

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
COLORADO STATE OFFICE
2850 YOUNGFIELD STREET
LAKEWOOD, COLORADO 80215-7093

April 29, 1999

In Reply Refer To:
8500 (CO-931) P

Instruction Memorandum No. CO-99-021
Expires: 09-30-2000

To: Manager, Grand Junction Field Office

From: Deputy State Director, Resource Services

Subject: Wilderness Inventory Procedures

The attachment provides guidelines and defines the scope, schedule and team makeup for the wilderness inventories for the Bangs Canyon and South Shale Ridge areas.

If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please call Eric Finstick at 303-239-3729.

Signed by
Frank Salwerowicz
Deputy State Director,
Resource Services

Authenticated by
Sharon Deuter
EMS Operator

Attachment (3 pages)

cc: All Field Offices

Wilderness Inventory Procedures

Evaluation Guidelines

Evaluation guidelines in the Colorado Handbook for Wilderness Inventory, Study and Reporting Procedures will be used (see IM-97-051 and chapter on "wilderness inventory procedures" for application of the criteria) for naturalness, outstanding opportunities, solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Study Areas

Areas inventoried will be the larger of the Conservationists' Wilderness Proposal as included in The Colorado Wilderness Act of 1999 or the original "brown book" proposal for which our roadless review policy applies, less any areas that were reviewed in the previous roadless review and found to not meet the roadless criteria.

Public Involvement

The previous roadless review field efforts included representatives of interested public on the field teams. They were volunteers who participated in the field with the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) staff, and were involved in discussions in the field, but it was made clear at the beginning that the decisions on what is or is not a road would ultimately be the BLM's decision. A similar process will be used for the wilderness inventories for Bangs Canyon and South Shale Ridge, as well as for the road and wilderness inventory for the Roan plateau.

As in the roadless review effort, it will be necessary to have a training opportunity for the public, and in some cases BLM staff, on the criteria that will be used and why. In the roadless review, getting the public team members to accept the definition of a road that we had to use was critical and sometimes difficult, but ultimately contributed greatly to the success of the effort. The criteria of 'outstanding opportunities' will be somewhat more difficult since the guidelines are so general and the criteria so subjective.

The public members will be able to participate in discussions in the field, voice their opinions and assist with local knowledge. The report of findings, which will be signed by the team leader, will summarize the nature of the discussions in the field and will make recommendations to management.

In addition to the involvement in the field, there will be a 45-day opportunity for the public to comment on the findings of the team's report for the Grand Junction areas, prior to a decision by the SD regarding whether to initiate a plan amendment to address future management of the areas.

The public team members are approved as follows:

- * Clee Seeling, Sierra Club;
- * Jim MacQueen, Colorado Environmental Coalition;
- * Shane Henry, Club 20 and Resource Advisory Council, member;
- * Ken Curry, represents oil and gas and off highway vehicle interest;
- * Chris Muhr, represents mountain biker interests; and
- * Suzanne Jones or another Wilderness Society representative.

BLM Core Team for Bangs Canyon and South Shale Ridge will be as follows:

* Scott Abdon, Team Leader, is from Salem Oregon. Scott is Natural Resource Administrator (like our multi-resource staff lead positions) with a staff of 14 in the Salem District. He has recent wilderness inventory experience as a team leader in the Utah effort.

* Dave Lehmann, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, is a local BLM team member.

An additional team member may come from outside the Grand Junction office. (Pending confirmation)

Training

The team leader will have the lead for conducting training for the public team as well as the BLM team. He will be assisted by Eric Finstick.

SCHEDULE FOR THE BANGS CANYON AND SOUTH SHALE RIDGE INVENTORIES

May 17 - Team Leader arrives in Grand Junction.

May 18 - Internal team training and orientation.

May 19 - Public team orientation and training and begin field work.

May 19 through May 28 - Conduct field work (including the weekend).

May 28 - Team Leader returns to Oregon (perhaps do some report there).

June 16 - Team Leader returns to Grand Junction.

June 16 through June 25 - finalize field work and prepare draft report.

June 28 - Team Leader briefs State Director on draft report in Grand Junction.

Approximately June 29 - Team leader returns to Oregon.

Approximately June 30 -Field office makes a draft report available for 45-day public comment and holds an open house sometime during the review period with the involvement of the team leader.

Approximately August 16-20 - Team leader and core team review comments, develops final findings, and submit them to Field Manager and State Director.

Approximately September 1 - Field Manager and State Director review findings and announce results and next steps (if any).

Attention: In order for the field effort to be efficiently accomplished, maps, aerial photos (if available), and other

background information should be assembled prior to the arrival of the team leader. Obviously, vehicles and other necessary support should also be arranged.