

**Casper Field Office Planning Area
Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement**

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Type of Action: Administrative

Jurisdiction: Most of Natrona and all of Converse, Goshen, and Platte counties, Wyoming

Abstract: This Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes and analyzes alternatives for the planning and management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Casper Field Office. The Casper planning area is located in east-central Wyoming and includes approximately 8.5-million acres of land in most of Natrona County and all of Converse, Platte, and Goshen counties. The BLM Lander Field Office administers public land in the southwestern corner of Natrona County. Within the Casper planning area, the BLM manages approximately 1.4-million acres of BLM-administered public land surface and 4.7-million acres of federal mineral estate.

The BLM is revising the RMP to address the availability of new data and policies, emerging issues, and changing circumstances that have occurred during the 20 years since the Record of Decision for the existing plan was signed. As part of the RMP revision process, the BLM conducted a scoping period to solicit input from the public and interested agencies on the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed in the Draft EIS. Planning issues identified for this RMP revision focus on energy and mineral development; vegetation and habitat management; land ownership adjustments; access to public lands; transportation; and special designations.

To assist the agency decisionmaker, cooperating agencies, and the public in focusing on appropriate solutions to planning issues, five alternative RMPs are considered in the Draft EIS. **Alternative A** is a continuation of current management (No Action Alternative). Under this alternative, use of public lands and resources continue to be managed under the 1985 Platte River RMP, as amended. **Alternative B** emphasizes conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources, while providing for the smallest level of development. **Alternative C** provides more conservation and less resource development than current management and falls between alternatives B and D relative to resource conservation and resource development. **Alternative D** emphasizes resource development, while providing for the smallest level of conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources. **Alternative E** is the BLM's Preferred Alternative at this stage in the process (the Draft RMP/EIS). It is not a final agency decision; it is an indication of the agency's preliminary preference because it reflects the best combination of decisions to achieve BLM goals and policies, meets the purpose and need, addresses the key planning issues, and considers the recommendations of cooperating agencies and BLM specialists.

When completed, the RMP revision will provide a set of comprehensive, long-range decisions for: (1) managing resources throughout the planning area and (2) identifying allowable uses on the public land surface and federal mineral estate administered by the BLM. Comments are accepted for 90 days following the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability for this Draft EIS in the *Federal Register*. Comments should be submitted via the RMP web site at www.blm.gov/rmp/casper. Alternatively, comments can be faxed to (307) 261-7587 or mailed to:

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