

Chapter 1. Purpose and Need

1.1 Purpose and Need for the Plan

The purpose of this planning effort is to develop a Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) that will provide overall management and long-term direction for the public lands and resources administered by the Alturas Field Office (AFO) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This PRMP is being developed in accord with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended. FLPMA requires BLM to “develop, maintain, and, when appropriate, revise land use plans which provide by tracts or areas for the use of the public lands” (43 U.S. Code 1712 [a]). Typically, BLM uses a period of 15-20 years as a basis for impact analysis. A PRMP may be amended or revised at any time to reflect changed circumstances or new information.

The AFO PRMP was developed in coordination with the Eagle Lake and Surprise Field Office PRMPs to provide a consistent framework for managing public lands and resource uses in northeast California and northwest Nevada. A PRMP documents broad-scale land use plan decisions for all resources and resource uses. The PRMP determines which lands are open or available for certain uses, including any restrictions, and lands that are closed or unavailable, to certain uses. The decisions derived from the plan will guide later site-specific implementing of management actions. This PRMP establishes the following:

- goals and objectives for resource management,
- measures needed to achieve goals and objectives, and
- parameters for using BLM-administered lands.

Current management direction for the AFO is contained in ten land use plans or amendments that were developed from 1973-2002. New information, changed circumstances, and resource conditions since these plans were prepared require a single updated PRMP.

Approval of a PRMP is considered a major federal action with the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Section 1601.0-6). BLM has prepared this PRMP and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations and BLM’s own procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FEIS portion of the document analyzes the effects of implementing the Preferred Alternative for the AFO. The PRMP and FEIS are integrated into this document and are not separate reports.

1.2 Changed Circumstances

Population growth in the vicinity of Fall River Valley in Lassen County, California and the metropolitan areas of Klamath Falls, Oregon; Reno, Nevada; and Redding, California has caused an increased demand for use of public lands to support community needs and low impact recreation. The AFO has experienced a substantial increase in requests for land tenure decisions or adjustments and for land use permits and authorizations, including those for renewable energy development.

In addition to traditional consumptive uses, public interest has expanded in uses that emphasize aesthetic values such as open space and low-impact recreational opportunities. Changes in the type of recreation uses and the demand for diversified recreational opportunities can result in conflicts between uses and resource concerns that the old land use plans did not address. Concerns include how these uses affect ecosystem health, local communities, and state, regional, and tribal interests.

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Vegetation communities continue to be threatened by both the encroachment of western juniper into sagebrush grasslands and from the invasion of annual exotic grasses and noxious weeds. These ecological resource concerns are best addressed at a landscape level to improve vegetation communities toward desired future conditions. The number of plant and animal species recognized by California as special status species has increased. In addition, the decline of sage-grouse populations in the western U.S. has triggered BLM national, state, and local strategies with new guidance to address habitat requirements of the species.

New protocol agreements between BLM and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) of California guide the protection, inventory, and conservation of cultural resources as they relate to other resources and land uses. Emphasis is being placed on finding and managing traditional cultural properties in coordination with local tribes.

1.3 Planning Area

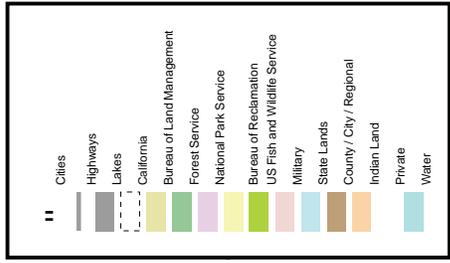
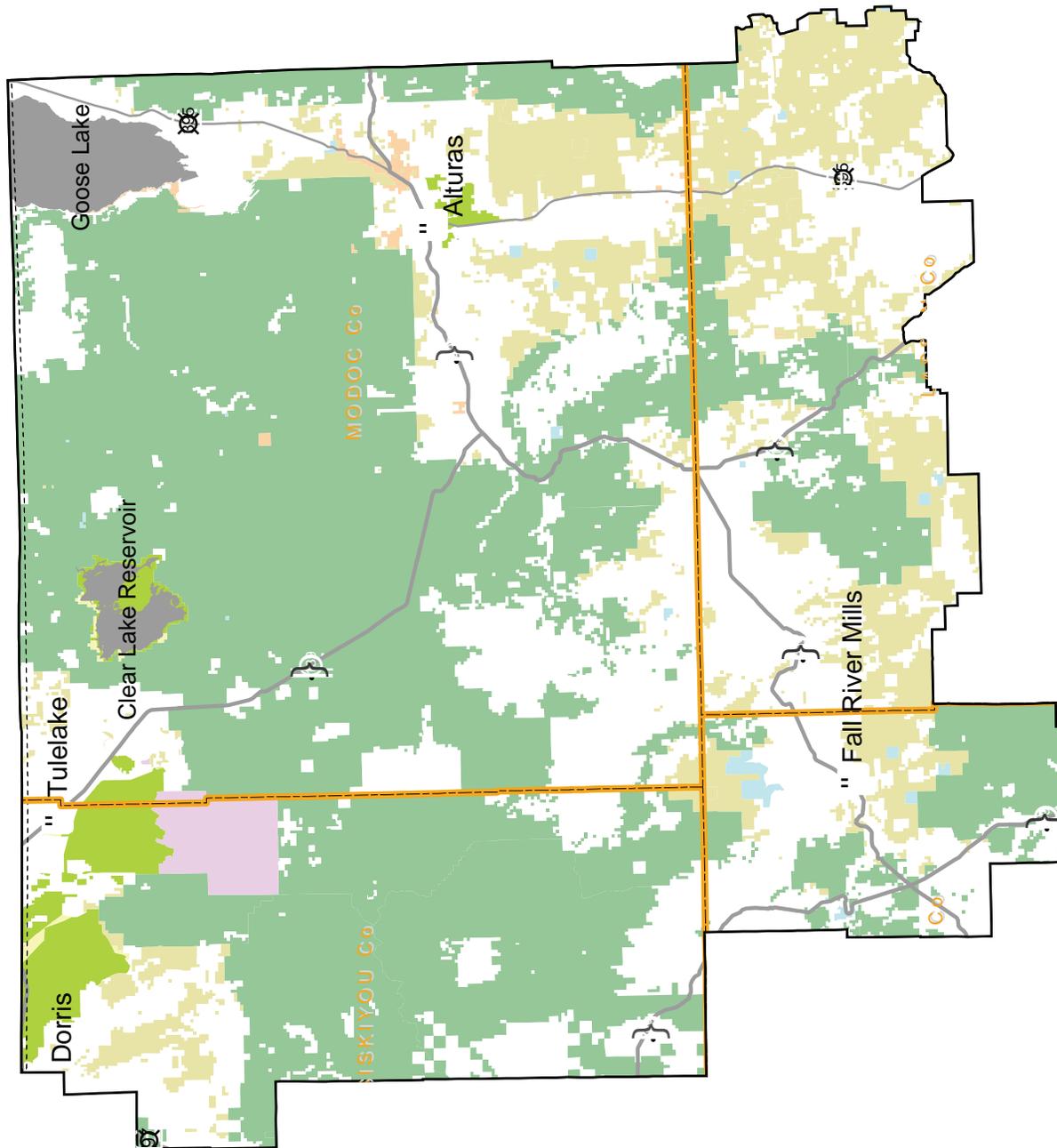
This PRMP discusses two distinct geographic areas: 1) the AFO area boundary, and 2) BLM-administered lands within this boundary that are the basis for planning decisions within this PRMP.

The AFO area encompasses 4,117,341 acres, not all of which is under BLM's management (Table 1.3-1, Figure 1.3-2). The planning and decision area for resources and resource uses within this PRMP refers to the 503,045 surface acres of public lands within the field office boundary, which are under BLM jurisdiction. These lands vary from small, scattered parcels to large, contiguous blocks. Management decisions in this PRMP will apply only to these lands. BLM-administered lands in the planning area are located in four counties: Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, and Siskiyou Counties (Table 1.3-3).

Table 1.3-1 Land Ownership within the AFO Boundary

Ownership	Acres
BLM	503,045
Bureau of Reclamation	8,223
Indian land	12,493
National Park Service	46,566
Private	1,513,876
State	14,919
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	103,416
U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service	1,914,803
Total	4,117,341

Fig. 1.3-2 Land Status

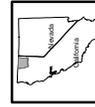


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

ALTURAS FIELD OFFICE
Proposed Resource Management Plan / Final EIS
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Table 1.3-3 BLM-Administered Lands in the Four-County Alturas Planning Area

County	Acres by County^a
Siskiyou, CA	39,736
Lassen, CA	268,214
Modoc, CA	141,975
Shasta, CA	53,120
Total	503,045

^a All acreages are approximate.

1.4 Planning and Scoping Processes

Issues related to resource management in the Alturas planning area were determined during the scoping process through public scoping meetings, field tours, socioeconomic workshops, and interactions with federal, state, tribal, and county collaborators. These issues, summarized below, were used to develop alternatives and are addressed in other sections of the resource management plan (e.g., effects on local economies).

BLM hosted six public scoping meetings in August and September 2003. A total of 205 people attended these meetings. Table 1.4-1 lists the dates and locations of these meetings. Four meetings were held within the planning areas. Other meetings were held in Redding, California, and Reno, Nevada, to ensure that BLM heard the concerns of user groups residing outside the planning area. BLM also conducted a scoping meeting in the field in August 2003.

Table 1.4-1 Public Scoping Meetings for the Alturas, Surprise, and Eagle Lake Planning Process

Date	Location
Scoping Meetings	
August 6, 2003	Cedarville, CA
August 13, 2003	Susanville, CA
August 20, 2003	Alturas, CA
August 27, 2003	Redding, CA
August 28, 2003	Reno, NV
September 10, 2003	Fall River Mills, CA
Field Tours	
August 9, 2003	Surprise Field Office
August 16, 2003	Eagle Lake Field Office
August 23, 2003	AFO
Social and Economic Outreach Workshops	
November 20, 2003	Susanville, CA
December 2, 2003	Alturas, CA
December 3, 2003	Cedarville, CA

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A community workshop was conducted to discuss economics and social values in November 2003. The workshop focused on presenting economic data and working with residents to arrive at a common understanding of the following:

- economic drivers of communities,
- local social values related to places and natural resources,
- community goals and visions, and
- BLM's role in the community.

1.5 Issues Raised During the Scoping Process

Summarized here are the comments and issues submitted to date and the issues identified by BLM that will be addressed in the planning process.

Issue Area 1: *How should upland ecosystems be managed?*

Vegetation has numerous values, both consumptive and non-consumptive, including wildlife habitat, wild horses, livestock grazing, forest products, and watershed protection. There is concern that resource use may be affecting the natural function and health of upland plant communities, soil productivity, and cultural resource site stability. The Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management adopted by the Secretary of the Interior in July 2000 will help frame decisions in the PRMPs. Management objectives are needed for upland vegetation, which will help determine allowable uses, treatment methods, and other activities.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Current health, ecological status, and trends of the various ecosystems and plant communities, including those lands subject to juniper encroachment and other invasive species and noxious weeds (cheatgrass, yellow starthistle, medusahead).
- Current status and condition of habitat needed to support guilds or suites of species, including threatened and endangered and special status species, neo-tropical birds, and species disjoint from their population center or at the edge of their range.
- Options to restore and maintain healthy native plant communities.
- A mix of consumptive and non-consumptive uses.
- Options to improve and maintain water quantity and quality and to promote hydrologic recovery.
- Options to maintain or improve soil productivity and site stability.
- Potential vegetative treatments, including seeding, grazing, mechanical, herbicides, biomass harvesting, fuel wood harvesting, and prescribed burning.
- Appropriate management of livestock grazing; ensure compliance with water quality control board objectives.
- Appropriate management of wild horses and burros.
- Policies regarding use of toxic substances, including pesticides.
- Management of species with cultural significance.

Issue Area 2: *How will forestry issues be managed, and how will forest resources be utilized?*

Forests have numerous values, both consumptive and non-consumptive. There is concern that resource use may be affecting the natural function and health of forest ecosystems and ecosystem components.

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Management objectives, which will help determine allowable uses, treatment methods, and other activities, are needed for forests.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Managing the resources to furnish a supply of forest products.
- Supporting traditional forestry uses.
- Maintaining healthy forests.
- Maintaining/enhancing habitat value/function of forests.
- Invasive and native juniper management.

Issue Area 3: *How will water resources be managed and utilized?*

Water quality and quantity in a region have far-reaching impacts on watershed health, ecosystem health, and the pursuit of various land or resource uses. There is concern that resource use, both within and outside of BLM's jurisdiction, may be affecting the quality and quantity of water in the area.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Protecting water quality and quantity.
- Making adequate water supplies available for domestic and commercial uses.
- Protecting existing water rights.
- Acquiring additional water rights.
- Downstream water commitments.
- Consider possible impacts of drought conditions.
- Use of water for power plant usage.

Issue Area 4: *How will visual resources be managed and preserved?*

Visual resources have a large impact on people utilizing land for recreation. There is concern that resource use may be affecting the quality of visual resources in the area.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Preserve visual nature of area while providing protection for the objects within the area and their identified uses.
- Reconcile uses (such as mining) with their potential visual impacts.
- Visual impact of the removal of junipers.
- Visual impact of man-made intrusions, including energy projects.

Issue Area 5: *How should riparian areas and wetlands be managed?*

Riparian and wetland vegetation provides the foundation for many resource uses on public lands, including habitat for wildlife and forage for domestic animals. Healthy riparian areas stabilize the soil, store water during spring and release it throughout the year, prevent erosion, and improve water quality. There is a concern that resource uses may be affecting the natural function and health of riparian areas and wetlands. Management objectives are needed for riparian and wetland areas, which will help determine grazing use, treatment methods, and other activities needed to sustain the resources and uses that depend on them.

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Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Current health, ecologic status and trend of riparian/wetland plant communities.
- Current status of riparian and aquatic systems relative to habitat quality for and population status of fish, wildlife, plants, and invertebrates.
- Options to maintain or improve soil productivity, and soil and cultural resource site stability.
- Whether current management practices are working in achieving desired water quality.
- Current condition of water quality and quantity.
- Opportunities to manage watersheds/basins with other agencies.
- Restoration and rehabilitation of riparian areas to proper functioning condition.
- Options to meet BLM standards and to promote hydrologic recovery including:
 - Meeting state numeric, narrative, and non-degradation standards.
 - Meeting needs of aquatic assemblage of native species.
 - Meeting needs of other beneficial uses.

Issue Area 6: *How will wildland fire and prescribed fire be managed and utilized?*

Wildland fire is recognized as having a vital role in the health of ecosystems in the planning area. It can also have significant impacts on the communities, economies, and infrastructures.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Fire history in the area, and its effect and anticipated fire trends.
- The role of fire in upland and riparian ecosystems.
- Prescribed fire.
- Appropriate fire management response.
- Effect of road extensions on fire hazard levels.
- Fuels management:
 - Mechanical treatment
 - Chemical treatment
 - Biological treatment
- Wildland-urban interface considerations and the National Fire Plan.
- Using fire to restore natural ecological systems to their proper functioning conditions.
- Management of areas after fires (restoration):
 - Public access.
 - Re-seeding.
 - Priorities.

Issue Area 7: *How should vehicular access be managed on public lands?*

Currently, public lands in the area are generally accessible by motorized vehicles to agency personnel for resource management, to commercial enterprise for permitted use or extraction of public resources, and to the general public for recreation and enjoyment of public lands. There is a need to balance access to public lands with resource management and protection.

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Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Areas where off-highway vehicle (OHV) use or season of use or the existing transportation system is in conflict with other goals and objectives.
- Appropriate area designations of open, closed, or limited OHV use and selection of routes of travel to meet goals and objectives.
- Existing roads and ways or other travel routes and their condition, including an analysis of road and trail expansion, both sanctioned and unsanctioned, in the recent past.
- Expansion, restriction, or reclamation of existing roads and trails.
- Implementation of road density standards.
- Implementation of a “closed unless posted open” policy for OHV access.
- Assessment of safety and stability of existing roads and trails.
- Acquisition of legal access to promote resource management and public use.
- Clear delineation of adopted roads and trails network and limitations or restriction on use.
- Water quality control board objectives for sediment runoff from roads.
- Delineation between roads to be used for recreation versus roads for commercial uses.
- Possibility of an OHV trail rotation to minimize long-term impacts on habitat.
- Impacts from OHV activity on other resources:
 - Sensitive resources (e.g., water, cultural resources, sensitive plants, or habitats), rather than just water resources.
 - Property.
 - Maintenance costs.
 - Health and safety.

Issue Area 8: How should the public lands be managed to sustain the traditional practices and traditional cultural properties of Native American cultures?

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Tribal consultation and input.
- Inventories of archaeological and cultural resources.
- Impacts to sites from land uses, including wild horses.
- Archaeological looting.
- Development of a Tribal consultation protocol.
- Management of traditional cultural properties and ethnographic sites, including rock art/petroglyph and other types of sites.
- Resource extraction.
- Future monitoring and partnerships.

Issue Area 9: How should the public lands be managed to meet the needs of local communities?

The small communities that are associated with public lands in this area depend on public land resources for economic and social benefits.

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Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Economic and social benefits to local and regional communities that are derived from the public lands.
- Management decisions supporting local/regional economies.
- Complement private uses rather than competing (e.g., camping).
- Benefits of biomass energy to community.
- The importance of these benefits to local and regional economies.
- Lifestyle and quality of life of local communities.
- Dependency of private ranch land on public land grazing and impacts from private land conversion.

Issue Area 10: *How will grazing and range issues be managed?*

Livestock and wild grazing animals have a large impact on the habitat that they occupy. There is concern that current grazing and range practices may be affecting the health and appearance of ecosystems in the area.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Providing adequate forage in planning area lands to support existing permit levels.
- Furnishing adequate infrastructure to support domestic animal grazing.
- Minimize increase of invasive, undesirable species, such as juniper.
- Management of range resources to ensure healthy and ecologically sustainable communities.
- Management of range resources to provide appropriate habitat elements for wildlife species.
- Current conditions and management situations at herd management areas.
- Current appropriate management levels at herd management areas.
- Management of neighboring non-isolated herd management areas as herd complexes.

Issue Area 11: *What lands will be identified for retention, exchange, disposal, and acquisition?*

Scattered tracts of public lands present throughout the area often complicate management or limit access or opportunity for enjoyment by the public. Opportunities exist to increase public benefits by disposing of some public lands through sale or exchange, or to acquire offered lands in areas which would enhance public enjoyment and facilitate resource management.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Public lands that are central or not central to BLM's mission or PRMP goals and objectives
- Isolated parcels of BLM lands and private in-holdings, especially in-holdings in wilderness study areas (WSAs).
- Effective management of isolated parcels.
- Existing rights-of-way (ROWS) and utility corridors.
- Extending/continuing trails from other areas and states, including historic trails such as the Applegate, Lassen, and Noble emigrant trails.
- Inconsistencies in existing ROWs.

Issue Area 12: *What lands are available for energy and mineral development?*

Potential for and interest in the development of renewable and non-renewable energy occurs across the planning area. Extraction of a variety of mineral materials occurs on public lands in the area and constitutes an important economic use of public land resources. Interest in decorative rock collection has also increased. Energy and mineral development may not be appropriate for all lands, such as those having special resource values.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- BLM's potential participation in the licensing process for power plants on adjacent lands that may impact BLM lands.
- Oil and gas potential.
- Potential for renewable energy, such as wind, geothermal, and biomass.
- Occurrence and demand for minerals.
- Compatibility of energy and mineral development with other resource uses, goals, and objectives.
- Establishment of utility corridors.
- Migratory bird routes.
- Impacts of mining on ground and surface waters.
- Split-estate lands issues.
- Potential impacts of decommissioning hydroelectric facilities.
- Timing of permits for renewable energy sources to coordinate with ongoing resource uses.
- Using woodlands as sources of biomass.
- Reclamation issues.
- Routing of overhead transmission lines.
- Dismantling unused poles to reduce avian roosting/resting sites.

Issue Area 13: *How will recreation opportunities be managed?*

With the rapid population growth of urban areas in northeastern California and northwestern Nevada, the demand for recreation opportunities has increased substantially in recent years. In addition, a significant shift in the demographics of these urban areas, as well as in some of the more rural small communities, has noticeably changed the types of recreation experience traditionally sought on public lands.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Current extent and nature of demand for recreational opportunities in the analysis area.
- Recreation opportunities that are currently provided in the planning area.
- Compatibility with adjacent land uses and resources.
- Impacts of OHV play areas.
- New facilities.
- Impact of OHVs and other recreation uses on hunting, grazing, water quality, riparian ecosystem health, scenic quality, wilderness characteristics, and wildlife, as well as other resources and land uses.
- Management of trails to address OHVs, hiking, and horses.
- Meeting demand for interpretive outdoor education.

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- Extent and placement of signage.
- Management of user fees - Where will they be required? How will the fees be used?
- Master trail plan updates, integrations, extensions, etc.
- Integration of commercial recreation operations and opportunities with Alturas-Eagle Lake-Surprise resources.
- Impacts of mining and other uses on recreational opportunities
- Opportunities for cooperative management of recreation and visual resources
- Changing demands for recreation on public lands
 - Hang gliding
 - Additional water sources
 - Primitive camping
 - Scenic driving
 - Rock hounding
 - Accessible to disabled populations

Issue Area 14: *How will fish, wildlife, and special status species be managed?*

Lands in the planning area are habitat for a range of fish, wildlife, and special status species. The habitat needs for healthy populations will be integrated into management decisions in the plan. Hunting and fishing activities are popular throughout the planning area as well and must be considered.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Habitat needs of special status species, including species listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS.
- Habitat needs of fish and wildlife in the planning area.
- Importance of habitats on BLM lands to overall populations.
- Connecting BLM public lands to refuges and other natural areas.
- Management of domestic livestock while considering wildlife needs.
- Balancing ecosystem management with species management.
- Implementation of population monitoring plans.
- State agency populations of interest.
- Demand for hunting and fishing.
- Interest in reintroduction of bighorn sheep.
- Sage grouse conservation strategies.

Issue Area 15: *How should special values and special management areas be managed?*

Existing special management areas, including WSAs, areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs), and wild and scenic rivers (WSRs) require special management to protect particular values and/or resources. New areas may require special management, including free-flowing rivers and streams; unique vegetation types; habitats for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species; cultural resources; and unique geologic resources.

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Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Resources and values to be managed.
- Manageability of the areas.
- Current and potential land uses.
- Existing special management area effectiveness and appropriateness.
- OHV usage in WSAs.
- Appropriate new designations.
- Visitor educational opportunities.
- Review wild and scenic status of all streams and rivers.
- Integrate and/or replace other ACEC plans.

Issue Area 16: *How will air quality be managed?*

Air quality is a region with far-reaching impacts on watershed health, ecosystem health, and the pursuit of various land or resource uses. There is concern that resource use, both within and outside of BLM's jurisdiction, may be affecting the quality of air in the area.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Maintenance of appropriate air quality.
- Coordination with neighboring power plants regarding emission levels and time periods.
- Assessment of impacts from fire management emissions.

Issue Area 17: *How will paleontological resources be protected and managed?*

There is concern that resource use, both within and outside of BLM's jurisdiction, may be affecting the integrity of paleontological resources in the area. Management objectives are needed.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Instatement of a paleontological resource protection policy.
- Management of scientific study so that it won't adversely impact paleontological resources.
- Management of recreation so that it won't adversely impact paleontological resources.
- Potential for paleontology ACECs.
- Establishment of paleontology collection areas.

Issue Area 18: *How will the PRMP planning process be organized?*

The planning process for the PRMP needs to provide for participation from a number of different stakeholders, and will be organized to maximize participation and incorporate as much input as possible. Objectives will help BLM staff organize the planning process efficiently.

Specific concerns that BLM is considering:

- Integration of BLM management with other agency and community plans.
- Making the process open to the public to the greatest extent possible.
- Completing the process in a manner fully compliant with law and regulations.
- Format the EIS to be easily integrated with future planning processes and documents in the region.

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- Involvement of other major federal land management agencies, as necessary.
- Provide consistency in management between the three field offices and other BLM offices in Nevada, Oregon, and California.
- Involvement of partners/cooperating agencies in the planning process.
- Challenges associated with having a dispersed, rural public.
- Coordinate these planning documents with other regional land use plans, conservation plans, conservation strategies, and the Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health in Northeastern California and Northwestern Nevada.
- Create a framework for implementing policies, rather than identify specific locations for implementation or management activities.
- Education/outreach as a priority.
- Re-examination of the Management Framework Plans for the three areas to ascertain what succeeded and what failed within the plans — what goals have been achieved, what decisions have been actualized, etc.

1.6 Issues Considered but Not Addressed

Issues beyond the scope of the Alturas planning process or BLM’s jurisdiction were also raised during the scoping process. Table 1.6-1 summarizes these concerns and explains why they were considered outside the scope of the PRMP.

Table 1.6-1 Issues Beyond the Scope of the Alturas Resource Management Plan

Issue Raised during Public Scoping	Reason That Issue is beyond the Scope of the Alturas Planning Process
Ticketing and fines or penalties by BLM for those not using land properly	BLM enforces existing laws, regulations, and decisions to the best of its ability, given law enforcement and budgetary constraints. The level of fines for citations is not a decision a PRMP can make.
More funding by BLM to support law enforcement of OHV use	Funding levels are determined by the President and Congress, not by a PRMP. This comment has been forwarded to management for consideration in developing future budgets.
Use of BLM lands for small hydroelectric facilities for private home use	Regional water quality control boards have jurisdiction over instream uses. Therefore, PRMPs do not address this issue.
Mitigation for hazards by the Army before BLM acquires land	Specific land acquisitions would require site-specific environmental review before completion. This issue would be addressed for a specific acquisition.
Involvement of local fire districts in BLM’s fire training	BLM coordinates many training opportunities for local fire districts, including classes at Lassen Community College, refresher courses, and periodic joint training sessions with local volunteers.
Public involvement in plan implementation	Near the completion of the PRMP, BLM will involve the public in developing an implementation strategy for the plans. This strategy will include volunteer and other public participation opportunities.
Use of fees from extraction activities to fund plan implementation	Funds gathered as part of the sale or lease of minerals and timber are deposited into the U.S. Treasury. Distributing these Treasury funds is the authority of Congress. BLM will propose funding from Congress for plan implementation when the plan is complete, but the PRMP does not discuss the use of funds.

1.7 Planning Criteria

BLM planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1610) require preparing planning criteria to guide development of all RMPs. Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules that guide the development of the plan. The criteria determine how the planning team develops alternatives and ultimately selects a Preferred Alternative. These criteria ensure that plans address defined issues and that BLM avoids unneeded data collection and analysis. Planning criteria are based on the following: 1) standards prescribed by laws and regulations; 2) agency guidance; 3) the results of consultation and coordination with the public, other federal, state, and local agencies and governmental entities and Native American Indian tribes; and 4) analysis of information pertinent to the planning area. Planning criteria may change as the planning process proceeds.

The planning criteria for the Alturas PRMP process developed and refined through scoping are as follows:

- Develop the PRMP in compliance with FLPMA, NEPA, BLM planning regulations, and all other laws, regulations, executive orders, and policies.
- Establish economic and social baselines and consequences in coordination with local governments.
- Initiate government-to-government consultation with federally recognized tribes on federal land management agency obligations under tribal treaties and laws or executive orders relating to Native American reserved rights, religious freedoms, and traditional use areas.
- Designate areas where OHV use is allowed and prohibited and select specific routes in the planning process.
- Develop the PRMP that address WSR eligibility and suitability.
- Store all new data collected and its explanatory metadata in a data base. All metadata will meet the Federal Geographic Data Committee standards.
- Incorporate the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management into the PRMP.
- Coordinate resource inventory, planning, and management with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Native American tribes to the extent consistent with administering the public lands.
- Provide opportunities for public involvement, including early notice and other opportunities for citizens, interested groups, and others (including Native American tribes) to participate and comment on the plan.
- Closely coordinate the planning effort with national and state fire management planning to provide needed program direction.
- Closely coordinate the planning effort with USFWS under the Consultation Agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management for the Northeastern California Resource Management Plans.

The alternatives developed in this PRMP to meet the purpose and need and to address issues described above must meet legal mandates, such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act; satisfy many regulatory constraints; support national policy, including BLM Strategic Plan goals; and follow state director guidance (see 43 CFR 1610.0-4[b]). A detailed list of legal and regulatory guidance is provided in Appendix A.

1.8 Collaboration

BLM approaches planning with community-based collaboration, in which interested groups and people – often with varied or opposing interests – work together to devise solutions with broad public support for managing BLM-administered lands. Cooperating local, state, tribal, and federal agencies have been part of the planning team for the PRMP to the fullest extent possible.

During plan implementation, BLM will continue partnerships with these public and local, state, and tribal governments and agencies to select high priority projects and to resolve emerging issues.

The Council on Environmental Quality defines a cooperating agency as any agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise for proposals covered by NEPA (40 CFR 1501.6). Any federal, state, or local government jurisdiction with such qualifications may become a cooperating agency by agreement with the lead agency. Formal cooperating agencies for this PRMP include Lassen County, Modoc County, Shasta County, USFWS, California Dept. of Fish and Game, Pit River Tribe, and California SHPOs.

The Northeast California Resource Advisory Council contributed issues and reviewed goals, objectives, and management alternatives. Other groups that participated in the planning process include the Modoc-Washoe Experimental Stewardship Group.

1.9 Public Comment Process

The Draft Alturas RMP EIS was published in April 2006. BLM distributed approximately 250 copies of the Draft Alturas RMP. The public had 90 days, until July 27, 2006, to submit comments on this Draft RMP EIS. During this period, BLM held seven public comment meetings, as follows:

Public Comment Meetings	
Date	Location
May 30, 2006	Susanville, CA
May 31, 2006	Alturas, CA
June 1, 2006	Cedarville, CA
June 12, 2006	Reno, NV Redding, CA
June 13, 2006	Fall River Mills, CA
June 12, 2006	Redding, CA
June 15, 2006	Dorris, CA

The public comment period generated 4,997 (nearly identical) form letters, and 33 additional unique comment letters from individuals and groups. The number of comments that BLM analyzed and responded to was approximately 402. These comments and BLM’s respond to them are summarized in Appendix R of this document. Based on the comments and feedback received, BLM has prepared this PRMP/EIS, which will be followed by a 30-day public protest period. Following the protest period, BLM will resolve protests and publish a Record of Decision for the Alturas RMP.

1.10 Coordination and Consistency with Other Plans

Planning decisions will strive to be compatible with existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, tribal, and federal agencies, and will be consistent with federal law and regulations. BLM-administered lands in the planning area are located in four counties; they also share boundaries with tribal lands. BLM manages land near or contiguous with the Modoc, Lassen, Klamath, and Shasta-Trinity National Forests; Modoc and Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges; Ahjumawi State Park; and Pine Creek and Fitzhugh Creek State Wildlife Areas.

BLM would consult with the military and jointly analyze any impacts to the military mission including: Military Operating Areas, Military Training Routes, and air space, coastal, and ground access when making any land use decisions on BLM property. This would be done at the earliest possible time to minimize impacts to current and future military mission uses. Examples of land uses that could impact the military mission include, but are not limited to habitat improvement projects, environmental restoration projects, public utility development (e.g., erection of cell phone towers, electrical transmission lines, wind energy towers and solar array towers), large mining developments, recreational development (e.g., campgrounds, visitor centers), and land exchanges for the purpose of facilitating the preceding land uses.

Involvement by cooperating agencies led to the development of a full range of alternatives to promote management that also would meet management goals on lands adjacent to BLM lands.

For example, working with local county administrators helped BLM develop alternatives for water resources that are compatible with the county general plans. USFWS and the California Department of Fish and Game worked in cooperation with BLM to assist in developing sound alternatives for various wildlife habitats. Ongoing collaboration and consultation with tribal representatives will ensure that the range of alternatives is responsive to tribal concerns. A list of key plans that have been consulted in the development of the PRMP is as follows:

- Lassen County General Plan
- Comprehensive Land Use and Management Plan for the Federally and State Managed Lands in Modoc County
- Shasta County General Plan
- National Fire Plan
- Modoc, Lassen, Klamath, and Shasta-Trinity National Forest Plans
- Siskiyou County Comprehensive Land and Resource Management Plan
- National Historic Trails Plan

Decisions in the PRMP are also compatible with decisions in land use plans for BLM-administered lands adjoining the planning area. This includes the recently completed PRMP for the Lakeview Field Office in Oregon.

1.11 Changes between Draft RMP EIS and PRMP/FEIS

The Draft Alturas RMP EIS was published in April 2006. The public had 90 days, until July 27, 2006, to submit comments on the DEIS. All comments received were seriously considered, and many were used to assist in making changes or clarifications to the PRMP.

Changes made to the Draft RMP EIS include the following:

- Changes to the Draft EIS Preferred Alternative; see Section 1.12.

Chapter 1: PURPOSE AND NEED

- Clarifications, corrections, supplemental analysis, and additional information added to various chapters of the PRMP/FEIS.
- Two new maps were created and are included with this document.

1.12 Changes to the Preferred Alternative

Based on the comments received from the public, cooperating agencies, and from internal discussions, the following summarizes the substantive changes made to the Preferred Alternative, between the Draft RMP EIS and the PRMP/FEIS. These are arranged by topic, and followed by bulleted descriptions of the changes made.

Substantive Changes Made to the Preferred Alternative

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Clarification of text in working with local tribes in regards to lava rock collection, Indian Trust responsibilities, fire rehabilitation, livestock grazing, etc.
- Deletion of “cultural resource interpretive presentations including flyers and brochures”.

Energy & Minerals

- Language added on how wind energy projects will be designed and developed in accordance with the *Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on Wind Energy Development on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States, 2005*.
- Inclusion of Impacts to Renewable Energy Development in Chapter 4.

Fire Management

- Clarification of the relationship between NorCal Fire Management Plan and Alturas RMP decisions.

Fuels Management

- Additional text describing how important wildlife habitats will be protected during fuels management projects.

Rights-of-Way/Utilities

- Designation of the potential California-Nevada (east-west) utility corridor as a ROW corridor.
- Expand maximum width of utility corridors to 500 feet.

Livestock Grazing

- Language added in Chapter 2.8 to assure consistency between livestock grazing and vegetation and wildlife management actions.
- Addition to Appendix I: Range Improvements in the AFO.
- Addition of Appendix N: Alturas Drought Management Policy.

Special Area Designations

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

- Additional text added to Ch 2.11 on management actions within individual proposed ACECs.
- Additional text describing livestock grazing strategies proposed in ACECs.
- Addition of Appendix P: *Tablelands Integrated Resource Management Plan* to clarify management actions proposed for the Likely Tablelands area outside of the proposed ACEC.

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Wild and Scenic Rivers

- Addition to Appendix J: Wild and Scenic River Inventory (Streams Evaluated for Eligibility), and WSR Suitability Determinations.

Travel Management

- Change of boating restrictions: Nelson Corral Reservoir and Delta Lake: electric trolling or non-motorized; Moon Lake: 2- and 4-cycle outboard. Bayley Reservoir: small 4 cycle outboard (implemented in 2012).
- Removal of snowmobile restrictions within 8,000 acres of Nelson Corral routes, December 1-March 15th.
- Clarification of text on authorized uses that are exempt from OHV travel restrictions.

Vegetation

- Clarify amount of new roads constructed for western juniper removal and/or forestry treatments to 10 miles of permanent roads and 50 miles of temporary roads.

Wild Horses and Burros

- Change of decision to retain the Red Rock Wild Horse Herd Management Area as it currently exists.
- Changes to glossary terms and definitions.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Sagebrush Ecosystems and Sagebrush Obligate Species

- Revision of Chapter 4.24 Wildlife and Fisheries, including additional impact analysis on sage-grouse habitat.
- Additional text describing how important sage-grouse habitats will be protected during fuels management projects.

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