



## United States Department of the Interior

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Colorado State Office**

**2850 Youngfield Street**

**Lakewood, Colorado 80215-7076**

**[www.co.blm.gov](http://www.co.blm.gov)**



In Reply Refer To:  
9101 (CO931)

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Canyons of the Ancients National Monument was established to protect nationally and internationally significant cultural and natural resources on a landscape scale, and is a component of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System.

The area contains spectacular landforms and unique wildlife species and has been a focal point of archaeological research for 135 years, resulting in almost 6,000 recorded cultural resource sites. Canyons of the Ancients continues to offer unparalleled opportunities to observe, study, and experience how cultures lived and adapted over time in the American Southwest.

Enclosed is the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. The BLM prepared the PRMP/FEIS [in consultation with cooperating agencies], taking into account public comments received during this planning effort. The PRMP provides a framework for the future management direction and appropriate use of the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, located in Montezuma and Dolores counties, Colorado. The document contains [both] land use planning decisions [and implementation decisions] to guide the BLM's management of the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

This PRMP and FEIS have been developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The PRMP is largely based on Alternative V, the preferred alternative in the Draft Resource Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DRMP/DEIS), which was released on October 26, 2007. The PRMP/FEIS contains the Proposed Plan, a summary of changes made between the DRMP/DEIS and PRMP/FEIS, predictable impacts of the Proposed Plan, a summary of the written and verbal comments received during the public review period for the Draft RMP/EIS, and responses to the comments.

Pursuant to BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2, any person who participated in the planning process for this PRMP and has an interest which is or may be adversely affected by the planning decisions may protest approval of the planning decisions within 30 days from date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*. For further information on filing a protest, please see the accompanying protest regulations in the pages that follow (labeled as Attachment # 1). The regulations specify the required elements of

your protest. Take care to document all relevant facts. As much as possible, reference or cite the planning documents or available planning records (e.g., meeting minutes or summaries, correspondence, etc.). To aid in ensuring the completeness of your protest, a protest check list is attached to this letter (labeled as Attachment #2).

E-mailed and faxed protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, the BLM will consider the e-mailed or faxed protest as an advance copy and will afford it full consideration. If you wish to provide the BLM with such advance notification, please direct faxed protests to the attention of Brenda Hudgens-Williams- BLM protest coordinator at 202-452-5112, and e-mailed protests to: [Brenda\\_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov](mailto:Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov).

All protests, including the follow-up letter (if e-mailing or faxing) must be in writing and mailed to the following address:

Regular Mail:

Director (210)  
Attention: Brenda Williams  
P.O. Box 66538  
Washington, D.C. 20035

Overnight Mail:

Director (210)  
Attention: Brenda Williams  
1620 L Street, N.W., Suite 1075  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, be advised that your entire protest – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your protest to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The BLM Director will make every attempt to promptly render a decision on each protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Upon resolution of all land use plan protests, the BLM will issue an Approved RMP and Record of Decision (ROD). The Approved RMP and ROD will be mailed or made available electronically to all who participated in the planning process and will be available to all parties through the “Planning” page of the BLM national website (<http://www.blm.gov/planning>), or by mail upon request.

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process, through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) pursuant to 43 CFR, Part 4 Subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM’s final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations once the BLM

resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and issues an Approved RMP and ROD. The Approved RMP and ROD will therefore identify the implementation decisions made in the plan that may be appealed to the Office of Hearing and Appeals.

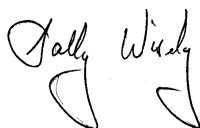
As the result of public input and internal review, the Proposed Resource Management Plan (PRMP) has been developed for the Monument. The PRMP, or the “Proposed Plan” (described and analyzed as Alternative VI in the PRMP/FEIS), is a refinement of the Preferred Alternative (described and analyzed as Alternative V in the DRMP/DEIS). The PRMP/FEIS details the No-Action Alternative (which serves as a “baseline”), the Preferred Alternative, and the Proposed Plan alternative (Alternatives I, V, and VI, respectively). For review, all of the alternatives considered in the DRMP/DEIS are outlined in Appendix L.

Public comments gathered during the review of the DRMP/DEIS showed a need for clarification on several topics. Chapter 2, and Table 2.2, now contain descriptions of the Proposed Plan, and identify the primary differences between the Preferred Alternative and the Proposed Plan (measured against the baseline No-Action Alternative). Chapter 2 also now includes a discussion of monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management processes. Chapter 4 provides greater detail with regard to the cumulative effects analysis for each resource. While Chapter 4 now focuses on Alternatives I (no action), V (Preferred Alternative) and VI (Proposed Plan), we have included a summary of actions for all alternatives (I-VI) at the end of each resource section. This, along with Appendix L, show the complete range of alternatives analyzed for this plan. Chapter 5 provides information regarding the consultation and coordination efforts conducted by the BLM from the beginning of the planning process.

In addition, several appendices have been added and/or enhanced to provide more detailed information. These appendices are listed in the Executive Summary and in Section 2.3.7. All appendices are found in Volume II of this PRMP/FEIS.

The BLM would like to thank the individuals, organizations, and agencies who participated in this planning process. Your interest, and your input, is greatly appreciated. We hope that your involvement will continue as we move forward to implement and monitor the land use plan, and as we manage the public lands in the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

Sincerely,



Sally Wisely  
State Director

4 Enclosures:

- 1-CFR 43 1610.5-2
- 2-Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist
- 3-Canyons of the Ancients National Monument PRMP
- 4-Canyons of the Ancients National Monument FEIS