

United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Availability of the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Roan Plateau planning area, including the former Naval Oil Shale Reserves (NOSRs) 1 & 3; Glenwood Springs and White River Field Offices in Garfield and Rio Blanco Counties, Colorado.

SUMMARY: The Draft RMPA/EIS for the Roan Plateau planning area, which includes the former Naval Oil Shale Reserves 1 and 3, is available for 90 days for public review and comment. BLM has prepared the document in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), and regulatory requirements

The Roan Plateau planning area contains about 73,602 acres of federal lands managed by the BLM, including both surface and subsurface (mineral) estates. The planning area totals about 127,000 acres. Although the planning area boundary includes private lands, BLM's decisions will apply only to the land managed by BLM.

The five alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMPA/EIS present differing management approaches for the physical, biological, visual, recreational, cultural, and other resources within the planning area. These include differing degrees and combinations of special resource management designations, travel restrictions, mitigation or other protective measures, and leasing for oil and gas development. As required by BLM's planning regulations, BLM has selected a "preferred alternative" (Alternative 3). However, the alternative ultimately adopted by BLM may comprise components contained in any of the alternatives presented in the Draft RMPA/EIS and/or other components within the range of actions analyzed. The public is therefore encouraged to comment on the components of any or all of the alternatives. Comments should focus on specific management actions being considered and the adequacy of analysis. BLM will publish responses to the comments as part of the Proposed RMPA/Final EIS.

DOCUMENT REVIEW AND AVAILABILITY: The Draft RMPA/EIS may be reviewed (1) at the BLM Glenwood Springs Field Office, 50629 Highway 6 and 24, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601, (2) at the BLM White River Field Office, 73544 Highway 64, Meeker, CO 81641 or (3) by visiting one of the Garfield County, Colorado, public libraries. BLM offices are open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except weekends and holidays. A copy of the document may be obtained in electronic, CD, or hard copy form by one of the following: (1) downloading from the project website (www.roanplateau.ene.com), (2) requesting a copy via the project website, (3) writing to ROAN RMPA REQUEST, BLM, Glenwood Springs Field Office at the address above or (4) calling the BLM at 970-947-2800.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: BLM will accept only written comments on the Draft RMPA/EIS. The comment period shall extend for 90 days following publication of its availability by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Federal Register. This period is expected to end on approximately February 28, 2005. The exact closing date of the comment period and other information will be posted on the project website cited above and will be available at BLM's Glenwood Springs Field Office. Comments may be submitted on the project website or sent in writing via the U.S. Postal Service or private delivery service to BLM at the address above. Additional information on how to comment and public participation in the planning process is presented on the website and on the inside front cover of the document.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Informational public meetings will be held as follows: December 13, 2004 – Battlement Mesa Activity Center, 0398 Arroyo Drive, Parachute, CO 81635; December 15, 2004 – Garfield County Fairgrounds ("New Hall"), 1001 Railroad Avenue, Rifle, CO 81650; December 16, 2004 – Glenwood Springs Community Center, 100 Wulfsohn Road, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601. All three meetings are scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information or to have your name added to the mailing list, visit the project website cited above. For other questions, contact: Greg Goodenow – Planning and Environmental Coordinator, Steve Bennett – Associate Field Manager, or Jamie Connell – Field Manager at the Glenwood Springs Field Office (970-947-2800) or by email (colorado_roanplateau@co.blm.gov).

BLM WELCOMES AND APPRECIATES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

DATE: November 19, 2004