of existing underground coal mines, which would further increase the potential for groundwater contamination. Migration of contaminants into the surrounding soils and aquifers could degrade groundwater quality and thereby affect wells and springs that may serve household and domestic uses.</p>			
<p>Vegetative Communities</p>			
<p>Management actions on the surface tracts (159 acres) could result in surface-disturbing activities that would impact vegetative communities. These actions would result in vegetation-clearing and disturbance associated with construction, which could alter vegetation communities. Wind and water erosion in disturbed areas could impede the regrowth of vegetation, allow noxious weeds to grow, and potentially deteriorate aquatic habitats. Retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures provided by Federal law and agency policies that would provide adequate protection of vegetation.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be reduced under this alternative compared to Alternative 1 due to limitation on motorized recreation, managing for native vegetation and habitat, and managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts as avoidance areas for ROW. Impacts from retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management would more directly benefit vegetation by restoring and maintaining continuity and composition of habitat than anticipated under Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 2. Impacts from disposing surface tracts out of Federal ownership consistent with resource management objectives would be the same as Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 1. Disposing surface tracts out of Federal ownership without conditions for management and use after disposal could increase the potential for subsequent development and associated impacts to vegetation. Such development could eliminate and fragment vegetation communities, leaving small, isolated populations that are more vulnerable to habitat modification and degradation.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>The estimated 20 wells to be developed in Alabama over the life of this plan would disturb approximately 105 non-USFS FMO acres. Although 305,640 acres are open to leasing, the potential is low for impacts to sensitive vegetation communities because leasing stipulations would be developed as appropriate to protect for vegetation.</p>	<p>Impacts from fluid mineral leasing management actions on split estate would be the same as Alternative 1. However, Alternative 2 uses more stringent leasing stipulations in managing all non-USFS FMO. Additional protections would be applied to 91,702 acres managed as CSU, 94,589 acres as NSO, and 8,297 acres closed to leasing.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternatives 3 and 4 would be similar to those of Alternative 2 except buffers for aquatic species and protections of Alabama beach mouse habitat would be reduced. Stipulations would be applied to 117,506 acres managed as CSU, 43,239 acres as NSO, and 8,179 acres closed to leasing.</p>	
<p>Future coal development is not anticipated to disturb the surface; therefore, impacts to vegetative communities are not anticipated.</p>			
<p>Fish and Wildlife</p>			
<p>Management actions on the surface tracts (159 acres) could result in surface-disturbing activities. These actions would result in vegetation-clearing activities and disturbance associated with construction, which could displace wildlife and alter vegetation, habitat, and forage components important to wildlife in localized areas. This could impair species viability and reduce habitat quality for a variety of species. Wind and water erosion in disturbed areas could impede the regrowth of vegetation, allow noxious weeds to grow, and potentially deteriorate aquatic habitats.</p> <p>Retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures provided by Federal law and agency policies that would provide adequate protection of wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be reduced under this alternative compared to Alternative 1 due to limitation on motorized recreation, managing for existing wildlife diversity and undertaking actions to manage for sensitive wildlife species, and managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts as avoidance areas for transportation project ROWs.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management would more directly benefit wildlife by restoring and maintaining continuity and composition of habitat than anticipated under Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Impacts from disposing surface tracts out of Federal ownership consistent with resource management objectives would be the same as Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Disposing surface tracts out of Federal ownership without conditions for management and use after disposal could increase the potential for subsequent development and associated impacts to vegetation. Such development could eliminate and fragment wildlife habitat, leaving small, isolated populations that are more vulnerable to habitat modification and degradation.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>The estimated 20 wells to be developed in Alabama over the life of this plan would disturb approximately 105 non-USFS FMO acres. Although 305,640 acres are open to leasing, the potential is low for impacts to sensitive wildlife because leasing stipulations would be developed as appropriate to protect wildlife.</p>	<p>Impacts from mineral leasing management actions on split estate would be the same as Alternative 1. However, Alternative 2 uses more stringent leasing stipulations in managing all non-USFS FMO with exception, waiver, and modification criteria applied as determined through agency direction. Additional protections would be applied to 91,702 acres managed as CSU, 94,589 acres as NSO, and 8,297 acres closed to leasing.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternatives 3 and 4 would be similar to those of Alternative 2 except buffers for aquatic species and protections of Alabama beach mouse habitat would be reduced. Stipulations would be applied to 117,506 acres managed as CSU, 43,239 acres as NSO, and 8,179 acres closed to leasing.</p>	
<p>Special Status Species</p>			
<p>Lack of specific areas and species being managed could increase the potential for exotic, invasive species to become established or spread on BLM surface tracts. Cogon grass at the Fort Morgan Highway tracts, in particular, has the potential to alter Alabama beach mouse critical habitat as it forms dense stands displacing native herbaceous plants and potentially increasing fire frequency and intensity.</p> <p>The coastal dune habitat associated with the Fort Morgan beach tracts would continue to be trampled at traditional beach access points damaging habitat for Alabama beach mouse. Dispersed recreation use of the Coosa River tracts has the potential to cause bald eagles to abandon nest sites.</p> <p>Retaining the surface tracts in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures provided by Federal law and agency policies that would</p>	<p>Alabama beach mouse and nesting shore birds would benefit from plantings of native coastal dune vegetation on the Fort Morgan beach tracts after damaging storms. These plantings promote sand deposition and help to reestablish the dunes more quickly. On the Fowl River, Coosa River, and Fort Morgan Highway tracts, woody exotic, invasive species such as Chinese tallow and Chinese privet would be removed by hand and stump treated with approved herbicides.</p> <p>Alabama beach mouse and nesting shore birds at the Fort Morgan Beach tracts would benefit from the installation of two dune walk-overs which would eliminate damaging foot traffic, and allow dunes and vegetation to recover at traditional public access areas at Veterans Road and Mobile Road.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management</p>	<p>Impacts from surface tract management, including vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat, would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Under this alternative, the Geneva and Jordon Lake tracts would be transferred out of Federal ownership without conditions. These tracts are adjacent to Gulf sturgeon critical habitat, but no changes of use are anticipated if it were transferred to private ownership that would affect critical habitat.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface tract management, including vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat, would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>The transfer of the BLM surface tracts to private ownership are likely to result in loss of habitat for the Alabama beach mouse, piping plover, snowy plover, and bald eagle, as well as potential habitat for Alabama red-belly turtle. Any development of the beach tracts would result in the direct loss of occupied critical habitat for the Alabama beach mouse. Development of the Fort Morgan Highway tracts are likely to result in the loss of important scrub habitats designated as critical habitat. Because the Fort Morgan Beach and Highway tracts are designated critical habitat, USFWS would have to authorize a taking permit through the Section 7 process of the ESA to before such transfers could be approved.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
provide adequate protection of special status species.	would more directly benefit special status species by restoring and maintaining continuity and composition of habitat than anticipated under Alternative 1.		
Oil and gas development on non-USFS FMO in Alabama is expected to result in the disturbance of 105 acres of habitat, any of which could occur in areas supporting special status species. Impacts to special status species could include the direct loss of habitat and/or degradation of aquatic or wetland habitats for the Alabama beach mouse, loggerhead sea turtle, piping plover, snowy plover, Wilson’s plover, gopher tortoise, Red-cockaded woodpecker, bald eagle, and special status fish species. Section 7 consultations with the USFWS would be required prior to BLM permitting any action that could adversely affect these Federally-listed species or designated habitat, and subsequent actions would comply with the conditions established by any subsequent biological opinions (BOs).	Although the number of wells (20) and acres disturbed (105) would remain the same under this alternative, lease stipulations would shift surface-disturbing activities away from sensitive habitats with potential to support special status species. The coastline and all critical habitat for the Alabama beach mouse, including upland scrub sites, would be excluded from leasing. This would avoid potential impacts to Alabama beach mouse, nesting sea turtles, piping plover and other coastal special status species, including least tern, American oystercatcher, and Wilson’s plover.	Impacts from mineral development would be the same as Alternative 2, except the aquatic and wetland buffer would be reduced to 250-feet. In areas where slopes exceed 10 percent, the buffer could be extended up to 600-feet to provide adequate protection. In most cases, this buffer is expected to prevent construction activities from increasing the sedimentation of local drainages and wetlands. The coastal no lease areas would be replaced with a 600-foot NSO buffer. This change could affect nesting sea turtles, piping plover, and all critical habitat for Alabama beach mouse, including adjacent upland scrub habitats. Although no surface disturbance would occur on non-USFS FMO or BLM surface tracts, offsite directional drilling to target these Federal minerals would be permitted under this alternative.	
Wildland Fire and Ecology			
Fire response and fuels treatments would apply to the 159 acres of BLM-administered surface land. Wildland fire management would minimize damage to life, public safety, and developments in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and to natural resource values. Allowing prescribed burning on a case-by-case basis would allow for a reduction in hazardous fuel conditions, improving ability to suppress wildfires while maintaining disturbance levels to which vegetation communities have adapted.			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>Allowing vegetation manipulation to meet resources objectives and habitat improvements under standard management common to all alternatives would maintain natural fuel conditions across the surface tracts. This would maintain natural disturbance regimes and decrease the frequency and intensity of wildland fires and allow fires to be more easily controlled.</p> <p>Dispersed recreation use would introduce additional ignition sources through human use of natural environments, which could increase the probability of wildland fire occurrence. This would be more prevalent in areas that are more accessible.</p> <p>While ROW actions could increase suppression costs, the aspects of ROW related to vegetation clearing and the potential for increased accessibility could reduce suppression costs.</p>	<p>Vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions, such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, on the surface tracts would reduce the potential for changes in the vegetation communities from invasive species. As a result, the natural fire regimes would be maintained or restored. This would improve the ability to manage wildland fire in its natural role through application of prescribed fires.</p> <p>The potential for increased wildland fire occurrence would decrease compared to Alternative 1 because travel on the surface tracts would be designated as closed or limited to motorized travel.</p> <p>Since the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts would be managed as avoidance areas (a total of 114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership in Alabama), there would be less potential for wildfire impacts associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.</p>		<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>If tracts were transferred from Federal ownership, the responsibility for suppression of wildfires would be eliminated, decreasing suppression costs in wildland fire events.</p>
<p>Development of 20 oil and gas wells introduces additional ignitions sources throughout the non-USFS FMO, increasing the potential of wildland fire occurrence and introducing infrastructure that requires protection in wildland fire events. Disturbance associated with development could provide increased accessibility for fire suppression equipment, and provide fuel breaks. These impacts would not occur on the 8,179 acres closed to oil and gas development.</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except impacts would not occur on the 94,589 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (8,297 acres).</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except impacts would not occur on the 43,239 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (8,179 acres).</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Cultural Resources			
BLM would continue to protect cultural resources from disturbance, damage, or loss from authorized uses through project avoidance or mitigation, including data recovery if necessary. As inventories are conducted, more cultural sites would be identified. Inventories and adherence to law, regulation and policy would protect most cultural sites; however, inadvertent damage of undiscovered sites would remain a possibility.			
<p>Dispersed recreation and standard vegetation treatments could result in inadvertent damage to cultural resources.</p> <p>Ground-disturbing activities associated with ROW construction and maintenance could impact cultural resources.</p> <p>Retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership (whether BLM administered or USFWS administered) would provide protection of cultural resource sites and preserve the setting of sites.</p>	<p>Vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management would increase impacts to cultural resources due to implementing vegetation treatments to reduce invasive species and improve habitat.</p> <p>Limiting or closing motorized vehicle use on the surface tracts would increase protection of cultural sites.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership (BLM or USFWS) would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts as avoidance areas for transportation and ROW would reduce the potential for impacts to cultural sites in these areas.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface tract management--including vegetative communities, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and ROW management actions--would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making surface tracts available for disposal from Federal ownership could result in the removal of cultural properties from Federal ownership and the associated protections by laws, regulations and policies. However, applying conditions and restrictive covenants on management and use after disposal, damage to previously undetected cultural resources could be mitigated.</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach (Lots 13, 14, 24, 54 and 55), Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, Geneva, and Jordan Lake tracts available for disposal from Federal ownership could result in the removal of cultural properties from Federal ownership and the associated protections by laws, regulations and policies. Disposing the tracts without any specified management would increase the potential for damage or loss of previously undetected cultural resources after the transfer.</p>
<p>Minerals management actions could impact cultural resources. An appropriate level of cultural resource survey would need to be conducted prior to disturbance. Cultural resources on 8,179 non-USFS FMO acres closed to oil and gas leasing would be protected from oil and gas development.</p>	<p>Cultural resources on 8,297 non-USFS FMO acres closed to oil and gas leasing would be protected from oil and gas development, as would cultural sites on 94,589 non-USFS FMO acres managed for NSO.</p>	<p>Cultural resources on 8,179 non-USFS FMO acres closed to oil and gas leasing would be protected from oil and gas development, as would cultural sites on 43,239 non-USFS FMO acres managed for NSO.</p>	
<p>Based on the RFD, production of 37.6 million tons of coal from pre-existing underground mines over 20 years would not result in new surface disturbance; therefore, no impacts to cultural resources would be anticipated from coal development.</p>			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Visual Resources			
<p>Allowing recreation activities including motorized vehicle use on the surface tracts could result in decreased visual quality over time.</p> <p>If existing utility and road ROWs that bisect the Fort Morgan Highway and Jordan Lake tracts were expanded or otherwise modified, visual quality would be diminished through increased use of these ROWs.</p>	<p>Actions to improve vegetation communities and wildlife habitat would temporarily diminish visual quality; however, visual quality would be improved in the long term.</p> <p>Limiting motorized vehicle use on the surface tracts could diminish impacts described in Alternative 1.</p> <p>Managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts as avoidance areas for ROWs would help to retain the visual quality of the area by reducing the potential for development activities to occur in these areas.</p> <p>Managing the Fort Morgan Highway and Jordan Lake tracts as available for ROW corridors could diminish the visual quality of these areas.</p>	<p>Impacts from limiting motorized vehicle use and actions to improve vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Although the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach (Lots 13, 14, 24, 54, and 55), Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, Geneva, and Jordan Lake tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership, visual quality would be protected.</p>	<p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach (Lots 13, 14, 24, 54, and 55), Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, Geneva, and Jordan Lake tracts available for disposal from Federal ownership could diminish visual quality, if the tracts were subsequently developed.</p>
<p>Mineral leasing and subsequent development in could result in the removal of vegetation; construction of access roads, well pads, and other infrastructure; introduction of drilling equipment; and associated dust emissions. These effects would all diminish the visual quality of the area.</p>	<p>Mineral leasing and subsequent development in could result in the removal of vegetation; construction of access roads, well pads, and other infrastructure; introduction of drilling equipment; and associated dust emissions. These effects would all diminish the visual quality of the area. Closed and NSO stipulations on 33 percent of the non-USFS FMO would prevent these impacts.</p>	<p>Mineral leasing and subsequent development in could result in the removal of vegetation; construction of access roads, well pads, and other infrastructure; introduction of drilling equipment; and associated dust emissions. These effects would all diminish the visual quality of the area. Closed and NSO stipulations on 16 percent of the non-USFS FMO would prevent these impacts.</p>	
Minerals			
<p>No impacts to oil and gas development would be anticipated from management of surface tracts.</p>			
<p>This alternative would have the least restrictions on oil and gas exploration and development, with more than 96 percent (305,6640 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject</p>	<p>Applying the conservation measures as lease stipulations and BMPs (Appendix D) could also increase exploration and development costs. This alternative would be the most</p>	<p>Applying the conservation measures as lease stipulations and BMPs (Appendix D) could also increase exploration and development costs. Compared to Alternative 2, lease stipulations would be less stringent under this alternative, with approximately 14 percent (43,239 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject to major constraints and less than 3 percent</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>to the standard lease terms and conditions. The remaining 8,179 acres (approximately 4 percent) would be closed to leasing due to restrictions placed by other Federal surface management agencies. Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 20 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>	<p>restrictive on oil and gas exploration and development, with 30 percent (94,589 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject to major constraints and approximately 3 percent (8,297 acres) closed to leasing. The remaining 208,841 acres would be open to leasing, subject to the standard lease terms and conditions (37 percent of non-USFS FMO) or open to leasing, subject to minor constraints (29 percent of non-USFS FMO). Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 20 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>	<p>(8,179 acres) closed to leasing. The remaining 260,083 acres would be open to leasing, subject to the standard lease terms and conditions (45 percent of non-USFS FMO) or open to leasing, subject to minor constraints (37 percent of non-USFS FMO). Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 20 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>	
<p>Recreation and Travel Management</p>			
<p>Although Lots 73 and 74 of the Fort Morgan Beach tracts would be transferred to USFWS, these lots would remain within the boundaries of the Bon Secour NWR (where they are currently, but are not managed by the USFWS).</p>			
<p>Allowing motorized travel uses on all surface tracts could result in conflicts between motorized recreationists and recreationists seeking a more natural setting or experience.</p> <p>If existing ROW that bisect the Fort Morgan Highway and Jordan Lake tracts were expanded or otherwise modified, the recreation experience would be diminished.</p> <p>Retaining the surface tracts in Federal ownership would maintain access to recreational activity.</p>	<p>Actions to improve vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat would temporarily diminish the recreation experience. The recreation experience would be improved in the long term.</p> <p>Continuing to allow recreation use on the surface tracts would result in impacts similar to those described under Alternative 1. However, since motorized vehicle use would be limited or closed, more non-motorized recreation opportunities would be increased while there could be a loss of motorized recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining the surface tracts in Federal ownership would be the same as Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface tract management--including vegetative communities, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and ROW management actions--would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining the surface tracts in Federal ownership would be similar to Alternative 1.</p> <p>Although the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach (Lots 13, 14, 24, 54, and 55), Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, Geneva, and Jordan Lake tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership, recreational settings would be protected, although access could be reduced if not specifically included in the conditions for use or restrictive covenants.</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach (Lots 13, 14, 24, 54, and 55), Fort Morgan Highway, Fowl River, Geneva, and Jordan Lake tracts available for disposal from Federal ownership could reduce access for recreational opportunities.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
	<p>Managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts as avoidance areas for ROWs would help retain recreational opportunities. Making the Fort Morgan Highway and Jordan Lake tracts available for utility and road ROW corridors could diminish the quality of the recreation experience.</p>		
<p>Since approximately 105 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 20 oil and gas wells on non-USFS FMO there could be a decrease in nature-based recreational opportunities due to conflicts with the developments. However, stipulations could indirectly protect the recreational resources in areas where development would be precluded (8,179 acres).</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except stipulations could indirectly protect the recreational resources on the 94,589 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (8,297 acres).</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except stipulations could indirectly protect the recreational and visual resources on the 43,239 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (8,179 acres).</p>	
Lands and Realty			
<p>Transferring Lots 73 and 74 of the Fort Morgan Beach tracts to the USFWS as part of the Bon Secour NWR would facilitate Federal management of the lots.</p>			
<p>Keeping the 159 acres of the surface tracts open to ROW applications would not impact the lands and realty program. Retaining the surface tracts under BLM administration would not allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership.</p>	<p>Managing the Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fowl River, and Geneva tracts (114 acres or 71 percent BLM surface ownership) as avoidance areas for ROWs could impose design and siting requirements and associated costs on new ROW or amended or renewed ROW at existing sites. There would be an increased potential for requests for new or amended and renewed ROW at existing sites to be denied. Making the Fort Morgan Highway and Jordan Lake tracts available for ROW would accommodate access and efficient energy supply, and minimize</p>	<p>ROW management actions and associated impacts to lands and realty would be the same as Alternative 2. The Coosa River and Fowl River tracts would be available for disposal with conditions. This would allow opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership, but would restrict future use of the tracts. All of the Fort Morgan Beach and Fort Morgan Highway tracts would be available for transfer to the USFWS as part of the Bon Secour NWR. This would facilitate Federal management of the tracts, but would</p>	<p>ROW management actions and associated impacts to lands and realty would be the same as Alternative 2. The Coosa River, Fort Morgan Beach, Fort Morgan Highway, and Fowl River tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. This would allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership without specified conditions on future use of the tracts; however, disposal would not be allowed if it would jeopardize Federally-listed species or</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
	<p>additional costs.</p> <p>Retaining the surface tracts under BLM administration and pursuing partnerships with other agencies and organizations could allow for management opportunities for other agencies and organizations, but would not allow for non-Federal ownership opportunities.</p>	<p>not allow opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership. The Geneva and Jordan Lake tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership, which would allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership without specified conditions on future use of the tracts.</p>	<p>designated critical habitat, which could limit some disposals. The Geneva and Jordan Lake tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership, which would allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership without specified conditions on future use of the tracts.</p>
Social and Economic			
<p>Recreation and travel, fish and wildlife habitat, and vegetative communities management actions would not cause changes in the economic characteristics (employment, income, and industries) or quality of social assets (housing, education, values and attitudes).</p> <p>BLM lands would remain in Federal ownership. Lands and realty actions would not cause changes in the socioeconomic characteristics.</p>	<p>This alternative includes active invasive species management on three BLM land tracts. Impacts from these actions on the economic indicators would not be anticipated from these types of vegetation management actions. Stakeholders who value the protection of native vegetation and habitats will likely prefer this alternative over the other alternatives.</p> <p>Socioeconomic impacts from recreation and travel, lands and realty, and fish and wildlife management actions would be the same as those under Alternative 1 since minimal changes are anticipated.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface tract management--including vegetative communities, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation and travel management actions--would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Under Alternative 3, a portion of the Fort Morgan Beach tracts would be transferred to the USFWS and a number of dispersed BLM surface land tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with specified conditions on management and use after disposal to meet prescribed resource objectives. Since the types of activities on these lands are not likely to change considerably, there would be minimum impact to socioeconomic characteristics under this alternative. However, stakeholders who feel that the retention of Federal ownership is important to maintain preservationist and open space values might be negatively impacted by this alternative.</p>	<p>Recreation and travel, fish and wildlife habitat, and vegetative communities management actions would not cause changes in the economic characteristics (employment, income, and industries) or quality of social assets (housing, education, values and attitudes).</p> <p>Under Alternative 4, a portion of the Fort Morgan Beach tracts would be transferred to the USFWS and a number of dispersed BLM surface land tracts would be available for disposal from Federal ownership without conditions on management and use after disposal. Since development could be allowed on these properties, it is possible that the property tax revenues to the local counties would increase more than the Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes, economically benefiting the counties and the state. It is possible that the private development of these tracts could slightly increase employment and income in these areas. Social indicators, such as housing, education, and cost of living are not expected to be influenced by the minimal development.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
			Stakeholders who feel that the retention of Federal ownership is important to maintain preservationist and open space values will likely be negatively impacted by this alternative. Those stakeholders who feel the development of these lands is a better use of these surface tracts lands would likely prefer this alternative.
<p>Since only 20 fluid mineral wells would likely be drilled with standard lease terms and conditions over the 20-year planning period, there would be minimal economic impacts from these activities. There would be minimal changes -- a potential slight increase in employment or income as compared with the current situation. Social indicators such as housing, education, and cost of living would not be anticipated to change under this alternative. Attitudes and values of some stakeholders are likely to be impacted by this alternative.</p>	<p>The same number of wells and acres of surface disturbance are anticipated under this alternative. This alternative provides for the most environmental stipulations on oil and gas leasing of these minerals. Economic and social indicators are likely to be similar to those under Alternative 1. There will be some impacts to stakeholders: stakeholders who believe that oil and gas leasing conditions should be imposed on development and production to mitigate environmental impacts would prefer this alternative to other alternatives; and the oil and gas industry and other stakeholders who believe in unconstrained Federal access to mineral development will least prefer this alternative.</p>	<p>Socioeconomic impacts from minerals management will be similar those of Alternative 2. However, lease conditions are less restrictive than those under Alternative 2, but more restrictive than the standard lease terms under Alternative 1. Therefore, stakeholders that believe that oil and gas leasing conditions should be imposed on development and production to mitigate environmental impacts would likely prefer this alternative to Alternative 1. Since industry costs and availability for well pad locations will likely decrease under this alternative, oil and gas industry and other stakeholders who believe in unconstrained Federal access to mineral development will prefer Alternative 1 over this alternative.</p>	
<p>The anticipated amount of coal to be produced under this alternative for the next 20 years (1.9 millions tons per year) is consistent with coal development over the last ten years. Employment and compensation from BLM-administered mining provides for 677 employees with total mining employee compensation of \$48,236,100. The average annual employee compensation is \$71,218, compared with average annual compensation from all industries in the State of \$34,877 (Bureau of Economic Analysis [BEA], 2005). Mining in the four-county study area likely provides fiscal revenues to local and state governments, supporting community and emergency services, school and infrastructure. Some stakeholders will support these mining activities due to the economic benefits in income, jobs, and government revenues, while others will be concerned that the economic benefit may not offset the risks to environmental and water resources from the activity.</p>			
<p>No impacts to Environmental Justice (EJ) populations are anticipated to occur.</p>			

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Hazardous Materials			
<p>BLM-authorized activities on surface tracts and non-USFS FMO could include hazardous materials, substances, and waste (including storage, transportation, and spills). These activities are conducted in compliance with 29 CFR 1910, 49 CFR 100-185, 40 CFR 100-400, CERCLA, RCRA, Superfund Amendment Reauthorization Act (SARA), Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and the CWA and other Federal and State regulations and policies regarding hazardous materials management. Therefore, if any releases were to occur, it would be immediately addressed in accordance with regulation.</p>			

Table 2-14. Comparison of Impacts For Mississippi

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Air Quality			
Wildfire could lead to air emissions. Suppression of all fires would result in short term localized impacts, but not anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions.			
Management actions on the surface tract (174 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, would not be anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions.	Although more management actions are proposed for the surface tract (174 acres), including vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat treatments, these actions would not be anticipated to deteriorate air quality conditions. Since the Hancock County tract (a total of 174 acres or 100 percent of BLM surface ownership in Mississippi) would be managed as an avoidance area, there would be less potential for emissions associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.	Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except managing the Hancock County tract (a total of 174 acres or 100 percent of BLM surface ownership in Mississippi) as an avoidance area would reduce the potential for emissions associated with ROW development compared to Alternative 1.	
<p>Estimated emissions from development of 10 oil and gas wells on non-USFS FMO would be responsible for less than one tenth of one percent of emissions from the mineral development across Mississippi for NO_x, SO₂, PM₁₀, CO, and VOCs. Those emissions would likely occur over a dispersed geographic area and would therefore not cause any noticeable or measurable effect.</p> <p>Potential oil and gas leasing on some non-USFS FMO tracts would be in close proximity to the Sipsey Wilderness in Alabama and the Breton NWR in Louisiana. Oil and gas emissions in those tracts could impact wilderness air quality values and ambient air quality attainment. Based on expected emissions air quality impacts would not be anticipated.</p>			
Soil Resources			
Management actions on the surface tract (174 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, could impact soils through vegetation clearing activities and ground disturbance. Wind and water erosion, and subsequent loss in soil productivity would occur in disturbed areas where revegetation does not occur. These effects would be localized and short term in areas where revegetation is enhanced or permitted. The effect would be long term but localized if roads or structures were constructed on the tracts.	<p>Management actions proposed for the surface tract (174 acres), such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, could increase site-specific erosion in the short term. Over the long term, improving vegetation communities and fish and wildlife habitat would reduce erosion and overland flows.</p> <p>Because the Hancock County tract would be retained in Federal ownership and management actions would afford more protections, such as NSO and avoidance areas for transportation and ROWs, no impacts would be anticipated.</p>		Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except disposing the Hancock County tract to private or non-Federal ownership could result in potential development that could affect soils.

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>Oil and gas development activities could result in decreased soil productivity, disturb topsoils and surface soil characteristics, and increased surface runoff. Cut and fill areas to support well pads and access routes can contribute to local soil erosion. The estimated 10 wells to be developed in Mississippi over the life of this plan would disturb approximately 55 non-USFS FMO acres. Required reclamation and the minimal surface that might be disturbed would produce only localized effects on soils.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 55 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (123 acres), and NSO (184,192 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to soils within the protected areas. In addition to the stipulations in Appendix D, areas within 1,000-feet of aquatic habitats would be managed with an NSO stipulation, which would eliminate impacts to soils in these areas.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 55 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (3,021 acres), and NSO (92,269 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to soils within the protected areas. Under this alternative, the 1,000-foot NSO area around aquatic habitats identified in Alternative 2 would be reduced to 250-feet, which would reduce protections to soils within these areas.</p>	
Water Resources			
<p>Management actions on the surface tract (174 acres), including potential ROW development and recreation and travel use, could increase soil erosion and surface run-off, which increase nutrients levels and turbidity and decreases water quality. Impacts would be short term in areas where revegetation was enhanced or permitted. The effect would be long term but localized if roads or structures were constructed on the tracts. The hydric soils associated with the wetlands that encompass most of the tract could be affected by development or construction activities that would dredge or fill the wetlands, compacting soils and hindering natural flow through the wetlands and potentially resulting in the loss of these emergent wetlands.</p>	<p>Management actions proposed for the surface tract (174 acres), such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, could increase nutrient levels and turbidity and decrease water quality in the short term. Over the long term, these actions would maintain the emergent wetlands, water quality, and groundwater recharge.</p> <p>Because the Hancock County tract would be retained in Federal ownership and management actions would afford more protections, such as NSO and avoidance areas for transportation and ROWs, no impacts would be anticipated.</p>		<p>Impacts would be the same as Alternative 1, except disposing the Hancock County tract to private or non-Federal ownership could increase chances for subsequent development and associated impacts to water resources.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>Except for 63,004 acres closed to leasing by other surface managing agencies, non-USFS FMO would be open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions (454,930 acres). The estimated development of 10 wells on non-USFS FMO in Mississippi over the next 20-years would disturb approximately 55 acres. Required reclamation by Federal and State laws and the minimal surface that might be disturbed would produce only localized effects on water resources. Oil and gas development could result in surface run-off, which increases nutrient levels and turbidity and decreases water quality. Leakage of drill fluids, hazardous waste spills, or leakage from reserve pits could be introduced into the ground water as well. Additionally, access roads and well pads can alter the local hydrology reducing surface flow to mesic areas and diverting or degrading surface water.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 55 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. A 1,000-foot NSO buffer around aquatic habitats and applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (123 acres), and NSO (184,192 acres) restrictions would be implemented. This would reduce the level of impact to water resources within the protected areas.</p>	<p>Anticipated levels of oil and gas development and associated impacts on 55 acres would be the same as Alternative 1. Applying the stipulations in Appendix D would increase the area where seasonal, CSU (3,021 acres), and NSO (92,269 acres) restrictions would be implemented, which would reduce disturbance to water resources within the protected areas. Under this alternative, the 1,000-foot NSO area around aquatic habitats identified in Alternative 2 would be reduced to 250-feet, which would allow development to occur in close proximity to water resources and the potential for impacts to water resources to occur.</p>	
Vegetative Communities			
<p>Surface-disturbing activities would result in vegetation-clearing activities and disturbance could affect plants in the sensitive wetland ecosystem, resulting in alteration of vegetation communities in the wetland ecosystem. Wind and water erosion in disturbed areas could impede the regrowth of wetland vegetation, allow noxious weeds to grow, and potentially impact water quality and species dependent on wetland habitat by changing the composition</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be reduced under this alternative compared to Alternative 1 due to limitation on motorized recreation, managing for enhancing and protecting coastal estuarine marsh ecosystem in support of the Mississippi Coastal Preserve System, and managing the tract as an avoidance area for transportation project ROWs.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining the tract in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management would be the same as Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Disposing the surface tract out of Federal ownership without conditions for management and use after disposal could increase the potential for subsequent development and associated impacts to vegetation.</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>of habitat. Retaining the tract in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures by Federal law and agency policies that would protect wetland emergent vegetation communities.</p>			
<p>An estimated 10 wells to be developed in Mississippi over the life of this plan would disturb approximately 55 non-USFS FMO acres. Approximately 454,930 acres of non-USFS FMO estate in Mississippi as open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions which could disturb, damage, demolish, or impact vegetation.</p>	<p>Impacts from fluid mineral leasing management actions on split estate would be the same as for Alternative 1. However, Alternative 2 uses more stringent leasing stipulations in managing all non-USFS FMO with exception, waiver, and modification criteria applied as determined through agency direction. Additional protections would be applied to 123 acres managed as CSU, 184,192 acres as NSO, and 63,004 acres closed to leasing.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternatives 3 and 4 would be similar to those of Alternative 2 except protections would be applied to 3,021 acres managed as CSU, 92,269 acres as NSO, and 63,004 acres closed to leasing.</p>	
Fish and Wildlife			
<p>Surface-disturbing activities would result in vegetation-clearing activities and disturbance could affect could affect plants and species in the sensitive wetland ecosystem, resulting in the displacement of species and alteration of vegetation, habitat, and forage components important to wildlife, impairing species viability and reducing habitat quality for mussels, clams, and fish species in the wetland ecosystem. Wind and water erosion in disturbed areas could impede the regrowth of wetland vegetation, allow noxious weeds to grow, and potentially impact water quality and species dependent on wetland habitat by changing the composition of forage and habitat.</p>	<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be reduced under this alternative compared to Alternative 1 due to limitation on motorized recreation, managing for enhancing and protecting coastal estuarine marsh ecosystem in support of the Mississippi Coastal Preserve System, and managing the tract as an avoidance area for ROW. Impacts from retaining the tract in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management would be the same as Alternative 1.</p>		<p>Impacts from surface-disturbing activities would be the same as Alternative 2. Disposing surface tract out of Federal ownership without conditions for management and use after disposal could increase the potential for subsequent development and associated impacts to vegetation and wildlife.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>Retaining the tract in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures by Federal law and agency policies that would protect wetland emergent vegetation communities and associated habitat for various turtle species, fish, crab, and native and migratory birds, as well as many mammal species.</p>			
<p>An estimated 10 wells to be developed in Mississippi over the life of this plan would disturb approximately 55 non-USFS FMO acres. Approximately 454,930 acres of non-USFS FMO estate in Mississippi as open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions which could disturb, damage, demolish, or impact wildlife.</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management actions on split estate would be the same as for Alternative 1. However, Alternative 2 uses more stringent leasing stipulations in managing all non-USFS FMO with exception, waiver, and modification criteria applied as determined through agency direction. Additional protections would be applied to 123 acres managed as CSU, 184,192 acres as NSO, and 63,004 acres closed to leasing.</p>	<p>Impacts under Alternatives 3 and 4 would be similar to those of Alternative 2 except protections would be applied to 3,021 acres managed as CSU, 92,269 acres as NSO, and 63,004 acres closed to leasing.</p>	
Special Status Species			
<p>The lack of vegetation management actions could result in increased potential for invasive/exotic species becoming established or spreading. This is particularly true of the higher elevations of the Hancock County tract located on Point Clear Island. Cogon grass and Chinese tallow are both known to occur in the area and if uncontrolled could substantially alter the habitats supporting Mississippi diamondback terrapin and tiny-leaved buckthorn.</p> <p>No recreation management actions are planned. Because this tract is not accessible by road, few impacts are</p>	<p>Removing exotic invasive plant species, particularly cogon grass, could improve habitat conditions for the tiny-leaved buckthorn and Mississippi diamondback terrapin.</p> <p>Prescribed burns could be used to remove wood debris and flotsam left from Hurricane Katrina that create hazards for wildlife and degrade marshes.</p> <p>Limiting motorized use on the Hancock County tract to boating would avoid damaging of sensitive coastal habitats for tiny-leaved buckthorn and Mississippi diamondback.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining surface tracts in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships to provide management would more directly benefit wildlife by restoring and maintaining continuity and composition of habitat than anticipated under Alternative 1.</p>		<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from recreation and travel and ROW management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Under this alternative, the Hancock County tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership. The affect this has on special status species is not known. Its location at the center of the Hancock County Marsh Preserve and the presence of extensive wetlands would make development of the tract difficult. It is</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>anticipated by designating the tract open to vehicles. However, use of four-wheelers on remote upland areas, such as Point Clear Island, could damage sensitive maritime forests and scrubs.</p> <p>Retaining the tract in Federal ownership would continue the application of protective measures by Federal law and agency policies that would protect special status species.</p>			<p>likely that special status species would continue to benefit from the tract being managed in coordination with the Mississippi Coastal Preserve System.</p>
<p>Oil and gas development on non-USFS FMO in Mississippi is expected to result in the direct loss of 55 acres. Based on previous oil and gas activity, the Federally listed species most likely to be affected are gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker, and black pine snake in the East Gulf Coastal Plain, and bald eagles associated with reservoirs and rivers in the northern portion of the state. Drilling in coastal areas would affect the 18 special status species that are associated with coastal marshes and maritime scrub and woodlands, including brown pelican, Wilson’s plover, Mississippi diamondback terrapin and saltmarsh topminnow. Section 7 consultations with the USFWS would be required prior to BLM permitting any action that could adversely affect these Federally listed species or designated habitat, and subsequent actions would comply with the conditions established by any subsequent BOs.</p>	<p>Although the number of wells (10) and acres disturbed (55) would remain the same under this alternative, lease stipulations would shift surface disturbing activities away from sensitive habitats with potential to support special status species. In most cases, this is accomplished with NSO buffers or seasonal restrictions. These stipulations could be applied to 184,192 acres or about 36 percent of the non-USFS FMO in Mississippi.</p>	<p>The number of wells (10) and acres disturbed (55) would remain the same under this alternative and impacts would be the same as Alternative 2, except the aquatic and wetland buffer would be reduced to 250-feet. In areas where slopes exceed 10 percent, the buffer could be extended up to 600-feet to provide adequate protection. In most cases, this buffer is expected to prevent construction activities from increasing the sedimentation of local drainages and wetlands. The 600-foot no lease area along the coast, would be replaced with a NSO buffer. Although no surface disturbance would occur on non-USFS FMO or BLM surface tracts within this buffer, offsite directional drilling to target these Federal minerals would be permitted.</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Wildland Fire and Ecology			
<p>Fire response and fuel treatments would apply to the 174 acres of BLM-administered surface land. Suppressing all wildland fires, unless an in-place site-specific plan determines otherwise, would minimize immediate threats and damage to life, public safety, and developments in the WUI and to natural resource values. Allowing prescribed burning on a case-by-case basis would allow for a reduction in hazardous fuel conditions, improving ability to suppress wildfires while maintaining disturbance levels to which vegetation communities have adapted.</p>			
<p>Allowing vegetation manipulation to meet resources objectives and habitat improvements under standard management common to all alternatives would maintain natural fuel conditions across the surface tract. This would maintain natural disturbance regimes and decrease the frequency and intensity of wildland fires and allow fires to be more easily controlled.</p> <p>Dispersed recreation use would introduce additional ignition sources through human use of natural environments, which could increase the probability of wildland fire occurrence. This would be more prevalent in areas that are more accessible.</p> <p>While ROW actions could increase suppression costs, the aspects of ROW related to vegetation clearing and the potential for increased accessibility could reduce suppression costs.</p>	<p>Vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions, such as removing invasive species and conducting prescribed fire, on the surface tract would reduce the potential for changes in the marsh vegetation communities. The natural fire regimes would be maintained.</p> <p>The potential for increased wildland fire occurrence would decrease compared to Alternative 1 because travel on the Hancock County tract would be limited to boating, decreasing accessibility to these areas and reducing the potential for additional ignition sources through increased human use.</p>		<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>If tracts were transferred from Federal ownership, the responsibility for suppression of wildfires would be eliminated, decreasing suppression costs in wildland fire events.</p>
<p>Development of 10 oil and gas wells introduces additional ignitions sources throughout the non-USFS FMO, increasing the potential of wildland fire occurrence and introducing infrastructure that requires protection in wildland fire events. Disturbance associated with development could provide increased accessibility for fire suppression and</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except impacts would not occur on the 184,192 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).</p>	<p>Impacts from minerals management would be the same as Alternative 1, except impacts would not occur on the 92,269 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
provide fuel breaks. These impacts would not occur on the 63,004 acres closed to oil and gas development.			
Cultural Resources			
BLM would continue to protect cultural resources from disturbance, damage, or loss from authorized uses through project avoidance or mitigation, including data recovery if necessary. As inventories are conducted, more cultural sites would be identified. Inventories and adherence to law, regulation and policy would protect most cultural sites; however, inadvertent damage of undiscovered sites would remain a possibility.			
<p>Dispersed recreation and standard vegetation treatments could result in inadvertent damage to cultural resources.</p> <p>Ground-disturbing activities associated with ROW construction and maintenance could inadvertently damage cultural resources.</p> <p>Retaining surface tract in Federal ownership (whether BLM administered or USFWS administered) would provide protection of cultural resource sites and preserve the setting of sites.</p>	<p>Vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management would increase impacts to cultural resources due to implementing vegetation treatments to reduce invasive species and improve habitat.</p> <p>Limiting motorized vehicle use on the surface tract to boating would increase protection of cultural sites.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining surface tract in Federal ownership and pursuing partnerships would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Managing the Hancock County tract as an avoidance area for ROW would reduce the potential for impacts to cultural sites.</p>	<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Hancock County tract available for disposal from Federal ownership without any specified management or use conditions could have impacts if the property contained previously undetected, potentially eligible National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) cultural sites. Disposing the property from Federal ownership would remove the protection of any cultural resources under Federal law, and not applying management or use conditions would increase the potential for damage of previously undetected cultural resources.</p>	
Cultural resources on 63,004 non-USFS FMO acres closed to oil and gas leasing would be protected from oil and gas development.	Cultural resources on 63,004 non-USFS FMO acres closed to oil and gas leasing would be protected from oil and gas development, as would cultural sites on 184,192 non-USFS FMO acres managed for NSO.	Impacts to cultural resources from management of non-USFS FMO would be the same as Alternative 2, except 359,640 acres would be managed as open to leasing subject to standard lease terms and conditions, 3,021 acres as CSU, 92,269 acres as NSO, and 63,004 acres as closed.	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
Visual Resources			
<p>Allowing recreation activities including motorized vehicle use on the surface tract could result in decreased visual quality over time. If new ROW were approved on the Hancock County tract, visual quality would be diminished.</p>	<p>Actions to improve vegetation communities and wildlife habitat would temporarily diminish visual quality; however, visual quality would be improved in the long term.</p> <p>Limiting motorized vehicle use on the surface tract to boating could diminish impacts described in Alternative 1.</p> <p>Managing the Hancock County tract as an avoidance area for ROW would help to retain visual quality within the area by reducing the potential for development activities to occur in these areas.</p>		<p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Hancock County tract available for disposal from Federal ownership without any specified management or use conditions could diminish visual quality, if the tract was subsequently developed.</p>
<p>Mineral exploration and development on non-USFS FMO tracts (517,934 acres) would result in impacts to visual resources on 55 acres from 10 wells. Removal of vegetation and construction of wells and well pads and introduction of other equipment would decrease visual quality. Impacts from these activities would not be anticipated on 63,004 acres closed to leasing.</p>	<p>Since approximately 55 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 10 oil and gas wells (as with Alternative 1), impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. Stipulations applied under this alternative could protect visual resources on the 184,192 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).</p>	<p>Since approximately 55 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 10 oil and gas wells (as with Alternative 1), impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. Stipulations applied under this alternative could preclude oil and gas development thereby protecting visual resources on the 92,269 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).</p>	
Minerals			
<p>No impacts to oil and gas development would be anticipated from management of surface tract.</p>			
<p>This alternative would have the least restrictions on oil and gas exploration and development, with approximately 88 percent (454,930 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject to the standard lease terms and conditions. The remaining 63,004 acres (approximately 12 percent) would be closed to leasing due to restrictions placed by other Federal surface management agencies. Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 10 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>	<p>Applying the conservation measures as lease stipulations and BMPs (Appendix D) could also increase exploration and development costs.</p> <p>This alternative would be the most restrictive on oil and gas exploration and development, with approximately 37 percent (184,192 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject to major constraints and approximately 12 percent (63,004 acres) closed to leasing. The remaining 270,615 acres would be open to leasing, subject to the standard lease terms and conditions</p>	<p>Applying the conservation measures as lease stipulations and BMPs (Appendix D) could also increase exploration and development costs. Compared to Alternative 2, lease stipulations would be less stringent under this alternative, with approximately 18 percent (92,269 acres) of non-USFS FMO open to leasing, subject to major constraints and approximately 12 percent (63,004 acres) closed to leasing. The remaining 359,640 acres would be open to leasing, subject to the standard lease terms and conditions (69 percent of non-USFS FMO) or open to leasing, subject to minor constraints (less than one percent of non-USFS FMO). Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 10 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
	<p>(51 percent of non-USFS FMO) or open to leasing, subject to minor constraints (less than one percent of non-USFS FMO). Oil and gas leasing stipulations would support development of the anticipated 10 wells on non-USFS FMO over the next 20 years.</p>		
Recreation and Travel Management			
<p>Allowing recreation activities including motorized vehicle use on the Hancock County tract would maintain existing recreation and travel opportunities. However, allowing motorized travel could result in conflicts between motorized recreationists and recreationists seeking a more natural setting or experience.</p> <p>The Hancock County tract would continue to be owned and managed by the University of Mississippi under an R&PP patent for the purposes of the R&PP patent, which would maintain access to recreational activity.</p> <p>If a new road or utility ROW were authorized on the Hancock County tract the largely natural recreational experiences available would be diminished.</p>	<p>Actions to improve vegetation communities and wildlife habitat would temporarily diminish or eliminate the recreation experience. The recreation experience would be improved in the long term.</p> <p>Continuing to allow recreation use on the surface tract would result in impacts similar to those described under Alternative 1. However, since motorized vehicle use would be limited to boating, more non-motorized recreation opportunities would be increased while there could be a loss of motorized recreation opportunities.</p> <p>Impacts from retaining the Hancock County tract in Federal ownership would be the same as in Alternative 1.</p> <p>Managing the Hancock County tract as an avoidance area for ROW would retain the recreation experience in the undeveloped wetland setting.</p>		<p>Impacts from vegetative communities and fish and wildlife habitat management actions would be the same as Alternative 1.</p> <p>Impacts from ROW and recreation and travel management actions would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>Making the Hancock County tract available for disposal from Federal ownership without any specified management or use conditions could result in reduced access for recreational opportunities. Following disposal, the tract could be made unavailable for public recreation.</p>
<p>Since approximately 55 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 10 oil and gas wells on non-USFS FMO there could be a decrease in nature-based recreational opportunities due to conflicts with the developments. However, stipulations could indirectly</p>	<p>Since approximately 55 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 10 oil and gas wells (as with Alternative 1), impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. Stipulations applied under this alternative could protect the recreational resources on the</p>	<p>Since approximately 55 acres of vegetation removal and construction activities would result from the development of 10 oil and gas wells (as with Alternative 1), impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. Stipulations applied under this alternative could indirectly protect the recreational resources on the 92,269 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
protect the recreational resources in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).	184,192 acres managed as NSO and in areas where development would be precluded (63,004 acres).		
Lands and Realty			
<p>The 174-acre Hancock County tract would remain open to ROW applications; therefore, no impacts would be anticipated.</p> <p>Retaining the Hancock County tract under BLM administration would not allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership.</p>	<p>The 174-acre Hancock County tract would be managed as an avoidance area for ROW. This could impose design and siting requirements and associated costs on new ROW. There would be an increased potential for requests for new ROW to be denied.</p> <p>Retaining the Hancock County tract under BLM administration and pursuing partnerships with other agencies and organizations could allow for management opportunities for other agencies and organizations, but would not allow for non-Federal ownership opportunities.</p>	<p>ROW management actions and associated impacts to lands and realty would be the same as Alternative 2.</p> <p>The 174-acre Hancock County tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership with no restrictive covenants. This would allow for opportunities for other Federal agency or non-Federal ownership without specified conditions on future use of the tract; however, disposal would not be allowed if it would jeopardize Federally-listed species or designated critical habitat, which could limit some disposals.</p>	
Social and Economic			
<p>Recreation and travel, fish and wildlife habitat, and vegetative communities management actions would not cause changes in the economic characteristics (employment, income, and industries) or quality of social assets (housing, education, values and attitudes).</p> <p>Under this alternative, the Hancock County tract would remain in Federal ownership. Lands and realty management actions would not cause changes in the economic characteristics (employment, income, and industries) as there are very little changes anticipated under this alternative. Quality of social assets (demographics, housing, cost of</p>	<p>This alternative includes the removal of invasive species on the Hancock County tract. Impacts from these actions on the socioeconomic indicators would not be anticipated from these types of vegetation management actions. Stakeholders who value the protection of native vegetation and habitats will likely prefer this alternative over the other alternatives.</p> <p>Impacts to social and economic conditions would not be anticipated from recreation and wildlife management actions as there are very little anticipated changes in these actions.</p> <p>Impacts from lands and realty would be the same as those under Alternative 1.</p>	<p>Recreation, wildlife, and vegetative management actions would not cause changes in the economic characteristics (employment, income, and industries) or quality of social assets (housing, education, values and attitudes).</p> <p>Under Alternative 4, the Hancock County tract would be available for disposal from Federal ownership without conditions on management and use after disposal. Since development could be allowed on these properties, it is possible that the property tax revenues to the local counties would increase more than the Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes, economically benefiting</p>	

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
<p>living, education) in Hancock County are not likely to be affected by retaining these lands in Federal ownership. Some stakeholders would be impacted by these decisions.</p>			<p>Hancock County and the State. It is also possible that the private development of these tracts could slightly increase employment and income in these areas. Social indicators, such as housing, education, and cost of living are not expected to be influenced by the minimal development. Stakeholders who feel that the retention of Federal ownership is important to maintain preservationist and open space values will likely be negatively impacted by this alternative. Those stakeholders who feel the development of these lands is a better use of the Hancock County tract would likely prefer this alternative.</p>
<p>Since only 10 fluid mineral wells would likely be drilled with standard lease terms and conditions over the 20-year planning period, there would be minimal economic impacts from these activities. Social characteristics such as housing, education, and cost of living would not be anticipated to change as a result of this activity. Stakeholders who believe that oil and gas activity should be constrained to protect wetlands and aquatic habitat would likely feel that this alternative does not do enough to ensure protection of these types of resources. Additionally, oil and gas industry stakeholders as well as others who value maintaining access to Federal minerals for oil and gas development will likely prefer this alternative over the other alternatives.</p>	<p>The same number of wells and acres of surface disturbance is anticipated under this alternative. Therefore similar socioeconomic impacts will be experienced as those identified under Alternative 1. However, this alternative provides for the greatest number of lease constraints and conditions, including stipulations for well pad distance to wetland and aquatic resources at the Hancock County tract. Therefore, stakeholders who believe that oil and gas leasing conditions should be imposed on development and production to mitigate environmental impacts would prefer this alternative to other alternatives. Since industry costs and availability for well pad locations will likely decrease under this alternative, the oil and gas industry and other stakeholders who believe in Federal</p>		<p>The same number of wells and acres of surface disturbance is anticipated under this alternative. Therefore similar socioeconomic impacts will be experienced as those identified under Alternative 1. However, this alternative provides conditions on oil and gas leasing of these minerals, including stipulations for well pad distance to wetland and aquatic resources. These conditions are less restrictive than those under Alternative 2, but more restrictive than the standard lease terms under Alternative 1. Therefore, stakeholders who believe that oil and gas leasing conditions should be imposed on development and production to mitigate environmental impacts would likely prefer this alternative to Alternative 1. Since industry costs and availability for well pad locations will likely decrease under this alternative, oil and gas industry and other stakeholders who believe in unconstrained Federal access to mineral development will prefer Alternative 1 over this alternative.</p>

Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (Preferred)	Alternative 4
	access to mineral development will least prefer this alternative.		
No impacts to EJ populations are anticipated to occur; further evaluation is warranted at project implementation.			
Hazardous Materials			
BLM-authorized activities on surface tracts and non-USFS FMO could include hazardous materials, substances, and waste (including storage, transportation, and spills). These activities are conducted in compliance with 29 CFR 1910, 49 CFR 100-185, 40 CFR 100-400, CERCLA, RCRA, SARA, TSCA, and CWA and other Federal and State regulations and policies regarding hazardous materials management. Therefore, if any releases were to occur, it would be immediately addressed in accordance with regulation.			

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