

# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Montana State Office

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In Reply To:

4100(923)P

February 2, 2004

EMAIL TRANSMISSION - 02/03/04  
Information Bulletin No. MT-2004-036

To: State Management Team

From: State Director

Subject: Proposed Revisions to Grazing Regulations Draft Environmental  
Impact Statement **DD: 02/18/04**

On January 6, 2004, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced the availability of the Proposed Revisions to Grazing Regulations Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). There will be six public meetings on the DEIS to be held in Salt Lake City, Phoenix, Boise, Billings, Cheyenne, and Washington, D.C. The Billings meeting will be held on February 2, 2004, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana, 5500 Midland Road. Field offices are encouraged to have manager and program staff representation at the meeting.

The comment period ends March 2, 2004. Outreach to State and local elected officials and the Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) is in progress. A PowerPoint program is available for use in presentations to State and local officials, RACs, or interest groups. Please coordinate presentations with Mary Apple, Public Affairs specialist.

As per Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-085 (Attachment 1), internal BLM comments on the proposed regulations and the associated DEIS also are due to the Director by March 2, 2004.

Montana/Dakotas State Office staff and field offices are requested to submit internal review comments for statewide consolidation. Do not submit comments through the electronic regulatory comment system or the ePlanning DEIS comment system. These systems are to be used only by the public. Please submit your office's consolidated comments via e-mail to Bill McIlvain, Range Program Lead, with a courtesy copy to Merry Prestridge by February 18, 2004.

Please contact Bill McIlvain at (406) 896-5028 with any questions about the internal review process or Mary Apple at (406) 896-5258 for any needed public outreach assistance.

Signed by: Martin C. Ott

Authenticated by: Merry Prestridge (MT923)

1 Attachment

1-Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-085 w/o its attachments (3 pp)

Distribution

Asst. FM Glasgow - 1

Asst. FM Havre - 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

January 16, 2004

In Reply Refer To:  
4100 (220) P

EMS TRANSMISSION 01/22/2004  
Instruction Memorandum No. 2004-085  
Expires: 09/30/2005

To: All WO Officials and SDs (except Alaska and ESO)

From: Assistant Director, Renewable Resources and Planning

Subject: Proposed Revisions to Grazing Regulations Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement (DEIS) DD: 01/22/2004; 03/02/2004

**Purpose:** The purposes of this memorandum are to provide:

- Direction to affected State Directors on their responsibilities for conducting outreach on the proposed revisions to Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) grazing regulations and the associated DEIS; and
- Guidance on how BLM Washington and State Offices are to submit internal comments on the Proposed Revisions to the Grazing Regulations DEIS.

**Background:** The BLM published a notice of proposed revisions to the regulations governing Grazing Administration in the *Federal Register* on December 8, 2003. On January 2, 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency published a notice of availability of the DEIS on those grazing regulations in the *Federal Register*. The DEIS analyzes the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed grazing regulations. On January 6, 2004, the BLM announced the availability of the DEIS and identified five public meetings on the DEIS to be held in Salt Lake City, Phoenix, Boise, Cheyenne, and Washington, D.C. A sixth public meeting has been scheduled in Billings and a *Federal Register* announcement of that meeting is forthcoming. The schedule for the public meetings is set forth in Attachment 1. The public may submit comments in writing through March 2, 2004. The BLM is encouraging the public to submit comments on both the proposed regulations and the DEIS through electronic means.

**Policy/Action:** The BLM is committed to fully engaging State and local elected officials in the review of the proposed regulatory revisions and the associated DEIS. In particular, we are encouraging County Commissioners or Supervisors to provide us with their feedback. In cooperation with the National Association of Counties, the BLM is sending a letter to County

Attachment 1-1

Commissioners/Supervisors requesting their participation and input. Slightly different letters are being sent to County officials in States where we have scheduled a public meeting than those that are being sent to County officials in States with no scheduled public meeting. Copies of these letters are found in Attachments 2 and 3, respectively. As follow-up to these letters, State Directors are asked to have the appropriate Field Managers personally contact County Commissioners or Supervisors representing areas with public land grazing to encourage their involvement in the review and comment process.

We also urge the State Directors to notify the Governors' offices of the upcoming meetings and encourage their participation as appropriate in commenting on the proposed regulations and DEIS. A printed version of the DEIS was sent to each affected Governor to the attention of the State Clearinghouse.

The Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) are important links to our publics and State Directors should extend a special invitation to RAC members to participate in public meetings and/or provide comments on the proposed regulations and DEIS.

It is the responsibility of the State Directors to ensure that appropriate contacts are made with State and local elected officials and with RAC members. In some instances, State Directors or Field Managers may be asked to attend County Commission meetings or other organizations' meetings to discuss the proposed regulations and DEIS. The Washington Office is providing each State Public Affairs Office with a copy of a Power Point presentation that can be used for meetings. We encourage you to accept such invitations, however, you must make it very clear that the only comments the BLM will consider are those made at the public meetings shown in Attachment 1 or submitted in writing or electronically by the close of the comment period. In addition, if BLM does make a presentation at a local government or interest group meeting, you should not attempt to interpret the meaning of a rule section or explain why we decided to include such a provision. The preamble to the rule speaks to our rationale and is the official explanation.

Please submit internal BLM comments on the proposed regulations and the associated DEIS to the Director (200). State Directors should compile any comments from State Office staff and Field Offices and submit as a combined and integrated package of comments. Do not submit comments through the electronic regulatory comment system or the ePlanning DEIS comment system. These systems are to be used only by the public and any comments submitted through those systems are immediately posted on the Internet. We respond to those comments in the final environmental impact statement and final regulation. In contrast, we consider BLM comments as predecisional and therefore do not have to respond to them, nor will they be posted on the Internet.

**Time Frames:** State Directors should initiate contacts with State and local officials and RAC members by January 22, 2004. Internal BLM comments must be submitted by March 2, 2004.

**Coordination:** This Instruction Memorandum was coordinated between the Rangeland, Soils, Water and Air Group (WO 220), Public Affairs (WO 610), Regulatory Affairs (WO 630), and Intergovernmental Affairs (WO 640).

**Contact:** If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Molly S. Brady at 202/452-7714 or [mbrady@blm.gov](mailto:mbrady@blm.gov).

Signed by:  
Thomas H. Dyer  
Assistant Director  
Renewable Resources and Planning

Authenticated by:  
Barbara J. Brown  
Policy & Records Group, WO-560

### 3 Attachments

- 1 - Schedule of Public Meetings on Proposed Revisions to Grazing Regulations and Environmental Impact (1 p)
- 2 - Letter to County Officials in States Where Public Meetings are Scheduled (2 pp)
- 3 - Letter to County Officials in States Where No Public Meetings are Scheduled (2 pp)